

THE ORIGIN AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF BLACK  
NATIONALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA UP TO 1960

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## CHAPTER I

### SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY FROM PRECOLONIAL TO POST-COLONIAL EPOCH

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

South Africa is a political anachronism. Elsewhere there has been a radical redistribution of power in the last two centuries with the result that in most states the entire adult population participated in the political system (i.e. they had the power to vote). Furthermore, since World War II European states have dismantled their colonial empires. However, this process of decolonization has not always been accompanied by the elimination of the racial stratification that was characteristic of many colonial societies.<sup>1</sup>

In South Africa, Britain's transfer of power to the Afrikaners after the Vereeniging Treaty, led to the Blacks to be isolated from universal male suffrage. Afrikaners dominated the South African political system especially from 1910 after the conclusion of Union of South Africa which placed the political, social and economic power in the hands of the white only government. But the fundamental problem later became essentially a black-white relation. And this led to the emergence of both Afrikaner nationalism and the Black nationalism respectively.

Black politics in general, and Black nationalism in particular from 1910 to the present 20<sup>th</sup> century, is abounded with examples of discord. Despite the fact that Blacks were faced with one common political problem (i.e. land dispossession and political subjugation by Whites) they decided to fought through different political ideologies and organisations.

The African National Congress (ANC) founded in 1912 became the first and the oldest supra-tribal Black organisation involved in the struggle against White domination in South Africa. But before the formation of African National Congress there were small organisations which were formed by black people to resist white encroachment especially after the free-burghers were allowed to move into the interior part of South Africa, in which their contacts with black communities was characterised by hostilities and wars. Amongst those organisation, were the All

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<sup>1</sup> Smuts, D.F., Slabbert, Van Zyl, The System and the Struggle, p. 7.



African Convention (AAC), South African Native Convention (SANC) and later the South African Native National Congress (SANNC).

All these organisations were poorly organised and without an electoral base except in the Cape Colony. But with the move towards Union of South Africa, the leaders of black people were drawn together in their common interest to advance their position within whatever system should develop, and with the advent of Union and their unsuccessful protests in London, Blacks as well as Whites were now placed in a new arena in which to devise appropriate forms of political action.

The South African Act of Union which was passed by the British House of Commons in 1909 and ratified by the South African Parliament on 30 May 1910 precluded all Blacks from being eligible to become members of parliament. The Act of Union was used to curtail and regulate (Black's freedom of movement through pass laws, cripple their education through inferior Bantu Education and chance of equal opportunities in economic, social and cultural development. And it was out of this socio-political and economic conditions that the African National Congress was formed to become the doyen of the Black Nationalism in South Africa.<sup>2</sup>

In 1920, the African National Congress established an alliance with the Communist Party of South Africa. The aim of the Party was to create a strong and powerful core of Black Marxists who would operate within the African National Congress in order to propagate the idea of the class struggle in South Africa. It took several years before Africans in and out of African National Congress began to take some initial interests in the idea of the Communist Party of South Africa.<sup>3</sup>

In 1944, the Congress Youth League (CYL) was formed within the African National Congress. And after its founding, the CYL adopted a militant African nationalism as the national liberatory creed of Africans under the influence of Anton Lembede who was the principal theoretician and leading ideologue within the CYL.

The advent of the White nationalist government in 1948 drew both the CYL and the Communist Party of South Africa together in a fight against the government repressive laws. Their willingness to cooperate on the basis of mass protests against apartheid led to increased personal contacts, and this in turn resulted in the moderation of virulent anti-Communist attacks within the League. With the dissolution of the

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<sup>2</sup> Meli, F., *A History of the ANC*, p. 34.

<sup>3</sup> Kono, T.R., *Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 2.

Communist Party of South Africa in 1950 as a result of government pressure, the number of Black communists within the ranks of African National Congress dwindled significantly and their impact in ideological terms become simply non-existent.<sup>4</sup>

In 1959, the African National Congress split with the formation of the Pan Africanist Congress. In their letter giving notice of dissociation, the PAC stated amongst other reasons, that the Freedom Charter was in irreconcilable conflict with the 1949 Programme of the African National Congress. Essentially, the difference between PAC and the African National Congress concerned tactics relating to the role of non-African allies in the struggle.<sup>5</sup>

The PAC's ideological position was diametrically opposed to that of the Communist Party of South Africa. The Africanists (later the Pan Africanists) drew their ideology from the Philosophy of Anton Lembede whose position was fiercely anti-Communist. The PAC advocated the doctrine of Africa for the Africans which in turn reflected the philosophy of Marcus Garvey. The PAC aimed at the complete replacement of white rule with African majority rule. Both the African National Congress and the PAC agreed that liberation could be achieved only through the numerical strength of the African people but the problem was how to mobilize the African masses.<sup>6</sup>

In the PAC's view an ideology based on multiracialism lacked sufficient emotional appeal to mobilize African support. The PAC therefore stood solidly for the philosophy of African nationalism as propounded by Anton Lembede. The same philosophy of African nationalism was affirmed and adopted by the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) when it came into being ten years after the banning of the African National Congress and the PAC by the Nationalist government in 1960. After its emergence in the early 1970's, the BCM embarked on a programme of raising the political consciousness of Black people on a nation-wide basis and adopted the slogan "Black man you are on your own!" The BCM saw first the mental oppression as its point of departure for the total liberation of the black people. The Black Consciousness Movement became a separate continuation of Black Nationalism. And in the South African conundrum however, it was directly influenced by African Nationalism as laid down by Anton Lembede.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Kono, T.R., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Motlhabi, M., Black Resistance to Apartheid, p. 75.

<sup>6</sup> Snail, M.L., The Antecedents and the Emergence of BCMA in South Africa, p. 225.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 238.

These events illustrate a high degree of disunity and internal conflict within the African's ranks, rather than the opposite. Yet, paradoxically, the groundwork for Black unity was also laid during those epoch.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, new social forces began to emerge in South Africa. These were African ministers of religion, school teachers, magistrates, peasants, farmers and workers. Together with some of the traditional rulers - the chiefs - they opened up a new chapter in South African history.

The social structure of African society was by this time changing, and this had repercussions on traditional forms of organisation, thinking and ideology, which later lead to the emergence of black nationalism which cut across (but did not replace) ethnic identity.

And in the three decades preceding Union, Black political activity had centred in small bodies led by Christian Africans in each of the four territories of South Africa. The groups were poorly organised and without an electoral base except in the Cape Colony. With the move towards Union, the leader of blacks in the four colonies were drawn together in their common interest to advance their position within whatever system should develop, and with the advent of Union and their unsuccessful protests in London, Blacks as well as whites were placed in a new arena in which to device appropriate forms of political action.

The South African Act of Union which was passed by the British House of Commons in 1909 and ratified by the South African Parliament on 30 May 1910 - the anniversary date of the Treaty of Vereeniging (31 May 1902) signed after the Anglo-Boer War precluded all blacks from being eligible to become members of parliament.<sup>8</sup>

The Act of Union was used to curtail African freedom of movement through pass laws, cripple their education through inferior Bantu Education and dray the equal opportunities in economic, social and cultural development.<sup>9</sup>

And it was out of this socio, political and economic condition that African National Congress was formed to become the doyen of the Black Nationalism in South Africa.

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<sup>8</sup> Meli, F., A History of the ANC, p. 34.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

### 1.1 THE EVOLUTION OF NATIONALISM: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The word nationalism which is a derivative of the basic concept nation is used in different senses by many writers who, more often than not, will reach different conclusions depending on their particular definitions. The phenomenon of nationalism has proved to be such a complex and problematic subject that it has long ceased to be the special area of historians and has come to attract a multi-disciplinary approach involving sociologists, political scientists, economists, psychologists and other experts.<sup>10</sup>

Many efforts were made in the nineteenth century to establish a scientific definition of nationalism and its many uses, but the concept still remains problematic and, like democracy and socialism, continues to be a subject of great interest to many scholars. To appreciate the complex nature of nationalism we have to start at the beginning and look at the meaning of the basic concept nation.

The concept 'nation' is described as a 'community' of people who feel that they belong together in the double sense that they share deeply significant elements of a common heritage and that they have a common destiny for the future.<sup>11</sup>

The concept must be distinguished from the 'state' although in general usage there is a tendency to employ both words interchangeable. The nation-state is the form used to describe a nation that has achieved sovereign status. In trying to come to a better understanding of the concept of nationhood many writers have resorted to the method of emphasizing the major characteristics of the concept, some making a distinction between objective and subjective characteristics.<sup>12</sup>

Although there are elements of the 'nation' which occur frequently in many definitions, there is no total agreement among scholars as to which combination of elements is the most acceptable.

The difficulties, involved in any attempt to define the term 'nation' are extended into its derived form \_ nationalism \_ which was a relatively unknown phenomenon before the eighteenth century and, like 'nation', originated in north-western Europe.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Snyder, L.L., The Meaning of Nationalism, p. 11 - 12.

<sup>11</sup> Emerson, R., From Empire to Nation, p. 95.

<sup>12</sup> Rustow, D.A., 'Nation' in the International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. II, p. 9.

<sup>13</sup> Kohn, H., The Idea of Nationalism, p. 3.

The term nationalism can be used in so many senses that it can be associated with respected historical figures, on the one hand, and, on the other, with leaders whose names have come to represent the worst forms of repression and cruelty. For instance, nationalism has been allocated with such figures as Mazzini, Woodrow Wilson who are referred to by one scholar as the "apostles of nationalism." Furthermore, nationalism can express itself in various and often mutually exclusive ideologies such as democracy, fascism and communism.<sup>14</sup>

It is clear that earlier writers did seek to pursue the chimera of universally valid, once-for-all definitions of nationalism, and ended up with more or less partial, more or less clear, description of the phenomena.

What most scholars found necessary for the later task of explanation of nationalism, was a more adequate conceptualisation of the main features of the phenomenon, under which they might subsume particular behavioural instances. In short, what they needed was an ostensive, substantive definition, which would demonstrate the limits of the field, and only an ostensive definition would help to designate 'nationalist' phenomena, and give the term jurisdictional limits.<sup>15</sup>

And it is this kind of 'working definition', stripped of essential nations, that is the only possible and fruitful one in the empirically indistinct field of nationalism.<sup>16</sup>

Snyder, for instance offered the following working definitions of nationalism, making it clear that every element of it is subject to alteration due to exceptional circumstances. 'Nationalism is a condition of mind, feeling, or sentiment of a group of people living in a well-defined geographical area, speaking a common language, possessing a literature in which the aspirations of the nation have been expressed, being attached to common traditions, and, in some cases, having a common religion.'<sup>17</sup>

The working definition can, however, not be applied universally and of all times because nationalism is not a static but dynamic phenomenon which has taken many shapes and forms as it evolved and spread since the eighteenth century. Difficult as it is to define the concept, Kohn has argued that there is a constant about the phenomenon of nationalism.

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<sup>14</sup> Kohn, H., "Nationalism", *The Encyclopaedia of the Social Science*, Vol. II, ,p. 63.

<sup>15</sup> Smith, A.D., *Theories of Nationalism*, p. 165.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Snyder, L.L., *The Meaning of Nationalism*, p. 2.

What remains constant in nationalism through all its changes is the demand of the people for a government of the same ethnic complexion as the majority. To be separated distinct, and independent from other nations, and equal to them, is the fundamental claim of nationalists for their people.<sup>18</sup>

The problem, however, with Kohn's constant is that there are nations with a heterogeneous composition that are not governed on the basis of an ethnic majority. The constant also fails to address the question of different types of nationalism.

Shafer took a totally different approach and pointed out that nationalism is not only almost impossible to define, but that the concept contains elements of myth and reality which are inextricably mixed together and because the concept is not fixed, one could even say that nationalism is what the nationalists have made it.<sup>19</sup>

And according to Shafer, one of the ways of trying to understand the nature of nationalism is to find out what elements, either in terms of beliefs or conditions, are present in this complex phenomenon. But one thing is certain about nationalism, and that it is complex and dynamic. Like all human phenomena it has several dimensions, its structure continue to vary constantly, and it moves with time. As it changes so must scholarly descriptions of it. Tidy formulas do not fit a sentiment which is itself in the process of becoming.<sup>20</sup>

The tendency with many writers was to dwell on one or more of the known elements of nationalism in their efforts to formulate a general definition of the concept. For I instance, in Hans Kohn's view, "nationalism" is first and foremost a state of mind, an act of consciousness, which since the French revolution has become more and more common to mankind.<sup>21</sup>

Carlton J.H. Hayes views nationalism as "A modern emotional fusion and exaggeration of two very old phenomena \_ nationality and patriotism."<sup>22</sup>

Here nationality is used to designate a group of people who speaks either the same language or closely related dialects, who cherish common historical traditions, and who constitute or think they constitute a distinct cultural society.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Kohn, H., "Nationalism", *The Encyclopaedia of the Social Science*, Vol. II, p. 65.

<sup>19</sup> Shafer, B.C., *Nationalism: Myth and Reality*, p. 7.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>21</sup> Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, pp. 10 - 11.

<sup>22</sup> Hayes, C.J.H., *Essays on Nationalism*, p. 6.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

Karl W. Deutsch postulated that a better understanding of nationalism (which he refers to as nationality) is achieved through the help of communication and cybernetics. The test of nationality is based ultimately on the ability of people to communicate more effectively with members of the same group than with outsiders. The concept of people is here defined as "a community of complimentary habits of communication."<sup>24</sup>

In the place of conventional characteristics of territory, language, culture, economy and such subjective factors as the will, Deutsch based his whole analysis of nationalism on the idea of social communication.

It is clear that all these different approaches to the concept of nationalism serve to emphasize and underline the fact that the phenomenon of nationalism is dynamic and complicated. It does not lend itself to simple or general definitions.

## 1.2 THE MEANING AND DEFINITION OF NATIONALISM

Nationalism is an ideology. An ideology may be defined as a system of thoughts, a conceptual structure, a pattern of thinking and a view of life of the centre of which lies a certain principle, idea or phenomenon.<sup>25</sup>

Thus nationalism can be defined as an ideological movement, for the attainment and maintenance of self-government and independence on behalf of a group, some of whose members conceive it to constitute an actual or potential 'nation' like others.<sup>26</sup>

Nationalism arises from the assumption that the nation represents certain common characteristics, values and interests and may have a special task to fulfil, and that this lends it its own identity or character, distinguishing it from other groups. The nation claims the highest love, honour, devotion and loyalty. This can happen only if the nation enjoys self-determination, therefore, the nation must have its own sovereign independent state.<sup>27</sup>

Kotze also identifies two criteria for political self-determination and for nationalism in a group i.e. the presence of an occurrence sense of political solidarity, consciousness

<sup>24</sup> Deutsch, K.W., Nationalism and Social Communication, p. 81.

<sup>25</sup> Kotze, D.J., Nationalism: A comparative study, p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> Smith, A.D., Theories of Nationalism, p. 171.

<sup>27</sup> Kotze, D.J., Nationalism: A Comparative study, pp. 7 - 8.

of identity, or a common purpose. Secondly, a desire and strive for political self-determination.<sup>28</sup>

In conclusion, one can say that what is true is that 'nationalism' (and to some extent nation) is defined in terms of individual perceptions - usually those of a tiny minority of the given unit of population. To understand its nature, one has to look at it from many angles. And one of these angles is the Third World perspective on the national and colonial question, and this should also accommodate the nature, rise and characteristics of nationalism in South Africa.<sup>29</sup>

## 2. THE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA: THE EARLY AND THE LATE IRON AGE ERA (500 BC)

The South African history prior to 1652 resemble its own unique internal dynamics, regional variations, and processes of historical change over time. The epoch before the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck was predominantly precolonial, precapitalist era, beginning some 1 700 years ago with the Early Iron Age. And the following period from the mid-nineteenth century was characterized by colonial subjugation which gradually evolved into the modern apartheid system. Responses to this system have ranged between, on the one hand, quiescence or copulation of blacks into the structure of white domination, and on the other, their various forms of resistance and protest: violent confrontations, peaceful campaigns, constitutional organization and opposition, community-based struggles, and working-class organization and action.

The Early and the Late Iron Age (500 BC) did promoted a long and complex migration of cultures and to some extend of actual peoples, as the technique of stock-raising, culturation with iron tools and long-term village settlement spread, broadly, from north to south after their initiation in Middle Africa some two and a half thousand years ago. And by 300 AD, they were installed in different areas of what is now South Africa to the east of the Kalahari Desert and of adjacent desert or semi-desert.<sup>30</sup>

These people produced a network of clan-and-lineage communities. These communities grew slowly in numerical size of settlement. They evolved their own ideologies of self-acceptance and worked out their own patterns and customs of mutual tolerance. And in this southern land of good climate, fertile soil for crops and

<sup>28</sup> Kotze, D.J., Nationalism: A Comparative study, pp. 7 - 8.

<sup>29</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa (AZANIA), p. 32.

<sup>30</sup> Davidson, B., Africa in History, p. 265.



cattle, and abundant extra protein in the form of game both big and small, they evidently prospered.<sup>31</sup>

However, the culture of South Africa's Early Iron Age can, in many ways be sharply distinguished from that of their Late Stone Age counterparts. The Late Stone Age people were hunter-gatherers who used stone tools and small scrapers of various kind, and the San in the Western Cape Province spent the winter at the coast living mostly from seafoods and the summer in the mountains where the diet consisted of various plant foods, hyrax, tortoises and other small game. Hence, their movement was regulated by the seasonal availability of water, plant and animal resources, and regular interaction between neighbouring groups was also to be expected.<sup>32</sup>

And in the first few centuries of our era, the Late Stone Age hunting gathering populations were replaced over much of Southern Africa by agricultural people with a knowledge of metallurgy. These populations are mostly likely to have been an advance guard of Bantu-speaking groups that migrated into the subcontinent from north-west (Chad and Cameroon).<sup>33</sup>

But it would be a mistake to infer from this that the two societies (Late Stone Age and Early Iron Age) existed in isolation from each other. Broederstroom, for instance, has been shown to be an Early Iron Age site; but archaeologists have found there hundreds of stone implements used for making shell beads of Stone Age style. And this suggests a measure of interaction between the two cultures.<sup>34</sup>

The Late Iron Age is marked by a more intensified exploitation of mineral resources, and change in patterns of land occupation and settlement. Early Iron Age societies preferred to settle in the low-lying coastal regions and river valleys. But settlement patterns in the Late Iron Age tend to display less uniformity and more regional diversity. Moggs in his research found the trend of the Late Iron Age in Natal and Zululand being towards smaller, more dispersed settlement with a family homestead as the basic unit. And in the southern highveld, be distinguished between the large, compact, densely populated settlement in the westerly region, and the smaller, more dispersed, village-type settlements to the east.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Davidson, B., *Africa in History*, p. 265.

<sup>32</sup> Ki-zerbo, J., *General History of Africa - I*, pp. 527 - 528.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 528.

<sup>34</sup> Maylam, P., *History of the African People of South Africa*, p. 7.

<sup>35</sup> Maggs, T.M.O'C., *Iron Age Communities of the Southern Highveld*, p. 285.

Although scholars may differ on the question of continuity between the Early and Late Iron Age, there is considerable agreement that a strong thread of continuity runs between the Late Iron Age and the present. And despite our knowledge and understanding of South African's distant past, we should not forget- that huge gaps still exist. There is still a dearth of monographs on many vital aspects of South African history. One can even do little more than to speculate about the political, social and ideological character of South African's Iron Age societies in the era before documentary sources become available. For too little systematic excavation has been done on Iron Age sites in the Free State, Natal and the former Transkei.<sup>36</sup>

One also has to be careful in the handling of cultural remains. Can it be assumed, for instance, that there is a correlation between different pottery and ceramic style and different peoples? The assumption that a discontinuity in ceramic tradition reflects a change in human population is misleading because we know little of what artefact traditions reflect in sociological terms. And finally, archaeologists may also encounter the difficulty of not being able to find any material remains of all.<sup>37</sup>

But in spite of these limitations one must recognise that the recent archaeological breakthrough in South African Iron Age studies has been of enormous value, not only to the archaeologists, historians and anthropologists, but also to any person interested in South African society. And its value has also contributed to the annihilation and correction of myths and stereotypes that are associated with the past and present African societies in South Africa.<sup>38</sup>

In conclusion, the South African Iron Age was dynamic. The past was not static, but ever changing. The prehistoric studies in southern Africa shows, therefore, the high interior plateau lands to have played a leading part in the evolution of man the tool maker. The increasing ingenuity and efficiency with which succeeding hominid populations developed patterns of behaviour and the cultural equipment with which to exploit ever more intensively the resources of these eco-systems in which they lived help to explain the racial and cultural differences that distinguish the indigenous people of southern Africa today (San, Khoi, Berg Jama and Bantu) as well as demonstrating the great antiquity and continuity of many behaviour traits which still persist up to the present time.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Wilson, M., Thompson, L., The Oxford History of South Africa, p. xii.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Maylam, P., A History of the African People of South Africa, p. 17.

<sup>39</sup> Ki-Zerbo, J., General History of Africa, p. 529.

The Iron Age people were farmers and some of them were nomadic pastoralists who grew no crops but who made a distinctive kind of pottery. And some of these people can be identified with the historic Khoikhoi. The Khoikhoi people conducted a trade with their Bantu-speaking neighbours in the middle of Orange and in the Rapa long ago before the arrival of whites. They also intermarried to some extent with Cape Nquni, and it was only after their association with European that they lost their land, their stocks and their trading role.<sup>40</sup>

However, the birth of a plural society and the European association with Southern Africa took place with the Portuguese circumnavigation of the Cape of Good Hope of the end of the fifteenth century, especially with the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck in Table Bay on 6 April 1652.<sup>41</sup>

### 3. BLACK PEOPLE'S MIGRATION TO SOUTH AFRICA

The early historical, and contemporary expression of the archaeological Iron Age are the Bantu-speaking societies, found in most part of Southern Africa. Such societies, being, until very recently, non-literate, form a part of the prehistoric scene until the first accounts of them by literate explorers bring them within the scope of the historians.<sup>42</sup>

And while there was building of different empires like the Bantu-speaking Iron-Age people who inhabited Zimbabwe especially the early Karango people and the Bantu Bbira from Lake Tanganyika who brought with them advanced techniques and ideas into Zimbabwe, there was also the southerly drift of groups of Bantu-speaking iron-working people into the interiors of present South Africa. They drove their herds, stopped seasonally to sow and harvest, and settled at last where they found space and a location to suit them.<sup>43</sup>

In their wandering they met with, mixed with, settled among, influenced and were influenced by earlier inhabitants - earlier-coming Bantu people, perhaps Khoisan or Khoikhoi. The Bantu-speaking people of South Africa fall into two dominant language groups of that time, namely the Sotho-Tswana and the Nguni, with differences of culture within their broad similarities.

<sup>40</sup> Davenport, T.R.H., South Africa: Modern History, 4th Edition, p. 8

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>42</sup> Wilson, M., Thompson, L., The Oxford History of South Africa, Vol. 1, p. 31.

<sup>43</sup> Troup, F., South Africa: An Historical Introduction, p. 18.

The ancestors of the Sotho may have been the earlier Iron Age inhabitants in South Africa occupying the present areas, Botswana, Lesotho and Free State. While the Venda and Lemba peoples of Northern Eastern Transvaal speak languages related to Sotho and the Karango are thought to have moved into South Africa perhaps in the fifteenth centuries. The Venda may be the offshoot of the Rozwi, while the Lemba, who were skilled metal workers and potters may be descendants of people once trading intensively with the east coast.<sup>44</sup>

The Nguni group which includes the Swazi, Zulu, Pondo, Thembu and Xhosas lived mostly in the east of Drakensberg, Natal and to the eastern Cape Province by the end of the sixteenth century. So by the middle of the seventeenth century when the Dutch were making their first settlement in the extreme South-west, the Bantu-speaking people had already been living in the northern, central and eastern parts for several hundred years.<sup>45</sup>

During the early sixteenth and late seventeenth century, the African societies with the exception of San and Khoikhoi were stratified on the basis of different chiefdoms with different levels of power and wealth. These traditional societies were not static, but there was also a structural change even though the change was very slow. With the establishment of chief township law and order were extended beyond their tiny village or hunting band. People were able to make fire, iron weapons supplanted those of stone and bones and domesticated animals were also introduced.<sup>46</sup>

However, the present demographic structure of South Africa owes much to the events that occurred with the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck in 1652. The arrival of British settlers and Boer migration within the subcontinent considerably altered the African chiefdoms and expanded the distribution of the white population. But more dramatic were the cataclysmic changes in Nguni and Sotho society wrought by the Difaqane (Sotho/Tswana word for 'hammering') or Mfecane (Zulu for 'crashing').

The chain reaction of attack, counter-attack, devastation and dispersal that constituted difaqane had its origin when the Zulu state under the leadership of Shaka started to expand by the conquest of neighbouring people. The overall impact of the difaqane was varied: some societies were severely devastated, some were forced to migrate and establish themselves in other parts of Africa; others withstood the traumas and even consolidated their positions in order to protect themselves from Shaka's

<sup>44</sup> Troup, F., *South Africa: An Historical Introduction*, p. 19.

<sup>45</sup> Maylam, P., *A History of the African People of South Africa*, p. 33.

<sup>46</sup> Pampallis, J., *Foundation of the New South Africa*, p. 6.

aggression. The Sotho, the Swazi, the Pondo, and the Pedi formed independent kingdoms, living in their own territories but under different African kings or chiefs.<sup>47</sup>

And other independent peoples included the Griqua, who establish their two states, one in the area of present-day Kimberley (Griqualand West) and one in an inland area between Natal and the Transkei (Griqualand East). And all the independent African states had their economics based on agriculture. They kept livestock, particularly cattle and goats and grew crops such as maize, sorghum, pumpkins and yams. They also mined and smelted iron and copper. Their change to Wage labour started when they began trading with Europeans: British, Boers and (in Mozambique) Portuguese.<sup>48</sup>

#### 4. DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY AND WHITE SETTLEMENT

As Portugal come under Spanish domination in the latter part of the sixteenth century, the Dutch provinces of the north were banding together under the leadership of William of Orange in the struggle to free themselves from Spain's Stranglehold. Lisbon had succeeded Venice as the great European centre of East-West trade and Philip II of Spain, hoping to subdue the rebellious Protestant Netherlands, closed the part of Lisbon to their traders. Undaunted, the Dutch set off themselves for the East and soon challenged the declining Portuguese influence in the Indian Ocean.<sup>49</sup>

The VOC's motives were strictly and relentlessly commercial, its purpose was to acquire valuable trade and to establish a monopoly in its sphere from which all competitors should be excluded. The Dutch were not crusaders as the early Portuguese ostensibly were; and they were also having smooth relations with the Muslim world. They were attracted to Africa by the gold of Sofala and Mozambique. But their main interest centred on the crops of the tropics, particularly the spice trade of the East, and the lucrative traffic in slaves.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Pampallis, J., Foundation of the New South Africa, p. 7.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>49</sup> Troup, F., South Africa: An Historical Introduction, p. 38.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

#### 4.1 FROM REFRESHMENT POST TO COLONY

The settlement of a colony at the southern end of the African continent was almost an accident and was thought unwise until after it was an established fact. The United Dutch East India Company, organized in 1602 as part of the vast commercial empire of the Netherlands, sailed its ships around the tip of the continent without any serious thought of stopping. The destination was the East Indies where they would obtain spices and return to home port.<sup>51</sup>

It was quite by accident that in March 1647 a merchant ship, the Haarlem, was wrecked in a storm but the valuable cargo was salvaged and the crew left to guard it until another ship was sent to pick them up.<sup>52</sup>

In a number of basic ways the colonial settlement at the Cape in the late eighteenth century had come to differ from the original settlement in the kind and extent of settlement, in the rationale for its existence, in the structural administration, and in the composition of its population.

In 1652 the Dutch East India Company (VOC) founded a refreshment station, an outpost on the southern tip of the African continent with limited objectives. The Cape was to be an easily defensible refreshment station serving its ships plying the oceans between Europe and Asia. Administratively it was to be kept as confined as possible to save expenses. Economically it was to exist for the Company's benefit and the interest of the mother country. And it was thought also to be an outpost of the Europe which would associate with the Khoisan and Hottentots for the sake of cattle trade, but otherwise would keep to itself and its task of becoming self-sufficient.<sup>53</sup>

A few years later these initial objectives were superseded by a number of structural changes. In 1657, the VOC gave out land at Rondebosch to farmer employees and encouraged them to settle. These settlers formed the nucleus of a permanent white population which grew slowly during the next two decades. After 1717 a growing number of settlers moved inland to join the few Freeburghers who, since 1703, had established themselves as postoralists or trekboers on land leased from the VOC.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Templin, J.A., Ideology on a Frontier, p. 15.

<sup>52</sup> Troup, F., South Africa: An Historical Introduction, p. 40.

<sup>53</sup> Giliomee, H., Du Toit, A., Afrikaner Political Thought, p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> Giliomee, H., Elphick, R., The Shaping of South African Society, p. 410.

From 1703 - 1780 the trekboers increased the area of white population almost tenfold as the Cape Colony grew from a compact settlement in the Southwestern Cape to a vast, ill-defined area stretching almost to the Orange River in the north and to the Great Fish River in the east. During the same period there was a steady increase in the free population of which most settlers were living on land and by 1780 a large majority of them were postoralists. Cape Town was the only town of significance and accounted for about one fifth of the free population, which included a number of free blacks.<sup>55</sup>

These structural changes radically affected the nature and structure of administration. During the first decades of European settlement, Company officials manned a city council cum port authority which could exercise control over all its subjects. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the outpost had become an unwieldy colony in which much de facto power had slipped into the hands of burgher officers occupying key positions in the local administration.<sup>56</sup>

At the same time, the composition of the outposts population was transformed. During the initial years the population consisted almost exclusively of the Europeans who had founded it. However in 1658 VOC officials captured a Portuguese ship with one hundred and seventy slaves from Angola and landed them in the Cape. Soon other slaves came from Angola and from the East Indies until 1795 when the VOC disbanded. And also within the limits of the colony were Khoikhoi, Khoisan, Xhosas and aboriginal hunters. And by 1800 this European community was part of an extended plural society.<sup>57</sup>

And most important agent of the transformation of the outpost was the community of freeburghers. It was the freeburghers who made the colony self-sufficient in wheat and wine, it was they who penetrated beyond the coastal mountain range, rapidly extending the limits of the settlement by carving out extensive cattle farms. Ultimately it was they who thwarted any plans for close settlement.

Their quest for water and pasture, the ease with which informal title could be acquired, and the ease with which the indigenous inhabitants could be forced to retreat or to enter service with their stock, ensured that the spread of the settlement was rapid.

<sup>55</sup> Giliomee, H., Elphick, R., The Shaping of South African Society, p. 410.

<sup>56</sup> Giliomee, H., Du Toit, A., Afrikaner Political Thought, pp. 1 - 2.

<sup>57</sup> Templin, J.A., Ideology on a Frontier, p. 19.

And by the 1770's they were in the Camdeboo and had penetrated northwards beyond the Sneeuwberg and eastwards to Bruintjies Hoogte.<sup>58</sup>

Between 1776 and 1833 the settlement at the Cape, which had by that time developed into a plural, stratified, slave-owning society was exposed to the tremors of an ideological conflict for less painful than, but in stark contrast to the Mfecane to which black people were being subjected. The change was an onslaught by the values of the Enlightenment on white colonial with desires to keep their caste, labour-repressive society in being.<sup>59</sup>

The 1790's, however, were also a period of extreme economic crisis as the VOC drifted steadily into bankruptcy and the settlers at the Cape began to experience the inflationary effects of an overprinting of paper money since its introduction in 1782, culminating with the first British occupation of Cape Colony in 1795, which was disregarded by many Cape Dutch who kept their distance and some were even refusing to take the oath of allegiance.<sup>60</sup>

In February 1803, under the terms of the Treaty of Amiens, the Cape was made over to the Batavian Republic, and the British authorities withdrew. With the arrival of the Batavians, the Dutch once again became the sole official language. The Council of Policy which was suspended by the British rule was turned from a board of commercial management into a more compact and regularly constituted instrument of government, changed the system of accounting, and for the time being got rid of the Fiscal.<sup>61</sup>

They brought the frontier farmers closer to the administration of local government by promoting some of them to the ranks of field cornet and entrusted them with minor administrative and judicial responsibilities. And in their liberal humanitarianism, they were innovators of a kind the colonials had been taught to view with extreme suspicion. However, their reputation remained high because they had time to change very little.<sup>62</sup>

With the resumption of hostilities in Europe by Napoleon in 1805, the Amiens treaty fell into abeyance, and the Cape again lay open to secure, as a strategic base of value

<sup>58</sup> Davenport, T.R.H., South Africa: A Modern History, p. 27.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>60</sup> Wilson, M., Thompson, L. The Oxford History of South Africa, p. 275.

<sup>61</sup> Davenport, T.R.H., South Africa: A Modern History, p. 37.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.



to any power which needed to secure its access to the East. And in 1806 the British occupy the Cape for the second time with little resistance from Governor Janssens. During this time the British governor, the Earl of Caledon was instructed to rule and to govern by proclamation and to legislate by proclamation even on important matters. And the early years of British rule saw several changes. Examples were the abolition of the slave trade and the laying down of rules to govern Khoikhoi vagrancy.<sup>63</sup>

In fact the peculiar racial labour order which developed at the Cape during the course of the eighteenth century is of great significance to much of the Afrikaner's later social and political history. This labour order was characterized by three central features. Firstly, the basic institution of slavery, secondly, the servile, subordinate position of the majority of Khoikhoi and the free blacks, and thirdly, the dominant position of the white group which did not itself produce a labour or artisan class but depended on slave and indigenous labour while attaching a racial stigma to manual labour in the service of others.<sup>64</sup>

#### 5. THE SLAVES - 1652 - 1795

By the turn of the seventeenth century, domestic slavery had disappeared in the Netherlands. However, in the following decades the Dutch gained experience of slavery as they came into contact with West Africa, Asiana slave-owning societies in the East Indies, India, Brazil and Ceylon. Thus from the beginning of the Dutch East India Company's activities in the Indies, slavery played an accepted and important part in their commercial activities.<sup>65</sup>

By the year 1652 the Dutch were well acquainted with slavery when the VOC established refreshment station at the Cape. The introduction of slavery to the new colony came as a virtually foredoomed, although incidental, consequence of its settlement. For the VOC, a commercial enterprise whose resources were much over-extended even in its period of prosperity, and which was always short of manpower, slavery solved otherwise intractable problems of labour supply.<sup>66</sup>

Slaves were thereafter brought to the Cape in three ways. Firstly, the Company (VOC) sponsored voyages from Cape visited slave outlets in Madagascar and elsewhere. Secondly, the Company 'return' fleets, sailing each year from the East

<sup>63</sup> Troup, F., South Africa: An Historical Introduction, p. 83.

<sup>64</sup> Giliomee, H., Du Toit, A., Afrikaner Political Thought, p. 7.

<sup>65</sup> Giliomee, H., Elphic, R., The Shaping of South Africa Society: 1652 - 1820, p. 75.

<sup>66</sup> Neame, L.E., The History of Apartheid, p. 11.

Indies and Ceylon to Europe, usually brought a fees slave to the Cape, occasionally for the Company's own use, but more often to be sold to individual burghers. Thirdly, foreign slaves en route to the Americas from Madagascar, Mozambique and East Africa sometimes sold slaves in Cape Town.<sup>67</sup>

Also with the introduction of slavery in Cape, another new development took place. In 1657 Jan van Riebeeck allow nine of the Company's servants to became free burghers and landholders. They were given small holdings of 13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> acres, free from taxation, on which they bound themselves to live for twenty years. They retain some of their military duties and they were expected to provide or to supply the Company (VOC) with its requirements at fixed price.<sup>68</sup>

The ultimate objective of the free burghers (as they were called) was to stimulate Company's garden to produce enough food for the ships going to India. And in order to stimulate cultivation labour was needed. However, the Khoikhoi and Khoisan had no wish to work as labourers for the newcomers, and it was then that Jan van Riebeeck suggested that slaves should be imported to work for the free burghers in order to alleviate labour shortage. And through the recommendation of Council of Policy which was initiated by the Directors of the VOC, to look into the Coloured labour, slaves were introduces as labourers replacing White labour.<sup>69</sup>

Slavery as a labour system was subject to various statutes in order to regulate the relationship between slave and master. Passes were introduced to regulate the movement of the slaves and the indigenou workers under the control of the frontier Boers. Other slave-related practices were extended. For instance, the indenture system, under which the children of slave men and Khoikhoi women were apprenticed for a certain period, was often applied also to the Khoikhoi children whose fathers were not slaves.<sup>70</sup>

However, despite the practice of slavery in the frontier, the expansion across the frontier into the interior part of Cape had also far-reaching effects on the mental outlook and the theological interpretation of the Boer frontiersmen. Although religious services in the frontiersmen's home often included the Khoikhoi, there was little consistent attempt to convert these Africans to the faith, with all its implications. Consequently there was almost a total lack of interest in the spiritual nature of either

<sup>67</sup> Giliomee, H., Elphick, R., The Shaping of South African Society 1652 - 1820, p. 77.

<sup>68</sup> De Kiewiet, C.M., A History of South Africa, Social and Economic, p. 5.

<sup>69</sup> Neame, L.E., The History of Apartheid, p. 12.

<sup>70</sup> Giliomee, H., Du Toit, A., Afrikaner Political Thoughts, p. 8.

Khoikhoi or the Khoisan. Culturally this period of the expansion on the frontier became for the white frontiersmen almost the 'Dark Ages' of South Africa because they regarded the Khoisan and Khoikhoi a people who lived and acted more like wild animals than human beings and they treated them accordingly.<sup>71</sup>

And as soon as the Afrikaners came into contact with different types of people, it became evident that they had developed an exclusiveness that had religious, cultural and racial implications. Their relation with both the Khoikhoi and the Khoisan including Africans in the interior, the most obvious difference was skin colour. In fact there existed amongst the frontier-farmers an unwritten common code of behaviour towards the non-whites. Development and crystallisation of the colour morality did went hand in hand with the gradual emergence in the eighteenth century of a Boer-Afrikaner type.<sup>72</sup>

The Boers had a long tradition of moving away from the centre of government in the Cape and this expansion across the frontier was greatly increased when the British replaced the Dutch or governmental authority. The British government at this time was influenced by humanitarians and liberal missionaries to abolish the slave trade, and the impact of this pressure on the Boer society of the Cape greatly intensified the established tradition of escape. Moreover, when the London Missionary Society and its superintendent in South Africa, Dr. John Philip, began to bring pressure on the Cape government in pursuit of African rights, the Boers became outrageous. Thus precipitating their move into the interior.<sup>73</sup>

And by an ordinance passed in 1828 the Africans were given both civil and human rights. The new law removed the passes of the 1809 proclamation. Khoikhoi could not be restrained under the charge of being vagabonds but were entitled to a fair trial as any other citizen of South Africa, and they were also allowed to own land. The Hottentots were given equality in law and the right to choose whether to offer their labour instead of being compelled to accept employment.<sup>74</sup>

Then in August 1833 Britain abolished slavery in all parts of the Empire. In South Africa the law was to become effective December, 1, 1834. It was estimated that the Boers owned 39 000 slaves, valued at over 2 million pound, and they were given  $1\frac{1}{4}$

<sup>71</sup> Templin, J.A., Ideology on a Frontier, p. 32.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, p. 39.

<sup>73</sup> Hatch, J., The History of Britain in Africa, p. 138.

<sup>74</sup> Gailey, H., John Phillip's Role in Hottentots Emancipation in the Journal of African History, No. 111, Article No. 3, p. 430 - 431.

million pound in compensation which the Boers considered it to be woefully inadequate. Three years later, in 1836, the British decided again to return land in the Eastern Cape to Africans in order to provide a buffer frontier area. As a result of these psychological, financial and territorial shocks, many of the Boers farmers decided to leave the Cape in a more organized and purposeful manner than previously. As before, this large-scale movement was bound to clash with the African societies beyond the frontier.<sup>75</sup>

#### 6. THE GREAT TREK, 1836 - 1854

In and after 1835 many Afrikaner families disposed of their property in the Cape Colony, bought large supplies of gunpowder, mustered their live-stock, loaded the rest of their movable property in their wagons, and trekked northwards across the Orange river. At the time they referred to themselves as Emigrants. But since the late nineteenth century they have been known as Voortrekkers and their migration as the Great Trek.<sup>76</sup>

When the Great Trek began two areas had been reported on, by reconnaissance expeditions which had been made in 134 and 1835, as fertile and uninhabited; Natal south of Tugela, and the central highveld on either side of the Vaal River. But the Voortrekkers did not initially understand the realities of the situations in those areas. They did not realize, firstly, that Dingane and Mzilikazi dominated them to safeguard themselves from attacks from the south, and secondly, that many Afrikaners were alive who regarded them as their homelands.<sup>77</sup>

Consequently the first phase of the Great Trek was a military phase; and even when the Zulu and the Ndebele kingdoms had been defeated, the security of Voortrekker settlement in Natal and the central highveld was threatened by influxes of Nguni and Sotho people, who were returning to what they regarded as their homes after the Difagane epoch. In the highveld environment there were other crucial factors. Unlike fertile soil in Natal, highveld set limits to the territory where Voortrekkers could settle and practice their traditional pastoral economy due to tsetse-fly and malaria. That was why Voortrekkers could not find settlement in the north and east of northern Transvaal thereby freeing themselves from dependence on British-controlled trade routes.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Hatch, J., The History of Britain in Africa, p. 138.

<sup>76</sup> Wilson, M., Thompson, L., The Oxford History of South Africa to 1870, p. 406.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 406.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

The course of the Great Trek was therefore affected by three main factors: the quality of the Voortrekkers as individuals and as a community, the environment into which they were migrated, and the reaction of the British government and its local representatives. Most of the Trekkers made for Natal, where fertile land had been depopulated by the expansion of the Zulus.

In 1837, the leader of the Voortrekkers, Piet Retief, after settling in Natal visited Dingane (leader of the Zulu nation) where they concluded two deals. Dingane would grant the Trekkers land in Natal on condition that Retief organized the recovery of Zulu cattle stolen by the Tlokwa chief, Sekonyela. Retief proceeded to lead a successful expedition that not only regained the Zulu cattle, but also acquired a number of guns and horses from Sekonyela. And early in 1838 Retief and his party of about one hundred men returned to Dingane's kraal at Mgungundlovu to hand over the cattle. On Dingane's order the whole party was massacred.<sup>79</sup>

In December of the same year (1838) the Voortrekkers gained their revenge. Taking advantage of their vastly superior fire-power and their strong defensive lager, they won a decisive victory over the Zulu army at the Battle of Blood (Ncome) River, where Dingane himself was killed by his half brother. The Boers, however, found that they had not escaped from the authority of Britain. Before they could fully establish themselves in Natal, British troops had followed them to the coast and Natal itself was annexed.<sup>80</sup>

Again on 16 December 1836, the Ndebeles attacked the lager of the Voortrekkers, and in January 1837 the Voortrekker under commando system defeated the Ndebele by killing 400 people and making off with 700 cattle. All these conflicts represent the military phase of the Voortrekkers, and they were also bound to be in conflict with other African tribes in the interior because of conflict over scarce resources: cattle, arable land, etc.

And eventually, the Boers were forced to move even further afield, and they established their two republics, the Zuid Afrikanse Republic and the Orange Free State through Zand River Convention (1852) and Bloemfontein Convention (1854). By this time in the middle of the century, the British government was tired of the expense and trouble of governing the Boers in the interior. The independence of these

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<sup>79</sup> Maylam, P., The History of the African People of South Africa, p. 73.

<sup>80</sup> Hatch, J., The History of Britain in Africa, p. 138.

two republics was recognized, provided that no slavery was practised within them. By the middle of the century, therefore, South Africa was divided into two British colonies, the Cape and Natal, and two Boer republics, the Zuid Afrikanse Republic and the Orange Free State.<sup>81</sup>

Other African states were annexed by British government. In 1869 Britain annexed Lesotho as the colony of Basutoland. This came after decades of struggle to maintain their independence by the Sotho people under king Moshweshwe, despite their defeat of British forces at the battle of Berea in 1854 and the Orange Free State Boers in the first Sotho-Boer war in 1858. And in 1879, after the defeat of the Zulu army, a British-led force consisting of British and Swazi soldiers invaded and defeated the Pedi forces and captured Sekhyukhune (leader of the Pedi people). In 1962 at the end of the Anglo-Boer War, Britain took over Swaziland as a protectorate, similar in status to Botswana and Lesotho.<sup>82</sup>

The power of the independent African states was thus broken during the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Meanwhile, as anti-colonial resistance continued, another great social process was getting underway. The enormous deposits of diamonds and gold which were discovered in South Africa not only increased Britain's determination to control more of its territory, they also resulted in the 'mineral revolution' which was to transform South Africa's social and economic life, and set it on the path to becoming an industrial country. These discoveries, coinciding with the British decision to return to the highveld, paved the way for a new era in South African history.<sup>83</sup>

## 7. THE MINERAL REVOLUTION

Before 1870, most Africans in Southern Africa lived in independent chiefdoms. These existed alongside some small Trekkers or Boer Republics and the British colonies of the Cape and Natal. Less than fifty years later, an industrial revolution had swept up all these little states and chiefdom into one large state dominated by white capitalists. And the discovery of diamond and gold both in 1867 and 1886, speeded up the breakdown of the old, land-based economy with the emergency of Wage labour and massive industrialization of the South African economy.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Hatch, J., *The History of Britain in Africa*, p. 138.

<sup>82</sup> Pampallis, J., *Foundation of the New South Africa*, pp. 14 - 15.

<sup>83</sup> Wilson, M., Thompson, L., *The Oxford History of South Africa*, p. 446.

<sup>84</sup> Callinicos, L., *Working Life: 1856 - 1940, Volume Two*, p. 37.

## 7.1 THE DIAMOND FIELDS DISPUTE

The area in which diamonds were discovered was inhabited by Griquas, some small groups of Khoikhoi (Kora) and Tswana (Rolong and Tlhapin) and some Boers with their African and coloured workers. The sovereignty of the Griqua was recognized by Britain until 1854 when it signed the Bloemfontein convention with the Boers and denying all responsibilities north of the Orange River. But after diamond discovery, Britain's interest in the rights of the Griquas was aroused once more.<sup>85</sup>

This territory of Griqualand West which was claimed by the Griqua, Orange Free State and the South African Republic, led to a court of arbitration, presided over by Robert Keate, Lieutenant-Governor of Natal. He gave Griqualand West in favour of the Griqua, whose chief, Nicolaas Waterboer, was persuaded to ask for British protection. Griqualand West later became a separate Crown Colony in 1871 and was formally annexed to the Cape in 1880.<sup>86</sup>

The annexation of the Griqualand West to Britain's sphere of Lagemony should be looked within the context of British imperialism in South Africa. Two motives were involved in the annexation of Griqualand West. Firstly, Britain feared that if the Boer republics gained control of the diamond fields, their new economic power would make them less amenable to British manipulation. Secondly, Britain was also anxious that the 'Missionary Road' (which ran through the diamond fields, then north to Botswana) should not be controlled by the Boers who would then be in a position to block a British advance to the north. And lastly, the wealth of the diamond fields was, of course, also a major attraction to Britain, the world's leading capitalist power.<sup>87</sup>

Here the ultimate objective of Britain was clear, that any Boer republic should not be allowed to be economically independent but should be under the tutelage of the financial capital of Britain for the purpose of economic control. However the intervention of Britain in the Zuid-Afrikaanse Republic after the discovery of gold culminated in a massive disastrous results - the Anglo Boer War in 1899.

## 8. THE ANGLO-BOER WAR 1899 - 1902

Afrikaner nationalism, which came into being slowly after the Great Trek, grew much stronger in 1870's and 1880's. It developed a strong anti-British character as Britain's

<sup>85</sup> Pampallis, J., Foundations of the New South Africa, p. 16.

<sup>86</sup> Saunders, C., Illustrated History of South Africa, p. 166.

<sup>87</sup> Pampallis, J., Foundations of the New South Africa, p. 17.

aggressive attempts to extend its influence in South Africa threatened Boer power and the independence of the Boer republics. The Orange Free State's grievance at being denied control over Griqualand West by Keate and the Transvaal's struggle against Britain's annexation both served to fuel the growth of Afrikaner nationalism which later expressed itself in a form of open conflict between the Boers and the Britains.<sup>88</sup>

In 1895, Cecil Rhodes together with Dr. L.S. James attempted to capture Transvaal by using the Uitlander's discontent to their advantage. The Uitlanders were complaining that although they pay most of their state revenues, they had no voice in the Transvaal government. They also accuse the government of refusing to allow the use of the English language in the courts, the state school and government affairs. And unfortunately for Rhodes and his friends, the uprisings failed to materialize and Jameson was easily captured and disarmed near Krugersdorp on 2 January 1896.<sup>89</sup>

The main result of the Jameson Raid was to further heighten Anglo-Boer tension. The Boers, who now had proof of Britain's intentions and bad faith, felt more insecure. From the time of the Jameson Raid, Kruger's government had assumed that war was inevitable and had started to make serious military preparations. Arm spending increased rapidly and large quantities of modern weapons - rifles, machine guns and field guns - were imported from Germany and France. Britain, meanwhile, brought reinforcement into South Africa and posted troops near the Transvaal Border.<sup>90</sup>

On the 9th October 1899, two days after White and the first troops from India were landing at Durban, Kruger issued an ultimatum, demanding the withdrawal of British troops from the border and all reinforcement halted within 48 hours, or else war would follow. Britain refused and the Transvaal declared war on 11 October 1899. The Boers in the Orange Free State, who sympathized with the Transvaal and who also realized that a British victory would also mean an end to their independence, fought the war on the side of their fellow Boers.<sup>91</sup>

Immediately after the war was declared, the Boer armies took the initiative. They made a systematic blockade to Mafeking which was heavily guarded to protect Britain's eventual line of march and to guard the border facing western Transvaal, and also to Kimberley which was however highly protected for the reason of prestige

<sup>88</sup> Pampallis, J., Foundations of the New South Africa, p. 39.

<sup>89</sup> Van der Poel, J., The Jameson Raid, pp. 130 - 131.

<sup>90</sup> Barthorp, M., The Anglo-Boer Wars, pp. 50.

<sup>91</sup> Pampallis, J., Foundations of the New South Africa, p. 43.



owing to the fact that it was the main town in Griqualand West endowed with diamond deposits and inhabited also by a population with strong republican sentiments.<sup>92</sup>

The Boers also laid siege to Northern Cape, Ladysmith and Natal. They also encountered and defeated British forces at Magersfontein near Kimberley, Stormberg, where General J.H. Olivier and his forces suffered great casualties from Free State commandos, and British suffered great loss also in Colenso in Natal all in December 1899, which was called the 'Black Week'. Joan, however, after more troops arrived from Canada, Australia and New Zealand, Britain was able to inflict series of defeat to the Boers especially in Kimberley and Ladysmith and forced General Piet Cronje to surrender with 4000 men at Paardeberg.<sup>93</sup>

In March 1900, the British troops entered Bloemfontein and after capturing it they entered Johannesburg and Pretoria in June 1900. After the occupation of Boer capitals, British proclaimed sovereignty over the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal Colony on 24 May and 1 September 1900 respectively. And later the Boer resistance started to dwindle as the commandos began to trickle back home leaving or mere number of both the Free State and Transvalers under arms.<sup>94</sup>

But the Boer commandos with the help from rural Boer population were able to outfought and outmanoeuvred the British soldiers. And in retaliation Britain adopted very ruthless tactics by burning the Boer farms and herded their women and children into concentration camps, which were overcrowded, disease-ridden and lacking in basic medical care and supplies of food and clothing. And about 28 000 people even more, died in these camps with more than 22 000 of them being young and innocent children.<sup>95</sup>

The Anglo-Boer War was not the white man's war as it is sometimes illustrated in many books. Blacks also bore the brunt of the war through their active participation in the Anglo Boer war. At the beginning of the Anglo-Boer War, the British and the Boers, agreed that the ensuing struggle would be a 'white man's war' in which the involvement of black people including the coloureds in the fighting would be confined to a non-combatant role. But with the outbreak of the war, those coloureds who were used by the Boers to perform task of supervision of their employer's horses and

<sup>92</sup> Muller, C.F.J. (ed), 500 Years: A History of South Africa, p. 332.

<sup>93</sup> Davenport, T.R.H., South Africa: A Modern History, p. 192.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Pampallis, J., Foundations of the New South Africa, p. 44.

loading of their rifles, were brought in and fight alongside these masters as combatants.<sup>96</sup>

In Natal the British armed the Zulus around the Vryheid district in order to end the war by destroying Afrikaner's stock. Zulus were also used by General Hamilton with the consent of Shepstone, the magistrate of Natal, to help the British Empire to defeat the Afrikaners at Holkrantz on 6 May 1902.<sup>97</sup>

And beside blacks and coloureds participation in war, there were also concentration camps for blacks which were called 'Native' camps in addition to the white concentration camps. Their conditions were similar, with high death rate, appalling and inhospitable conditions where all the things that go to help cleanliness were scarce or altogether lacking.<sup>98</sup>

The results of the Anglo-Boer war were devastating. In money and lives, the cost in blood was very alarming with hundreds of casualties from both the imperial soldiers, Boers and Blacks. The war further intensified the racial conflict than ever before between the Boers and the British nationals. The siege at Mafeking where Blacks were killed by the Boer commandos, as a war epic, is all but forgotten. But the history of Mafeking, represent in a microcosm, the broader issue of the development of black-white relations in South Africa.<sup>99</sup>

But after three years of war, with heavy casualties amongst combatants and civilians, and widespread devastation of large areas of the Transvaal and Orange Free State, peace, although with strong sense of animosity and bitterness from both the Boers and Britains, finally returned to the subcontinent with the signing of the realty of Vereeniging, on the 31 May 1902.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Warwick, P., Black People and the South African War, p. 11.

<sup>97</sup> Maphalala, S.M., Participation of the Zulus in Anglo-Boer War, p. 43.

<sup>98</sup> Hobhouse, E., The Brunt of the War, pp. 350 - 351.

<sup>99</sup> Comaroff, J.L., The Boer War Diary of Sol. T. PLAATJE, p. xi.

<sup>100</sup> Willan, B., Sol Plaatjie: A Biography, p. 104.

## 9. THE TREATY OF VEREENIGING - 31 MAY 1902

The treaty of Vereeniging marked the official ending of the Anglo-Boer war. With this treaty, Boers were asked to lay down their arms and to acknowledge themselves subject of Edward VII, that the Dutch language was to be allowed in the schools, self-government for the defeated republics would be allowed as soon as possible and lastly, that there would be no discussion of the franchise for black Africans until after self-government was instituted.<sup>101</sup>

Both the native policy and political disunity amongst the White community towered above all other points. And between these two great problems (native policy and political unity) there existed also a serious incompatibility. The indecision of the British Government between its obligation to the native and its obligation to the white communities. To grant an unrestricted political liberty to the whites was to fasten social, economic, and political restrictions on the motives. And to insist upon a higher place for the natives was to offend the white communities, especially Natal and the Boer Republics.<sup>102</sup>

For many Africans - in the Cape as well as the Transvaal and Orange Free State - the terms of the Treaty of Vereeniging were intensely disappointing. Wartime propaganda had led many of them to expect some form of recognition of least of the political rights of Africans living in the conquered Boer republics. But clause 8 of the Treaty of Vereeniging disappointed those with hope for an immediate improvement in political status: it provide that no decision would be taken on extending the franchise to Africans until responsible government in the former Boer republics is constituted. The contribution of black South African to the war effort, in other words, was to be without tangible political reward.<sup>103</sup>

## 10. FORMATION OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

As early as 1901, even before the war ended, Wilner had given up as High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape and, as Governor of the new Colonies, had moved to the Transvaal to take up the task of reconstruction and prepare the ground for eventual self-government. The whole country was now, for the first time, under the British flag, but it remained politically ambivalent, the ex-republics administered

<sup>101</sup> Templin, J.N., Ideology on a Frontier, p. 268.

<sup>102</sup> De Kiewiet, C.W., A History of South Africa, p. 143.

<sup>103</sup> Willar, B., Sol Plaatjie: A Biography, pp. 104 - 105.

directly as Crown Colonies, the Cape and Natal reforming self-government and unwilling, except on their own terms, to join any close union.<sup>104</sup>

Immediately after the Anglo-Boer War, the relations between Boers and Britains remained strained, mainly as a result of Lord Milner's policies. As Governor of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, and High Commissioner for South Africa, Milner, obstinately wedded to his belief that British was best, he gave a heavy English language bias to the educational system of the Colonies, and he also tried to anglicize the Boer communities and considered Boer nationalism to be the result of backwardness and isolation from the rest of the world. All these things stimulated a fierce and enduring nationalistic reaction.<sup>105</sup>

However, serious economic problems did propelled Afrikaners and English-speaking in all four colonies to seek the solution of a political union. Custom tariffs and railway policy lead to fierce economic competitions between the four colonies. The economic consideration motivated the support for union. But the union was also strengthened by the Bombatha Rebellion of 1906, indicating the political insecurity of the Afrikaners and Britains.<sup>106</sup>

Between October 1908 and February 1909, representatives of the four colonies met in a National Convention, first in Durban and then in Cape Town, to discuss the establishment of a union. They produced a constitution in the form of a draft Act of Union which was submitted to the British parliament for approval. The principal guarantees of the Act of Union (31 May 1910) were for the white population. Although Great Britain returned the native territories of Bechuanaland, Basutoland, and Swaziland under its protection, the Act of Union was dedicated to the European community.<sup>107</sup>

In the new Union of South Africa the four colonies would become provinces, with all political powers in the new states in the land of whites only. Only whites could be elected as members of parliament and only whites could vote in the Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal. Black voters in the Cape and the existing qualified franchise was to remain, allowing a few property-owning black to vote. The Dutch and English were to be the official languages with equal status.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Troup, F., South Africa: An Historical Introduction, p. 191.

<sup>105</sup> Pampallis, J., Foundations of the New South Africa, p. 48.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, p. 49.

<sup>107</sup> De Kiewiet, C.W., A History of South Africa, p. 150.

<sup>108</sup> Templin, J.A., Ideology on a Frontier, pp. 272 - 275.

And despite strong opposition from the blacks to the exclusive nature of the proposed constitution, it was ratified by the British parliament as the South African Act and came into force on 31 May 1910, with Louis Botha as the first Prime Minister of the Republic of South Africa. This Act which was based on a colour-bar precluded all blacks from being eligible to become members of parliament.<sup>109</sup>

#### 11. CONCLUSION

The last decade of the eighteenth century and the first three decades of the nineteenth century was a period of rapid transition in the economic, political and culture of the South African Boers. These rapid developments challenged the Boers way of life, previously relatively free from governmental interference (British government), especially in the eastern frontier.

South African Society of the turn of the nineteenth century was also undergoing rapid and profound changes. Thirty years before, in 1870, the majority of Africans lived in independent chiefdoms. The settler society in the interior (Boers) remained weak and fragmented, and in Natal, Boers were engaged mainly in hunting and bartering with Africans for cattle. In the region bounded to the north and south by the Limpopo and Orange River, both the Swazi's, Zulus and Tswanas competed with the Boers for control of land, and this led to continued conflict between the Boers and the Black people.

With the mineral revolution, the economic and political landscape of southern Africa was transformed dramatically, leading to the emergence of wage workers. The mineral discoveries engendered rapid growth in all other sectors of the economy, creating a strong demand for labour in both construction and manufacturing industry. South Africa, suddenly from being a backward, neglected, outpost of Empire, it became a major investment opportunity for British empire in particular.<sup>110</sup>

The incorporation of different independent African chiefdoms lead to the transformation of political configuration of the subcontinent. The participation of blacks in the Anglo-Boer war and the military success of the British army over the Boers early in 1900, followed by the annexation of the Orange Free State and Zuid Afrikanse Republic, generated among many black people a mood of optimism that a

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<sup>109</sup> Meli, F., A History of the ANC, p. 34.

<sup>110</sup> Hatch, J., The History of Britain in Africa, p. 141.

new downing, a future in which their interest would be safeguarded, and in which their status and influence in South African society would be progressively advanced.<sup>111</sup>

The Anglo-Boer War was one of the most costly and bitterly contested military encounters between whites on African soil. It left many people young and old dead and those who remained were left destitute and poor. The signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging in 1902, however, ushered in an epoch when the foundation of the settler state, were urgently repaired and strengthened.

The immediate post-war era was one unfulfilled expectations for many black people. The terms of the peace treaty (Treaty of Vereeniging) made it impossible for a non-racial franchise to be introduced in the annexed colonies. The discriminatory laws of the republics were reinforced and extended. Opportunities that might have presented themselves during the war were in most instances swiftly terminated once the peace agreement was signed. For example, the Kgatla people's request for a reserve land in the western Transvaal was turned down following their military assistance to the British against the Boers. Zululand was opened up to white settlement after war, and partition of land system was implemented in Swaziland.<sup>112</sup>

With the establishment of the Union of South Africa - Afrikaners developed a new sense of identity as one people. Yet theirs was nationalist movement with major inconsistencies. They experienced domination by the British government, but were themselves 'racist'. They were concerned to preserve their language and culture and yet actively suppressed Black culture. Indeed, they came to be seen by the African nationalist movements as its main enemy.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Warwick, P., Black People and the South African War, p. 163.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, p. 182.

<sup>113</sup> Pampallis, J., Foundations of the New South Africa, p. 52.

CHAPTER 2THE EVOLUTION OF BLACK NATIONALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

In October 1908, white representatives of the four colonies met in Durban in the South African National Convention to draft the terms of Union. The overwhelming majority of the delegates clearly intended to limit the role of Africans in any political system devised for a united South Africa. This led to the renewed demand for franchise rights by Africans during and after the proceedings of the all-white convention that hammered out the provisions of the Act of Union. In reaction to the imminent threat to the existing non-racial provisions of the Cape system and the proposed limitations of its implicit promises for an eventual non-racial society, Africans called a counter convention in Bloemfontein in March 1909. This specially convened South African Native Convention became the most broadly representative body of the Africans.<sup>1</sup>

In the three decades preceding Union, African political activity had centered in small bodies led and supported for the most part by Christian Africans in each of the four provinces of South Africa. These groups were poorly organized and without an electoral base except in the Cape Colony. All of them display sharp concern over the unequal position of Africans in white dominated society, and they also encompassed insistent requests for improvement in the conditions of all Africans in South Africa.<sup>2</sup>

With the move towards the Union, the leaders of Africans and different groups of Christian Africans in the four colonies were drawn together in their common interests to advance their position within whatever system should develop. They brought with them accumulated experiences of their political activities and unhappy memories of unsuccessful protests. With the advent of Union, Africans as well as whites were placed in a new arena in which to devise appropriate forms of political action.

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<sup>1</sup> Pampalis, J., Foundations of the New South Africa, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The rise of black nationalism for the first few decades was indicative of black's opposition and resistance to colonialism and white supremacy. It represent the reaction of the blacks against their systematic exclusion in the modern economy and their evolutionary participation in the country's political institutions.<sup>3</sup>

The ideology of the black nationalism is that of an outward-looking nationalism, respectful of past traditions yet based on universal principles. Government is to involve the consent of the people, and authority is ultimately to reside in the citizens of all races inhabiting the territory.<sup>4</sup>

Initially, black nationalism, militated itself as a loose expression of tribal consciousness not organized into a formidable force through nationalist or political organizations. During the first few decades tribes were resisting and opposing white domination independently which sometimes resulted into open hostility between blacks and whites.

In the aftermath of both World War 1 and 2 the African people in South Africa entered a period of intense frustration as they continued with their efforts to obtain social, economic and political rights. In social and economic terms, they were caught between an acute shortage of land in the rural areas and industrial discrimination in towns which were designated as European areas.<sup>5</sup>

They had to face up to the harsh realities of increasing taxation, poor educational facilities, industrial colour bar and a series of pass laws restricting their movement from one area to another. As the rate of African urbanization increased, white

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<sup>3</sup> Walshe, P., The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, p. 412.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 100.



workers insisted on the maintenance of industrial colour bar. Thus, the social, economic and political life of Africans was the source of great bitterness and led to increasing racial tensions between Blacks and Whites which found expression in the outbreak of social unrest.<sup>6</sup>

It was within such a context that the doyen of black nationalism i.e. African National Congress operated as it searched for ways of improving the lot of the oppressed Blacks. In ideological terms, the organization could have moved either in a new radical direction or continued in the familiar path of peaceful consultations and constitutional reforms. As events turned out, the South African Native National Congress during early forties continued to seek change within the framework of peaceful protest and constitutional reforms.

#### 1.1.1 METHODS OF PROTEST AND RESISTANCE

#### 1.2.1 THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIVE CONVENTION (SANC)

The first supra-tribal organization to be formed in Bloemfontein was the South African Native Convention and not as is widely accepted the South African Native National Congress in March 1909. And in reality, it was a counter-convention to the South African National Convention of 1908 which met in Durban to draft the terms of the Union of South Africa. It represented African grievances, and was founded also to overcome tribal divisions, and to attempt to get acceptance within the white polity through education, self-help and the accumulation of property.<sup>7</sup>

The SANC was the most broadly representative African gathering to that date. It included such prominent African leaders as John Dube and John Tengo Jabavu and groups and delegates from all the colonies. They represented both the small minority of Cape voters and the overwhelming majority of non-enfranchised Africans

<sup>6</sup> Walshe, P., The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, pp. 70 - 71.

<sup>7</sup> Sono, T., From Democracy to Partocracy, p. 165.

especially from Orange Free State, Transvaal and from Natal including respected tribal authorities as well as "detrribalized" Africans.<sup>8</sup>

The South African Native Convention passed a series of resolutions which, while endorsing the principle of Union, declared that the imperial government was obligated to provide equitable rights to all South Africans regardless of their colour with strong protest also against those terms of the Draft Act that would arrest the advance of non-racial politics and legalize provisions by which a two-third majority of the members of Parliament could disenfranchise any non-white on the voter's rolls in the Cape or Natal.<sup>9</sup>

When it became clear that the terms of the Draft Act would remain unchanged and would be approved by the white Parliaments of the Transvaal, the Cape Colony and the Orange River Colony, and by a referendum of white voters in Natal, the executive of the South African Native Convention joined inter alia with Dr. A. Abdurahman, John Tengo Jabavu, the editor of *Imvo*, and Walter Rubusana, an American-educated ordained minister all of them representing the most prominent Coloured pressure group, the African People's Organization and W.P. Schreiner, a supporter of non-racialism and former prime minister of the Cape Colony and presented a petition to the British Parliament, urging it to remove the discriminatory provisions of the South African Act, particularly in view of the loyalty and attachment to British institutions shown by the non-white population of South Africa.<sup>10</sup>

The founding of the first successful Coloured political movement, the African Political Organization, in Cape Town in 1902 marked also the start of successful black political mobilization on a national scale in South Africa. The APO made important contribution to the tactics and ideologies of black political leaders by propagating the principle of non-collaboration with segregatory political institutions,

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<sup>8</sup> Sono, T., *From Democracy to Partocracy*, p. 165.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

they implemented tactics of the boycott, a strategy that was to be employed to considerable effect by contemporary black organizations.<sup>11</sup>

The appeal went unheeded. The British Parliament passed the South African Act unchanged, and the Union of South Africa, a new self-governing state within the British Empire, came into being. It was on this stage that leaders of SANC uneasily but unmistakably recognized that a new stage in South African politics was opening and called for a new African unity to carry on the struggle for rights within the new political system of the Union of South Africa. This led to the formation of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC).

#### 1.2.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN NATIVE NATIONAL CONGRESS (SANNC) - 1912

The first step in the establishment of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) was taken shortly after unification, when Dr. Pixley Ka Iyaka Seme did not hesitate to draw up a press release in 1911, pleading for the establishment of a South African Native National Congress.<sup>12</sup>

The organization he envisaged was to provide a forum for all African viewpoints, forcefully present African grievances to the new government and to white public opinion, and serve as a new rallying point for political pressure on behalf of Africans throughout South Africa.<sup>13</sup>

In response to Seme's call, representatives from local Vigilance groups, chiefs and other prominent Africans from throughout South Africa and the neighbouring British

<sup>11</sup> Lewis, B., Between the wire and the wall: A history of South African 'Coloured' politics, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> De Beer, L., Political Analysis of African National Congress as An Extra-Parliamentary Movement, p. 5.

Pixley K.I. Seme was a lawyer and politician; he was the principal founder of the ANC. He was educated at Columbia University in USA, Oxford University and the Middle Temple, London. He served as President of the ANC between 1930 and 1937.

<sup>13</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G., From Protest to Challenge, Vol. II, p. 61.

territories assembled in Bloemfontein in a hall called Community Hall and they establish the South African Native National Congress in 1912 and later in 1923 to be called the African National Congress with approximately 200 delegates.<sup>14</sup>

The South African Native National Congress was to be both the focal point of black unity and a pressure group defending African or black interests. In seeking the removal of racial discrimination, the way was to be opened to untrammelled progress in the modern economy and evolutionary participation in the country's political institutions.<sup>15</sup>

The dominant ideology of the SANNC at the time was liberal and reformist in perspective. There was no clearly stated ideological principles. However, the 1919 Constitution of Congress contain some elements that provide useful insight into the ideological position of the organization at that time. It states, among other things, that the South African Native National Congress was established to be the medium of expression of representative opinion and to formulate a standard policy on Native Affairs for the benefit and guidance of the Union Government and Parliament.<sup>16</sup>

Congress thus projected its national role in terms of making representation on behalf of both Africans and Coloureds and formulating policy guidelines for the use of the government in its administration of Coloureds and Africans and also set itself the task of educating the rulers about the demands and needs of its members.

The entrenched policy of racial discrimination against Africans was a constant source of frustration and moral indignation for the African people. What was known as the "Colour Bar" clause of the constitution was seen by congress leaders as a major obstacle to African advancement and progress. Hence, one of the aims of Congress as

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<sup>14</sup> Nyong'o, P.A., *Popular Struggles for Democracy in Africa*, p. 145.

<sup>15</sup> Walshe, P., *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 412.

<sup>16</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G., *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. I, p. 77.

stated in the 1919 constitution was "to agitate and advocate by just means for the removal of the "Colour bar" in political education and industrial field.<sup>17</sup>

The constitution of the SANNC thus makes it clear that congress at the time was committed to the achievement of civil rights and would seek redress and reform by peaceful and constitutional means. Resolutions, protests, deputations, and petitions would be the means employed for the achievement of constitutional reforms within the existing political and economic system.

These political attitudes remained fundamentally unchanged until 1940's, when congress develop a serious concern with the African/Black majority. After three decades of moral arguments and fruitless endeavour to obtain reforms, the stage was eventually reached when a disciplined mass organization was recognized as the essential means to political influence.<sup>18</sup>

Blacks were to claim their rights as a group and accept responsibility for the reform of society, a confrontation with the authorities came to be accepted as a lamentable necessity, methods of protests change dramatically from consultation to non-collaboration and then passive resistance. Methods of protest vary from appeal to Britain and later to the United Nations, to consultations with authorities and on occasions mass protests and passive resistance.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 104.

The term 'Coloured' in the South African context refers to those people often described in other societies as mixed race, mulattos or half-castes. In this paper I use the term 'Coloured' with a capital C in order to avoid confusion with 'coloured' as meaning African or Black. 'African' or 'Black' I use them in the general sense of all those people not 'white'.

<sup>18</sup> Walshe, P., The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, p. 413.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

### 1.3 THE 1913 NATIVES LAND ACT IN SOUTH AFRICA: SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT

The 1913 Natives Land Act in South Africa which was repealed in 1991 was important because it was the first major piece of legislation that would later comprise the legal structure of apartheid.<sup>20</sup>

This Act laid down the principle of territorial segregation by setting aside the existing African reserves for African occupation and by prohibiting Africans from buying or leasing land outside these reserves. It also sought to eliminate sharecropping in favour labour tenancy particularly in the Orange Free State Province.<sup>21</sup>

The Native Land Act included a "Schedule of Native Areas," incorporating all the African reserves that had been established in the various provinces prior to 1913. The Act carefully delineated the boundaries of these reserves areas. The most important provision of the Act stated that Africans could no longer buy, lease, or in any other manner acquire land outside a scheduled area, except by acquiring that land from another African, and Europeans were prohibited from buying or leasing land from an African. Only African could buy land within the scheduled areas. The Act established a commission to study the impact of this legislation and to recommend to Parliament which additional land should be added to the scheduled areas of the African Population.<sup>22</sup>

As far back as November 1910, a Select Committee was appointed by Parliament to investigate the question of African land settlement with particular reference to the "squattling problems." This committee found that the squattling laws of the Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal were unsatisfactory, and recommended a uniform policy

<sup>20</sup> Feinberg, H.M., "The 1913 Native Land Act in South Africa: politics, race and segregation in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century" in The International Journal of African Historical Studies, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 66.

<sup>21</sup> Neame, L.E., The History of Apartheid, p. 40.

<sup>22</sup> Feinberg, H.M., "The 1913 Native Land Act in South Africa: politics, race and segregation in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century" in The International Journal of African Historical Studies, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 68.

throughout South Africa for regulating the settlement of Africans on private property. To rectify the position the Committee recommended legislation and even published a preliminary bill, broadly on the lines of the segregation blueprint for a future South Africa.<sup>23</sup>

The bill prepared by the Select Committee of 1910 and published in 1911 temporarily failed, because it involved removals not only of Africans from specified lands but also, for exchange purposes, of certain Whites. It was later reintroduced successfully in 1913 by General J.B.M. Hertzog and passed by Parliament in the same year as the Native Land Act, one of the most controversial piece of legislation in the history of South Africa.<sup>24</sup>

The South African Native National Congress refused to accept the legislation, and on July 25, 1913 an extraordinary Congress was held in Johannesburg to discuss further steps to be taken against the Bill. Congress decided to appeal to the British government and to inform the British public of the disastrous effect of the Native Land Act. The deputation under premiership of Dube First met with Prime Minister Louis Botha, just before leaving for Britain, but with no success.<sup>25</sup>

The lack of positive results in South Africa after the efforts of three deputations have failed, led to a growing feeling in African circles that it was not worthwhile to appeal to Britain or the outside world. Absolutely no concrete success had been recorded by the deputations. It thus no wonder that the next 40 years saw no new attempts of activities in that direction. A realization was born that the Blacks were on their own in what they considered to be a just struggle against racial domination. The leadership of the South African Native National Congress stop attempts to persuade Britain to intervene in South African political affairs.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Grobler, J., A decisive clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976, p. 7.

<sup>24</sup> Motlhabi, M., The Theory and Practice of Black Resistance to Apartheid, p. 7.

<sup>25</sup> Grobler, J., A decisive clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976, p. 43.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 49.

#### 1.4 AFTERMATH OF WORLD WAR I

The process of urbanization and massive industrialization of South Africa had serious socio-economic and political implications for blacks. It became a period of intense frustration as blacks continue with their efforts to obtain social, economic and political rights. It was therefore a combination of economic developments and social unrests, after World War I that produced an increased level of political consciousness within the African society, and it was within such a context that the SANNC was to operate as it searched for ways of improving the lot of the oppressed Blacks.<sup>27</sup>

The war itself aroused visions of a better world and directed attention to international events - in particular the struggle of subject people for political emancipation. And in South Africa, the SANNC emerged with its own ideological commitments of peaceful struggle.<sup>28</sup>

However, the successive governments of South Africa refused to accept the non-racial principle of the South African Native National Congress because it was committed to the segregation policy, and that finally ensure and emasculate the SANNC's efforts to divert the South African government's official policy from continued discrimination.<sup>29</sup>

The two failures suffered by the SANNC (in 1914 and 1919) during the first seven years of its life constituted a major setback to that movement. Its image as a really influential movement was severely damaged and a long period of frustration resulted, as well as a struggle for the leadership of the politically-conscious Blacks.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Walshe, P., The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, p. 89.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 421.

<sup>30</sup> Grobler, J., A decisive clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976, p. 49.



In an attempt to achieve a disciplined mass movement, the SANNC struggled also to certain the State's repressive measure, and the South African government suppresses the Black resistance which challenged Afrikaner supremacy and this situation led to the SANNC becoming a moribund organization paving the way for the emergence of both the All-African Convention (AAC) and the African National Congress.

#### 1.5 THE IDEOLOGICAL POSITION OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (ANC)

The African National Congress was formed initially in 1912 as an inter-ethnic national organization concerned with the removal of discrimination from the South African political, economic and social system, in the form of South African Native National Congress, and changed its name in 1923 to be the African National Congress.<sup>31</sup>

The SANNC, the fore-runner of the African National Congress, was essentially concerned with the economic and political well being of blacks. The South African Native Congress was later shortened to be the African National Congress.

The supreme authority of the organization was vested in the annual National Congress which consisted of delegates from affiliated organizations, ordinary delegates from different branches and hereditary chiefs who had the automatic right to attend any Congress meetings. The chiefs, in fact, occupied a separate place of honour as ex officio Honorary Vice-Presidents who were accorded a higher status than ordinary members of the organization.<sup>32</sup>

The African National Congress carried the designation 'national' not because it was committed to clearly defined nationalistic objectives such as self-determination or majority rule but rather because it was originally established and inaugurated as a

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<sup>31</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 101. E. Lefuo Collection: Interview with Gregory Nthatsi.

<sup>32</sup> Norval, M., Inside the ANC, p. 3.

supra-tribal movement committed to the achievement of equal opportunities within white-ruled South Africa.<sup>33</sup>

The African National Congress is one of the oldest black political organization in South Africa. Throughout its existence it has attempted to co-ordinate and initiate actions to bring about the recognition of the majority of South Africans as full citizens enjoying democratic rights and freedom. It expose the economic decline and social conditions (appalling) of blacks and developed a political programme based on the principles of equality and social justice.<sup>34</sup>

Ideologically, the African National Congress was exposed to the ideological influence of both the Joint Council and the international Socialist, League. The Joint Council was a group of White liberals who had taken a keen interest in the liberal ideals of the African National Congress. It was formed in 1921 by liberal professional whites whose aim was to promote inter-racial cooperation and a spirit of understanding between different racial groups. Their methods in the cause of racial justice were highly appreciated and publicly acknowledged by the African National Congress leaders. And by upholding the model of racial cooperation, the Council played their part in delaying the early emergence and growth of an assertive African nationalism that became the distinctive feature of the Congress Youth League in the forties.<sup>35</sup>

## 2. PARADOXICAL RELATION BETWEEN THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND SOCIALISM (MARXISM)

The relationship between nationalism and Marxism within the nationalist movement in South Africa can be put in its proper perspective by looking at several major events which took place between 1919 up to 1930. These events stand out as historical landmark which clearly underline the ideological basis and direction of the African

<sup>33</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 102.

<sup>34</sup> Louw, C., Journey to the ANC, p. 163.

<sup>35</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 106.

National Congress during this early period. They also illustrate the fact that, as a result of its christian-liberal background and its commitment to constitutional reforms, the African National Congress viewed the question of Marxism or communism with great deal of hostility.

This hostility was at the root of the conflictual relationship between the African National Congress and the CPSA and its nature can be properly evaluated by taking a close look at pivotal occurrences, which are considered under the subheadings: i) The Industrial Commercial Worker's Union 1919; ii) The 1920 African Mine Workers Strike; iii) The 1922 Rand Revolt; iv) La Guma and the Black Republic; v) The Independent African National Congress and Communism.

## 2.1 THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL WORKER'S UNION (ICU)

Following upon the unsuccessful pass resistance movement on the Reef in 1919 came other less notable disturbance here and there about the country. The cost of living had risen beyond all bounds. There had been no comparable increase in wages, particularly in the wages of the African. If the white worker suffered hardship during this period of inflation, the black workers lived in misery, with general discontent. In such favourable circumstances, the I.C.U. movement came into existence.<sup>36</sup>

Founded at Cape Town, in 1919, as a trade union of dock workers, it soon developed into a general all-in union for non-European workers, under the title, "Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa." In the end it came to lose its strictly industrial character and became a political mass party of national emancipation for both the workers and non-workers who were also members of the African National Congress.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Roux, E., Time Longer than Rope, p. 153.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

With the name of the I.C.U. inseparably associated with that of Clement Kadalie. A Native of Nyasaland, he was among the founders of the movement. Full of restless energy, a born orator, a capable organizer, he was able to overcome the disadvantage of being unable to speak the South African Bantu languages.<sup>38</sup>

The transformation of the I.C.U. from a pure union movement into a political mass "party" for national liberation, led to the election of both Clemence Kadalie and Prof. J.S. Thaele into the executive committee of the African National Congress during its annual congress in May 1924. Kadalie was elected as "minister" of labour and Prof. Thaele as "minister" of education.

However, in 1926 the I.C.U. had to deal with its first large-scale internal crisis. Two schools of thought emerged: the left wing believed in direct action, strikes, the burning of passes, refusal to pay taxes, while the right wing was all for a policy of go carefully. In practice, the right wing were not able to produce any concrete plans.

At a national council meeting in December 1926 held in Port Elizabeth, Kadalie used the occasion to make an intemperate attack on the communists. He accused them of serving two masters, being puppets of the whites in the party and sought to capture the union. Their main aim, he alleged, was to make propaganda and not to improve the worker's conditions. The council resolved by six votes to five that "No officer of the I.C.U. shall be the member of the Communist Party, and three party members on the council - La Guma; E.J. Khaile, the financial secretary; and John Gomas, the provincial secretary in the western Cape - refused to resign from either organization and were summarily expelled."<sup>39</sup>

The tensions between communists and non-communists in the I.C.U. were both tactical and ideological. The I.C.U. was not functioning as a trade union organization as the communists understood the concept. If membership was scattered and diffused

<sup>38</sup> Roux, E., *Time Longer than Rope*, p. 153.

<sup>39</sup> Simon, J., Simon, R., *Class and Colour in South Africa 1850 - 1950*, p. 354.

and tended to be concentrated among farm-workers rather than the industrial proletariat. Secondly, the I.C.U. founders tended to view achievement in petty "bourgeois" terms. Kadalie viewed social conflict in South Africa mainly in nationalistic or colonial terms, and did not share the communist vision of a class struggle.<sup>40</sup>

These tensions eventually resulted in the decline of the I.C.U. due to its underlying weaknesses of analysis and strategy. The rise of Black industrial organizations in South Africa towards the end of World War I and the fact that the I.C.U. overtook the African National Congress as primary Black political organization, has important implications. Black urban labourers realized that their economic position was deteriorating, both in real terms and in relation to the white workers, and this contributed to the politization of Blacks in urban areas, with sporadic workers strikes highlighting those grievances.<sup>41</sup> (e.g. low wages, unfair dismissal, etc.)

However, the I.C.U. leadership itself became later alienated from the Black labourers. Instead of responding to the Black workers grievances, it got itself tangled in the conflicting ideologies of liberalism and communism and ended up as neither a liberal nor communist organization, nor a union or a political party. It developed into a bureaucratic clique that clung to power in order to perpetuate its elitist self-interests, and vacillated between providing inert evolutionary approaches and tough revolutionary oratory as a means of self-aggrandizements.<sup>42</sup>

Except for indirect and tenuous connection with left-wing ideas in the I.C.U., the leadership of African National Congress showed no interest in Marxist class analysis or Marxist ideology, and the situation remained the same with the formation of the Communist Party of South Africa in 1921. The CPSA at the time, like its predecessor - the International Socialist League (I.S.L.), concentrated its efforts on white workers,

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<sup>40</sup> Lodge, T., The second consultative Conference of A.N.C., p. 44.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 57.

<sup>42</sup> Ncube, D., Black Trade Unions, p. 48.

who were then regarded as the vanguard of the revolution - the main revolutionary force in the labour movement.<sup>43</sup>

And the labour strikes of the early twenties illustrate more than anything else the fact that white workers saw their interests as being incompatible with the interests of the black workers, and if Marxist ideas had to have any impact of all on moderate African organizations like the African National Congress, their practical application in real labour relations would have to be convincing by taking a firm line of action against entrenched racist attitudes within the white labour movement.<sup>44</sup>

## 2.2 THE 1920 AFRICAN MINE WORKER'S STRIKE

In February, 1920, more than 40 000 African mine workers came out on strike for higher wages in Witwatersrand, with the help of James Gumede, who later became the president-general of the African National Congress. However the support of the African National Congress for the strike was minimal. The strike was peaceful at first, but violence was later provoked by the police trying to force their way into the compound of the Village Deep Mine and were met by the resistance of the African miners.<sup>45</sup>

Later there were reports that eight Africans were killed and that the strikers on several mines had been driven down below at the point of the bayonet. The International Socialist League issued a "Don't Scab" leaflet, which appealed to the white miners to refrain from breaking the Native strike. But the tragedy was that this moving appeal fell upon deaf ears as the magnificent scabbing continued by the white workers, because they believe that they had nothing in common with the blacks.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 107.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>45</sup> Roux, E., A Political Biography of Sidney Percival Bunting, pp. 132 - 133.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 134.

And at the Vrededorp slums, eight miners were killed and forty injured, and over twenty miners were affected by the strike, which lasted only a week. The African mine workers strike was eventually crushed by a combination of violent police action, white civilians attacking with firearms and scabbing by white workers on black workers. And the fact of the matter was that even though the Don't Scub leaflet was issued in the name of the I.S.L., the organization as such was more concerned with the interests of white workers than with the demands of black workers or, less still, the application of Marxist principles to the labour movement as a whole.<sup>47</sup>

However, both the I.S.L. and the African National Congress after 1923 failed to play a significant role in the strike, perhaps due to class difference between the leaders of the Congress and the workers, or by reason of a conception that trade-union organization was not appropriate action for a political association. And they missed the opportunity for rallying the African workers and channeling their grievances in a more organized and effective direction.<sup>48</sup>

### 2.3 THE 1922 REVOLT ON THE RAND

The white miners strike of 1922 was initiated and carried out by whites against a proposal by the Chamber of Mines to lower the Colour bar so as to allow more Africans to fill up lower skilled jobs previously reserved for whites. The Chamber of Mines undermine the status quo agreement of 1918 which stipulate the ratio of white to black workers in the mines.<sup>49</sup>

The strike started when the Chamber of Mines, the supreme controlling body of the gold-mining industry on the Rand, decided to lower wages all round and retrench about three thousand white miners, mainly overseers, receiving very high pay in relation to the black miners. The fixed ratio between the number of whites and blacks

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<sup>47</sup> Roux, E., Time Longer than Rope, p. 110.

<sup>48</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 110.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

on the mines began to prove a financial burden in the poor economic conditions following the First World War.<sup>50</sup>

The all-white mine workers union declared their aim as to protect the white race, to maintain a white standard of living and to preserve a white South Africa. The Communist Party of South Africa not only came out in full support of the strike but attempts were also made to play down the importance white workers attached to the maintenance of colour bar regulations.

However, the support given by the CPSA to the white strikers was diametrically opposed to the interests of Africans who consistently agitated for the removal of the colour bar in the mines. And in the earlier 1920 strikes by African workers, the International Socialist League (I.S.L.) failed to support them. It also failed to stop white workers from scabbing and intimidating African strikers. And in 1922 white miners strike, the left-now reconstituted as the CPSA identified openly with the defenders of colour bar regulations. Hence the participation of the Party in a strike which was so patently anti-blacks in both form and content left an indelible mark on the name and reputation of the CPSA.<sup>51</sup>

The oscillating alliance of CPSA come again to the fore in 1924 when it gave its full support to a pact between General Hertzog's Afrikaner Nationalists and Creswell's South African Labour Party. And after the defeat of Gen. Smuts government, the pact government never hesitate to introduce the so called 'civilized labour policy' aimed of protecting white workers from competition by black workers, contrary to the expectations of the CPSA.<sup>52</sup>

And the final dilemma of CPSA culminate in 1926 with their expulsion from the I.C.U., which was a fateful tragedy for them because they had now pinned all their

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<sup>50</sup> Sachs, B., The road to Sharpsville, p. 113.

<sup>51</sup> Roux, E., Time Longer than Rope, p. 147.

<sup>52</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 116.



hopes on the I.C.U. for the promotion of black interests. At that time the CPSA did not pay no attention to the African National Congress, which it regarded as a reformist organization under the leadership of moderates. Following their expulsion from I.C.U., the CPSA turned its full attention to the African National Congress, forging closer ties with African organization. This policy and strategy was in line with the strategy of the 'International' to support the nationalist elements in the colonial countries. However, the ICU expulsion set a bad precedent for the Party.<sup>53</sup>

The task of selling Marxist ideas to the African National Congress was certainly complicated by this stigma of expulsion from ICU, a well known African union. This setback notwithstanding the appeal of Marxism to the African National Congress was about to undergo its first major test.<sup>54</sup>

#### 2.4 LA GUMA AND THE BLACK REPUBLIC

James La Guma as a member of both CPSA and the African National Congress became the first person to postulate the "Black Republic" as a slogan for immediate revolution in South Africa. And this slogan was viewed by the Comintern (Communist International) as a stage towards the workers and peasants Republic which, in turn, was to be viewed as a transition towards socialism.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 118.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

James La Guma was a coloured trade unionist and a member of the South African Communist Party, and he was expelled from the ICU together with E.J. Khaile and John Gomas for their refusal to resign from the CPSA. He was born in Cape Town on the 20th February 1925 and died in October 1985 in Havana, Cuba, where he was the representative of the ANC. He was the son of Jimmy La Guma who was the President of the South African Coloured People's Congress and a member of the CPSA.

The term 'International' takes its origin from the International Workers Association (IWA) which was founded in London in 1864 as an association of heterogeneous group of workers. The Association was established primarily as a trade union organ of the European labour movement and was ultimately concerned with the promotion of solidarity amongst working class.<sup>168</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Motatu, G., et al., Makers of Modern Africa, p. 386.

In 1926 La Guma became the secretary of the African National Congress branch in Cape Town, and in 1927 he visited Brussel-based League Against Imperialism as a delegate for the Communist Party of South Africa together with Gumede who represented the African National Congress nationally and V. Colraine who was the delegate of the South African Trade Union Congress (SACTU). And after addressing a meeting in Germany, Gumede proceeded to Moscow, where he participated in discussions on South African with ECCI members.<sup>56</sup>

However, in Brussels, both Gumede, La Guma and Colraine drafted a joint resolution and signed it as "South African delegates" before it was adopted by the congress. The resolution demanded the right to self-determination through the complete overthrow of capitalist and imperialist rule in South Africa, and this resolution introduced an impetus and a new political dimension which was later incorporated in the slogan of the "Black Republic."<sup>57</sup>

The discussions that La Guma held with the Comintern in Russia, lead to the resolution that South Africa should be assisted towards independent black republic as a stage towards the achievement of socialism. And the initial response to the slogan of "an independent Native republic" by the majority of the CPSA members was very negative, because it was linked to Marcus Garvey's "Africa for the Africans", which according to the CPSA, was diametrically opposed to the principles of proletarian internationalism. And because South Africa was conceived as a single society constituted by both settlers and Africans, where the imperial-colonial syndrome occurred within the confines of a highly integrated and independent political entity.<sup>58</sup>

The idea of the 'Black Republic' was vehemently opposed by Bunting, who was also a prominent member of the CPSA. And his concern was about the negative reaction the slogan might provoke among white workers who may foster a hostile and Fascist

<sup>56</sup> Simon, J., Simon, R., Class and Colour in South Africa 1850 - 1950, p. 389.

<sup>57</sup> Meli, F., A History of the ANC, p. 75.

<sup>58</sup> Simon, J., Simon, R., Class and Colour in South Africa 1850 - 1950, p. 389.

alliance with the bourgeoisie. But in Moscow, La Guma successfully defended his major premise that in South Africa the way to socialism was through African majority, and he was also supported by Moses Kotane and the Comintern, which finally gave its ruling that the new slogan about the Black republic had to be accepted as the communist prescription for African majority rule as a stage towards socialism.<sup>59</sup>

Both Bunting, who was a prominent member of the Communist Party of South Africa and La Guma were dedicated Marxists who were committed to the theory of the class struggle as the driving force in history, but on the question of the right of self-determination they arrived at divergent and contradictory positions.

It was the analysis of the concrete situation that divided Bunting and La Guma, not the method of analysis or the starting point, both of which were nearly identical. La Guma, as an African communist, was fighting against the white domination and for Blacks self-determination. Bunting, as a white communist, was fighting against white domination, imperialism and white chauvinism. Paradoxically they arrived at exactly contrary position on self-determination.

But silent as it was, the African National Congress was not unaware of the overtures of the CPSA towards it, as was amply demonstrated by its reaction to Gumede, the congressman who had accompanied La Guma to Moscow.<sup>60</sup>

## 2.5 THE INDEPENDENT AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (CAPE) AND COMMUNISM

Before the formation of the Independent African National Congress by both Bransby Ndobe and Elliot Tonjeni in the Western Cape, in 1927 Josiah Gumede was elected president-general of the African National Congress, and later that year he went to the

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<sup>59</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 124.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 125.

Soviet Union to attend the Moscow celebration of the Russian revolution, and he also participated in the "Friends of Russia" Convention.<sup>61</sup>

On his return to South Africa in 1928 he praised the Soviet Union with their achievement of Socialism. The communist viewed him in South Africa as a major breakthrough for their party's position. However, the African National Congress chiefs were not at all happy about this radical strain of thought that Gumede was trying to present to the organization. And at a national executive meeting that was convened to deal with matter of national cooperation a resolution was adopted to the effect that "the African National Congress hereby repudiates its association with the South African Communist Party, which of late was openly identified itself with the Congress. These resolution was moved by the executive of both the African National Congress and the ICU."<sup>62</sup>

In 1929, the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) launched a moderate organization which was in line with the demands of the African National Congress relating to the overall objectives of seeking equality within the system, and that organization was called the League of African Rights, and it was later joined by president Gumede on his private capacity, thus leading to further ideological conflict within the Congress. The Congress was still striving for equal opportunities within the system and diametrically opposed to the communist idea of a Black Republic.<sup>63</sup>

The dual membership of Gumede with communist party and his radical stands on South African politics lead to his voice being officially silenced in 1930 when he was defeated by Dr. P. Ka I. Seme in the presidential elections in Bloemfontein. And it was after the defeat of Gumede in the election and the disillusionment of CPSA by the African National Congress, that the Communist Party turned its attention to the Western Cape, which had a core of radicals with strong Marxist leanings. In Cape,

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<sup>61</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 127.

<sup>62</sup> Simon, J., Simon, R., Class and Colour in South Africa 1850 - 1956, p. 403.

<sup>63</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 129.

James Thaele was the president of the African National Congress and was opposed to the organized communist penetration which he viewed as a potential threat to his leadership especially in the Western Cape.<sup>64</sup>

Gumede's position of the Black Republic was supported by the two outstanding militants in Western Cape - Bronsby Ndobe and Elliot Tonjeni and they supported Gumede also for his unsuccessful bid for second term of office as president. These two young militants later initiated a campaign to oust Thaele out of the presidency. Matters came to a climax with the special executive meeting in the Cape Town convened by Thaele to rid the Cape Town Branch of all "bolshevistic elements."<sup>65</sup>

It was during this special congress that a special resolution was moved and adopted by majority of congressmen which was aimed towards the extermination of the communist within the Congress and to curtail their influence. According to the resolution all communist leaders were not all allowed to address Congress meetings, sell their literatures and that copies of this resolution was to be communicated and sent to all branches in the Western Cape. This resolution lead to the expulsion of ten members which later included both Ndobe and Tonjeni. On November 7, 1930, the left wing formed a new organization, known as the Independent African National Congress (Cape), to which the most active country branches became affiliated.<sup>66</sup>

However, later after 1930 the position and functions of the African National Congress proved to be minimal and ended up being a moribund organization. It was paralyzed by the government's ban on the free movement of its members in the Cape area and the hostile action of the African National Congress towards it. Because the African National Congress at that time was committed to the philosophy of Liberal-reformism and was highly resistant to left-wing ideological influences, it never put in place a programme concerned with problems of national liberation.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 129.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>66</sup> Roux, E., Time Longer than Rope, p. 243.

<sup>67</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 139.

### 2.5.1 CONCLUSION

The thirties were unequivocally the doldrum years of the African National Congress. That era was certainly dull in terms of the military political action and the ideological confrontation between the African National Congress and the Communist Party of South Africa reached climax and later subsided, with few exceptions.

The thirties culminate also with the departure of the radical Independent African National Congress from the political scene, and the oscillating alliance of CPSA when it tried desperately to form alliance with different political and unionist movement, particularly the Industrial Commercial Worker's Union and later the African National Congress. Sometimes the support the CPSA offered to different strikes and organization was antagonistic and diametrically opposed either the Africans or Whites, e.g. the Rand Strike of 1922, where its support to the white strikers was opposed to the African interests. Here they have a stigma of marching side by side with white workers who were determined to fight "for white South Africa." The strike which was fought for the retention of the Colour bar was defended by the Communists under the pretext that the repeal of colour bar regulations would have been of no benefit to African workers.

However, the period from 1930 to 1940 marked a watershed in the development of African politics in South Africa. It was a period in which a massive expansion of black urban labour force, its increasing deployment in manufacturing industry, the revival of trade unionism and the stimulation of class consciousness, all had a radicalizing effect on black political organizations, and in particular the African National Congress, which was at that time the champion of Black nationalism in South Africa.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Lodge, T., Black Politics in Southern Africa since 1945, p. 1.

CHAPTER 3THE RE-ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS1. THE GRAND DESIGN: THE UNION'S CONSTITUTION

By the time the War of dispossession (land) ended around 1880, Africans had been pushed to the areas known as the "Native" reserves at the formation of the Union in 1910.

On May 31, 1910, a new country came into existence - the Union of South Africa, consisting of four former British colonies: Cape Colony, Natal, Transvaal, and the Orange River Colony. A National Convention, with participation limited to white South Africans (21 percent of the total population) in 1908 and 1909, led to the writing of a new constitution which the British Parliament then passed as the South Africa Act of 1909. The new country was part of the British Empire and thus accepted the authority of the British crown over certain of its affairs. This led to the South African government to be white dominated whereby whites controlled political and economic decision-making power, and the overwhelming majority of the South African population, mainly the indigenous Africans were virtually having no voice in the government.<sup>1</sup>

For different reasons 31 May 1910 was a significant day for both the English and the Afrikaners, for the farmer, the formation of central government in South Africa ensured political stability for mining capital, and for the Afrikaners it represent a constitutional triumph over British empire which lead to a republican South Africa under Afrikaner rule.<sup>2</sup>

In the very first session of the Union parliament in 1911, the government passed legislations that were designed to strip Africans including Coloureds and Indians of the means to defend themselves, and to deliver them helpless to capitalist exploitation by mining and forming interests. The Mines and Work Act of 1911 reserved certain occupations in the mining industry for whites only, and thus laid down the principle of the industrial colour bar. By virtue of law, Whites were excluded from general unskilled work and confined to skilled, supervisory and a small number of clearly defined less skilled categories.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Feinberg, H.M. The 1913 Natives Land Act in South Africa: politics, race, and segregation in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in The International Journal of African Historical Studies, Vol. 26, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Mbeki, G., The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa, pp. 14 - 15.

<sup>3</sup> Webster, E., Essays in Southern African Labour History, p. 70.

However, the precise limits of this racial division of labour were far from fixed. In their pursuit of profit mine owners sought, especially at times of crisis in the industry, to progressively transfer more and more of the actual production tasks to lower paid African workers: in fact, to attempt to create a structure of production relations in which white employment would ultimately be confined to a limited number of supervisors of African workers. As such proposed modifications involves lay-offs, increase in the intensity of work, and, to a lesser extent, wage cuts, they were resisted by the organized white miners and thus resulted in a number of strikes, the most important of these was in 1922 which involved considerable violence and was only ended by being put down with force.<sup>4</sup>

And the promulgation of the Native Labour Regulation Act no. 15 of 1911 armed the government with the powers to control African's movement by regulating their recruitment, employment and provision for their compensation in certain cases. And with the passing of Native Land Act of 1913, the white government laid firm foundation for a race-based system of oppression and exploitation.<sup>5</sup>

By controlling the movement of the African labour the government was able to create a pool of cheap labour in the 'Native' reserves which could be drawn upon to satisfy the needs of employers in the "white areas" - be they the mining, manufacturing industries, commerce or the farms. And the effects of the Native Labour Regulation Act was two-pronged, firstly it entrenched the practice of migrant labour, by creating a situation where only the labourer was permitted to take up employment in the 'white areas', while his family was left in the reserves. Secondly, it render African workers a faceless mass of undifferentiated labourer and eliminate competition for jobs in the various sectors of the economy and this resulted in the adoption of an average standard wage for the 'Natives' and it become the model for all sectors of the economy.<sup>6</sup>

The Native Land Act of 1913 prohibited black people for vagabondage, squatting and from sowing on the shore system, and it also took effective measures to restrict the purchase and lease of land by blacks. In effect the Act extended to the whole Union the land laws of the Boer Republic of the Orange Free State which had denied land-ownership rights to Africans and ushered in the land dispossession of blacks by whites through the system of segregation especially in the urban areas outside the reserves.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Webster, E., *Essays in Southern African Labour History*, pp. 70 - 71.

<sup>5</sup> Mbeki, G., *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa*, p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> Davenport, T.R.H., *South Africa: A Modern History*, Third edition, p. 238.

<sup>7</sup> Feinberg, H.M., *The 1913 Natives Land Act in South Africa: politics, race, and segregation in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century* in *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, p. 108



The formation of both the South African Native Convention (SANC) and South African Native National Congress (SANNC) in 1909 and 1912 respectively, marked a watershed also in the history of black nationalism in South Africa. Both the organizations became the first supra-tribal movements to become vocal on the question of African unity in South Africa. And to emphasize this sense of unity, Pricley Seme in his keynote address in Bloemfontein on the 8th January 1912 inaugural conference of South African Native National Congress said to the delegates:

"Chiefs of royal blood and gentlemen of our race, we have gathered here to consider and discuss a theme of African unity in South Africa. We have discover that African are treated as hewers of wood and drawers of water in the land of their birth and they have no voice in the Union of South Africa. We have called you to this conference so that we can together device ways and means of forming our national union for the purpose of creating national unity and defending our rights and privileges."<sup>8</sup>

Here Seme was emphasizing both the negative impact of tribalism and disunity amongst the African as reason for their defeat in the hands of the white government through their exclusion in the National Convention of 1909 and also in the Union's parliament, and in his central theme he said:

"The demons of racialism, the aberrations of the Xhosas-Fingo fead, the animosity that existed between the Zulus and the Tongaas, between the Basutos and every other Native must be buried and forgotten; it has shed among as sufficient blood; We are one people; These divisions, these jealousies, are the cause of all our wars and of all our backwardness and ignorance today."<sup>9</sup>

It became apparently clear that leader of Africans like Seme were striving now to built an efficient machinery based on a people united in purpose to fight against tribalism, disunity and all forms of racial segregations. However, it was only after the Pact government was formed in 1924 in which Prime Minister Hertzog elucidated the policy of his government in his Smithfield speech of 1925 which was geared towards disenfranchising Coloureds and Africans in Cape Town through both the Representative of Native Act which provide for the removal of Cape African voters from the common roll of voters and the Native Trust and Land of 1936 which embodied, strengthened accelerated the principles of territorial segregation, that the

<sup>8</sup> Meli, F., *A History of the ANC: South Africa belongs to us*, p. 38.

<sup>9</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. 1, p. 72.

whole sense of African unity was consolidated through the African National Congress.<sup>10</sup>

The period between 1920 to 1936 caught the African National Congress unprepared. From its inception the African National Congress was forced to be on the defensive side to light the course of the black nationalism. And in devising its strategies, logistics and tactics to counter government's attack on the Natives, the African National Congress was guided by the belief that it could appeal to British sense of justice through deputations and protests inside the country.

When the African National Congress found itself unable and incapacitated to take a stand against Hertzog's bills, it failed to have a position to go to the people with any programme of action, and as a result, not only were the masses not provided with an effective leadership, but these who were at the head of the African National Congress felt helpless to do anything. From year to year the African National Congress held conferences and passed resolutions that failed to grapple with the ever-deteriorating political situation in South Africa. And it was only in 1935 that both the African National Congress and African leaders were shocked into action and called the All-African Convention conference in Bloemfontein to map out new strategies and way forward for future.<sup>11</sup>

### 1.1 THE INTERLUDE: CONTROL AND CONFRONTATION 1936 - 1946

The decade between the mid-1930's and mid-1940's was marked by a series of troughs and peaks in Black opposition and resistance to the South African system of white control and domination. In the early 1930's movement like the African National Congress and the Communist Party of South Africa were becoming increasingly ineffectual. The branch and provincial organisation of the African National Congress had been steadily deteriorating, the depression had aggravated its precarious financial position, and the divisions between moderates and radicals were continuing to undermine African National Congress unity.<sup>12</sup>

However, this period between 1936 to 1946 marked also a departure from years of inactivity as well as a pointer to a new phase in the struggle for black liberation in South Africa. It was also a period whereby the strengthened white government, backed by the combined political forces of Prime Minister J.B.M. Hertzog and

<sup>10</sup> Mbeki, G., The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa, pp. 36 - 37.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>12</sup> Maylam, P., A History of the African people of South Africa, p. 181.

General Jan Smuts, promulgated measures which set a clear direction for the following four decades to come.<sup>13</sup>

The principle of territorial segregation became firmly entrenched, the possibility that Africans might retain or even enlarge their place in the South African Westminster-style constitution was lost, the Cape African voters were removed from the common voters roll and the policies of urban segregation, pass laws, and influx control were tightened. But in spite of these policies the mid-1930's also marked the beginning of an epoch of accelerated African urbanization as more and more Africans converged on the major urban centres leading to the onset of greater military and radical activism in African political organization, and in particular the African National Congress.<sup>14</sup>

## 1.2 THE UNITED PARTY AND HERTZOG'S BILLS

The formation of the Hertzog-Smuts coalition government in early 1933 and its endorsement by the white electorates in the general election held later that year was followed in mid-1934 by fusion of the two coalition parties into the new United Party. And with economic recovery from worldwide depression under way, the new government began to reconsider the "Native Question" that had preoccupied the two previous Nationalist-dominated government headed by Hertzog.

The formation of the South African United Party gave Hertzog a two-third majority of the joint membership of both houses of Parliament, the number required by the Act of Union to amend the entrenched clause protecting the non-white franchise in Cape Province. Until that time he had been unable to command that number, now Smuts gave it to him.<sup>15</sup>

In May 1935 a Joint Select Committee of Parliament tabled two measures: the Representation of Natives Bill and the Native Trust and Land Bill, and later these two Bills were enacted by the South African government in 1936 as Act and became laws for regulating the natives votes and their access to land.

## 1.3 REPRESENTATION OF NATIVE ACT - 1936

The promulgation of the Representation of Native Act in 1936 by the South African United Party excluded Cape African voters from the common roll and provided a separate roll on which qualified Cape Africans could vote for white members to represent them in different governmental structures (this roll was later abolished in

<sup>13</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., From Protest to Challenge, Vol. 2, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Lodge, T., Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Luthuli, A., Let My People Go, p. 84.

1959). The Act made it impossible for any African to qualify as a voter, and the franchise was entirely removed from the common voters roll.<sup>16</sup>

The Representation of Native Act provided, firstly, for the representation of the Cape African voters by three whites in the House of Assembly and by two whites in the Cape Provincial Council. Secondly, four whites elected by bodies like Advisory Boards and the United Transkeian Territories General Council (UTTEC or Bunga) represent Africans in the Senate. And thirdly, a native Representative Council was established to ensure representation of Africans at national level, as distinct from Advisory Boards for urban Africans and the local council, which provided local administration in the Native reserves.<sup>17</sup>

The Native Representative Council consisted of twelve elected members and four government-appointed members. The Secretary of Native Affairs presided at all the meetings of the Council, which were also attended by a member of Native Commissioners. Thus the proposed legislation had in mind the removal of segregated political institutions, including the white "Native Representative" in parliament and an elected advisory "Native Representative Council."<sup>18</sup>

The Africans in the Cape, and throughout South Africa, who had hoped that these would be an evolution of the democratic process, extending the African vote to other provinces, saw this Act as a total onslaught on their remaining rights. These were some of the immediate issues agitating the Africans in South Africa. There was also the question of support for the struggle of the people of the High Commission Territories - Basutoland, Swaziland, Bechuanaland and South West Africa - against incorporation into South Africa.<sup>19</sup>

In fact, the Representation of Native Act deprived Cape African male of the franchise, and the Natives Representative Council (NRC) turned out to be little more than a forum for the expression of African opinion and the articulation of African grievances. It was later abolished by the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act, a key measure in the creation of the Nationalist government's Bantustan system. The Bantu Authority Act provided for the abolition of existing tribal councils and for the gradual implementation of both the Tribal, Regional and Territorial Authorities.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Luthuli, A., *Let My People Go*, p. 85.

<sup>17</sup> Meli, F., *A History of the ANC*, p. 84.

<sup>18</sup> Lodge, T., *The Second Consultative Conference of the ANC, South African International*, Vol. 16, p. 11.

<sup>19</sup> Meli, F., *A History of the ANC*, p. 84.

<sup>20</sup> Maylam, P., *A History of the African People of South Africa*, p. 167.

The promulgation of the Representation of Native Act dealt a final blow to the hopes of many Africans that the Cape franchise could be a useful lever for the eventual extension of the franchise to all Africans. And in their immediate reaction to the Act, the Cape Africans through the Cape Native Voters Convention who had for eight years known the value of the franchise and used it to influence decision where they were made-in parliament, decided to boycott participation in government created institutions.<sup>21</sup>

#### 1.4 THE NATIVE TRUST AND LAND ACT - 1936

The principle of territorial segregation, embodied in the 1913 Natives Land Act, was confirmed and strengthened by the Native Trust and Land Act of 1936. This latter measure had two main provisions. Firstly, it set aside an extra 7 250 000 morgen of land to be added in the course of time to the African reserves. Secondly, the Act tried to remove rent paying African tenants from white-owned land by penalising landowners who kept such tenants and to tie the number of labour on white farms more closely to the labour requirements of these farmers.<sup>22</sup>

Although seeking to meet African demands to a limited degree, the proposed Native Trust and Land Act contained also the repressive labour sections which provide for a system of registration and licensing which would force African squatters from white-owned land into the already overcrowded Native reserves, or into the pool of cheap African labour.<sup>23</sup> However, as the step-by-step process of restriction continued, new legislation virtually barred all Africans, including those in Cape Province from buying land in "white" towns.

Indeed, during the 1930's, every political movement of any significance, every political policy, conference or question of leadership, has centred upon the problem of segregation. But it was also during this period that the government found itself also face to face with the crucial problem which had epitomised the South African dilemma in such a glaring manner, namely the problem of the Coloured people. Now after the Blacks had been removed from the common roll of voters in 1936, signs became ominous that the government (United Party) was now seriously intending to apply a policy of segregation to the Coloured people.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Grobler, J., A decisive clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976, p. 65.

<sup>22</sup> Maylam, P., A History of the African People of South Africa, p. 166.

<sup>23</sup> De Beer, L., A political analysis of ANC as an Extra-Parliamentary Movement, p. 18.

<sup>24</sup> Van der Ross, R.E., The Rise and Decline of Apartheid, p. 117.

And the first indication of Coloured segregation was echoed by General Smuts, then Deputy Prime Minister, when he spoke at an election meeting of the United Party in the Paarl Town hall on 15 March 1938. In his speech Smuts related the problem to mixed housing and played on the sentiments of his audience which included paradoxically both the Whites and the coloureds by calling it undesirable, and he called for the residential segregation of Whites from Coloureds in the town of Paarl. That speech foreshadowed so much of what was to come: the Group Areas Act, the Population Registration Act, and possibly even the Separate Representation of Voters Act.<sup>25</sup>

The Hertzog Laws between 1926 and 1931 which intended giving Coloureds greater rights, were not designed out of magnanimity, conscience, or the need to do what was right for the Coloured people, but to ensure their support to the National Party so that it can strengthen its parliamentary power so as to implement its race laws of segregation against the Africans.<sup>26</sup>

Slowly, but with dreaded certainty, the Coloured citizens were becoming strangers in their country, and after 1910 they began the slow but inexorable journey into the political wilderness. They were excluded outside of the Cape from the vote by 1909 Constitution, and were subsequently relegated to the fringes of political power. However, one cannot blame coloured people for their ambivalence they have shown all years in their attitude and relationship with and to Africans and Whites, but they became victims of political manipulations. They sprang out of the European nation and shared its culture, but were similarly discriminated against, segregated and oppressed.<sup>27</sup>

#### 1.5 BLACK RESISTANCE AND OPPOSITION - 1936 - 1946

In the same year of 1935 after the publication of Hertzog and segregation bills, and with the African National Congress in a near state of moribund, a new body - the All-African Convention (AAC) was formed in Bloemfontein at the same time when the Afrikaners were celebrating the ninety-eight anniversary of the Voortrekkers victory over the Zulus. The AAC provided a new national umbrella organization within which all existing African political groups including both the African National Congress and the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) should be linked.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Van der Ross, R.E., The Rise and Decline of Apartheid, pp. 117 - 118.

<sup>26</sup> Du Prez, R.H., Strangers in their own Country, pp. 62 - 64.

<sup>27</sup> Du Prez, R.H., The rope of the Coloured people, p. 103.

<sup>28</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., From Protest to Challenge, Vol. II, p. 6.

In fact the All-African Convention was to be used as the federal or united front structure to pursue the principles of strategic unity especially amongst the organizations of both the Coloureds i.e. the African People's Organization (APO), Indians and Africans which were opposed to the Hertzog's bills. These organizations, the African National Congress, CPSA and APO retained their organizational independence but plan their actions jointly as far as is necessary and possible for the purpose of the united front.<sup>29</sup>

The All-African Convention rejected the Native Trust and Land Bill as inadequate for the satisfaction of African demands for land. It also demanded reconsideration of 'oppressive laws' such as the Riotous Assemblies Act, the Native Service Contract Act, the Poll tax Act and the Pass laws. In its statement of principles the AAC sought a policy of political identity and full partnership in which no one racial group would be dominated by another.<sup>30</sup>

Although the AAC failed to organize the mass protest throughout the country to oppose the passing of both the Representation of Native Bill and Native Trust and Land Act, that it had endorsed, its supporters reiterated their rejection of the government's policies. Rejection was evident, for example, in the discussion of the pending bills in the United Transkeian Territories General Council, the Bunga, all African members of the oldest representative body recognized by the government unequivocally supported retention of the Cape African franchise and its extension throughout the country.<sup>31</sup>

And according to the document which deals with the proceedings and resolutions of the Bunga's general council in March 30, 1936 the Council endorsed the said sentiments and views:

"with great concern that the government's intention by its proposed legislation to abolish the existing form of franchise to Natives and thereby tamper with the rights of citizenship, will have the effect of undermining the good feeling between European and Native which has hitherto existed, and the Council therefore express its profound disapproval."<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Alexander, N., *Sow the Wind*, p. 14.

<sup>30</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. II, p. 8.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

Nonetheless, despite continuing protests which were supported by white liberals and other sympathizers, the two Hertzog Bills were passed. The Representation of Native Bill was passed at a joint sifting of Parliament in April 1936 as amended in accord with the limited compromise offered by Prime Minister Hertzog, and the Native Trust and Land Bill as originally submitted, became law during the following month. And at its third conference in December 1937, the AAC accepted the institutions provided for i.e. the Native Representative Council, the very institution in opposition to which the AAC had been founded two years previously.<sup>33</sup>

But, according to Lodge, the AAC was typical of the time and it failed dismally to mount the coordinated mass protests which it had endorsed in its proceedings and resolutions and instead it used the traditional techniques of African pressure group politics used by the African National Congress like deputations, wordy protests through consultative machinery, vague calls for African unity and adoption of number of resolutions without engaging the government through strikes, resistance campaigns nor stay-away calls.<sup>34</sup>

And furthermore, there were also inherent structural strangulation for AAC members, because when they argued that AAC should be a permanent federal structure, they failed to examine the inherent weaknesses of a federal structure in leading a protracted struggle that demanded a high degree of individual loyalty.<sup>35</sup>

All these weaknesses incapacitated the AAC and it failed to stop the Hertzog government from excluding Africans from the common voters roll and removed them to the reserves. Thus the AAC later faded away into state of oblivion and became a moribund organization.

However, the passage of the Natives Bills in 1936 created a new situation for African politics in South Africa. The agitation against these measures spurred greater political consciousness among Africans, including students, trade unions and women's league. Thus accelerating the creation and the formation of what was to be known as the Congress Alliance. New thoughts were given to the establishment of contact with Africans outside the country, and this added a pan-African dimension to its perspective.

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<sup>33</sup> Grobler, J., A decisive clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976, p. 68.

<sup>34</sup> Lodge, T., Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945, p. 11.

<sup>35</sup> Mbeki, G., The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa, p. 45.



Yet, despite intimidations of radical actions, the prevailing outlook regarding tactics continued to be essentially conservative, concerned with the long-standing efforts to build a national African patriotism and unready - for more than a decade - for mass action in concert with other non-whites.<sup>36</sup>

And according to Grobler, the resistance against the Hertzog Bills was the predominating issue in Black politics in South Africa since the draft of the constitution in 1909. The 'resistance' was incredibly unassertive and characterized by moral appeals to liberal justice. On the surface the Africans seemed content, but within less than ten years it became clear that moderate resistance was indeed the last instance of unassertive protest. The attitude of restraint was on the verge of being replaced by an attitude of defiance.<sup>37</sup>

In conclusion, the AAC became dominated by conservatives until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1945. Its protestations were punctuated by affirmations of loyalty to South Africa and the Crown, and its policy documents, despite some attention to general socio-economic matters became largely thought out within the tenets of Cape liberalism.<sup>38</sup>

#### 1.6 THE IMPACT OF WORLD WAR II

In contrast to the political lethargy of the previous decade the 1940's was a period of ferment as political movements adjusted to the new pressure and opportunities created by the popular upheavals accompanying the massive wartime expansion of the African working class.<sup>39</sup>

The disruption of the international capitalist economy as a result of the Second World War created boom conditions for South African industry with the proliferation of more sophisticated form of import substitution and the development of production geared to military demands. With the expansion of manufacturing industries and the diversion of a section of the white labour force into the army, there was a rapid growth in the number of the African factory workers, and for the first time African women began to be employed in manufacturing industry in large numbers.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., From Protest to Challenge, Vol. II, p. 12.

<sup>37</sup> Grobler, J., A decisive clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976, p. 69.

<sup>38</sup> Lodge, T., Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 12.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

The epoch of the Second World War had also a negative economic impact in South Africa. It was a period during which the countryside was devastated by drought, with the threat of starvation in the reserves and deteriorating conditions on white farms also escalate. All these factors accelerated the process of urbanization and rural depopulation.<sup>41</sup> In the reserves, overcrowding and sharp inequalities in stock ownership and landholding created a situation in which for many people was precarious to farm even in years of good climatic conditions, leading to the emergence of wage workers in cities.<sup>42</sup>

In the reserves overcrowding and sharp inequalities in stock ownership and landholdings had created a situation in which for many was precarious even in years of good climatic conditions. The specific pattern of urbanization varied from city to city as did the major types of work available to Africans. Not surprisingly, the primary focus of African energies during this process of transition was on the problem of sheer survival. When the basic necessities of life, food and shelter, could rarely be taken for granted from one week to the next, a materialistic orientation was inevitable.<sup>43</sup>

And most rural-born workers, having little or no formal education, found the working of the modern economic system far beyond comprehension. The fatalism characteristic of the peasant's world view or their disinclination or disdain to acquire into the causes and effects, left most with little perspective on their own existence, obliged to take life as it come, without reflection or analysis.<sup>44</sup>

The exodus from the countryside was firstly facilitated by a brief suspension, between 1942 and 1943, of influx control in the major cities. This was one of several measures taken by the authority in the early stages of the war so as to avoid confrontation and maintain African political quiescence. Other measures included school feeding schemes, pensions for certain categories of African employees and increased educational expenditure. All these were tied in with manufacturing's requirements of a stable, urbanized and relatively well educated industrial labour force.<sup>45</sup>

The exodus to urban areas by black people intertwined with draught conditions and possible starvation in the countryside influenced black protest politics in South Africa. Indirectly, the need for war materials led to an industrial explosion, which in turn led

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<sup>41</sup> Walshe, P., The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, p. 300.

<sup>42</sup> Lodge, T., Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 12.

<sup>43</sup> Gerhart, G.M., Black Power in South Africa, p. 27.

<sup>44</sup> Molema, J.M., The Bantu Past and Present, p. 313.

<sup>45</sup> Lodge, T., Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 12.

to a growing urbanization and detribalization, thus adding to the vast constituency available to Black politicians.<sup>46</sup>

The outbreak of World War II led also to the downfall of Afrikaner-dominated Hertzog government which supported neutrality of South Africa during the War, and it make room for pro-war government under Smuts. War also led to the conscription of the Africans in the Union Defence Force. And because blacks were not allowed to serve as full combatant soldiers according to the South African Defence Law no. 13 of 1912, this led to opposition by the African National Congress, whereby Rev. Mahobane made an appeal to the government to amend the S.A. defence law in order to allow blacks to serve as full and equal soldiers for their fatherland.<sup>47</sup>

The Second World War had indeed a direct impact on the nature of Black demands in South Africa. The Atlantic Charter helped to shape Black perception as to the rights of people and nations, and contributed to an immediately noticeable self-confidence among Black leaders and the nature of their demand became much more assertive. The War also stimulated the Communist Party of South Africa, the African National Congress and other active organizations in the field of Black politics, to be even more diligent in their pursuit of their political objectives. The need for war material led to an industrial explosion, which, in turn, led to growing urbanization and detribalisation, thus adding to the vast constituency available to Black politicians.<sup>48</sup>

### 1.7 THE RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

With the passing of the Hertzog Bills, the government slammed the door on Africans who had enjoyed the franchise on a common roll with Whites, to say nothing of extending franchise to Africans in the northern province. It was then that we saw a reawakening of the African National Congress, even though the movement became increasingly wrought by internal tensions and was often ambivalent in its stance on vital issues, to provide effective leadership.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Grobler, J., A decisive clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976, p. 82.

<sup>47</sup> De Beer, L., A Political Analysis of ANC as an Extra-Parliamentary Movement, Unpublished M.A. degree, p. 20.

<sup>48</sup> Grobler, J., A decisive clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976, p. 82.

<sup>49</sup> Maylam, P. A History of the African People of South Africa, p. 183.

Mohabane, Zaccheus Richard was born in Thaba Nchu next to Bloemfontein in 1881. And he died in 1970. Methodist clergyman, twice president-general of the African National Congress (1924 - 1927)

Having experienced a gradual recovery in the late 1930's, the stimulated by the outbreak of War II and the advent of Dr. Xuma as President-General in 1940, the African National Congress turned its attention to formulating a comprehensive policy for the ordering of race relation in a democratic society" whereby racial discrimination will be progressively abandoned with the logic of equal opportunities to be pursued to its ultimate results - a predominant African influence in the economic and political life of South Africa.<sup>50</sup>

Conscious of the structural weaknesses of the organization (African National Congress) whose constitution had not been reviewed since 1912 when it was established, Dr. Xuma took steps to procure that the efforts to recruit membership would be matched by a suitable organizational form to represent the full voice of the African people.<sup>51</sup> And the African National Congress was charged with the onus to provide a pressure group and a basis for passive resistance should the Native policy not be reorientated during the course of the War.<sup>52</sup>

The lethargy in the African National Congress's structures, the utter ineptitude and general indolence and demotivation emasculated the African National Congress to function as a viable political organisation. But under the leadership of Dr. Xuma in 1940, the African National Congress at last got down to the task of equipping itself for the fray, and to face up to the realities of the South African situation. Dr. Xuma took up the old non-racial theme with a new vigour. This was not innovation, but his contribution was coherence and a sense of purpose at the centre.<sup>53</sup>

His first task was to re-establish the organization. He began by composing a lengthy exposition of the African National Congress's aims and objectives in the political, economic, social, educational and related fields, and plead with Africans to swell the ranks of the African National Congress. Secondly, he visited urban centres in South Africa, blowing new life into the local branches of the African National Congress and smooth over the differences of opinion which divided the provincial branches. Thirdly, he managed to induce a number of African intelligentsia to join the African National Congress, and fourthly, he succeeded in rebuilding the organization's financial position which helped with the establishment of a permanent office in Johannesburg.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Walshe, P., The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, p. 264.

<sup>51</sup> Mbeki, G., The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa, p. 47.

<sup>52</sup> Walshe, P., The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, p. 264

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Grobler, J., A decisive clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976, p. 80.

Dr. Xuma's pragmatism led him to foster links between the African National Congress and other opposition movements. He was both an Africanist, calling for African unity, solidarity and self-reliance, and a multiracialist, welcoming cooperation by whites of goodwill but turning increasingly to cooperation with non-whites.<sup>55</sup>

Guided by his vision that "the emancipation of the African people shall come from Congress, this can come about when the Congress is well organized," he drafted a new constitution which became known as the Xuma Constitution, which was later adopted by the conference in 1943 in Bloemfontein.<sup>56</sup> And it was during Xuma's leadership that the African National Congress adjusted to the new pressure and opportunities created by the popular upheavals, accompanying the massive wartime expansion of the working class.<sup>57</sup>

According to Karis and Carter, by 1941 the African National Congress was speaking explicitly of the right of franchise for all Africans, and it also included in its policy the demand for the representation of Africans in all government departments, standing also for racial unity and mutual helpfulness, improvement of African people politically, economically, socially, educationally and industrially.<sup>58</sup>

The revised 1943 Constitution of the African National Congress was simplified and to the point. The aims of that Constitution cover the same area of African inspirations and demands as the 1919 Constitution. The underlying ideology was still liberal-reformist and moderate in perspective. There was, however, no signs in that Constitution that the African National Congress was moving towards a militant position relating to the question of political power or the control of government.<sup>59</sup>

The ultimate goal of this revised Constitution was franchise and equal rights for all Africans, full citizenship and participation in all councils of the government, including the repeal of discriminatory clauses in South African Constitution. However, the question of franchise according to the African National Congress, was not within the context of majority rule but mere political recognition of African rights.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Maylam, P. *A History of the African People of South Africa*, p. 183.

<sup>56</sup> Mbeki, G., *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa*, p. 47.

<sup>57</sup> Lodge, T., *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 11.

<sup>58</sup> Karis, T., Carter, G.M., *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. 2, p. 89.

<sup>59</sup> Kono, R.T., *Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa (Azania)*, pp. 148 - 149.

<sup>60</sup> Motlhabi, M., *Black Resistance to Apartheid*, p. 40.

## 1.8 THE AFRICAN'S CLAIMS - 1943

Besides the question of dealing with organizational problems and modernizing the constitution, the African National Congress was faced with the problem of mopping out a future South Africa. Moreover the (African National Congress) was also affected by the international debate about the nature of the post-war world. After Roosevelt and Churchill signed the Atlantic Charter on a post-war settlement in 1942, the African National Congress prepared and adopted a statement of African aims under the title "Africans Claims in South Africa" from the standpoint of Africans on the 16th December 1945.<sup>61</sup>

However, according to Koni in his thesis of Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, the interpretation of the Atlantic Charter articles dealing with the right of people to choose their own form of government by the African National Congress was interesting because on this question the Allied Nations took the position that:

"they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live, and they wish to see sovereign rights and self government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."<sup>62</sup>

And this article was interpreted by the African National Congress as follow:

"The principle of self-determination necessarily raised not only issues relating to the independent existence of small nations besides their more powerful neighbours but those also concerning the political rights and status of minority and of Africans now held under European holelage."

He went on to characterized the situation in Africa where:

"European aggression and conquest has resulted in the establishment of alien governments which are not accountable to the indigenous inhabitants. Africans are still very conscious of the loss of their independence, freedom and the right of choosing the form of government under which they will live. We believe that the acid test of this third article of the Charter is its application to the African continent. In certain parts of Africa it should be possible to accord Africans sovereign rights and to establish administrations of their own choosing. But in other parts of Africa where there are peculiar

<sup>61</sup> Meli, F., A History of the ANC, p. 95.

<sup>62</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 149.

circumstances of a politically entrenched European minority ruling a majority European population the demands of the Africans for full citizenship rights and direct participation in all the councils of the state should be recognised. This is the most urgent in the Union of South Africa."<sup>63</sup>

And what emerges from this interpretation of the third article of the Atlantic Charter is the recognition by the African National Congress of the principle of self-determination as applicable to "small nations" and to "certain parts of Africa." However, with regard to other parts of Africa like South Africa where Africans and other minorities were "now held under European tutelage" self determination according to the African National Congress meant the recognition of "the political rights and status" of those under European rule.<sup>64</sup>

And, therefore, on the basis of this latter interpretation the principle of self-determination assume a special meaning with regard to countries like South Africa, where there were "the peculiar circumstances of a politically entrenched European minority ruling a majority non-European population." Here, the focus was on the acquisition of "full citizenship rights and direct participation in all the councils of state."<sup>65</sup>

All documents containing African claims were not dealing with a programme of state control, and not even about self-determination in South Africa by Africans, but was concern with the direct participation of Africans in the existing organs of state. However, the African Claims marked a milestone in the evolution of African policies in South Africa. It was and it became the basic policy document upon which later the African National Congress policies would essentially be based.<sup>66</sup>

The African's Claims in fact represented the last non-military stand by the old and moderate generation of Congress. By far the most important decision to be taken at the Bloemfontein conference was the approval for the formation of both the Women's League and the Youth League, which later ushered in a period of militant political demands based on the ideology of militant Black nationalism.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., *From Protest to Challenge*, pp. 214 - 215.

<sup>64</sup> Kono, R.T., *Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 150.

<sup>65</sup> Kono, R.T., *Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 150.

<sup>66</sup> Walshe, P., *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 278.

<sup>67</sup> Mandela, N., *The Struggle is my Life*, p. 17.

In conclusion, it was clear that Dr. Xuma did keep the Congress on a high and respectable platform, but he never subscribe to the Congress Youth League's triple doctrine of Africa for Africans, African nationalism and boycott of the Native Representative Council. He describe the slogan of Africa for Africans as a cheap imitation of "Quit India" type of slogan, and he believed that such slogans besides betraying a lack of realism, were merely a means of exacerbating interracial relations when energies should be expended more responsible with constructive undertaking.<sup>68</sup>

However despite these reservations which caused him to lose the Presidency to Dr. J.S. Moroka, Xuma was a remarkable leader and contributed significantly to the preparation and adoption of the African's Claim document of the African National Congress. He placed the African National Congress on a sound foundation, and through the militancy and radical programmes of the Congress Youth League, the African National Congress was now able to challenge the government directly due to its mass-mobilization and Congress Alliance strategy.

#### 1.9 AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS YOUTH LEAGUE (CYL) AND COMMUNISM

The African National Congress Youth League was established in early 1944. Among its founding members it numbered the African National Congress personalities such as Lembede (first president), O.R. Tambo (Secretary), W.M. Sisulu (Treasurer), A.P. Mda and Nelson Mandela.<sup>69</sup> The Youth League becomes an increasingly dominant strategic and ideological influence within the African National Congress and eventually took over the leadership in 1943. It became incumbent upon the CYL to revise drastically the earlier approach of the African National Congress and to Jefferson completely its defeatist and apologetic tactics.<sup>70</sup>

The African National Congress was described by the Youth League as the symbol and embodiment of the African's will to present a united front against all forms of oppression. The formation of the Congress Youth League was an attempt on the part of the Youth to impart to Congress a truly national character. Its formation was also a protest against the lack of discipline and the absence of a clearly-defined goals in the movement as a whole. The Congress Youth League was to be the brain-trust and power-station of the spirit of African nationalism, the spirit of African self-determination. It was to be an organization where young African men and women

<sup>68</sup> Bantu World Newspaper, 1950, p. 2.

<sup>69</sup> Reddy, E.S., Oliver Tambo and the Struggle against Apartheid, p. 6.

<sup>70</sup> Motlhabi, M., The Theory and Practice of Black Resistance to Apartheid, p. 41.



will meet and exchange ideas in an atmosphere pervaded by a common hatred of oppression.<sup>71</sup>

And after its founding in 1944, the CYL adopted African nationalism as the national liberatory creed of Africans under the Influence of Anton Muziwakhe Lembede who was the principal theoretician and leading ideologue within the CYL.<sup>72</sup>

Of all the Congress Youth League (CYL) founding members, Lembede stands out as an intellectual giant in the history of African politics in South Africa. He occupied a prominent place in the history of the African National Congress as the most radical and brilliant thinker in the ranks of the CYL.<sup>73</sup>

Lembede and Mda, propounded the basic principles of nationalism or what they called "Africanism". The fundamental aims of this creed were to create a single entity out of the 'heterogeneous' groupings of Africans, to free Africa as a whole and South Africa in particular from foreign domination and leadership, and to make it possible for Africa to make her own contribution to human progress and happiness.<sup>74</sup>

And taking a position diametrically opposed to that advocated by senior Congressmen in the African's Claims, the CYL Manifesto declared that for the African, without exception, self-determination was the philosophy of life which shall save it from the disaster he clearly sees on his way. And in accordance with their philosophy of African nationalism, the league members made a historic break with the traditional African National Congress policy of liberal-reformism and spoke of national liberation, and not just in terms of the recognition of full citizenship rights and direct participation in all the councils of states as advocated by Africans Claims.<sup>75</sup>

The long-term goal of the CYL was "true democracy" which guaranteed minority rights in a democratic constitution. The immediate goal of its political action was direct representation in parliament on a democratic basis. "Freedom in our life time" becomes the Leagues motto. The CYL affirmed in no uncertain terms that Africa is a Black man's country, and compromise was considered possible on condition that whites abandoned their domination of Africa and assist in building up a free democracy both in South Africa and throughout the continent.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., From Protest to Challenge, Vol. II, p. 306.

<sup>72</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 151.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Karis, T., Carter, G., From Protest to Challenge, Vol. IV, p. 55.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>76</sup> Motlhabi, M., The Theory and Practice of Black Resistance to Apartheid, pp. 41 - 42.

The struggle, it was declared, was not directed against whites but against white domination. The CYL saw African unity and the restoration of African self-determination as pre-conditions for inter-racial co-operation. Having lost all faith in the obsolete ideology of trusteeship, the Africans, it was declared by the CYL, realized that to trust to the mere good grace of the white man will not free him as no nation can free an oppressed group other than that group itself.<sup>77</sup>

They believe that the national liberation of Africans will be achieved by Africans themselves, thus rejecting even the foreign leadership of Africa. The effects of Trusteeship which imposed form of control on the African through the 1927 Native Administration Act, which established the white race as the Supreme Chief of the African people, made Africans to realize that Trusteeship means the consolidation by the White man of his position of the expense of the African people. So that by the time national awakening opens the eyes of the African people to the bluff they live under, white domination should be secure and unassailable.<sup>78</sup>

A hurried glance of legislations passed by the Trustee for the Africans during the last forty years shows also that the very Act of Union itself established as a legal right the claim of the White man to dominate the man of colour. It did not recognise the Africans as a citizen of the then newly formed Union, it regarded him as a beggar at the gate.<sup>79</sup>

The rejection of foreign leadership was allied to the determination of League member to resist the acceptance of foreign ideologies. The resistance to imported ideas was a fundamental facet of African/Black nationalism.

The CYL's statements were not confined to political matters only, but the emphasis was different. Whereas the African's Claims concentrate on the extension of civil and economic rights, the League was intent on economic and cultural regeneration from within the African community itself. Land was to be equitably distributed, and there was to be equality of opportunities in industry and commerce, and the League still thought in terms of economic self-help through African entrepreneurs and co-operatives.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., From Protest to Challenge, p. 304.

<sup>78</sup> Mandela, N., The Struggle is my life, p. 13.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Walshe, P., The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, p. 354.

There was also vague reference to the "democratization of industry" and an insistence on a more equitable distribution of wealth. Little detailed thinking, however, was apparent of the level of a future South Africa's economic policy, and there was some evidence to suggest that opinions within the CYL varied sharply on the basic structures of the future economic order.<sup>81</sup>

On the left there existed a Marxist inclination to a centralized economy, whereas certain the African National Congress members were hypersensitive on the issue of State domination and the domination of individual liberties. The most widespread inclination appears to have been for some limited nationalization of industry and the establishment of a welfare state, much on the lines of the British Labour Party's policy.<sup>82</sup>

However, there was also fundamental divisions which generated tensions within the African National Congress in the 1940's. Africanists in the Youth League like Lembede and Mda, recognised the need to cultivate African pride, assertiveness and self-reliance. They firmly rejected any paternalistic support from the white liberals and rule out any collaboration with non-African movements, and this position clashed with the class analysis of the communists (like's of Kotane), who were concerned to unite the working-class against capitalist exploitation.<sup>83</sup>

Lembede spare no time in criticizing Communism while he was the President of the Youth League. Although he accepted the principles of socialist economic principles, he was strongly opposed to the role of communists within the African National Congress. He believed that the sole purpose of communists within Congress was to undermine the ideology of African nationalism.<sup>84</sup>

Although he accepted socialism as a legitimate goal in African politics, the kind of socialism he had in mind was not properly defined except to say that it could be improved by incorporating modern ideas.<sup>85</sup>

Marxism did not attract Lembede and some of the CYL (including Mda and Tambo), Marxists condemned capitalist exploitation and prescribe a vague defined socialism as the most suitable economic system for a free Africa. Lembede in particular, associated Marxism in South Africa with the "white" South African Communist Party

<sup>81</sup> Walshe, P., *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 354.

<sup>82</sup> Maylam, P., *A History of the African People of South Africa*, p. 184.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> Kono, R.T., *Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 154.

<sup>85</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. P. 315.

- a political force which, in his view, was capable as any other reactionary or liberal, in perpetuating what he perceived to be the stultifying evil of white potentialism.<sup>86</sup>

And despite these ideological exchange between League members and communists, the Communist Party of South Africa continued with its attempts to establish cooperative links with the African National Congress. And the African National Congress managed to held together, seemingly able to accommodate within its ranks persons with differing political ideologies and strategies.

### 1.9.1 CONCLUSION

The Congress Youth League did contributed significantly and positively to the formulation of a new militant and radical policy of the African National Congress. It strengthened and consolidated ideas of African unity, self-determination and black solidarity. And the concepts and ideas of the African National Congress about the principle of self-determination were developed and incorporated in the 1949 Programme of Action.<sup>87</sup>

And according to Davies, all these policy changes within the African National Congress remained at the level of theory throughout the 1940's. Their practical implementation were not given expression until the beginning of the following decades. The Programme of Action was eventually implemented in the 1952 Defiance Campaign against unjust laws, and was also aimed to bring the administration to a half, and to demonstrate the effectiveness of mass non-violent action.<sup>88</sup>

However, the African National Congress reflected critically in 1940 on the developments within the white politics that witnessed the introduction of the period of National Party rule and the coordinating previous segregations to policies into the edifice of apartheid.<sup>89</sup>

The South African Act of 1909, containing the political constitution for South Africa, was a compromise formula. For the most part, it maintained the status quo of colonial practice on the 'Native Question' while introducing a form of central government for 'Europeans' of the Union based on principles imported from Westminster. Except to a limited degree in the Cape, where a restricted property franchise entrenched in the constitution by the South Africa Act admitted some Africans to the vote, the political

<sup>86</sup> Gerhardt, G.M., Black Power in South Africa, p. 55.

<sup>87</sup> Meli, F., A History of the ANC, p. 118.

<sup>88</sup> Davies, R. et al., The Struggle for South Africa, p. 286.

<sup>89</sup> Louw, C., Journey to the ANC, p. 164.

system of the Union was constructed as a parliamentary democracy of white (male) citizen coupled with an authoritarian government of 'Natives'. The majority of the population was thus excluded from participation within the central organs of state power and precluded from full citizenship by boundaries drawn on lines demarcated by criteria of 'colour' on 'face'.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Ashforth, A., The Politics of Official Discourse in Twentieth Century South Africa, p. 70.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE PASSIVE RESISTANCE, THE MINER'S STRIKE AND THE COMING OF APARTHEID

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The African National Congress between its origin in 1912 and the election of the Nationalist Government in 1948, made little progress in the struggle against racial discrimination. The African National Congress's leadership was tired and disillusioned.<sup>1</sup>

During that period (1912 - 1948) the African National Congress represented an educated elite and was committed to the values of negotiations, deputations and diplomatic procedures. They were increasingly out of touch with the growing discontent and impatience of the African people and therefore could not hope to reflect their wishes.<sup>2</sup>

The increasing momentum of the National Party ensured that the voice of the African National Congress remained jeeble, while its importance demanded restructuring by its members. And it was during this period that the leadership of the African National Congress realized that the method of political struggle should go beyond verbal protests, petitions and deputations, and that people should understand and accept this position so that they can back the African National Congress with mass demonstrations and strikes.<sup>3</sup>

The nucleus of African National Congress leadership consisted of young men whose names over the next four decades became synonymous with opposition to Apartheid. Names such as Anton Lembede who was to be the African National Congress Youth League, its first President, Nelson Mandela, its first secretary, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, A.P. Mda and Robert Sobukwe, united to shape a policy of militant ideas and action that sought "Freedom in our lifetime."<sup>4</sup>

The Youth League at that time was having little membership which hoped to promote a new spirit of African nationalism. The League also proposed and propounded a

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<sup>1</sup> Rosenham, C., Fenwick, J.L., South Africa from Settlement to Self-determination, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Meli, F., South Africa Belong to us, p. 99.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

unified movement of all coloured people. Together, they undertook the restructuring of South Africa through a policy of self-determination. Recognizing that the emancipation of the oppressed people in South Africa should be undertaken within a multi-racial society, the Youth League argued for a co-operative ideal which was expressed in a statement from the 1948 African National Congress conference called "Two Streams of Nationalism".<sup>5</sup>

One stream of nationalism centers around Marcus Garvey's slogan of "Africa for the Africans". It was based on the 'Quit Africa' slogan and on the cry "Hunt the white man into the sea". And this brand of African Nationalism was thought by the members of the Youth League to be extreme and ultra revolutionary.<sup>6</sup>

Another stream of African Nationalism (Africanism) which was moderate and professed by the Youth League, take account of the concrete situations in South Africa, and realized that the different racial groups have come to stay. But they emphasized that for peace and progress to prevail in South Africa, there should be change in the basic structure of society and the abandonment of white domination.<sup>7</sup>

This was to be the pre-conditions for the disappearance of relations which breed exploitation and human misery.

Therefore, the goal of the Youth League became the triumph or winning of national freedom for the African people and the induguration of a free society where racial oppression and exploitation will be outlawed. The historical task of African nationalism (Africanism) became the building of a self-confident and strong African nation in South Africa seeking freedom from colonial rule.<sup>8</sup>

The above mission statement of the Youth League clearly underline its non-racial and anti-racist policy. However, the primary goal of national freedom for the African people remained clear and its achievement demanded a more vigorous political policy given the political conditions under which the African National Congress was operating at that time.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Rosenham, C., Fenwick, J.L., South Africa, From Settlement to Self-determination, p. 192.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>7</sup> Unity in Action: A short history of African National Congress, pp. 41 - 42.

<sup>8</sup> Rosenham, C., Fenwick, J.L., South Africa, From Settlement to Self-determination, p. 93.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

Indeed the Youth League was instrumental in reshaping the African National Congress's policies and in setting forth its key principles in the 1949 Programme of Action. This programme was the first to identify specific guidelines and directions for the African National Congress.<sup>10</sup>

The Youth League called for the principle of self-determination and the rejection of white domination. It propounded a vigorous pro African policy under the banner of African Nationalism. And it also expounded a political movement for mass action involving strikes, demonstrations, protests and acts of civil disobedience which were to be pursued in a dignified and non-violent manner.<sup>11</sup>

### 1.1 THE PASSIVE INDIAN RESISTANCE: 1946 - 1949

The first batch of Indian immigrants arrived in South Africa in 1860, bringing with them a wide variety of backgrounds, culture, languages and customs. They came as indentured labourers and worked on the sugar plantations in Natal.<sup>12</sup>

Their living and working conditions on the sugar plantations in Natal were kin to slavery, working from sunrise to sunset for a pittance. Indian workers were insulted, exploited, flogged and they were deprived of living wages and rations. As time went on, they refused to renew their indentures and therefore became "free man", finding employment as market gardeners, mineworkers, railway and council workers, small traders, hawkers, hotel and domestic workers. It is from these indentured labourers that Indian workers emerged who later played an important role in the Indian national movements.<sup>13</sup>

The first conference of the South African Indian Congress was convened in Cape Town in January 1919 by the Cape Indian Congress, but the constitution was not adopted until the third conference held in June 1923. The South African Indian Congress (SAIC) was formed to fight the principles of segregation embodied in the Class Area Bill.<sup>14</sup>

The Cape British Indian Council, the Transvaal British Indian Association and the Natal Indian Congress affiliated to the newly formed SAIC and thus became the

<sup>10</sup> Rosenharn, C., Fenwick, J.L., South Africa, From Settlement to Self-determination, p. 93.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Meli, F., South Africa Belongs to Us, p. 30.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Bhana, S., Pachai, B., A Documentary History of Indian South Africa, p. 151.



foundation members thereof with equal representation of the periodical conferences in the number of delegates.<sup>15</sup>

### 1.1.1 The Class Areas Bill

The Union Government on the pressure of the anti-Asiatics from the Afrikaners embodied their segregation policy in the Class Areas Bill in 1923 for their degradation and humiliation of the Indian community. This Bill has for its objects the compulsory segregation of Indians, the deprivation of their propriety rights and the ultimate elimination of the Indian community in South Africa.<sup>16</sup>

However, this Bill was openly opposed by the Indians. And the South African Indian Congress later proposed a meeting with the Minister of Interior, Dr. D.F. Malan, the Imperial Government and the Indian Government to reconsider the position of the Indians in South Africa, and to arrive at an amicable settlement which will require adjustment to questions of licences, immigration, education and citizenship.<sup>17</sup>

And in 1940 the then government of South Africa set up the Broome Commission to enquire the Indians' position in South Africa regarding their socio, economic and political status. This commission led to the promulgation of the Asiatic Land and Trading (Transvaal) Act in 1941. And on the 15th March 1946, Prime Minister Jan Smuts introduced into parliament the Asiatic Land Tenure Act and Indian Representation Bill. Both the Act and the Bill curtailed the movement of the Indians and circumscribed their residential areas and access to trading facilities.<sup>18</sup>

The Land Asiatic Tenure Act in particular prohibited any land transfers between Indians and non-Indians in the Transvaal and Natal, and went even further to propose a token representation of Indians by three whites in parliament. And this law became an insult to the national honour and dignity of the Indians in South Africa.<sup>19</sup>

And after the passing of the Asiatic Land Tenure Act or the 'Ghetto Bill' or it was known in June 1946, the Indian Government recalled its High Commissioner from South Africa and the Indians in South Africa for the first time since Ghandi's days

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<sup>15</sup> Bhana, S., Pachai, B., A Documentary History of Indian South Africa, p. 151.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 154.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Meli, F., South Africa Belongs to Us, p. 97.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

launched a passive resistance campaign and paved the way for the outside world to condemn the South African government's racial policies in the United Nations.<sup>20</sup>

In February 1946, the South African Indian Congress held a conference in Cape Town which resolve to oppose the Asiatic Land Tenure Act and the Class Areas Bill with concerted and prolonged resistance. They appointed the Passive Resistance Councils in Natal and Transvaal, and on the 3 June 1946 after the passing of the 'Ghetto Bill', the Indian community replied by proclaiming 13 June 1946 "Resistance Day" in which a complete Hartal (strike and closing of businesses) was observed throughout the Country.<sup>21</sup>

The introduction of both the Class Areas Bill and the Asiatic Land Tenure Act by General Smuts' government brought together both the South African Indian Congress and the African National Congress. This was a significant development as, for the first time these two organizations sought and found each other in order to co-operate in the struggle for national liberation. And this alliance was later sealed in the Xuma-Jadoo Pact of 1946.<sup>22</sup>

And on the 27th June 1946 as a result of the intensification of the passive resistance campaign both the leaders of the South African Indian Congress i.e. Dr. Dadoo and Dr. Naicker who was the president were failed and sentenced to six months hard labour. Within two months, over 2 000 resisters (including 300 women) were also sentenced to jail. The campaign continued until 1948 and one of its by-products was the publication of a weekly paper, *Passive Resister*, which was edited by I.C. Meer.<sup>23</sup>

The philosophy of the Indian passive resistance campaigns, although was known to be 'passive' resistance, was in fact active campaign of protest and defiance. Beside those

<sup>20</sup> Benson, M., Africa: *The Struggle for a Birthright*, p. 93.

Ghandhi, Mohandos Karamchand was born in India in 1869. He was the chief creator of Indian Independence and exponent of satyagraha (passive/soul force) and champion of the Indian coarse in South Africa. Later known as Mohatma (great soul), he qualified in law in London, worked as a barrister in Durban and he founded the Natal Indian Congress in 1894. Ghandi helped to unite Asians in peaceful opposition to the pass registration requirements of the Transvaal and organize strikes and pass law campaign in Natal. In 1914 Ghandhi return to India and lead the Indian National Congress in its bid for Swarj (home rule), and tried also to freed India from British rule. In 1947 he was associated in New Delhi by a Hindu fanatic who blamed him for the partition of India and Pakistan.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> De Beer, M., *Who did what in South Africa*, p. 73.

<sup>22</sup> Mbeki, G., *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa*, pp. 61 - 62.

<sup>23</sup> Meli, F., *South Africa Belongs to Us*, p. 72.

people who shared and embraced a non-violent philosophy of Ghandi, the campaign was also broaden to include communists and radicals. The resistance campaign aroused the political consciousness of the Indians, and it also gained general support from Black, Coloureds and from White democrats.<sup>24</sup>

The African National Congress alliance with both the Transvaal and Natal Indian Congress led to some division within the African National Congress. The crucial issue was whether African National Congress should link up with other organizations opposing apartheid, such as Indian Congress, Congress of Democrats or whether it should follow a strictly Africanist course, rejecting association with all non-African associations. The former policy of alliance with non-African allocation triumph.<sup>25</sup> The passive resistance campaign of the Indians in South Africa led to the new era of the politics of alliance between different political organizations.

Plans and initiatives were made by the African National Congress to bring together opponents of apartheid in the hope that sheer numbers and force of moral argument would lead to the overthrow of the government. It was also felt necessary to demonstrate multiracial unity to counter charges made by the state that racial segregation was natural and desired by all. In 1953 the African National Congress made formal links with the Congress of Democrats, the Indian Congress movements and the South Africa Coloured People's Organization (the successor to the APO) in order to launch a National Congress of the People.<sup>26</sup>

The National Party's victory in 1948 in a white only general election and the adoption of the policy of apartheid, lead to different organizations to come together and to oppose what the NP hoped to achieve. The policy of apartheid stimulated the epoch of political alliance. And with the adoption of the Programme of Action in 1949 by the African National Congress, the desks were cleared fro a struggle that was to be bitter and long for opponents of apartheid.

## 1.2 THE AFRICAN MINE STRIKE - 1946

The period between 1933 and 1946 was a period in which South Africa saw a rapid economic development and significant changes in the structure of production. The economy was stimulated by the rise in the price of gold after abandonment of the Gold Standard in 1932. And it was also during the 1930's when the depression came

<sup>24</sup> Sechaba: Official organ of African National Congress, p. 72.

<sup>25</sup> Mbeki, G., The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa, p. 62.

<sup>26</sup> Worden, N., The Making of Modern South Africa, p. 104.

to an end in South Africa, and capital poured back into the country and the price of gold suddenly began to rise while the manufacturing sector resumed full production and expanded rapidly.<sup>27</sup>

The total dependence on agriculture and mineral exports was transformed into a high level of industrialization. The contribution of manufacturing to National Income first surpassed agriculture in 1930 and outstripped mining in 1943, and this "boom" expressed itself also in an increase in the number of manufacturing establishments which rose from 543 in 1933 to 8 505 in 1939 and by 1946 one could count 9 999.<sup>28</sup>

This industrial development also affected the social composition of the African population, and by 1946, almost one in four Africans was an urban dweller and this led to the impoverishment of the rural areas due to urbanization process. Despite the rapid economic development, this period (1933 - 46) did not see the rise of an African bourgeoisie except small trading petty bourgeoisie dealing mostly in foodstuff and small stratum of professional men and administrative and clerical workers.<sup>29</sup>

The exploitation of the African proletariat produced no material benefit for the African bourgeoisie, but was in fact the direct cause of their political oppression. The labour policies of the state which differentiated between skilled and unskilled on racial grounds closed off avenues of mobility to this class and in effect lumped together with the proletariat as politically rightless and economically exploitable.<sup>30</sup>

It should also be remembered that 1936 was also a period of acute political contradictions sharpened by the Hertzog Bills which disenfranchised Cape Africans. And during the Second World War, the living conditions of the black masses further deteriorated through low wages, especially in the mines, the pass laws, the need for more and better education, miserable housing conditions, overcrowded slums and often non-existent sanitation.<sup>31</sup>

The growing number of African workers, especially on the mines led to the formation of the Council of Non-European Trade Union (CNETU) in 1941 of the Trade Hall in Johannesburg. It was a nation-wide federation and a coordinating body trying to change the living and working conditions of mine workers. Dominated by the

<sup>27</sup> Worden, N., *The Making of Modern South Africa*, p. 104.

<sup>28</sup> Callinicos, L., *Working Life, Volume Two*, p. 133.

<sup>29</sup> Bonner, P.L., *Working Papers in South African Studies*, p. 75.

<sup>30</sup> Meli, F., *South Africa Belongs to Us*, p. 102.

<sup>31</sup> Bonner, P.L., *Working Papers in South African Studies*, p. 190.

communists, CNETU grew into the most powerful African trade union embracing nationwide 119 affiliated unions with a total membership of 158 000 African workers.<sup>32</sup>

During the war years African labour was in a stronger bargaining position than it ever had been or was to be in the future. Yet for political reasons CNETU was unwilling to challenge either the state or employers on the crucial question of recognition during the war years, doing so only in 1946 with the mineworkers strike when CNETU no longer occupied such a strategically advantage position.<sup>33</sup>

The development of the African trade union movement became a significant radicalizing influence on the African National Congress, especially in the Eastern Cape, and as far as the African National Congress leadership in Johannesburg was concerned the workers struggle which was to have the greatest impact on its outlook was that of the African mineworkers, who were recruited in the South African reserves as well as in the adjacent colonial territories.<sup>34</sup>

This development of African unionism was of times matched by a growth in African activism with a spate of strikes, mainly on the Rand but also in Natal. And it was in the 1940's, that African mineworkers on the Rand come to realize their organizational potential more fully, and they formed in 1941 the African Mineworkers Union (AMWU).<sup>35</sup>

The AMWU signed up most of its members through its regular mass meetings on Sunday at the Market Square in Fordsburg, Johannesburg. Organizing 'compound by compound' was difficult to carry out openly as organizers were not allowed on mine property. The AMWU was also severely constrained by the War Measure 145, which banned all strikes and imposed a crippling 500 pounds penalty, but the union grew steadily and by 1944 it claimed a membership of 25 000.<sup>36</sup>

The war-time conditions played their part in encouraging a militant mine workforce and gave the union scope for enrolling members. As the war progressed, inflation began to bite harder. Products, especially foodstuff, were in short supply, because the army was given first preference. The food shortage affected the mines where

<sup>32</sup> Meli, F., *South Africa Belongs to Us*, p. 102.

<sup>33</sup> Maylam, P. *A History of the African People of South Africa*, p. 182.

<sup>34</sup> Price, R., Rosberg, E., *The Apartheid Regime*, pp. 179 - 180.

<sup>35</sup> Lodge, T., *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, p. 18.

<sup>36</sup> Callinicos, L., *A Place in the City: The Rand on the eve of Apartheid*, pp. 97 - 98.

compounds managers introduced meat rations. And to mineworkers they got ultra-low wages, this move was outrageous.<sup>37</sup>

And to make things worse, the 1942 Wage Determination announced that cost of living increases would not apply to mineworkers because they were migrant workers.<sup>38</sup>

However, wave of local food strikes, not planned by the union swept the mines leading into hastily increase of meat rations at Robinson Deep Gold Mine and Langlaagte Estate. The strike was barely over when the workers of Hourse Mines downed tools. But with the full support of the state, the mining companies attempted to suppress the African Mineworkers Union by prohibiting gatherings of more than twenty people in the goldmining areas. Nonetheless, the miners became more insistent in their demands of protests continued to occur in individual mine compounds.<sup>39</sup>

At an AMWU conference in April 1946, 2 000 delegates decided to demand a minimum wage of 10 shillings a day instead of the existing minimum wage of 2 shillings and 3 pennies or 2 shillings and 5 pennies a day. A further demand was for better conditions of work in the mines and the withdrawal of War Measure 145 December 1942 which outlawed strikes by Africans.<sup>40</sup>

Several attempts were made by the Mineworkers Union to the Chamber of Mines with a view to resolve the plight of the mineworkers amicably without resorting to strike, because strike was viewed as a last option if negotiations failed. Letters were also written to the Gold Producers Committee to put the miner's grievances and demands and to ask for an interview, but the committee failed to reply. And lastly, an appeal was again made to the Chamber of Mines for mediation and they proved again to be intransigent.<sup>41</sup>

And at 3 a.m. on Monday, 12 August 1946, the Rand Mineworkers went on a strike with full support from the Communist Party of South Africa and African National Congress. Between the 12th and 17th of August an estimated 70 000 African mineworkers were on strike with twenty one mines being affected.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Callinicos, L., A Place in the City: The Rand on the eve of Apartheid, p. 97.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Pampallis, J., Foundations of the new South Africa, p. 171.

<sup>40</sup> Benson, M., The African Patriot, p. 126.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., pp. 98 - 99.

<sup>42</sup> Luckhardt, K., Wall, B., Organize or Strike, p. 69.

And in retaliation to the strikes, police surrounded the compounds in the Rand and forced miners down the shaft with firearms and batons, and at some mines men refused after being forced underground. They were then driven violently back to the surface and into the compounds with some miners losing their lives in the process.<sup>43</sup>

However, after a week of determination by miners, the strike was brought to a swift and brutal end by the government. The strike, which lasted for a week, had disastrous and horrendous short-term repercussions for the miners.

The political consequences of the 1946 African Mineworkers strike were far reaching. The Native Representative Council, which was established to represent Africans and to advise the government on matters affecting African interests, resolve to adjourn indefinitely to protest against the government's vicious handling of the strike.<sup>44</sup>

The adjournment was an important stage in the realignment of African politics in 1940's. Even the Labour Party, some local committees of the Trades and Labour Council, and some White Liberals denounced the police terror and called for negotiations between workers and mine owners.<sup>45</sup>

The strike was in fact brutally and ruthlessly suppressed by the police at a cost of 12 dead and 1 200 wounded. No wage increase was to be granted until 1949, and the Union of Mineworkers was effectively destroyed.<sup>46</sup>

The strike also weakened the CNETU because in 1947 22 of its affiliates receded from the federations Council, citing as their reasons disenchantment with communists leadership and disillusioned with the strike as a political weapon.<sup>47</sup>

One immediate result of the strike was the trial of 53 trade-unionists, including African National Congress and Communist Party officials for aiding and abetting an illegal strike. The entire Communist Party Central Committee was also charged on sedition. The most important aspect of the strike relate also to the fact that the leadership of the CPSA had taken a prominent and active role and since the AMWU had the support of both the African National Congress and CPSA, a tentative basis for

<sup>43</sup> Pampallis, J., Foundation of the New South Africa, p. 171.

<sup>44</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism, p. 161.

<sup>45</sup> Pampallis, J. Foundation of the New South Africa, p. 173.

<sup>46</sup> Roux, Time Longer than Rope, p. 331.

<sup>47</sup> Lodge, T., Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 20.

cooperation on the level of mass action was also established due to convergence of interests among the different sections of the Liberation movement.<sup>48</sup>

Old tensions between African National Congress and CPSA begins to give way to a new spirit of cooperation and this produce a broad set of leadership contacts of vital importance in the year to come.<sup>49</sup> However, the ad-hoc period of the strike should not blur the wider significance of the event. The 1946 strike was the largest on Witwatersrand and significantly, it was carried through by migrant workers who were supposedly less capable of organization and militancy.<sup>50</sup>

### 1.3 THE CONGRESS YOUTH LEAGUE'S PROGRAMME OF ACTION - 1949

The adoption of the Programme of Action in 1949 by the African National Congress marked the beginning of a new era. It was a great shift from the timid, apologetic and defensive position which had previously characterized the struggle for national liberation.<sup>51</sup>

At its 1949 annual conference the African National Congress, almost dragged by its Youth League, adopted a programme of action to implement its revised policy. First, a reorganization in the leadership of the organization had to be done. But its then president of the African National Congress, Dr. A.B. Xuma, did not think that the organization was ready yet for a mass action. He advised for further organizational improvement and growth in membership before such a militant step could be taken. The African National Congress Youth League, on the other hand, thought that the movement was ready, and they campaigned for a president who could go along with its plan.<sup>52</sup>

On presidential election, 16 December 1949, Dr. James Moroka took a militant stand and gave his full support to the boycott strategy as advocated by the Youth League in the Programme of Action. He believed that the time for a firm line of action against the government had arrived. And his stand ensured him to stand as a candidate against Dr. Xuma, after some persuasion by the League members because firstly, he was not an African National Congress member and secondly, he was a friend of Dr. Xuma.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Meli, F., South Africa Belongs to Us, p. 107.

<sup>49</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 162.

<sup>50</sup> Roux, E., Time Longer than Rope, pp. 336 - 342.

<sup>51</sup> Mbeki, G., The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa, p. 63.

<sup>52</sup> Motlhabi, M., Black Resistance to Apartheid, pp. 43 - 44.

<sup>53</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 163.



The League however, finally succeeded and Dr. James Moroka was elected president-general of the African National Congress in 1949. Moroka's election as president-general was, strictly speaking, unconstitutional, since he was not at the time a member of the African National Congress. The Youth League, however, could find no other willing and suitable distinguished candidate to challenge A.B. Xuma, and at the last moment they agreed on Moroka and persuaded him to stand. Unlike Xuma and many other members of the 'old guard' generation, Moroka believed in militant action and made no attempt to prevent Congress radicals from proceeding with plans for the implementation of the Programme of Action.<sup>54</sup>

The Congress Youth League's Programme of Action was later adopted at the Annual Conference of the AN on the 17th December 1949 at Bloemfontein (Community Hall) as a statement of policy of the African National Congress. For the first time the principle of self-determination was officially adopted by the African National Congress and African Nationalism became the ideological basis of the Programme of Action.<sup>55</sup>

The Programme of Action called for civil disobedience, strikes, boycotts and stay-at-homes, and thus unequivocally committed the African National Congress to a new strategy based on extra-legal tactics, mass actions, and the principle of non-collaboration.<sup>56</sup>

The Programme pledged the African National Congress to the ultimate goal of "national freedom", political independence and self-determination. By 'National Freedom' the African National Congress means freedom from White domination and the attainment of political independence. This implies the rejection of the conception of segregation, apartheid, trusteeship, or White leadership which was all in one way or another motivated by the idea of White domination or domination of the White over the Blacks.<sup>57</sup>

And with this object in view in the light of the above principles, the African National Congress sought to continue to fight for the rights of direct representation in all the

<sup>54</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., From Protest to Challenge, Vol. IV, p. 98.

<sup>55</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., From Protest to Challenge, Vol. II, p. 337.

<sup>56</sup> Gerhart, G.M., Black Power in South Africa, p. 83.

<sup>57</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., From Protest to Challenge, Vol. II, p. 337.

governing bodies of the country-national, local and provincial, and resolve to work for the abolition of all differential institutions or bodies specially created for Africans.<sup>58</sup>

The African National Congress also, resolve to establish commercial, industrial, transport, national educational centres and other enterprises in both rural and urban areas. And there was also appointment of a council of action whose function was to carry into effect, vigorously and with the utmost determination the Programme of Action and to prepare and make plans for a national stoppage of work for one day as a mark of protest against the reactionary policy of the South African government.<sup>59</sup>

Three major demonstrations were held in 1950, following the adoption of the Programme of Action, as a prelude to its implementation. The first demonstration was a 'Freedom of Speech' convention, organized by the Transvaal African National Congress, the Transvaal Indian Congress, African People's Organization (APO), and the Johannesburg District Committee of the Communist Party in March 1950. This convention was followed by May day or 'Freedom Day' demonstration against the suppression of Communism Act, and finally a National Day of Protest was called on the 26th June 1950. The last demonstration was mainly a day of mourning for 18 Blacks who lost their lives on May day, and it was also a protest against the new Group Areas Bill.<sup>60</sup>

Finally, the Congress of Youth League had at long last officially embarked upon the path of militant action on the ideological basis of an assertive African Nationalism. The Programme of Action was a milestone in Congress history. It represents a fundamental change of policy and methods. And, in spite of the drastic adjustment in tactics endorsed by the African National Congress in 1949, the underlying political orientation of most Congress leaders appears to have shifted very little as a result of the advent of the National Party government, and only the younger generation briefly fling with radicalism.<sup>61</sup>

However, the coming into power of the Nationalist Party in 1948 not only accelerated the process which eventually led to the acceptance of the Programme of Action in 1949, but also had the effect of drawing old enemies together ... the Congress Youth League (CYL) and the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA). Prominent members of the CPSA joined the provincial and national executive committees of

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 338.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Motlhabi, M., *Black Resistance to Apartheid*, p. 44.

<sup>61</sup> Luthuli, A., *Let My People Go*, p. 98.

African National Congress e.g. J.B. Marks in 1950 was elected president of the Transvaal Congress and Moses Kotane, who was the general secretary of the CPSA also joined the national executive of the African National Congress.<sup>62</sup>

And it was as a result of this closer cooperation and increasing personal contacts between communists and black nationalists that the traditional anti-communism of the Congress Youth League subsided and gradually gave way to a wholesome exchange of ideas, but the basic ideology of the Youth League (African Nationalism) was, however, not diluted or sidetracked by this flow of ideas.<sup>63</sup>

And in 1950 the Communist Party of South Africa dissolve in a precautionary move to pre-empt the parliamentary adoption of the Unlawful Organizations Bill. In May 1950 both the African National Congress and the CPSA organized national day of protest against government restrictions and was also set aside for the Launching of Programme of Action. Demonstrations involving a one day work stoppage were called and more than half of the African workforce headed the call and stay at home.<sup>64</sup>

Numerous gatherings were held especially in Johannesburg, Durban and Port Elizabeth in support of the May day call. However, these meetings were held in spite of the government's ban in all, demonstrations and meetings.<sup>65</sup>

Later the police broke up number of meetings and in subsequent riots they killed eighteen people and injured more than thirty. And in the aftermath of this tragedy, the African National Congress designated Monday, June 26th as a day of mourning for the dead and a National Day of Protest against the Group Areas Bill and the Suppression of Communism Bill.<sup>66</sup>

The response to the call was nationwide and successful and it was observed on an interracial basis including Coloureds and Indians. And in 1959 the government proposed for the removal of Coloured voters from the common roll by the Separate Representation of Voters Bill, and this lead to the ground swell and mounting dissatisfaction from the Coloured community, thus broadening the struggle further. And mounting apartheid legislations provided a favourable setting for concerted action.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 164.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>64</sup> Benson, M., The African Patriot, p. 130.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., pp. 130 - 131.

<sup>66</sup> Kuper, L., Passive Resistance in South Africa, p. 99.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

In July 1951, a conference of the national executives of the African National Congress, SAIC, representatives of the Franchise Action Council was organized and the Council was appointed and given the task of coordinating the efforts of the national organizations of the Africans, Indians and Coloured people. That Council was referred to as a Joint Planning Council. The Council proposed a mass campaign for the repeal of the Pass laws, the Group Areas Act, the Separate Representation of Voters Act, and the Bantu Authorities Act, and for the withdrawal of the 'so called' rural rehabilitation scheme, including the policy of stock-limitation. And the plan submitted to this Council as amended by the African National Congress, forms the basis of the Defiance Campaign in 1952.<sup>68</sup>

Nelson Mandela was elected volunteer-in-chief, Moulvi Cachalia his deputy. Dr. Moroka, Dr. Dadoo and Moses Kotane made up the rest of the five man planning committee. It was a unity of Indian, Coloured and African in ethnicity and to some extent, Marxist and nationalist in ideology since Dadoo and Kotane were members of the Communist Party. They worked together as a team with neither the ethnic nor ideological factors intruding into the day to day planning.<sup>69</sup>

And according to the planners of the Defiance Campaign, the objective of the whole effort was to declare war on Pass laws and the Suppression of Communism Act in particular. The campaign aimed at the repeal of these oppressive laws by means of Massive non-cooperation.<sup>70</sup>

The campaign for the defiance of unjust laws was scheduled to begin on June 26, 1952, the second anniversary of the 1950 "Day of Protest". In May of that year, in a preemptive move to intimidate the leadership and dampen the growing challenging mood of the people, the government ordered five leaders ... all communists ... to resign from their respective organizations and stop forthwith from attending political gatherings. The leaders in question were: J.B. Marks, Transvaal president of African National Congress, Dr. Dadoo, president of the SAIC, J.M. Ngwevela, Chairman of the Western Cape Regional Committee of the African National Congress, and Moses Kotane, a member of the African National Congress's NEC. The banned leaders defied the order anyway and were put under arrest.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> Meer, F., *Higher Than Hope*, p. 40.

<sup>70</sup> Karis, T.G., Carter, G.M., *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. II p. 458.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 417.

The government's response to the Defiance Campaign became violent. Hundreds of blacks were shot and killed by the police and thousands more were wounded. Special legislation were introduced, the Criminal Law Amendment Act lashed and punished anyone breaking the law 'by way of protest and the Suppression of Communism Act afforded the police with the powers to raid and confiscate documents in the homes and offices of the African National Congress and SAJC.<sup>72</sup>

Nevertheless, the campaign proved to be an effective form of training disciplined volunteers and mobilized the masses in non-violent action. It transformed the character of the African National Congress, strengthened the leadership and attracted many new recruits. It also stimulated the growth of militancy within the African National Congress and initiated the emergence of the Congress of Democrats. However, during and after the Defiance Campaign, many African National Congress leaders were arrested including Dr. Moroka, Sisulu, Mandela, Marks, Dadoo, Bopope, Thome and Nonosito and other faced trial under the suppression of Communist Act.<sup>73</sup>

The arrest and trial of African National Congress leadership exposed the weakness of Dr. Moroka. He unilaterally withdrew from the joint defiance team and engaged his own independent team of lawyers. In pleading for mitigation he stressed and emphasized that he was committed to the task of promoting racial harmony and was diametrically opposed to communism. His action soured his reputation within the African National Congress and he was later displaced as president at the next election by Albert Luthuli, in December 1952.<sup>74</sup>

The Defiance Campaign hastened the end of Moroka's incompetent leadership. As African National Congress's President-General and as chairman of the Joint Planning Council, he failed to give direction to the campaign and he later decided to live and practiced in Thaba-Nchu, too far from the mainstream of Black political activities.<sup>75</sup>

By December 1952 there were only a few acts of defiance, the most important being on 8 December, when only a handful of Whites took part for the first time. The most prominent of these was Patrick Duncan, son of a former Governor-General. To the delight of the organizers, his participation generated a great deal of publicity for the campaign, both locally and overseas.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Meli, F., South Africa Belongs to Us, p. 121.

<sup>73</sup> Meli, F., South Africa Belongs to Us, p. 41.

<sup>74</sup> Meer, F., Higher than Hope, p. 41.

<sup>75</sup> Grobler, J., A Decisive Clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976, pp. 101 - 102.

<sup>76</sup> ibid., p. 100.

Albert Luthulis presidency of the African National Congress was characterized by a spread of political activity and the radicalization of the African National Congress. He was a foresighted man, orator and erudite who campaigned vigorously for the adoption of a more militant approach. This meant a creative implementation of the 1949 Programme of Action. It was during his presidency that people became involved in great numbers in African National Congress activities and this orientation towards mass participation transformed the African National Congress into a mass based movement.<sup>77</sup>

And at the conclusion of the trial, all the accused were sentenced to nine months imprisonment with hard labour, suspended for a period of two years. And all of them were not found guilty for being members or associating them with communism. The defiance campaign and the subsequent trial had the effect of bringing sympathetic white liberals and former members of the dissolved CPSA (reconstituting underground as the South African Communist Party) closer to the African National Congress.<sup>78</sup>

It was in this unprecedented favourable climate that liberals and communists succeeded in organizing themselves with the support of the African National Congress. And in 1953, they established an organization that was pro-African National Congress called the Congress of Democrats (COD). This Congress was independent and enjoyed the full support of Albert Luthuli. A new spirit of cooperation and unity in action was established even though the Defiance Campaign itself had failed to accomplish its objective of eradicating unjust laws. And both the African National Congress, SAIC, COD and the South African Coloured People's Organization (later to be called the Coloured People's Congress-APO) were now working together in their common opposition to oppressive laws.<sup>79</sup>

Almost at the same time as the Congress of Democrats was formed, a group of liberal-minded Europeans, mostly university and professional people, who were disturbed by the racial impass that the Defiance Campaign had revealed, decided to form a new parliamentary political party, the Liberal Party, with a multi-racial membership. It advocated a limited African franchise, an end to discriminatory laws, and a return to the old liberal tradition of the Cape.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Meli, F., South Africa Belongs to Us, p. 122.

<sup>78</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 172.

<sup>79</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism, p. 173.

<sup>80</sup> Sampson, A., The Treason Cage, p. 101.

But although the Liberals sympathised with many of the statements of Congress, they could not contain the willful breaking of the law in the Defiance Campaign, nor could they identify themselves with Congress itself, which most of them regarded as tainted with both nationalism and Communism.<sup>81</sup>

The Defiance Campaign was later suspended early in 1953 and the African National Congress declared that political resistance would continue in new forms.

### 1.3.1 CONCLUSION

The impact of racial discrimination in South Africa changed both quantitatively and qualitatively after the coming into power of the National Party in the general election of 1948. And in the 1950's South Africa was thus characterized by the impact of the National Party's apartheid policy, the banning of Communist Party and the willingness of Black protest politics to become more involved in mass action to achieve their political objectives.<sup>82</sup>

However, the determination of the National Party to refashion South African society according to Afrikaner ideals of racial purity and segregation in the 1950's cannot correctly be attributed to a specific event or incident. Overall it was a process that developed over a period of time and in which significant landmarks are readily recognizable.

Mixed marriages were outlawed in 1949, and the following year (1950) penalties were imposed for all sexual relations between Whites and Coloureds (thus extending the Immorality Act of 1927, which banned sex between Whites and Blacks. The Population Registration Act of 1950 required the classification of all individuals by race, in order to make the prohibition in race-mixing enforceable. The Group Areas Act of 1950, set in motion the zoning by race of all urban areas in respect to ownership, occupancy, and trading rights. And the Reservation of Separate Amenities

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., pp. 101 - 102.

The former members of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) formed themselves in early 1953 into an underground organization with the slightly re-arranged name of the South African Communist Party (SACP). Its purpose was to carry the banner of communist movement and to combine legal mass work with the illegal work of building the Marxist-Leninist Party.

<sup>82</sup> De Beer, L., A Political Analysis of African National Congress as an Extra-Parliamentary Movement; Unpublished M.A. degree, p. 46.

Act of 1953 struck down any lingering adherence to the principle of "separate but equal", making it legal for services to be discriminatory and removing the discretion formerly vested in the courts to pass judgement on the suitability of nonwhite facilities.<sup>83</sup>

Also onto the statute books in 1953, come the momentous Bantu Education Act prescribing tight government control of all African schools, with a view to the long-term range implementation of apartheid.<sup>84</sup>

The African National Congress however, entered the 1950's undoubtedly as the doyen of African Nationalism and as the most important Black political organization in South Africa. It had a sound organizational structure and was ready for political mass action. However, its leadership was divided among nationalists of varying ideological hues. Among the older generation, men of liberal bent predominated, and there was also a sprinkling of Marxists who had managed to balance their immediate loyalties to the cause of African rights with a longer term loyalty to the eventual construction of a socialist order.<sup>85</sup>

But the continuing relationship between the African National Congress and Communist Party of South Africa can only be explained on grounds of political pragmatism and not on ideological accommodation. The question of material aid from Soviet-bloc countries points to the fact that the African National Congress-CPSA alliance was of great advantage to the African National Congress. And from Moscow's perspective the alliance makes African National Congress to be the most acceptable liberation movement in South Africa.

The Communist Party was thought to be the vanguard party of the oppressed masses in South Africa according to the Comintern. But the CPSA never succeeded in leading the struggle of the black people of South Africa for liberation. It failed to promote the idea of an Independent Black Republic as directed by the Comintern in 1928, but rather worked within the black nationalist movement. The Communist Party was an insignificant or insipid political force and it never become a political force either in terms of membership or political impact up to the time of its official dissolution in 1950.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Gerhart, G.M., Black Power in South Africa, pp. 85 - 86 .

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Gerhart, G.M., Black Power in South Africa, p. 87.

<sup>86</sup> Kono, R.T. Marxism and Black Nationalism, p. 209.



Since it could not gain a mass following whilst operating legally there was hardly a chance it could succeed in achieving that objective underground. Hence, the continuing need to maintain its relationship with the African National Congress, which led to the mutual benefit of both organization, e.g. African Mineworkers Strike and the Defiance Campaign.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., pp. 209 - 210.

## CHAPTER 5

### PARADOXICAL ALLIANCE BETWEEN AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND SACP; CONFLICT HARDENED

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The African National Congress entered the 1950's undoubtedly as the champion of African Nationalism and as the most important black political organisation in South Africa. It had a sound organisational structure and was ready for political mass action. However, its leadership was divided among nationalists of varying ideological hues. Among the older generation, men of liberal bent predominated, and there was also a sprinkling of Marxists who had managed to balance their immediate loyalties to the cause of African rights with a longer term loyalty to the eventual construction of a socialist order.<sup>1</sup>

The Defiance Campaign ushered in a new spirit of unity and cooperation between the African National Congress, SACP, COD and the Coloured People's Congress even though itself (defiance campaign) failed to accomplish its political objectives of eradicating unjust laws. The abovementioned organisations were now working together in their common opposition to oppression laws.<sup>2</sup>

The SACP during the 1950's, was weak and a pallid political force unable to pursue its theory of national democratic revolution. Under the banner of Communist Party of South Africa especially in 1928 after the formulation of the Native Republic policy by La Guma; the CPSA failed to introduce socialist ideas even to white workers. And in 1928, the CPSA, despite growing working class and the militancy of the black workers, lost confidence in the working class leadership and saw the "masses" as the vanguard.<sup>3</sup>

The revolutionary socialism, in the sense of concentrating, educating and politicizing workers on socialist thinking and practice, preparing them for the overthrow of capitalism, was never embarked upon. And after 1950 when the CPSA was banned and changed its name to South African Communist Party (SACP), its coterminous alliance with the African National Congress endorsed its insipid and weak organisational structure, that is why it was forced to maintain its relationship with the

<sup>1</sup> Gerhart, G.M.; Black Power in South Africa, p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> Kono, R.T. Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 173.

<sup>3</sup> Grossman, I., Class Relations and the Policies of the Communist Party of South Africa, pp. 34 - 35.

African National Congress. However, this relationship can be explained on grounds of political pragmatism and not on ideological accommodation.<sup>4</sup>

After the failure of the Defiance Campaign, the new idea as proposed by Z.K. Matthews concerned the staging of a multiracial 'Congress of the People' as a rallying point against apartheid. It was on the basis of this proposal that the African National Congress, SACP, COD, Coloured People's Congress and South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) formed the Congress Alliance.<sup>5</sup>

Prof. Matthews suggested the summoning of a national convention at which all groups might be represented to consider the national problem on an all inclusive basis. This Alliance met at Kliptown outside Johannesburg on 26 June at Kliptown to draw up a Freedom Charter which represent concerted efforts to forge principles for a fast South Africa.<sup>6</sup>

Undeniably, however, the 1950's were times of growing state interference in the lives of Africans. It was reflected not only in the protests of the African National Congress but also in the intensification of rural violence in the second half of the decade. In Tekhukhune land in the Eastern Transvaal, resistance to the introduction of Bantu Authorities was widespread and vehement. Three hundred black people were arrested and twenty-one were convicted of murder.<sup>7</sup>

In the Western Transvaal there were bitter protests against women being compelled to carry passes, while in Pondoland in the Eastern Cape, rural violence arrived to stay as Africans seemed determined to reject anything associated with the Government. However expressed, the violence had a common denominator: rejection of a government which had provided much sustenance for the belief that it was hostile to Africans.<sup>8</sup>

#### 1.1 FREEDOM CHARTER (See Appendix I)

The draft of the Freedom Charter was prepared by a small committee of the National Action Council composed of the executives of the African National Congress, the

<sup>4</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, pp. 209 - 210.

<sup>5</sup> Sampson, A., The Treason Cage, p. 104.

<sup>6</sup> Chipasula, J., Chilivumbo, A., South Africa's Dilemmas, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Kenney, H., Power, Pride and Prejudice, p. 99.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, pp. 99 - 100.

South African Indian Council, the South African Congress of Democrats (COD) and the Coloured People's Congress.

The preparations for the people's charter of rights took over a year and literally thousands of people participated in the campaign for the drawing up of the charter and send their demands of the kinds of South Africa they wished to live in. These proposals provided the basis for the draft of the freedom Charter.<sup>9</sup>

The Freedom Charter was finally read out to a crowd of 2 884 delegates that included 320 Indians, 230 Coloureds and 112 Whites. The Charter was approved clause by clause by the crowd that sang the African National Congress National Anthem between each approval. The preamble to the charter declared:

We, the people of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know:- That South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people;... And therefore, we the people of South Africa, black and white, together - equals countrymen and brothers - adopt this Freedom Charter. And pledge ourselves to strive together, sparing nothing of our strength and courage, until the democratic changes here set out have been won.<sup>10</sup>

There is certainly no document in the history of the nationalist movement in South Africa that has caused more dissension and discord than the Freedom Charter. It was a controversial document not only among white supporters of apartheid but also some black people. Most of the latter thought it was a weak statement of the goals envisaged by the black struggle for change, and was also thought to be unrealistic if not contradictory to its aims.<sup>11</sup>

Controversies both inside and outside the African National Congress have revolved mainly around the Charter's statement about nationalisation and land ownership. Under the heading "The People Shall Share in the Country's Wealth", the Charter deals with the question of nationalisation and the rights of free trade:

<sup>9</sup> Meer, F., *Higher than Hope*, p. 56.

<sup>10</sup> Karis T.G., Carter, G.M. *From Protest to Challenge* Vol. III, p. 205.

<sup>11</sup> Motlhabi, M., *Black Resistance to Apartheid*, pp. 45 - 46.

The national wealth of our country, the heritage of all South Africans, shall be restored to the people; The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole; All other industries and trades shall be controlled to assist the well-being of the people; All people shall have equal rights to trade where they choose, to manufacture and to enter all trades, crafts and professions.

Details of ownership of land are treated under the heading "The land shall be shared among those who work it". And this position was dismissed in toto by the Africanist within the African National Congress who argued that South Africa belongs by right only to the original African inhabitants.<sup>12</sup>

It became apparent that the details of land ownership was approached from a perspective of land redivision along non-racial lines and not from the viewpoint of militant nationalist demands for the restoration of conquered and confiscated land. The aim of the Charter was to banish Jamine and land burger and not to interfere with the rights of private ownership. The basic rights apply to all irrespective of class, colour or origin. All South Africans, black and white have "the right to occupy land wherever they choose."<sup>13</sup>

The old liberal tradition of congress which was virtually buried by the Youth League Manifest and the 1949 Programme of Action was resurrected by the 1955 Freedom Charter. This tradition was revived in the shape of a public and official commitment to the principles of equalitarian multiracialism. And in the Freedom Charter the Congress Youth League ideology of militant African nationalism was replaced by the philosophy of liberal-reformism.<sup>14</sup>

In terms of ideology, therefore, the Freedom Charter predates the Congress Youth League era which was based on the philosophy of African nationalism inspired by the desire to achieve national freedom from white domination and the attainment of political independence. This position was a fundamental principle of the programme of action of the African National Congress before 1955.

And according to Kono, the Freedom Charter takes its inspiration from the 1943 African's Claims, which defined self-determination within South African context as a struggle for "political rights and status" or "full citizenship rights and direct

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<sup>12</sup> Suttner, R., Cronin, J., 30 Years of the Freedom Charter, p. 112.

<sup>13</sup> Kono, R.T., Marsixm and Black Nationalism, p. 176.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

participation in all the councils of state, with no mention of African liberation and self-determination.<sup>15</sup>

However, Mandela dismissed the argument that Freedom Charter was a mere list of demands for democratic reforms. According to him it was a revolutionary document precisely because the change it envisage was to be won through the breaking up of the economic and political set-up of South Africa; and to win these demands, mass-mobilization, agitation were to be used on the widest scale.<sup>16</sup>

Mandela also elucidated the fact that Freedom Charter was also not a socialist document, because under socialism the workers hold state power. They and the peasants own the means of production, the land, the factories, and the mills. But the Freedom Charter does not contemplate such profound economic and political changes. Its declaration: "The People shall Govern" visualises the transfer of power not to any single social class but to all the people of South Africa, be they workers, peasants, professionals, or petty bourgeoisie.<sup>17</sup>

But ultimately, the Freedom Charter carries the onus for the division and split within the African National Congress and the conflict between Africanists and Charterists was sharpened with the formation of Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) in April 1959.<sup>18</sup>

The Africanists contend that Freedom Charter was a sell-out document of the Africanist's birthright - his prerogative in his land, and for the government it was a 'communist' document inspired by international communism to overthrow the state by violent means and the establishment of a socialist order.<sup>19</sup>

## 1.2 THE TREASON TRIAL

Following the official adoption of the Freedom Charter by the African National Congress in 1956, the government responded to the demands of the Charter by arresting the entire leadership of the Congress movement. More than 150 people were arrested in a country-wide swoop. The basic contention of the state was that the

<sup>15</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism, p. 178.

<sup>16</sup> Mandela, N., Struggle is my life, p. 55.

<sup>17</sup> Meli, F., South Africa Belongs to Us, p. 128.

<sup>18</sup> Liebenberg, I., (ed.), The Long March: The Story of the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa, p. 104.

<sup>19</sup> Motlhabi, M., Black Resistance to Apartheid, p. 47.

Charter was a blueprint for a violent revolution and illegal overthrow by force of the state with a communist society.<sup>20</sup>

All arrested people were accused of being members of a 'country-wide conspiracy' which was inspired by international communism to overthrow the state by violent means. The accused represented a wide political spectrum which included communists, liberals, nationalists and conservatives, with the bulk of the accused being African National Congress members.<sup>21</sup>

The trial of the Congress leaders, which came to be known as the 'Treason Trial' lasted four and a half years. After a long and convoluted trial, the three-judge Special Criminal Court pronounced judgement on March, 29, 1961. The accused were accordingly found not guilty and were discharged. With regard to charges relating both to communism and the replacement of the government by violent means the court found that there was no evidence of infiltration of the African National Congress by former member of Communist Party and it was also impossible for the court to conclude that the African National Congress was intending to forcefully overthrow the state by violence.<sup>22</sup>

The Treason Trial generated wide international publicity, resulting in a stream of sympathy for members of the protest movements in South Africa. In England a Defence and Aid Fund was established to support the accused and their families. The Treason Trial also had an indirect benefit to the congress since it brought the leaders together for long periods, during which strong bonds of solidarity developed between them.<sup>23</sup>

In the course of this long and costly trial the African National Congress revised the 1943 Xuma constitution, and the revised constitution was adopted by Congress at the Annual Conference in December 1957. The aims and objectives of the new constitution were:

- a. To unite the African people in a powerful and effective instrument to secure their own complete liberation from all forms of discriminations and national oppression.

<sup>20</sup> Meli, F., South Africa Belongs to Us, p. 128.

<sup>21</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism, p. 181.

<sup>22</sup> Karis, T.G., The Treason Trial in South Africa, p. 75.

<sup>23</sup> Grobler, J., A Decisive Clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976, p. 116.

- b. To promote and protect the interest of the African people in all matters affecting them.
- c. To strive for the attainment of universal adult suffrage and the creation of a united democratic South Africa on the principles outlined in the Freedom Charter.
- d. To support the cause of national liberation and the right to independence of nations in Africa and the rest of the world.

One year after the adoption of the revised the African National Congress Constitution, the increased ideological tension within Congress reached a critical point. At the annual meeting of the Transvaal African National Congress in early November 1958, the Africanists who were present announced that they would launch out on their own as the sole custodians of the Programme of Action and that they intended starting a political battle against white domination.<sup>24</sup>

### 1.3 THE FREEDOM CHARTER AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

There can be no gainsaying the importance of the freedom Charter in contemporary South African politics, although over 30 years old a de Facto obligation existed on all political organisations struggling to transform the South African state to define their position vis-a-vis the Charter. The freedom Charter was, moreover, the clef de voute of the alliance between the SACP and the African National Congress, one of the most controversial but significant political alliance in South Africa.<sup>25</sup>

This strategic alliance is based on the fact that the SACP does not pursue socialism as an objective separate from national liberation; but rather, sees the latter as the necessary vehicle for the attainment of the former. The theoretical basis of the political alliance between the African National Congress and SACP is to be located in the identification by the ACP of South Africa as a 'colonial society of a special type' and its subscription to the theory of national democratic revolution. In 1969 of the Morogoro conference in Tanzania, the African National Congress normally endorsed

<sup>24</sup> Fine, R., Davis, D., Beyond Apartheid, p. 192 - 193.

<sup>25</sup> Journal of the United Democratic Front, pp. 27 - 35.



the theory of colonialism of a special type and its strategic corollary in the SA context, the theory of national democratic revolution.<sup>26</sup>

The theory of national democracy and of national democratic revolution is at the heart of the current strategy of the SACP and the adhesion of SACP to this theory is a sine quo non condition of the African National Congress. Therefore, the unifying role of the Freedom Charter in the struggle against apartheid, in particular its role as the corner-stone of the alliance between SACP and the African National Congress, depend upon its interpretation in terms of this theory.

Therefore, before I can go further discussing the SACP and Freedom Charter, I think the historical origins and logic of the national democratic revolution, its theoretical excursus is thus called before we consider the specific way in which the SACP applies this theory to South Africa and uses it to interpret the Freedom Charter briefly.

### 1.3.1 NATIONAL DEMOCRACY - THE GENEALOGY AND LOGIC OF A CONCEPT

From 1935 until 1947, the international communist movement pursued a strategy of alliance with states which were anti-fascist. And in response to the 'Marshall Aid' offensive of the United State during the immediate post-war honeymoon period (1945 - 47), the world was bifurcated into two implacably antagonistic camps, the anti-imperialist democratic camp and the imperialist camp.<sup>27</sup>

In such a highly polarized world, there was no place for the politics of alliance and unity practiced by the international communist movement during the previous decade and a 'left turn' ensued. According to the switch of 1947, the communist parties in the colonial, semi-colonial and dependent countries were to eschew alliances formed with the national bourgeoisie during the preceding period. And countries which had recently acquired independence were consigned to the camp of imperialism and their claims to neutrality and national autonomy rejected as specious.<sup>28</sup>

But this analysis of the nature of colonial and underdeveloped society was gradually changed. The Soviet Union began to appreciate the authenticity of

<sup>26</sup> Maliband, R., Saville, J., The Socialist Register, p. 145.

<sup>27</sup> Frankel, P. (ed). State, Resistance and Change in South Africa, p. 262.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp. 262 -263.

the claims by nearly independent states to be non-aligned. Ex-colonial societies under the rule of the national bourgeoisie were ceased to be perceived by the international communists movement as irrevocably integrated into the imperialist anti-democratic camp. The possibility of economic growth in ex-colonial societies was seen as contingent upon the prior destruction of capitalism, and that was perceived as an example of the 'non-capitalist road' towards socialism, and society engaged on such a path of development was conceived as 'transitional social structure', neither capitalist nor socialist, but reflects the interest of the widest strata of the population of the newly-free society and not of anyone particular class.<sup>29</sup>

And in order to fill what was considered conceptually significant in Marxist-Leninism, the concept 'national democracy' was introduced to name such forms of society and state. Thus, the growing international links between the Soviet Union and the ex-colonial world received a doctrinal basis and vindication through the introduction of this concept.

However, in the mid-1970's, the term 'national democracy' was replaced by the term 'socialist orientation' because all states of socialist orientation were to pursue policies aiming of the gradual creation of the political, material, social and cultural pre-requisites for the transition to building socialism.<sup>30</sup>

### 1.3.2 FREEDOM CHARTER, INTERNAL COLONIALISM AND NATIONAL DEMOCRACY

The South African Communist Party argued that unlike other ex-colonial countries which were primitive in terms of economic development, South Africa is having a certain level of industrialisation and the forces of production are more developed, while the proletariat is neither small nor politically insipid; and the material preconditions to carry out revolution and establishment of socialism exist in South Africa. However, in South Africa there is an existence of a state which has the form of a racial dictatorship - an instance of colonialism.<sup>31</sup>

The colonial domination is distinctive in South Africa because it occurs within the boundaries of a single political territory. The white nation, on this analysis

<sup>29</sup> Taburin, E.A., Neocolonialism and Africa, p. 305.

<sup>30</sup> Frankel, P. et al, State Resistance and Change, p. 267.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, pp. 267 - 268.

was identified as the colonial power, and the politically oppressed blacks as the oppressed. This disposition has two significant results; firstly, the colonial subjection of black

Thus, reading through the prism of the theory of national democratic revolution and the colonialism-of-a-special type analysis of South Africa, it is now not difficult to interpret the principal clauses of the Freedom Charter as comprising national-democratic demands.

In terms of the theory of national-democratic revolution, a national democratic state is opposed to foreign political and economical domination, and more anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist, than anti-capitalist. And once the thesis, based on the colonialism-of-a-special-type analysis of South Africa, that the white population should be identified as a colonizing nation, is accepted, and once monopoly industry, the principal financial institutions and the mineral wealth were white owned, then the Freedom Charter's call for their nationalisation appears as a national-democratic demand.<sup>33</sup>

Thus even though the Freedom Charter does not call for the destruction of capitalism in South Africa and does not refer, even implicitly, to socialism, the SACP is able to endorse it, and thereby enter into an alliance with the African National Congress because in its view, the model of future South Africa adumbrated there represents a necessary stage (stage of national democracy), that must be traversed before there can be any transition to socialism, and eventually communism in South Africa.<sup>34</sup>

#### 1.4 THE REVIVAL OF THE WORKING CLASS MOVEMENTS

In the latter half of the 1950's the working class movement began in earnest the difficult process of recovery. The struggle took off on a number of related but distinct sites: women against the extension of passes, community movements against increases in costs of social consumption, 'reservists' in the countryside against the imposition of 'Bantu authorities' and the state betterment schemes, and workers in the factories over wages, conditions and trade union recognition.<sup>35</sup>

As a class with its own independent interests, goals, methods of struggle, the working class remained curiously invisible. Their invisibility was a function of its own

<sup>32</sup> Fine, R., Davis, D., Beyond Apartheid, pp. 129.

<sup>33</sup> Frankel, P. et al., State Resistance and Change, p. 270.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Fine, R., Davis, D., Beyond Apartheid, p. 153.

inherent weaknesses inherited from the 1940. The obstacle to the growth of working class consciousness in the 1950's arose from the internal fragmentation of the working class, particularly but not exclusively on racial lines and again from the lack of distinction of the working class as a party in its own right from other class forces.<sup>36</sup>

However, the political consciousness of Black workers was given impeded by the publication of the revised Industrial Conciliation Bill in 1954. Essentially this legislation prohibited the establishment of mixed unions with effect from the passing of the Bill in 1956. Another prohibition was that mixed unions could not extend their collective bargaining scope to cover additional areas of interests which involved a racial group that was different to the bargaining unit.<sup>37</sup>

And in retaliation to government onslaught on mixed unions, those unions which were affiliated to the South African Trade and Labour Council formed a new federation called South African Trade Union Council which was later called Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA). African unions were not affiliates of TUCSA but were allowed to consult TUCSA on matters affecting African workers through a parallel coordinating liaison committee. And this attitude of TUCSA towards African unions was regarded as a naked form of racism, which led to the formation of SACTU.<sup>38</sup>

The revival of independent trade unionism, after almost ten years of decline and dispersal, was marked by the formation in 1955 of the South African Congress of Trade Unionism (SACTU). Born out of the remains of Council for Non-European Trade Unions (CNETU) and the Trade and Labour Council (TLC), SACTU's prime task was to ensure the existence of a national, non-racial trade-union coordinating together all workers of South Africa both black and white.<sup>39</sup>

SACTU's policy was to oppose race discrimination and to demand equality of opportunity and to reject the reforms that leaves the substance of power in the hands of the white government. And it is for these reasons that SACTU came into existence and accepted the onus and risks of political struggle in the Congress Alliance. This federation was formed at the time when the South African government was in its

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<sup>36</sup> Fine, R., Davis, D., *Beyond Apartheid*, p. 153.

<sup>37</sup> Neube, D., *Black Trade Unions in South Africa*, p. 88.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.

<sup>39</sup> Interview: South African Congress of Trade Unions, SALB, October - December 1985, Volume 11, p. 43.

deepest political and economic crisis with people acting in open defiance and resistance to the system.<sup>40</sup>

Economically, the industrial sector's growth rate of 7,2 per cent in 1954 declined to 4,4 per cent in 1955, 3,4 per cent in 1956 and 1,7 per cent in 1958. Thus despite the substantial growth of national income in the 1950's (from 585,6 m in 1945 to 995 m in 1960 at constant prices) and the small growth in the share of manufacturing industry, the industrial sector was caught in a cycle of stagnation and backwardness.<sup>41</sup>

SACTU's intention was to be a political trade union, to harness workers' demands for economic amelioration to a political cause. It was to participate in the political struggle against the pass laws, Bantu Education, and other forms of oppression. Three unions formed the backbone of SACTU - the Food and Canning Workers' Union, the Textile Workers Industrial Union, and the Laundry, Cleaning and Dyeing Workers Unions and in 1956, SACTU helped to establish the Metal Workers Union in Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, and in 1961 it formed a Farm Workers Union and a national organizing committee for mineworkers.<sup>42</sup>

The first few years of SACTU's existence belonged to a period of growing African workers organisation and militancy. SACTU's total affiliated membership rose from about 20 000 in 1956 to about 55 000 in 1962. SACTU was involved in a number of national campaigns for minimum wages, and on the 26 June 1957 it organized a one day stay at home and played a prominent role in mobilizing support for a three-day-stay-at-home that brought considerable disruption to industry and commerce in major centres especially in Durban and Port Elizabeth.<sup>43</sup>

SACTU was later crushed in 1960 by the government's crackdown of African opposition movements. However, it should be clear that SACTU was not the only trade union federation to emerge in the mid-1950's. It was a small body, relative both to the organized labour movement as a whole and to the mass of unorganized workers. The majority of white unions were affiliated to the racially exclusive white Federal Consultative Council, Coordinating Council and Federation of Trade Unions. While some independent unions with coloured and Indian workers/membership were

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<sup>40</sup> Interview: South African Congress of Trade Unions, SALB, October - December 1985, Volume 11, p. 43.

<sup>41</sup> Fine, L., Davis, D., *Beyond Apartheid*, pp. 154 - 155.

<sup>42</sup> Maylam, P., *History of the African People of South Africa*, p. 189.

<sup>43</sup> Pampallis, J., *Foundation of the New South Africa*, pp. 203 - 204.

affiliated and linked to South African Trade Union Council (SATUC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC).<sup>44</sup>

### 1.5 THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT; ANTI-PASS CAMPAIGN

The ANCWL was founded in 1948 and in 1954 it affiliated to the Federation of South African Women.

During the early 1950's the African National Congress Women's League (ANCWL) increased its level of political activities. Significant numbers of women participated in the Defiance Campaign, were arrested and served prison sentences. The Women's League participated in the fight against Bantu Education and in the Congress of the People. However, the major campaign undertaken by the ANCWL was against the introduction of passes for women.<sup>45</sup>

In this, as in many of its other activities, the Women's League worked closely with non-African women, particularly the Federation of South African Women. This federation was a non-racial, national organisation which was formed in 1954 in Johannesburg, and which became closely associated with the Congress Alliance. And in response to the intensification of pass and permit raids on the Rand, the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) mobilized 2000 women in an illegal rally in Pretoria. Petitions were signed on a wide range of issues from forced removals to ghetto housing, black poverty and passes.

Later this anti-pass campaigns demonstrations spread to other major cities like Durban and Johannesburg and to smaller cities including rural areas.<sup>46</sup>

In Winburg, the centre of the 1913 Free State anti-pass resistance, nearly 1 500 women were induced to take out new reference books before local women requested help from the African National Congress. And when Lilian Ngoyi (Vice-president of FEDSAW) visited the town, she found women ready to turn to civil disobedience. Against African National Congress advice, women activists collected their newly issued passes, marched with them to the magistrate's office and publicly burnt them. Winburg acted as a spark for many other areas particularly in the East Rand where

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<sup>44</sup> Fine, R., Davis, D., Beyond Apartheid, pp. 163 - 164.

<sup>45</sup> Pampallis, J., Foundation of the New South Africa, p. 205.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

municipalities were controlling the presence of African women through residence permits.<sup>47</sup>

On 27 October 1955, almost 2 000 women of all races staged a march through Pretoria. The high point of the anti-pass campaign was the march of 20 000 women in Pretoria on 9 August 1956 to the Union Building to present anti-pass petition to the Prime Minister, J.G. Strijdom. And when the Prime Minister refuse to see them, thousands of petitions were left at his door. Throughout this process, the African National Congress Women's League played a crucial role.<sup>48</sup>

Although a number of top FEDSAW and ANCWL leaders were arrested in December 1956 Treason Trial arrest, the anti-pass campaign continued with some rallies and demonstrations in Johannesburg and Durban and strong resistance to the issue of passes in rural areas. It was only at the end of 1960 that the government was finally able to impose and enforce the pass laws on all African women.

#### 1.6 COMMUNITY STRUGGLES

A wide range of community struggles against oppression and forced removals took place in South Africa during the 1950's. One of the most important event was the struggle against the government's plan to destroy Sophiatown and remove its people to Meadowlands, in Soweto (South Western Township) in 1954 - 1956. The African National Congress launched a major campaign against the removals, lasting several months with mass protest and mobilize people to resist removals.<sup>49</sup>

The government responded by banning all meetings in Johannesburg areas because there was a looming confrontation between the police and the people of Sophiatown. And on 9 February 1955, 2 000 armed police and 80 trucks were ordered into Sophiatown to begin the removals, and when the removals were eventually initiated there was no resistance and eventually Sophiatown was destroyed and people were send to what is today called Meadowlands in Soweto.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Fine, R., Davis, D., Beyond Apartheid, p. 176.

<sup>48</sup> Meer, F., Higher than Hope, pp. 51 - 52.

<sup>49</sup> Sophiatown was one of the oldest African urban communities in South Africa. It was in this area where Africans could own freehold properties. However, compensation for people's removal in Sophiatown was far below the market value for their properties and this caused people to resist their removals, thus involving protest meetings and campaigns.

<sup>50</sup> Maylam, P., A History of the African People in South Africa, p. 186.

The 1950's were also marked by African consumer boycotts of commodities and services. In 1959 the African National Congress organized a three-month consumer boycott of potato in Bethal area of the Eastern Transvaal and this led to a slight improvement in legal requirements for the treatment of farm workers. And the consumer boycott of the country's largest canning company, forced the government to enter into direct negotiations with the SACTU-affiliated Food and Canning Workers Union.<sup>51</sup>

Other significant community struggles during the 1950's included bus boycotts in protest against fare increases in Evaton, Pretoria and Port Elizabeth. However, one of the biggest was the Alexander bus boycott where people walked to work in protest against one shilling increase in bus fares, and despite the intimidation by the police, fares were lowered down.<sup>52</sup>

However, the African National Congress's role in the various passive resistance campaigns of the 1950's, appear somewhat inconsistent. At times it was uninvolved, as during the Evaton bus boycott and on occasions its organisational role was hesitant because of lack of a clear and articulated ideological position.

### 1.7 TOMLINSON AND BANTUSTAN POLICY

From its beginning the policy of apartheid accorded an important part to the Black homelands. These areas were to become the national homes of all Blacks in South Africa, including those Blacks who were residents in the white areas. The first step towards the creation of Bantustans was the promulgation of the Bantu Authorities Act (no. 68 of 1951). This act had two objectives; Firstly, the abolishment of the Native Representative Council and Secondly, the expansion of Bantustans.<sup>53</sup>

It was in 1951 when the first Minister of Native Affairs in the Malan Cabinet, Governor-General E.G. Jansen appointed a commission under the agricultural economist, Prof. F.R. Tomlinson to conduct an exhaustive inquiry into and to report on a comprehensive scheme for the rehabilitation of the Native Areas with a view to developing within them a social structure in keeping with the culture of the Native and based on effective socio-economic planning.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Pampallis, J., Foundation of the New South Africa, p. 204.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Meer, F., Higher than Hope, pp. 46 - 47.

<sup>54</sup> Kenney, H., Architect of Apartheid, p. 70.



The Commission interpreted its terms of reference widely, as it very soon realized that the problems relative to the development of the 'Bantu Areas' could only be thoroughly analysed and studied in the light of the wide economic, social and political framework of the Union of South Africa.

What all the circumlocution come down was that the Tomlinson Commission saw separate development (Apartheid) as the only way for South Africa. The primary assumption of the Commission was that South Africa would not evolve into a common unitary state, because of the unbreakable will of whites to maintain their identity and their position of dominance. And thus the task of the commission was to examine how best the 'Reserves' might be developed to support the 'Reserves' might be developed to support the 'Bantu' population on a large scale.<sup>55</sup>

The Tomlinson Commission spent years investigating the social and economic conditions of the reserves. Finally, in 1954, it submitted to the Cabinet a huge report of 3 755 mimeographed pages, later summarized in over 200 printed pages. The Tomlinson report, in spite of its commitment to the Government's policy of racial separation, was an important document because it provided a wealth of information about conditions in the black rural areas. It recorded in immense detail their economic backwardness and their inability to provide blacks with a living much above the margins of subsistence. And the report show also the kind of poverty in the reserves for its inhabitants which seemed insurmountable. Population density in the native reserves was far higher than in the metropolitan areas of South Africa in 1951 there were an average of 65 persons per square mile in the reserves, compared with a figure of 27 persons per square meter mile in the urban areas.<sup>56</sup>

Noting that the reserves were already rundown and would require a massive cash injection to establish them, the commission found that there was abundant land in the reserves to meet the needs of 51% of their population in 1951, although 12% of the surface was mainly rural, and suffering from acute overstocking and soil erosion. The report argued for the division of land among the inhabitants in economic units which were to be consolidated to be larger than the then current units, and those who were invariably forced of the land would have to find jobs in secondary and tertiary activities.<sup>57</sup>

The Commission also estimated that 50 000 new jobs outside agricultural sector have to be created annually for the next 25 years. Initially secondary industry would

<sup>55</sup> Kenney, H., *Architect of Apartheid*, pp. 70 - 71.

<sup>56</sup> *The Cape Times*, 1954, p. 7.

<sup>57</sup> Schoeman, B., *My Lewe in die Politiek*, p. 224.

provide the necessary boost by employing 20 000 workers, with the remaining 30 000 jobs coming from the consequent stimulation of tertiary activities. The Commission preferred the internal growth of the reserves as opposed to border industry despite its short-term advantages. According to the Commission, the internal growth of the reserves would become economic dependencies of the white areas, exporters of labour and recipients of the indispensable remittance of black migrant workers.<sup>58</sup>

The Commission also supported white capital investment in the reserves and left no doubt that white South African tax-payers would have to pay dearly for their super-segregation. Even if other sources of capital investment could be found, the Commission recommended the Government should make R50 million available over a period of five years for the purpose of industrial development.<sup>59</sup>

However, in rejecting the basic recommendations of the Commission, Verwoerd (who was then the Minister of Native Affairs) claimed that its estimates of necessary expenditure were far too high. Furthermore, he added that white capitalists would not be permitted to invest in the Reserves, only near the borders, that the government would not buy more land for the Reserves, and it would not depart from its intention to establish 'tribal' authorities as the basis of African political power and rights in the Reserves.<sup>60</sup>

How white capitalists were to be induced to invest in those border areas, lacking in infrastructure and still subject to the restrictions of the industrial colour bar, was something of little concern to Minister Verwoerd. The supreme imperative at this stage was then not to keep Africans out of those parts of the country officially designated as white, but rather to slow down the rate of urbanization. The majority of African people were opposed to the Bantustan idea. And here the African National Congress in particular was vocal and speaking explicitly of the rights of franchise for all Africans in a unitary state, and it also included in its policy the demand for the representation of Africans in all government departments.<sup>61</sup>

And despite the evidence of illegitimacy and failure and lack of economic success in the former Bantustans, the attempt to sustain the 'development' of the Bantustans in the face of mass opposition by the former Nationalist government expose its limitations and contradictory policies.

<sup>58</sup> Kenney, H., *Architect of Apartheid*, p. 112.

<sup>59</sup> Kenney, H., *Power, Pride and Prejudice*, p. 74.

<sup>60</sup> Saunders, C., (ed). *Illustrated History of South Africa*, p. 380.

<sup>61</sup> Motlhabi, M., *Black Resistance to Apartheid*, p. 40.

Verwoerd did have a vision of the ordering of relations between South Africans which was based on ethnicity, hence the establishment of Bantu Authorities and the rejection of permanent black settlement in the urban centres. And he knew that the new tribalism would be at risk if the state had no control over the minds of Africans. It then made sense that education for blacks should be of a special kind, devoted to inculcating them with pride in their own unique ethnicity. And what they needed was Bantu Education.<sup>62</sup>

### 1.8 BANTU EDUCATION

Before 1948, black education was under the jurisdiction of the provinces, with the majority of schools being controlled by English speaking missionaries of a variety of denominations. Although they had a separate primary school syllabus, at the secondary level it was largely the same for all races.

And under Verwoerd's government, a Native Education Commission headed by Werner Eislen was appointed in 1949. It was charged to formulate the principles and aims of Education for Natives as an independent race, in which their past and present, their inherent social qualities, their distinctive characteristics and aptitudes, and their needs under ever-changing social conditions were to be taken into consideration. The explicit aim was to restructure the existing system of black education in order to conform to the proposed principles and aims, and to prepare Natives more effectively for their future occupations.<sup>63</sup>

The report which was submitted in 1951, called for the centralization of African education under the Department of Native Affairs. It entails a separate educational system for blacks, as the Department of Education will administer the schooling of other races. The proposal was logical enough within the ambit of apartheid, which set blacks aside as being so specially different with education that is different from that of the whites. And in 1953 the government introduced the Bantu Education Act to re-create separate institutions, attitudes, and values.<sup>64</sup>

In parliament Verwoerd was quite frank about his aim. Education for blacks 'must not clash with Government policy' and should not create wrong expectations on the part of the Native himself. The task of education was not to inculcate only ideas about

<sup>62</sup> Kenney, H., *Power, Pride and Prejudice*, p. 79.

<sup>63</sup> Horrell, M., *A Decade of Bantu Education*, p. 4.

<sup>64</sup> Carter, G.M., *The Politics of Inequality: South Africa since 1948*, p. 73.

individualist striving, but to teach everyone that he could only advance if his community did so as well. It would be one of the chief aim of Bantu Education to ensure that this ideal of community service always had priority. In white South Africa the prospects for blacks would always be limited. They would never rise above a certain level in white society.<sup>65</sup>

The new approach meant a stranger emphasis on the Vernacular in the teaching of black children, but they were expected to receive instructions also in both official languages. It involved, in particular, greater attention to the teaching of Afrikaans. It may be doubted how important a knowledge of Afrikaans would be in qualifying most blacks to work for white capitalists, but it was quite in keeping with the basic assumptions of Bantu Education.<sup>66</sup>

It could be argued, and of course it was, that this simply amounted to an education for inferiority, that it was designed to provide Africans only with that minimum level of competence which would enable them to provide a efficient manual work for white employers. Bantu Education was not so much to marginalized blacks economically, but more an effort to indoctrinate them about the blessing of apartheid.<sup>67</sup>

It is clear that Bantu Education was used to implement and transmit apartheid. Not only was it a hindrance in the process of learning, through exchange of the medium of education (English and Afrikaans), but was also a negative form of indoctrination among the young and innocent, who have no other way of obtaining alternative information to balance the facts. Needless to say, this system of education was loudly condemned by Africans and their sympathizers throughout South Africa. In 1954 African National Congress in its conference managed to organize children to boycott classes.<sup>68</sup>

In 1955, the African National Congress's National Executive decided to launch an indefinite school boycott which would not commence until provision could be made for students who would be out of the school. The African Education Movement was formed to organize education outside of state control. As a result of its oppositional stance, this movement faced the wrath of the state through banning and harassment. In the 1960's, students in schools and colleges continued to protest vehemently against Bantu Education through strikes and demonstrations and in the 1970's resistance to

<sup>65</sup> Kenney, H., Architect of Apartheid, p. 118.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 119 - 122.

<sup>68</sup> Molthabi, M., Black Resistance to Apartheid, p. 54.

apartheid and Bantu Education reached a climax culminating in the uprisings of 16 June 1976.<sup>69</sup>

### 1.9 SHARPVILLE SHOOTING: 21 MARCH 1960

The closing years of the 1950's were marked by strikes, riots, demonstrations and loss of life and properties. Large demonstrations occurred, which were inspired by the African National Congress and the PAC's campaign against pass laws. In every city, town and village men were to leave their passes at home, surrender to the nearest police station, and demand arrest.<sup>70</sup>

In December 1959 in Durban, the African National Congress at its national conference resolve to demonstrate against pass laws on 31 March 1960. Preparations were already advanced when PAC at its press conference on 18 March 1960 announced that it would launch its own campaign against the pass laws, starting on Monday, 21 March. Members and supporters of the PAC all over South Africa were expected to leave their reference books at home and then present themselves for arrest at the nearest police station. The aim was to fill the country's prisons to overflow with offenders against the pass laws. Their slogan was 'no bail, no defence, no fine', with the intention of bringing freedom and independence to South Africa by 1965.<sup>71</sup>

Africa's sweep to freedom contributed massively to PAC's belief that South Africa should be free and independent by 1963. Nine independent states already existed and four more, including Nigeria, were due to get their independence in 1960. A bloody revolt in the Belgian Congo led to a lessening of European control; the French Cameroens, Nyasaland, North and Southern Rhodesia, Tanganyika, Uganda, Kenya, Guinea, Algeria, Angola and Mozambique were each in different stages of demanding the end to colonial rule.<sup>72</sup>

The PAC's expectations of a possible freedom in South Africa was also reinforced on 3 February 1960 when Harold Macmillan, Britain's Prime Minister, gave his historic address to the South African Parliament 'of the wind of change' blowing through the African continent. His speech add hope among blacks of change to come although to the nationalists it was a provocation.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Cobbert, W., (ed). Popular Struggles in South Africa, p. 155.

<sup>70</sup> De Beer, L. A Political Analysis of ANC as an Extra-Parliamentary Movement; Unpublished M.A.-degree, p. 104.

<sup>71</sup> Pogrand, P., Sobukwe and Apartheid, p. 122.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>73</sup> Pogrand, P., Sobukwe and Apartheid, pp. 115 - 116.

On 21 March 1960 at Philippi, near Cape Town, 15 000 Africans in a non-violent march, went to the local police station and insisted on being arrested. The police took only the names of the leaders and warned them to appear in court the following week, upon which they dispersed quietly. At this stage the response to PAC's call was not widespread. It was only at a few centres in the Transvaal and the Cape that the protest took on any significant proportion. But it was at the black township of Sharpville, near Vereeniging in the southern Transvaal, where the numbers were sufficient for the triggering of what was later to be known as the Sharpville shooting.<sup>74</sup>

In the township of Sharpville on the 21 March 1960, Africans gathered outside the police station. As the day wore on, the crowd became larger and more aggressive with a total number of between 15 000 to 20 000 demonstrations. Earlier that year nine policemen had died at the Cato Manor slum near Durban, massacred by thousands of Africans, outraged at the stepped-up frequency of pass and liquor raids by the police. And the events at Cato Manor undoubtedly weighed heavily on the minds of the beleaguered policemen. Thus as the crowd increases the police felt threatened and the shouting from the crowd reminded them of events at Cato Manor. And when the fences seemed to give way under pressure of the crowd, nerves snapped. A policeman opened fire without command to the crowd, and most of the policemen followed his example. A total of 69 Africans were killed and about 180 wounded.<sup>75</sup>

And in Langa (Cape Peninsula) two Africans were also killed by the police. The PAC's anti-pass campaign did not achieve its original aim, but its results were far-reaching. South African government was condemned by the overseas countries, and as a matter of routine the Security Council of the United Nations criticized South Africa and once more demanded an end to apartheid. Gold shares on world stock exchange slumped with overseas investors selling off their investment in South Africa, and a great deal of capital left the country.<sup>76</sup>

The government's reaction to Sharpville shooting was firstly, to ban and prohibit all public meetings in specified magisterial districts, and later state of emergency was also declared. On 28 March the government introduced the Unlawful Organisations Bill, designed to ban the African National Congress and PAC, and the government

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<sup>74</sup> Kenney, H., *Power, Pride and Prejudice*, p. 138.

<sup>75</sup> Grobler, J., *Decisive Clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976*, pp. 123 - 124.

<sup>76</sup> Kenney, H., *Power, Pride and Prejudice*, p. 139.

temporarily suspended the carrying of passes on 26 March 1960. Chief Albert Luthuli called on the public and supporter of the African National Congress to stay at home on Monday, 28 March, to mourn those shot on the 21 March 1960, and that day was proclaimed a day of mourning. On the day of mourning thousands of Africans all over the country headed the call and stay at home.<sup>77</sup>

The state of emergency lasted from 30 March to the latter part of 1960. About 11 500 blacks were arrested, and Robert Sobukwe, the leader of PAC was sentenced to 5 years in prison and the leader of the African National Congress, Albert Luthuli, was sentenced a fine of R200 or one year imprisonment. And on 8 April 1960, both the African National Congress and PAC were constitutionally banned by the government ending their legal existence.<sup>78</sup>

The banning of the African National Congress and the PAC signalled the end of the second phase in the history of Black protest politics in South Africa, namely the era of defiant assertiveness. As banned organizations, the African National Congress and PAC, as well as the SACP, which was already operating underground, could no longer openly defy laws which they regarded as inimical to Black interests. By banning these organizations, the government officially closed all potential channels of negotiations, and set itself upon the path of confrontation with the organizations it banned.<sup>79</sup>

The significance of the Sharpsville crisis was not that it was an occasion when revolutionary political and social conditions were present and consequently squandered. Instead it represented a turning point in the history of Black Nationalism, when protest finally hardened into resistance, and when Black politicians were forced to begin thinking in terms of a revolutionary strategy. In the wake of the Sharpsville-shootings there was a massive withdrawal of investors' confidence, giving rise to a short-term business slump; and cabinet minister called for reforms in government policies affecting Africans. The sense of crisis generated by the Sharpsville shootings and their aftermath appeared to be a vindication of a programme of armed insurgency.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Grobler, J., A Decisive Clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1976, p. 124.

<sup>78</sup> Pike, H., A History of Communism in South Africa, p. 340.

<sup>79</sup> De Beer, L., A Political Analysis of ANC as an Extra-Parliamentary Movement; Unpublished M.A. degree, p. 105.

<sup>80</sup> Lodge, T., Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, pp. 225 - 226.

### 1.9.1 CONCLUSION

The period between 1950 to 1960 can be characterized as the time when the African National Congress and the SACP gradually strengthened their cooperative relationship. However, this relationship was not symptomatic of an ideological convergence between the black nationalism of the African National Congress and the communism of the SACP. This growing relationship was simply a product of cooperative action relating to a number of important political events, such as the fight against the Bill for the Suppression of Communism, the Defiance Campaign of 1952 and the adoption of Freedom charter in 1955 and the long Treason Trial which started in 1956. Ideological differences between these organizations were either overlooked or relegated to the background.<sup>81</sup>

In the mid-1950's the legal framework for a radical restructuring of the lives of black South Africans was instituted through apartheid policy. Influx control was tightened and the notion of a permanent black urban presence was repudiated. What were seen as traditional tribal structures were refurbished in the black homelands under suitable white tutelage. A new educational system of Bantu Education was adopted with the ideology of ethnic separatism.<sup>82</sup>

At Kliptown in 1955, the Freedom Charter was adopted by Congress Alliance and this charter was later to serve as a key document during the Treason Trial which lasted from December 1956 to March 1961. And after a long and convoluted trial all the accused were accordingly found not guilty and discharged by the Special Criminal Court.

The African National Congress and the Communist Party adopted the Freedom Charter, as their programme of action, for different reasons. The African National Congress wanted to rally all South Africans irrespective of colour, creed or race behind it. The Communist accepted the Charter because it calls for the protection of the white minority rights, as opposed to individual rights. Both the African National Congress and Communist Party argue that the struggle was not against colonialism and imperialism but for democratic reforms as outlined in the Freedom Charter. The struggle for the African National Congress, was not to actually to defeat the imperialists but to share power with them. Thesis was no longer a struggle for total

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<sup>81</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism, p. 181.

<sup>82</sup> Kenney, H., Power, Pride and Prejudice, p. 82.



emancipation from foreign domination but a plea for concessions and this become a serious issue which lead to the formation of the PAC.

In 1958 due to an increased ideological tension within the Congress, the Africanists broke away from the African National Congress and formed Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), citing Freedom Charter as the casus-belli. In rejecting what they referred to as the 'Kliptown Charter' because of its multiracial premises, the Africanists undertook to be the custodians of the African National Congress policy. They set out on their new path to defend and propagate the philosophy of Black nationalism as a basis for Black liberation.<sup>83</sup>

The 1950's were also marked by the workers and women militancy through trade unions formation and anti-pass campaign, by women including consumer boycotts of commodities and services. The Sharpsville crisis marked the end of a decade during which passive resistance had been the main tactic of black opposition. One effect of the post-Sharpsville crackdown was to break a commitment to non-violent by both the African National Congress and PAC. And the subsequent banning of the African National Congress and PAC by the government in 1960 forced these organizations to operate underground resulting in the unprecedented confrontation between them and the government.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Kono, R.T., Marxism and Black Nationalism, p. 221.

<sup>84</sup> Grobler, J., Decisive Clash? A short history of black protest politics in South Africa 1875 - 1876, p. 126.

CHAPTER 6THE GENESIS OF PAN-AFRICANISM IN SOUTH AFRICA1. INTRODUCTION

The immediate roots of the PAC were in the Youth League of the African National Congress which was established in 1944. Among the founder members of the Youth League were Oliver Tambo, Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe, Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela and Peter Raboreko.<sup>1</sup>

The Youth League came into being at a time when young people were discussing the possibility of establishing another organization completely independent of the African National Congress or to attempt too revive the moribund [African National Congress] organization. As it happened, they decided to put life into the African National Congress. The principal criticism directed against the African National Congress leadership at that time concerned their alleged 'collaboration with the oppressors'. The African National Congress's support for the Native Representative Council (NRC) was bitterly resented. Another criticism was that the African National Congress leaders were not sufficiently outspoken on the issue of nationalism, or that they were not sufficiently nationalists. And the Youth League came out plainly with the declaration that it rejected all forms of white domination.<sup>2</sup>

The strong feelings among Youth League members about collaboration with whites were in part also due to the influence of the All African Convention. Captured by Coloured Trotskyists in 1935, at the moment when it had been expected to dissolve, the AAC, under the leadership of Dr. I.B. Tabato, worked effectively as an organ of propaganda, denouncing vehemently any form of collaboration with segregated councils or other bodies, which they claimed would be used by the Government like the village Bungas to impose more effectively iniquitous legislation upon the blacks.<sup>3</sup>

From these and other varied influences like the aggressive entry into the war of the non-white power, Japan, and the experiences of life itself for black people in South Africa, all stimulated the Youth League into a coherent group with a definite programme. The feelings and ideas thus generated took shape when a number of them come together to evolve their concepts of nationalism and their tactics in the

<sup>1</sup> Gibson, R., African Liberation Movements, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Roux, E., Time Longer than Rope, p. 403.

<sup>3</sup> Gibson, R., African Liberation Movements, p. 46.

radical transformation of the African National Congress, which was essentially urgent. And the charismatic leader that inspired this effort was Anton Muziwakhe Lembede.<sup>4</sup>

### 1.1 THE FORMATION OF PAN-AFRICANIST CONGRESS OF AZANIA

The Pan Africanist Congress was formed in Orlando Township and properly constituted on the 5 - 6 April 1959. It was formed after the increased ideological tensions within the Congress Alliance. The division was created by the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955 by the African National Congress leadership leading to the emergence of the Africanist who regarded themselves as the true custodians of African nationalism which was espoused by A.M. Lembede, and the Charterists who were committed to a multiracial South Africa as envisaged by the Freedom Charter. The Africanists proclaimed the standard of African nationalism as defined by the Congress Youth League in its Basic Manifesto of 1944 and the Programme of Action of 1949.<sup>5</sup>

### 1.2 CONGRESS YOUTH LEAGUE'S BASIC MANIFESTO - 1944

On the basis of the ideology of African nationalism the 1944 Congress Youth League declared in its preamble that "Africans must struggle for development, progress and national liberation so as to occupy their rightful and honourable place among nations of the world." In this manifesto Africans had finally reached the stage where they now elects to determine their future by their own efforts and to free themselves from white oppression they should not merely thrust to the good grace of the Whiteman as no nation can free an oppressed group other than that group itself.<sup>6</sup>

On the question of multiracialism the 1948 Basic Policy document of the Programme of Action emphasized that "The majority of Europeans share the spoils of white domination in South Africa. They have a vested interest in the exploitative caste society of South Africa."<sup>7</sup> Therefore because of the privileges accorded to them by legislation and because of their continued maintenance of the status quo, white liberals and sympathizers have defined themselves a part of the problem and not as part of the solution.

<sup>4</sup> Benson, M., South Africa: The Struggle for a Birthright, p. 80.

<sup>5</sup> Kono, R., Marxism and Black Nationalism, p. 179.

<sup>6</sup> Karis, T., Carter, G., From Protest to Challenge: Vol. II, pp. 300 - 301.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 329.

### 1.3 PROGRAMME OF ACTION (CYL) - 1949

And in the 1949 Programme of Action the Youth League of the African National Congress proposed a cogent plan for militant action. The fundamental principles of the program of action were inspired by the desire to achieve national freedom, which was defined as "Freedom from white domination and the attainment of political independence." This implies the rejection of the concept of segregation, apartheid, trusteeship or white leadership, which were all in one way or another, motivated by the idea of white domination or the domination of white over black.<sup>8</sup>

The Programme of Action reinforced the original position regarding the dispossession of land and highlighted African nationalism as a forceful liberatory creed. It emphasized the necessity to have a programme that the Africans should follow in their liberation efforts. And having a programme meant also that the system of white domination and segregation should be seen as something to be outrooted wholly, rather than concentrating on the symptoms.<sup>9</sup>

The Programme also emphasized the question of who must be involved in the struggle and at what level one must lead in that struggle. It asserted that the oppressed Africans themselves must lead because they are the only people who understand what it feels like to be nationally oppressed, and who through that experience would understand what their goals should be. This was an expression of the African's desire to assert themselves, to rise from a mental position of inferior; it was also an assertion of human dignity and positive self-appraisal.<sup>10</sup>

However, because of the long standing mistrust of the Africanist towards the communist due to the fact that the Communist Party was predominantly dominated by Whites (what the PAC hated most) and the Liberals within the Congress (who were accused of trying to take over the leadership of the African National Congress.) The Africanists within the African National Congress especially after the defiance campaign, felt that the Congress Alliance was a betrayal to the national struggle for liberation, for it has abandoned both the principles of the 1944 basic manifesto of the C.Y.L. based of self determination and emancipation from white domination and the programme of action (1949) which emphasize the militant programme for national

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<sup>8</sup> Gibson, R., African Liberation Movements, p. 48.

<sup>9</sup> Muendane, N., Confrontation with Apartheid Colonialism, p. 7.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

freedom, and they voiced their fear of a white take-over of the African National Congress leadership.<sup>11</sup>

And this tension within the Congress Alliance was further exacerbated by Prof. Z.K. Matthew's suggestion after his return from New York, of a National Convention, a 'Congress of the People' representing all the racial groups of South Africa, irrespective of race or colour, to draw up a Freedom Charter for the Democratic South Africa of the future.<sup>12</sup> The content of the Freedom Charter was regarded by the Africanist as a 'sell out' of the African's birthright. In November 1958, the Africanists finally came out in open revolt and broke away from the African National Congress. In a letter giving notice of the Africanists decision to dissociate themselves from the African National Congress, the Freedom Charter was cited as the *casus belli* between the Charterists and the Africanists.<sup>13</sup>

The 'Freedom Charter' was the document adopted by the 'Congress of the People' convened in Kliptown in 1955. And to this day the African National Congress accepts it as its manifesto. The Africanist were vehemently against the Charter because they felt that it removed the African National Congress from the path of national liberation and the verconquest of the land. The preamble of the Charter which states that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, Black and White", make Africanists to believed that "they have been robbed of their land. By saying that the land belonged to all who lived in it, the Charter removed the "object of dispute" which had been dictated by history and originally accepted by African National Congress as the basis of its objectives.<sup>14</sup>

One of the objections standing out prominently against the 'Freedom Charter' by Africanists was that it concerned itself with the maintenance of race and nothing about the individual. The Africanist were questioning how different nations can inhabit one territory and still call themselves one nation, except producing disharmony and racial conflict. Here the Africanists placed the primacy on the individual in an Africanist non-racial society, where anyone who paid his sole allegiance to Africa would be regarded as an African and colour being regarded as irrelevant.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Benson, M., South Africa: The Struggle for a Birthright, p. 160.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Kono, R., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 184.

<sup>14</sup> Muendane, N., Confrontation with Apartheid Colonialism, p. 9.

<sup>15</sup> Snail, M.L., The Antecedens and the Emergence of B.C.M. in South Africa, p. 205.

And in the 1959 Pan Africanist Manifesto, the Africans commented also that the democratic proposals of the Freedom Charter, which at no time mentioned One Man, One Vote - which would have reduced White, Asian and Coloured vote to near significance - help these groups to use the Congress Alliance to fight for their constitutional guarantees or 'national rights'. The Manifesto charged that a portion of the black leadership of the African National Congress had been 'captured' by a section of the leadership of the white ruling-class.<sup>16</sup>

Here the Africanist were against the multi-racial approach of the AN which was enshrined in the Freedom Charter. They felt that the multi-racialism was a method of safeguarding white interest with proportional representation irrespective of population figures. And in that sense they thought it as a complete negation of democracy. The political ambition of the Africanists was the government of the African by Africans. And by African they refer to everybody who owes his loyalty to Africa, and who was prepared to accept the democratic rule of an African majority. They guarantee no minority rights, because they think in terms of individuals, not groups.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, the old liberal tradition of congress which was buried by the Youth League Manifesto and the 1949 Programme of Action was according to the Africanists, now resurrected under the principles of equalitarian multiracialism. And as for the 'Congress of the People', they felt that it excluded from participation all those who were opposed to the liberals who were now posing as communists through the Congress of Democrats.<sup>18</sup>

Their lamentation to the introduction of the Freedom Charter of Kliptown, was that the charter was never previewed at branch level, and was never even referred to the branches of African National Congress for possible amendments or additions in the normal course of democratic practice. They even maintain that Dr. Wilson Conco, who presided at the Congress admitted that he never seen the Charter before coming to the meeting, nor did Chief Luthuli, who was then President General of the African National Congress, by his own admission, know who had drafted it. To them, the Charter was a document manipulated by the white liberals to safeguard the interest of white minority in South Africa and to promote the capitalist principles which were in contrast to the socialist view of them.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Gibson, R., African Liberation Movements, p. 52.

<sup>17</sup> Snail, M.L., The Antecedens and the Emergency B.C.M. in South Africa, p. 222.

<sup>18</sup> Muendane, N., Confrontation with Apartheid Colonialism, p. 10.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

In effect the 'Freedom Charter' was an instrument used also by the South African Communist Party to pursue the objectives it had laid out in 1950 when it dissolved itself to infiltrate the African National Congress. In 1950 after it was banned by the government through the Suppression of Communism Act, the Communist Party came back under a new name, the Congress of Democrats, and its intention was to turn the African National Congress into the Worker's Party.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, the Africanists within the AN postponed the establishment of Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) until April 1959. They had not really wanted to split, nor had they been completely prepared for it. Time was needed to rally their forces scattered throughout the country (South Africa) and to begin intensive mobilization of the black masses.<sup>21</sup>

Before its formation [PAC], the Africanists tried to capture the leadership of the African National Congress. They were extremely agitated about some of the ways the AN leadership was conducting the affairs of the movement. They were also against the communist (Congress of Democrats) and the Indian Congresses. These organizations were seen as major obstacles to the strategy based on African nationalism. Their motive was to remove 'communist control' of the African National Congress and other adverse influences arising from its connection with the Congress Alliance. Initially they met under the leadership of Josiah Madqunya and Potlako Leballo in order to influence other members of the African National Congress to elect Africanist into executive positions, and when they failed to win the leadership and to effect the expulsion of the communist from African National Congress, they walk out from the African National Congress to establish the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania in 1959.<sup>22</sup>

In their letter giving notice of dissociation, dated November 2, 1958, the Africanists stated, among other reasons, that the Freedom Charter was in irreconcilable conflict with the 1949 Programme of the movement. And the letter concluded, "We are launching out openly, on our own, as the custodians of the African National Congress policy as it was formulated in 1912 and pursued up to the time of the Congress Alliance."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Snail, M.L., The Antecedens and the Emergence of the B.C.M. in South Africa, p. 212.

<sup>21</sup> Gibson, R., African Liberation Movements, p. 55.

<sup>22</sup> Kotzé, D.A. African Politics in South Africa 1964 - 1974, pp. 16 - 17.

<sup>23</sup> Motlhabi, M., Black Resistance to Apartheid, p. 75.

On April 6, 1959, the concluding declaration in the letter found expression. The Pan Africanist Congress was founded. Of the prominent members of the Youth League in the new organization were Mongaliso Robert Sobukwe, A.P. Mda, Potlako Leballo and Zephanian Mothopeng. When the Africanist section of Congress broke away from African National Congress, the main bone of contention was the role to be played by the ideology of African nationalism in the struggle for African liberation in South Africa. The major complaint of the Africanists against the African National Congress leadership concerned the role to be played by white liberals in the nationalist struggle.<sup>24</sup>

#### 1.4 IDEOLOGICAL REFINEMENTS

The Programme of Action adopted by the African National Congress in 1949 come to the peak of its implementation in 1952. And according to the PAC, this programme was distorted through the Defiance Campaign. Apparently, this campaign did not meet the requirements of the Programme of Action. And the internal struggle within the African National Congress especially between the communists and the Africanists caused serious division. The communist were accused of being threatened by the spirit of African nationalism which the Programme of Action has generated, and they saw African assertiveness as a direct threat to their vested group interest as "Whites".<sup>25</sup>

This kind of fear according to the Africanists had been manifested even much earlier. In 1928, the delegation of the Communist Party of South Africa to the Comintern opposed a resolution calling for the creation of a "Native" Republic in South Africa. The delegation protested that the "Native" sought to drive the "White" man into the sea, and that at any rate, the "Native" was not mature enough to run a republic.<sup>26</sup>

In their formative stage, it is true that the Africanists were extremely agitated and used very strong and bellicase speeches with frequent references to Whites and Indians as 'alien' and 'foreigners'. And by such angry and reckless utterances a false impression was created that PAC stood for an ideology that was both anti-white and anti-Indian. It was only after the Africanists had separated from the African National Congress that the PAC embarked upon a more positive presentation of their political philosophy in its basic document.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Karis, T., Carter, G., From Protect to Challenge, Vol. 3, p. 505.

<sup>25</sup> Muendane, N., Confrontation with Apartheid Colonialism, p. 8.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Snail, M.L. The Antecedens and the Emergence of the B.C.M. in South Africa, p. 219.



The PAC's attitude to black and white alliance was not negative and its emphasis was also not on colour or 'race' but on equality and birthright or prerogative. On the question of prerogative the PAC felt it was for the Africans, who was both indigenous to South Africa and constituted its majority, to determine the future course of the country. Those who were prepared to regard themselves as Africans, whether they were Europeans or Indians, would have an equal say - but no special privilege or monopoly. And unless Blacks and Whites could cooperate on equal terms and from an equal base, there could be no true cooperation between the two groups but only collaboration by Blacks in their continued oppression, so felt the PAC. The PAC differed from the African National Congress in three other respects; in the evaluation of the status of South Africa as an independent state; in the definition of the goal of the struggle; and in the tactics to be adopted towards that goal.<sup>28</sup>

The African National Congress was criticized for regarding the South African government as the rightful or properly elected government of the land, notwithstanding the exclusion of the majority from the electorate. And the PAC to the contrary was aiming at the complete overthrow of white domination as represented in the 1909 South Africa Act. This criticism of African National Congress by PAC according to Khopung was within the contest that most African leaders in South Africa including the white communists had made the African masses to believe that South Africa was not a colony but was an 'independent' state from the rest of Africa.<sup>29</sup>

And the main criticism of the PAC on African National Congress strategy was that the African National Congress had no political strategic vision with principled programmatic action. And the political activities by Africans in the form of strikes, protests, demonstrations and petitions, were in reality, a reaction to the government's implementation of its own policies, and this led to African National Congress in becoming "reformist" in outlook.<sup>30</sup>

On the contrary, the PAC believed to represent the view that Africans should fashion a new society through honest and relentless execution of the 1940 programme of action which rejected the concept of segregation and apartheid. And ideologically, Pan-Africanism was seen as an alternative especially in South Africa to both communism and tribalism, with vehement rejection to white racialism and black

<sup>28</sup> Motlhabi, M., Black Resistance to Apartheid, p. 78.

<sup>29</sup> Khopung, E., Apartheid: The Story of a Dispossessed People, p. 63.

<sup>30</sup> Motlhabi, M., Black Resistance to Apartheid, p. 79.

chauvinism. The PAC was to stand for racial co-existence on the basis of absolute equality and respect for human personality.<sup>31</sup>

### 1.5 THE PAC AND WHITE LIBERALS

To understand the attitude of the PAC to the role of White liberals and left-wing groups within the national liberation movement, one has to grasp the main elements of the ideological principles outlined by Robert Mangoliso Sobukwe, who became the leading ideologue and first president of the Pan-Africanist Congress.<sup>32</sup>

Robert Sobukwe was born in the Cape Province in a town called Graaff-Reinet in 1924. As a student he won a scholarship to Heroldtown where he graduated in 1947. Following the completion of his high school education he entered Fort Hare University College where he became a very active and militant member of the Fort Hare Branch of the African National Congress Youth League. Following his graduation in 1949 he taught in Standerton and in 1954 he took up a teaching post at Wits University. And it was here that Sobukwe became deeply involved with the Africanists who ultimately broke away from the African National Congress in 1958. At the time of its inauguration in April 1959 he was unanimously elected and became the first president of the PAC.<sup>33</sup>

Ideologically, Robert Sobukwe was influenced by the philosophy of African nationalism as expounded and propagated by Anton Lembede. He was also to a very large extent influenced by the ideas of Kwame Nkrumah and George Padmore. In fact the PAC as an organization was inspired in its policies by the emergence of Ghana from a colonial status. Ghana's leader (Nkrumah), had personally been involved in the Pan-Africanist movement and had also placed the independence of Ghana in a pan-Africanist contest as he declared: "The independence of Ghana is meaningful as long as there is still any square inch of the African soil under foreign domination."<sup>34</sup>

Robert Sobukwe's ideas on Pan-Africanism and Communism correspond very closely to the ideological position held by Padmore, and his attitude to the role of white liberals in African organizations was expressed very early in his political development. Cooperation with white liberals and sympathisers was unacceptable,

<sup>31</sup> Padmore, B., Pan-Africanism or Communism, p. 379.

<sup>32</sup> E. Lefuo Collection, Interview with Dr. Motsoko Pheko on 22 August 1996.

<sup>33</sup> Kono, R., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 223.

<sup>34</sup> Muendane, N., Confrontation with Apartheid Colonialism, p. 13.

here the liberals were accused of breaking the African unity every time Africans shown signs of uniting against oppression.<sup>35</sup>

And on the question of multiracialism Robert Sobukwe explained that the Africanists took the view that there is only one race to which all belong and that is the human race, and they therefore rejected both racialism and multiracialism.<sup>36</sup> But on one major question the Africanists were quite adamant that African liberation could only be achieved by Africans on the basis of the ideology of African nationalism, which holds out the only hope for the achievement of freedom and genuine democracy. More specifically the exclusion of white liberals from the nationalists movement for liberation was a pre-requisite for the achievement of African unity without which there can be no progress on the liberation front.<sup>37</sup>

Robert Sobukwe accused the white liberals in nationalist movement for trying to dictate the course of the national struggle for liberation, because whenever Europeans [liberals] co-operate with African movements, they keep on demanding checks and counter-checks, guarantees, with the result that they stultify and retard the movement of the Africans and consciously and unconsciously protecting their sectional interests. This was a dialectical situation, as one's material conditions was to determine one's level of consciousness.<sup>38</sup>

Refusal to cooperate with Europeans according to Sobukwe was not based on black racism or anti-white feelings. He admitted that not every white man is necessarily an oppressor or wields the whip that hurts the backs of the subjugated Africans, but every white man, by virtue of his superordinate position in the system, contribute his share to the oppression. In this context, because of the privileges accorded to them by legislation and because of their continued maintenance of an oppressive government, whites (liberals) have defined themselves as part of the problem and not as part of the solution.<sup>39</sup>

The left was no exception to the rejection of white participation in black liberation organizations. The attitude of the Africanists to the national liberation struggle was closely related to their uncompromising opposition to any form of cooperation with white liberals. The handful of leading black and white communists like J.B. Marks

<sup>35</sup> Kono, R., *Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 225.

<sup>36</sup> Horrell, M., *Action, Reaction and Counteraction*, pp. 28 - 29.

<sup>37</sup> Benson, M., *South Africa: The Struggle for a Birthright*, p. 243.

<sup>38</sup> Muendane, N., *Confrontation with Apartheid Colonialism*, p. 39.

<sup>39</sup> Karis, T.G. and Carter, G.M., *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. 4, p. 508.

and Moses Kotane who held important positions in the African National Congress never really became an issue with the Africanists. But white communists and their liberal counterparts became such contributed to the emergence of a serious cleavage within the ranks of the black nationalist movement.<sup>40</sup>

#### 1.6 THE STATUS CAMPAIGN - 1959

The status campaign was announced by Robert Sobukwe in his 'State of the Nation' address in August 1959. It was to involve the political, economic, and social status of the African people. It was also to be seen as part of the unfolding national-building programme of the PAC. The ultimate aim of this campaign was to generate self-awareness, self-reliance, confidence and dignity in the African mind, and it was to be implemented until the government of the Africans by the Africans for the Africans was a faint accomplished.<sup>41</sup>

And however, no sooner was the campaign announced that it proved to be a mere political rhetoric and myth and was replaced by the positive action campaign. The failure of the status campaign was due to the inability of PAC branches to implement it. Lack of vibrant leadership at gross-roots level incapacitated the campaign to be vigorously implemented.

#### 1.7 THE POSITIVE ACTION CAMPAIGN (SHARPVILLE TRAGEDY)

The positive action campaign (the Anti-Pass Campaign) was planned for March 21, 1960. This was ten days earlier than the date which had been appointed by the African National Congress earlier at its own conference for a similar campaign. On the date appointed for the positive action campaign, men and women were to leave their passes at home and go to the nearest police station to present themselves for arrest on pass-law violations.<sup>42</sup>

Those arrested would accept jail terms under the slogan, 'No bail, no defence, no fine.' The campaign began as planned. At several places around the country people walked to police stations to carry out their mission. At some places they were arrested, but at others the police refused to make arrests. In Johannesburg, PAC president, Sobukwe,

<sup>40</sup> Kono, R., Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa, p. 231.

<sup>41</sup> Motlhabi, M., Black Resistance to Apartheid, p. 92.

<sup>42</sup> Azania Newsletter, No. 5, 1986, p. 7.

and members of his executive as well as about two hundred followers presented themselves for arrest.<sup>43</sup>

And within the PAC, on the eve of the campaign there was dissatisfaction particularly by Mr J Madzunya, Chairman of the PAC's branch in Alexandra Township in Johannesburg, who refused to support the campaign on the grounds that he was opposed to both the timing and the tactics, and that the people were as yet not sufficiently well organized and there is also lack of organizational preparedness.<sup>44</sup>

And even the African National Congress was not prepared to support the campaign saying that it was a mere sensational action which might not succeed, and that they have realized that it is treacherous to the liberation movement to embark on a campaign which has not been properly prepared for and with no reasonable prospect for success.<sup>45</sup>

The African National Congress went further to accuse the PAC that their policies and method of protest catered to the worst popular instincts and eventually could lead only to undisciplined violence and more government repression if they are not properly organized. With regard to PAC's racial policy, African National Congress maintained that it was an act of irresponsibility and harmful for the Africanists to preach to the people that all Whites and Indians were enemies, when in fact many were sympathetic and made themselves useful in the struggle.<sup>46</sup>

Here, the above reading demonstrate not only the unwillingness of African National Congress to support the anti-pass campaign organized by the PAC, but the long standing ideological contradictions between these two organizations and their interpretation of African Nationalism. However, with the exception of these ideological hiatus between the PAC and African National Congress, the positive action campaign continued as planned. The most active area in the country at that stage was around the Vaal complex, in the Southern Transvaal. In other towns, for example at various police stations in the Cape Peninsula, the police refused to arrest volunteers and persuaded them to go home. Because of widespread and bitter opposition to the pass laws and the employment of intimidation by junior leaders of

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<sup>43</sup> Motlhabi, M., Black Resistance to Apartheid, p. 94.

<sup>44</sup> Lodge, T., Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 205.

<sup>45</sup> Horrell, M., Days of Crisis in South Africa, p. 8.

<sup>46</sup> Snail, M.L., The Antecedens and the Emergency of B.C.M., p. 232.

the PAC to induce people to join the demonstration, many hundreds of Africans who were not PAC members joined the demonstrations in some towns.<sup>47</sup>

In Sharpville 5 000 to 20 000 people, led by PAC's Nyokane Tsolo gathered around the main police station and offered themselves for arrest; and not all the people present knew what was going on, because others were apparently under the impression that some high official was going to address them on some important issues. But despite all these misunderstanding and confusion the crowd was not armed nor hostile. And immediately after the arrest of Tsolo and two of his colleagues, two 'unidentified' shots were heard. Shortly afterwards, a scuffle broke out at the gate which breached the wire fence encircling the station. A constable was pushed over and then the shooting began.<sup>48</sup>

The line of 30 policemen fired their semi-automatic rifles into the crowd of 5 000 people, killing 67 Africans and wounding 186, most of whom were shot in the back. And a week later, both the African National Congress and the PAC called for a day of mourning and there were widespread work stoppage, burning of passes and stay-away strikes especially in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth.<sup>49</sup>

For at least a week after the disturbances many of the shops and factories in the Vereeniging and Vanderbijlpark areas were very seriously short of African labour and number of them were forced to close temporarily. Buses were forced to cease operating on 22 March, and number of men who had gone to work begged their employers to allow them to return home, or left without permission on hearing that reprisals might be otherwise taken against them or their families.<sup>50</sup>

In reaction to the Sharpville massacre and the ongoing stay-aways and strikes, the government struck back fiercely; it declared a state of emergency, it mobilized the armed forces including the reserves, it arrested 98 Whites, 36 Coloured people, 90 Asians and 11 279 Africans under emergency regulations. It jailed another 6 800 Africans for pass offences and hundreds of Africans were also compelled to return to work by policemen. On the 28th March 1960 the government introduced the Unlawful Organizational Bill proscribing both the PAC and African National Congress. And this Act makes it illegal for any person to be a member of the former African nationalist organizations.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Horrell, M., *Days of Crisis in South Africa*, No. 5, p. 8.

<sup>48</sup> Liebenberg, I. et al., *The Long March*, p. 108.

<sup>49</sup> Thompson, L., Prior, A., *South African Politics*, p. 197.

<sup>50</sup> Horrell, M., *Days of Crisis in South Africa*, p. 11.

<sup>51</sup> Dugard, J., *Human Rights and the South African Legal Order*, p. 215.

Chief Albert Luthuli on Monday, 28 March 1960, called on the public and supporters of African National Congress to stay at home to mourn those shot on the 21 March, and that day was proclaimed a day of mourning. On that day thousands of Africans all over the country headed the call and stay at home. The state of emergency lasted from 30 March to the latter part of 1960. PAC leaders were also arrested and sentenced to imprisonment without the option of a fine. Robert Sobukwe was sentenced to five years in prison and Potloko Lebollo to two years; while Albert Luthuli was sentenced to one year or a fine of R200.<sup>52</sup>

These stern measures broke the campaign. They also deprived Africans of their last means of lawful country-wide opposition to the South African political system. And on the 8th April 1960, both African National Congress and PAC were constitutionally banned by the government ending their legal existence. Although by that time both organizations were already operating as underground organizations.<sup>53</sup>

#### 1.7.1 CONCLUSION

When the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania was formed in April 1959, it espoused a militant Africanism. And under the leadership of Robert Sobukwe it attempted to inject new urgency into campaigning and upstage the African National Congress in mass mobilization.<sup>54</sup>

The PAC made it clear and committed itself to the establishment of an Africanist state in Azania and ultimately to the formation of the "United State of Africa." But this was undoubtedly a lofty and ambitious aim. The PAC, on the basis of its aims and objectives it was committed to the establishment of a non-racial society and as far as the national struggle for liberation was concerned, it believed that the oppressed black people of South Africa had no earthly hope unless they faced up to the task of liberation themselves. Here liberal intervention in African politics was discouraged.<sup>55</sup>

However, this position of PAC towards liberals also indicated its inconsistency in implementing its policies because during the 1960 pass campaign as well as before and after it, there was considerable contact between PAC leaders and members of the multiracial liberal Party. Local liberals were seeking a mass base and though wary of

<sup>52</sup> Davenport, T.R.H., South Africa: A Modern History, p. 286.

<sup>53</sup> E. Lefuo Collection: Interview with Dr. Motsoko Pheko on 22 August 1996.

<sup>54</sup> Bernart, W., Twentieth Century South Africa, p. 159.

<sup>55</sup> Kono, R., Marxism and Black Nationalism, p. 238.

the racist undertone of Pan-Africanist ideology, they sympathized with and were attracted by the PAC's hostility to left wing influences within the Congress Alliance.<sup>56</sup> Cape Town PAC leaders, whatever their private feelings about the liberals, were glad to accept offers of assistance and allow certain liberals to play an important intermediary role between them and the authorities during the 1960 troubles in Cape Town.

And after the Sharpsville crisis and a period of political lull during which African political organizations adjusted to new conditions of illegality, a variety of military wing organizations emerges. Of these the two most important were those linked to the PAC (POQO) and African National Congress (Umkhonto we Sizwe). These were both dedicated to revolutionary transformation of society and were both prepared to employ violent measures to attain their goals. But both these organizations reflected in their divergent strategies the fundamental ideological and strategic differences which had led to the fission in African resistance politics in the 1950's.<sup>57</sup>

Immediately after the banning of PAC in the early sixties, its exiled leadership established strong links with Communist China, Ghana, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. This organization had an extremely short life-span as a legal political organization. The only major event organized by Pan Africanists was the Anti-Pass Campaign, which ended in the Sharpsville Tragedy on the 21st of March 1960. Its short period of legal existence marked an important phase in the evolution of Black nationalism in South Africa.

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<sup>56</sup> Lodge, T., Resistance and Ideology in Settler Societies, p. 180.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p. 179.



## 2. CONCLUSION

Afrikaner nationalism is the first form of nationalism that emerged in the South African soil. And several factors influences its emergence. Common languages and culture were sustained and promoted by the Afrikaner's strong feeling of togetherness in the face of common enemies - the imperialist British and the intransigent natives who were determined not to give way to the conquering Boers. The strong religious ties which were constantly encouraged through neo-Colonist approach, created a form of identity distinct from the European origin. These instinct of self-preservation and the idea of political and cultural exclusiveness, led to the emergence of a new nation - the Afrikaner nation.

The granting of self-determination, the endorsement of the Union Constitution and the failure of the British-government to intervene in 1913 when the Land Act was passed on behalf of the Blacks, strengthened the Afrikaner's bargaining powers. The political and economic power were now in their hands and this they use to further defranchise the Black majority. With both political and economic clout in their grip, the Boers could now organize freely and more easily for the attainment of their Boer republic. The coming into power by the Boers in 1948 completed a long and uncompromising struggle against British imperialism and Black nationalism - the road ahead was now open to deal with the latter.

Afrikaner nationalism can be seen further as an independent variable in relation to political change and its strategic significance can be argued in terms of the following assumptions:

- (a) The nature of present Afrikaner nationalism should be viewed within the context of Afrikaner Nationalists control of political decision-making power especially in the period from 1910 to 1948.
- (b) Political control achieved in 1948 resulted in the interlocking of Afrikaner bureaucracies and consolidated Afrikaner nationalism and Afrikaner Nationalist unity.
- (c) At present the quality of Afrikaner nationalism is charging away from political exclusivism, but political control is still entrenched in the same organizational structures. This broaden the base of political support, but does not

significantly affect the Afrikaner Nationalist monopoly of political decision-making.

- (d) And this poses the problem of the role of white electoral opposition in relation to the central problem of the devolution of political decision-making to blacks.

Another dimension of Afrikaner nationalism was that all Afrikaners (Boers) are united under one nationalism. However, history has disproves that myth.

White politics in general, and Afrikaner politics in particular in the period from 1910 up to the present twentieth century was also abounded with examples of discord. The political conflict between Smuts and Hertzog, both veterans of the war against British imperialism, Hertzog's rejection of the Broederbond and Malan's repudiation of the Ossewa Brandwag, the uneasy truce between Malan, Havenga and Strydom at time of the general election that led to an Afrikaner victory in 1948, the fact that today both Conservative Party, AWB and National Party cannot see the South African reality with the same political binoculars, all illustrate a high degree of disunity and internal conflict within Afrikaner ranks, rather than the opposite.

Thus one can say that with the achievement of Union in 1910, the Afrikaners may have shared a common consciousness based on shared experiences, but did not yet have an organized unity of purpose. And if existed a collective ethos at that time, it was not yet bureaucratized and there was no clear indication in which direction it would develop. Yet, paradoxically, the ground work for Afrikaner nationalism was laid during that period.

And with regard to the Black nationalism the Black people's armed resistance to colonial expansion was almost over by the early 1880's, when most of South Africa was controlled by two groups of colonizers" British and Boers. Of the two groups, the British proved to be dominant, and in the Anglo-Boer War of 1899 - 1908 extended their control over the economic sphere of South Africa. Thus subjected by colonialism and suffering a common oppression, the Black people of South Africa began slowly to develop a national, South African consciousness as opposed to the old tribal or ethnic consciousness - the Black nationalism. This new nationalism was promoted partly by the realization that they had to unite in order to gain strength to fight more effectively for freedom.

As a result of both process of industrialization and urbanization, Africans of different national groups come together in the new urban areas which grew up in the late nineteenth century. They lived in the same neighbourhoods and worked in the same factories, mines and other workplaces. They suffered from the oppressive measures to which all African workers, irrespective of ethnic origin, were subjected: low wages, job discrimination, pass laws, etc. Under these conditions, ethnic barriers among the people began to crumble, and a new, national consciousness began to develop among Africans of all groups.

Before 1900 it became clear to the Africans that armed resistance (Frontier Wars) to colonial domination was no longer effective, and they began to turn their attention to other non-violent and constitutional way of safeguarding their interests. The first 'modern' political organization - Imbumba yama Africa (also called the South African Aborigenes Association) was formed in 1880. And one of its main concerns was forging unity among Africans of various church organizations. It held periodic conferences to discuss matters affecting the African people, and sent petitions and deputations to present its ideas and opinions to the colonial authorities in Cape Town.

Another supra-tribal organization was the Native Educational Association, which was founded by Elijah Makiwane. It made one of the earliest protest against pass laws in 1889 and the Native Electoral Association which was led by John Tengo Jabavu, was also active in voicing its opinion on many matters of concern to Africans as well as supporting white candidates especially in the Cape who were considered friendly to African interests.

Different newspapers were also founded and they became the mouthpiece of the Africans. In 1884 John Jabavu founded the first independent African newspaper in King Williams Town called Imvo Zabantsundu. This newspaper played a key role in mobilizing African voters at election times and it was also used in opposing discriminatory and repressive legislations. Another newspaper which played an important role in raising Black nationalism was Izwi Labantu, established in East London in 1898 by Rev. Walter Rubusara, Alan Sogo and Meshack Pelem.

African people's opinions and demands were also put forward by newspapers which sprang up outside the Eastern Cape after 1900. Solomon Plaatjie, established the first Setswana English weekly, koranta yo eo Becoana, in Mafeking in 1901. Six years later he moved to Kimberley where he started a newspaper, Tsalo eo Becoana.

In 1903, John Dube established Ilango Lose Natal, with articles in both English and Zulu. All these newspapers were having one thing in common, to raise the consciousness of African people, to instil a sense of national unity through one nationalism -Black nationalism and to protest against all forms of discrimination and national oppression.

During the Anglo-Boer War, Britain promised to free the Black people of the Transvaal and Orange Free State from 'Boer slavery'. The British also claim that, after the war, the Cape franchise system would be extended north to the former White republics. But, as has already been noted, all these political posturing became unfulfilled promises and Blacks outside the Cape remained without political rights.

In the years following 1902 the main focus of Black political activity became the question of the franchise in the Transvaal, Orange River Colony and Natal. To achieve their political goals, Blacks opted for non-violent method of protest to register their dissatisfaction particularly to Britain. On numerous occasions they sent delegations, organized petitions or passed resolutions directed either to colonial authorities or to the British crown calling for franchise rights for Blacks in the former Boer republics and Natal. In addition they protested against the pass laws, excessive taxation, segregation on trains and other discriminatory regulations.

And with the conclusion of the Union Act of South Africa, only white males became eligible to vote, except in the Cape where black men with the necessary property qualifications were allowed to vote, but only for white candidates. Thus, political power was transferred by Britain into the hands of the Whites.

Although this has been often represented as an act of decolonization, of the blacks it was just a change in the form of colonial domination. The transfer of power to the whites merely gave rise to a new and special type of colonialism - internal colonialism, in which political power was now held by the local whites rather than Britain.

This led to a strong sense of black solidarity and unity through a single form of national consciousness - Black nationalism. Soon after the Union of South Africa, different legislations were passed to regulate the lives of blacks across the whole of South Africa. The Native Labour Regulations Act (1911) made it illegal for black workers in mines and industry to strike, the Mines and Works Act (1911) reserved certain skilled jobs for white workers only (colour bar act); Native Land Act (1913)

prescribed black to their specific areas separate from white residential areas. This Act later became the corner-stone of the Apartheid philosophy.

Confronted with this type of political order after 1910, many Blacks realized that they needed to establish a supra-tribal organization which must take the lead in uniting the Black people for effective struggle against white domination. And through the initiatives of Pixley ka Isaka Seme, the South African Native National Congress (S.A.N.N.C.) was formed in Community hall in Bloemfontein (1912).

With lack of political vision and state's repressive measures, the S.A.N.N.C. became just a moribund structure. And in 1912 at Bloemfontein again, the South African National Congress was founded. In 1923, the name was shortened to become the African National Congress (African National Congress). The African National Congress carried the designation 'national' not because it was committed to clearly defined nationalistic objectives such as self-determination or black majority rule but rather it was originally established and inaugurated as a supra-tribal movement committed to the achievement of equal opportunities within South Africa.

The early Congress leaders were mainly professional men, occupying a privileged social position compared to the masses of Black people. The Black working class was also still fairly small and unorganized, and did not therefore exercise a strong influence over African National Congress policies. At the same time it became increasingly obvious that the monopoly of power given to the Whites by the South African Act made it impossible for blacks to satisfy their political aspirations within the confines of the law. The result was the development of an assertive nationalism, contrary to the reformist nationalism of African National Congress's early days - Black Nationalism.

Another critical issue within the black's politics was the absence, in South Africa, of a clearly articulated Marxist-Leninist ideology in movements of 'national liberation' such as the African National Congress, the Pan-Africanist Congress and the Black Consciousness Movement. The leaders of these movements often talk about the need for national unity, proper organizational structures and collective programmes of action. The emphasis was on unity, structures and programme of action and rarely on the need to evolve a dynamic political ideology - militant nationalism in a way to challenge the South African political order.

When questions of ideology arise, they were generally approached from the perspective of the rhetoric of action and not as issue of correct theory. Marxist-Leninism as an ideology of liberation failed to make a significant appeal to the national political movements in South Africa, even despite desperate efforts by the South African Communist Party to infiltrate or form an alliance with African National Congress. And in trying to mobilize and consolidate their political support, the black nationalist movements in South Africa were unable to evolve a collective political ideology that can effectively take care of both national oppression and economic suppression of black people. Black nationalism in South Africa became a loose political tool which was interpreted and implemented differently by different black national movements.

APPENDIX I: FREEDOM CHARTER**Preamble**

We, the people of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know:

That South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people;

That our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty, and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality;

That our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities;

That only a democratic state, based on the will of our people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief;

And therefore, we, the people of South Africa, black and white, together - equals, countrymen and brothers - adopt this FREEDOM CHARTER. And we pledge ourselves to strive together, sparing nothing of our strength and courage, until the democratic changes here set out have been won.

**The people shall govern**

Every man and woman shall have the right to vote for and stand as a candidate for all bodies which make laws.

All the people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country.

The rights of the people shall be the same regardless of race, colour or sex.

All bodies of minority rule, advisory boards, councils and authorities shall be replaced by democratic organs of self-government.

**All national groups shall have equal rights**

There shall be equal status in the bodies of state, in the courts and in the schools for all national groups and races;

All national groups shall be protected by law against insults to their race and national pride;

All people shall have equal rights to use their own language and to develop their own folk culture and customs;

All apartheid laws and practice shall be set aside.

**The people shall share in the country's wealth**

The national wealth of our country, the heritage of all South Africans, shall be restored to the people;

The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole;

All other industries and trade shall be controlled to assist the well-being of the people;

All people shall have equal rights to trade where they choose, to manufacture and to enter all trades, crafts and professions.

**The land shall be shared amongst those who work it**

Restriction of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land re-divided amongst those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger;

The state shall help the peasants with implements, seed, tractors and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers;

Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land;

All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose;

People shall not be robbed of their cattle; forced labour and farm prisons shall be abolished.



**All people shall be equal before the law**

No one shall be imprisoned, deported or restricted without a fair trial;

No one shall be condemned by the order of any Government official;

The courts shall be representative of all the people;

Imprisonment shall be only for serious crimes against the people, and shall aim at re-education, not vengeance;

The police force and army shall be open to all on an equal basis and shall be the helpers and protectors of the people;

All laws which discriminate on grounds of race, colour or belief shall be repealed.

The preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime.

**All shall enjoy equal human rights**

The law shall guarantee to all their right to speak, to organize, to meet together, to publish, to preach, to worship and to educate their children;

The privacy of the house from police raids shall be protected by law;

All shall be free to travel without restriction from countryside to town, from province to province, and from South Africa abroad;

Pass laws, permits and all other laws restricting these freedoms shall be abolished.

**There shall be work and security**

All who work shall be free to form trade unions, to elect their officers and to make wage agreements with their employers;

The state shall recognise the right and duty of all to work, and to draw full unemployment benefits;

Men and women of all races shall receive equal pay for equal work;

There shall be a forty-hour working week, a national minimum wage, paid annual leave, and sick leave for all workers, and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers;

Miners, domestic workers, farm workers and civil servants shall have the same rights as all others who work;

Child labour, compound labour, the tot system and contract labour shall be abolished.

**The doors of learning and of culture shall be opened**

The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life;

All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contacts with other lands;

The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace;

Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children;

Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit;

Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a mass state education plan;

Teachers shall have all the rights of other citizens;

The colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished.

**There shall be houses, security and comfort**

All people shall have the right to live where they choose, to be decently housed, and to bring up their families in comfort and security;

Unused housing space to be available to the people;

Rent and prices shall be lowered, food plentiful and no one shall go hungry;

A preventive health scheme shall be run by the state;

Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers of young children;

Slums shall be demolished and new suburbs built where all have transport, roads, lighting, playing fields, creches and social centres;

The aged, the orphans, the disabled and the sick shall be cared for by the state;

Rest, leisure and recreation shall be the right of all;

Fenced locations and ghetto shall be abolished, and laws which break up families shall be repealed.

**There shall be peace and friendship**

South Africa shall be a fully independent state, which respects the rights and sovereignty of all nations;

South Africa shall strive to maintain world peace and the settlement of all international disputes by negotiation - not war;

Peace and friendship amongst all our people shall be secured by upholding the equal rights, opportunities and status of all;

The people of the protectorates - Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland - shall be free to decide for themselves their own future;

The right of all the peoples of Africa to independence and self-government shall be recognised, and shall be the basis of close co-operation.

*Let all who love their people and their country now say, as we say here: "These freedoms we will fight for, side by side, throughout our lives, until we have won our liberty."<sup>58</sup>*

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<sup>58</sup> Steytler, N., The Freedom Charter and Beyond, pp. 269 - 272.

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