



Unit F, Colstine Terrace, 88 Belvedere Rd, Claremont
P O Box 44907, Claremont 7735. South Africa
Telephone: +27 21 674 0361 Facsimile: 086 670 6772 Email: wolpetrust@mweb.co.za
Website: www.wolpetrust.org.za

University of Kwa-Zulu Natal,
CCS and Harold Wolpe
Dialogue
03 July 2010
Durban

Topic:

**NEVER AGAIN
XENOPHOBIA!
SOLIDARITY!**

Speakers:

Community, CCS, KZN Refugee Council,
Durban Social Forum

The aim of these dialogues is to create a space for open and informed dialogue and debate around key local and global political, social and economic issues facing South Africa.

Xenophobia

Good afternoon to everyone, one of things that Fred did not say is that I was part of a team that was this big research team that was commissioned by Atlantic philanthropists to undertake a fairly massive research study, Josh at the back there was also part of the team which was researching one particular case-study so I will take time then to walk through some of the things that we found as a fairly big research team. I will fail Fred if I do not mention my other role in (Xhosa), which is belated, entered the table over there. If anyone is interested to get a copy, we can talk afterwards.

Atlantic philanthropies asked us as people in Cape Town, in Durban, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, centre for civil society, and the University of Johannesburg to look at several case studies, to find out a whole range of questions in relation to the role of civil society in response to the 2008 outbreak of xenophobic violence. I think it's useful to go back to the questions that were interesting to Atlantic philanthropists. For most of the question whether there was a demonstration of ruling between levels of community organisation and the scale of violence, this is interesting because what we pick up demonstrates not necessarily one single answer to that question, also, of interest of Atlantic philanthropies was whether what appeared as a massive mobilization of civil society, actually represented, a revival of civil society with positive implications of what civil society would do, going into the future, not just on xenophobia but on a whole range of socio-economic issues. How would one characterise that response of civil society to the crisis, what is coercive? Is it possible to build lasting coalitions out of the events of 2008 and so on? Just to give you an idea of the breadth of these case studies, I think it's useful to go through them one by one.

There was a look at Alexandria, the township in Johannesburg, where interestingly, the tension between the ANC and the IFP also played a particular role in the evolution of a particular case study, and very interestingly, the anti-privatisation forum at that instance was seen to have come out in a very problematic way because some of its members were recorded live, there is footage on a commercial film that shows members of the APF, actually supporting the xenophobia, which is atypical of the APF in other instances. Ramaposa is the second case study near Nelspruit which is where, I forgot his name now, (Xhosa) was televised burning to his death in the East-rand next to the Nelspruit hospital, and then there

was Durban, and Cape Town as sites but Durban and Cape Town were very interesting because they chose several townships but also they chose several organisations to look at, for example, Durban, then went to an informal settlement called 'Bottle brush' where there is serious ANC land-lordism taking place in a particular informal settlement but very interestingly also, over time, there have been a range of battles in 'bottle brush' over service delivery but also crime between the community and the police and those battles increasingly united the Indian and African segments of that particular settlement which it not necessarily been the case before and yet during the moment of xenophobia, that coercion which had been building over time seemed to unravel and the ANC seemed to reassert itself in that particular community in various ways.

The next case study is then the specific role of the anti-privatisation forum, not just in Alex but in other areas in Johannesburg where it exists, particularly in Soweto but also in (Xhosa), south of Johannesburg where there has been an ongoing struggle around housing and access to land and services, and Gotsong where Josh was working with one other colleague. What is interesting about Gotsong was that, there was no anti-foreigner violence. People would remember that Gotsong had four or five or so years been actively mobilised around re-integration back into Gauteng against their demarcation into the North West province, so its very interesting that out of that experience, but also of course, it happens to be outside Carletonville which is an old standing mining town with migration from Lesotho, from Malawi, from Zimbabwe, from Mozambique, so that also playing a particular dynamic in that particular community. And then there was a specific focus also on coalitions, whether it was a coalition against xenophobia in Johannesburg which collapsed almost immediately after the end of the violence, and then the last case study, the one looked at COSATU and the ANC, in which our characterization in the research process were referred to as as the big players, what were they doing? What was their role? What was their effect of their role? And then there was one case that looked at other minority groups particular people from Asia given that the brunt of the violence was (reckoned) at African nationals from other countries. I just thought; let me start there, just to give you an idea of the kind of things that we covered.

There are others which I'm not really talking about. There was a case study that looked at the role of the media, how it covered xenophobia, the role of corporate, what they do, and then finally, faith based organisations a major study on gift of the givers, which we have seen taking plane loads of food to Sudan, to Palestine and so on but also during the xenophobia

that played quite a significant role. So that's the totality if I am correct of the case studies that is this fairly big team of researchers was looking at.

Now I want to move quickly then to the substance of the presentation. Ultimately, if you want to characterise the response of civil society, what we come to are several words, it was humanitarian, in so far as the sheer horror of people being displaced violently on TV, so it mobilised a whole range in Cape Town, you actually found Muslim and Jewish communities and religious organisations forgetting for a minute other differences but being able for eight to twelve weeks working together to mobilise significant resources that then sustained people who were affected by the violence. That element is very key because for the first time, other than when the Red Cross intervenes during the Cape Town fire disasters, or other similar humanitarian responses, this was quite a wide spread mobilization, not just of organisations but of thousands of volunteers and the TAC in the Western Cape was able to enter almost each and everyone in those camps with hundreds of volunteers who were trained to take statements and to be able to feed those statements into a well network system, being able to mobilize thousands of sandwiches in a few hours or so, this was something that we had not seen for a long while, that's important to underline.

The second feature of this response is that so it seemed initially to displace the state or at least substituted for the State. The state was quite incoherent, quite absent in the case of Alexandria (Xhosa) moving in providing leadership but he could not beyond the political statement provide resources and because he didn't have any government power to provide those kind of resources, and then ultimately, Helen Ziller and (Rousseau) entered the stage because they are fighting about what the response should be but basically, if you look throughout all the major flash points, the state was quite absent. So then you found civil society coming into play the role the state should have been playing in so far as providing tents, providing medication, providing even registration systems, providing food and then having done that initially in the immediate period of response, doing the third thing, pressurising the state because quickly, with the TAC having the advantage of knowing how to use the law, quickly then, and the TAC realises, there are actually UNHCR standards across the board about conditions for refugees and camps and so on. So quickly again, hundreds of activists get trained about these minimum conditions so then the failure of the state when it intervenes to provide to meet the minimum conditions for refugees and camps, again becomes a point of activism of putting pressure on the state, call it shaming the state if

you will. However that shaming, that putting pressure on the state produced very interesting dynamics within the civil society organisations because a large number of them, civil society organisations which are active when it comes to migrant and refugee issues are not typically political or activist in their orientation, they are service oriented. So there was a tension when a court challenged that forces (Rousseau) to act in particular ways or Ziller to act in particular ways is that not a waste of money because we could be giving this money to people who are desperate because we are buying food, we could be buying medical supplies with this money, so there you see two different traditions of civil society organisations, there ones that are normally providing charity and then your typical ones that use the loincloth activism to challenge and shame the state. So that was a tension.

By the way a large number of the migrant organisations whether they are formed by migrants themselves, normally about service, how home affairs treat people and how to deal with those cases or asylum cases which are not successful or cases of xenophobic action on the part of the police or generally the state. So normally they deal with cases on a one to one basis and trying to as much as possible not to confront the state because they themselves are vulnerable particularly because of all organisations that exist in South Africa, they are the most poorly funded, this is one major finding as well, from the study. So that shaming and challenging the state I think was already met with those contradictions from within.

Now the fourth element of this response in our view is that even for a minute, a single moment, put forward something to society about progressive values. If I was still smaller I would show the T-shirt I am wearing, it says 'foreigner' but when the TAC marched in Khayelitsha (Xhosa) during that response wearing this T-shirt saying 'foreigner', it immediately made visible impact in terms of what people saw and people beginning to actually say "we can't be saying we are hosting an African world cup, and yet we are killing them on the streets". That was an interesting message, however even though I am talking in glowing terms of the TAC, even within the TAC itself, there were tensions. For example in the Khayelitsha district of the TAC, which is the biggest in the country, was well organised even able to withstand the vultures from (SANCO) which were trying to access the camps and the tents to steal the supplies that were mobilised in particular ways and yet (Xhosa), the reason the TAC (Xhosa) was able to ultimately act was simply because the pressure was just too much on people who were forcefully removed otherwise they had not been proactive approach on the part of the TAC (Xhosa) to act in response to this violence. The TAC Khayelitsha example is repeated in

so far as the SACC, the APF, and I forget this one other affiliate of the APF in (Xhosa) and Soweto are concerned. The (Xhosa) organisation had not previously done conscious political education amongst its members on a whole range of issues compared to the APF. Interesting the APF, had had prior ongoing activities where people were even visiting Zimbabwe during earlier movements of the Zimbabwean crisis and coming back to report back in communities so people are beginning to make those connections about conditions inside and conditions in Zimbabwe and so on. So now the affiliate of the PAPP in (Xhosa) is quickly forced to catch up with that APF that we have been doing all along in Soweto so that again is very interesting because what it shows is the importance of social mobilisation on the ground where people are and then a conscious attempt by forces within those social organisations on the ground to say their side of progressive values, their set of principles, their set of ideas that if we were going to fight about service delivery and so on that our membership needs to be aware of. So that's very important because today where we are, all of that level of mobilisation from that period has basically been lost. The TAC today says there is no way it can go back to that level of mobilisation, it was able yes to secure 4 million rands in a short space of time but it went deeper into its own money to finance a whole range of things, so now that nearly collapsed the organisation, so that's one manifestation of the reality that post-xenophobia there have been very few of the very organisations that were involved, that now have integrated xenophobia, issues of migration, issues of refugees into components of their work. This reflects my view, the reports reflect this, it reflects an inability for now to understand the structural causes of this xenophobia, of course there are a whole range of other factors that drove that particular attack in 2008, for example if you look at Cape Town, these migrants from the Eastern Cape who come and take our houses, this is the logic in (Xhosa) now you come and take our houses so this is amongst Africans themselves, by the way amongst whom their problem is the lack of housing is visible as far as you can see the shacks.

Go to another level, amongst the coloured working class, the problem of housing is hidden in their backyards, we don't see it in visible shacks its hidden in the back yards so already that structural condition and the fact that that railway line between (Xhosa) is not yet been crossed. People are still living on different sides of the line, so there is already another level of division, between people who generally have common interests in so far as they are unemployed and so far as course recover and service delivery effects them in bad ways but also the lack of housing and also the fact that they are far way from economic opportunities

in Woodstock, in Claremont and so on. So now, in this divided Cape Town, which is not integrated, in fact which is reinforcing a form of neo-apartheid, you get a particular wave of migration from Zimbabwe and, Malawi in particular, and that wave of migration most of it goes to (Xhosa) the very intensely contested spaces. By the way already so violent whether its violence against women whether its criminality and all other types of social crisis manifesting itself quite locally. So you get civil society trying to respond in a situation like that, and its response focuses on the humanitarian element and the responsibility of government to meet the humanitarian conditions of people in crisis. And yet these conditions continue to foster themselves and continue to survive and thrive. So critically, what the synthesis reports show is that civil society is not routed in so far as it's my jacket, my office, my laptop I represent. I can write a full report and so on and yet I am not part of the trauma that the people in crossroads continue to suffer back from the violence of the (Xhosa) of the 80s cause there are still remnants of that and then how do people negotiate understand even talk about it, let alone get themselves organised in ways that say, lets improve our conditions we making claims, either on the state or for employment and so on and then of course as I have tried to paint the picture of migration from people who are seen as outsiders climbing on top this unresolved mess. So now civil society has not been able to develop, undertake, apply structural analysis so to speak of these conditions and the ways that then say, how do we use resources we have, to build a sense of self agency, a sense of ourness, a sense of consciousness on the part of people who are living in these conditions.

Cape Town is particularly interesting because there are long traditions of organisations like 'Africa unite', 'indasa' and so on which have done work trying to integrate migrants and refugees into communities with the (Xhosa) foundation and so on. If you go through all their programmes, again it's humanitarian and what is very interesting some of them have then said, human rights or human rights for migrants and yet the conditions that encourage disintegration continue to be unaddressed. By the way before I talk about the big players, what's also interesting is that right across where these flash points of violence were, there were also intense battles of the ANC, where basically ANC branches were fighting over leadership, fighting over who leads, who is the what counsellor in ways that demobilize in ways that basically make it impossible for the ANC to play their role they are expected to play. This is by the way contrary to the claim that (Xhosa) and (Xhosa), the Gauteng secretary made at the time because at the time they said, they were no attacks in places where

ANC branches were strong, and the evidence you will find in all these case studies that I was listing shows basically, yes there is ANC presence, yes the ANC was fighting amongst itself not able to lead the community even in terms of the ANC's own programmes, so for me this speaks to the fact that communities are largely leaderless except for where there are strong church organisations or strong social movements of particular types of organisations but by in large, working class communities are really struggle to find leadership amongst themselves on issues that concern them.

Of course there are interesting stories of the ANC (Xhosa) which was one of the case studies in Khayelitsha where the non business members, those that are not running the team stores were actually committed to fighting the xenophobia and yet they retain elements like taxi drivers or your spaza shop owners within the ANC, in Hout Bay we actually expressing different interests in ways that are more demobilized their response.

The paper by Stephen Friedman in the study then does a national overview of the ANC. What it basically points too is that the ANC as an organisation at a national level does not have a return policy on migration. It's not talking about government, its talking about the ANC as the ANC. It may come up, the issue of migration may come up in directly implicitly in other documents but there is not a specific document that says this is the policy of the ANC in the same way that there would be on land reform, and a whole range of other things. And then he says in government, the ANC basically has maintained the exclusionary nature of South Africa that the apartheid system had developed in extending the areas control act, in particular ways but also the very battle, with (Xhosa) over changes to the immigration bill which ultimately (Xhosa) did not win when he was still minister. Then the other thing he says is that, like government, the ANC seems to have been in denial, statements continue to come out even during the NGC of a few weeks ago. There is caution on the part of the ANC to say no, South Africans can not be xenophobic, at the time of course, Thabo was president. When there was a ceremony in Pretoria to apologise, he says, "who is the media to tell me that my people are xenophobic"? "That's quite out of touch with reality". I will leave it there when it comes to the ANC.

The other big player is COSATU. Before the xenophobic outbreak, COSATU had made a number of submissions to parliament where it had called for job creation, for the protection of jobs of South African workers, and then also it had learned the formation of the private South

African campaign all in the interests of protecting jobs. Now that kind of notion over time blinded COSATU to not take up issues of migrant workers, what it did was to then characterise the conditions of migrant workers as migrants without rights, not workers, whose rights and interests have to be protected. But at the 2008 outbreak, COSATU in particular in the Western Cape, some nationally, some affiliates here in the Eastern Cape, SATAWU, SACAWU and the NUM also in other parts of the country were quite systematic in their response, however COSATU did not do what the TAC did. COSATU did not bring its numbers, yes it brought its strategic voice, for example all the task teams, all the litigation in the Western Cape, COSATU is listed and is quite active in the media, and yet it did not mobilise its job... in the same way that the TAC was able to bring through its branches to the response. It was very interesting because, what does it say about COSATU, is it because COSATU could not do this or was it the awkwardness that for example many African activists in Cape Town felt this awkwardness came through in so far as the response in Cape Town was not driven, others on the TAC, it was not driven by African activists, it was a typical middle class largely white and to a lesser extend coloured and foreign hands and emotions and so on playing active roles. So it was that awkwardness on the part of COSATU because its membership is largely African that remains the question that we are not able to answer in the case study of COSATU.

What interesting is that after the xenophobic attacks, COSATU particularly in the Western Cape has now put together an organising team with groups of migrant workers and the NGO of those services, trade unions to try work out a strategy to organise migrant workers. I think this is a shift and a step forward and of course at that congress in 2008, what they also did was to put forward very strong resolutions on anti xenophobia. They also used their strategy voice at NEDLAC to put forward a number of cause on the part of government in terms of what it must do to change xenophobic laws, so I think its conscious, I think its committed to a progressive approach and yet its not bringing through its mass numbers in ways that would make a difference to integration but also specifically at the time to the response. Now I will not go through the case studies because I think this picture I have drawn is beginning to say that was an important moment without a doubt, people came out across the political spectrum, across the spectrum of civil society, however that moment was not in so far as structural causes were not linked to the xenophobia and there was no integration of xenophobia, migrant and refugee issues into the work of different organisations. I think the

possibility for building that link lied in understanding the society. The reasons that society is still divided are still not integrated. Then even though I say the moment was lost, there is a very interesting experience now in so far as there is what is called a social justice coalition and also in KwaZulu natal some of the social movements have on a ongoing basis been trying to continue to build a response to build a perspective in response to subsequent attacks. You may remember the case of the ANC council (Xhosa) the ANC councillor who basically continued to mobilise MPs to attack particular blocks of flats in Durban and we saw there (Xhosa)...and other organisations trying to continue a level of mobilisation but I think the most lasting organisationally legacy out of the 2008 response in a social justice coalition in Cape Town which is basically founded primarily on organising South African working class communities to act against xenophobia. Of course now they have included in their programme of activities, other forms of violence, there were responding to the open air toilets in Cape Town, they were also quite active in forums and activities that raised the issue of safety and security in communities in ways that for example that a community policy forum is not able to do because a community policy forum in their view is an invited space of government where as if they are able to mobilise communities themselves they are able to represent independently the voice of communities in response to the violence.

So to move to a conclusion, I think the success of the response, the failure of the post response period still leaves the question of what is to be done open are pointing to the need for civil society to undertake and apply an analysis of society that understands why there is inequality, why there is a lack of integration. It think the conditions are ripe for civil society to ask that question because if civil society does not do that, the conditions we have in this country are also ripe for the ongoing reproduction of oppressive social constructs where rise of xenophobia itself or the rise of virginity testing or the rise of traditional leaders or even the rise of anti-progressive values on an ongoing basis. Even if society does not respond to this then clearly we are in trouble but civil society as I was saying earlier is not routed, its not going to replace the need for self agency amongst ordinary people, therefore if that is correct, I think what civil society has to concern itself with is what... someone spoke at one of the seminars, Michelle Williams says theorised as the notion of sustained mass participatory politics whereby we actually invest resources of all kinds to make it possible for ordinary people to recognise their own potential, their own interests but also to develop their own ability to act on a consistent basis. That is different from marching people up the mountain

and leaving them to find their way down because when you march you make demands, the march is over when the memorandum of demand has been read, but can civil society make it possible to support communities around notions of sustained organising on the ground. I think it's difficult but I think that's the questions civil society has to face. Thank you Fred.

Response

Ladies and gentleman, if I am going to try and do something somewhat different, I am not so much going to respond to what Mazibuko has said because I didn't hear what he has said before. I wrote a few notes on the response. I am going to respond to this glossy here and I just wondering if the glossiness is anyway a signifier as 'lacka' would say or anything that we are going to see. The other institutions that I used to know came out with these kind of glossy things were banks. It's up to you to decide whether you think it signifies anything. I want to make a couple of theoretical points in answer to the synopsis here, in order to get us to think through what xenophobia is, what it may be and how we can confront it.

I think this particular piece of research, we can look at its relation to civil society in two different ways. First, it's really an analysis of civil society particularly of the response of civil society to May 2008. But it's also a product of civil society. The people who are actually writing here are civil society people and I think this implies or suggests how civil society people may think. And I think how they think is highly problematic so I am going to try make a case for why I think its highly problematic the way they thinking because I do not believe on the way of this, on the basis of this thinking they going to be able to achieve a laudable things which Mazibuko was talking about. In other words, to use traditional terms, mobilise the masses. I want to do this by doing two things. First I am going to look a little bit at the kind of explanations which they provide for xenophobia, and I am going to argue that the highly problematic. Secondly I am going to look at what they say about civil society, very briefly and also what they don't say about civil society very briefly. And then I am going to come to some conclusions and provide what I think is a very quick alternative.

Now, the point is, is civil society helping us to think a way out of or beyond xenophobia. Or is it simply reproducing the dominant state view, what I consider to be the dominant state view, on why xenophobia or what xenophobia is if you like and how it must be understood. And I am going to argue that what civil society at least in this particular synopsis here, I know that there are particular studies in here we've tried to go beyond that particular

perspective but what I am going to argue is that civil society operates very much with a dominant mode of thinking and that the dominant mode of thinking regarding xenophobia is the particular characteristic which I am going to try and outline. The fundamental explanation which they provide for why xenophobia exists is an economic one. They say that this is fundamentally due to poverty, and or inequality, those are the two dominant views that kept on being chinned out immediately after the events of May 2008. They say it's a symptom, xenophobia and especially xenophobic violence, the two in fact seem to be conflated which I think is a problem in this particular thing. They said to conflate xenophobia and xenophobic violence, and I'll say why I don't think the two are the same. They seem xenophobic violence as a symptom of deeper malaise, what is the deeper malaise is broadly economic. It is due to poverty, it is due to an unfinished transition, its due to the left overs of poverty and racial oppression from apartheid and so on. This is exacerbated they say by increased migration and competition for scarce resources which arise from the increased migration. Now let me try and go over some of this dominant account. Its not unique to them, it's the dominant view of what are the causes of xenophobia.

It seems to me that poverty explains desperation and frustration, indeed, people are extremely desperate and extremely frustrated but neither explains the action of people resorting to violence if you like. No and most importantly it doesn't explain the target. Why are foreigners the targets of that frustration, if its inequality that is so important, why are people targeting the rich? Why are people targeting whites? You could say, why aren't they targeting women? Why don't they think of burning a few witches? I mean this used to be the case in the past, still a case I learnt recently up in Limpopo wherever. Why are foreigners the ones that are targeted? I think that is an important question which I will try to answer in a minute. The other point about the issue of poverty is that it assumes and it stresses that xenophobia is a problem of the poor. But this is not the case, if you look at research on xenophobic attitudes, in this country undertaken by Jonathon Crush and he's buddies at Queens University Canada, they undertook two major surveys, one in 1997, one in 2007, just before. What comes across from these attitude surveys is that all South Africans irrespective of colour, race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, you name it are exhibit highly xenophobic attitudes. I don't want to read any of these results because I will take too much time but if you are interested, I can let you have them. It's a very interesting survey if you go on the website on the Queens University Canada website you will find it. The point is here simply that in so far

as attitudes are concerned, xenophobic attitudes are completely widespread across the population, in fact so much so, that the researchers on the survey couldn't actually work out a xenophobic profile. They couldn't say if you are white, unemployed or black in the township unemployed, you more likely to be xenophobic than if you are not. They couldn't. It was a problem for sociological analysis because in sociology, always tries to relate consciousness thinking attitudes in this particular case to some kind of socio-economic grouping. It was not possible to do it. In fact I tried just by looking at some of the results of the surveys and it turns out that those were marginally more xenophobic than others happen to be white pensioners who are DA supporters. I was laughing. I made this point in Cape Town, the next day I had the DA on the phone saying "how dare you say this about DA supporters", but it was pensioners. All these people you can imagine them, in their retirement homes going "bloody foreigners, bloody foreigners" so I mean they not exactly a target for education you know to increase people's consciousness or whatever. So ok, if it exists across the board in South Africa, what it means is that the middle class are equally xenophobic in terms of their attitude. If you talk to professional Africans from the continent, and how they experience at work, they will tell you, my colleagues are terribly xenophobic, the only thing is they don't kill them, and they don't come with pangas and slash them. Of course the middle class usually doesn't do its own killing you know, this is not usually what happens. It kind of pays other people to do it for them, if they want to do such a thing. It's true. So its not that xenophobia does not exist among the middle classes, it's prevalent, it's everywhere. Its just that its not manifesting itself in the same way. It manifests itself with snide remarks; it manifests itself saying "well you shouldn't be in this job, this job should be reserved for South Africans" etc. That's the other point. So xenophobic is not a problem of the poor, it's a problem with everyone.

Another reason why I have a problem with the poor because there is no correlation between. In fact it's not the poorest parts of the townships which did the most killing in May 2008 incidentally, that is something else. This comes out from research by.....the forced migrations studies programme; they did a very interesting piece. Its not the areas where the greatest amount of poverty which were most xenophobic, and of course, a poor country like Tanzania recently gave full citizenship rights to 132 000 refugees from Burundi, so if there was a kind of relationship between poverty and xenophobia, why are these Tanzanians allowing 132 000 refugees, giving them citizenship rights so that they can vote, and this is a very poor country

unlike south Africa which is much richer. So I don't buy this thing about poverty. Now to say that migration has an influence on xenophobia, for me it's highly problematic, it's like saying the reason for gender oppression is women. If you didn't have any women you wouldn't have any gender oppression, wouldn't it be wonderful. If you don't have migration, then you don't have xenophobia. I found this kind of thinking unbelievable, why are you saying that if only no-one migrated, everything would be wonderful. The point is that people migrate and people have always migrated and the question is that when people have migrated, they are not necessarily faced by xenophobia whether it takes a violent form or not.

This thing about the struggle for resources because its pressure with all these migrants coming in, it's a kind of...view the word of all against all. Why do people who I automatically thought to be so individualistic that they would be killing each other in order to grab what they need or think they need. Why is ... assumption made? Why are people cooperating and sitting down and saying, I think this time you should have that half, I think this time you should take this and so on. Why isn't that happening? Ok to say that poverty is the fundamental cause of xenophobia seems to me is to deny us the ability to understand political agency. And this is the point I want to stress, and I want to try and give you some idea of why I think, try to understand political agency in able to make us more sense of xenophobia than merely talking bout poverty. Poverty of course is just one of the conditions people are poor but there is no reason for that to try to quasi-fascist forms of chauvinism. Why aren't they all supporting ex members of the communist party or corrupt members of the communist party for that matter? Why aren't we all wearing black and being anarchists like most guys a couple of weeks ago. Poverty is not providing an answer so this thing about deeper structural factors seems to me is ultimately vulgar Marxism and its vulgar Marxism which explains very very little. What I think the fundamental reasons concerning xenophobic attitudes and the prevalence throughout the country has to do with is fundamentally to do with politics. It has fundamentally to do with the way people think their problems and how they should solve their problems. And this problem is a problem of politics; it's a problem of thinking agency. A political sort of the way we think politics, what are the problems, what are the solutions, is structured by dominant forms of thought. And if dominant forms of thought emanate from different parts of society, but overwhelmingly emanate from the state, not necessarily only from government, from the state in general. They emanate from the law. The law in this country as been pointed out in several studies is in fact very much continuing in the good old

traditions of the apartheid regime, keep people out. That is the underlying philosophy; you give police powers to ask people for their ID's even though they haven't got the power to ask everyone for their ID's. They have the power to ask suspected foreigners for ID's, and you therefore give the police all these extra powers for them to be able to control people. The law, quickly, the politicians is not just Buthe, I mean he was notorious, he was going on when he was minister of home affairs about how all Nigerians were drug dealers. And he is actually saying this and he is saying, millions of people are swarming into this country, if you let it happen it's going to undermine our reconstruction and development programme, he says this but he is not the only one.

Politicians of all shades of opinion in the 1990s uttered xenophobic statements. Human Rights Watch, the American NGO notes this and says there is a public culture of xenophobia developing in South Africa. Foreigners are being blamed for illness, for unemployment, for the fact that South Africans are complaining that they are taking the women, everything, everything you can think of under the sun is blamed on foreigners. This is by politicians of all persuasions, unfortunately that doesn't mean to say that all politicians, it means, people from different political parties were coming out with these statements on a regular basis. The police itself utilises foreigners, they call them mobile ATMs. You shake people down, you come and harass them, even though they may have totally valid reasons for being in the country, even though they may have the papers, as under apartheid in the rural areas they can come up and tear it up.. "Ooh sorry you are no longer legal" it is unbelievable some of the stuff that is going on, I must tell you. You know this, a lot of you but all this is documented in the various surveys and studies which have been done by CSVR, by the human rights commission, it's all there, the advantage about South Africa is that we have a hell of a lot of documentation and we can see all this stuff but it will make always much difference but it's there and it can be used. Tackling ..., this other wonderful establishment in which all ANC MPs had shares at one time I don't know if they still do it's known what is going on, do you know that they regularly beat people up in the middle of the night which amounts to torture but it doesn't kind of feature as a kind of major torture issue. Imagine if this had happened during the apartheid period, the faster would have been made by civil society.

People are fleeced of their money all the time in (Xhosa), you suppose to be repatriated in Zimbabwe but "oh sorry you have to give us 50 bucks otherwise we won't repatriate you". People are not supposed to be spending more than 30 days at a time but the government can

always go and ask for extensions from a magistrate. Sometimes it's well over 30 when the service and studies are done, well over 30 days, the people have been saying. Of course we know the press, we know this, it must be mentioned ok, so what I am trying say is that it creates an atmosphere in society, maybe I should call it uncivil society if in which it is considered legitimate to oppress foreigners or at least those who are deemed to be foreigners because don't forget out of the 62 people who get killed in May 2008, 12 are South African. But they happened to have darker skins, they can't say elbow in Zulu and other forms of stereotypical things and as a result they get zapped because they come from...and they arrive in the township, wow man, so you are in trouble. So of course it's stereotyped but it is seen as legitimate. It is seen as legitimate if you like to other foreigners to use the trendy post modernist trend which I think is very useful in this particular context. People are (avid). This is the context in which this kind of violence actually takes place. What else is there?

A notion of South African exceptionalism which some of us find so irritating, Mahatma Ghandi used to write about his years ago. South Africans whatever colour they happened to be, don't think of themselves primarily as African. They think of themselves as maybe floating off the continent somewhere in the middle of the Atlantic, but all the reference points are to either Latin America, southern Europe, culturally as well as in other ways. Africa is the place of the other, you know if you white, "let's have a unique African experience" and you go, what is it, the great five or the big five sorry. The unique African experience is the big five, so you can understand what kind of conception people have on the continent. The constant stuff that comes out in the media which comes from European western medium is generally is about half a case of basket case, how the governments are always in crisis, how people live in absolute poverty and so on. Then of course they are only waiting to come to South Africa to take from us because it's so terrible over there. In fact when there have been interviews with migrants, they say we don't want to come and stay, we want to earn and leave as quickly as possible.

I think finally there is also a discourse of indigenerity which is dominant in this country, a discourse that stresses the native as being much more important than those who are considered to be less native so there is a gradation. Of course the least native is the one who seems to be the foreigner. The most native are supposed to be some people who are considered to be essentially genuinely South African so if you happen to, if your ancestors happened to have migrated from south east Asia or somewhere, you not as South African as

if you haven't. If you have taken to have migrated, if you are a so called coloured in Cape Town, you not as South African, and if you white, of course you were a settler. So there is this stress of nativism where it comes to BEE, where it comes to accessing resources from the state, this is a point which (Francois) insisted upon in the case of Africa in the post colonial period, but I won't go into this or draw the parallels because we don't have all that much time.

The point that I am trying to make very simply is that if you try and think about political thought, how politics is being thought, what is the dominant way of thinking politics? What is the dominant way of thinking the problem of xenophobia overwhelmingly it is thought in terms which seek the foreigner as the other, as being the African foreigner I should stress even though only Africans get hammered sometimes, its Pakistanis or whatever, but overwhelmingly the conception is that migrants are coming into this country to take, they are not coming to provide, they are not coming to give skills, resources, investments, employment, no, they are coming to take from us, that's the overwhelming conception. That's the dominant conception and despite all the, I think very important points that Mazibuko makes about this particular. I don't think these subjective, political, ideological conceptions of consciousness, whatever term you want to use are sufficiently addressed. How is civil society dealing with this? Now, the way, as you have just been told with Mazibuko, the way this particular project deals with civil society, is looking at primarily a humanitarian response. Everybody kind of plans together rapidly more or less and intervenes as they say, probably better than the state could have done. But is this the only form of civil society reaction or attempt to confront the xenophobic attacks in 2008, in fact it isn't. There's a other civil society which they don't spend so much time on, apart from the particular example of Gotsong which I think is crucially important because what it shows is that in Gotsong, local leaders, local organisers, local people who are engaging in politics already regarding this demarcation issues and could be mobilised around a anti-xenophobic politics. In other words, there are already there, the politics is already there. It doesn't have to come from outside, from some well bidding NGO. But Gotsong wasn't the only one, it wasn't the only place. A number of others, most importantly I think (Xhosa) in Durban who systematically stressed and went out acting upon this, that everyone must be treated the same, that no person is illegal, it doesn't make sense to talk of illegal immigrant, a person can not be illegal, a person is a person, and they went out acting upon this, of course the level of... of their membership

and the communities was we may say extremely high. But there was no xenophobic attack in that particular area, strange that it is not mentioned in the report....in the study look at two particular instances where in fact this didn't happen, where in fact, people can to agitate in a community, to try and force people to attack foreigners and they said no we not. The reason were complex but they felt that they had similar interests with foreigners and therefore that it would be counter productive to go and attack them so people resisted, long before the middle classes decided to engage in some kind of humanitarian response. In various instances, people resisted from within the communities and said "no we don't want to do it, and we are not going to do it". That's crucially important. That is the place that seems to me where we should start thinking about anti-xenophobia, and not start thinking somewhere in the cities and then move into the areas where people are poor and then tell them what to do or whatever. The reason why it's so important is because these particular examples where examples of people contesting that dominant view that in fact it's legitimate to go and attack foreigners. They know it's not legitimate. We don't see why it should be. So I think there should be, I think there is one good study, the one on Gotsong. I think there are snippet's here and there. I must admit I haven't been able to read all 500 pages, I only got the thing a couple of days ago and I haven't had time. But this is what I want to stress, I want to stress that in fact, that's where people should start, listening, not telling. Listening to what the people have actually done and tried to learn from what people have actually have done rather than coming to mobilise from the outside.

I just want to conclude now. And I want to conclude by saying there is a dominant view of xenophobia in this country to which this research or at least the synthesis report, I am sure there must be people who don't follow this completely, but the synthesis report is quite amazing. To which the synthesis report in particular seems to adhere. I think this view is seriously flawed because it systematically disables an understanding of subjective politics or agency. I think that as a result, it ends up blaming the poor themselves for xenophobic violence. I have tried to stress that xenophobia is not primarily a problem of the poor that in fact it results fundamentally from a particular conception of power, a particular conception of the nation, a particular conception of politics. Finally I think the conclusion must be that this kind of civil society at least, the dominant kind of civil society that we talking about, it could be called middle class civil society, is one which reinforces fundamentally an elite or state conception of what the nation is and as a result tends to continue, tends to disable us from

being able to think an anti xenophobic politics. It seems to me rather, an interesting question to ask maybe something that goes something like this...why has nationalism, which was such a liberatory political discourse in the 1980s. I know it was a liberatory discourse, I was there; I saw the struggles of the 1980s at first hand. No one said, hey you are a foreigner, you can't get involved. Those notions didn't exist. Why then has nationalism which was such a liberatory political discourse in the 1980s, turned into its opposite, into a kind of a simulacrum of its self, a form of quasi-fascist chauvinism. Now it seems to me posing this kind of question in this way, should help us to get some of the answers and move forward, otherwise I think we are just going to be caught in the same repetition of the same problem and we are not going to be fundamentally able to address the problem. Thank you very much.