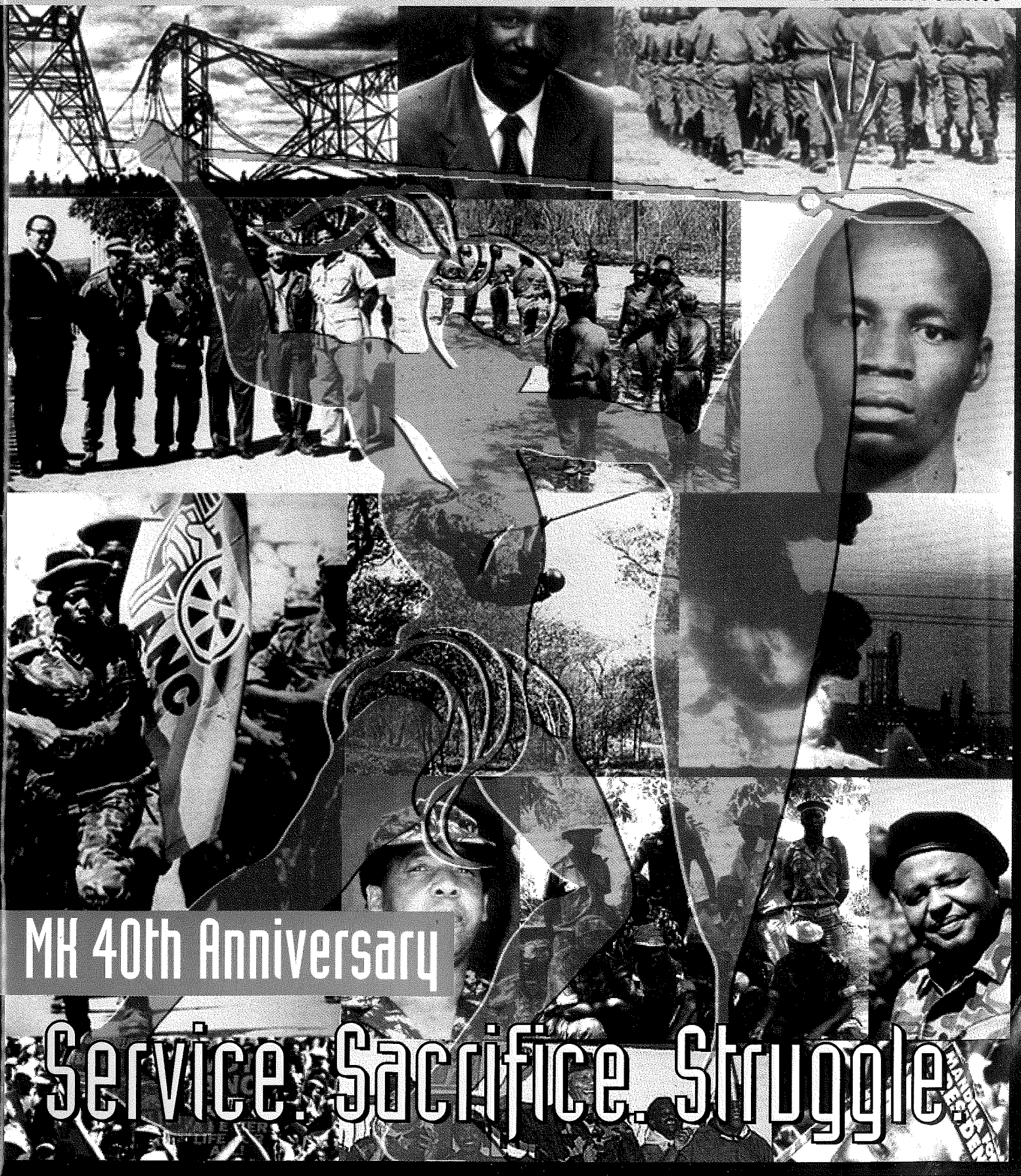
ANC
UMRABULO
LET'S TALK POLITICS
December 2011



MK 40th Anniversary

Service. Sacrifice. Struggle.

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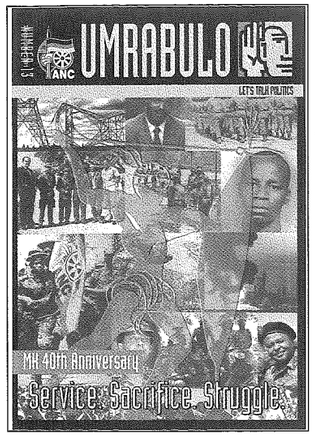
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Editorial

We shall not submit

The Time When Dawn Broke

On 16 December 1961, the retort of armed actions against the symbols and infrastructure of white minority rule reverberated across the still of the night. The high command of Umkhonto we Sizwe declared:

> "The time comes in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices: submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all means within our power in defence of our people, our future and our freedom".

A people's army had been formed. A conscious decision had been taken by bold men and women, to demonstrate, in the face of massacre and repression, what it means to be a warrior and a patriot. In the words of our President, comrade Thabo Mbeki:

> "It was a time of great heroic efforts and unprecedented sacrifices. It was a time of massacres and a savage attempt to silence those who fought for our liberation. It was the time when the dawn broke to signal the start of a new day, even as the night sought to claim dominion over both day and night, both the past and the future.
>
> It was that time in the evolution of our country into its future, when the new infant, even when it was a mere conception in the minds of those who were destined to die, was engaged in a difficult struggle to be born. It was the time in the evolution of our country when the old and decrepit fought to extend its life, by strangling the new being, even as it emerged from the troubled womb of our society.
>
> It was an era of historic decisions. It was the moment when those who lived and had a conscience, had to take epoch-making resolutions. It was that difficult period when responses to the questions of the day by those who lived and had a conscience, perhaps beyond the understanding of they who had to decide, were responses to the question whether freedom would forever be deferred.

Forty years on the infant that was mere conception in the minds of those who were destined to die has been born. Our freedom has been born in the glorious light of dignity thanks to the heroic decisions of those bold patriots who acted in that bleak and hopeful time.

Your Blood has Nourished the Fruits of Freedom

We dedicate this issue of UMRABULO, to the combatants of our glorious people's army, *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, the Spear of the Nation. You cut the trail that we follow today. You are the pioneers of our freedom, the *Masupatsela* of our dignity. Through resolute struggle, preparedness to sacrifice and determination to serve your people, you have set the examples that we strive to emulate.

We salute those who paid the supreme sacrifice, that fell in the field of battle: you are the warriors who have given us freedom and dignity, and your spirit lives on among us. In the words of Solomon Mahlangu, your blood has indeed nourished the sweet fruits of freedom. You did not die in vain: our dignity is a living monument to your historic sacrifice.

As we mourn the death of comrade Joe Modise, and mobilise our people in pursuit of reconstruction and development, we pay tribute to our all our revolutionary forebears.

To those cadres of MK who continue to live and work amongst us, you are a daily inspiration. Even as our movement grows to meet the challenges of this new era, which is the fruit of your contribution, the unique experience and collective memory of the former MK combatants within our ranks continuously remind us of what it really means to be a cadre of the African National Congress.

The Cradle of a New Cadre

It is no accident that you should be held in such high esteem, since *Umkhonto we Sizwe* was consciously designed as the cradle of a new cadre.

In the dark days of the 1960's, when it appeared that the revolutionary tide had been thwarted, the Luthuli detachment set a precedent of struggle, service and sacrifice that was keenly followed by all those patriots that came after them. As they carved their way through the steep ravines and treacherous gorges of Wankie, the *Umgwenya* of our struggle learned that, for the soldier of *Umkhontho we Sizwe*, political comprehension and comradeship were as important, if not more so, than ability to handle weapons of war.

Following them, the June 16 detachment, the Moncada detachment, the Madinoga detachment, the Barney Molokoane detachment and many others learned the art of war, were schooled in the science of revolution, and imbibed the spirit of *Letsema* that marked the soldiers of MK and continues to inspire our work in this new century.

Through the years this dedicated and committed cadreship volunteered its services without seeking personal reward or benefit. They kept the flame of struggle alive and inspired many within the rank and file of our movement to work selflessly for the achievement of democracy. This culture of voluntarism, of struggle, service and sacrifice are rare and precious qualities that cannot be neglected as we prepare to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the African National Congress.

Let us all learn from the history of *Umkhonto we Sizwe* what it means to be patriotic, what it means to contribute selflessly to the freedom and dignity of our people. On December 16, 2001, let us dip our revolutionary banners in honour of our forbears, and make a covenant with these martyrs, to respect their memory by serving our people.



Let us not submit to the scourges of poverty, disease and ignorance. Let us fight the fight their sacrifice has blessed us with and continue the struggle for freedom, peace and dignity.

Ke Nako! Mayihlome!

Manifesto of Umkhonto we Sizwe

Leaflet issued by the Command of Umkhonto we Sizwe, 16 December 1961

Units of Umkhonto we Sizwe today carried out planned attacks against government installations, particularly those connected with the policy of apartheid and race discrimination.

Umkhonto we Sizwe is a new, independent body, formed by Africans, It includes in its ranks South Africans of all races It is not connected in any way with a so-called 'Committee for National Liberation' whose existence has been announced in the press. Umkhonto we Sizwe will carry on the struggle for freedom and democracy by new methods, which are necessary to complement the actions of the established national liberation organisations. Umkhonto we Sizwe fully supports the national liberation movement, and our members jointly and individually, place themselves under the overall political guidance of that movement.

It is, however, well known that the main national liberation organisations in this country have consistently followed a policy of non-violence. They have conducted themselves peaceably at all times, regardless of government attacks and persecutions upon them, and despite all government-inspired attempts to provoke them to violence. They have done so because the people prefer peaceful methods of change to achieve their aspirations without the suffering and bitterness of civil war. But the people's patience is not endless.

The time comes in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices: submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all means within our power in defence of our people, our future and our freedom. The government has interpreted the peacefulness of the movement as weakness; the people's non-violent policies have been taken as a green light for government violence. Refusal to resort to force has been interpreted by the government as an invitation to use armed force against the people without any fear of reprisals. The methods of Umkhonto we Sizwe mark a break with that past.

We are striking out along a new road for the liberation of the people of this country. The government policy of force, repression and violence will no longer be met with non-violent resistance only! The choice is not ours; it has been made by the Nationalist government which has rejected ever peaceable demand by the people for rights and freedom and answered ever such demand with force and yet more force! Twice in the past 18 months, virtual martial law has been imposed in order to beat down peaceful, non-violent strike action of the people in support of their rights. It is now preparing its forces enlarging and rearming its armed forces and drawing the white civilian population into commandos and pistol clubs for full-scale military actions against the people. The Nationalist government has chosen the course of force and massacre, now, deliberately, as it did at Sharpeville.

Umkhonto we Sizwe will be at the front line of the people's defence. It will be the fighting arm of the people against the government and its policies of race oppression . It will be the striking force of the people for liberty, for rights and for their final liberation! Let the government, its supporters who put it into power, and those whose passive toleration of reaction keeps it in power, take note of where the Nationalist government is leading the country!

We of Umkhonto we Sizwe have always sought -as the liberation movement has sought to achieve liberation without bloodshed and civil clash. We do so still. We hope - even at this late hour that our first actions will awaken every one to a realisation of the disastrous situation to which the Nationalist policy is leading. We hope that we will bring the government and its supporters to their senses before it is too late, so that both the government and its policies can be changed before matters reach the desperate state of civil war. We believe our actions to be a blow against the Nationalist preparations for civil war and military rule.

In these actions, we are working in the best interests of all the people of this country black, brown and white whose future happiness and well-being cannot be attained without the overthrow of the Nationalist government, the abolition of white supremacy and the winning of liberty, democracy and full national rights and equality for all the people of this country.

We appeal for the support and encouragement of all those South Africans who seek the happiness and freedom of the people of this country.

AFRIKA MAYIBUYE!

Umkhonto we Sizwe:

Within living memories

PART ONE

By Makhanda Senzangakhona, Edwin Mabitse, Uriel Abrahams and George Molebatsi

Comrade Nelson Mandela in Algeria (1962)



The Spirit of the Volunteers

The path of the revolutionary struggle of our people has always been carved by volunteers and informed by an overwhelming sense of service, sacrifice and a commitment to the struggles of the oppressed masses. We call to mind also that the formation of the African National Congress on 8 January 1912 was a manifestation of the selfsame spirit of volunteerism precisely because the organisation was formed by men and women of unparalleled courage, patriotism and vision. They were all volunteers, fired by the ideals of freedom and independence from colonial bondage. From the outset, they aimed at taking the struggles of the people to the highest possible levels.

The Seeds of Conflict

The infamous landing of the Dutch colonists, in 1652, at the Cape planted the seeds of conflict. The establishment of colony and the relentless extension of settlement into the interior, along with similar incursions by Britons, in Natal, subsequently set-off a process destined to alter the course of natural development in the history of South Africa.

Settlement bred encroachment on the habitat of people and communities; it kindled resentment which Britons and Afrikaner invaders met with fierce muskets and organized military campaigns. The era of plunder in the name of civilizing the natives, the conversion of pagans and the "Law of First Occupation" had commenced.

The settlers confiscated cattle, annexed lands, decreed Native reserves and coerced labour through the imposition of taxes. The forces of colonialism, keen on establishing domination by force of conquest or bible had arrived.

Epic Resistance to White Domination

Aggression and annexation sparked resistance; it ignited clashes, battles, and uprisings. In the eyes of the settlers, these were rebellions to be quelled severely in the interest of the Crown and Boer imperial aspirations.

Resistance took on many forms: organized or spontaneous and sporadic pitched battles, religious or spiritually inspired insurrections and outright protracted insurgency by warriors. These periods witnessed, variously, the imprint of the daring exploits and deeds of warriors, medicine-men and chiefs alike. Notable in this regard were the famed Gonema, Autshumayo, Makhado, Moshoeshoe, Shaka, Makana, Hintsa, Ngungunyana, Sekhukhune and Ramabulana and others.

The epic resistance mounted against the forces of foreign domination and expropriation inspired an enduring challenge today known in the annals of the liberation struggle as The Wars of Resistance. It bequeathed a succession of parallels and legends like Thaba-Bosiu, the fortress of Moshoeshoe, The Battle of Income, also known as "Blood River" and immortalized in Inkandla, Isandlwana and the battles of Thaba-Leolo in the North of the country.

The combined might of both Boer and British predation were unable to reign completely over the land until two centuries had elapsed. The last battles of this era only closed when the "rebellions" by Vhavenda under Ramabulana/Makhado, and the challenge by Cetshwayo and Sigananda were fiercely put down towards the close of the nineteenth century. In the end, the "civilising" mission of the colonists had triumphed over the indigenous owners. Quite curiously, the new sovereign was not, in the least, averse to behead the vanquished enemies. Many a head of a warrior or chief became trophies with the hope to deter the so-called seditious intentions of natives.

Divide-and Rule: The Legacy of Colonial Conquest

Sworn enemies, Boer and British settlers, when not fighting each other, to the extent of building internment camps, could reconcile animosities, finding unity in their commitment to exclude the indigenous in matters of state and religion.

The discovery of diamonds in Kimberly, upon which the South African economy was later established, had paved the way for the colonists' convergence of interests. Both Boer and Briton found reciprocal accommodation; their interests coalesced. They closed ranks and confirmed the fact through the Treaty of Vereeniging of 1902 that guaranteed them usurped undivided authority over the land.

Unity, while desirable for both the settler communities, was deemed unsuited for the indigenous peoples. For the latter, separate reserves and enclaves were prescribed and pre-ordained. Our people were tolerated for the conscripted use of their labour on the farms, mines and industry. They became migrants, commuters and temporary sojourners at the service of white capital and nationalism. Modern South Africa was in the making.

The Union of South Africa Act in 1910 sealed the marriage of Afrikaners and Britons. They excluded the majority Black population, impervious to the petitions, deputations and nationwide outrage that accompanied their intentions. The British Crown declined many requests and pleas of intervention made by deputations and representatives of the majority, and instead referred them to the Union government (Roux) because the latter was sovereign.

Organised Political Resistance: The Formation of the African National Congress (ANC)

Against the backdrop of colonial dispossession and for the fact that the peoples' interests had been totally disregarded, the need for a political organisation of their own became more pressing. In the ensuing situation, several hundreds of Africans convened in Mangaung, Bloemfontein, in 1912, to found the South African Native National Congress, later to be known as the African National Congress (ANC). This was happening in the wake of organised political forms that had begun ascendancy at the very dawn of Black National Awareness towards the end of the 1800's. Those efforts had, however, remained disparate.

The ANC was formed to unite Africans, to harness their efforts and to create a national consciousness; it was assigned the task of being a mid-wife in the process of national rebirth and regeneration" to continue the anti-colonial struggle under new conditions. (Meli, in African Communist No 48, 1972).

The emergence and development of the ANC as the principal organism of the National Liberation Movement came in the context of heightened political awareness. It mirrored the efforts and strivings of other parties and organisations of labour; it complemented and cooperated with them. Acting, at times in combination, sometimes independently diverse techniques of struggle were employed. These ranged from strikes, campaigns and boycotts.

For four decades, the ANC and other forces, inspired by the goal of liberation and equality, waged relentless campaigns. The pleas, albeit assuming the nature of determined fights, encountered deaf ears and hearts of stone. The Land Acts of 1913 had disinherited Black people of 87% of their birth -rights to land and livelihoods leaving them only 13%. Pass laws proscribed the African people movement and turned law-abiding citizens into criminals. A battery of other repressive legislation: The Suppression of Communism Act, Group Areas Act and Bantu Education sought to outlaw dissent and to stifle even peaceful protest, besides denying the entire African people of a dignified nationhood.

The Nationalist Party was destined to balkanize the country into "Bantustans" and institutionalise racial discrimination with its creed of apartheid, euphemistically, named Separate Development. A distorted First World was in the making at the expense of the indigenous majority.

South Africa witnessed unprecedented mass ferment. This was more examplified by the historic Defiance Campaign of 1952, which saw batches upon batches of volunteers nationwide break apartheid laws and court arrest. The ANC Youth League, formed in 1944, was catapulted into history. Known as, *Amadelakufa* – Those Who Defy Death, the emergence of the Youth League and Volunteers imparted to the ANC a militancy hitherto unknown in the land. "Amavolontiya", with national Volunteer-in-chief, Nelson Mandela, at helm, set out to "make history and focus the attention of the world on the racist policies of South Africa (Mandela)." But above all, to insist through militant action on the people's right to be free.

Dubbed, "*From Protest to Challenge*" (Karis & Carter), this period resulted in mass involvement, mobilization and recruitment. It rattled the protagonist of apartheid, and the ANC "received an enormous amount of publicity and the membership of ANC shot up from some 20 000 to 100 000". (Mandela).

The Defiance Campaign demonstrated the possibility and feasibility of victory built upon the commitment and sacrifice of those volunteers that were willing to lay down their lives for the greater good.



The Defiance Campaign became the incubator of mass mobilization and movement. The campaign demonstrated the possibility and feasibility of victory built upon the commitment and sacrifice of those volunteers that were willing to lay down their lives for the greater good.

Typically, the apartheid authorities responded with yet more repressive laws; they passed the Public Safety Act to enable them to impose martial law and the detention of people without trial and the Criminal Laws Amendment Act authorizing corporal punishment for persons defying their designs.

The Move to Armed Struggle

The fifties closed with a renewed spirit; the fear of prison was broken albeit with immense sacrifices. Previously in 1955, the Congress of the People had adopted the Freedom Charter, a statement of aims that encapsulated a set of guiding principles and a broad vision for a future democratic South Africa. Indeed, the Charter Charter "captured the hopes and dreams of the people and acted as a blueprint for the liberation struggle and the future nation".

The People had spoken defiantly and asserted that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it. And that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people." They vowed to spare neither strength nor courage, until the democratic changes set out in the Charter had been won.

The regime responded swiftly and very harshly. Several leaders and representatives of the Congress Movement, amongst them Volunteer-in-Chief, Nelson Mandela, were arraigned and charged with Treason. In the aftermath of the Treason Trial apartheid laws were fine-tuned, activists restricted, and banned from public activity or banished from center-stage.

The apartheid regime prepared to declare South Africa a Republic. Subsequently, the Liberation movement and other formations were outlawed. The nationalist government, bent on achieving their cherished dream to cut off ties with the British Crown and become a republic, refused to heed the ultimatum of the Congress Alliance to convene a constitutional convention.

Even before the actual banning of black political organizations in 1960, there was already debate as to whether, in the midst of the intense and granite-like repression by the minority government, the time had not arrived to adopt armed struggle as part of the strategy of the national liberation movement. The overriding feeling amongst the volunteers of the ANC and the broad Congress Alliance was that this option was now open.

The situation that obtained in 1960 called for a review of the strategy and tactics until then adhered to by the ANC and its allies. Beginning in 1950 the ANC had found every avenue of peaceful resistance to discriminatory laws blocked. This was the begin-

ning, of the most intense period of mass mobilization in the history of the ANC. The aim of building a mass movement of the people anew, in addition to the employment of extra-parliamentary pressure, was dealt a blow with the banning of the ANC and other formations. The regime closed all peaceful, legal and constitutional means of resistance.

The time had, therefore, come in 1961 that necessitated an appropriate response for the policy and strategic decisions that gave birth to the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Among these were:

- Disillusionment with the prospect of achieving liberation by the traditional peaceful means had taken a firm grip on the psychology of the masses.
- There was a catching willingness to respond to the strategy of armed struggle with all the attendant enormous sacrifices.
- There existed a political leadership capable of the organizational allegiance of the people armed for combat.
- The international situation carried with it a favourable set of objective conditions. The same applied for the local context.
- The government's act of banning political organizations had eventually closed and barred all avenues of peaceful political struggle (Mabitsela).

The creation of MK was a noble and heroic act; it underscored the will and determination of the people to achieve the goal of liberation. It was a fitting response to a situation that left the liberation forces with one of either two choices: submission or fighting back. MK embodied the latter- the commitment to fight and, "to hit back by all means within our power in defence of our people, our future and our freedom". The people's patience had run out.

In deciding on the formation of MK, the ANC, alongside its allies, "acted in accordance with firm revolutionary guidelines" informed by the recognition of the new situation, as well as, the grasp of the art and science of armed liberation struggles in the modern era. Detailed preparations for the launching of guerrilla warfare were undertaken. Mandela, himself, underwent military training in Algeria and China, visited Addis Ababa in Ethiopia and toured Africa accompanied by selected senior cadres. They succeeded in securing arrangements for MK recruits to undergo military training in preparation to lead the eventual battle for South Africa.

There was recognition, even at that time, that the opening steps of the new path had to meet a threefold requirement:

a. The need to create a military organism complemented by the recruitment of large numbers of fulltime cadres to form the core of the future guerrilla troops.
b. The imperative to demonstrate convincingly to all and sundry that the movement was making a sharp break with the methods and tactics of the previous period of struggles.
c. The urgency of presenting a new and effective method for the overthrow of the White minority domination. The initiation of the sabotage campaign against selected installations and infrastructure was a fervent demonstration of the commitment to the new strategy. It heralded the opening assaults of a people's war under preparation.

The ANC and the military wing, MK, fully appreciated that armed struggle was a political struggle by means which included the use of military force. The basic tenet was that the primacy of political leadership must remain unchallenged and supreme, and that all revolutionary formations, armed or not, are sub-ordinate to that leadership. The understanding was equally that the struggle had to be won through all-round political mobilisation that was to accompany military activities. In the envisaged people's war, MK was perceived as the core of the people's army and constituted the cutting edge of political efforts.

Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK): The Spear of the Nation

MK carried out the first acts of sabotage against selected targets of the enemy on 16 December 1961. These attacks, launched in several centers in the country, announced the arrival of MK on the scene and occurred with the appearance of the MK manifesto heralding the formation.

The volunteers who swelled the ranks of MK at its inception were drawn principally from ANC and SACP structures. A visible percentage also came from organizations belonging to other oppressed groups including a few white revolutionaries who were ready to make common cause with the aspirations of the most oppressed African masses. The South African Indian Congress and Coloured People's Organisation were among these.

The first crop of MK recruits, the selected volunteers, were indeed pioneers and Amadelakufa in their own right. Many of them were tempered in the Defiance campaigns, while several had participated in the WW II and saw action in Egypt and the Sudan. Among these, are counted the names of Graham Morodi popularly known as Ntate Mashego and Jack Hodgson (Desert Rat). The latter imparted to MK the skills of manufacturing explosives that he had acquired during WW II.

In the wake of the sabotage campaign that heralded the birth of the MK on 16 December 1961, as well as the resultant repression, members of the MK High Command were forcibly removed from society following the raid on Liliesleaf Farm in Rivonia, Johannesburg. They were later condemned to languish for the better part of their lifetimes on Robben Island. Cadres like Vuyisile Mini, Zinakile Mkhaba and Walter Khayingo and others were sentenced to death. They went to the gallows singing; *Na'ntsi indoda emnyama...Pasopa Verwoerd - Here comes the Black man...Watch out Verwoerd.* (Verwoerd was then Prime Minister of the newly created Republic).

This generation of MK combatants also provided the first recruits to set up base outside South Africa. The first batch had arrived in Tanzania as Mandela was winding his mission of Africa negotiating training facilities, before his arrest upon returning to the country. *Umgwenya* – Veterans, as they came to be known, eventually arrived in Kongwa, Tanzania, in the early sixties. In their midst counted several leadership cadres of the Alliance, among others, Moses Mabhida, J.B. Marks, Moses Kotane, Dr Yusuf Dadoo and Joe Modise (J.M) and several others. JM later became Army Commander of MK for many years until the big return to South Africa after 1990.

Umgwenya were the pathfinders at a time when Southern Africa was a laager of hostile borders of Portuguese, Rhodesian and Afrikaner colonial states. This early detachment trained in places as far-flung as Egypt, Algeria and Morocco. To reach their destination, O. R. Tambo had this to say, " They traveled by land from Cape Town, now on foot; now on trucks and then on boats in the night; then by train through the Sudan until Cairo – through immense difficulties, a journey that, incidentally, fulfilled Cecil Rhodes's dream of a link from Cape to Cairo. We did that in the course of the struggle. And every phase of that trip was a challenge". (Cited from a speech delivered on the occasion of MK withdrawal from Angola by President, O.R Tambo: The Year of Convergences and Dispersal, 1988).

Their quality, discipline, dedication and courage as a group was such that the then President of Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere told people who then informed OR Tambo that he thought MK "was the most disciplined army in Southern Africa-including his own army!" O.R, ever the modest, thought that that was unfair!

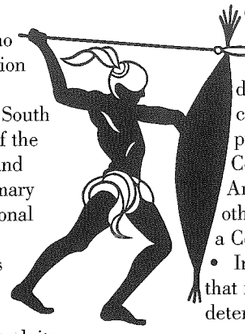
Umgwenya laid the foundation of the partnership between the sister people of South Africa and Tanzania and their army the Tanzanian People's Defence Force (TPDF). This was the precursor of the alliances that were later forged among MK, SWAPO, ZIPRA, FRELIMO and FAPLA.

Later generations of MK found a beaten path laid by *Umgwenya*, who subsequently, took upon the mission of training and nurturing others, particularly, The June 16 and Moncada detachments.

PART 2, which focus on the later detachments of MK and the alliances with other liberation armies and movements on the continent, will be published in the next edition of UMRABULO.

The duty of a communist in the *national liberation army*

SACP Central Committee, 1967



The Central Committee of the South African Communist Party warmly greets all Communists who are taking part in the armed struggle for the liberation of our country.

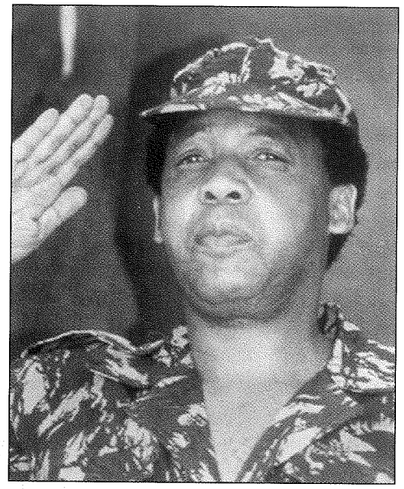
For decades it has been a cardinal principle of the South African Communist Party, the revolutionary party of the working class, to support the struggle for freedom and democracy. For this reason our party has given primary importance to the building of a united front of National liberation centred around the African National Congress. In all the struggles of the past forty years and more, Communists in common with their non-communist colleagues have fought numerous campaigns against national oppression, racialism and exploitation. Communists believe that ultimately the whole world including South Africa will become a communist society in which classes and exploitation have been abolished and all human beings enjoy complete equality in all spheres of life. But the task of building such a society cannot even begin until the people are free from national oppression and the system of white minority rule is smashed. The paramount duty of the SACP today is to participate in and support the struggle for freedom in our country whose main content is the freedom of the African people. This struggle has now entered the new phase of armed revolutionary war.

When Umkhonto was established, Communists readily joined the national army at the behest of the Party. Now fighting is raging in Zimbabwe and no doubt soon the masses in South Africa will be engaged in revolutionary armed struggle. In these circumstances it becomes necessary to spell out clearly the duty of all communists in the liberation army and in propaganda work among the masses.

- It is the duty of Communists in Umkhonto we Sizwe to be an example of devotion and loyalty to the military command of Umkhonto we Sizwe and the political leadership of the African National Congress.
- It is the duty of Communists to set an example of hard work and zeal in the performance of their duties in the army and always to be the first to volunteer for the most difficult tasks.
- Communists must constantly raise the level of their political consciousness through study of the latest developments in South Africa and abroad. Such knowledge must be shared with all freedom fighters in a spirit of humility. On no account must Communists give the impression of "knowing everything". Communists must always be willing to learn from others as well as teach them.
- Communists wherever they are represent the high ideals of Communism and the liberation of all mankind from the bonds of oppression. Therefore it is the duty of Communists strenuously to oppose all direct or indirect manifestations of racialism, tribalism or narrow nationalism. Communists will always defend the unity of the revolutionary forces both communists and non-communists and espouse the progressive nationalism of the African National Congress as enshrined in the Freedom Charter. Any person who puts forward tribalist, racialist or other ideas that produce confusion or division is not a Communist.
- In the course of the struggle the best elements, that is, those that are most far-sighted, resolute and determined in the fight for liberation and social progress are always drawn to the Communist Party. Communists do not consider that leadership consists in competing for positions in the national movement, still less by engaging in intrigues. But by reason of their devotion to duty and work and also by their political understanding of the needs of the movement they gain the confidence of the nation. This process applies in the South African Revolution.
- Revolutionary struggle is not an invitation to a picnic. All Communists must therefore make it part of their duty to instil the spirit of sacrifice wherever they are; to inspire the freedom fighters in the periods of difficulty; to constantly emphasize that the victory of the revolution is inevitable. Communists must vigorously combat any inferiority complex or spirit of despair or cynicism among freedom fighters.
- Our party is a party of the oppressed worker and poor peasant. Our members must always set an example of devotion to the people and respect for their interests and traditions. In our political work and personal conduct we must always seek to win the masses by persuasion and example. There is no duty nobler than the fight for the liberation of the masses. This noble fight must not be sullied by arrogance and immoral behaviour such as theft of property; molesting of women or drunkenness which would lower the prestige of the movement and also endanger its security.
- Communists fight for the unity of the revolutionary forces and liberation movements of Southern Africa and throughout our continent. We are internationalist and it is the duty of Communists always to spread knowledge and act in solidarity with the struggles of people in other parts of the world against imperialism for freedom and independence, for peace and socialism. The value and meaning of international solidarity must be constantly place before the eyes of the freedom fighters and the masses of the people.

The Wankie campaign

Article (abridged) by Chris Hani



This is an abridged version of an article by the late Comrade Chris Hani, published in Dawn: Journal of Umkhonto we Sizwe, Souvenir Issue, 1986

The Luthuli Detachment was one [of] those detachments that were well prepared and well trained. I'm saying this because I personally participated in the preparations. A lot of time was allocated for the detachment to be together in the bush to be able to train together in order to ensure that physically we were ready for the rigorous task that lay ahead. But in addition to the physical preparation there was also the political preparation, the need for us to forge an understanding between the forces of Umkhonto we Sizwe and the forces of ZAPU and to understand the historical necessity of the battles of Wankie...

When we began the process of crossing, we were ready for anything, and the spirit of MK combatants was very high. The crossing point was not an easy one, it was a place which was quite rocky and the current of the Zambezi was strong. But these seeming obstacles and difficulties did not deter us at all. After crossing the river, there was a spirit of elation and joy, due to the fact that we had already crossed the first obstacle, mainly the river, and we were now all looking forward to participating in the long march deep into Zimbabwe and ultimately reaching our destination, South Africa.

The spirit of cohesion and unity between ourselves and ZAPU was magnificent. We were working together as one unit, consulting and discussing together. There was no friction whatsoever within this unit...

From the very beginning we began to notice that we were not at all conversant with the terrain across the river. For instance, moving away from the Zambezi river we had expected to come across streams and rivulets with water, but as soon as we moved a few kilometres from the Zambezi river we realised that it was quite a dry area. There were no rivers, no streams, and people were getting water from boreholes. So this problem of no rivers necessitated an earlier contact with the people...

Secondly, we were beginning to run low on food supplies. So again we had to contact the people. It is important in all military preparations, whatever military strategy is worked out, to emphasise the need to contact people. But it is dangerous to contact the people at random and that is what we were forced to do...

But in all fairness when we established this contact we were met with enthusiasm by the people. We were given water and even fresh supplies of food. This was very useful and enabled us to continue for a few days marching towards the South of Zimbabwe. Within the game reserve of Wankie a decision had been taken by our HQ in Lusaka that the unit had to split into two. There was the unit that had to move towards the east, towards an area called Lupane, and there was also the main unit which had to march towards the South.

Within the unit moving towards the South was quite a substantial number of those comrades whose mission was eventually to reach South Africa and establish MK units within the country. In the unit moving towards the South with the eventual aim of getting to South Africa were comrades Lennox Lagu, myself, Peter Mfene, Douglas Wana, Mbijana, the late Victor Dlamini, Castro, Mashigo (the ANC Chief

Representative to Lusaka), Paul Sithole, Desmond, Wilson Msweli, Shooter Makasi, Eric Nduna, Basil February and James April. Lennox was the most senior in our group. I was the group's commissar.

The unit marching towards the East was to base in Zimbabwe, the aim being to establish an MK presence in Zimbabwe which could be used in future to service MK combatants passing through Zimbabwe. In other words, the whole concept of the Wankie campaign was to build bridges, a Ho Chi Minh trail to South Africa...

They made contact with the enemy quite early, about two weeks after we had parted. One of the battles they were engaged in will probably go down in the history of MK military operations as one of the most heroic... So this caught them [the Pretoria regime] by surprise, and there was so much panic that immediately after this, the regime in Pretoria dispatched more troops to Zimbabwe to fight the Luthuli Detachment.

A big battle was now looming on Zimbabwean soil, not just between the settler forces of Ian Smith but the combined forces of Smith and the SADF [South African Defense Force]. We noticed after three to four weeks of our presence in Zimbabwe that there was a lot of aerial reconnaissance by the enemy... We were sure that it was only a matter of days before we would have to engage the enemy.

But interestingly enough there was a spirit of looking forward to battle with the enemy... We had undergone very serious training in the Soviet Union and other places and had always looked forward to this historical engagement between ourselves and the forces of the enemy... [T]here is nothing [so] scintillating and stimulating to a soldier as to test his whole reactions in actual battle, your responses when you are under fire...

There were reasons why we moved mostly at night. We discovered once again that the terrain was very bad. It was empty, with no cover except for shrubs, especially as we moved deeper into Zimbabwe towards Matebeleland... During the day we took cover, dug foxholes and trenches in preparation for any possible engagement with the enemy and used the cover of darkness to cover as much ground as possible in our march towards the South. But again I want to point out that I as a Commissar found the spirit of the men quite magnificent... We could only survive on game meat and that was also risky. Shooting and killing wild animals was a way of signalling to the enemy and his agents that we were around. Yet there were no alternatives...

I think the biggest legacy of the Luthuli Detachment at Wankie was the sort of absolute commitment of our fighters to the revolution to an extent where to them things like hunger and thirst were not primary...

Then came the days of our battles. The first battle we fought was in the afternoon... we noticed that the enemy was not far from us. We had detected the motorised enemy earlier. The vehicles were visible from a distance. Since it was during the day we deliberately refrained from engaging the enemy at that particular point in time. But it was quite clear that the enemy also noticed that we were around... In the afternoon the enemy moved into the offensive by firing at random at the sector where we had taken position.

We had decided earlier on that each and everyone ought to be very economic with the ammunition he had due to the fact that we did not have access to enough ammunition except what we were carrying...

So the usual psychological war of the enemy of firing furiously at our sector continued coupled with shouting and calling on us to surrender. From the very beginning during the course of our preparations we had made it clear amongst ourselves that surrender was out of the question. We were not going to fire back unless we had a clear view of the enemy. The enemy got impatient. They stood up and began to ask "Where are the terrorists?" This was when there was a fusillade of furious fire from us. That fusillade, the furious nature of that reply, drove away the enemy. They simply ran for their dear lives leaving behind food, ammunition and communication equipment. In this first epic battle we lost three comrades: Charles Seshoba, Sparks Moloi and Baloi – one comrade Mhlonga was wounded. On the side of the enemy we must have killed between 12 to 15, including a lieutenant, a Sergeant-Major, a Warrant Officer and a number of other soldiers. The rest literally ran helter-skelter for their lives. One memorable thing about that encounter was the fact that this was the first time that we had what I can call a civilised meal, cheese, biltong, meat and other usual rations carried by the regular army. For us this represented a feast. So it was a good capture. We also captured a brand new LMG, some machine guns, uniforms and boots.

It was a memorable victory and to every soldier victory is very important. This was a virgin victory for us since we had never fought with modern weapons against the enemy. For us that day was a day of celebrations because with our own eyes we had seen the enemy run. We had seen the enemy frozen with fear. That lifted our spirits and transformed us into a fighting force. We had also seen and observed each other reacting to the enemy's attacks. A feeling of faith in one another and recognition of the courage of the unit developed.

This was important and we knew from then on there was no going back... We moved on after having that fantastic feast. We proceeded because it could have been dangerous just to celebrate and wait there. We knew the enemy was going to organise re-inforcements...

We were running short of food, there was no water and our uniforms were tattered. There was not even rivers where we could have a decent bath. But again this has to be taken in its proper perspective. Despite these difficulties basically our morale was not affected. There were days after that when the enemy was quite fanatic in its aerial reconnaissance.

A week after this battle there was another one... the enemy had carried out furious bombardment not far from us using Buccaneers and helicopters. But fortunately for us the bombing and strafing was about two kilometers away...

The commander of the joint MK-ZAPU Detachment took the decision that this was the time to raid the enemy. We organised units to go and raid the enemy. I was in that together with James April, Douglas Wana, the late Jack Simelane, Victor Dlamini and others. We crawled towards the enemy's position and first attacked their tents with grenades and then followed with our AKs [AK-47 guns] and LMGs. The enemy fought back furiously and after fifteen minutes we called for reinforcements from the rear, and within ten minutes we overran the enemy's position. In that battle we killed the enemy's colonel who was commanding. His name was Thomas, a huge chunk of a man wearing size 10 boots. We killed a few lieutenants and other soldiers.

The story was the same as in our previous battle. The enemy fled leaving behind supplies, weapons, grenades, uniforms and communication radios. Another victory for our detachment. I want to emphasise the question of victory because the Luthuli Detachment was never defeated in battle.

Our supplies became depleted and we were moving to a barren part of Zimbabwe. We decided that it would be futile to continue fighting because the enemy was bringing in more reinforcement. So we deliberately took a decision to retreat to Botswana. The aim of this decision is important to emphasise. This was no surrender to the paramilitary units of Botswana government. It was important for us to retreat to strategic parts of Botswana, refresh ourselves, heal those who were not well, acquire food supplies and proceed. We then crossed over to Botswana. But by this time the South African regime had pressurised the Botswana government to prevent us from getting into Botswana. We found a situation where the Rhodesian security forces joined by the South Africans were pursuing us, and within Botswana the para-military force had been mobilised to stop us from entering Botswana. We had to discuss seriously what our response was going to be if the Botswana security forces confronted us. It was difficult to reach a decision, it was really a dilemma. Botswana is a member of the OAU, and in theory it is committed to the struggle for the liberation of South Africa. So Botswana does not constitute an enemy of the liberation movement, an enemy of ZAPU and the ANC. We came to the correct political decision that we were not going to fight them. When they came to meet us they played very conciliatory and friendly, saying that they had not come to harm us. They said their instructions were not to engage us and that all they wanted was that we surrender and our fate would be discussed amicably. They also promised that we would not be detained. We accepted the bonafides and surrendered, only to discover that they were actually being commanded by white officers from Britain and South Africa. This caused problems for us.

All of a sudden we were manacled, hand-cuffed and abused. Of course all this is history now. We were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment: 3, 5 to six years and ended up in the maximum security prison in Gaborone...

"I think the biggest legacy of the Luthuli Detachment at Wankie was the sort of absolute commitment of our fighters to the revolution to an extent where to them things like hunger and thirst were not primary..."
Chris Hani, 1986



Honour to serve: Memories of the June 16 Detachment

By Lincoln Ngculu (James Makhaya



Combatants of Umkhonto we Sizwe... This story is about what we did for our country and our people

Our experiences of exile and armed struggle, however painful, were a source of strength and inspiration during hard times. This story is about the life and activities that took place in the Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) camps, in forward areas and on the battlefield in South Africa itself. It is about the dedication and heroic acts of valour of MK fighters. It is about the history of the Luthuli Detachment, the trailblazers of armed struggle, who withstood all the hardships and deprivation of exile and camp life in order for MK to survive. It is about the detachments formed from the June 16 1976 generation and others that followed.

This story tells our parents, relatives and friends that what we did, we did for our country and posterity. Some comrades might not have gained from the struggle for liberation after we obtained our freedom, but they served with honour.

University of the South: Nova Katengue

The ANC faced an influx of new recruits after the June 16 uprising in Soweto and other areas, and needed secure and reliable training bases for the new arrivals. Both the MPLA in Angola and FRELIMO in Mozambique, who had taken power in these countries in the mid-1970s, were strong allies of the ANC. Angola had declared itself as the firm trench of the Southern African revolution. Dr Agostinho Neto had declared that MPLA was ready to suffer for the decolonisation of the whole of Southern Africa. It was therefore to Angola that the ANC looked to accommodate the new generation of recruits.

After a lot of delays and promises the day for us to go for further training arrived. In April 1977, news that we were to go to the ANC military training camp in the south of Angola initially came through the grapevine at Engineering camp. When the buses that were to take us south entered the camp cadres began to whistle and sing. People began preparing themselves for the journey and packed whatever little belongings they had into bags. Those who remained in the camp were the sick ones or those who were earmarked for early missions, like the Solomon Mahlangu group.

The Cuban patrol that was to accompany the buses also came in their transport vehicles. Strict security was required for the journey because UNITA was quite active in the south. The journey to the south was long and arduous. We finally landed at the base for training in a place called Nova Katengue, south of the Benguela province. We later called this camp the 'University of the South' because it was a cradle of a new cadre of the African National Congress. It was here where cadres were educated not only in the art of war but in politics and philosophy.

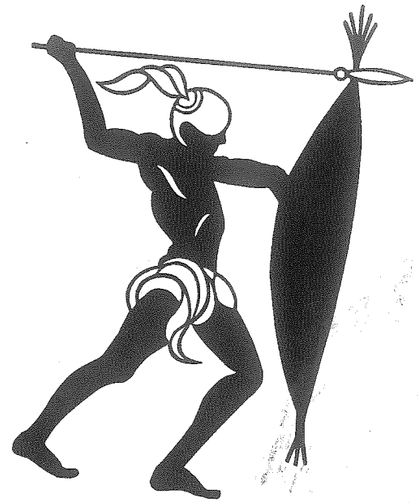
The camp was about fifty kilometres from the city. It was in the midst of nowhere and there were no people living in the vicinity of the camp. The camp was a former Portuguese farm complete with a workshop. The only link the camp had with the outside world was the Benguela railroad, which was only used occasionally by passenger trains. Whenever we heard a train approaching we would rush to the donga (ditch) beside the railway line and wave at the passengers. Some passengers would throw packets of cigarettes to us, and for days afterwards we would have the pleasure of smoking a brand name.

Otherwise, we were connected to the outside world by radio. The camp had a news team that monitored various radio stations like the Voice of America, BBC, Deutschevelle, and the SABC External Service, which was an unapologetic mouthpiece of the apartheid regime. We would be given news about the outside world at the formation in the mornings when the news would be read to us.

We would listen to commentaries from the SABC about communism and ANC terrorists. Peter Finn and Alexander Stewart, who read the SABC External Service commentaries after the morning news bulletin, were true ideologues of the apartheid regime. Later we were able to link these commentaries to impending raids of the SADF in the forward areas or in Angola. Thus, when the South African Airforce bombarded the Nova Katengue camp in April 1979 the camp was deserted because the cadres had already been withdrawn from the camp.

At the time the South African regime regularly attacked Angolan and SWAPO bases in Angola. This was the period during which the regime's policy of total strategy, whose design was to wipe out the liberation movement in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, was taking form. Therefore, as we arrived at this camp we were mindful of the dangers and challenges that lay ahead. Yet in our youthfulness and romanticism we zealously looked forward to the danger.

After being welcomed into the camp by Mzwai Piliso we were divided into companies, platoons and sections. The group was divided into four companies with about 120 people in each company. The overall number of the group was 500, excluding the instructors and the camp administrators. Company, platoon



and section commanders and commissars were appointed. There was also a Cuban group with their own instructors and administrators.

The camp commander was Julius Mokoena of the Luthuli Detachment. Francis Meli was the camp commissar, but he was soon posted to head the editorial board of Sechaba in London. Mark Shope, former general secretary of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), replaced Francis. The chief of staff was the late Thami Zulu. Chief of security was the Wankie battles veteran, Alfred Wana. Our medical team was made up of the late Drs Peter Mfelang and Nomava, who were later joined by Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang. Most of us owe our lives to these doctors.

Each person was given a few blankets and an airbed. The uniforms allocated to us were from the Cubans and Russians. We used cases or boxes as wardrobes. We cut oil drums to use as our washing basins. We had to share the water for washing because water was so scarce in the camp.

The first group of MK soldiers we met in the camp was the 'Mgwenya' group, the members of the Luthuli Detachment. These comrades constituted the core of Umkhonto we Sizwe during its first decade in exile and held the fort during the most difficult years of our struggle. When the first batch of June 16 fighters arrived in Zambia, Tanzania and Angola, the troops of Mgwenya were the inspiration and proof that, with conviction and political will, it was possible to survive.

We would gather around them to listen to stories of how they sustained themselves in the difficult conditions of exile. They would tell us about Oliver Tambo, JB Marks, Moses Mabhida, Moses Kotane, Robert Resha and others as leaders who taught them to be loyal. They told us that Moses Kotane once told them that for one to be a true cadre of the movement it is necessary to be born again, to become a new person.

The instructors in Nova Katengue camp were mainly Cubans, assisted by members of the Mgwenya group and the mid-70s group that had trained before us. After being allocated our respective barracks we were assigned the task of cleaning up the camp. Once this was completed we had to dig the toilets and create a defence system for the camp. Trenches were dug all round the camp.

The morale in the Nova Katengue camp was very high from the outset, and a sense of purpose was visible in the brisk walk and chattering of the comrades. During the formations, when we gathered for classes and news reading, the comrades would sing freedom songs with gusto.

Not long after we had been in the camp we, the group that had recently come from Luanda, were called to the hall by the camp authorities. Francis Meli read a letter from one comrade. The author's name was James Makhulu, known as 'Master' because of his skill in soccer. Master had written the letter and forwarded it to the administration in order to air some discontent. He had made observations that most of the newly appointed commanders and commissars were Tswanas. He pointed out that this confirmed what some people were saying in the transit places in Tanzania and Luanda – that when we arrive at the training base they are going to rule over us. When he saw the appointments in the camp it confirmed his fears and he thought it wise to raise his concerns officially.

Mark Shope stood up and pointed out that the ANC had consistently fought against tribalism and divisions among the African people in particular from its inception. Francis Meli stood up and spoke about the history of the ANC and some of the areas where people tried to use tribalism to pursue their own agenda. They also thanked Master for raising his views in an organised and constructive manner. The floor was opened for comrades to add their points of view. A number of comrades supported Master's views while others came out in defence of the camp authorities. People stood up and pointed out the problems around tribalism that existed in Tanzania and Luanda that supported Masters's fears. The matter was settled amicably and no one was subjected to any disciplinary action.

Though some comrades thought that Master had landed himself in deep trouble, subsequent events proved them wrong – the comrade continued to be held in high esteem and eventually went to Europe for further training.

As time went by there were an increasing number of signs that morale was waning. Exile, in particular camp life, was not easy. The fact that comrades did not know when or if they would ever go home or see their loved ones was at times difficult to bear. There were other problems that were specific to camp life and which had a major impact on morale. One was the way the camp administration was behaving and another was the general rumour that the Cubans were paying special attention to our female comrades.

In September 1977, we had our first experience of infiltration by agents of the South African establishment. This was when the whole camp was poisoned. The effects of the poison took hold during our evening classes. Comrades would request permission to go to the bush in order to relieve him or herself. More and more would follow. The instructors decided to abandon the classes and all headed back to the main base. We streamed back to the camps and occasionally people would leave the formation to relieve themselves or to vomit. Some were wriggling on the ground with excruciating stomach pains. The pain was beyond description. It was simply unbearable.

As we entered the main base we observed that other platoons were also returning to the camp. We realised then that something was seriously wrong. Everyone was going to the medical post. Everyone was complaining about the same problem – stomach pain. This problem was affecting about 90 percent of the more than 500 people in the camp. The two doctors at this time – Nomava Ntshangase and Peter Mfelang – were unable to cope and the camp did not have many trained medical orderlies.

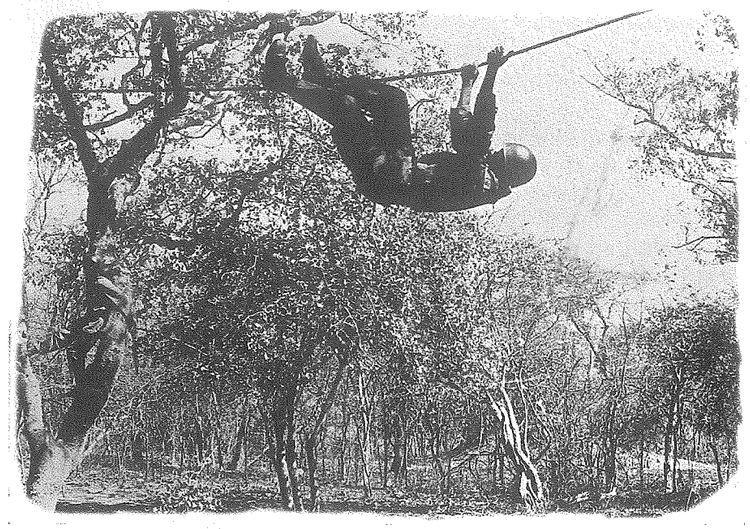
Some comrades had to go to the Cuban medical post in the camp. Cuban reinforcement from nearby Benguela were also called in to assist. The Cubans provided doctors and other cadres to man the guard posts. Luckily nobody died and after a few days all was back to normal. This day was called the Black September.

This poisoning was to be one of many that our comrades were to face. One of the daring cadres of MK, Reverend Mandla Msibi, died when his drink was poisoned in Swaziland. Another, comrade Mondlane, who was deployed in Radio Mozambique's English service, met a person from South Africa who befriended him. This person gave him some tinned beers that were spiked, leading to his death.

Our weapons training in the camp began with the AK47. We were taught how to disassemble and assemble it. After that we were trained in the theory of firing and all the firing mechanisms. After completion of this we were taken to the shooting range to learn firing positions. However, putting this theory into practice was one of the most difficult things to do. You now had to cope with the recoil and jerking of the AK47, and the loud bang that resulted from firing the weapon. Nevertheless, in time we all became proficient and confident that we could use the weapon. We were also trained to use Makarov and Tokarev pistols.

Also exciting was the Engineering course, where we learnt to deal with explosives. The general warning here was that you had no chance to repeat any mistake you make in handling explosives because you would be dead. The other difficulty here was the mathematical training – formulae and calculations – that we had to master in order to complete the course on explosives. Another terrifying aspect of the explosive classes was training to use detonators. However, after training for some we gained confidence in our ability to use explosives.

Although training in the camps was extensive, the question of politics and its supremacy over the military was strongly emphasised by both the ANC leadership and camp administration



We completed the general course after six months of training. We were by then competent in firearms, military engineering and clearing of mine fields, topography, military tactics, signals, physical training and overcoming of obstacles, artillery, and politics. Jack Simons and Mark Shope, who were later replaced by Ronnie Kasrils, taught the politics course. The politics course was quite extensive and a bit complicated for some of the cadres who had not had an opportunity to go to school or go far in their studies.

But the question of politics and its supremacy over the military was strongly emphasised by both the ANC leadership and the camp administration. All commissars were required to inculcate this policy in the cadreship. It was emphasised that our war was an extension of political objectives by military means, particularly in view of the arrogance and violence of the apartheid regime against defenceless people.

The main reasons for the limited interest in the politics course among some comrade were the different levels of education and the use of English as the medium of instruction. Some instructors would translate into the vernacular but this normally took too much time. Translation into Nguni or Sotho was mandatory during news reading and addresses by the leadership. In order to overcome these problems the commissariat decided to establish literacy classes and set up a camp education department.

The course outline for political classes included the history of colonialism, the emergence of the Working Class in South Africa, and the history of the African National Congress. It also dealt with the four pillars of our revolution – underground organisation, mass mobilisation, armed struggle and international support. We then turned to the history of the international communist movement and theories of Historical and Dialectical Materialism. Jack Simons would insist that we situate everything within the context of the South African situation and avoid being pedantic and dogmatic. Finally, meetings would be held to analyse the international and local situation, as well as the analysis of news.

Jack also played a crucial role in developing our understanding of the concept of non-racialism. At the same time he also tried to ensure that we do not just mechanically accept non-racialism by forgetting the realities of South Africa, especially white minority rule and all its effects and ramifications.

Professor Simons was against dogmatism. He caused a stir in the company when he criticised certain aspects of the Soviet Union, especially those arising from Lenin's writings on the national question. Once, when the group was dealing with the basis of Marxism, Jack asked us to list the basic needs of life. The group, relying on the writings of Frederick Engels, replied: "food, shelter and clothing". He then asked the group if sex was not a basic need of life. This was a shocking question and, because of embarrassment, difficult to answer. He then shouted that sex is one of the most basic needs of life because society has to reproduce itself.

Mark Shope was a fatherly figure with a strong trade union background. Every morning he would come to the detachment for a political briefing. His usual greeting was – "Good morning sons and daughters of the working class". Every time he addressed a meeting he would say that we are fighting for every child in South Africa to have a pint of milk a day.

Jack later introduced special classes in the evening for a select group of comrades. This was aimed at preparing a new group of political instructors to replace him and Mark Shope. This was seen as "a way of Jack and Mark reproducing themselves". Some of these comrades were then used as instructors in the camp and would assist in presenting certain classes. These included comrades such as

Mkhize (Welile Nhlapo), Peter Ramokoa (Joel Netshitenzhe) Duncan Mahlo and Mavis Twala (Dr Thandi Ndlovu).

In November 1977 we were told that we would soon be completing our course. We were very excited because we were now going to be recognised as trained cadres, and were now fully prepared for the next mission – going home.

We were a group of 500 people who were highly trained and fully committed to the struggle. This group had come from all over South Africa. We had met as strangers speaking different languages. We came out of the distilling pot of the University of the South and, after breaking the numerous cultural and language barriers, emerged not only as comrades but also as friends.

As part of the final acts for completing the course we were informed that we were to undertake a long march to last three days. We were given a ration of condensed milk, biscuits and tinned meat. We took off for the long march in our various formations. It was an exercise of endurance and fitness.

After the long march we began to prepare for the graduation ceremony. The Cubans used the caterpillars of the previous Portuguese farm owners to clear the ground where the march-past was to take place, and built a stage where the salute was to be taken by President Oliver Tambo. This was one of the most memorable days of our lives. Our uniforms were washed and ironed and our boots polished.

As we look back, we can proudly proclaim that it was a cause worth serving



The Cubans organised an ox and vegetables from Benguela for the occasion. They also brought along beer (cerveja) and desserts. There was general excitement. Cultural groups were busy with preparations for the evening session. Security was tight, with both Cubans and members of our contingent manning all the vantage points. The Cuban contingent in Benguela tightened its own security and ensured that the road leading to the camp was routinely patrolled. When Tambo came we marched to the grounds according to our companies. President Tambo took the salute from each company as it goose-stepped passed the stage where he stood throughout the ceremony.

He christened the detachment the June 16 Detachment, in honour of the heroic student uprising of 16 June 1976 and in recognition of the fact that the majority of the graduates participated in those uprisings. The best soldiers of the company and the detachment were announced. The June 16 Detachment was the second such detachment of Umkhonto we Sizwe after the Luthuli Detachment.

After the graduation various members of our detachment were deployed elsewhere. Some were selected for various missions and sent abroad for further training either in military science or specialised political training. However, frustration and uncertainty crept in among those who remained behind. This was made worse by the absolute secrecy surrounding the selection and destination of people. It was also made worse by the secrecy of departures. Normally people would leave early in the morning before the start of the daily routine. Even those who were close to you would not indicate to you about their imminent departure – you would simply find an empty bed in the morning.

Those who remained behind often developed a sense of guilt and uncertainty about their own future. The innuendoes and reckless comments that were made by some officials at the time aggravated this. This situation also presented a great opportunity for gossipmongers and agent provocateurs to wreak havoc on the morale of the detachment.

The naming of each detachment after completing the training course became a tradition. Mostly these would be named after great leaders of the struggle against colonialism and apartheid, or important events in the struggle against colonialism and apartheid. The detachment trained after the June 16 Detachment was called Moncada, after the Cuban struggle against the Batista regime when the July 26 Movement stormed the Moncada barracks. The name of the detachments created a sense of pride and association. It assisted in moulding the new cadre of Umkhonto we Sizwe. The christening of the detachments would be led by the President and if he was unavailable the Secretary General or somebody nominated by them.

It was also in 1979 that the NEC introduced the oath for all MK members. Oliver Tambo, the President, and Joe Modise, the Army Commander, would visit the camp and people would be called according to detachments. Your name will be called and you will march forward towards the President. The President would present a spear to you. You would accept the spear from the President and say the following words: *"With the Spear of the Nation. Till victory or death..."* Then about turn and back to your formation.

Oath taking made you proud but those who were not afforded the opportunity were deeply hurt and terribly embarrassed. Those who got the opportunity were filled with elation and would wish for a mission as soon as possible. However, in many cases you would not get a mission for months, if not years. Your contact with the outside world would only be trips to fetch water or firewood or trucks passing by the camp.

A cause worth serving

As we build this delicate democracy it should be borne in mind that historians and students of today and tomorrow should not be allowed to ignore the history of MK. Many illustrious fighters, the living and the dead, the celebrated and the unsung contributed to the process that led to our democracy with their blood, limbs and souls. They sacrificed their youth and livelihood for future generations. When monuments of struggle are erected at home and abroad for the heroes and heroines of struggle and resistance, their memory should forever be etched in our hearts. With fond memory when I look back at the quarter of a century I and many of my comrades decided to be part of the glorious army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, one can proudly proclaim that it was the cause worth serving.

**This is an extract from a soon to be published book by the author of this article.*

90 Years of Struggle:
A brief overview of ANC history



On 8 January 2002, the African National Congress will celebrate 90 years of existence. The ANC was founded in 1912 to unite the African people against white minority rule and to act collectively for the creation of a non-racial and democratic South Africa. From its inception, the ANC saw this task as a part of what the organisation's founders called the "regeneration of Africa".

Over nine decades the ANC has forged and led a powerful national liberation movement which has united millions of South Africans in a hard-fought struggle for freedom. Through years of hardship, amid numerous setbacks, but thanks to the sacrifices of countless patriots, we have together defeated the forces of racial oppression and ushered in a new era of peace, democracy and reconstruction.

We have much to celebrate. But we also have much to do. As we recall our past, as we honour our heroes, as we commemorate our achievements, we need to remember that the historic mission for which the ANC was formed is not yet complete.

As we continue the struggle to free South Africa's people from all forms of oppression – alongside our efforts to achieve the regeneration of the entire African continent – we need to draw lessons, strength and inspiration from 90 years of struggle.

1652-1906: A history of resistance

South Africa was conquered by force, and for much of the last century has been ruled by force. White settlers first came to South Africa in 1652. Many wars were waged with the indigenous people, and although the African kingdoms lost land and cattle they were still independent some 200 years after the arrival of the first settlers.

The arrival of the British military forces in South Africa at the beginning of the 19th century marked a qualitative and quantitative change in the anti-colonial resistance struggle, immensely strengthening the forces of colonisation and oppression. By 1900 the power of the African kingdoms had been broken and they had been brought under the control of the colonial government. Africans had to find new ways to fight for their land and their freedom. A rebellion against the Poll Tax, led by Chief Bambatha in 1906, was brutally suppressed by the Natal colonial authorities.

1910-1920: The ANC is formed

With the African kingdoms militarily defeated, and the Boer republics incorporated into a larger British colony, the white inhabitants of South Africa forged a political union which would consolidate their control over the land to the exclusion of the black majority. The Union of South Africa was established on 31 May 1910, entrenching the loss to Africans of freedom, land and dignity which had begun in previous decades.

Following a decade of organisation among Africans, coloureds and Indians in different parts of the country, there was a growing desire for a single movement to champion the interests of South Africa's majority. On 8 January 1912, representatives of people's organisations, religious bodies, prominent individuals, clergymen and chiefs gathered at Mangaung in Bloemfontein and formed the South African Native National Congress. Its aim was to bring together all Africans as one people to defend their rights and to fight for freedom. In 1923 the organisation changed its name to the African National Congress (ANC).

1920s: Workers struggle and unionisation

Following the discovery of gold and diamonds in the late 19th Century, various laws and taxes had been introduced to force Africans off the land to provide cheap labour in the white economy. The emergence of a black working class gave rise to worker organisation and resistance. The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU), formed in 1919, won some major victories for black workers through militant action. Socialist organisations had also begun to organise black workers in the 1920s. The International Socialist League together with other socialist organisations formed the Communist Party in 1921.

During the 1920s government policies became harsher and more racist. A rigid colour-bar was established to stop blacks from holding skilled jobs in a number of industries. Josiah T. Gumede, who was elected ANC President in 1927, sought to revitalise the ANC to fight these racist policies. However, in 1930, Gumede was voted out of office in a conservative backlash. Under the more cautious leadership of Seme the ANC withdrew into itself, and became divided.



Anti-fascism protest... The rise of fascism in Europe was accompanied by efforts by right-wing Afrikaners to stir up ethnic nationalism and racial hatred in South Africa.

1930s: The fascist danger

The rise of fascism in Europe was accompanied by efforts by right-wing Afrikaners to stir up ethnic nationalism and racial hatred in South Africa. A group taking its inspiration from Nazism in Germany set up the Ossewa Brandwag (OB) and began agitating for a Nazi-type government in South Africa. To oppose the rise of fascist movements in South Africa a number of organisations came together in 1936 to form a united front. Short-sightedly, many of the whites refused to ally themselves with the ANC and other black movements.

To fill the political vacuum created by the weakness and divisions in the ANC, James La Guma and John Gomas took the lead in establishing the National Liberation League. They attracted support from among younger coloured and Indian militants. The League was central to the formation of the Non-European United Front (NEUF) with an anti-racist and anti-fascist programme that sought to unite Africans, coloured and Indians in one front to fight for freedom.

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, the white parliament voted by a small majority to join the war against Nazism.

1940s: The ANC gains new life

The ANC was boosted with new life and energy in the 1940s. Under the leadership of Dr AB Xuma, with the Reverend CR Calata as Secretary-General, ANC branches throughout the country had steadily been rebuilt after 1940. In 1943, Dr Xuma called together a committee of African leaders, thinkers and opinion-makers to draft the 'African Claims', published in 1946.

In 1944 a group of younger ANC members led by Anton Lembede and Walter Sisulu helped establish the ANC Youth League, which aimed to involve the masses of people in militant struggles.

Strikes, boycotts and other mass struggles during the war years culminated in the strike by African mineworkers in 1946. In the rural areas of Northern Province and the eastern Free State peasants rose in revolt against the impositions of the white government and oppressive chiefs in their pay. When the Smuts government passed laws to prohibit Indians from acquiring land in certain parts of the city, its action was met with a Passive Resistance campaign led by the South African Indian Congress.

The Youth League drew up a Programme of Action calling for strikes, boycotts and civil disobedience. It was adopted by the ANC in 1949, and led to the Defiance Campaign of the 1950s.

1950s: A mass movement is born

The introduction of apartheid by the National Party after it came to power in 1948 increased the determination of South Africa's majority to resist it. During the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign of 1952, volunteers deliberately broke apartheid laws. The government tried to stop the Defiance Campaign by banning its leaders and passing new laws to prevent civil disobedience. But the campaign had already made huge gains.

The Congress Alliance, which brought the ANC together with Indian, coloured and white organisations, organised the Congress of the People, which adopted the Freedom Charter at Kliptown on 26 June 1955. A huge campaign was mounted by women countrywide against the extension of the pass laws to African women, culminating in the women's march on the Union Buildings on 9 August 1956. In the same year, the government arrested 156 leaders of the ANC and its allies and charged them with high

treason using the Freedom Charter as the basis of its charge. All the accused were eventually acquitted.

On 21 March 1960, police opened fire on an anti-pass demonstrations in Sharpeville, killing 69 people and wounding 186. On 30 March the government banned the ANC and the Pan Africanist Congress, declared a state of emergency, arrested and detained thousands without trial.

1960s: The armed struggle begins

The massacre of peaceful protestors and the subsequent banning of the ANC made it clear that peaceful protest alone would not bring about change. On 16 December 1961 organised acts of sabotage against government installations took place, marking the emergence of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the armed wing of the ANC. During the following 18 months MK carried out 200 acts of sabotage. In 1963, police raided MK's secret headquarters at Lilliesleaf Farm in Rivonia and arrested the leadership of MK. This led to the famous Rivonia Trial where the leaders of MK were charged with attempting to cause a violent revolution, and were sentenced to life imprisonment.

In 1967, MK launched a joint campaign with ZIPRA, a people's army fighting for the liberation of Zimbabwe, to find a route into South Africa by first crossing the Zambezi River from Zambia into Zimbabwe, then marching across Zimbabwe through the Wankie game reserve, and crossing the Limpopo River into South Africa. The cadres acquired valuable experience in combat but were unable to reach South Africa. It was clear other ways of getting into the country would have to be found. The ANC consultative conference at Morogoro, Tanzania in 1969 was called to look for solutions to this problem. The conference resolved that freedom called for an all-round struggle, which included armed struggle, mass political struggle, underground struggle and the international isolation of apartheid.

Armed attacks against government installations marked the emergence of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK)



1970s: Workers and students fight back

In the 1970s new struggles against the system began to grow. In response to the poor conditions of workers, spontaneous strikes began in Durban in 1973 and later spread to other parts of the country. In the segregated black universities a new movement, dubbed 'black consciousness', was developing. Strikes and class boycotts erupted at the University of the Western Cape, at Turfloop near Pietersburg and at the University of Zululand.

Student anger and grievances against Bantu Education exploded in June 1976. Tens of thousands of high school students took to the streets to protest against compulsory use of Afrikaans at schools. Police opened fire on marching students, sparking an uprising that spread to other parts of the country. This was the turning point in the struggle for liberation. Thousands of young people flocked to the ANC, MK and the re-emerging trade union and workers movement.

1980s: The struggle for people's power

In the 1980s, people took the liberation struggle to new heights. All areas of life became areas of political struggle. The ANC was able to step up the armed struggle inside South Africa dramatically after 1975. Underground organisers, armed militants and propagandists of the movement helped stoke a mood of rebellion and defiance. Sensational armed operations demonstrated the vulnerability of the apartheid regime and captured the imagination of the youth.

Community organisations such as civics, women's structures, and student and youth organisations began to spring up all over South Africa. There was a rebirth of the mass movement, culminating in the formation in 1983 of the United Democratic Front (UDF). Massive national school boycotts rocked the townships in 1980s and again in 1984/5.

Worker organisation and power took a major step forward with the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) in 1985. Cosatu committed itself to advancing the struggles of workers both in the workplace and in society at large and adopted the Freedom Charter as its programme.

In April 1985, the ANC called on the people to make South Africa ungovernable by dismantling all the structures of apartheid. As resistance mounted, the regime became more vicious, declaring states of emergency, detaining thousands of people, assassinating activists and arming vigilante groups to combat the democratic forces.

The 1980s also saw the escalation of the international campaign against apartheid. This massive international effort complemented, and was guided by, the mass struggles of South Africa's people themselves. Through internal resistance and international isolation, the apartheid government began to crumble.

The democratic breakthrough...



ANC president Thabo Mbeki succeeded Nelson Mandela to become the second president of a democratic South Africa

1990-1993: The ANC unbanned

In February 1990, the regime was forced to unban the ANC and SACP, and to release Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners. The ANC began again to recruit members openly, and establish branch and regional structures.

The negotiations process in the early 1990s became a terrain of struggle itself. The NP planned to lock the ANC into protracted negotiations, while the structures of the ANC on the ground would have been rendered ineffective by ongoing state-sponsored violence. In the face of this violence – including the massacre of 39 residents of Boipatong in June 1992 – and the intransigence of the regime, the ANC embarked on a campaign of mass action to bring about an end to the violence and break the deadlock in negotiations. As a result of these efforts, a Record of Understanding was signed with the NP, which paved the way for the resumption of multi-party talks. The talks resulted in agreement on constitutional principles for a final democratic constitution and the adoption in 1993 of an interim constitution.

1994-1999: The democratic breakthrough

On 27 April 1994, millions of South Africans went to vote for the first time. The ANC won the country's first democratic election with a vast majority. On 10 May, Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as the President of South Africa, heading a Government of National Unity. Apart from the immediate tasks of governance – transforming the public service and security forces, stabilising the economy, and beginning the process of meeting basic needs – the ANC focused its attention on the task of writing a new democratic constitution.

The new Constitution was adopted in 1996, making provision for a united, democratic South Africa in which all enjoyed equal rights. It established institutions to support, protect and enhance democracy, such as the Human Rights Commission, Commission for Gender Equality, Public Protector, Auditor General and Electoral Commission. The ANC-led government proceeded to implement the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), adopted in 1994 as the basic policy framework guiding the transformation of the country.

2000-2002: The African Century

South Africa's second democratic election was held in 1999. Thabo Mbeki succeeded Nelson Mandela as President of South Africa. With an increased mandate, the ANC-led government continued to build on the foundation established during the first five years of democratic rule.

As the world marked the beginning of a new millennium in January 2000, the ANC joined leaders and organisations across the continent in declaring the 21st century an African Century. The ANC has therefore given substantial support to efforts by African leaders to develop a continent-wide programme for the renewal of Africa. This programme, adopted by the OAU in July 2001 and endorsed by a number of developed countries and organisations, envisages a multi-pronged strategy to eradicate poverty and place African countries on a path of sustainable growth and development.

From its formation, the ANC has always been a movement for the liberation of all the peoples of Africa, including South Africa. It has always seen itself as a fighter for freedom and independence, and the restoration of the human dignity of all Africans. Loyal to this human and patriotic tradition, the ANC is convinced that Africa's time has come.

Afrika ke Nako.

Women and the early years of the ANC: 1912–1943

By Frene Ginwala

For the first 30 years of the its existence, the exclusion of women from full membership in the Constitution of the South African Native National Convention (SANNC/ANC), contrasted with the participation of women in the deliberations, decision making and campaigns of the organisation, (though not in the leadership). This apparent contradiction arose from the reality of African women's involvement in resistance and the peculiar structure of the ANC, which allowed for ways in which women could participate.

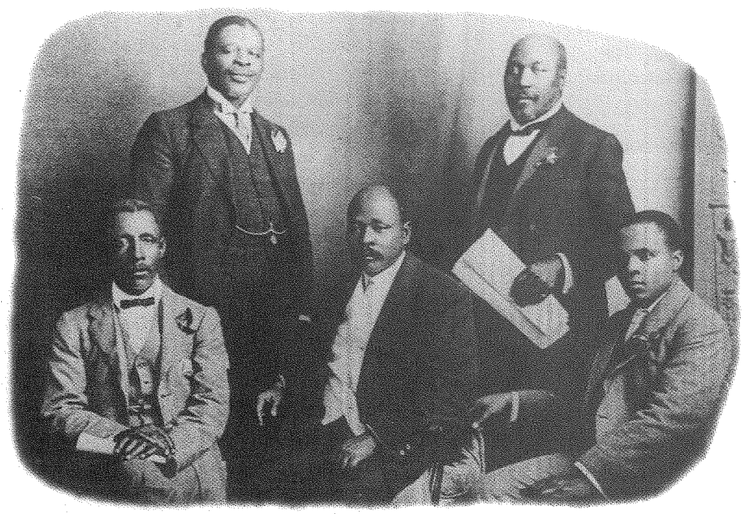
The exclusion of women was not surprising nor exceptional for the time. The societies from which the white settlers originated and the indigenous societies they encountered in South Africa were male dominated and patriarchal. In 1912, throughout South Africa government and politics were generally seen as the terrain of men, and all women, black and white were denied the right to vote.

That women were excluded from membership of the major political organisation of the African people was to be expected: the more so, as the formation of the SANNC was intended to unite the African people, and constructed to express an alliance between the traditional rulers, the educated petty bourgeoisie and aspirant middle class. The absence of women from political institutions does not necessarily lead to their absence in the political arena. The ways in which women worked with and in the ANC is complex, and it is not correct to say, that the exclusion of full membership

"...laid the basis of the ANC's treatment of women for the next twenty five years, as a separate category of members outside of the scope of its regular activities." (Walker, 1982)

While all Africans were subjected to conquest, colonial rule and dispossession, the way in which women and men experienced these differed as did their political, economic and legal status. These differences shaped their particular response, helped to determine the issues they took up, and the methods of struggle adopted.

In the wake of the conquest, there emerged a group of Africans, mostly mission educated, who turning their backs on traditional African society sought entry into the colonial one. The liberal values as proclaimed by British Imperial and colonial governments, and adopted by Africans, had led to a not unreasonable expectations that Africans would be admitted into the new society being established in South Africa. Though the expectations of the African people had been repeatedly frustrated, they continued to hope and form organisations to protect and expand African interests and rights from within the constitutional framework an and institutions of the new system. These organisations adopted the style of the conquerors and addressed the authorities in ways that would be considered acceptable by whites,



The SANNC delegation to Britain, 1914. From left to right: Thomas Mapikela, Rev. Walter Rubusana, Rev. John Dube, Saul Msane and Sol Plaatjie

and would not alienate them. They saw the franchise as a gateway to this society and focused their political demands on it. As a consequence, the leadership and membership of the organisations inevitably came from those who would qualify for the franchise: men of property and education.

While sharing the overall objectives, women, and those without property and education, did not feel it necessary to operate only within the parameters laid down by colonial society and were less inclined to comply with or accommodate settler rules and sensitivities. While some women saw themselves as gender images, "the wives and daughters" of the ANC leadership, most of those who participated in resistance differed in the issues they took up, their organisation, mobilisation and methods, as well as economic status and educational levels. To a greater extent than the SANNC, the women's resistance was shaped from below.

Because women chose to engage in issues of immediate and direct relevance to their daily lives, they found it easy to mobilise support and mount campaigns. In the context of colonialism and the nature of the oppression of the African people, these issues were relatively easy to resolve. But they were not linked to long term goals, the campaigns did not lead to lasting organisational formations. Men assumed, and women conceded, that defining and achieving the long term goals was men's territory.

When dealing with officials women were handicapped by a lack of fluency in European languages, and of confidence. These handicaps were made worse by the frequent refusal of white officials to meet with or listen to women. Men, sometimes national leaders, were requested to act as go-betweens or interpreters. Generally they tried to control women's initiatives and steer them away from militant and direct action. It was not so much that they were opposed to such methods in principle, but rather that they were concerned to ensure that an 'acceptable' and reassuring image of Africans were always presented to whites.

Two cases in East London act as an example of the influence exercised by national leaders. In August 1908, *Izwi* (18 August 1908) praised the women for the way in which they brought their grievances to the attention of the authorities and said their 'activities were far more organised than any ever attempted by men'. A report (*Izwi laBantu*, 1 September 1908) of another meeting two weeks later presents a totally different picture. This time women spoke through an interpreter. They said this was their birthplace and they had nowhere else to go. They told the mayor that if they were arrested for rent arrears, they would not resist.

The issues around which women mobilised before and after the formation of the Union of South Africa, were materially based. In the Transvaal in 1910, women protested at the lack of employment opportunities.

"It is well known that our husbands are getting low wages and cannot afford to discharge their liabilities unless they get our assistance...All classes of work formerly performed (by women) are now in the hands of men, e.g. kitchen or general servants work, washing and ironing, eating houses for natives, nursing in native hospitals..." (Petition by Ellen Leeuw and 122 Native women to the Mayor of Johannesburg, 23 March 1910)

In the two case in East London referred to above, women complained that Indians and Chinese were taking over all the work as washerwomen and wanted the Mayor to put an end to this as they had no other employment opportunities. They further asked the Council for permission to start 'a coal and wood business.' Other complaints were high rents and bus fares. The trigger for the militant Orange Free State Anti-pass campaign was the enforcement of the regulation requiring women to purchase permits to use the municipal wash house, which further limited their ability to retain economic independence .

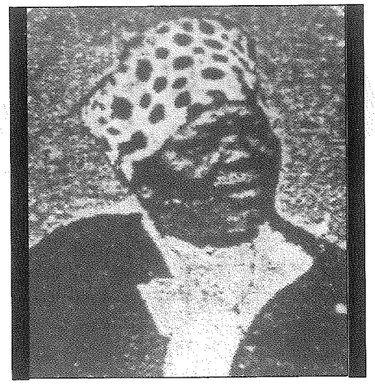
These were very different concerns from those that prevailed amongst the founding fathers of the SANNC who met in Bloemfontein on 8 January 1912. They clearly conceived of it as an organisation of men in which women's participation would be limited to their stereotyped 'traditional' domestic roles. The draft constitution placed before the founding Congress refers to three classes of membership. The prevailing patriarchal notions of women's roles in society were inscribed in the constitutional provisions for and duties of a category of "auxiliary" members, automatically enrolled without fee and hence with no vote.

"All the wives of the members of any affiliated branch or branches and other distinguished African ladies where the Congress or Committee therefore shall be holding its sessions shall ipso facto become auxiliary members of the Congress during the period of such session... It shall be the duty of all auxiliary member to provide suitable shelter and entertainment for delegates to Congress."

"Ordinary membership" on payment of a fee of 2s 6d, was open to "men who belong to the so-called Negro or aboriginal African races south of the Zambezi." Their duties were to "join some local organisation or in person to attend to all the Annual sittings of the Congress."

Provision was however made for the participation of "exceptional" women. In addition to a class of Honorary Members composed of "Ruling Chiefs and Hereditary Princes of African blood", honorary membership could be conferred on "Men and Women who shall have rendered eminent service to the native races of South Africa". Honorary members paid an enrollment fee of 10s 6d and had two votes.

However, by 1912, women had been participating in a number of overtly political Associations and Congresses which were later to constitute the SANNC. In 1902 Charlotte Manye, later Maxeke was one of the three representatives from the Transvaal who was sent to the SANNC conference in the Cape. Her contribution was highly praised, but the franchise orientated SANNC concluded that the time was not right for women to participate in political organisations (see Odendaal, 1983).



Charlotte Maxeke

Maxeke's contribution at the 1902 conference of the SANNC was highly praised, but the franchise orientated SANNC concluded that the time was not right for women to participate in political organisations

In the Afrikaner Republic there was no history of involvement in constitutional or electoral politics, and the focus of the Orange River Colony Native Congress (ORCNC) ranged over a number of issues, including passes for women. As African organised in opposition to the racist constitution of the proposed Union of South Africa, leaders such as Thomas Mapikela tried to organise local and regional groups, and establish a permanent national organisation.

After the 1909 African delegation returned to South Africa having failed to move the British Government on the constitution, Mapikela traveled around the Orange River Colony, explaining the results of his mission at well attended public meetings in most of the major urban centers of the province. He also used the occasions to organise support for the ORCNC. He asked local groups and people to submit statements on any matters they wished to be discussed at the annual Congress in January 1910. These would possibly be put to the South African Native Convention before being submitted to the colonial authorities (Odendaal, 1984). This grassroots mobilisation brought women and the pass issues into greater prominence in the province.

The Anti-Pass campaign

The Free State Anti-Pass Campaign highlighted the different approaches of women and men in pursuance of a common demand, and serves to illustrate aspects of women's relationship with the male dominated political organisations.

Opposition to passes for African women had featured regularly in most of the representation that were made to the authorities, and the 1912 SANNC Conference passed a resolution urging the repeal of all laws which compelled African women to carry passes. Less than a month later, women in the province began collecting signatures for a petition which they decided to present directly to the authorities in Cape Town. Within weeks they had collected over 5000 signatures (no mean accomplishment) and began to prepare to go to Cape Town. (Wells, 1982).

The authorities as well as the political organisations were discomforted by women who took initiatives, especially at national level. The Minister of Native Affairs wrote to the President of the SANNC, John Dube, advising the male African leaders to prevent the women's deputation from coming to Cape Town, as he feared such a deputation would lead to further agitation and excitement amongst whites that would make it more difficult for the SANNC other representations to succeed. However, the women would not be dissuaded and in the event Walter Rubusana assisted in the presentation of the petition and accompanied the women's deputation to the Minister (Wells, 1982) .

In the Afrikaner Republics no distinctions had been made between Africans and Coloureds and the communities lived together in the same locations and under the same restrictions. Coloured women who were also required to carry passes, were involved in the campaigns against them. Their independent actions caused the African People's Organisation (APO) to express it concerns and its paper chided them:

"We think the deputation might have awaited the Native Congress. It is also regrettable that Coloured women of the Orange Free State did not consult the executive of the APO's Women's Guild. We feel sure that no deputation of Coloured men of the APO would come to Cape Town without first acquainting the Executive with the object of its mission."
(APO 6 April 1912)

The ORCNC however called a special general meeting of its members to hear a report from the deputation after its return from Cape Town. Later, many centers elected one man and one woman as their delegates to the Annual Conference, where one of the women's leaders, Katie Louw, reported on the progress of the anti-pass campaign. (Odendaal, 1984)

The Free State women did not confine themselves to making representations, and in May 1913 decided to stop carrying passes or buying permits. The action spread across the provinces and there were numerous



Women's struggle's since the turn of the century paved the way for the historic women's march against passes in 1956

confrontations with the police as they tried to rescue those being taken to prison after sentence. The women who went to prison for refusing to carry passes lived in the urban centers, but were not all from amongst the elite. While some of the leaders of the Native and Coloured Women's Association formed during the campaign were the wives of Congress leaders, three of the eleven executive members of the Native and Coloured Women's Association (NCWA) were not literate.

Initially women had mobilised through manyanaos, but as the campaign spread across the province and the number of women in prisons grew, women from the Orange Free State Congress and the APO Women's Guild came together and set up the NCWA to oversee the campaign (Wells, 1982). The NCWA tried to mobilise support, and raised funds to provide for those in prison and for medical treatment after they completed their sentence.

As the Free State campaign involved both African and Coloured women, there would have been a need for some coordinating body, but there is little information on how and why the new organisation was set up. Neither has it been possible to ascertain the precise relationship between this 'women's' organisation and the SANNC or APO or their provincial affiliates. The few surviving documents of the organisation, relate to its solidarity work, i.e. petitions, letters in the press, fund raising appeals, etc. This is precisely the sort of task that one would have expected the existing organisations to have undertaken. However, both the provincial and National Congresses were preoccupied with the recently enacted (1913) Land Act. They may as well have felt it inappropriate to divert their attention and scarce resources to the women's campaign.

As the campaign progressed, the earlier misgivings about women's independence and militancy had given way to admiration and a general pride in the women's achievements. The Secretary General of the SANNC Sol Plaatje visited the women in prison, expressed his admiration (and surprise at their determination), and tried to publicise the resistance and mobilise support. The African press rallied to the support of those who were imprisoned, as did the APO journal and the Indian Opinion.

The NCWA addressed an appeal to "many Europeans friends in the provinces" urging them to use their influence to get legislation introduced in Parliament abolishing passes for women. They also addressed a petition to Governor Gladstone. These were initiatives similar to those of the SANNC, but there they were being undertaken in a context where women were continuing to go to prison for refusing to carry passes. Also the content and approach in the representations differed from those made by men.

The NCWA addressed such issues as sexual harassment by police in enforcing pass laws, and cited examples in explaining their resistance:

"A white Superintendent of the Location demanded a pass from the girl at home and failing to produce one was arrested and taken to the charge office. The Superintendent made improper overtures on the way to the girl. The latter resented the overtures, but she was ultimately taken by force and outraged by this man."
(Petition of the OFS Native and Coloured Women to Governor General in 1914)

This contrast with the protests made by male leaders about the sexual harassment of African women:

"I marry a women in the church and I think I have done what civilisation demands and that as my wife she will be protected as a respectable married woman, but I find her being mauled by a man who is far lower

in the scale of civilization than she is herself and merely because the law gives him the power to do so."
(Joseph Twayi in Minutes of Interview between Mayor and Natives, Bloemfontein 1913, quoted in Wells, 1982:85).

Women acknowledged the national leadership of the SANNC, and followed its general directive in suspending their campaign for the duration of the 1914-18 War.

The Bantu Women's League

The SANNC did not adopt a constitution until 1919. By then, women had established through the Anti Pass campaign that they had a role in the political life of the nation that went beyond providing entertainment and accommodation. Though acknowledging this, the SANNC was not yet ready to admit them to full membership. At the inaugural Conference it had been resolved:

"that it was expedient and desirable that a well digested and accepted native opinion should be ascertainable by the Government and other constituted authorities with respect to the Native problem in all its various phases and ramifications."
(Constitution of the SANNC, 1919)

That opinion was to continue to be expressed by men. There appears to have been no demand from women for membership, and they did not consider the SANNC or its provincial affiliates as appropriate vehicles to mobilise for their own campaigns. A pattern had been established of grassroots mobilisation and participation by women, while dealing with authorities at local or national level was to remain the province of men.

The SANNC leadership had encouraged the formation in 1918 of the Bantu Women's League (Wells, 1982) to organise women against proposals to extend passes to women throughout the Union. The Constitution adopted the following year, provided that Auxiliary Membership of the SANNC
"should be open to all Women of the aboriginal races of Africa over the age of 18 years, who shall be members of the Bantu Women's National League of South Africa... auxiliary members under the auspices of the League whenever required shall provide suitable shelter and entertainment for member or delegates to meetings of the Association."
(Constitution of the SANNC, 1918)

There were two significant changes from the 1912 daft. The original reference to "wives of " members... and other distinguished African ladies" was altered to "women", and there was an acknowledgement that women were entitled to organise politically.

The Bantu Women's League pursued an independent course, and did not affiliate to the SANNC . Nor did it function as expected. In Charlotte Maxeke it had a leader of national standing among the African people and one who was capable of dealing directly with legislators and officials. Women no longer had need of interpreters or spokesmen, but could articulate their demands and make their own representations. At a National level, the League made representations to authorities through delegations meeting with the Prime Minister and other officials, appearing before Commissions and Inquiries (Walshe, 1970: South African Outlook, 1921).

At the grassroots, women's militancy was being encouraged by Charlotte's appearance and statements on the platforms of the Industrial Commercial Workers Union (ICU) and the radically orientated Transvaal ANC of the post war period. The League formed branches across the country, some of the most active being in the Transvaal and OFS. These took up local issues and participated in the campaign initiated by political organisations and trade unions at local and national level.

Within days of the inaugural conference of the ICU, the Bantu Women's League of Pietersburg drew up a list of grievances of women farm workers. Examples were cited of farmers making women do exceedingly heavy physical labour, even when they were in advanced stages of pregnancy and detailed the case of a farmer who forced women workers to stand in a pool of clod water for half a day as punishment for complaining about conditions. The workers also objected to being forced to work until midnight without time off for meals. The League's representations were sent to Pretoria, where no action was taken, as the complaints were considered to be "exaggerated" (Kimble & Unterhalter, 1982).

Little is known about the other leaders or members of the Bantu Women's League, except some names. Clearly Charlotte Maxeke was dominant. To a greater extent than the SANNC, the Bantu Women's League suffered from organisational weakness: the bulk of women were rural, poor, non-literate and inexperience in western style politics and organisation. There was little financial support – money was raised from teas etc – quite literally in pennies and occasional shillings. There were not full time officials, and leaders had to find the time from their employment or professions, and frequently also had to fund their planned activities themselves.

After the death of her husband in 1928, Charlotte Maxeke devoted more time to her career. She established an Employment Bureau and was later employed as a probation officer by the Johannesburg Municipality. She devoted more attention to welfare work and less to politics. The League remained in existence for some years, though mainly in the person of Charlotte Maxeke. She participated in the All African Convention, where the decision was taken to establish a new women's organisation which became known as the National Council of African Women, with Charlotte Maxeke as its President.

The ANC Women's Section

It has not yet been possible to ascertain the date and manner of formation of the ANC Women's Section, nor to locate its constitution. It is likely that as the Bantu Women's League asserted its independence, the Women's Auxiliary was revived as a subordinate body within Congress and renamed the Women's Section. By the 1920's the Women's Section had branches in a number of centers and announcements of the officers of the Congress, often included the names of the Chairwomen of the 'Women's Auxiliary' or 'Women's Section'. The Annual Conference also appointed a Chief Organiser for the Women's Section.

The Women's Section was represented on the Executive through the Provincial President of their Sections (National Gazette, 1927) and branches were supposed to be self-financing and self-sufficient. Members paid an annual subscription of 3 shillings on which branches could draw for their expenses. After the Transvaal ANC had incurred a debt of 110 pounds in 1926 to fight the imposition of passes on women through the courts, a circular letter was sent urging Women's Section branches to send whatever monies they had in their possession to pay off "***this debt incurred on their behalf***". (Circular letter to Provinces and branches, ***own emphasis***)

The Women's Section and the Bantu Women's League operated as separate organisations, but had an overlap of members and leader. Charlotte Maxeke was considered to be an ANC leader, taking full part in proceedings and appearing on platforms at public meetings. The African Yearly Register published in 1930 by the Secretary General of the ANC, Mweli Skota, lists a number of women who were founder members or officers of the ANC Women's Section, and a number who were also active in the Women's League. Mrs. Nuku of Beaconsfield Kimberley is described as a social worker and a leading member of the church temperance movement who had been "Chairman of the local branch of the Women's League and Women's Section." (Skota, 1930: 230). Two sisters, Mrs. M. Kondile and Mrs. M. Bobojane were foundation members of the "Women's Section of the African National Congress" (Skota, 1930: 166 & 133). The elder, Mrs Kondile, who at one time was in charge of a grocery store and a news agency, is described also as a "prominent member of the Women's League" and one of the best women's organisers in the Transvaal. Charlotte Maxeke who assisted in preparing the biographical sketches for the volume is described as "founder and President of the Bantu Women's League" (Skota, 1930:195)

In the late 1930's in the context of the attempts to revitalise and reorganise the ANC, the role and function of the Women's Section was also debated.

Women in the ANC

As we have seen women were active in the provincial congresses before the formation of the SANNC, and continued to be involved at branch level particularly in the Free State and the western Cape. Women participated in the Annual Conference which was the highest decision making organ. The majority were elected as part of the provincial Congress delegates. Others represented affiliate women's groups such as Daughters of Africa and Zenzele.

They spoke on a range of issues, rarely on matters affecting women exclusively. On the first day of the 1937 Session, celebrating the 25th Jubilee, the lone woman speaker criticised the Congress for its extensive attention to festivities when it had no money for organisation (Bunche, 1937) . Later in the same session a Mrs. Peters moved a resolution urging that The Wages and Conciliation Act be amended to make all wage determinations apply to African workers in all industries. The following year, Mrs. Benjamin leading the debate on National Policy of Congress appealed for support for the low paid African workers in the Bloemfontein water works who were earning only 1/9d per day.

Their contributions particularly in these years, made constant reference to the need to reorganise and strengthen the ANC. The Conference Minutes of 1938, report the intervention of a delegate of the Cape African Congress, Mrs. LP Nikiwe of Port Elizabeth, who advanced "several interesting arguments to prove that the African women were interested in Politics." Amongst their recommendations was: "To acquaint Congress with the Masses."

Women also served on important Conference Committees such as Resolutions and Finance and voted on all resolutions as well as for the Officers. The extent to which women's de factor participation in the ANC was considered unremarkable is illustrated in the course of disputes over the re-election of Pixley ka Seme as President in 1933. Three years earlier he had ousted the radical James Gumede, who, on his return from the Soviet Union, had proposed radicalising the ANC by organising mass demonstrations and forming an alliance with the Communist Party. In the interim the ANC had become moribund. In 1993 when Seme was due to stand for re-elections, he packed the Annual Conference. Thirty seven of the 69 delegates were from Bloemfontein, the majority of them women. Of the 27 delegates who voted to re-elect Seme, 22 were women. The Speaker declared the proceedings unconstitutional, but Seme continued in office. Seme was attacked and accused of not getting the necessary votes from all provinces, but non of his critics challenged the right of women to vote and determine the leadership of the organisation. (Cape Times 22 April 1930. Umteteli wa Bantu 29 April 1933).

As the ANC went into decline, so did the Women's Section. But many of the women who were prominent in ANC conferences, appeared in the meetings of the All African Convention (AAC) in

1935-38: Charlotte Maxeke, Minnie Bhola, Mrs. Mahabane.

The National Council of African Women and the revival of the ANC Women's Section

Over 30 women attended the AAC in 1935. Among the women's organisation in the participant were the Pimville Women's League and the Africa Women Self-Improvement Society.

The women delegates met separately during the Convention and resolved:

"that the time has come for the establishment of an African Council of women on similar lines to those of the National Councils of other races in order that we may be able to do our share in the advancement of our race."

Their decision was later endorsed by the AAC. In the following years, several branches were set up and a national organisation launched in 1937, called the National Council of African Women (NCAW).

The NCAW did not regard itself as primarily a political organisation, but rather one involved in "non-European welfare". Most of its members were teachers or nurses. It took up issues of teachers salaries, education, provision of crèches, widows rights of inheritance, delinquent children, etc. The NCAW immediately came under the influence of white liberals such as Mrs. Rheinhald-Jones, and many African women attacked it as being run by white women (Walker 1982) .

The AAC had expected the new organisation to be responsible to it. In 1936 the Convention resolved "***that women be authorised to form branches of the NCAW in terms of the decision of the last Conference***". (AAC, 1936, ***own emphasis***). However, the NCAW did not affiliate to the AAC, though some of its branches did. The reluctance to affiliate arose from the NCAW desire to speak for itself, and not subordinate itself to the AAC. The AAC had not approved of the women making direct representations to the authorities. Divisions within the AAC almost led to Mina Soga losing her seat on the Council (AAC, 1940) . Mina Soga was a founding member of the NCAW and its first Secretary General and Organiser.

The ANC welcomed the formation of the NCAW, but eventually found itself with the same difficulties as the AAC. The NCAW send greetings to ANC Conferences and promised to work together, but steadfastly retained its independence. In May 1939, the ANC invited the NCAW to participate in the Joint Deputation to the Minister and Secretary for Native Affairs. ANC President General Mahabane voiced his concern, as not only had the NCAW not come to Cape Town and joined the delegation, but he had learnt that Charlotte Maxeke had been there earlier and seen the Minister independently (Cape Times, 16 May 1939).

When the NCAW was formed there was some uncertainty about the continuation of the Women's Section. The appointment of the Chief Organiser of the Women's Section in 1937, was deferred until the final constitution of the new organisation was known. The following year brought a significantly larger number of women to the ANC conference and Mrs. Nikiwe spoke on "The Organisation of African women as a section of Congress". A suggestion that the Women's Section affiliate to the NCAW was not taken up.

Even before the formation of the NCAW a debate begun among women, about the nature of a new women's organisation. Some like Charlotte Maxeke had been calling for an organisation dealing with the growing welfare needs of the African people in the 1930's. Others felt that priority should be given to an organisation with a strong political orientation. Josie Mpama was the most articulate spokesperson for this view. Following the Urban Areas Act of 1937, which further restricted the mobility of African women, she urged:

"We women can no longer remain in the background or concern ourselves only with domestic and sports affairs. The time has arrived for women to enter the political field and stand shoulder to shoulder wit their men in the struggle."
(Umsebenzi, 26 June 1937)

She also attacked the NCAW for its ineffectiveness and called for an effective organisation that would bring women into the general political struggle.

In 1941, the ANC resolved to revive the Women's Section, and that women "be accorded the same status as men in the classification for membership." The resolution recommended further:
"That the following means be made to attract the women (a) to make the programme of the Congress as attractive as possible to women, (b) a careful choice of leadership." (ANC, 1941)

The revival of the Women's Section was part of the process of reorganisation of the ANC. A draft document on organisational structure dated 1942 indicates that the Women's Section was seen operating "under the supervision and direction" of the parent body (ANC Draft Constitution).

In 1943, the ANC resolved that a Women's League be formed. The debate on the status of the League continued with the women calling for autonomy and the men wanting greater control. In 1945, a resolution from the Executive read:

"that the women of this Congress be allowed to organise autonomous branches wherever they desire within the ANC." led to protests from some men, and statements of appreciation from women delegates. (ANC, 1945)

But the following year, the ANC Bulletin (194)warned that the granting of permission to



When women were accepted as full and equal members of the ANC, there was a consensus that women's mobilisation was necessary to strengthen the organisation.

women to set up the League "does not mean parallelism, but co-operation and mutual assistance in the building up of membership and funds for both sections."

When women were accepted as full and equal members of the ANC, there was a consensus that women's mobilisation was necessary to strengthen the organisation. While recognising some of the practical problems faced by women in participating fully, there appears to have been limited understanding of the inherent problems of at the same time providing for a separate women's organisation.

In 1945, a draft constitution explained the need for a women's section:

"In the Congress women members shall enjoy the same status as men, and shall be entitled to elect and be elected to any position including the highest office. Notwithstanding this fact, however, and without in any way diminishing the rights of women members, the Congress may, recognising the special disabilities and differences to which African women are subjected and because of the peculiar problems facing them, and in order to arouse their interest and facilitate their organisation, create a Women's Section within its machinery, to be known as the ANC Women's Section."

Further on the same document contains this telling sentence "...the relations between the Women's Section and the men's section shall be on the basis of co-operation and..."

In the 1943, the constitutional hurdle had been overcome, but there was, and is today, a long way to go towards realizing that: "...the socialist revolution needs women's creative participation at least as much

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Gumede and Seme:
Two wings of a great movement

By Michael Sachs



ANC president Josiah T. Gumede (1927–1930) was way ahead of his time. His radicalism did not go down well with the conservatives within the movement

In his inaugural address as ANC President in 1927, Josiah Tshangana Gumede appealed for the unity of all African leaders, advising that personal ambitions be subordinated to the "greater ambitions of the race". He went on to say,

"I know there are two wings to the Bantu movement of political and economic emancipation . . . the conservative and the radical. These two wings are absolutely necessary for our progress. They are the right and the left wings of a great movement. Just as a bird must have both wings for successful flight, so must any movement have the conservative and radical wings. That is to say, we may differ in our views but this should not necessarily mean divisions and bickerings. We can differ . . . and yet work together harmoniously for the good of our oppressed people".

But Gumede himself was in some measure to blame for the 'divisions and bickerings' that then existed in Congress. As the years passed, and partly as a result of visiting the Soviet Union, he became increasingly radicalised. He began to advocate communist positions within the ANC, which was still dominated by educated professionals, ministers of religion and traditional leaders with little appetite for mass mobilisation and revolutionary activism. Matters came to a head at the ANC's Annual Conference in 1930. According to a report in *Umteteli wa Bantu*, the President claimed that:

"Everywhere the oppressed peoples were being inspired by that ideal of emancipation which found expression in the Russian revolution. There was still an illusion that the people would obtain justice from the British Government. But the plain truth was that they had again and again failed in their petitions to the British Government, and that their supplications to the Governor-General had been futile. 'We now have to rely on our own strength . . . We have to demand our equal economic, social and political rights. That cannot be expressed more clearly than to demand a South African Native Republic, with equal rights for all, but free from all foreign and local domination'".

The report goes on to say:

"The effects of this startling speech was to raise a storm of protest from the majority of the delegates who made it plain that the address did not express their views. Probably Mr. Gumede's object in making such a fiery speech was to catch votes, but if so he failed hopelessly."

Dr. Pixley ka Isaka Seme was then nominated for the position of President of the ANC by the conservative wing of the organisation, and was duly elected. The Communist Party, which had a representative observing the conference, declared Seme's election as 'a challenge to the workers'. On behalf of the newly elected executive, Dr. Seme "welcomed [this] declaration of war, and said that they did not want any militant organisation to hide under the name of the Congress. They were determined to get rid of Communist influences."

So began the most divided, disorganised and insular period in our proud history. Seme, true to his word, set about ridding the ANC of its communist influences and in the process contributed further to the decline of the ANC as united, organised voice of the African people. In the words of Tim Couzens: "the man who launched the ANC ship in 1912, nearly sank it when he was its president in the 1930s. A combination of lethargy and corruption nearly destroyed the organisation" . In similar vein, Mary Benson wrote of Seme's Presidency, "Alas, he whose dream had been to encourage divided tribes to cooperate was himself incapable of cooperating with colleagues and, once in office, he proved domineering and jealous of newcomers."

Ironically, the Communist Party also spent the early part of the 1930's disinfecting itself of those very elements that linked it to mass organisation. Seized by a factional leadership, the Party cast out 'right-wing deviationists', thereby isolating itself from "reformist" organisations such as the ANC, and reducing its contact with the masses almost to nothing.

These episodes are instructive for our current discussions in a number of respects. First, and most generally, it is important that we never forget that the ANC has a long and unbroken history as an organisation. It has weathered many storms, existed in numerous social and political environments, made many mistakes and learnt many lessons. We should strive to avoid the influence on our thinking of journalists who often write as if the ANC was born yesterday, or as if our organisation is entirely disconnected from its own past. In fact, the institutional memory of Congress is very much alive today, both as a conscious element in the actions of its leadership and as part of the unconscious institutional architecture which binds our entire movement together.

Second, the relationship between the ANC and the socialist, communist and progressive trade union movements is not as recent as is commonly supposed. The evolving dialectic between these streams of organisation was central to the development of all our formations throughout the twentieth century. Rusty Bernstein is fond of likening our movement to three trees planted in the same soil. They have grown together, twisting and intertwining towards the light of liberation, so that today it is impossible to tell which branches belong to which seeds.

A formal alliance between the ANC, SACP and COSATU (as heir to the traditions of SACTU) can perhaps be dated back to the 1950's. But our shared history is much older. The political content and organisational forms of these relationships has matured over seventy years against a tapestry of joint campaigns, shared objectives, overlapping leadership and dual membership.

There have been periods of co-operation and conflict, antagonism and collaboration, antipathy and goodwill. In the words of Oliver Tambo:

"Ours is not merely a paper alliance, created at conference tables and formalised through the signing of documents and representing only an agreement of leaders. Our alliance is a living organism that has growth out of struggle. We have built it out of our separate and common experiences".



Dr Pixley ka Isaka Seme succeeded Gumede as President of the ANC in 1930. He served two terms – 1930 to 1936.

Certainly the formation of MK cemented our relationship in an unprecedented sense. But it would be a mistake to suppose that period of underground and exile is the only definitive experience.

Third, given history's hindsight, Gumede was a leader far ahead of his time, but perhaps too far ahead. On the one hand, his statement that the movement had two wings, whose cooperation was essential for flight, was proved accurate in the coming decades. He was also right to believe that the future progress of the movement and of the country lay in the combination of many traditions of resistance in united action under the banner of the ANC. He correctly anticipated the transformation of the ANC into a revolutionary mass organisation, as a vital step towards the achievement of majority rule without local or foreign domination.

On the other hand, Gumede advocated programmes and policies which, given the character of the ANC at the time, were bound to lead to confusion and division. His positions may have been theoretically 'correct', but he was thwarted by his inability to marry these theories with a practice that would result in the unity of the two wings of the "Bantu movement of political and economic emancipation" which he advocated.

Gumede could therefore be accused of falling prey to errors that were identified forty years later in the ANC's 1969 Strategy and Tactics document:

To ignore the real situation and to play about with imaginary forces, concepts and ideals is to invite failure. The art of revolutionary leadership consists in providing leadership to the masses and not just to its most advanced elements; it consists of setting a pace which accords with objective conditions and the real possibilities at hand. The revolutionary-sounding phrase does not always reflect revolutionary policy, and revolutionary-sounding policy is not always the spring-board for revolutionary advance. Indeed what appears to be "militant" and "revolutionary" can often be counter-revolutionary. It is surely a question of whether, in the given concrete situation, the course or policy advocated will aid or impede the prospects of

the conquest of power.

However radical and correct Gumede's approach, it ignored the real situation and therefore impeded the development of Congress.

Seme and Gumede were both founding fathers of the African National Congress. In a way they each epitomise a wing of the liberation struggle: one radical, one conservative, both absolutely necessary for our flight. However, both did our movement a disservice at the ANC's 1930 Annual Conference. They went to Congress with an uncompromising certainty in their own convictions, each unwilling to understand the importance of the other's critique.

Seme regarded the strategies and tactics of independent socialist and working class movements as something alien to the Congress tradition; something exogenous to our history, which, having been imposed from the outside, needed to be defeated. Once elected as President General, he acted together with other 'conservatives' to exclude Gumede and his 'radical' friends from the National Executive. Instead of using his victory to consolidate unity, he welcomed the Communist Party's "declaration of war" and committed himself to ridding Congress of its Communist (and working class) elements. In doing so he condemned the ANC to divorce from mass struggles and the broader progressive working class movement.

For his part Gumede could be blamed for having precipitated this bitter outcome. After being elected in 1927 he realised the need for unity. It was in this context that he called on African leaders to bury their "divisions and bickerings". But three years later, having alienated himself from all but the most radical elements in the ANC, he presented to Congress a Presidential address apparently designed to antagonise the majority of delegates through its overtly revolutionary pontifications. The upshot of Gumede's clumsiness was that communists and socialists were excluded from the workings of the Congress on the one hand, while on the other, the Congress itself slid further into its own organisational failures and became even more distant from the masses.

Seme and Gumede were both founding fathers of the African National Congress. In a way they each epitomise a wing of the liberation struggle: one radical, one conservative, both absolutely necessary for our flight.

Both leaders chose to pursue the narrow ends of their own ideological and political convictions. They failed to unite Congress behind a broader vision of progress towards liberation that recognised the dialectic of the evolving and complex relation between nationalism, socialism and progressive trade unionism. The two wings of the Congress movement did not help each other to fly. The consequence was a further slide into disunity and disorganisation of the ANC.

It would be fifteen years before the ANC would begin its revival as a mass based revolutionary movement. The ANC Youth League of Mandela, Sisulu and Tambo would reproach their forebears for the failures of the past and revive the Congress on a platform that provided the vision and organisational basis for unity in action of a diverse multiplicity of traditions.

The realignment of opposition forces

Opposition parties in a democratic SA

ANC delegation to the CODESA talks. From left to right: Valli Moosa, Cyril Ramaphosa and Joe Slovo



The new Constitution and democratic dispensation afforded parties with requisite support to attain representation in parliament, to pursue the interests of their constituents. Given the widespread legitimacy of the 1994 elections and our democratic government, even the forces against transformation and change had to assume a legitimate political form - hence the proliferation of political parties.

Contesting the first democratic elections and winning seats were political parties that fell into four broad categories: (a) parties linked to the liberation struggle, including the PAC and Black Consciousness elements; (b) parties directly representing a broad spectrum of white interests, be they Afrikaner or English – liberal in origin; (c) parties relying on the mobilization of regional or ethnic factors for their political subsistence; and (d) parties informed by a narrow understanding of morality, e.g. ACDP.

The first five years saw the realignment of forces and the reconstitution of the political arena. The first obvious development was the *disappearance of homeland parties*. This development was accompanied by the growing rapprochement between the ANC and IFP, including the peace initiatives, work in the GNU and the province, the Three-A-side and Ten-A-side structures, all of these underpinned by the objective conditions faced by the constituency we share, which are African and rural. This has been against the very grain of the basic and fundamental counter-revolutionary strategy to keep the ANC and IFP apart.

The second development was the start of the process, which we are still experiencing today, *of realignment within white political parties*. One of the objective consequences of the transition was the steady erosion of the power of the Afrikaner section of the white ruling block, which before the 1994 breakthrough exercised its power primarily (but not exclusively as indicated by the conscious programme to build Afrikaner capital) through the state and its various organs. This was compounded by the decision of the National Party under De Klerk to with-

draw from the Government of National Unity in 1996. It was a strategic mistake that deprived the Nats of an opportunity to contribute to the construction of a non-racial democracy. It threw it into the political wilderness, rapidly loosing support and the fragmentation of its original ideologically. It set the scene for its considerable loss of support amongst its core constituencies in the 1999 elections to the DP.

The Democratic Party during this period emerged as a party that could more effectively protect white interests. Under the leadership of Tony Leon, it positioned itself as the only opposition force capable of 'fighting back' against the ANC majority and with its claim to represent the interests of national minorities, co-opting the programme of the NNP. In addition, it maintained and consolidated the support of the English liberal section of the ruling block, who have always exercised its power primarily through business, capital and the media. That power has not reduced significantly, though it feels threatened.

The third development was the emergence of post-apartheid parties centered around individuals/cliques without any significant historical and social base except opportunism, notably the Federal Alliance and the UDM.

The second democratic elections for national and provincial government in 1999 saw further significant shifts in opposition politics. The elections consolidated the shift in the white political agenda from Volkstaat politics to politics of securing white interests within the Republic, evident in the decline in the fortunes of the Freedom Front and other white right wing parties. The DP, with its "fight back" message, emerged as the official opposition and the new party of white South Africans, having eroded significantly the base of the NNP and the Freedom Front. Its elections strategy also focused on selective targeting of certain provinces (W Cape, Gauteng, N Cape, KZN) where demographic and political factors may be in their favour, a concerted effort to penetrate African areas through disgruntled elements and by portraying the ANC near two-third majority rule as a threat to democracy.

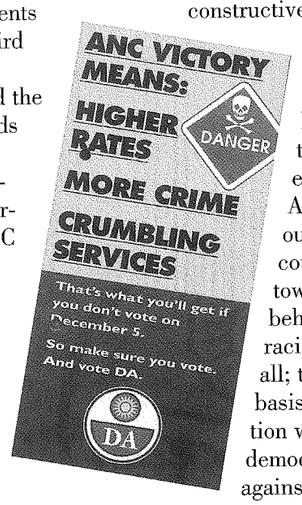
The ACDP increased its support and the newcomers, AZAPO, Afrikaner Eenheids Beweging, the Federal Alliance, UCDP and the UDM all find themselves represented in parliament (although with marginal percentages of the vote.) The ANC lost some support to the UDM and UCDP in the Eastern Cape and Northwest, not having done sufficient work amongst civil servants and security personnel from the old Bantustan regimes in these provinces. The IFP lost the little inroads it made into other provinces, especially Gauteng, establishing it as a provincial party with its base in KZN.

The fact that no singly party in the 1999 general elections managed to win an outright majority in KzwaZulu Natal and the W Cape, prompted discussions on coalition formations in these provinces. The ANC opted for a coalition government with the IFP in KZN based on our shared mass based in rural areas and one with the NNP in the W Cape, who won a large portion of Coloured working class vote.

The NNP, having just suffered a strategic defeat at the hands of the DP, instead of once again grabbing the opportunity to be part of the future, chose to join hands with the DP in the W Cape and formed a coalition government, aimed at excluding the ANC. To add insult to injury – and from a position of weakness with large-scale defections from its ranks – it allowed itself to be cajoled into the Democratic Alliance as a junior partner in the lead-up to the 2000 elections.

The Democratic Alliance meant the coming together of the networks of the former ruling political elite, elements of white business and sections of white middle and working classes who yearn for the past and some from the former security establishment - under a veneer of liberalism whose claim to "anti-apartheid credentials" was invoked merely to justify and legitimise opposition to change.

However, the objective changes brought about by the transition, and the political work of the national liberation movement amongst sections of the white community, have resulted in sectors of the white community who recognised the folly of Leon and his followers. They recognise the limitations of the approach of the type of opposition politics espoused by the DA, which ultimately seeks to isolate the white community from the majority of South Africans and their government, forcing the entire white population into becoming a wining and marginalised minority. The majority of Afrikaners know that South Africa is their only home and that they need to play a constructive role in the reconstruction and development of this country.



We have therefore said from the start that this marriage of convenience is bound to fail, because the DA has neither the vision, policies or tactics that will enhance the participation of white South Africans in the political and general life of our country. This unholy Alliance takes the country a step back. Instead of moving towards the genuine process of uniting behind the vision of building a truly non-racial country and ensuring a better life for all; these parties sought to unite solely on the basis of opposition to the ANC. This opposition was not merely a necessity for multi-party democracy; it consolidated an opposition against transformation and the deracialisation of our society.

The cracks in the DA have been evident since the early days of its birth, with MPs and MPLs from both the Nats and the DP dissatisfied with the merger approaching the ANC and struggles between the two key components for the leadership of the alliance. These internal contradictions came to a head with the sacking of Marais as Mayor of Cape Town and his expulsion from the DA, and the decision on 26 October 2001 by the NNP Federal Council to withdraw from the DA.

Strategic and Tactical challenges facing the ANC

The ANC is not only a leader of itself, nor just of its supporters or those who voted for it. History has bequeathed on it the mission to lead South African society as a whole in the quest for a truly non-racial, non-sexist and democratic nation. The ANC is therefore also called upon to win over those who previously benefitted from the system of apartheid: to persuade them to appreciate that their long-term security and comfort are closely tied with the security and comfort of society as a whole.

During the CODESA negotiations and after much debate, we chose the system of proportional representation in order to allow representation of smaller and minority parties in the new democratic dispensation, without undermining democratic majority rule. We also agreed to a constitutional provision for Government of National Unity during the first five years, to enable us to pull together a variety of forces from across the politic al spectrum that would contribute towards the transformation and reconciliation of our country.

The success of our political transition in the first five years and its impact on the state of opposition politics, meant that as we approach the 1999 elections, substantial numbers of public representatives changed political allegiances, some to the ANC and others from the NNP to the DP or the UDM, symptomatic of the shifts in political alignment in the country.

Whilst this in part represented realignment as part of the deracialisation and democratisation process; the political stance of the DP and later the formation of the DA, was an antithesis to this process. The DP's 'fight-back' stance, opposing for its own sake rather than as a contributing factor to ensuring that the legacy of the past and the major problems are addressed in the shortest possible time, contributed to the racialisation and polarisition of politics in the country. It won its position as the official opposition by appealing, like the Nats in the past, to the national minorities to vote their fears, not their hopes.

The challenge of cooperation with the NNP

The breakup with the DA in 2001 and cooperation with the NNP therefore presented us with an opportunity to break out of this mold of opposition politics, to broaden the range of forces committed to transformation and to challenge the racially defined nature of opposition politics in our country.

The cooperation between the ANC and the NNP is therefore informed and will be built based on a set of principles and values aimed at fundamentally transforming South Africa for the better. It acknowledges the different histories of the organisations and their divergent policies and programmes. It recognises that the NNP, as the chief architect of apartheid, has undergone a long and evolutionary process, and that co-operation with the ANC presents it with an opportunity to transcend its past and contribute positively to the country's future. It is therefore a cooperation that should not only find expression in governance, but must find expression in all areas of South Africa's national life.

The strategic objectives that will underpin the relationship between the ANC and the NNP will include:

- Building a national consensus founded on true South African patriotism as a critical instrument in the effort to deracialise our society;
- Developing a unity of purpose to confront the great challenges of our country, including, among other things, poverty, unemployment, homelessness, crime, and HIV/Aids and other diseases;
- Striving to foster reconciliation and good inter-community relations to achieve a truly non-racial and non-sexist South African society so that, together, we can address the legacy of the past;
- Recognising that South Africa is an African country. Within the African continent we have an important role to play in mobilising extensively the relevant human and material resources necessary for the development of both our country and our continent.

Each organisation will retain its identity and autonomy and will stand for its own policies and programmes. Each organisation will have the right to publicly promote its views and positions in terms of its policies, programmes, strategies and tactics. The ANC and NNP will seek to achieve consensus on areas of disagreement and differences, but will not compromise the principle of majority decision-making and the right to differ publicly.

The nature of cooperation in different areas, including in government, will be determined in accordance with strategic objectives of the relationship and on the basis of the needs and circumstances in each instance.

Accommodating realignment of forces within our present electoral system

One of the other challenges which the democratisa-

tion process has presented, is whether and how to accommodate shifts within the political landscape, between elections. It is in this context that the debate arose about whether we should have legislation that allows for the crossing of the floor.
The Constitution of the country provides for a proportional representation electoral system for national and provincial legislatures. Thus, Schedule 2 to the Interim Constitution, as amended by the insertion of Item 23A (contained in annexure A, Item 13 of Schedule 6 to the final Constitution) provides that a person loses membership of Parliament or a legislature if that person ceases to be a member of the party which nominated the person as a member of the relevant legislature.

In addition, however, this Schedule also provides that:-

- Any existing party may change it name;
- An Act of Parliament may be passed to provide for the manner in which it will be possible for a member of a legislature who ceases to be a member of the party which nominated him or her to retain membership of the legislature (i.e. to cross the floor); and
- Such an Act may also provide for existing parties to merge or subdivide.

Crossing of the floor

Introducing legislation to allow for crossing of the floor, will have important ramifications on our electoral and parliamentary system, and ultimately our democratic dispensation. The arguments for making such provision for crossing of the floor under our proportional representation system include the following:-

a) The ANC is a non-racial, democratic and non-sexist movement, and of the few (if not the only) that is consistently democratic and non-racial in its approach. The ANC is a centripetal force, which unite all the forces who are committed to these principles. It has the historic responsibility to lead both the people and the opposition in normalizing politics in the country. For the future of democracy in our country, we need more parties who are non-racial, non-sexist and democratic. Otherwise, we are keeping and propping up parties who belong to the past and that continue the racial polarisation of our society.
b) We should move from the premise that the future of South Africa belongs to the goals and cause that the ANC stand for. It is therefore our intention to expand that hegemony of the ANC, to win support amongst the widest range of forces in society of these goals.
c) The balance of forces since the adoption of the Interim Constitution (and the particular form of Electoral system) has changed. Realignment in parliament and the provincial legislatures is reflective of transitions in broader society, as a result of our programme of transformation. We should adopt the principle, under the current electoral system and in the period of transition, that if there are major upheavals in political alignment between elections, the system should accommodate this and not imprison people in their parties, especially if they no longer agree with the objectives of their parties that are steeped in the past. Even within the ANC parliamentary caucuses, if there are those who given the latitude, would break ranks from the ANC because they believe that it no longer represents their political views, we should not keep them imprisoned.
d) The debate about crossing of the floor was forced onto the national agenda, by the initial decision of the DP and NNP to merge into the DA in June 2000. This should mean that if the parties are allowed to merge (or divide as is the case with DA local councillors at the moment), members from the two constituent parts should have the choice of going into the DA or not. In the W Cape, the principled issues for NNP MPs and MPLs should be whether the vote they received from coloured working class is best represented in the DA or in the ANC.

The arguments cautioning against crossing of the floor include the following:-

a) Making provision for the crossing of the floor between elections (since the system at national and provincial level do not allow for by-elections) does not take account of the will of the electorate as reflected in the system of proportional representation, to establish government based on the will of the people. For example, the majority of ANC public representatives serve in these positions because people voted for the ANC, not for individuals.
b) The debate on crossing of the floor takes place in the context where as a young democracy, we are still busy establishing and consolidating the political institutions in our country. The responsibility of the ANC is not only to nurture our own electoral strength, but also the democratic institutions that we have put in place. Introducing a proposal for crossing of the floor through legislation, without changing the electoral system, may be seen to be undermining the democratic system and process.
c) Crossing of the floor opens up greater possibilities for opportunism and populism on the one hand and the "buying" of MP's on the other hand. If public representatives genuinely don't support the politics of the party on whose platform they got elected any more, they must resign. If they want to join the ANC, they must join the movement as individuals and rise through the ranks to become ANC public representative, like any other ANC member.
d) There have been debates over the last few years about the continued appropriateness of our current electoral system for national and provincial government. However, though it has been criticised in certain circles, it accurately reflects the will of those who voted in the elections.
Therefore, the question in relation to an Act of Parliament which will permit members of a legislature to cross the floor, is to what extent we as the ANC will want to interfere with the expression of the will of the majority as currently reflected in the national and provincial legislatures. A related question, is what the implications for good governance will be if members are simply allowed to cross the floor at will.

The ANC will therefore take forward during the next parliamentary sitting in 2002, a trilogy of Bills that would allow for crossing of the floor under the following circumstances:-

a) Where at least a group of 10% of MPs, MPLs and/or PR local councillors of an existing party represented in any of these spheres of government wish to leave a political party, either to form a new one or join another/other party (-ies);
b) That such changes will only be allowed 9 months after and before an election; and
c) That the arrangements that apply to constituency-based local councillors will stand .

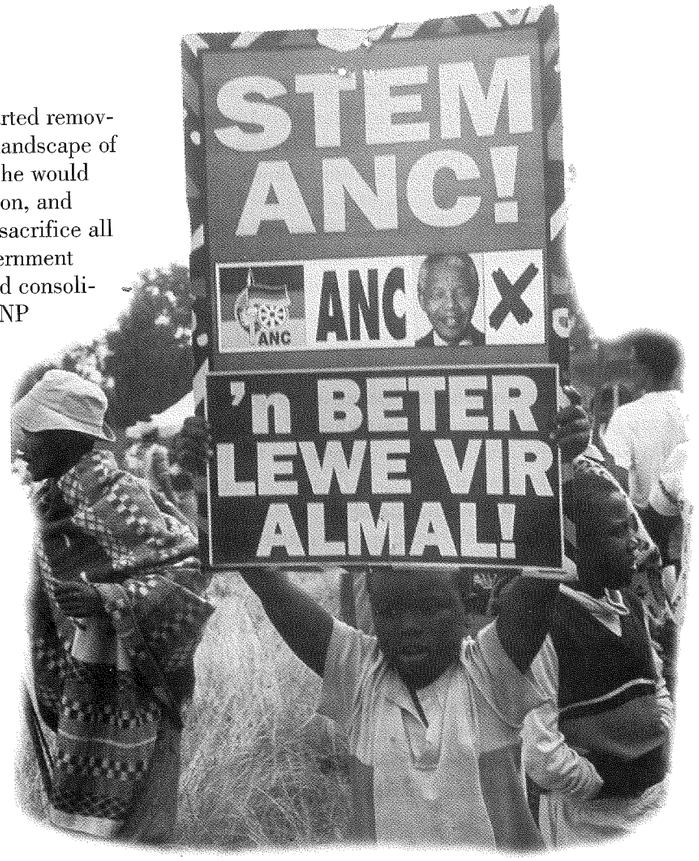
Conclusion

Cabinet in March 2001 established a Task team charged with the responsibility of drafting new electoral legislation as required by the Constitution. Amongst the issues that will have to be debated in preparation for electoral legislation towards the 2004 Elections, will be changes – if any – to our electoral system.

Our democracy is evolving and adapting to the progress we make in building a truly non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society. The manner in which we elect public representatives and how they in turn represent the aspirations, as well as the changes in the electorate, is an important part of the deepening and consolidation of our democracy.

Comment on paliamentary politics in contemporary South Africa

By Van Zyl Slabbert



On 2nd February 1990 F.W. De Klerk started removing the National Party from the political landscape of S.A. He set in motion a process whereby he would abdicate power to a democratic constitution, and through that, to the ANC. He would also sacrifice all the powers of patronage that the NP Government used for more than 50 years to bolster and consolidate its control over the country. For the NP this created a trauma that it could not, and would not survive. Progressively out-negotiated into the ramifications of being just another party in a liberal democracy, it enjoyed a brief interim period as a junior partner in a Government of National Unity. However, when the final constitution was adopted in May 1996, De Klerk withdrew from government and all active politics a few months later.

With his departure the NP died and the NNP was born. With the old NP support base eroded, its voters disillusioned and apathetic, the NNP was condemned from the outset to scavenge for any kind of support in order to have some political relevance. It found some in the Western Cape where it could still exploit the remnants of Tri-Cameral politics to cling to some kind of power. It was this fragile power base which it offered to the DP as a bargaining chip when they formed the Democratic Alliance (DA). That this Alliance has now unraveled, comes as no surprise.

It is useful to keep in mind that opposition politics in South Africa, from 1974 to the present, whether as part of the old racist Parliament or the current democratic one, has always been involved in wheeling and dealing. Realignments of some kind: mergers, take-overs, alliances, partnerships etc have been an enduring feature of opposition politics. Why? A very important reason, and still valid for the time being, is that within the context of parliamentary politics, of whatever kind, from 1948 until the present, no opposition party, or a combination of them, has been able to pose an electoral threat to the government in power. Put another way, for 53 years SA has never experienced an electoral change of government. It is simply not part of our political memory. Both the NP in the past and the ANC currently constitute the government in a one dominant party Parliament. If parliamentary politics were dominated by two large parties contesting for government the whole style of inter-party competition would be vastly different. Now opposition parties thrash about at local and provincial level for some incremental advantage and relevance. At national level, Parliament is used to "play politics", not to change government. This may not be as silly as it sounds. With it comes all the supporting institutions necessary to underpin an emerging democracy: a free press and judiciary and a growing, vigorous civil society amongst other things. But these are not the primary concerns of electoral politics. Getting votes is.

This partly explains why current opposition politics is preoccupied with two broad strategies; either one opposition party cannibalising other opposition parties, or chipping away at the support base of the governing party. Over the years the best cannibalisers, by far, have been the Progs, the forerunners of the current DP/DA. They ate up the old United Party by forming the PRP, then the PFP. They then chipped away at the NP by forming the DP (remember Dennis Worral and Wynand Malan?). They were well on their way to eating up the NNP by forming the DA. The NNP saw its last few bargaining chips disappearing, jumped ship and started wheeling and dealing with the ANC for a place in the political sun. The NNP are just natural born scavengers, and the DP/DA natural born cannibals. Unfortunately for the DP/DA, they find it very difficult to change their diet and cannot find any more victims to devour. They now seriously have to look for voters.

For a considerable period of time, if ever, the DP/DA will not be able to go to the polls and say: "Vote for us, we are going to be the Government". To do so would be to stretch credulity beyond all limits. Therefore they are condemned to "fight back", "stand tall", "protect democracy", "be watchdogs" etc. This may not be as futile as it sounds. It can contribute to the broadening of a democratic culture. On the other hand, given the diet that has sustained opposition politics in the past, i.e. getting white votes, the ANC is not going to allow the "legacy of the past", to fall into disuse in the game of Parliamentary politics. It will continue to paint the DP/DA in a racial corner for as long as it is useful to do so. Suddenly we are confronted with the extraordinary spectacle of the ANC presenting the NNP as "true South Africans", who have "buried the past" and want to "build the future together", whereas the DP/DA want to protect "white privilege" and "keep the past alive". For the uninformed it almost sounds as if the NNP fought apartheid tooth and nail, all its life, and the DP/DA created it. It certainly is a puzzling time in electoral politics in SA and it is very difficult to see how the DP/DA is going to crawl out of this hole on their own. The leader of the party better watch his back very carefully. It will come as no surprise if, in the not too distant future, a few of his representatives will end up in the folds of the ANC. All of this however, bears very little consequences for the electoral change of government in the foreseeable future. For that we have to look elsewhere than opposition politics.

Holding regular elections is not the final test of whether a country is a democracy. It may be a necessary condition but it is not sufficient. The real test comes when the party in power is electorally challenged to hand over power peacefully to anther party that has won more votes. This is one of the defining moments of whether a country qualifies as being a democracy. When a government does so, it honours the principle of contingent consent i.e. the party in power does not abuse its electoral victory, to prevent parties that have lost, the opportunity of winning next time, and this is contingent, on the parties who lose, accepting the right of the party that won, to govern until next time. This principle is flagrantly and viciously disregarded right now in Zimbabwe and, for the sake of sanity in discourse, it is not a "racist" comment to make such an observation. This principle has often been violated all over the world. Gerrymandering and rigging elections, is not an African invention.

As has been said, for the last 53 years, SA has not been confronted with this test. Is it likely to be in the foreseeable future? Well now, this becomes an increasingly fascinating question. Not because of the wheeling and dealing going on in opposition. That does not threaten the principle of contingent consent. But what about the growing opposition within the ANC itself? Because the ANC Alliance holds, SA is one dominant party democracy, not the same as a one party state. However, within the Alliance there is increasingly strident and often quite provocative talk about "a break up", "forming a new party", "mobilising the masses to "left" of the ANC" etc. Some openly say, "the Alliance is dead". Certainly it is early days, but what would be the implications for electoral politics in SA if these internal tensions mature into an open split? Just suppose the breakaway results in a labour-based, quasi-populist party with growing support amongst migrant workers, the poor and unemployed, and largely concentrated in industrial areas?

So far the ANC has been "tolerant" in losing two provinces to opposition: the Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal. This is good for democratic consolidation and strengthening the principle of contingent consent. But it could be argued that these provinces have politics peculiar to themselves that, on their own, do not threaten to unseat Government (The one dominated by factors of race, the other by ethnicity. The current romance between the N.N P and the ANC. may even weaken the racial divide in the Western Cape).But what would happen if the ANC., for example, loses Gauteng and the Eastern Cape to a party with demonstrable black majority support. Such an opposition party's rallying cry is definitely not going to be: "Stand Tall", "Fight Back" or some such inter-varsity exhortation. More likely it is going to be: "Let us take power to the people", "Away with GEAR", "Forward to delivery" etc.

Should such a situation develop, the landscape of current electoral politics will change beyond imagination. Does this sound farfetched? Certainly not as farfetched as saying: "The DP/DA will be in power after two elections." Opposition politics will not then be about scavenging and cannibalising but about challenging for government Should such a challenge be successful and the A.N.C has to hand over power peacefully, it would be the defining moment for the resilience of our young democracy. Will those supporting institutions underpinning democracy come under threat as the incumbent tries to rig electoral politics in order to cling to power, (as is happening in Zimbabwe at the moment), or will these institutions be used to facilitate electoral transition and further consolidate democracy?

In the meantime, it is almost mandatory that the ANC being the incumbent party will try to minimise the possibility and size of the split; demonise those who cause it; tighten party control; and cautiously look for new partners and friends to off set the potential loss to "the left". Most likely, and quite unintentionally, the NNP has exploited its own coincidence by referring to the ANC as "a party of the centre". Who knows, even the DP/DA support base may become more and more attractive to the ANC. Electoral politics has the habit of forcing the most extraordinary bed fellows under the same blanket. One thing is quite certain: in considering the possible permutations of political alignments in the foreseeable future of parliamentary politics in South Africa, one should not restrain one's imagination in any way.

Sweden and South Africa: challenges of party building

By Beatie Hofmeyer



Sharing ideas... Delegates from the ANC and the Swedish Social Democratic Party at a seminar on party building

Early in 2001, a delegation from the ANC and senior leaders and organisers of the Swedish Social Democratic Party held a seminar to share ideas and experiences on party building.

Although the two parties operate in vastly different environments, the core values and approaches to party structures and internal democracy are very similar. The SDP has been in government for most of the last century and has its roots and support in the labour movement. It was responsible for transforming Sweden from the poorest country in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century to one of the four most prosperous in the world [in terms of quality of life index]. Sweden is one of the most "organised" countries in the world and the average Swede belongs to three organisations – mostly party, union, church, sport, leisure, cultural or issue-based groups. Although they have only one fifth of the South African population, they have more SDP branches and more members than the ANC. Huge sectors of civil society are controlled and directed by the SDP – including a vast network of adult education schools and study groups.

In spite of their successes, the Swedes see their party as weak and shrinking. Party structures and programmes have failed to adapt to the new challenges of globalisation where "the power is always elsewhere" and activists often feel that they can have no influence on government policy. Sweden has also achieved a high standard of living and well developed social services. Members no longer feel involved in transformation and building a better life – only in defending the gains of the past against the more conservative fiscal policies imposed by globalisation. There is nothing "sexy" about being an activist and the core cadres are getting old [forty-something].

Young people seem to take their privilege for granted and the older generation activists see them as being more interested in consumerism than revolution.

"The young generation has too many choices – internet, mass media, satellite TV, travel, studies, 24-hour sport channels, access to any information, news, music or culture, any time. Why should they spend time in boring branch meetings with people their par-

ents' age?"

Even those young people who have a strong social awareness or a rebellious streak, are not turned on by party meetings and programmes. They join single-issue groups that lobby and push for concrete changes – groups that can measure their impact and the successes of individual campaigns. Examples are campaigns against pollution, exploitation of child labour and profiteering pharmaceutical companies. The campaigns often mobilise consumer support through tactics like boycotts. Many of them have a global focus and use the internet as an organising tool. In the developed world they are the new social movements of the 21st century.

The South African reality is different – transformation and a better life for all are still goals we are working towards. The tasks and challenges are very real and activists can be directly involved and make an impact. We still have a long struggle ahead and no-one can feel that we have already won the war against poverty. Yet we experience many of the same problems as our Swedish comrades – especially with mobilising young people into our party branches.

Discussion between the ANC and the SDP focussed on dealing with common challenges we face to build active and vibrant branches, attract youth to our branches and bring our organisations closer to communities.

Building vibrant branches

Both parties recognised that their structures were run by 'abnormal' people who do not understand the needs of normal citizens who may want to join the party. As one delegate put it:

"We are all struggle junkies – politics give meaning to our lives. We are driven by strong commitment and believe that our work makes a difference and builds a better world. Meetings and conferences are our social life. All our friends are in politics. Our families either get involved or get neglected. Many of us have jobs and work another 20-40 hours a week for our party. Normal people are not like this. They want to have free weekends and relax at the end of the day. When they sacrifice three hours for a meeting, they want to feel that they have gained something from attending it."

This type of behaviour from activists discourages members from becoming more involved. Many members will attend a meeting every month and perhaps be willing to do a bit more for the branch. Few people want to give up their "lives" and be taken over completely by party work. For a branch to be vibrant it has to offer at least the following to members:

- Involvement in meaningful local issues and stimulating national debates.
- Information and education that leads to developing an analysis and understanding that the member finds useful.
- Empowerment that make members feel that they have developed as human beings.
- Entertainment – the branch work must also build the member's social life.
- Reward – since most people get no money or power from being involved, members must be given recognition and social status for their efforts.

Even the group of struggle junkies in the seminar confessed that most of them hated branch meetings and found the demands of the party on their personal lives increasingly difficult to manage. A South African said:

"We have always worked hard in the struggle. First for liberation, then for building the ANC, then for elections – but even now we are still working just as hard. Except there are fewer and fewer people prepared to do this. It seems you either have to work yourself to death or pull out completely. We have to find a better balance if we want to keep more people involved."

Discussion also focussed on the way core cadres tended to become gatekeepers and form closed cliques to discourage any challenge to the power they held in party structures. This type of behaviour also destroys vibrant structures. Some suggestions we shared for improving branches were:

- Branch meetings should attract people and respond to their needs.
- Be open and encourage new ideas and initiatives from members
- The core cadres should treat members as a target group whose needs must be sensitively catered for – not as a reluctant and passive audience who must be turned into core cadres.
- Leaders should take risks and allow members to try new responsibilities
- Work should be broken into interest areas where members can get involved in something that really interests them – branch meetings should not be the place where everything happens and everyone should not feel forced to attend.
- Branch meetings should be shorter and less bureaucratic – some education and discussion should be part of every meeting. Administrative issues should be handled by the BEC and not be brought into branch meetings.
- Building morale and team spirit are central to building a vibrant branch.
- Members must be allowed to have lives – do not make them feel guilty for not working as hard as you. They will stop coming altogether.

Attracting youth

Fewer people under 25 are getting involved in the ANC or SDP these days. This contrasts strongly with the situation 10-20 years ago when youth formed the backbone of both movements. This was a big concern at the seminar. One of the youth leaders from Sweden said:

"Young leaders in the party cannot tell you what to do about the youth – they themselves are out of touch with normal youth. We have to look at youth culture and interests and do research to really find out what would mobilise youth. Our party has grappled with this and we have not found the answer."

Disappointment with the fruits of liberation and with the behaviour of some of our leaders, has also lead to disillusionment among the youth of South Africa. In Sweden the SDP is "the system" and youth who are disillusioned, blame it for all ills.

A few suggestions were made by delegates:

- Youth will only get involved if they are convinced their activism will make a difference in the near future. When politics becomes too abstract and power too remote, there is no gratification.
- For every generation there are some social issues that grab their imagination – we may be out of touch and have to tune in to the new social issues more effectively.
- Youth leagues have been treated as the party school for future ideologues rather than as the party's arm that mobilises and involves the young masses. The role of building future leaders is important but should not be so prominent that it discourages most young people from joining
- Bashes/concerts are not an effective way of building involvement – we have to find something more meaningful and lasting. At the same time we have to use culture more effectively. Most of the 40+ generation will remember the big influence that socially relevant popular music had in the 60's, 70's and 80' and how it helped to spread the message of different social movements.
- We have to find ways of turning some of the disillusionment and disappointment with liberation into constructive involvement before the youth mobilise against us as the new ruling class.



Members of the National Executive Committee, ANC staff with representatives of the Swedish Social Democratic Party

Bringing the organisation closer to the people

Both parties felt that a key characteristic of our movements is the way we relate to the people. We believe that we represent people, are in touch with them, encourage participation and partnerships and want to empower communities. Once we are in power it is easy to lose this relationship and everyone agreed that it needs special attention. Some approaches discussed were:

- We need to see ourselves as having to go back to the people, and not the people as having to come back to us.
- Every community has real issues and problems – the party has to engage with these on the ground. Where delivery is impossible, we have to explain and justify government priorities.
- The party must be organised in such a way that people with problems can get help, advice and support.
- Direct communication is very important – forums, report backs, even phone calls where possible. [In Sweden 500 000 people were phoned recently by the party to ask their opinion on an important issue – this really had an impact on people feeling their views were listened to.]
- We need to return to the old struggle values and not see ourselves as having the right to lead. We have to learn from the people, work with them and serve them – if we do that well, they may call us their leaders.

The seminar was too short to engage with all the issues the parties faced, but stimulated us to re-think many of our assumptions about building people's organisations. This article only summarises discussions held and is not meant to be a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and how we should respond to them. The ANC will have to have more in depth debates on these issues before the next national conference.

Evaluating the WCAR NGO forum (and preparing for the WSSD)

Thousands of people, including participants of the WCAR NGO Forum joined leaders of the ANC and the Alliance in the Global March Against Racism, held in Durban



Introduction

An NGO forum has the potential to contribute positively to UN processes. Civil society organisations can use such gatherings to build networks amongst themselves. This helps them to monitoring compliance by governments with the decisions they take at UN conferences. NGO Forums can also have an impact on the nature of the decisions taken at government conferences, since civil society can engage critically with governments and raise issues that would otherwise be ignored. Given an increasingly well organised and articulate corporate engagement in government policy processes, civil society actors have a responsibility to present an alternative set of solutions to important global problems, and to enliven policy debates with creative forms of mobilisation and engagement.

The World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) NGO Forum, held at the Kingsmead Cricket Ground in Durban from 28th August – 1st September 2001 was one such opportunity. As hosts to the WCAR, South African civil society had a special responsibility to ensure the success of this event. By success we mean achieving the following:

- Building global coalitions amongst civil society actors opposed to racism,
- Providing programmatic direction to these forces, and
- Influencing the outcome of the governmental process by ensuring that the voice of civil society *is heard on a range of issues.*

Meeting this responsibility required a broadly consultative and democratic process within South African civil society. Unfortunately, SANGOCO (which was tasked with this responsibility) opted not to pursue these objectives. Instead "Civil Society" was reduced to a narrow network of service and advocacy organisations affiliated to SANGOCO, who were themselves inadequately consulted. While such organisations have an essential role to play in international processes, including the provision of technical advice, most have no independent social base and are tied to funding from interest groups, governments, corporations or foundations, often with self-interested agendas. In this context the usefulness of such an NGO process, its claims to represent "the voices of the people", and its purpose needs to be properly interrogated.

As we prepare to host the World Conference on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in 2002 it is important that we interrogate the reasons for the WCAR NGO Forum's failure and learn from this experience.

Failure of the Durban Forum

In an opening speech that visibly inspired the vast majority of delegates to the NGO forum, and became a reference point in the numerous ensuing debates, President Thabo Mbeki remarked that:

"The central question that you, the delegates and participants, will have to answer in the clearest way possible is – what is to be done!"

As a festival of ideas the Durban Forum was highly educational. Over 8,000 delegates, representing more than 2,000 NGO's from around the world participated. The gathering was both entertaining and intellectually stimulating. It facilitated the building of networks of those opposed to racism, and provided a forum for broad and unrestrained debate. It allowed groups that have for a long time been marginalised from the international political discourse to raise their voices and be heard. For South African civil society it was particularly important in that it facilitated our reconnection with global Anti-Apartheid Movement networks.

However, the NGO forum did not succeed in answering the central question posed by the President. As a platform for building a global civil society alliance against racism or giving direction to emerging global movements it was a missed opportunity. In answer to the question "what is to be done?" it was an abject failure.

The substantive documentary outcome of the forum – an NGO Declaration and Programme of Action – was immediately rejected by a large number of participating NGO's. These included most of the international NGOs (such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International), Zionist NGOs and groups from eastern and central Europe. The reasons that these organisations gave for rejecting the declaration were clearly political, motivated primarily by their opposition to formulations regarding racist practices in Israel. However, these organisations were able to argue that:

> "the process of compilation and adoption for the NGO Forum Declaration and Programme of action was neither transparent nor democratic and [was] permeated with procedural violations. The draft documents were not submitted to delegates in a timely manner; the rules of procedure were unclear and repeatedly changed; the discussion was heavily restricted. Finally, the delegates were not given an opportunity to vote on the draft documents in their entirety"

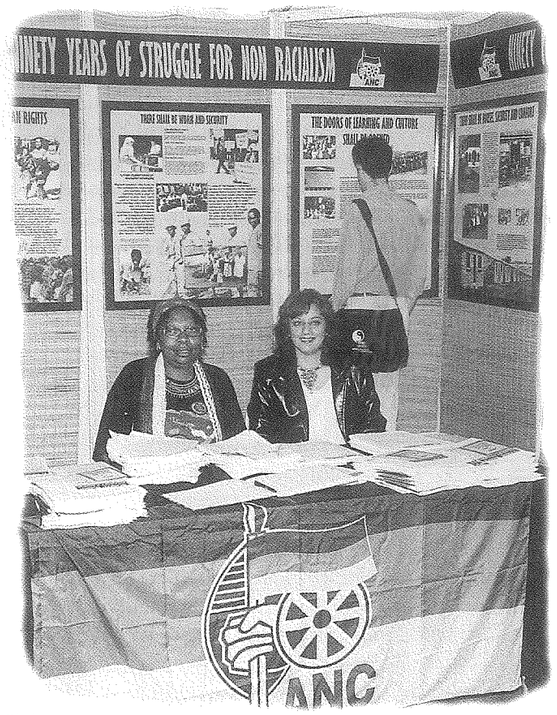
These claims are patently true: they cannot be rejected. It is therefore difficult to defend the outcome of the process no matter what it's political content. In an unprecedented step, Mary Robinson refused to recommend the NGO declaration to the delegates at the intergovernmental conference. Explaining herself at a press conference she said:

> "I became aware that the text has some inappropriate language and as I have said before, I will always support civil society but I am not able to do so now. Some paragraphs are very unhelpful. To a serious degree the language in this paragraphs is undermining my work. I cannot recommend it to the delegates"

There were three inter-related reasons for the failure of WCAR NGO forum:

- The international and domestic NGO movement is politically divided and organisationally weak;
- The international process was not transparent or democratic;
- SANGOCO failed to mobilise South African civil society to play a constructive role in the forum.

The ANC Exhibition at the WCAR NGO Forum attracted many visitors



A Weak and Divided NGO Community

First and foremost, the international NGO community is organisationally inchoate and politically divided. Apart from obviously irreconcilable divisions between say, Palestinian versus Zionists, there were clearly opposed groupings reflecting socio-economic divisions within and between countries. These included divisions between organisations from the North and the South as well as divisions between

"black" and "white" NGOs within the Northern bloc. In this context, the preparations for and management of the Forum were characterised by infighting and turf battles over the discharge of operational responsibilities. The main lines of division were between the WCAR Secretariat (which was based in South African and drawn from SANGOCO staff) and the International Steering Committee (ISC), which was based in Geneva until the eve of the forum. Further divisions between the WCAR Secretariat and the SANGOCO leadership exacerbated the problem, as did divisions within the ISC itself.

As a result of these divisions, the programme of the NGO forum (which had been prepared by the South African Secretariat and agreed upon by the Geneva based Prepcomm) was rejected and a new programme proposed on the first day. This caused confusion amongst delegates, speakers, raporteurs and other participants. The rejection of the programme led to angry public condemnation from some of the South Africans involved in drafting structures. These South Africans were themselves then publicly rebuked by the SANGOCO leadership during the NGO Forum's plenary session.

While the NGO Forum clearly failed on the day, its problems were firmly rooted in the preparatory process, at both South African and international levels. Had these processes been approached properly, it is possible that inherent divisions could have been overcome, and broad unity around a common civil society programme achieved.

No democratic international process

The second major problem was that the International Steering Committee (ISC), which was appointed to oversee the international preparations, was not accountable to any democratic mandate or body. And those selected to participate in the ISC tended to be better resourced, Geneva-based NGO's, often with close links to the UN system. This obviously disadvantaged the South.

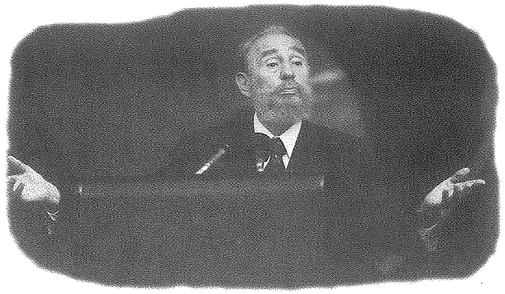
Prior to Durban, the ISC was responsible for the management of regional processes: an NGO forum was held in each continent. However, no transparent or democratic process was established for the appointment of NGO's to lead these regional processes or to represent regional groupings in the ISC. For example, the Geneva-based ISC would alone decide who would manage the African regional process or represent Africa on the ISC.

The consequence was that there was no recognised procedure through which conflicting demands of those present in Durban could be resolved. The structures charged with overseeing the process were not themselves democratic or legitimate and, therefore, outcomes were characterised by the principle of "might is right": those groupings who were the best organised, most well resourced, or most closely linked with the UN bureaucracy were strongly advantaged in matters of both administration and substance.

These weaknesses were compounded by the following:

- Over-reliance on the Internet, List Serves and other methods of communication that systematically discriminate against third world and grass roots organisations.

WCAR highlights:



Cuban president Fidel Castro addressing delegates



Angela Davids, Wally Serote and Baleka Kgositle at an ANC organised workshop



We also want to be heard... Jewish support for the Palestinian cause

- The dominance of the English language, both in the preparatory process and at the forum itself.

In terms of content, the outcome of these and other procedural weaknesses is that First World issues were dominant in the drafting process. This is clearly apparent in the final declaration, which considers the problem of racism overwhelmingly from the point of view of marginalised minorities in the developed countries. Third world perspectives, and especially African perspectives, are largely absent.

In the context of a weak and divided international NGO community, and no democratic or transparent international process, the responsibility fell to South African civil society to rescue the forum. But the problems inherent in the international process were exacerbated by the failure of South Africans to present any clear or effective voice, either in the preparatory process or during the forum itself.

Failure to Mobilise South African Civil Society

The moral and political force of South African delegates was clearly evident at the NGO Forum. The mantle of the South African freedom struggle was held up as a beacon to the struggling people of the world. A range of South African civil society actors were able to interact in an honest, principled and progressive manner with the diversity of groups vying for attention at the forum. However, instead of providing leadership and direction to the forum, South African civil society repeatedly embarrassed itself through public division and open squabbling in full view of the international NGO community.

The main responsibility for South African civil society preparations fell to the South African NGO Coalition (SANGOCO). The main reason for SANGOCO's failure is that it did not attempt to bring South African civil society into any meaningful or democratic consultative process prior to the NGO forum. They did not attempt mobilise South Africans into any coherent bloc.

While SANGOCO did convene a process (the South African Civil Society Initiative or *Asinamali* campaign), it can in no way claim to have been a democratic or inclusive. It was characterised by late notices, poor attendance of meetings and political manipulation by SANGOCO head office staff. There was no national forum in which South Africans could develop a clear position. Key organs of civil society, such as SANCO, COSATU, communities of faith, black business, the women's and youth movements and many others were not considered by SANGOCO to be essential components of the process. In fact, the only actors who were properly consulted were NGO service organisations, most of which lack any popular base and whose agendas are often driven by the exigencies of donor funding. It often appeared that SANGOCO head office staff were concerned more with the political outcome of the process than with solid organising, consultative processes or democratic debate.

Instead of mobilising the voice of South African civil society in a non-sectarian and inclusive debate, SANGOCO directed the bulk of its organisational and financial resources into building opposition to various South African government policies, which it felt it could usefully highlight in the context of an international conference. Much of SANGOCO's weakness in the forum is directly related to this attempt to act as both organiser and host of an official UN event, and at the same time the leader of a "social movement" against globalisation (and against the South African state) outside of the conference. It is clear that the bulk of SANGOCO's organisational abilities and financial resources were devoted to the latter. This work required SANGOCO to act in a divisive and openly sectarian manner. Not only did this involve the exclusion of key civil society actors from the process, but actually divided the even the narrow network of service organisations that forms SANGOCO's membership base and constituency.

Conclusion: Towards the WSSD

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) will be considerably bigger than the WCAR. Even at this early stage evidence of division and contestation around the organs of international NGO participation is becoming increasingly evident.

Given the obvious shortcomings of the WCAR process, we should avoid the repetition of the same mistakes. SANGOCO has already taken it upon itself to proceed with the establishment of a WSSD Civil Society Secretariat. However, once again the consultative process around the establishment of this "Civil Society" body was confined to the NGO sector and excluded all the other civil society actors. Among these central partners in South African civil society are:

- The trade union movement;
- The civic movement;
- The women's movement;
- The youth and students movement
- Black business and small business;
- The community of NGO's and CBOs
- Communities of faith
- Political organisations and liberation movements.

As we prepare for the WSSD it is essential that we build a proper, democratic, consultative civil society process. At the centre of our debate needs to be the realisation that whoever claims to represent South African civil society has a very important responsibility. That is to ensure that the broadest range of organisations are properly and substantially consulted in a manner which does not exclude key actors on the basis of narrow political interests, and that the product of these consultations accords with the broad views of the majority of South Africans.

Trends in civil society in SA today

By Charm Govender

We need to examine what we mean by civil society, what role it plays in society, recent developments in this sector and finally what role can we play, if any, to bolster its capacity to influence the current development terrain.

At the outset we need to posit our understanding of what civil society is, its role in determining the allocation of national resources and the current environment within which civil society operates.

Defining civil society

The traditional definition of civil society is that it comprises all organisations and institutions upwards of the family and up to the state (national, provincial and local). Institutions of civil society are therefore varied and perform a myriad of roles in society. They will range from the local SPCA, football club or a stokvel. It is estimated that there are between 55,000 and 100,000 organisations active within civil society that employ up to 500,000 workers. The bulk of these organisations are welfare oriented and are more prevalent in the poorer urban areas.

Many of the pre-94 organisations have gravitated to a development orientation with two main foci i.e. those that are product and service oriented; and those that undertake lobbying and advocacy functions. However the voluntary sector in South Africa is still understood to be very 'thin and frail', yet very much alive in present day South Africa.

So what then is the issue that we are concerned about? Within the current national context our concerns are about the relevance and role of a special category of civil society organisations, that impact on public policy and more especially those that impact on the allocation and disbursement of public funds.

Most of these organisations have their genesis in the critical period of the liberation struggle and provided services to their constituencies that a discredited and illegitimate state could not do. These services ranged from organisational support to civic or trade union formations, undertaking research to assist their client organisations to better understand the obstacles they were confronting and the options available in negotiating with an intractable state.



Sangoco hearings on poverty... Can NGOs and CBOs face up to the challenges faced by civil society?

A further important feature of these non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is that it attracted to them intellectual resources of a very high calibre as these individuals were reticent to be associated with an illegitimate state. This is an important factor to bear in mind when we begin to understand the current reality within which these NGOs work and accrue reasons for the relative weaknesses of NGOs in this period.

A second important component of civil society in the current political and development context would be the trade union movement and ANC/SACP branches. These organisations sometimes do play and have the potential to play an important role in determining the allocation and utilisation of public resources.

Changes in the NGOs and the CBOs in the recent past

Since 1994, NGOs have had to cope with new challenges. Key amongst these are:-

- The advent of a democratic and legitimate state, which freed those who were unwilling to be associated with the apartheid state to now work in the new state. Indeed it was the patriotic duty of politically conscious individuals with the apposite skills to enter the new state and assist in its transformation. Inevitably many of the erstwhile "comrades" did choose this route and rapidly forgot their origins. NGO, CBO and trade union capacity became depleted and this in some way contributes to the belief that the current crop of progressive organs of civil society is weaker.
- The service providers within the progressive civil society sector have historically been and for the foreseeable future will be dependent on donors for their funding. In the post-94 period many donors stopped seeing South African NGOs as a deserving recipient for funds. Many donors chose to establish bilateral links with government. This contributed to NGOs experiencing difficulties in continuing their operations. In the context of financial uncertainty even more of the NGO corps deserted for greater security within the public sector (this issue will be dealt with in greater detail later).
- The strategic focus of the NGOs became confused and diffused. Prior to 1994 the focus of the NGOs was to organise and support resistance to the apartheid state. Many NGOs became rudderless when a democratic dispensation came into being. Instead of focusing on what the democratic government was unable or unwilling to do they attempted to continue with their old tasks, often duplicating the functions of, especially, the local state.
- The clients or target group of the NGOs also faced the challenges of working in a new environment and in the case of the civic organisations; they entered into a sometimes conflictual relationship with the local ANC branches and also became weak. The civics that formed SANCO were the most devastatingly affected. However, the civics also played a role to unlock local development processes. The current development nexus calls for a new development vehicle and local communities are indeed engaging with local development programmes through local development fora. Local councils are also legally obliged to consult with communities and it is in their interests to ensure that local development fora exist with sufficient understanding of development issues. It is also debatable whether the consultation that occurs with local communities is in fact meaningful or whether local governments just go through the motions.
- Strains have appeared between progressive organs of civil society and the government around the adoption of the macro-economic strategy (GEAR); the non-disbursement of the funds allocated to the NDA and those raised through the national lottery; and the governments pronouncements around HIV/AIDS and the availability of retroviral drugs.

One can therefore conclude from this that whilst there are fewer NGOs of this type now than in the pre-94 period, the role that they have played is no longer required and/or new organisations are in the process of germination to fulfill the local communities' aspirations.

Need for strategic assessment of civil society

Indeed there is a need to assess the strength of civil society, especially if one considers government weaknesses to meet the needs of the poor in society. Since the advent and adoption of the GEAR strategy, we have witnessed the constriction of the economy, a rise in unemployment and widening wealth gaps. If anything at all one could say that GEAR has operated in reverse. The trade union movement has much to be worried about with these trends. Hence there is a clear reason to organise and mobilise its constituency against these reverses. If one tracks other consequences of this strategy in the way in which the budget is developed and its obsession with the deficit one can predict the relative decline of social expenditure and hence the quality and quantity of social services.

With these trends emerging there is a need of a movement for the poor to galvanise itself and bring public pressure to bear to call for increases in social spending and perhaps a reduction in defence or other non-essential spending.

Currently the cross-cutting themes of all progressive organs of civil society are poverty reduction, gender equity, HIV/AIDS and environmental issues.

The organisations identified above (trade unions, ANC/SACP branches, civic organisations and non-

governmental organisations) have the potential to organise themselves within an "a" alliance and engage the state on its poverty eradication performance. This brings into focus the role of ETU in building ANC branches.

It is understood that ETU provides training in essential skills for branches to function and perform their constitutionally defined functions. However the more serious question is whether the constitutional functioning of branches alone will achieve redress for the poor. Whilst, as a consequence of ETU work, branches work more efficiently, we must ask whether what they are doing is of the desired social consequence or whether branches are becoming 'conference attendees' and part of an election machinery. This raises the issue of how does an outside agency assist to develop a core of local ANC/SACP, trade union and civic leaders who possess the correct attributes of attitudes and values to engage the state around the needs of the poor.

The funding scenario for the civil society sector

This sector will include other organs of civil society in addition to the progressive organisation that we have identified.

For the period 1994 – 1999 it was estimated that about R18bn in international donations was utilised in the forms of grants, concessionary loans and technical assistance. The breakdown is as follows:

Education	22%
Good Governance and Social development	19%
Infrastructure and Services	13%
Water and Sanitation	11%
Business development	11%
Health	7 %
Others	16%

But of this 50% went directly to the government; 25% to parastatals; 15% to the civil society sector and 10% to others.

The trend has been a decline to civil society in the period 1994 to1995 and an increase in bilateral funding to the government. In the period 1995 to 1999 the civil society sector's share reached the 1994 levels without an adjustment for inflation i.e. it dropped in real terms. It must also be borne in mind that some of the aid funds that go to government reach the civil society sector through government allocations to individual line departments and to the TNDT/NDA.

The future scenario is likely to see an increase in foreign funding to the civil society sector borne out of frustration with the pace of government's delivery. However only certain types of organisations will be likely to benefit. These are organisations that appear more professional, can perform a watchdog function, hold government accountable, challenge assumptions in respect of delivery without risk of penalty, have a definable product and able to measure impact and those that assist with the establishment of independent NGO'S and CBOs.

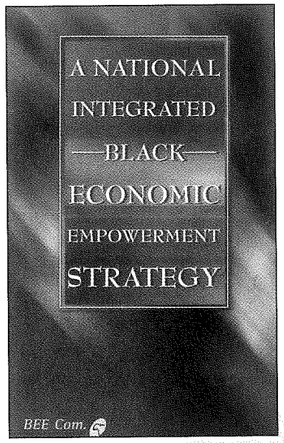
Overseas development aid allocations from various countries in SA Rand (to both the civil society and government sectors

COUNTRY	PERIOD	ANNUAL ALLOCATION	NOTES
EU	2000–2006	780m	For health, education, water, social housing, SSME support, human rights, NGO support
USA	2001–2002	300m	Democracy and governance, education, health, economic policy, market-driven employment, housingand municipal services
Sweden	1999–2001	405m	Education, democracy and human rights, urban planning and housing, private sector and economic cooperation, SMME development, culture and media, public administration, research and university cooperation
Germany		160m	Half of the aid is set aside for technical assistance and cooperation and the other half for financial cooperation
Japan	2000–2006	1.57bn	6% in grants and the rest in loans or export guarantees. Sectors are: health, education, water, SMME, community development, loans and credit guarantees for infrastructure, trade and investment promotion
UK	1999–2001	473m	Human development, rural development, environmental management, water and sanitation, democracy and good governance
Denmark	1999–2002	180m	Grants through DANIDA and environmental assistance through DANCED
FRANCE	1999–2000	51M	Technical, scientific and cultural cooperation, social infrastructure investment and private sector development (loans)
Norway	2000–2004	100m	This excludes direct assistance to the civil society sector
Netherlands	2000–2001	80m	Local government, youth, education, justice and gender

Black economic empowerment

An ETC Discussion Document

This statement aims to clarify our understanding of black economic empowerment (BEE) and how we can integrate it effectively into all our strategies.



The Black Economic Empowerment Commission released its report early this year

Background

Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) goes to the heart of the debate in South Africa about the fundamental tasks of transformation. BEE has been a consistent theme in ANC policy from at least the time of the Freedom Charter. Indeed, two of the Charter's main demands were: "The people shall share in the country's wealth!" and "The land shall be shared among those who work it!" The goal of BEE has therefore been a central pillar of the democratic Government's strategy for economic transformation.

The ANC's 1969 Strategy and Tactics emphasises that:

"In our country – more than any other part of the oppressed world – it is inconceivable for liberation to have meaning without a return of wealth and land to the people as a whole. It is therefore a fundamental feature of our strategy that victory must embrace more than formal political democracy. To allow the existing economic forces to retain their interests intact is to feed the root of racial supremacy and does not represent even a shadow of liberation."

The ANC Policy Guidelines (1992) gave details of policies required to fundamentally transform the South African political and economic landscape – in areas such as housing, land reform, the environment, health, social welfare, education and building the economy. It should be noted that all these policies were designed to create an enabling environment to empower the black majority.

With the regards to specific instruments to deracialise the economy, the Policy Guidelines said: *"management of both the public and private sectors will have to be de-racialised so that they rapidly and progressively come to reflect the skills of the entire population. Equity ownership will have to be extended so that people from all sectors of the population have a stake in the economy and power to influence economic decisions."*

The Reconstruction & Development Programme (RDP) set out the key development challenges for the new government that include: the creation of jobs; human resource development; provision of infrastructure; changes in ownership patterns and the reduction of inequality in society. The RDP document provided a more comprehensive framework (than the earlier documents) for addressing the issue of BEE. There were recommendations calling for:

- Aggressive land reform programme with substantial state funding.
- SMME development programmes.
- Reform of the financial sector to increase the amount of capital available for entrepreneurs; and
- The de-racialisation of business ownership.

In relation to ownership the RDP said:

"The domination of business activities by white business and the exclusion of black people and women from the mainstream of economic activity are causes for great concern for the reconstruction and development process. A central objective of the RDP is to deracialise business ownership and control completely through focused policies of Black Economic Empowerment. (RDP 4.4.6.3)"

The ANC's Strategy and Tactics document, as amended at the 50th National Conference, December, 1997 talks about:

"The creation of a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society. This, in essence, means the liberation of Africans in particular and black people in general from political and economic bondage. It means uplifting the quality of life of all South Africans, especially the poor, the majority of whom are African and female."

The Context

The Government has implemented various measures in different areas of public policy to advance the objectives of BEE. However, there is an absence of a coordinated and targeted approach that integrates all these efforts and measures their impact on advancing the levels of black participation in economic activities.

However, South Africa's economy is still characterised by inadequate investment, low levels of economic growth, huge development backlogs, vast inequalities in income and rising levels of unemployment and poverty.

As President Thabo Mbeki pointed out at the BMF National Conference in 1999:

"Five years after the arrival of the democratic order, we have not made much progress and may well be marching backward with regards to the de-racialisation of the productive property. Clearly something is not right."

There have been numerous obstacles that have hindered the successful implementation of the national transformation project. The ANC Strategy and Tactics, December 1997 mentions some of these obstacles:

"The current wide front of struggle has had the potential of dissipating focus. As such, some of the detailed action undertaken may not clearly reflect internal consistency and a relation to the strategic objective. While decisive progress has been made, the questions remain: "Have there been missed opportunities? Have the constraints been fully understood and confronted? Does the movement have the cadreship to carry out its objectives on all fronts?"

The NGC (July 2000) discussed the issue of Economic Transformation:

"Although macro-economic stability remains a necessary condition for growth, it is not a sufficient condition for growth, development and job creation" and that "other more targeted strategies are necessary in areas such as:

- *Control/ownership of productive property by black people and women, including the land.*
- *Job creation and reducing unemployment*
- *The reduction of the racial and gender disparities in income and wealth and in the building of a more egalitarian society.*
- *Access to opportunities for economic empowerment, education, training and experience especially in areas of higher education, the professions and senior management.*

This NGC resolution was taken forward by the NEC Lekgotla and the Cabinet Lekgotla in January 2001 and formed the basis for government priorities for the year. The targeted strategies that were agreed to were elaborated upon in President Thabo Mbeki's State of the Nation Address to parliament and Budget Speech in February 2001.

"The objectives we seek to achieve are moving the economy onto a high-growth path, increasing its competitiveness and efficiency, raising employment levels and reducing poverty and persistent inequalities."

The Cabinet Legkotla in January 2001 said that BEE is a key component of a sustainable growth path, which needs to be effectively supported, through integrated policies that significantly increase the economic contribution and productivity of all South Africans. This was reinforced in the State of the Nation Address, BEE was sited as an indicator against which performance would be measured.

The Black Economic Empowerment Commission (BEECom)

The BEECom under the auspices of the Black Business Council drafted a report on a "National Integrated BEE Strategy". The ANC met with the BEECom in a workshop to discuss the BEE Strategy on March, 3 2001. It was agreed at this workshop that the ANC would draft a Statement on BEE incorporating the outcomes of the workshop and subsequent consultations.

The BEECom submitted its report on to the President on April 11,2001. The DG Cluster on Employment and Investment was mandated to coordinate the response to the BEECom and to design a National BEE strategy.

The ANC believes that the BEECom report has made a significant contribution to the challenge of defining BEE. The report argues that BEE is a necessary measure aimed at increasing South Africa's growth prospects through programmes, which in a targeted and deliberate manner address the marginalisation of the black majority, by substantially increasing access to and the use of productive assets.

Such a strategy is both a political and an economic imperative. It is an investment in democracy, prosperity and security over the long term. BEE must become the responsibility of all Government departments, the private sector and civil society.

Definitions

The BEECom has encapsulated a broad definition of BEE. It argues:

- It is an integrated and coherent socio-economic process, located in the context of the country's national transformation programme, the RDP.
- It is aimed at redressing the imbalances of the past by seeking to substantially and equitably transfer and confer the ownership, management and control of South Africa's financial and economic resources to the majority of its citizens.
- It seeks to ensure broader and meaningful participation in the economy by black people to achieve sustainable development and prosperity.

This approach was adopted by members of the ANC's Economic & Transformation Committee (ETC) at the workshop on March 3, 2001.

The COSATU input to the ANC Policy Workshop said:

"We therefore do not see BEE narrowly as the enrichment of a few black individuals. Rather, we see it as empowerment of the black majority in the context of dealing with the legacy of apartheid and the NDR. We accept that the process of dealing with discrimination may ultimately lead to the development of a new black bourgeoisie. Our approach, however, is that for BEE to make sense for the majority of our people, the emphasis must be on blacks as a whole."

This definition is thus a significant contribution to the contextualisation and the design of a comprehensive BEE Strategy and Programme. It locates BEE in the overall transformation programme, the RDP, and it argues that the broader and meaningful participation of black people in economic activities is central to growth, poverty eradication and the building of a more egalitarian society.

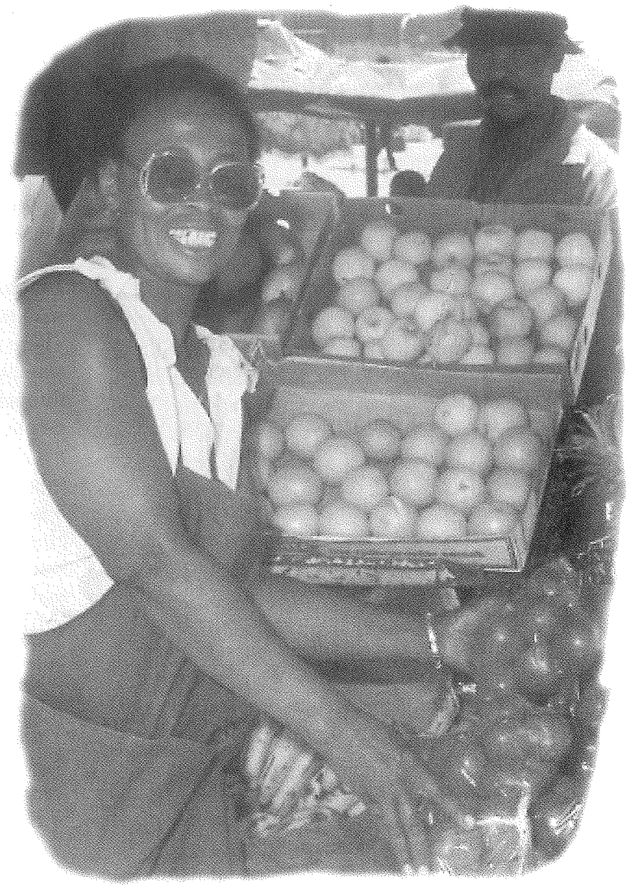
BEE as a component of a Growth Path

SA's transformation challenges can only be addressed in a context of a growing economy. However, economic growth whilst being a necessary condition to raise the living standards of the people, is unlikely to reduce the racial and income inequalities of the society unless the growth process is accompanied by creative economic and social programmes that address these inequalities. Furthermore, prevailing inequalities, unemployment and poverty have a fundamental impact on prospects for attracting productive investment and thereby reinforce the low growth cycle.

Economies that increase the participation of its people in production through equity ownership, skills development and social pacts between government, labour and business, amongst other interventions, are more likely to become competitive.

The government's current industrial policy needs to move beyond competitiveness strategies, which place a premium on expanding the current industrial base through complex manufacturing, beneficiation and knowledge based production. The Strategy must address the need for complementary policies (in the form of a BEE Strategy) to forge an accumulation path based on adding the factor inputs of the majority (land, labour, capital, innovation, entrepreneurship etc) into the economy. A range of interventions, (which include skills and business development, better workplace organisation and innovation support,) beyond the basic production process are thus required to enhance competitiveness.

A BEE strategy, which does not support all strata in society, and especially the most marginalised, will be ineffective.



In the face of prevailing constraints and trade offs that come with resource allocation and prioritisation, our programmes should address issues of providing real economic opportunities to various strata. A BEE strategy, which does not support all strata in society, and especially the most marginalised, will be ineffective.

It is simultaneously necessary to implement measures, which ensure the emergence of black human capital and black enterprises as dominant economic players with increasing influence. The inevitable consequence will be the growth of a black middle class. This is a necessary step in BEE process, which can contribute towards transformation in the economy.

Adopting the wider definition, the process cannot be led alone by black business and professionals or organisations such as the BEECom. It must include the rural poor and the working class. There is a view

that working class leadership of the BEE process must be highlighted. However an integrated BEE strategy will require an amalgamation of classes to drive the process.

However, there are a number of questions. Will the middle classes benefit at the expense of the rural poor and the working class? This illustrates the importance of an Integrated BEE Strategy that will empower the majority of South Africans who are poor. There will be different levels of empowerment (in other words, different benefits for different classes.) Therefore, there should be a correct balance in the benefits that accrue to the various classes.

Priority interventions

Access to assets
Achieving broader control and ownership of assets, both collectively and individually represents a critical strategy for BEE.

- The ANC believes that it is imperative to utilise government procurement as an instrument to promote BEE. New efforts must be made to reform national procurement in relation to both the institutional and the regulatory environment.
- Effective support for small and micro enterprise should be devised.
- BEE must support social capital – or models of collective enterprise development – and not just individual entrepreneurs. Forms of social capital include community infrastructure and state-owned assets, labour ownership and participation, cooperatives and self-employment.
- In terms of restructuring of state assets the ANC agrees with the need to improve on the broader empowerment outcomes of restructuring.
- Access to and productive use of land and natural resources is also an instrument to promote deracialisation of ownership.

Access to financial services and capital
The ANC believes that there is a need for various interventions, to promote an enabling framework, which access to financial services and capital for households, to facilitate affordable ownership, and increase levels of savings. The following areas have been raised for consideration:

- A review of the legislative environment to promote micro finance and alternative financial institutions.
- Discussions with key stakeholders in the financial sector at a financial sector summit to reach agreement on the key challenges and identify solutions.
- Legislative intervention including disclosure legislation for the banking sector.
- New instruments, which promote access to credit and which alleviate the absence of collateral amongst black people.
- The streamlining and coordination of public sector funding is key. A number of processes have therefore been initiated to enhance the activities of the DFIs. These include reviewing their mandates in terms of BEE.

Human resource development
The ANC agrees with the emphasis on skills development as a central component of BEE. The Government has adopted the Integrated Human Resources Development Strategy, which contains indicators and targets for all aspects of HRD. The training of the youth, who make up the majority of those unemployed, needs urgent attention.

Enhancing the role of the private sector and institutions in civil society
There is a need to promote partnerships between the state, the private sector, labour and civil society through social compacts and industry-based agreements. This will enable the participation of all economic actors in policy development and implementation. The ANC has the responsibility to mobilise and lead all social forces, including the emerging middle class, black business structures, community organisations and trade unions, with the aim of ensuring that their interests as a sector are closely linked with our broader transformation agenda.

It is also critical to ensure capacity and advocacy amongst groups in civil society, as significant agents of change. In the long term, this mobilisation requires funding for organisational development and the establishment of participatory processes and forums. Moreover, government at all levels must prioritise engagement, dedicating the necessary time and resources for broad consultation and negotiation. Business organisations in particular can play a role in transformation. The ANC therefore believes that it is necessary for it to support the development of a viable business organisation framework, which actively promotes BEE.

Ensuring appropriate Governance of the Strategy
The ANC supports the proposal to establish a Black Economic Empowerment Council located in the office of the President. The structure would promote the BEE strategy and play a monitoring and evaluation role of the implementation of BEE across the economy, against agreed targets.

The make-up of the structure, the authority and mandate would require further investigation. Apart from the national or broader level structures, there is a need to promote adequate institutional capacity at a local level. This could also involve a training component for community service into undergraduate training. The new activism for the development of the country should go down to the level of village-level development workers.

Indicators and targets
The Strategy would spell out measurable and realistic outcome targets that will underline the desired structural changes in the economy. These targets would provide for a national framework against which progress in achieving BEE will be measured.

The following indicators have been identified by the ANC, against which to measure the success of a BEE strategy.

- Income levels
- Ownership
- Control
- Skills

Regulatory environment
The BEECom proposed the promulgation of a BEE Act, which would define BEE and establish the appropriate institutional structures. It was argued that substantial progress in increasing the levels of participation by black people in economic activities could not be achieved if left to the market alone. The ANC believes that legislative interventions to promote an enabling environment for BEE are necessary. Existing legislation should be investigated to advance BEE in a number of areas. It will also be necessary to draft a new piece of legislation, aimed at providing clarity and guidance on BEE.

Implementation of the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS)
The Government has begun the implementation of an Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme (ISRDS). The ANC agrees with the contention that the promotion of economic activity, deracialisation of and access to land ownership and support measures to ensure appropriates use of land are critical elements of the ISRDS which require additional focus and which contribute to BEE.

Targeted Development Investment (TDI)/Investment for Growth Accord
The BEECom recommended a TDI Accord to boost the levels of fixed investment and economic growth. The BEECom focuses on the redirection of financial investment and calls for a larger percentage of Life and Retirement Company's total assets, as well as the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) to be diverted towards productive investments in areas of national priority over an adjustment period of five to seven years

Some successes have been achieved in government-led infrastructure projects; in improving collaboration between and the mandates of the DFIs and finally in the design of sectoral or industry strategies e.g. in the Motor Industry Development Programme. However, government efforts to attract appropriate investment have faced a number of challenges, especially in terms of the mobilisation of sufficient resources, adequate private sector investment and BEE.

There is growing consensus that the government itself needs to demonstrate a commitment to invest in its own projects and thereby lower the risk for the private investor. Furthermore, that development should be stimulated through a targeted investment strategy, which entails a coordinated mobilisation of resources and mechanisms to promote co-financing in a manner, which minimises risk. The ANC is of the view that it is possible to design such funding vehicles.

The mobilisation of social and private capital behind a defined strategy is fundamental to promoting appropriate targeted investment. A major source of resource mobilisation is savings under management by life and retirement companies as well as the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF). A proposal that government should allocate an increasing portion of its own pension fund towards such investments should be explored through an examination of the activities of the Pubic Investment Commissioners (PIC).

The traditional areas of investment for retirement funds have been the domestic and international equity, fixed income and property markets. More recently there has been a move locally towards building a socially responsible investment (Targeted Development Investments) class that can serve as a vehicle to mobilise retirement savings for infrastructural and BEE projects. It is thus also necessary to reach agreement with the private sector on a framework for enhancing targeted development investment funding. The notion of an Investment for Growth Accord, which accommodates some of these issues, should be pursued through discussion between the social partners.

An additional challenge is to increase the effectiveness of public sector funding instruments and incentive schemes. This would include enhancing DFI activities; matching support instruments to strategic priorities; and improving the administration of schemes and ensuring targeted support for black companies. Although many of the programmes are supposed to be biased in favour of SMEs and firms owned by black persons, it appears that the bulk of funds have often not in fact gone to such enterprises.

Conclusion

In 10 to 20 years, South Africa must be a completely different country to the one we know. Our human resources strategy must have eradicated illiteracy and produced thousands of black accountants, engineers and scientists. Our workplaces must be areas

of equality and opportunity to advance through training. Our workers must have a meaningful influence in the production process. The levels of small and medium enterprise activity in the key growth sectors of the economy should have increased and the competitiveness of these industries substantially improved.

Together, we must enable a black woman in a rural area to participate in the economy, to save money, to increase the circulation of money in her area. If it is possible to add value to the economic activities of most of the country's women, the multiplier effects on the whole nation will start a virtuous cycle of economic growth, investment and job creation.

As the ANC we must mobilise around the idea that a BEE strategy is required to eradicate the vast inequalities that characterise our economy and thereby ensure black people can actually participate in mainstream economic activities. This inclusion and participation of the majority of our people in the economy is fundamental to our ability as a nation to expand the productive base and grow our economy.

BEE is therefore a necessary measure and the responsibility of all stakeholders to implement. A BEE strategy on its own will not solve all the problems facing our economy and our people, similarly an employment strategy and a poverty relief strategy and finally an industrial strategy are key drivers of growth. As a result of their direct relation to each other these strategies must be must be implemented simultaneously and in an integrated manner.

The DOHA developmental agenda

By Alec Erwin

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) is an important organisation. Whilst it has become the target of protest there was no country that did not attend the Conference in Doha, Qatar. The Peoples Republic of China and the customs area of Taiwan were accepted into the WTO. Doha was an intense and critical moment for the global economy.

The essence of the Doha negotiation in November was to seek a new balance between the needs of developed and developing countries. More accurately it was to redress an imbalance against the developing countries that exists in the world trade system.

Accordingly, after six intense days the Director General of the WTO considered carefully the name, the Doha Development Agenda, for the outcome of the negotiation. This was an achievement for the developing world that will require a great deal of hard negotiation and a consolidation of strategy to give it meaning.

However, the fact that he could suggest the appellation was in itself fairly remarkable if we consider the events that had preceded the Ministerial Conference.

During 1999 before the Seattle Conference the developing countries had focussed on the many issues that were either outstanding from the Marrakech Agreement or which could be described as problems in the implementation of that Agreement. Many developing countries were reluctant to deal with matters other than these implementation issues.

The Seattle Conference failed. In the aftermath of this failure positions hardened and eighteen months of virtual inactivity followed in the Geneva headquarters of the WTO. The battle lines were clear. It was a question of dealing with the implementation issues and the built-in-agenda alone or of having another Round.

To understand what this means requires a brief look at the history of trade negotiations. In the 1920s it became clear that there would have to be some form of multilateral trade agreement. This led to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The then South African state was one of the founder members.

Members proceeded by means of a method of negotiation called a round – a negotiating Round. This meant a single negotiation, over a few years, tried to reach agreement on a number of issues. The outcome of the negotiation would generally depend on an agreement being reached on all issues – the so-called single undertaking. Unionists and our own negotiators at Kempton Park will be familiar with this method. It has a lot of advantages, as issues can be traded one against the other to try and seek an overall balance of interests.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was formed during one of the Rounds in the 1960s to assist developing countries. South Africa occupied the Presidency of UNCTAD from 1996 to 2000.

The Uruguay Round started in 1985 and led to the Marrakech Agreement in 1993. The achievement of this Round was the formation of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) a new and fundamental development in the global economy. It is a rules-based organisation that can discipline members that break the rules. This added a new dimension to the world trading system.

Another important aspect of the Marrakech Agreement was that it included new economic relations in the rules based agreements. These were matters related, among others, to investment support measures, intellectual property and agricultural production.

In the Marrakech Agreement not all the issues could be completed and the member States agreed to continue the negotiations by a particular time. Agriculture and trade in services were the two main such issues. These were therefore referred to as the built-in-agenda.

What this meant was that the built-in-agenda had to proceed irrespective of what else happened. In addition to this the developing countries succeeded in getting acceptance that the implementation issues – some 92 of them – should also be dealt with. This last was an important achievement for which India and Pakistan need to take most of the credit.

The question that then arose was whether other issues should be added to the negotiation agenda. If this was done then in effect the member States were embarking on a new Round. The new issues had been identified in Singapore in 1996. They were investment, competition, trade facilitation, government procurement and labour standards. This was a complex agenda and the European Union (EU) insisted that environment be moved from consideration in a Committee to the negotiation. Each of these issues

was at different stage of consideration by the WTO in 2001. This set of issues came to be known as the New Issues or the Singapore Issues.

Their addition was bitterly opposed by some developing countries. The reasoning for this opposition was sound but the choice was really one of strategy and not the substance of the issues. Again India and Pakistan were the leaders of this opposition. Around them they formed a Like-Minded Group of developing countries mainly from Africa and Asia.

At the other end of the spectrum was the European Union with a very ambitious agenda to commence negotiations on all the new issues. The previous USA administration largely shared this view with the exception of not wanting to negotiate the anti-dumping measures. However, the new USA administration did not have such an ambitious agenda but retained the stand on anti-dumping.

Japan supported a new Round but was defensive on agriculture and strong on the need to deal with anti-dumping and subsidies.

There were no developing countries that supported the ambitious EU agenda. However, there were many who were prepared to consider a modified, less ambitious and carefully defined agenda. They were prepared to consider this because the rapid changes in the global economy needed to be accommodated within the WTO. In addition a wider agenda made it possible to achieve key objectives in agriculture and industrial tariffs.

This group of developing countries was flexible on the timing of negotiations on the Singapore issues – they did not see them as urgent priorities but accepted that they would have to be addressed sooner rather than later. The developing countries in the Cairns Group would have been good examples of this approach.

The Cairns Group was originally formed to deal with the agricultural protectionism of the EU, Japan and Korea. The USA position on agricultural support is more complex but it exists. The Cairns Group is composed of developed economies like Canada, Australia and New Zealand and key developing economies in South America and South East Asia. South Africa became the first African member of the Group a few years ago. With countries like Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand and South Africa in the Group it was clear that this was also a powerful group of developing countries.

The Cairns Group economies are similar in that their agricultural potential is greater because they have the industrial capacity to fully develop their agriculture. The protectionism and agricultural support of the EU and others is an immediate problem because the Cairns Group have a considerable export potential that is being blocked. In more recent times the USA has moved closer to Cairns.

Other developing countries such as India are more interested in the fact that agriculture is the major economic activity for the economy as a whole and exports are not such a factor. In Africa the level of agricultural development and the problems in African economies has caused them to focus on the need for assistance rather than expanding their export capacity. It is for this reason that the New Partnership for African Development focuses on agriculture, industrialisation and the ability to export.

The developing countries as a whole would broadly support the stand on agriculture in relation to the EU. However, the Cairns Group was prepared to make it a deal breaker. The EU countered this with an insistence that trade and the environment be negotiated. This raised major issues around what this would mean in practice. Cairns was not opposed to the environmental matters – Brazil had hosted the Rio Summit and ten years later South Africa would host the next – they feared a new form of protectionism in Europe.

This somewhat simplified categorisation of the economies within the WTO membership is enough to outline the major battle lines in Doha. The countries organise their delegations on almost military campaigning lines. South Africa matched the best in this. We were proud of our abilities considering we are in fact a new democracy and have only recently participated fully in such processes.

One battle line was between the overly ambitious and self-centred agenda defined by the EU on the one side and the very narrow agenda of India. It was this battle line that brought the Conference to the brink of a second failure.

The second major battle line was between the Cairns Group and the EU. Japan, Korea, Norway and Switzerland associated with the EU. This related to the question of agriculture and the need to phase out the excessive support for agriculture in the latter countries. Agriculture, as we have seen, is part of the built-in-agenda but the negotiation mandate was too vague for the Cairns Group and they wanted to redefine it and bring it into the new negotiation.

A third battle line was between the USA and the rest on the question of entering negotiations on refining the anti-dumping and subsidies agreements.

This was and is a complex matrix of interests. At times in Doha it seemed an absolutely insurmountable problem. In previous Rounds it was easier for the Quad – the EU, Canada, USA and Japan – to come to an agreement and then line up the rest behind it. The power of the developing countries prevented this and a great deal more time was needed for consultation and negotiation. The lack of time itself could have led to the failure of the Conference.

Underlying this matrix of interests and battle lines was a larger question of what it would mean if there were a second failure. The active trading countries, including South Africa, made it clear that they would have no option but to enter further bilateral negotiations and to try and strengthen the regional trading blocs of which they were members. The prospect was one of more regional blocs and complex overlapping agreements with a tendency to regional protectionism. This was a particularly dangerous prospect for the economically weaker developing economies.

Whilst this would be an inevitable result of failure it was a dangerous prospect that sensible leaders would want to avoid. On the sixth day of the Conference and after nearly 36 hours of intense final negotiations following the report back on the facilitation and consultation processes this was the choice that faced 142 countries.

Africa came to occupy the lynchpin position. Africa was divided at the outset. Quite correctly the African countries were wary of the idea of a new Round. The majority of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are also in Africa and they were particularly wary.

In the Conference the LDCs, the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) and the OAU members met as a group. In this Nigeria (OAU), Kenya (ACP) and Tanzania (LDCs) came to fulfill a key role. In addition Botswana was a deputy chair of the Conference and South Africa and Egypt were asked to help the Chair (Qatar) as facilitators or ' friends of the Chair' in WTO language. African states came to occupy influential positions in the Conference.

Only South Africa and to some extent Egypt were in strong support of the Cairns Group and therefore part of that battle line. However, the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) members were more open to the general position of those developing countries in Cairns. North Africa and certain countries in West Africa were also closer to the Cairns type position. The rest of Africa and the island states were closer to India. Pakistan moved closer to Cairns.

The crucial dimension of the debate on these issues rested on how to deal with the reality of a lack of capacity to enter into a Round and the consequences of another failure. For Africa, excluding South Africa where we have now built considerable capacity (increasingly this is a SACU capacity), this is a very real dilemma. However, India occupied an interesting and problematic position in this regard. India cannot claim a lack of capacity. Their resistance stems from their economic size and the fact that they are not that dependent on trade as well as a complex political configuration. They can defend their interests in all situations whereas the position for most developing countries is not the same. The latter could find themselves even more on the margins of the system as others race into agreements.

The entry of China into the WTO during the Conference was of profound importance. They can and will swing the balance of power. China supported the idea of a carefully defined Round.

At the 11th hour the focus rested on Africa. After some 24 hours of continuous negotiation a point was reached where the choice was between a delicately crafted and carefully defined agenda for a wider negotiation – in effect a Round – and failure. It was impossible to persuade the developed countries and key developing countries that we should only deal with the built-in-agenda and implementation. Of particular concern to many developing countries were the considerable gains made in the negotiation. Here we need to remind ourselves of the single undertaking idea. It was all or nothing.

The declaration on health and the TRIPS agreement; agriculture; industrial tariff negotiations with defined objectives; a waiver for the Cotonou Agreement with the EU and the ACP countries; major commitments on technical assistance and real progress on implementation were some of these gains that would redress the imbalance of Marrakech.

Africa debated and decided on the Doha Development Agenda. This was the built-in-agenda with new terms for agriculture; outstanding implementation issues to be completed; problem areas of industrial tariffs to be addressed; negotiation on investment, competition, trade facilitation, government procurement to be de facto decided on about two years from now; environment to be negotiated in a tightly defined mandate and a statement on labour standards.

This left India isolated with a few Caribbean supporters and it finally entered the consensus about fifteen minutes before the Conference ended.

Africa realised that if it coordinates it does have power in the WTO. Now the task of coordinated negotiation has to start. However, we can feel confidence in our abilities since we were all inspired by how a small country in the developing world – Qatar – was able to host and chair such a crucial Conference. The developing world showed on all accounts that it was in the process of a Renaissance.

South Africa's delegation of government, community, labour, and business representatives worked immensely hard – each and every one was a critical representative and we can feel proud of their skill and knowledge. For South Africa and our continent Africa we may look upon this time as a turning point in the role we play in world economic affairs.

Women and the national budget

By Dorothy Mahlangu

"Society can never be free, unless women are fully emancipated from all forms of discrimination and oppression"

The role of the Budget cannot be over-emphasised when we talk about the emancipation of women. The budget is an important tool for the ANC-led government to implement policies that will change the lives of our people for the better. It is through the budget that the ANC government will be judged in terms of its priorities to the poor, the majority of whom are women, i.e. how much has been spent in programmes that directly assist women, change their lives and improving their status.

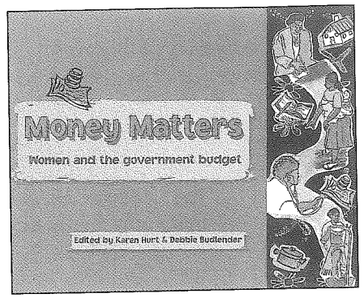
Before 1994, the budget was the affair of the few, it was a secret and was aimed at serving the interests of the white minority at the expense of the majority.

Post 1994, we have the budget process which is driven by the Cabinet through different consultative structures at all levels, i.e. national, provincial and local government. Over the past few years, government has also adopted the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), which is used as a planning tool by government departments. Parliament can also utilise the other years to engage with civil society and for their views to be taken on board for consideration by both parliament and the executive.

It will be fair to give account how the resources were allocated before 27 April 1994, i.e. every rand spent was divided as follows: 60% personnel (salaries of civil servants); 20% debt servicing cost; 11% welfare programmes and the 9% remainder for all other programmes other than the ones outlined above.

The new democratic government was therefore confronted with the challenge of fundamentally changing budget priorities and taking measures aimed at generating savings in two major areas of spending: personnel and debt service costs. This did not give the government much scope for maneuvering, but we had to be resolute to achieve the objective of ensuring that all the citizens benefit proportionally. We could not say all those who were privileged in the previous system will no longer benefit and cut them out of the system, we had to ensure that we are able to continue to provide to all the citizens without discrimination.

The Women's Budget Initiative: Our Constitution and government are committed to the building of a truly non-sexist society and progressively addressing the legacy of the past. However, despite the changes ushered in by the democratic dispensation, there are gaps, such as the lack of a budget document that gives a gender breakdown of spending by departments.



This book, published by IDASA helps women to understand the national budget

Identifying this gap, women MPs and women from NGOs started the Women's Budget Initiative, which was and remains an important tool to assess the impact that the main budget has on women since the democratic government came to power. Although called the "Women's Budget", it is not a separate budget, but a rather a policy tool that does gender breakdowns for the purposes of analysis and further improving our policies on a continuous basis.

As a result of the advocacy work done through the Women's Budget Initiative, the 1998 Budget Review gave disaggregated data on a number of programmes that impact on the position and the status of women.

Economic status of women: When we analyse the impact that the allocated resources have had on women, we look back, learn from this in order to plan ahead. One of the things highlighted by the Women's Budget, for example, is that despite the increase in allocation to social services, there is still a lot to be done to improve the lives of women and their participation in the economy. In the economic sphere, the following areas of the Budget impact on women:-

- The discriminatory practice of taxing women differently from men was abolished and women have also been the main beneficiaries of tax cuts aimed at lower income levels, where women tend to be in the majority.
- In the 2001/2002 budget, illuminated paraffin was zero rated from VAT. This is one commodity used by women as a source of energy for cooking, heating and other household functions. This has been made possible by the fact that the South African Revenue Services (SARS) has improved its capacity to collect taxes. Despite this positive development it is important to indicate that as a nation we need to move towards electrifying as many homes as possible.
- In keeping with the transformation of the economy from the white minority to black majority talking about women entrepreneurs is inevitable. The financial sector still practice discrimination between men and women, despite the fact that it is proven that women are better debt payers than men.
- The continuous investment in infrastructure will further improve the lives of women for the better. These projects will assist women to be involved in reconstruction programmes and acquire skills at the same time, which may help them to establish their own business.

Housing: Since 1994 many women are able to own houses, irrespective of their marital status, age and race. The Department of Housing has adopted a policy stance which says that in all the contracts that are given to emerging contractors, 10% of them should be given to black women. This sector is also empowering women through the People's Housing Schemes, which are largely composed of women.

Health: This is one area, which directly impacts positively or negatively on women, and amongst the clear policy positions in this sector is the drive towards increasing access to primary health care and recognition of the reproductive rights of women. Programmes include free health care for pregnant mothers and children under the age of six; access to safe terminations of pregnancy, the many clinics that were and are being built in and around where people live, so that women no longer have to walk such long distances. The substantive budget, which is in the range of about 50% of the Department of Health overall budget, is directly benefiting women.

Education: The universal access to basic education through the schooling system, adult basic education and other skills training programmes continue to make an impact on the high levels of illiteracy amongst women. However, educating the girl child continue to pose serious challenges because of high rate of drop-out by girls (especially at secondary level). Some of these reasons are that girls are sometimes expected to leave school and mind their siblings while parents are working elsewhere and sexual harassment by their peers and by educators and in rural areas lack of transport to schools. As a nation we need to resolve issues of culture and tradition, which continue to discriminate against the girl child.

Water affairs: Many women benefited from Presidential lead projects aimed at poverty alleviation, such as the Work for Water programme. These projects employ members of communities to remove invasive species near and around dams and rivers so that water can flow with ease. Such programmes provide women with an income, and at the same time communities benefit directly through their efforts. They are also trained and given skills for future purposes.

We have made great strides in providing access to water and sanitation, but many women in rural areas are still without clean and safe water – as so painfully illustrated by the cholera epidemic in KZN. Much more work needs to be done in this area, in the context of the Integrated Rural Development strategy. This issue impacts directly on the quality of life and time of women, because women who live in the rural areas are the ones who have to walk the long distances to fetch water from rivers or dams.

Social Development: The deracialisation and redistributive nature of our social security system being introduced since 1994, has benefited many black people and women in particular, especially such social grants as pensions and child support grants. However, our comprehensive social security system is still evolving and we need to improve on the delivery systems of the already existing grants so that they indeed reach the core target groups. This can only lead to further improvements in the lives of the poor, the majority of whom are women. The Child Support Grant, for example, when optimally implemented is expected to increase to cover over 3 million children in the medium term.

The poverty alleviation projects budgeted for by the department also have women as their main target group, and most of these projects are run by women and have created both part-time and full-time jobs. According to statistics from the department, 67% of the beneficiaries of the poverty alleviation programmes are women.

Conclusion

The above scenario presents some positive developments since the democratic dispensation. However, in order to build on these and to ensure the acceleration of programmes that fundamentally change the status of women, it will be important that departments be required to give disaggregated data by gender for purposes of monitoring.

This process was started by the National Treasury, and it should be a requirement that all other departments and tiers of government should comply with it. It will be important for government to budget for this project from its own revenue; we cannot simply rely on donor funded.

This will allow us a nation and as an organisation to analyse the impact that the budget has on women, our programme to fight poverty, empower women and build a truly non-sexist society.

The end of an era:
A tribute to comrade Govan Mbeki



By Deputy President Jacob Zuma, 8 September 2001

During the past week, the entire country has been united in mourning the fall of a giant of our struggle. Messages of condolences have come from all over the world, giving a comprehensive account of the life of Isithwalande Govan Mbeki.

We are gathered here today to pay our last respects and to celebrate the life of this departed hero.

Oom Gov was, no doubt, one of the most outstanding thinkers and strategists of our liberation movement, and indeed, his passing on closes an important chapter in the struggle for freedom and democracy in our country.

It is truly the end of an era, given how the life of Oom Gov was intricately interwoven with the history of this country. He was born in 1910, the year of the Union of South Africa. In addition, Oom Gov passes on just as the ANC is preparing for a celebration of its 90th birthday next year, while he celebrated his 90th birthday last year.

Comrades and friends, Oom Gov has played his role and made his contribution to the liberation of this country and its people, and contributed to the laying of foundations for a stable and prosperous society.

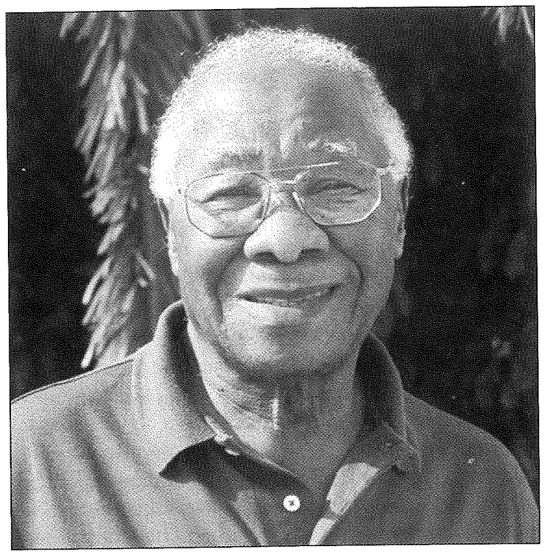
His record speaks for itself. He was a rare breed of a freedom fighter, making an invaluable input in developing ideas at the level of strategy and tactics of the African National Congress. He was one of the few political intellectuals who combined theory and practice successfully.

But he was also much more than a revolutionary intellectual. During his lifetime he set a sterling example of dedication to the rural poor and the working class of South Africa. A disciplined and hardworking member and leader of the ANC and SACP, Oom Gov devoted his life to the struggle for the liberation of his people.

Oom Gov worked in different organisations from organising peasants in the Transkei to organising teachers and workers in the urban centres. His extensive work among peasants in the Transkei resulted in the publication of the remarkable book: *"South Africa: The Peasants Revolt."*

The taking up of arms by the peasants in Pondoland provided him with rationale for the adoption of the armed struggle later.

Oom Gov was a born educator, and his love for imparting knowledge, for the sake of bringing about fundamental change was unequalled. For him, knowledge was a spear to be used to fight oppression. As part of the process of building the organisation, and ensuring an informed cadreship, he organised political study groups in Port Elizabeth, which ensured that the movement became vibrant.



Isithwalande Govan Mbeki

When time demanded he also organised and strengthened the underground structures of the movement. In this regard, his insistence and punctuality and disciplined proved to be extremely vital for the ANC. In the process he developed and produced many cadres who are national leaders today in government and in the ANC. He had a way of instilling dedication and inspiration to volunteers and cadres of the ANC, which in turn earned him an enormous amount of respect in the ranks of the movement.

His role as a revolutionary intellectual has been recognised throughout the world. For his contribution to the analysis of the South African economic and social formation, the University of Amsterdam awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1997. After his release from prison in 1987 he was appointed Chancellor of the University of Fort Hare.

If there is anything we should learn from Oom Gov, it is the importance of writing and recording our history. During six decades in the struggle, he has left a formidable legacy of producing a substantial body of writing as both a journalist and author.

After leaving Fort Hare with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science and Psychology, he published a book of essays, titled, Transkei in the Making, in 1939.

Journalism and theoretical writing became one of his principal spheres of political activity after he founded Inkundla Yabantu (the People's Forum), a fortnightly tabloid that opened up its pages to African intellectuals of every political persuasion.

After shifting base to Port Elizabeth from the Transkei in the mid-1950s, he served as the Eastern Cape editor of Advance, New Age and the Spark, weekly newspapers that were successively banned by the apartheid regime. He also founded and edited Isizwe, a Xhosa language popular newsletter that circulated in the Eastern Cape during the late 1950s.

While in prison, he turned disadvantage into advantage, and produced a book entitled, Learning from Robben Island, which is a collection of essays ranging from political economy, organisational development to an analysis of the apartheid state.

Oom Gov was greatly admired and loved by all the cadres of the movement, young and old. He was a man of firm views and ideas, an independent thinker who resolutely stood for what he believed in.

Oom Gov was a source of inspiration to all, particularly we, the younger generation. To us, Oom Gov belongs to the leadership that had the last authority on the matters of strategy and policy of the ANC. When Oom Gov, Cde Walter Sisulu, Madiba and others of that generation spoke, we knew there was nothing else for us to say. The ANC had spoken.

With our long stay on Robben Island, we the younger generation, also regarded them as fathers. To many of us therefore, in Oom Gov we lost a leader, a comrade, a revolutionary intellectual, a teacher and an organiser.

If we feel the sense of loss so much, we understand how much the family grieves on losing such as a pillar of strength. To Mama Mbeki, whilst you were a revolutionary in your own right, you still had to be strong enough to see your sons leave the country and go into exile, while your son languished in prison for 23 years.

You have led a difficult life, but the resilience and bravery you have shown in the face of adversity is to be admired. To your children, our brother and sister, Moeletsi and Linda, as well as our President Thabo Mbeki and the rest of the family, your loss is the country's loss.

To sister Linda and brother Moeletsi, you have shown a lot of strength and courage and survived your own harassment and that of your parents as you were growing up.

To Cde President, I know how you feel about this great loss of your father who meant so much to you. You have shown extra-ordinary fortitude to rise within the ranks of the African National Congress, to become its President, and that of the country, despite the difficulties of your childhood, where your father was taken away and imprisoned, while you also suffered intense harassment and hardship. You took a decision that a permanent solution to all of this would be to put all efforts into the struggle for liberation.

Up to this day you continue working for the betterment of the lives of the people of this country, having to deal with numerous difficulties and constraints.

Personally, I feel a great sense of loss as well as due to the time I spent on Robben Island with Oom Gov and other comrades. Most importantly, due to working closely with you Cde President for close to 30 years, at both strategic and operational levels, I also began to seem Oom Gov as my father too. We have survived many hurdles together, Cde President, during those years, we have shared views and have always been in agreement on all issues. We have also always complemented each other.

Due to working with you closely, I therefore felt quite privileged on being present and sharing the first telephone contact between you and Oom Gov in Harare in 1987, after his release from prison. As Oom Gov spoke to us, it truly felt like a father speaking to us as his sons. Those are some of the memories we will treasure forever about Oom Gov.

Comrades and friends, since the beginning of his political life, Oom Gov was a fervent believer in the absolute necessity of transforming our society to create a better life for all in South Africa.

We should therefore take comfort in the fact that he lived to see the freedom and democracy that he so gallantly fought for. We should also appreciate that he was able to serve this country, as Deputy President of the Senate, after the first democratic elections. In this way, he assisted with the consolidation of our new system of co-operative governance that enhanced our constitutional democracy.

Comrades, as the ANC in Government, we commit ourselves to continue working for the achievement of the ideals that Oom Gov represented. The creation of a better life for all will continue to be at the top of our agenda.

In conclusion, we know that the heroic example of selfless dedication set by Oom Gov will continue to inspire generations to come.

Many years from now, long after our children and even their children have left this earth, after several generations have handed over the torch of freedom – after the passage of many decades – young South Africans will speak with pride and admiration of the founding mothers and fathers of this nation. They will speak of one Govan Mbeki.

Sithi lala ngoxolo Zizi! You have fought a good fight. Ayafa amaqhawe kodwa ziyasala izibongo!

Oration of Thabo Mbeki at the funeral of Joe Modise



By President Thabo Mbeki, 8 December 2001

A mere eight days away from the 40th birthday of Umkhonto we Sizwe, we have gathered at this place to prepare to lay to rest the mortal remains of a warrior and a patriot. We have convened on these grounds to celebrate the immortal soul of a patriot and a warrior. We are meeting here to say a fond farewell to another human being, a parent, a friend, a comrade, a leader.

At this moment of parting, each one of us will remember many little things about Joe Modise, that constitute part of the composite picture that makes up the biography of the deceased.

Because he was as human as you and I, that biography will tell a story of positive things and negative things, of victories and of defeats.

Some of those who opposed him while he lived will continue to oppose him even as he lies in his grave. They will engage in a macabre search for the negatives they believe are important to their unrelenting struggle even against the dead.

Nje ngamagqwira, ja ka baloi, in their unceasing struggle to defeat what Joe Modise stood for, they will work to ferret beneath the mounds of the graves, to find the negative things with which to infuse the evil spirits of the night they will strive to conjure up - izithunzela, dithutsela, matukwane.

But we who had the privilege to experience the comradeship of Joe Modise, his hopes and his disappointments, his successes and his failures, will walk a different road.

We will recall the millions of little things that Joe Modise did, that define him as our friend, comrade and leader.

The biography we will write in our hearts and minds will tell the story of a man of courage. It will speak to us of a thinker. It will convey the reality of a man of action. It will paint a picture of a person of loyalty to his cause, his principles, his fellow fighters, his comrades. It will remind us of the personal sacrifices he made.

It will inform all that will care to listen, that Joe Modise was human because he could laugh and cry. He could rejoice and despair. He could play and he could work. He could love and he could hate.

He could stand and dally and appreciate the beauty of the material world, while he steeled himself to understand the painful frozen images of the contortions



Isithwalande Joe Modise

of violent death. He could sway in joy to the rhythm of music and he could march in rhythm to the beat of the deadly drums of war. He loved life while he accepted that the price to be paid for a life of liberty might be death.

When we bring together all the little fragments we will recall as we write our own biographies of Joe Modise, each will come to the conclusion that here lie in front of us, the mortal remains of a warrior and a patriot.

Fate imposed the obligation on Joe Modise to live his life during a period of storms and hurricanes in the history of our country. This was a time of hope and despair. It was a time of great heroic efforts and unprecedented sacrifices. It was a time of massacres and a savage attempt to silence those who fought for our liberation.

It is the time when the dawn broke to signal the start of a new day, even as the night sought to claim dominion over both day and night, both the past and the future.

It was that time in the evolution of our country into its future, when the new infant, even when it was a mere conception in the minds of those who were destined to die, was engaged in a difficult struggle to be born.

It was the time in the evolution of our country when the old and decrepit fought to extend its life, by strangling the new being, even as it emerged from the troubled womb of our society.

It was an era of historic decisions. It was the moment when those who lived and had a conscience, had to take epoch-making resolutions. It was that difficult period when responses to the questions of the day by those who lived and had a conscience, perhaps beyond the understanding of they who had to decide, were responses to the question whether freedom would forever be deferred.

Those who lived and had a conscience, like Joe Modise, had to resolve whether they were willing to be midwives of a bright future for the people, or accessories to the act of extinguishing the faint light of hope.

They had to decide whether fear and the instinct for self-preservation would predominate in their hearts and minds, turning their own consciences into their everlasting and constant tormentors, because of what they had been afraid to do. This was a time when life demanded that, as the wise decided what constituted the better part of valour, the bold were required to demonstrate what it was to be a warrior and a patriot.

Joe Modise was born of a people that are heroes and heroines. This is a heritage he refused ever to betray. Perhaps unseen by many who were mere observers, he took his place among the front ranks of those who fought for our liberation during the period of 45 years that led to our emancipation in 1994. After that, he soldiered on to help to rebuild his homeland to which he maintained an abiding loyalty.

Circumstances have decreed that Joe Modise will be remembered and honoured for the work he did as a military combatant, a member and leader of Umkhonto we Sizwe, an architect of our National Defence Force.

It is natural that those who do not know will ask questions about how many bombs he detonated, what rifles he pointed at the enemy forces, what artillery shells and rockets he lobbed into the battle positions of the opposing formations.

These will look for signs of blood and death and destruction as they seek to weigh the worth of the soldier that was Joe Modise. But it was not because he wanted to kill that Joe Modise resorted to the weapons of war.

He became part of the armed rebellion because to have submitted to continued tyranny would have condemned millions to death.

He took up arms to protect life and to expand the frontiers of human dignity. For the same reason, even before Umkhonto we Sizwe was formed, he took his place in the vortex of the storm of mass struggle and unarmed resistance to protect life and expand the frontiers of human dignity.

He viewed weapons as a necessary evil. He insisted that they had to be treated with the greatest caution because they existed as instruments for the denial of life. He knew this and preached the message that the best victories were those that were won with the minimum loss of life.

He was a soldier who loved life and hated death. He was a man of arms who refused to glorify arms or to deify the use of force. He would never accept that the deadly muzzles of the guns should take precedence over the voice of the people.

He refused to agree that military force, however skillfully used, could ever be an alternative to the exercise of power by the unarmed masses of the people, among whom he had served as an activist throughout the decade of the 1950's. For him, force could never be its own justification.

Even as our continent bent down in homage to military coups d'etat that placed soldiers in positions of power as heads of state and government ministers, Joe Modise fought to defeat the abuse of guns. As the opportunity emerged for the peaceful resolution of our conflict, he opted for resort to reason rather than the celebration of war.

Today, members of our National Defence Force serve in various African countries as messengers of freedom and peace. Where they are, they draw wonder that they, who had been enemies, are, today comrades-in-arms.

Reflecting the full kaleidoscope of our colours and cultures, they are a cause of marvel that they come from a country, which only recently was on course towards the most destructive racial war.

No so long ago, elements of this force that is now united, had visited African countries as an instrument of death and destruction. Today, they serve on our continent as representatives of life, of hope, of the dignity of all Africans.

They are the pride of our nation. They bear on their disciplined shoulders an African future of a glorious renewal. They are the representatives of the best that Joe Modise bequeathed to us, a military culture and doctrine that give meaning to the weapons of war only to the extent that they are used to defend peace and to realise the objective, that the people shall govern.

Therein lies Joe Modise's greatest contribution to the practice of war. It is the contribution of a patriot who was not afraid of death. It is the contribution of a warrior who did not place a value on his own life above the freedom of his people. It is the contribution of a soldier who loved humanity more than the destructive logic of war.

He was a soldier of peace. He was a soldier for peace. He helped to construct Umkhonto we Sizwe as a combatant for democracy and peace. He helped to construct the South African National Defence Force as our nation's spear for the defence of democracy and peace.

In his honour, South Africa must take the weapons of war out of the hands of the bandits who murder, rob and rape. That too is part of the peace that Joe Modise desired for his people.

Today, I will do something that, perhaps, should not be done. I will speak in the name of the departed warrior who rests so peacefully in our midst, while we talk and breathe and walk and weep silently, or cry out for all to hear. I will speak in the name of the pantheon of the fearless warriors and patriots of our land, whom Joe Modise has joined. This I would like to say. Do not weep. Do not mourn. Do not clothe yourselves in the garments of grief. Do not impose on yourselves the attitude of pathos that speaks of an adored object forever lost. Do not agree that death has proved that it is the final arbiter.

Consider this, the truth. Time will forever tell the story of Joe Modise. It will speak of him as an architect of a future that is good for all our people. It will say that because of what he did, the point is established, that the Africans of Africa and the diaspora are one people who, as equals, will sit in the grand lekgotla of the nations, to contribute to the fashioning of the decision of what should happen to all humanity.

Time will broadcast the message that because Joe Modise lived, Africa and Africans have constructed a global compact with the peoples of the world, which has given meaning to the necessary condition for the continued existence of all humanity, the practice of human solidarity.

It will convey a tale that is true, that because of what he did, the children of South Africa are able to play their simple and noisy and innocent and humane games and sports in our villages and towns, telling all, that they have a right to love, happiness and comfort.

Time will say that once upon a time we had one among us, our own son, who made it possible for us to be proud that we are South African. It will say that his body was subject to the dictates to which all that are made of flesh and bone must submit.

It will say that death is not possible unless there has been life. Life is not possible unless it is integrated within the cycle of death.

Joe Modise has passed away. We will compose songs to him. As we sing of him, we will also be making a solemn salute to the Luthuli Detachment of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and all other detachments that preceded and succeeded this pioneer freedom column of its time.

We will build a monument to him. We will ensure that in our nation's Freedom Park, he has a place as one of those who played his part, as we progressed from the very origins of the earth and life.

He will be a visible particle in our continuous movement towards the unfathomable eternity of the evolution of the earth, the stars, life and society, as we sustain our flight from the enslavement of a state of unknowing, to the freedom informed by our mastery of the actuality of necessity.

What we will do, and must do, will make the statement that Joe Modise has not died. It will say that like all his fellow warriors, who have given freedom and dignity to us as a people, we know that his spirit lives on among us. That spirit will impel us constantly to honour what he stood for.

It will communicate the command to us to carry out the instructions of the Comrade Commander, who lives on among us; member of the Volunteer Corps of the African National Congress; Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe; architect of democracy, peace and reconciliation; builder of the armed forces for peace; star of the new South Africa; representative of the international movement of human solidarity; harbinger of hope; Isithwalandwe.

A mighty tree of our forest has fallen. As it came down to rest, its crashing echoes published the fact. The singular noise in the enveloping silence told the story that had to be told. Yet we have not been troubled, because as it died, this living baobab did not perish.

People of our land, do not mourn. Let us walk together in respectful silence of the dead, of the warriors and patriots who live though they are not with us. Let us walk in silent deference and preparation for the quiet of their graves. Our voices will be still because the founding human rites of passage, are an occasion to honour our renewable and everlasting gift of soldiers who are prepared to offer their lives as a sacrament for peace.

Farewell dear bother. Farewell comrade. Farewell Comrade Commander. We will continue to obey your commands. Singamasosha kaLuthuli.

Whatever happens, we will bear witness to the truth of liberation. When the roll call is read on the parade ground, we know we will find your name among those who are present and ready to act in the interest of the people. Together with you, we will continue to serve the people of South Africa.

The Chilean poet and revolutionary, Pablo Neruda composed a poem entitled: *"So is my life"*. So is Joe Modise's life!

"My duty moves along with my song:
I am I am not: that is my destiny.
I exist not if I do not attend to the pain
of those who suffer: they are my pains.
For I cannot be without existing for all,
for all who are silent and oppressed,
I come from the people and I sing for them:
my poetry is song and punishment.
I am told: you belong to darkness.
Perhaps, perhaps, but I walk toward the light.
I am the man of bread and fish
and you will not find me among books,
but with women and men:
they have taught me the infinite."

From Joe Modise, we too have learnt the infinite. And so let us begin our dignified procession of tribute to a patriot and a warrior as we accompany him to his place of infinite rest.

A commentary on "Through the eye of a needle" and the disbandment of constitutional structures

By Gugili Nkwinti (Eastern Cape)

The NWC must be commended for producing this discussion document (UMRABULO no. 11). Through it one can begin to not only understand, but also appreciate, why the NEC has been disbanding some of our structures across the country. It is good that the leadership has seen it fit to take us back to the basics. It is an old wisdom that when things do not go well, one should retrace one's footsteps.

Unintended consequences

It must have taken the leadership a lot of deep thoughts to have reached the conclusion that to disband certain structures of the organisation was the most appropriate option at this time. More so at the second highest level of the hierarchy of the organisation – Northern Province, Gauteng and Free State. The process has also gone lower to regions and branches and we now have Interim Leadership Cores, Regional Task Teams and Ward Task Teams in some parts of the country. Of course, the political guidelines (*Through The Eye Of A Needle...*) followed later, almost like an afterthought.

The time period between disbandment and re-launching of these structures may have been meant to be as short as possible. However, the reality is that we may have, in some instances, gone beyond twelve months with the interim management organs, though surely, they were never intended to become permanent (assuming that an organ that lives for as long as the constitutional structure would have lived in a term, is permanent by definition). Unless the life span of these interim arrangements is as short as is only necessary, they will themselves generate their own internal dynamics, not dissimilar to those of the structures they temporarily replaced.

We should not forget that the environment within which they live and operate remains unaltered. The guidelines (of the NWC's) seek to alter this immediate environment. The scope is narrowed down by a variety of factors, amongst them time and capacity. Time, because everything is rushed against the need to establish branches as soon as possible in order to be able to hold regional and provincial conferences. Capacity, because the cadres of the Movement who are still readily available and able to conduct political education workshops are getting fewer and fewer. Both factors militate against effectively altering the environment sufficiently to achieve the desired effect.

Without sounding undynamic, this process (interim arrangements) should be treated like a project: (a) should have a beginning; (b) should have an end; (c) should have clear terms of reference; and, (d) should have clear time-lines. An impression should not be created, by default, that they are equal to constitutional structures of the organisation.

Cadres who are thoroughly processed and systematically educated as a diminishing proportion

This is an important observation. We should always bear in mind that the number of cadres of the Movement, who are thoroughly processed and systematically educated in its policies, is a diminishing proportion of the number of people joining it. This is not just a quantitative question; it is, disturbingly, also a qualitative one.

The challenge posed by the variety of political subcultures found within the Movement does not make the situation any easier: such as the Robben Island; the exile; the underground; the militaristic; the mass organisational / mobilisational; the parliamentary / government; the Marxist-Workerist tendencies; the Africanist; the metaphysical-materialistic tendencies; and the neo-liberal subcultures.

This wonderful diversity, which constitutes the strength of the Movement as the leader of the anti-apartheid struggles, is beginning to pose a very serious threat to its coherence and discipline, both politically and organizationally. The capacity of the Movement to manage this diversity is clearly diminishing. So, even as we centralise internal democratic processes, as we should, we must be acutely sensitive of this diminishing capacity to effectively manage the Movement as we did before.

The Moral High ground and The Myth

The Moral High ground: Those who wage struggles for a just cause often occupy a moral high-ground, relative to their oppressors. This was true, too, of the South African people, led by the African National Congress, in their struggles against the system of Apartheid. It is understood here that there is a direct relationship between one's cause and method of struggle; one's ability to articulate one's cause and method;

and, occupying a moral high ground.

Succinctly put – the cause, method, ability to articulate and occupying the moral high ground are critical political factors in any struggle. To consolidate these into a coherent and marketable package requires enormous political and organizational skill and wisdom. This is exactly what our Movement achieved during the execution of Anti-Apartheid struggles.

Being in government, the situation has dramatically changed and has become extremely complex. The dialectics of the complex is so difficult to manage that it not only threatens our coherence and ability to market our vision; it threatens the existence of the Congress Alliance, at least as we have come to know it.

The Myth: For as long as the Movement was banned, its leaders silenced, jailed, exiled or killed it remained a sort of a myth, sustained by faith. There was, and continues to be, a lot of faith in the Movement, amongst the oppressed masses of South Africa. Faith engenders belief and hope. These are intangible qualities, which engender bitterness when they evaporate.

A short eleven years ago the Movement was unbanned and its leaders freed to conduct legal political activities. The myth was exploded, but belief and hope sustained. It is these two intangible qualities, which, to a large extent, propelled the masses of our people to the polls in both national elections thus far, to register their overwhelming support for the ANC, the leader of the Congress Movement. It is not their deep political understanding and consciousness which propelled the masses to the polls. It seems logical, therefore, that it is not going to be political consciousness, in the main, which will sustain the support of the masses for the ANC. It is going to be continued belief and hope reinforced by tangible service delivery towards meeting their basic human needs.

Political organisation constitutes the organic link between the masses and the service delivery instrument, the state. It is the visible symbol, which ought to continuously refurbish the belief and hope; and, it is the reality, which ought to continuously reproduce the political consciousness necessary to serve as yeast that must transform the belief and hope into deliberate and strategic political activism.

While the former is a quantitative function, the latter is a qualitative one, a long-drawn process that needs patience and commitment.

That is why the disbandment of structures of the organisation has such a significant political value. These structures represent the quantitative and qualitative functions, which may cross into different directions at a particular point in time. It is always that moment of potential disjuncture that poses a serious challenge to political leadership. And it ought not to be guessed, or determined only through academic surveys and media speculation. That moment is best determined through direct interaction with the masses themselves; and, there can be no better vehicle than the branch.

It Boils Down To Political And Organisational Management

This is a thorny issue – political and organizational management. During one of the workshops we are conducting on the NWC discussion document, as part of the preparations for launching "new" branches, the question arose as to whether or not a "mass Communist Party" was a good idea. Amongst the points made was one that said:

"Yes, it is a good idea because it creates a platform for sectors to raise concerns against the ANC."

The follow-up question was whether that meant the ANC did not allow its members to criticise it (refer to p3, par 22 of the document). The responses, which drew a nod from most of the 22 participants, were that:

"As a policy, the ANC allows for criticism. But its leadership tends to be defensive when responding to criticism; even what appears to be fair criticism. That is why people find it easy to criticise the organisation informally, or move into sister organizations to criticise it."

"One is afraid to criticise for fear of being labeled as belonging to this or the other group, probably bent on destroying a leader or the organisation itself."

It is easy to ask people to give living examples to back up their perceptions, and discount them if they fail to do so. At issue here is not whether what was said here is true or not. The fact of the matter is that there is a perception being held by some members of the organisation that in reality criticism is not taken kindly to by the leadership. As President Mandela would say, 'perceptions may be more dangerous than fact'.

But, criticism is feedback; whether good or bad; whether constructive or not; whether it comes from within or outside of the organisation. It is part of the early warning system. Not every member of the organisation will think matters through their heads. Some will think through their hearts. But all of them are giving the organisation's leadership a feedback, which must help it shape appropriate responses in terms of its political education programmes, and its strategic political posturing.

Let me make two points about criticism: Firstly, the President of the ANC even in his personal capacity has been under severe media attack during the recent past. And, there has been no visible or loud collective response to it. Secondly, because we do not seem to recognise criticism as being part of feed-back to what we do as the ANC and, or, government, we respond to it not with the intention of turning it into our advantage. Yet that should be the strategic thrust of dealing with criticism – at all times.

We are the most powerful social formation in this country and will therefore have to work much harder to occupy the moral high ground. Any apparent intolerance to criticism will not assist us in that regard. It is not always the case that people attack us because they are essentially opposed to us. As they say in Xhosa, *inkokheli yintsika yomkhunyu*. That is exactly what the ANC is.

During the days of anti-Apartheid struggles the Movement was able to manage the diverse political sub-cultures within it. Those were the days of a common enemy; the days of colonialism of a special type; the days of the (armed) seizure of state power; the days of the four pillars of struggle; the days when there was one center of power, the ANC-led Tripartite Alliance. Those are the days that were! Frankly speaking, now the center does not hold; and, things are falling apart.

Not only are we having more than one center of power now; these are the days when we no longer have a common physical enemy: the ANC does not see capitalism as its primary enemy, whereas its Alliance partners do; colonialism of a special type has been replaced by globalisation; the seizure of state power has been replaced by the consolidation of state power in the hands of the people; the four pillars … have been replaced by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP); and, we now have a Mass Party (SACP), whose constituency is, in the main, exactly the same as that of the ANC. It is only logical that competition between the two would lead to conflict. Part of managing this challenge is not to deny these extremely significant changes which have taken place. It is due to our successful execution of struggle that we are in the current situation. We must manage these unintended consequences. And, it seems to be right here where things fall apart. Once more, it is the ANC that must provide leadership.

The theatre of struggle is wider in scope and much more complex. The ANC is now the governing party, whilst it continues to be a liberation movement. We may want to deny this, but in reality the ANC is now a "split personality". On the one hand it is the party in government, which must embrace globalisation, neo-liberal macro-economic policies, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. On the other hand, it is a liberation movement, which must mobilise and organise all the social forces in society behind it in the struggle for social and economic justice and a new and equitable world order. Some of these forces are so diametrically opposed to one another that in their quest for mutual destruction or achieving hegemony within the ANC, they may end up destroying the ANC itself. This is a complex which cannot be politically managed by an individual, even the most brilliant of individuals. Collective political leadership, in the old tradition of the Movement, is the only answer. And, this can be achieved only through strong organisation. Where organisation is weak, political management takes on a form of divergent and competing individual brilliance, often with disastrous consequences to the purpose of the organisation. Effective organizational management nurtures, harnesses and channels these divergent individual "brilliances" into a coherent and cohesive organic mass.

Political divergence and competition are not new to the organisation. They have always been there, and provided it with dynamism and vibrancy. Curse the day when that would stop! What we need is organizational management, not so much organizational structural disbandment. It is not the organizational structure, which commits political crimes; it is individuals who must be dealt with according to the measures provided in our constitution and established through tried and tested political and organizational traditions.

It cannot be true that all members of a Provincial, Regional or Branch executive committee committed the same crime, to the same extent, at the same time. This approach is both sterile and demoralizing to the disciplined and hardworking cadres of the Movement. It is not suggested here that in all instances political criminality has been the cause for the disbandment of organizational structures. It is referred to instances where such was the case.

Summary and Conclusion

Reading through the *'Eye of the Needle"* it becomes clear that the intention, at least in part, behind the disbandment of certain organizational structures was to provide the membership of the organisation with an opportunity to revisit our political and organizational values and traditions. And to internalise them with a view to enabling members to choose leaders for whom service to the people is primary and personal gains only incidental to rendering such a service – not the other way round.

The risk, however, of disbanding organizational structures at a time when the membership system of the organisation is itself undergoing a major re-organisation, is extremely high. When these processes are underpinned by weak organizational discipline, as it is apparently so across the organisation, the risk becomes even greater.

The myth has exploded; faith is a diminishing quality; and, the cadres of the Movement (ANC, COSATU & SACP) who are well trained in its policies, values and traditions are a diminishing proportion of the population that currently constitutes the Movement. This places more pressure on political and organizational management. Leadership must engage each other across the spectrum that constitutes the Movement; and, the ANC must lead that initiative, always. Otherwise its leadership will become traditional (and soon obsolete) rather than dynamic.

Organisational management, to the extent that we must confront even powerful individuals when they mess up, instead of disbanding organizational structures, must improve. The competing subcultures are an essential feature for the vibrantly and dynamism of the Movement. If we do not manage them properly they become a problem.

Once more, let me re-state, with emphasis, that in the ANC one can make this kind of commentary freely and without fear of retribution. However, as one hopes here, too, such a commentary could generate vigorous and rigorous responses.

Postscript: *I have been thinking about a concept, which would fit well, as a description of the complex we tried to sketch above: The dialectics and logic of progression. How about that?*

A response to social emancipation and national liberation

*By Xolile Nqata**

"In agreeing to this common program (of the Alliance), we should not seek to take away the ability of COSATU to engage in legitimate strike actions. In such eventuality, they would cease to be a trade union movement. However differentiation between shop floor issues and political issues is being suggested. With regard to political issues, mass action should be an Alliance driven process. Better still if such action is led by the ANC," said Comrade Ngoako Ramatlhodi, (UMRABULO issue No. 11 2nd Quarter 2001)

One finds it difficult to find 'the line' in this argument – instead, cde Ngaoko seems to be arguing for an in-between line, which in itself is contradictory.

On the patriotic bourgeoisie: In this complex transitional period, it is the "patriotic bourgeoisie" and emerging black petty bourgeoisie who are privileged and lucky. Lucky because they have earned a place to be counted as one of the motive forces for the deepening of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) – a conclusion that still needs explaining.

Our revolutionary experience and understanding informs us that all the motive forces have fought and earned their place of being counted among motive forces in the struggle. Maybe the next appropriate question to ask is, what have the "patriotic bourgeoisie" and emerging black bourgeoisie done which is of benefit to the NDR? What makes them different to other capitalists?

I agree that individually there are some who have paid and are paying a lip service to the NDR. They have and they stand to benefit in the new dispensation in making their way into the capitalist class. And that is why they want to ensure that they use state as a tool for black capital accumulation. For them what is primary is not better life for all, but the creation of conditions for self-enrichment. What motivates capitalists, whether emerging or big, is profit. It is greed that makes them to want more and more and more.

On the progressive trade union movement: For COSATU, her existence is the product of struggle, the history of our country and her lifeblood is its member affiliates who decide from time to time which route of action to take. The process of trade unions engaging in action is not as a result of a favor from anyone. No individual nor organization, owns mass action, which it can give a piece to the trade union movement to exercise. Action belongs to those who feel aggrieved by a particular circumstance, which mobilises them, to unite into action.

"In the transition to socialism the strategy of the working class must have a character of an anti-passive revolution, based on an extension of class struggles and popular democratic struggles so as to mobilise ever-wider section of the population for democratic reform,"
(Antonio Gramsci – Prison Notes)

Are we allowing the reduction of COSATU into a workerist trade union federation? Is Comrade Ngaoko suggesting that it was wrong for COSATU to play an active and leading role in the fight against the greed of pharmaceutical companies? Should we abandon the slogan of the 80's that workers are members of the community before they workers? Is there a clinical difference in the elements of the overall struggles for better life? Or are all the struggles not complementary and interconnected?

One argues that there can be no sole ownership of any elements of the struggle for a better life. What Lenin said in 1907 is as relevant as it was then, *"The proletariat alone is capable of carrying the democratic revolution to the end... the main task of the proletariat at this historical moment is to carry the democratic revolution forward to the end... any minimization of this task inevitable results in the working class being transformed from the leader of the people's revolution into passive participant in the revolution tailing behind the liberal bourgeoisie."*

In the context of the Tripartite Alliance, at no point should it be expected of any component to abandon its independent position or forget its historic mission. The SACP and COSATU must analyze every major event or important issue from its own point of view. They must put forward their own independent policies and measures and act accordingly. Failure to do this will result in them becoming political appendages. There is nothing wrong about the Party or COSATU pronouncing their views, which might at times be different to those of the ANC as leader of the NDR.

"In this context the working class should not aim for quick and easy victories in the same way as it should not fail to consolidate on the battles already won," writes cde Ngaoko. Once again cde Ngaoko raises yet another point where workers and the poor are being called upon to wait and sacrifice with the hope of some distant economic boom. And as workers want to consolidate the battles already won, conservative labour amendments are on the pipeline and a bill on the conversion of ESKOM into a company has been passed by the NCOP despite protests from the workers.

On the SACP: "The Party, as the highest form of organization of the working class must represent the all-embracing interest of the working class as whole and not just the interests of the organised section of the working class but those of the organised and unorganised, the employed and non employed section of the working class. Short of this, it will sink to Economism and Norodism and lose its leadership role. It will turn itself into a trade union movement which is to take two steps backward," said cde Ngaoko.

Comrade Philip Dexter correctly argues, "the focus on building people's power for a people's economy should not be seen as economic reductionism, but is essentially located within the overall political context of deepening the NDR through building people's power to effectively tackle, in an integrated manner, the class, national and gender contradiction in our country."

As such, the Party program talks to all sections of our population, organised and unorganised, employed and an unemployed. By the way, it is in civil society where the contest for hegemony takes place between the capitalists and the working class. This is where the Party seeks to dominate, not by means of force, but domination of consent by means of political and ideological leadership. That is why it is correct for the Party in this conjuncture to bring the issue of economic transformation to the center stage. For it is true that our political freedom will remain hallow without the redistribution of wealth as envisaged in the Freedom Charter more than 30 years ago.

On the Political center: "Following the Mafikeng National Conference, the ANC shifted the focus of policy formulation from the state back to Luthuli House. At least this is what our resolution were," says cde Ngaoko. And, "The strategic task of the SACP is the mobilization of the genuine left democratic forces. It is to ensure that all progressive (potential or actual) forces coalesce and unite in action to consolidate the NDR without diluting the leadership role of the working class. It is to train and guide the progressive trade union movement through its theoretical superiority. As to whether the SACP is fulfilling this task needs honest critical self examination..."

The mistake here is to over-emphasis the role of the Party whilst glossing over whether we are indeed on the road to building the ANC as a political center. Have we really shifted policy formulation from the state to Luthuli House? For one, it is not a question of how the ANC and the Alliance should relate to the democratic state but how the democratic state should relate to the ANC and the Alliance. We seek to transform the state so that we ensure that as a tool it performs in a manner, which advances and deepen the NDR.

The present conjuncture in South Africa requires that the SACP and COSATU assert their independence within the context of the Tripartite Alliance. For we pronounce our views so that they are known as we seek to make the working class understand their class enemies and mobilise in defence of the democratic state.

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On the question of collective leadership

*By Walter Mothapo**

Context

The concept of collective leadership in organisational terms refers to: mutual responsibility for proper running, guidance and overall leadership of an organisation in accordance with the stated principles. Collective leadership is a mechanism to ensure that the organisation moves in a cohesive and homogeneous manner in its struggle to convert its stated objectives into realistic and attainable goals. It is a tool to ensure that the organisation focuses on its mission with an atmosphere characterised by less or effectively no internal hurdles.

We can best apprehend the principle of collective leadership if we understand the concepts of an organisation and leadership. A political definition of an organisation is the coming together of people from different backgrounds, who share a particular ideological conviction and political perspectives and as such become organised in a formal movement to struggle for the realization of their shared objectives. Leadership simply means using whatever power is vested in one to influence; in revolutionary terms such influence should be to transform society for the better. It is within this context that it becomes an ethical and political obligation that binds every member at whatever level of an organisation to take responsibility for programmes that are geared towards the attainment of organisational objectives. This is what we mean by collective leadership.

Our inference should be that every member of the organisation is a leader in revolutionary terms as he/she does not only advocate the interests of an organisation he/she is affiliated to, but also represents the views of a particular class in society. The term responsibility is an integral feature of collective leadership, as leadership per se starts with a pledge by oneself to assume responsibility for actions that go along with it.

The six core principles of collective leadership

The principles mentioned here should not be seen as the "alpha and omega" of our reflections on the question of collective leadership, but be viewed as being central towards the conceptualization of this question. They are familiar concepts in the Mass Democratic Movement and we often refer to them in passing.

Organisational communication: Leaders in an organisation have a democratic obligation to account on their actions, to report on significant developments in order to ensure proper information flow within the organisation. This is important to ensure that members understand the political direction of the organisation and capacitates cadres to defend the movement. It is only when members are involved in shaping a particular perspective that they will go out to pioneer its implementation.

Communication should deliberately unite and organise people to remain mobilised. Lack of communication on the other hand, is damaging and dangerous to the well being of an organisation, because it brings about rumour mongering, disorientation and disgruntlement. It provides fertile ground for the counter revolutionary forces to operate within a movement, thus further polarizing it.

James and Grace Lee Boggs in their book entitled *"Revolution and Evolution in the Twentieth Century"* have this to say on leaders who undermine inputs from other comrades: "The idea of human being moving simultaneously like a school of fish with no ideas in their heads and without struggling among themselves over these ideas, actually provides the basis for a totalitarian dictator who manipulates people as masses, turning elections into plebiscites which deliver mandates to the leader". (Boggs, 1974, p.217)

Unitary leadership and cadreship: All of us in an organisation can possess leadership qualities. This is a good thing, as a revolutionary movement must contain a cream of leadership in all its layers. But there will be cadres who through an election are entrusted with a responsibility to lead the organisation and thus deserve respect of all of us, no matter how intelligent we think we are as compared to the elected leadership. We must regard them as unitary figures in the organisation that help to bind the organisation together. Our duty as fellow cadres is to ensure that we strengthen their capacity in building organisational unity.

We can take a leaf from the constitutions of any organisation within the Tripartite alliance: a democratic constitution empowers the national leadership to be responsible for running the affairs of an organisation in between the Congresses. During the term of their office, the national leadership needs to act decisively on certain critical developments and thus it is not feasible nor in the interest of effective leadership to always seek mandate on whatever issue. Democratic centralism gives space for leaders to exercise creativity in their leadership.

However, respect given to leadership is not given, but must be earned. To this end the ethics of integrity are crucial towards the realisation of the latter. If we adhere to this principle we shall minimise and ultimately eradicate factionalism, groupings and the tendency for being other "comrade's comrades".

Organisational discipline: It indeed requires organisational discipline to understand the application of the principle of "democratic centralism". Organisational discipline is above all a revolutionary obligation and the principle advocates adherence by every member. Organisational discipline ensures that members become loyal in defending and implementing decisions of the organisation. During discussions about particular issues some members might feel dissatisfied on a particular conclusion as supported by the majority, but once it becomes an organisational position, each and every member has a political obligation to rally behind it. The same applies even though some were not even part of the forum that decided on such a position. All members have a duty to communicate and implement organisational decisions.

Organisational discipline also advocates that we have to raise issues constructively and internally. This principle is against seeking media gimmick and as once said by comrade Netshitenzhe on the issue of "false popularity". (Netshitenzhe, 2000). The notion here is that there is a large space in a revolutionary movement for us to raise differing opinions and thus rushing to raise issues in the media without first raising them internally is detrimental to the well being of our organisations.

Managing internal contradictions: The basic principle of collective leadership is cultivating a culture of open debates within an organisation. Leaders must never be immune from criticism; they should be humble enough to listen to comments and opinions of other comrades. Every member of an organisation is responsible to level criticism that will assist in building the movement. It is only when we listen to each other's criticism that we shall move forward as a cohesive force that builds on its strength and seeks to improve on its weaknesses. Criticism and self-criticism is the way in which individuals who are united by common goals can consciously utilise their differences and their limitations, i.e., "the negatives in order to accelerate their positive advance." (Boggs, 1974, p. 133).

Cadres should continuously reflect upon themselves in a quest to improve on their revolutionary activities, as a necessary condition for positive criticisms from fellow comrades. Criticism reflects internal contradiction within an organisation. Internal contradictions are in themselves dialectical in nature. Revolution creates new basis for tension, new unities, which split again into dualities. In the dialectical process of development, opposite forces can be brought together in unity. (Bogg, 1974.p. 220-221). This theory should inform us whenever we manage contradictions within the Alliance.

Political education and revolutionary ethics: We should acknowledge that comrades do not grow at the same pace in terms of political maturity. The collective approach to the question of political education should be that comrades must never take advantage of each other's weaknesses but instead complement each other. The COSAS slogan of "each one teach" one is pertinent to this issue. In this current conjuncture the question of knowledge and skills also play a crucial role. Comrades have a responsibility to share skills among each other; and we must all be willing to learn. At one stage SASCO converted its departments into "collectives" in order to encourage the spirit of comrades working with each other in a less hierarchical but complementary manner.

Coming to the question of ethics one needs to pose some controversial but equally important questions such as: Is there not a fast developing trend of comrades finding it somehow "boring" or de-motivated to discuss political issues? Is there also not a "paradigm shift" of comrades looking upon, treating and relating to each other according to material and social achievements?

Comrades have a responsibility to behave in a manner that portray revolutionary values, both within and outside the movement and to counsel and advise rather than mislead each other with corrupt practices.

Solidarity and Internationalism: One of the pillars that made us emerge victors against apartheid was solidarity both at a national and international level. Solidarity however is not the thing of the past; in fact it holds a key to winning the current global struggles. This is one principle that advocates for selflessness and sacrifice not only for visible and immediate day to day struggles within our vicinity but also for others remotely. It needs cadres to be aware of the global nature of the struggles so as to withstand cynical criticisms in the name of "charity begins at home". Comrades need to be educated that the struggle is integral and intertwined and therefore the liberation of others is one's liberation.

Perorating remarks

We should not deceive ourselves with an ambition to build a perfect revolutionary movement or cadre. We should not only acknowledge that comrades do not develop at an equal level but even that the human factor is also responsible for certain deliberate false ambitions and counter revolutionary tendencies. There is also an issue of faceless infiltrators who will always strive to bring polarity in the revolutionary movement. But as cadres of the movement we should always pledge to strive for political maturity that is informed by revolutionary principles.

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The significance of ubuntu in the development of an ANC cadre

By Nombeko Liwane

Ubuntu (botho, human dignity) is a figure of speech that describes the importance of group solidarity on issues that were pivotal to the survival of the African communities, who as a consequence of poverty and deprivation have to survive through group care and not only individual reliance (Mbigi and Maree, 1995).

However, collective unity is not something new or peculiar to Africa. Universally all marginalised communities in places like Harlem in New York, Brixton in the United Kingdom, subscribe to this concept of Ubuntu. It is a concept of brotherhood or sisterhood and collective unity for survival among the poor in every society. Ubuntu plays a significant role in our value system for it derives specifically from African mores: *"I am human, because you are human"* (Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, 2001:16).

In an article entitled *"Finding the lost generation,"* Valerie Moller suggests "Social cohesion has disappeared. Great waves of social, political and economic upheaval have changed the moral landscape and often destroyed the network of ethical values and norms that provided social cohesion and control". This means that in order to resuscitate the concept of Ubuntu especially at the work place, we need to be united and strengthen our work relationship. It is also essential to inculcate the notion of work ethic and self esteem.

The concept of Ubuntu is crucial to nation building, for example, urban renewal in the ghetto or inner cities of the West as well as community development in rural and peri-urban situations in developing countries. It is universal because it can be applied to the challenge of empowering marginalised minorities.

The cardinal belief of Ubuntu is that a person can only be a person through the help of others, which means ***umntu ngumntu ngabanye abantu*** in Xhosa. This fundamental concept stands for personhood and morality. The important values of Ubuntu are group solidarity, conformity, compassion, respect, human dignity and collective unity. All and sundry know that charity begins at home. Respect is reciprocal irrespective of race, ethnicity, class, age, and gender. Ubuntu requires one to respect others if one is to respect him or herself.

African people are collectively united by their religious experience. It is entrenched and pervasive in virtually all aspects of their lives on daily basis. That is why it is vital that conceptual frameworks of strategy and ideas must try and make reference to the African religious and cultural experiences if effective transfer and adaptation are to take place. It is imperative to translate all the essential ideas and practices from the foreign language into the relevant local languages.

The spirit of patriotism is also an important part of Ubuntu. That means there is a readiness to sacrifice for one's group, something, which is inculcated in the minds of the activists and nationalist movements. The spirit was a transformative force in the union movement and the mass democratic movement in this country. That is why Mbigi and Maree (1995:8) assert "South Africa owes the birth of its nation to the emancipating spirit of Ubuntu. It drives the national change process towards national liberation and majority rule, but not sufficiently to meet the challenges of reconstruction and development."

Mbigi and Maree (1995) suggest that we are faced with the challenge of building into the spirit of Ubuntu, "a new dimension of citizenship." He contends that, "This is the ability to live for one's country; the ability to take personal accountability and responsibility for improving one's situation." Perhaps this is the missing link and dimension of Ubuntu in post-independent Africa.

Our people's dignity has been denigrated by the indignity of Apartheid. That implies that as a part of the healing process of reconciliation, organisations should help restore this dignity in the spirit of compassion and care which are the essential elements of Ubuntu.

According to Mbigi and Maree (1995:20) "The spirit in African religion is one's total being or soul. It represents our inner self and our total being. The spirit is who we really are. It is our values and our culture in terms of an organisation". This implies that the spirit of Ubuntu has endeavored to unite the religious community, and that is why we all have to adhere to the norms, customs and values in order to revive the concept of Ubuntu. People outside one's culture should respect one's religion.

For a meaningful worker for participation to occur, it is essential to harness the African communal spirit of grass-roots democracy based on respect and human dignity – Ubuntu – as well as the spirit of harmony and service. That is why Mbigi and Maree (1995) assert that

> "Continuous improvement teams (CITs), based on the natural working team and focusing on operational efficiency with the supervisor or team leader, should be formed. This will necessitate weekly prosperity meetings (forums) to discuss progress towards targets. The aim is to stimulate bottom-up communication and empowerment giving access to information, knowledge, training and shop-floor democratic processes. This involves capacity building at grass-roots level. This emerging shop-floor democracy will empower the worker to contribute to wealth creation and to derive job satisfaction."

Racism is socially constructed and is not innate. The sociological implications of this are that human beings are socialised into racism, and grow up with acquired and racist stereotypes that are learnt from birth. The fact that racism is a social construct means that if we exert efforts, all in sundry can eradicate or minimise racism to the acceptable and tolerable level, so as to consolidate the spirit of Ubuntu. "Equality might require us to put up with people who are different, non-sexism and non-racism might require us to rectify the inequities of the past" (Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, 2001:16). But Ubuntu emphasises the notion of mutual understanding and the active appreciation of the value of human difference. It requires us to know and understand others within a multicultural environment.

Tribalism on the other hand has no place in our fledging democracy, because instead of being a unifying factor, it causes cleavages. It further exacerbates division by creating favoritism and nepotism, something that is unacceptable in the African National Congress. We have to eradicate its deleterious effects. Multiculturalism teaches us to respect other cultures because we may not know what we can learn from other people whose views might be different from ours. That is why cultural diversity in a South African context teaches us to even learn other people's languages. For reconciliation to occur in this country, we have to put our differences aside in order to rebuild the nation. People should learn to be conciliatory.

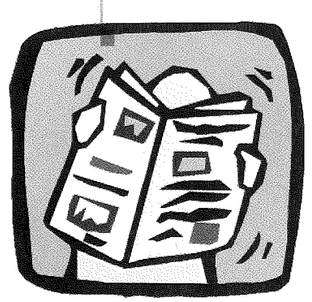
The efforts of corporate cultural transformation in South Africa must encourage acceptance of our differences and the discovery of our similarities. The process must avoid emphasising differences, e.g. Zulus accept you one way and Xhosas another way. Mbigi and Maree (1995) contend that the process must emphasise similarities and the creation of a common survival agenda. This implies that the emancipating African concept of Ubuntu is imperative with its emphasis on human dignity, respect and collective unity. Mbigi and Maree (1995:98) further argue that Ubuntu could facilitate the development of an inclusive national and corporate vision based on compassion and tolerance as well as the will to survive in spite of the constraints of our history.

According to Mbigi and Maree (1995), the Afro centric view of rewards is based on Ubuntu. One works for additional reward so that one's fellow man or woman can enjoy the fruits of one's labour. Whatever one earns is for the collective good of the community. The American conception is that if each person concentrates on accomplishing his personal best and on attaining inner fulfillment, this automatically contributes to the team's greater good. Analogously, in the Afro centric view one thinks in terms of collective survival. Group loyalty is the key issue in building a team. The essence of Ubuntu is collective shared experience and the collective solidarity.

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