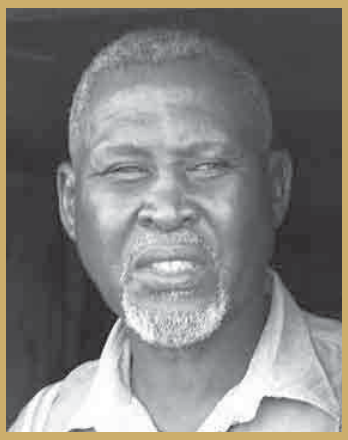

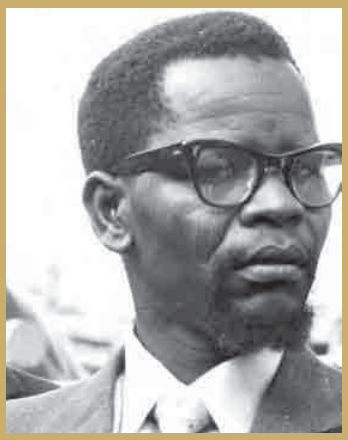

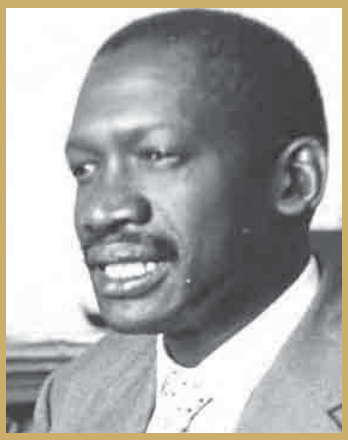

FOOTPRINTS
IN THE SANDS OF TIME

CELEBRATING EVENTS AND HEROES
OF THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM
AND DEMOCRACY IN SOUTH AFRICA

education
Department:
Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

FOOTPRINTS
IN THE SANDS OF TIME

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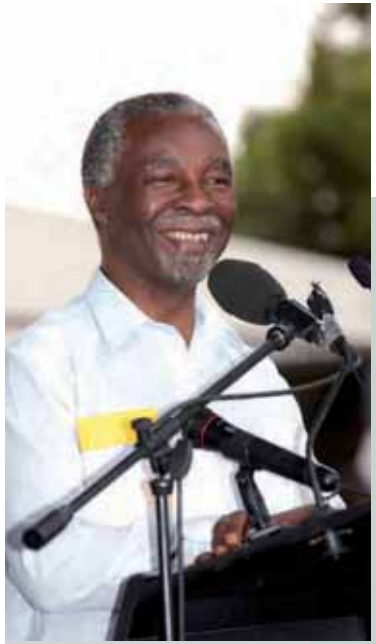


Courtesy Government Communication and Information System (GCIS)

President Thabo Mbeki

LABOUR OF LOVE

Unveiling the Nkosi Albert Luthuli Legacy Project in August 2004, President Thabo Mbeki reminded us that:

"... as part of the efforts to liberate ourselves from apartheid and colonialism, both physically and mentally, we have to engage in the process of telling the truth about the history of our country, so that all of our people, armed with this truth, can confidently face the challenges of this day and the next.

"This labour of love, of telling the true story of South Africa and Africa, has to be intensified on all fronts, so that as Africans we are able to write, present and interpret our history, our conditions and life circumstances, according to our knowledge and experience.

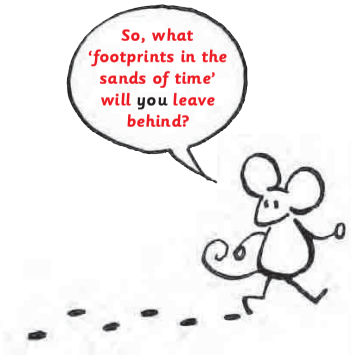
"It is a challenge that confronts all Africans everywhere - on our continent and in the Diaspora - to define ourselves, not in the image of others, or according to the dictates and fancies of people other than ourselves ..."

sub·lime *adj*
1. so awe-inspiringly beautiful as to seem almost heavenly
2. of the highest moral or spiritual value
3. excellent or particularly impressive (informal)
4. complete or utter

President Mbeki goes on to quote from a favourite poem of Nkosi Albert Luthuli; *A Psalm of Life*, by Henry Longfellow:

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.



"I am confident that through our combined efforts, together we can make the lives of our people sublime and magnificent, uplifting particularly those who occupy the lowest rung in our social order. In doing so, and as the poet said, we will emulate A.J. Luthuli in leaving behind us 'footprints on the sands of time'."

CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

This book was written in 2007, a year that celebrated and commemorated many anniversaries. Fifty years ago, under the leadership of Dr Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana became the first sub-Saharan African country to reclaim her independence from colonial rulers. Since then, all other African countries have fought to take back their freedom.

For many decades, Africa was the victim of colonialism. The infamous Berlin Conference of 1884 had divided Africa between European powers. What made this occupation possible was that Africa had been brought to its knees by almost 400 years of slavery. Africa's male population had been reduced by 20%, and its morale had been destroyed. You can read about the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the British slave trade in chapter one: **TWO AFRICAS: THE ONE BEFORE AND THE ONE AFTER THE HOLOCAUST**.

Not all anniversaries are celebrations. Some are better thought of as commemorations. Ninety years ago, about 300 black South Africans died with the sinking of the SS Mendi during the First World War. Their moving story is told in chapter two: **WE DIE LIKE BROTHERS ... WE ARE THE SONS OF AFRICA**.

We then turn our attention to the liberation struggle of the mid 20th century, in which many brave South Africans, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of passive resistance, marched together in peaceful demonstrations against racial discrimination. There is a long history of cooperation between Indian and black South Africans. It began 90 years ago with the Three Doctors' Pact, which you can read about in chapter three: **WE SHALL RESIST**.

While the history of liberation in South Africa relied on the mobilisation of thousands, it also relied on the leadership of a few. The year 2007 marks the 50th anniversary of the death of Nkosi Albert Luthuli. Chapter four uses the title of Luthuli's famous book, **LET MY PEOPLE GO**.

The year 2007 is also the 90th anniversary of the birth of Oliver Reginald Tambo. In chapter five: **CHAMPION OF FREEDOM**, we celebrate the way he led the ANC in exile, and inspired the international anti-apartheid movement for 30 long and difficult years.

One hero we all need to be reminded of is Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe. The title of chapter six: **OF THE AFRICAN, BY THE AFRICANS, FOR AFRICANS**, describes the kind of Africanist - inspired government he wanted to see. The year 2008 is the 29th anniversary of the death of this great thinker, and the first leader of the Pan Africanist Congress.

Our celebrations would not be complete without remembering the courageous young leader, Steve Biko, who was murdered by police 30 years ago. His philosophy of Black Consciousness, which called black people to liberate themselves from self-oppression, has inspired people all over the world. Explore these ideas in chapter seven: **BLACK MAN, YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN**.

Inspired by their leaders, South Africans from all cultural and economic backgrounds have marched in protest against apartheid. One of the most courageous marches of all time happened 50 years ago. It was the three-month Alexandra Bus Boycott, in which marchers cried, **ASIKWELWA! WE WILL NOT RIDE!**

Peaceful protests very quickly invited violence from the apartheid government, and many South Africans embraced an armed struggle in response. The violence could have gone on for many years, but 20 years ago, some far-thinking black and white South Africans agreed to talk to each other about negotiations for a peaceful change. A group of white Afrikaners and the leaders of the ANC, met in Dakar, Senegal, and began a new **DAWN OF NEGOTIATION**.

This new dawn inspires us to look to the future, as we did five years ago when we hosted the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and began to explore how we are all **CREATING OUR FUTURE TODAY**.

We hope these commemorations inspire you to cherish your freedom. We invite you to learn about the history of your freedom in the **LEARNING ACTIVITIES** for each chapter found on page 85 of this book.

Little Libby - The Adventures of Liberation Chabalala, New Age, 2 April, 1959. Courtesy Wits Africana Library

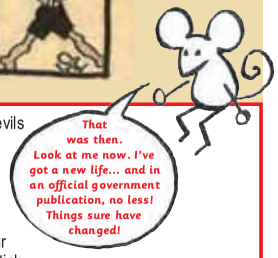
Alex la Guma (1925-1985)

© Mayibuye Centre, UWC

Alex la Guma's *Little Libby*

Born in District Six, best known for his novels and numerous short stories, Alex la Guma was a leading figure in the anti-apartheid struggle during the 1950s and 1960s. Arrested, detained without trial, banned, shot at, placed under house arrest, along with 155 others charged with treason and eventually acquitted, he and his family left SA in 1966. In exile he continued to write and work for the liberation of South Africa. He was the ANC's Chief Representative for the region when he died in Cuba.

His comic strip *Little Libby: The Adventures of Liberation Chabalala* appeared in *New Age* between March and November 1959. It tells the story of a small impish character, Little Libby, whose adventures take him from the countryside to the city, and bring him into contact with some of the worst aspects of apartheid such as forced labour, pass laws and forced removals, and with those who opposed these evils through strikes and stay at homes.



Despite such serious subject matter, La Guma injects considerable humour into the story through slapstick, caricature, mock drama and the presence of a small mouse that comments on events or encourages readers to become politically active. The *mouse* participates in the action and intervenes in events that occur in the main panels to challenge the established order and empower the powerless.

In the best tradition of progressive popular culture Little Libby educates, entertains, and encourages us to fight for justice.

By: Roger Field, lecturer and PhD candidate, University of the Western Cape

200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ABOLITION OF THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

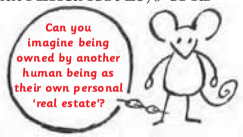
TWO AFRICAS: THE ONE BEFORE AND THE ONE AFTER THE HOLOCAUST

"Vast populations were uprooted and displaced, whole generations disappeared, European diseases descended like a plague, decimating both cattle and people, cities and towns were abandoned, the threads of cultural and historical continuity were so savagely torn asunder that henceforth one would have to think of two Africas: the one before and the one after the holocaust." — Van Sertima, in *African Renaissance* (1999)

Illustration of slaves being sold by auction to the highest bidder.

Cape Town Archives Repository

All throughout history slaves have been captured in wars, kidnapped and made to serve against their will, traded as punishment for a crime, or even sold by their parents as a way of surviving harsh conditions. But slavery had never existed on such a global scale and with such deliberate planning until the Transatlantic Slave Trade. It is estimated that Africa lost 20% of its population to slavery.



It all began in the 1500s when Europeans developed an appetite for the sugar, and later the tobacco and cotton, that they had discovered in the Americas, known then as the 'New World'. These labour-intensive crops needed cheap farm labourers, and the Europeans turned to Africa. At first, some African leaders sold their defeated enemies and criminals as slaves. But these weren't enough for the European demand.

In 1552, the King of the Kongo complained to the King of Portugal: *"… the demand is so great that we cannot count its size, since Portuguese traders are every day taking our people ... [local] thieves and men of evil conscience seize them, wishing to have things and goods of your kingdom. They seize them and sell them, and Sire, so great is the corruption and licentiousness that our country is being completely depopulated."* – Basil Davidson, *The Story of Africa* (1984)

A combination of the political strife within Africa, the racism of Europeans, prejudice against non-Christians, and the increasing demand for labour, fuelled the trade in slaves from Africa.

In 1705, the Virginian General Assembly, in North America, declared that, *"all servants imported and brought into the country … who were not Christians in their native country shall be accounted to be slaves. All Negro, mulatto and Indian slaves within this dominion shall be held to be real estate."*

Illustration of slaves being marched by force and in chains across the African landscape.

Cape Town Archives Repository

1444 – The first public sale of African slaves, from northern Mauritania, in Portugal.
1482 – The Portuguese start building a permanent slave post at Elmina on the Gold Coast (now Ghana).
1510 – Slaves arrive in the Spanish colonies of South America.
1532 – The first direct shipment of slaves from Africa to the Americas.
1652 – The Dutch establish a colony at the Cape of Good Hope and start importing slaves.
1780s – The Transatlantic Slave Trade reaches the peak of its activity.
1787 – The Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade is formed in Britain.
1807 – Britain passes the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act.
1811 – Spain abolishes slavery. Its colony Cuba resists the ban.
1834 – Britain passes the Abolition of Slavery Act, banning all forms of slavery throughout its colonies.
1865 – The 13th Amendment abolishes slavery in the United States of America.
1869 – Portugal abolishes slavery in all its colonies.
1886 – Slavery is abolished in Cuba.
1888 – Slavery is abolished in Brazil.
1926 – The League of Nations adopts the Slavery Convention abolishing slavery.
1948 – The UN general assembly adopts the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including an article stating, "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms."

Courtesy Wilberforce House Museum, Hull Museums

Background image: Detail from a drawing of the slave ship "Brookes", showing how slaves were to be packed for transporting. Only a 40cm width was allowed for each enslaved person. Over 7 000 posters with this image were distributed during the Anti-Slavery Campaign.

Africa fuels western economies

"According to leading experts, between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, over 10 million Africans were forcefully deported to the Americas, thereby depleting the African continent of its most precious human resources and stifling African development, while fuelling the economies of countries in Europe and the Americas."

- Koïchiro Matsuura
Director-General of UNESCO

The Middle Passage

The journey of a slave from Africa to the Americas - called the Middle Passage - was dehumanising and oppressive. After slaves were captured or received in trade, they would be marched in chains across the landscape to forts established by different European nations along the coast. Here they would wait until they were crammed into ships for long and dangerous sea journeys to the New World.

The slaves were treated like cargo and recorded as such in the accounting books of the slave traders. Kept below deck - men, women and boys separate - they were hand-cuffed and their ankles bolted to the floor with iron leg rings. They had so little space, they could only lie on their sides. The voyage, often in rough seas, took at least two months. Many died - as much as 20% - as a result of malnutrition, dysentery, small pox and other diseases. Some even committed suicide.

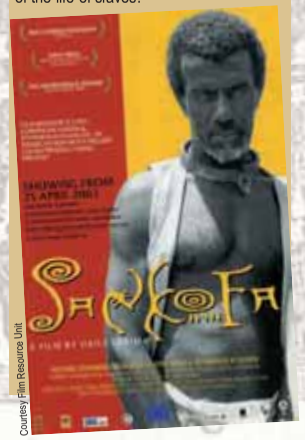
Resistance and Rebellion

Africans resisted their enslavement at every opportunity. On board ship they were, *"ever upon the watch to take advantage of the least negligence of their oppressors"* (Alexander Falconbridge, slave ship's surgeon). Over 250 shipboard revolts were reported. These usually resulted in slave deaths. The slave traders treated these deaths as *"loss of cargo"* and made insurance claims.

African slaves organised hundreds of uprisings and rebellions. At an individual level, the greatest act of rebellion was to escape. This took considerable bravery. Recapture could lead to cruel torture and death.

Sankofa (1993)

Haile Gerima's film begins with a fashion shoot at a slave fort in Ghana. An American female model, Mona, is reprimanded by the divine drummer, Sankofa, for selling herself and disrespecting this sacred site. Sankofa's drumming returns African souls, taken during the slave trade, to Africa. It also sends Mona back in time to experience what it was like to be shipped to America as a slave and sold to work on a sugar plantation. The horrors she witnesses and suffers herself teaches her about her ancestors. How can this knowledge help her to find herself back in her own time? The film is a shockingly realistic portrayal of the life of slaves.



Courtesy Film Resource Unit

Detail of a painting by Johann Moritz Rugendas, 1835, showing slaves performing the Capoeira dance. Courtesy John Carter Brown Library.

In Brazil, escaped slaves developed a unique dance-like martial art known as Capoeira - possibly based on dances from Angola. Slaves that were recaptured taught Capoeira to the plantation slaves. What the colonists saw as a strange Sunday ritual, with much music and clapping, was actually training for revolt. Eleven revolts eventually led to the abolition of slavery in Brazil in 1888.

In 1791, French slaves in Haiti began a war that lasted 13 years and ended in their victory and the independence of Haiti in 1804.

Over time, slavery weakened Africa, making colonisation possible. In 1884, the Berlin Conference divided Africa between England, France, Germany, Portugal and Spain. Soon, traders and missionaries led the occupation.

SLAVERY AT THE CAPE

The first slaves brought to the Cape arrived just two years after Jan van Riebeeck founded a refreshment station for Dutch ships. He also started a school for slaves. This sounds like the decent thing to do, but as we read his journal, we learn about his true motives and strange methods.

Courtesy StoryWorks, Cape Town.

Artist, Alastair Findlay's interpretation of slaves arriving at the Cape of Good Hope on a ship of the Dutch East India Company in the 1750s.

17 April 1658: *"… The aim of the school should be to teach our slaves Dutch and the Christian religion. This will help them to understand and obey our orders …"*

19 April 1658: *"To encourage slaves to attend school and learn their Christian prayers, it has been decided that after school everyone is to receive a glass of brandy and two inches of tobacco."* – Thom. *Journal of Jan van Riebeek* (1952), cited in Potenza & Favis, *Hands on History* (1994)

Below: Slave sale notice.

The Cape from the mid-1600s to the early 1800s is referred to as a "slave society" because every aspect of life relied on slaves of one kind or another. By the time slavery was abolished, more than 60 000 slaves had been brought to the Cape.

Verkooping van Prys Slaaven.
Op heden den 3de October,
Zullen in het openbaar,
Ter huise van F. Kannemeyer,
Worden verkogt.
Zeventig schoone slaaven en slaavinnen, aangekoomen met de Fransche vaartuigen la Raisonable en la Glaucus, prys verklaard in het Vice Admiraliteits Hof.

Courtesy National Library of South Africa

Otto Mentzel, a German who lived at the Cape in the 1730s, described the Cape slaves as follows:

"It is no easy matter to keep the slaves under proper order and control. The condition of slavery has soured their tempers. Most slaves are a sulky, savage and disagreeable crowd. Firmness as well as tact is required to keep them subdued. The slaves belonging to the Company are, undoubtedly, the most rascally of all. They also receive the worse treatment. Their food is scanty and coarse; their weekly dole of tobacco is often kept back. It would be dangerous to give them the slightest latitude; a tight hold must always be kept on the reins; the taskmaster's lash is the main stimulus for getting any work out of them. Those savages who are owned privately are, with few exceptions, much better treated and much more amenable to good treatment." – Otto Mentzel., *Description of the Cape* (1785)

The Cape came under British control in 1806. On 27 October 1808, two slaves, Louis of Mauritius and Abraham van der Caab, were told by Irish sailors that Britain had ended the slave trade. This prompted the two slaves to lead a group of about 300 other slaves on a peaceful march from Koeberg to the Cape to demand their freedom. They were attacked by government troops at Salt River. This was the first organised act of slave resistance at the Cape. Historian Nigel Worden has suggested that 27 October ,1808 is a more appropriate date for South Africa to commemorate than the 1807 date of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Courtesy National Library of South Africa

Auwal Mosque in Dorp Street, the first mosque in the Cape.

Muslims at the Cape

Many of the exiles and prisoners brought to the Cape were Muslim. Some were released after serving their sentences and they began to form a Muslim community of 'free-blacks'. One such prisoner was Imam Sayeed Alawie of Mocha, known as Tuan Sayeed. After 11 years on Robben Island, he became the first Muslim religious leader, or imam, in the Cape.

Another prisoner, Imam Abdullah ibn Qadi Abdus Salaam, spent much of his time on Robben Island writing the 600 page *Mar'rifah al-Islam wa al-Imam* (The Manifestation of Islam and Faith), which included an ideal system of social relations in which slaves had rights and could even become imams. In 1792, a year after his release from Robben Island, he started the first madrassah (Muslim school) at 39 Dorp Street. From 1793 – 1807 it enrolled 372 slaves and free black students.

From 1794, Muslims also met in a Dorp Street warehouse. It was transformed into the Auwal Mosque, the first Mosque in the Cape, in 1798. The madrassah and mosque were places where slaves were treated as equals by free people and could interact with free members of the social underclass. Here they developed a greater sense of collective identity with other slaves. A third of Cape Town's population was Muslim by 1842.

Human Rights Campaigns Today: Single Vision

Amnesty International (AI) is a worldwide movement of people who campaign for internationally recognised human rights. AI has a varied network of more than 2.2 million members worldwide. Although they come from many different backgrounds and have widely different political and religious beliefs, they are united by their determination to work for a world where everyone enjoys human rights.

Human Rights Campaigns Today: Legal Precedent

When parliament passes a law, it cannot imagine all the possible case scenarios. Sometimes the law needs to be adapted. In South Africa, the higher courts are allowed to continue developing the law by setting new legal precedents that lower courts then have to follow. For example: A Hindu student was told that wearing a nose stud to school was against the school's code of conduct - which the school had a legal right to impose. The student said that the nose stud was an expression of her cultural practices and religious beliefs. She took the case to the Durban Magistrate's Equality Court. That court supported the school's decision. The student then took the case to the Natal High Court. In 2006, the High Court set a legal precedent stating that the previous court had disregarded the student's religious and cultural rights, and that the prohibition of nose studs for Hindu students was discriminatory and did not value cultural diversity in South Africa.

THE ANTI-SLAVERY CAMPAIGN IN BRITAIN ...

The Abolition of the Slave Trade Act was passed in Britain on March 25, 1807. This made it illegal to buy, sell or transport slaves throughout the British Empire. However, it would be a further 27 years - until 1834 - before the *ownership* of slaves would become illegal in the British Empire. The successful passage of these Acts of Parliament was partly the result of an intense and well organised anti-slavery campaign over many years.

Courtesy National Maritime Museum, London.

Medals commemorating the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act were popular in Britain in the early 1800s.

This campaign can be seen as the prototype for all successful human rights campaigns that followed it. The anti-slavery campaign pioneered the use of many of the advocacy (promotional) tools that human rights movements use today.

An organisation with members committed to a single vision: On 22 May, 1787, a group of abolitionists - people committed to the abolition of slavery - organised themselves into the Society for the Effective Abolition of the Slave Trade. This functioned rather like organisations that fight for human rights today. This society had a vision with a single focus. It also had a membership, a newsletter and a fundraising programme.

Courtesy Royal Mail.

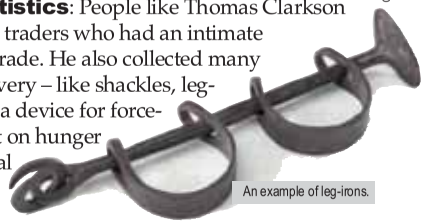
While most of the members were from the religious group known as the Quakers, they chose two Anglicans, Granville Sharp and Thomas Clarkson, to represent them because Britain was primarily an Anglican country.

Examples of stamps produced by the Royal Mail in Britain to commemorate the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act.

The use of the courts to set legal precedents: The abolitionists started fighting cases that prevented runaway slaves from being forced back into slavery. A successful case could set a precedent – in other words, it could change the patterns of all legal judgments from that point on.

To this day, campaigners for all sorts of causes try to use the courts as a way of changing the law, which, in turn, contributes to changing the values of society.

Investigative research that presents accurate information and statistics: People like Thomas Clarkson interviewed doctors and traders who had an intimate knowledge of the slave trade. He also collected many of the instruments of slavery – like shackles, leg-irons, thumbscrews and a device for force-feeding slaves who went on hunger strike, to provide physical



Courtesy National Maritime Museum, London.

An example of leg-irons.

... A HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN MODEL

evidence of abuse and confirm the testimonies he had recorded. He also collected statistics, like the fact that 20% of slave ship crews died from disease or ill treatment – showing that slavery was bad for sailors as well as for slaves.

In this way he could accurately represent a picture of slavery that ordinary people never got to see. He represented his research in an intelligent and unemotional way, relying on facts, statistics and physical evidence. This approach has become the standard for the research used in human rights reports and investigative journalism today.

Publishing personal testimonies: The abolitionists knew how to get their information 'out there'. The Quakers had access to a printing press and national networks that they could use to distribute their information. They published widely. Many of these publications were vivid personal testimonies and some, like the life story of Equiano, became best-sellers.

Courtesy National Maritime Museum, London.

Frontispiece of Olaudah Equiano.

"At last we came in sight of the island of Barbadoes, at which the whites on board gave a great shout, and made many signs of joy to us. We did not know what to think of this ... Many merchants and planters now came on board, though it was in the evening. They put us in separate parcels, and examined us attentively. They also made us jump, and pointed to the land, signifying we were to go there. We thought by this we should be eaten by these ugly men, as they appeared to us; and, when soon after we were all put down under the deck again, there was much dread and trembling among us, and nothing but bitter cries to be heard all the night from these apprehensions ...

[The next morning] We were conducted immediately to the merchant's yard, where we were all pent up together like so many sheep in a fold, without regard to sex or age ... We were not many days in the merchant's custody before we were sold after their usual manner, which is this: On a signal given (as the beat of a drum), the buyers rush at once into the yard where the slaves are confined, and make choice of that parcel they like best. The noise and clamour with which this is attended, and the eagerness visible in the countenances of the buyers, serve not a little to increase the apprehensions of the terrified Africans, who may well be supposed to consider them as the ministers of that destruction to which they think themselves devoted. In this manner, without scruple, are relations and friends separated, most of them never to see each other again.

- Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or* Gustavus Vassa, *The African,* written by himself (1789)

Much of the effective media of human rights groups today relies on publications of personal testimonies with which people can easily identify. (See box on the right.)

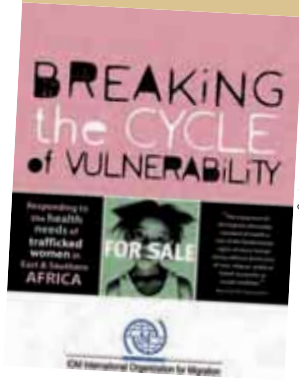
Human Rights Campaigns Today: Information and Statistics

CAST (Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking), the only American organisation dedicated solely to stopping human trafficking, uses statistics to try to convince Americans to fight slavery. For example, according to their research, every 10 minutes, a woman or child is trafficked into the United States for forced labour. In 1999, the CIA estimated that 45,000 women and children are trafficked to the United States annually. Currently, there is not one shelter for such persons in the United States. Human trafficking has become a $9 billion a year global industry and is increasingly an activity of organised crime. (www.castla.org/facts)

Human Rights Campaigns Today: Personal Testimonies

"I was recruited ... to be a domestic servant in Saudi Arabia ... I saw it as an opportunity to improve my situation and that of my mother ... I was surprised that when we were being selected to go to our employers, the "pretty" girls were told to stand to one side while the less attractive ones were put in another group. Unfortunately for me, I was chosen as a "pretty" one. I ended up in Saudi Arabia, working for a bachelor. He repeatedly raped me and I fell pregnant ... I gave birth to my son in jail and they [the police] took him away from me. I went mad and refused to eat and shouted and shouted until they brought him to me twice a week."

Testimony of a young Ethiopian woman from *Breaking the Cycle of Vulnerability*, International Organisation for Migration (2006)



Courtesy International Organisation for Migration.

Human Rights Campaigns Today: Popular Media

© PictureNet Africa

Former President Nelson Mandela kisses US singer, Beyoncé Knowles, at the Nelson Mandela AIDS Benefit Concert in Cape Town, November 29, 2003.

Human Rights Campaigns Today: Branding & Merchandising

A logo can be more than a fashion statement. 46664, Nelson Mandela's prison number, is used at global music events, on T-shirts, etc. to raise AIDS awareness.

Human Rights Campaigns Today: Consumer Boycotts

Boycotts are often used to get companies to change their behaviour. Many Americans are boycotting the Wal-Mart chain stores because of their use of sweatshop labourers who work 18-hour days, below the minimum wage, with inadequate health care and no right to form a workers union.

Popular media: While printing was a powerful tool, at that time only half of the British population was literate. The abolitionists used all the media available to them - posters, cartoons, poems, songs - and sought the support of the celebrities of the day. Many famous people supported the Anti-Slavery Campaign, including artists like William Turner and William Blake, and poets like William Cowper, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Hannah More and William Wordsworth.

Cease, ye British Sons of murder!
Cease from forging Afric's Chain;
Mock your Saviour's name no further,
Cease your savage lust of gain.

Ye that boast "Ye rule the waves,"Bid no Slave Ship soil the sea, Ye that "never will be slaves," Bid poor Afric's land be free.

Hannah More, *The Sorrows of Yamba* (1797)

Branding and merchandising: Like many modern day human rights movements, the Quaker-led Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade had a logo. In 1788, the society approved a design "expressive of an African in Chains in a Supplicating Posture".

The design was used to brand society publications and banners. Supporters of the Anti-Slavery Campaign used the design on chinaware, snuffboxes, cufflinks, bracelets, hat pins and other fashion accessories. People used these items to show their support for the Anti-Slavery Campaign.

"The design was symbolic both artistically and politically. In addition to evoking classical art, the figure's nudity signified a state of nobility and freedom, yet he was bound by chains. Black figures, usually depicted as servants or supplicants, typically knelt in the art of the period, at a time when members of the upper classes did not kneel when praying; this particular image combined the European theme of conversion from heathenism and the idea of emancipation into a posture of gratitude." - PBS, Africans in America.

Consumer boycotts: One of the most powerful ways to change a system is through boycott - "*the act of abstaining from using, buying, or dealing with someone or some other organisation as an expression of protest or as a means of coercion*" (Wikipedia). Many slaves worked on sugar plantations, so in 1791 a campaign to boycott sugar was organised. Some estimates suggest that 300 000 people stopped using sugar. They literally voted in the way they shopped.

Courtesy Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery

An abolitionist sugar bowl inscribed in gold lettering with the words 'East India Sugar not made by slaves'.

Lobbying: One of the most powerful tools of the abolitionists was lobbying. This is the process of getting major decision-makers (typically government and elected officials) on your side by convincing them to support your cause. In 1806, the abolitionist James Stephens lobbied William Wilberforce, a Member of Parliament, and convinced him to support the Anti-Slavery Campaign.

Lobbying is a tricky strategy and requires a good understanding of politics. The abolitionists convinced Wilberforce to promote a Bill (a proposed new law) banning British subjects from participating in the slave trade with France and its allies. This was a very clever strategy; by linking the slave trade to France, which was a powerful enemy of Britain, participation in the slave trade was made to appear unpatriotic. This Bill paved the way for the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 1807.

Petitions: Hundreds of thousands of people also signed petitions calling for the abolition of the slave trade. Public opinion was stimulated, informed, mobilised and expressed in a way politicians could not ignore.

"For almost twenty years before the 1807 Act, the people of Manchester had been showing their opposition to slavery. Despite the majority of jobs in the city being dependent upon cotton produced by slave labour, in 1788 over ten thousand people, almost one in five of the population, signed a petition against slavery. A second petition in 1792 was signed by twenty thousand people." (www.manchester.gov.uk)

The Campaign succeeds

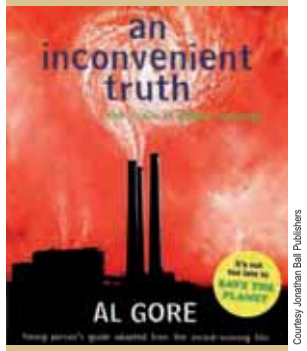
The 20 years of campaigning by the Society for the Effective Abolition of the Slave Trade helped to raise awareness and challenge traditions that were hundreds of years old. The decision to end the slave trade was more than an economic decision, a moral choice, or a reaction to slave rebellions. It was a decision influenced by the changing national consciousness of the British people. This changing consciousness grew into a 'grass roots' movement that later, driven by women's groups across the country, led to the banning of slave ownership throughout the British colonies, including the Cape, in 1838.

A chain reaction followed. The United States abolished slavery in 1865, Portugal in 1869, and the Spanish colonies of Cuba and Puerto Rico stopped the practice in 1873 and 1886, respectively. The last nation in the Americas to abolish slavery was Brazil, in 1888.

The slave trade and slavery was recognised as a "crime against humanity" by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban in 2001.

Human Rights Campaigns Today: Lobbying

Ex-Vice-President of the USA, Al Gore is an influential lobbyist for the cause of global warming. *"I have faith that young people have both the ability and the enthusiasm to put a stop to global warming."*



Courtesy Jonathan Ball Publishers

Human Rights Campaigns Today: Petitions

In 1839, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society was set up (known today as Anti-Slavery International) to work for the global eradication of slavery. Anti-Slavery International continues to work for the elimination of all contemporary forms of slavery.

Today tens of thousands of people have signed Anti-Slavery International's petitions against modern day slavery. (www.antislavery.org)

anti-slavery
today's fight for tomorrow's freedom

This section (pages 10-13) was inspired by the work of Mike Kaye, one of Anti-Slavery International's human rights activists.

SLAVERY TODAY

According to the Not For Sale Campaign, 27 million people are enslaved today. This is the largest number of people that has ever been in slavery at any point in world history. (www.notforsalecampaign.org)

The price for a slave is also the cheapest it has ever been. In 1850, the price of a male slave in America was the equivalent of US$38 000. Today, a young adult male slave can be bought for US$40 in Mali.

What used to be called slavery is now called 'human trafficking'.

The advances in transport, and in information and communication technology (from about the 1980s) that enable the free movement of people across borders have made the trafficking of human beings easier. According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), millions of people, primarily women and children, are subjected to this tragic fate.

It is not always easy to recognise human trafficking because it happens in subtle and disguised forms. There are many things that make communities vulnerable to human trafficking. Some of these things are poverty, illiteracy, sexual abuse, the use of child labour and child soldiers, commercial sex (prostitution), human migration over borders, refugees, the lack of rights of marginal ethnic groups, orphans, child-headed households, traditional forms of servitude (like being forced to work for relatives), recruitment into gangs, social castes and unfair labour practices.

Children as slaves
According to the United Nations, 8.5 million children are slaves today. According to CARE (a leading humanitarian organisation fighting global poverty – www.care.org), more than 300,000 child soldiers are exploited in armed conflicts in over 30 countries around the world; 2 million children are believed to be exploited through the commercial sex trade; approximately 246 million children work; and 171 million children work in hazardous conditions.

Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (RAPCAN) (www.rapcan.org.za) is a South African NGO that raises awareness around the idea that trafficking of children is made possible because of a culture of child abuse, and because of cultural ideas that treat women and children as objects that can be owned. RAPCAN trains communities in the prevention of sexual abuse and human rights violations. It also tries to influence policy through its awareness campaigns, and has a child witness programme that helps children who give testimony in court.

19 November is World Day for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.

Photographs: Merweleen van der Merwe
Campaign concept and design: AdlibStudio
Courtesy International Organisation for Migration

The above three posters are part of a campaign by the IOM (International Organisation for Migration) to counter human trafficking. These 'whistle-blower' posters were placed on litter bins in areas near clubs and brothels known for trafficking. The posters all use black and white photography and a bright red, roughly scrawled graphic - which both strongly brands the campaign and communicates the core message that human trafficking is a modern form of slavery - victims lose their freedom of expression and freedom of movement. This campaign was adapted into other languages and extended into Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia.

90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SINKING OF THE SS MENDI

Courtesy Hilary Graham and the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Detail from *The Loss of the Mendi* as interpreted by artist Hilary Graham.

"Be quiet and calm, my countrymen, for what is taking place is exactly what you came to do. You are going to die ... but that is what you came to do. Brothers, we are drilling the death drill. I, a Xhosa, say you are my brothers. Swazi's, Pondo's, Basuto's, we die like brothers. We are the sons of Africa. Raise your war cries, brothers, for though they made us leave our assegaais in the kraal, our voices are left with our bodies." – Reverend Isaac Wauchope Dyobha (1917)

On February 21, 1917, towards the end of the First World War, South Africa suffered one of its worst military tragedies with the sinking of the SS Mendi. The Mendi was carrying 805 black privates, five white officers and 17 non-commissioned officers of the 5th Batallion of the South African Native Labour Corps (SANLC). They were sailing to France to help Britain fight in its war against Germany.

It was a bleak winter morning. There was thick fog, and most of the men were still asleep below deck. With no warning siren, the SS Darro, a larger passenger ship, struck the Mendi at full speed. Many of the men died on impact. The Mendi immediately started to sink. The SS Darro did not lower boats to rescue the survivors. It was left to other naval vessels, which responded to the Mendi's distress signals, to rescue the few survivors from the freezing water.

The many stories of the men's bravery have become legend: A group of men gathered on the slanting deck, and encouraged by the Reverend Isaac Wauchope Dyobha, they took off their boots and performed the traditional death dance, singing, *"We are the sons of Africa. Raise your war cries ..."*. In the icy waters, the men called to one another: *"Ho, 'so and so', child of my mother, are you dead that you do not hear my voice?"* and *"Ho, to me, men of 'so and so', that we may all die together?"* Joseph Tshite, a schoolmaster from near Pretoria, encouraged those in the water around him with hymns and prayers until he died. A white sergeant was helped by two black compatriots to swim to safety.

1917, January 16 – Over 800 troops of the 5th Batallion of the South African Native Labour Corps set sail from Cape Town to join the war effort in Europe.
1917, February 21 – In the English Channel, the SS Mendi is struck by a much larger ship and sinks within about 20 minutes; 616 troops and officers die, either on impact or in the icy waters.
1917, March 9 – News of the disaster reaches South Africa. MPs in the House of Assembly rise to their feet in respect.
1917, July – Some of the survivors of the SS Mendi meet the King and Queen of England at Rouen in France.
Many years pass during which there is no official acknowledgement of the disaster or of the contribution of the Native Labour Corps to the war effort.
1930, December 10 – The Hollybrook Memorial Cemetery in Southhampton, England, is unveiled; 17 panels carry the names of the men who died on the SS Mendi.
1986 – The SA Nationalist government formally recognises the SA Native Labour Corps with a bronze plaque at Delville Wood Memorial in France.
1995 – Unveiling of the Mendi Memorial in Avalon Cemetery by then President Nelson Mandela and Queen Elizabeth II of England.
2004, August 23 – En-route from the German shipyards to South Africa, the SAS Mendi stops where the SS Mendi sank and lays wreaths in remembrance of those who died.

Courtesy Hollybrook Memorial.

The Hollybrook Memorial in Southampton, England.

Courtesy South African Military Museum

... Wauchope was among the dead that morning.

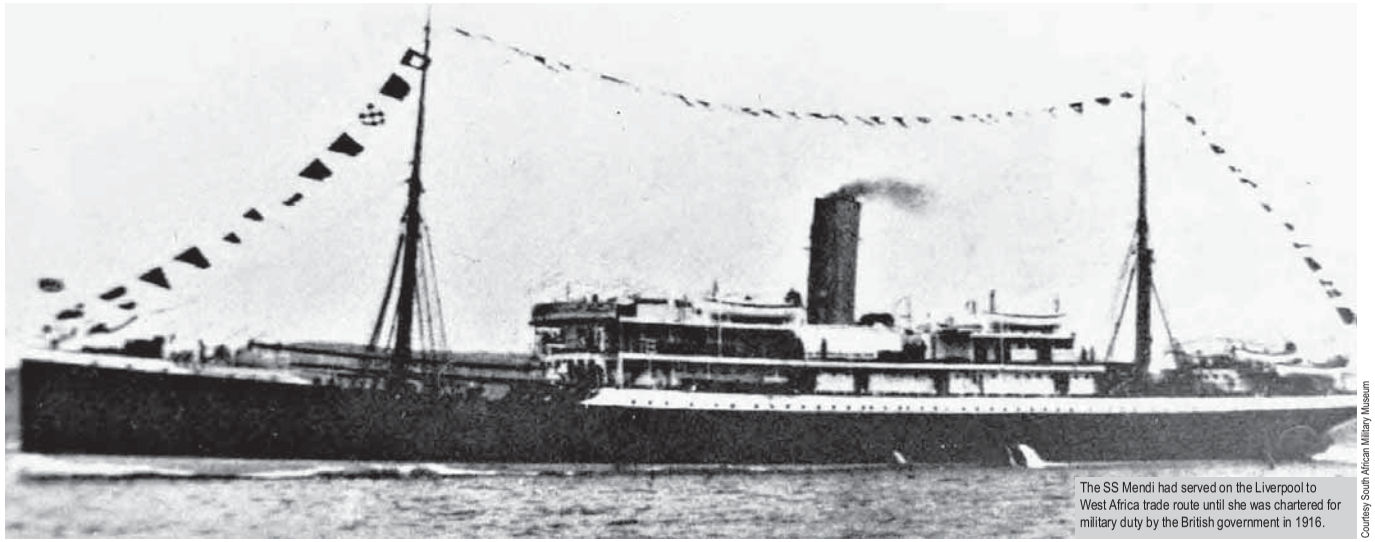
"He [Wauchope] was the quintessential missionary-educated African of the late 19th and early 20th century. He was born in 1852 in Doornhoek near Uitenhage into a family with strong connections to early Christian missionaries. After finishing school at Lovedale Institute, he worked as a teacher in Uitenhage. In September 1882 he played a key role in establishing Imbumba Yamanyama, one of the earliest political associations for Africans in South Africa.

In literary history Wauchope is credited with launching protest literature in South Africa. In May 1882, writing as IWW Citashe, he published his first poem. The poem exhorts Africans, after decades of resistance, to abandon their spears, which were no match for European weapons, and adopt other means, such as protest and persuasion. His poem reads, in part:

Your rights are taken away!
Grab a pen,
Load, load it with ink ...
Shoot with the pen ...
Engage your mind.

Wauchope moved to Port Elizabeth, where he worked as a clerk and interpreter at the Magistrate's Court. In 1888 he responded to a call for 'native' ministers and studied theology at Lovedale. On March 6 1892 he was ordained and installed as pastor of the Congregational Native Church of Fort Beaufort and Blinkwater.

In 1906 Wauchope joined the movement to create an institution of higher learning for Africans. Ten years later these efforts culminated in the foundation of the South African Native College, now the University of Fort Hare." – Mbulelo Vizikhungo Mzamane, *Sunday Times* (18 February 2007)



The SS Mendi had served on the Liverpool to West Africa trade route until she was chartered for military duty by the British government in 1916.

Courtesy South African Military Museum

THE MEN OF THE SS MENDI

Among the Africans who died when the SS Mendi sank were some prominent men, such as the Pondoland chiefs Henry Bokleni, Dokoda Richard Ndamase, Mxonywa Bangani, Mongameli, and also the Reverend Isaac Wauchope Dyobha, who initiated the death dance on the sinking ship. When he volunteered in 1916, Wauchope was 64 years old.

The survivors of the tragedy continued their military service in France. One of the men, Koos Matli (of the Bahaduba chiefdom), recalled a day in July 1917:

"... we were all called together and we went to another ship. On the deck we met King George V and Queen Mary. The King addressed us personally and thanked us for the services we had rendered. He told us that we were going home within a few days, and when we reached home we must tell our Chiefs and fathers how he had thanked us." - SA Navy (www.navy.mil.za)

Black men fighting white men's wars

The men of the SANLC were mostly from the rural areas of the Pondo Kingdom in the Eastern Cape. All were volunteers. They were not used as a fighting force, however, and were, in fact, forbidden to carry weapons. Instead, they were used as labourers. They also had to collect the wounded from the front-line trenches.

"The South African Native Labour Corps came to France early in 1917, and established a base at Arques-la-Bataille. Respected warriors and tribal leaders, men of the South African Native Labour Corps found themselves relegated to supporting roles under the command of white Commissioned Officers. They were not permitted to carry weapons or mix with white communities." - Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org)

Courtesy South African Military Museum

Prime Minister Jan Smuts with members of the South African Native Labour Corps.

Housed like prisoners of war

"One of the less known and perhaps more astonishing aspects of the unit's stay in France, was that they were housed in closed compounds, which were apparently not unlike the camps which were used to hold the German prisoners of war (who were also being employed as labour in France)."
— Grundlingh, A, *Fighting Their Own War - South African Blacks and the First World War* (1987)

Some 21 000 black South Africans – all volunteers – served in France with the South African Native Labour Corps between 1916 and 1918. They joined a labour force made up of French, British, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Egyptian and Canadian labourers, as well as German prisoners of war.

They dug quarries, laid roads and railway lines, and cut timber. But most of the men were employed in the French harbours of Le Havre, Rouen and Dieppe, where they unloaded supply ships and loaded trains with supplies for the battlefront.

Some 350 of these men died in France during World War I. Most are buried at the British military cemetery at Arques-la-Bataille in France. The rest returned home, to a land oppressed by segregation and inequality.

Courtesy South African Military Museum

Above: Members of the SA Native Labour Corps posing with their officer in France during World War 1.

Below: Members of the SA Native Labour Corps at work digging trenches in France during World War 1.

Courtesy South African Military Museum

Courtesy Navy News magazine

The SA Navy's new Valour-class frigate SAS Mendi.

A vision of justice and freedom

"The Commissioning of the SAS Mendi allows for reflection ... These young men were to be borne away to fight in the First World War. A war which arose of the need to create nationalities, preserve freedom and justice, the very freedom and justice which they longed to possess, but which they were denied ...

"... the words of Reverend Dyobha speak of men, who, regardless of clan or tribe, faced death together. They speak of men who, despite being victims of a system of oppression which forbade their access to freedom, were inspired by a vision of justice and freedom, a vision which was so strong that they were willing to commit their lives to the pursuit thereof.

"And it is with this affirmation that we gather here today to commission SAS Mendi, the fourth of our Meko Patrol Frigates. The SAS Mendi's task is to participate in providing maritime defence to our country, its peoples, the region and the Continent. However, her task is far greater than this, for she is also to serve as a constant reminder of the bravery and the valour of our predecessors and of their willingness to lay down their lives in pursuit of the Vision of a society where all would participate equally and where all brothers and sisters of Africa would be united by the principles enshrined within the Constitution of our country."

– From Minister of Defence M.G.P. Lekota's speech at the occasion of the commissioning of the SAS Mendi in Port Elizabeth (20 March 2007)

FORGOTTEN HEROES

On receiving news of the SS Mendi disaster on 9 March, 1917, all the members of the South African House of Assembly, led by then Prime Minister Louis Botha, rose from their seats to show respect for the men who had died.

That, however, was all the recognition these brave men received from their government until 1986 - 69 years later – when a bronze plaque showing the sinking of the SS Mendi was unveiled at the Delville Wood Memorial (for South African servicemen who died in the First World War) in France.

Returning home in September 1917, the black servicemen of the South African Native Labour Corps did not receive any of the typical acknowledgements for overseas military service. White servicemen and women received ribbons and medals in acknowledgement of their service to their country.

Furthermore, the relatives of the warriors who died on the SS Mendi received no official notice, compensation or acknowledgement from the British government.

For decades, and across generations, memories of the brave men who perished on the SS Mendi were kept alive, mainly through oral history.

Courtesy Navy News magazine

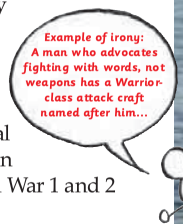
Left: Minister Lekota (right) congratulating the Chief of the SA Navy, Vice Admiral Johannes Refiloe Mudimu on the occasion of the commissioning of the SAS Mendi in Port Elizabeth, 20 March, 2007.

Courtesy Navy News magazine

Below: The Ship's Company of SAS Mendi on parade, salute the Minister of Defence Mr Mosiuoa Lekota at the commissioning ceremony of the SAS Mendi.

DEMOCRACY REMEMBERS OUR HEROES

The lack of acknowledgement of the heroes of the SS Mendi changed in 1994. South Africa's first democratically elected government was committed to honouring the brave men of the SS Mendi.

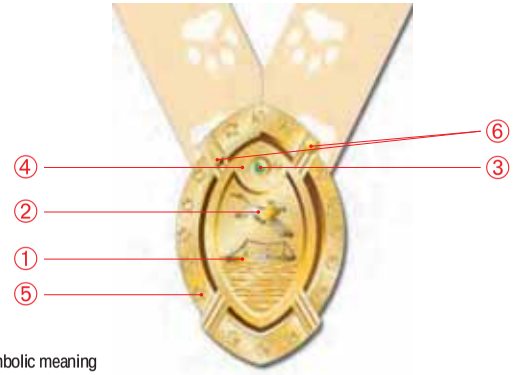


In 1995, President Nelson Mandela and Queen Elizabeth II of England unveiled a Mendi Memorial and Garden of Remembrance at Avalon cemetery in Soweto, where those who gave their lives in World War 1 and 2 are honoured.

The SS Mendi has also been honoured by the South African Navy, which has named one of its four Valour-class frigates, the SAS Mendi. In addition, a smaller Warrior-class attack craft, the SAS Isaac Dyodha, is named after the famous Reverend Wauchope - one of very few warships in the world to be named after a cleric.

The government further honoured the men of the SS Mendi by naming its highest award for courage, the Order of Mendi Decoration for Bravery. This honour is bestowed annually by the president.

The Order of Mendi for Bravery is awarded to South African citizens who have displayed extraordinary acts of bravery. Their actions may have put their lives in great danger or led them to lose their own lives. Their actions may include trying to save the life of another person, or saving property in or outside the Republic of South Africa.



Courtesy the Chancery of Orders, The Presidency

Symbolic meaning

The shield

1. *The SS Mendi* – represents the courage of the many South African soldiers drowned aboard the SS Mendi warship.
2. *The blue crane* – the flight of the blue crane in the ocean skies above the SS Mendi symbolises the souls of the brave soldiers who drowned. The blue crane's feathers were traditionally awarded to brave warriors.
3. *The green emerald* – symbolises the lighting of the way ahead when giving assistance to those in need during natural disasters (and other extreme difficulties) around the world.
4. *The three geographical pointers* – radiating out from the green emerald core represent the flowers of the bitter aloe, known for their resilience, survival and medicinal value.

The holding shape

5. *Lion spoor* – represent beauty, power and bravery, and refer to the brave South Africans who conduct border patrols within and beyond South Africa.
6. *Knobkierie and spear* – both complement the shield as symbols of defence and honour.

Courtesy Navy News magazine

Memorial at sea

On 23 August 2004, the SAS Mendi rendezvoused with the British ship HMS Nottingham at the exact coordinates where the SS Mendi sank in 1917. Representatives from both navies laid wreaths to honour those who died.

As part of the ceremony, Petty Officer Mpho Rakoma recited a poem that he had composed for the occasion, part of which reads:

SS Mendi, our fallen heroes
We're visiting your resting place
To connect and accept the event
For blessing and guidance
Through the deep blue seas

SS Mendi, our fallen heroes
We bid you farewell
In accepting our call
To guide the Mendi name
Aluta continua – (www.navy.mil.za)

Courtesy Navy News magazine

Rear Admiral (Junior Grade) Khanyisile Litchfield-Tshabalala and Captain Packer prepare to throw the wreath into the sea.

In 2006, as part of The Sunday Times' 100th anniversary celebrations, the editor, Mondli Makhanya, launched a project to commission a number of public memorials to record and recognise some of the remarkable people and events of the past century.

The brief was to create a permanent storytelling 'trail' of built memorials around the country, marking some of the compelling moments in 100 years of our history on the spot where they happened, as interpreted by selected artists.

For more information, visit: www.sundaytimes.co.za/heritage

All photographs courtesy The Sunday Times

SS MENDI - THE MAKING OF A MONUMENT

The artist chosen for The Sunday Times SS Mendi memorial was the late Madi Phala. *"I'd read about the Mendi, we'd sung about the Mendi, but I'd never looked into it until I was given this commission."*

Phala's brief was to avoid making anything "epic or monumental". This was difficult because, as he said, *"I think in epic and monumental terms, but the joy of it was the challenge ... It's not like you look at it and you've got the answers, you'll still want to talk to me, you'll want to ask me questions. It's not all about what I'm saying, it's about how you perceive it. That's very important."*

The site of the memorial is significant; a grassy embankment below a soccer field on the middle campus of the University of Cape Town. It was on this spot that the troops were billeted, before marching to Table Bay to board the SS Mendi.

Phala's concept for the design of the memorial was to depict a sinking ship with different hats and helmets lined up behind it – each showing information about the number of people who sailed and died in the tragedy.

"This is one of the greatest challenges I've had in my life to be given this chance with this piece," said Phala. *"I have this belief that I have put my signature on the Mother City's belly and we've made a baby now. This will be more memorable than anybody else buying my private work and keeping it in their lounge, because now this will be exposed to everybody."*

Manufacturing: To turn his drawings into a structure, Madi worked with blacksmith and artist Luke Atkinson.

1. Using traditional blacksmithing techniques, they forged the steel into the shape of a ship's hull.

3.

2. The hats were made by starting with wax moulds which were dipped in a ceramic shell, then cast in bronze. Acid etch was used for the lettering and detail, and patina was used to age the bronze.

4.

5.

A double tragedy
Madi Phala was killed in a mugging outside his home in Langa on 3 March, 2007.

WE SHALL RESIST

"Today, we have to pledge with cold-blooded courage and determination that we will rather stand on our legs and fight and die if need be than grovel on our knees and live for the crumbs that may fall to us. There can only be one answer that you can give and that is: ***We shall resist****."*
– Dr. G.M. 'Monty' Naicker (1947)

People of Indian origin have played an important role in making the dream of democracy in South Africa a reality. Their successful Passive Resistance Campaign of 1946 inspired the Defiance Campaign of the 1950s. The so-called "Three Doctors' Pact," signed between the ANC and the Indian Congresses of Natal and Transvaal in 1947, became the foundation for the Freedom Charter signed in 1955. The Freedom Charter then became an important foundation document for the Constitution that we enjoy today.

THE PASSIVE RESISTANCE CAMPAIGN

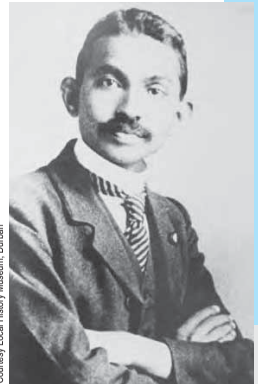
Long before the Nationalist Party came to power, apartheid-like legislation was already being implemented by the Union government of Jan Smuts. Just as black people and coloured people suffered, so too did people of Indian origin.

In January 1946, Smuts announced his intention to introduce the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Bill. This would prohibit Indians from purchasing land from non-Indians. It would also force Indians to elect whites to represent them in Parliament. These acts became known as the 'Ghetto Acts'.

The Natal Indian Congress (NIC), under the leadership of Dr. 'Monty' Naicker, and the Transvaal Indian Congress, under the leadership of Dr. Yusuf M. Dadoo, led a Passive Resistance Campaign against the Ghetto Acts. On 31 March 1946, 6 000 Indians marched in Durban in support of the South African Indian Congress' (SAIC) resolution for Passive Resistance.

On 13 June 1946, a mass meeting of over 15 000 people at the "Red Square" in Durban was addressed by Dr Naicker. After the meeting, a procession marched to a plot of land that had been designated for the use of 'whites only'. Here, 17 passive resistors (including 7 women) pitched five tents in defiance of the Acts. They were quietly challenging the law, inviting arrest.

By the end of the campaign, over 2 000 Indian passive resistors had gone to prison. Many of these passive resistors were women.



Courtesy Local History Museum, Durban

Mahatma Gandhi - the 'father' of non-violent resistance. *"An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind."*

1946, January – The Union government, under Jan Smuts, announces its intention to introduce the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Bill.
1946, 8-12 February – South African Indian Congress (SAIC) decides to begin a Passive Resistance Campaign to oppose the Bill.
1946, 17 July – The government of India terminates trade relations with South Africa.
1946, 8 December – The General Assembly of the United Nations calls for South Africa to treat Indians in accordance with the United Nations Charter.
1947, 9 March – Dr A. B. Xuma, the president-general of the ANC, Dr. 'Monty' Naicker, the president of the Natal Indian Congress, and Dr. Yusuf M. Dadoo, the president of the Transvaal Indian Congress, sign a joint declaration of cooperation that becomes known as the "Three Doctors' Pact".
1948 – The Nationalist Party comes to power in South Africa and introduces its formalised racist policy of apartheid.
1949, 17 December – The ANC adopts a Programme of Action including strikes, boycotts and other forms of mass action.
1952 – The ANC and the SAIC launch a nationwide "Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws".
1953 – An ANC conference adopts a proposal for a "Congress of the People of South Africa".
1955, February – About 60 000 people are forcibly removed from Johannesburg's Western Areas as part of the policy of the Group Areas Act.
1955, 5 March – The South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) is formed - the first non-racial union in South Africa.
1955, 26 June – The Freedom Charter is adopted at the Congress of the People in Kliptown.
1955, 9 August – Over 20 000 women march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against the extention of passes to women.
1957 – The Alexandra Bus Boycott sees African workers walking to work rather than pay increased bus fares.
1957 – A-Pound-a-Day national minimum wage campaign is launched following the success of the bus boycott.

THE THREE DOCTORS' PACT

On 9 March 1947, Dr. A. B. Xuma, the president-general of the ANC, Dr. Naicker and Dr. Dadoo signed a joint declaration calling for cooperation among all democratic forces to fight for basic human rights and full citizenship for all South Africans. This became known as the 'Three Doctors' Pact'.

Joint Declaration of Natal Indian Congress, Transvaal Indian Congress, and the African National Congress.

This joint meeting between the representatives of the African National Congress and the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses, having fully realised the urgency of cooperation between the non-European peoples and other democratic forces for the attainment of basic human rights and full citizenship for all sections of the South African peoples, has resolved that a joint declaration of cooperation is imperative for the working out of a practical basis of cooperation between the National Organisations of the non-European peoples.

This joint meeting declares its sincerest convictions that for the future progress, goodwill, good race-relations and for the building of a united, greater and free South Africa, full franchise rights must be extended to all sections of the South African peoples, and to this end, this joint meeting pledges the fullest cooperation between the African and Indian peoples and appeals to all democratic and freedom-loving citizens of South Africa to support fully and co-operate in this struggle for:

1. Full franchise.
2. Equal economic and industrial rights and opportunities, and the recognition of African Trade Unions under the Industrial Conciliation Act.
3. The removal of all land restrictions against non-Europeans, and the provision of adequate housing facilities for all non-Europeans.
4. The extension of free and compulsory education to non-Europeans.
5. Guaranteeing freedom of movement and the abolition of Pass Laws against the African people and the Provincial Barriers against Indians.
6. And the removal of all discriminatory and oppressive legislation from the Union's Statute-Book.

This joint meeting is therefore of the opinion that for the attainment of these objects, it is urgently necessary that a vigorous campaign be immediately launched, and that every effort be made to compel the Union Government to implement the United Nations decisions and to treat the non-European peoples in South Africa in conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

This joint meeting further resolves to meet from time to time to implement this declaration and to take active steps in proceeding with the campaign.

When the Three Doctors' Pact was signed, there were those who feared that Indians might dominate the ANC. Dr Xuma responded by saying, *"… if you cannot meet the next man on an equal footing without fearing him, there is something wrong with you. You are accepting a position of inferiority to him"*.

The collaboration of organisations represented in the Pact became the core of the Congress Alliance, which would dominate the resistance movement during the 1950s. The Three Doctors' Pact also became an important foundation for the Freedom Charter, which was organised by the Congress Alliance and adopted by the Congress of the People, in Kliptown, on 25-26 June 1955.

Drs. Naiker, Xuma and Dadoo signing the declaration.

Drs Naicker and Dadoo leaving for the UN in 1946.

The struggle goes on

"The struggle of the non-European people for liberation is not an isolated struggle; it is merely a continuation of the struggle of the oppressed masses carried on in many lands...

"The Government may imprison me, it can fling hundreds and thousands into jail and concentration camps, but it cannot and shall not suppress the demand for freedom which arises from the crying hearts of the non-Europeans...

"The struggle goes on..., all non-Europeans unite! Create a fighting unity!..."

– Dr Yusuf Dadoo

Leaders salute the three doctors

Here are two people's recollections of the Three Doctors' Pact, many years after it was signed. They show how different people experienced the significance of this landmark declaration.

"The Xuma-Naicker-Dadoo Pact took place a year after the great African miners' strike of 1946 and the Indian passive resistance of the same year. These events evoked the conscious political mobilisation of our people towards unity. They consolidated the spirit of fraternity and solidarity between the African and Indian communities.

"It was also in 1946 that the Government of India broke relations with the racist regime, spearheading the campaign for international action against apartheid and support for our liberation struggle. This role on the part of the people of India, which takes origins from the heroic struggles led by the great Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa, has always been a source of inspiration and strength for all opponents of the apartheid system.

"In observing the 40th anniversary of the Xuma-Naicker-Dadoo Pact, which coincides with our Year of Advance to People's Power, we reiterate our commitment to the liberation of our people, the complete overthrow of the racist regime and the emergence of a new South Africa.

"Your government and people have through the years responded resolutely to our appeals to isolate apartheid South Africa and have given us political, material and moral support - we salute you."
– Message from O.R. Tambo to the people of India on the 40th Anniversary of the Three Doctors' Pact (9 March 1987)

Personal reflection

"When I was thirteen, in March 1947, I learned about... [the] 'Three Doctors' Pact' ... Immediately, I wanted to be a doctor. Then, when I learned that doctors had relied on lawyers to work out all the details, I wanted to be a lawyer. But the "Three Doctors Pact" was a landmark of non-racialism. It was a landmark in the struggle for freedom. It was a landmark in defining Indian South Africans, not only as Indians, but also as Africans in South Africa.

"Almost sixty years later, looking back on the 'Three Doctors Pact,' we can see that they were demanding the simplest things: full franchise; equal economic rights; removal of land restrictions; free and compulsory education; freedom of movement; and the elimination of discriminatory and oppressive legislation...

"For me, as a boy in Stanger, the 'Three Doctors Pact' was a milestone on the path of non-racialism, giving me a clear sense of what it is to be South African... The struggle for human rights, I saw, was both non-racial in principle and international in scope."

– Professor Kader Asmal in an address given while he was Minister of Education (7 April 2004)

Early apartheid laws

- **Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act** (1949) prohibited marriages between white people and people of other races.
- **Population Registration Act (1950)** led to the creation of a national register in which every person's race was recorded.
- **Group Areas Act (1950)** forced physical separation between races by creating different residential areas for different races. This led to forced removals of people living in the "wrong" areas, for example coloureds living in District Six in Cape Town and black people living in Sophiatown in Johannesburg. These 'non-white' communities suffered large scale property and financial losses.
- **Suppression of Communism Act** (1950) outlawed Communism and the Communist Party in South Africa. Communism was defined so broadly that it covered any call for radical change.
- **Bantu Authorities Act (1951)** established a system of rule for rural blacks. It tried to revive tribalism and made no provision for elected representatives.

The Nationalists introduce apartheid

In 1948, the Nationalist Party came to power under the leadership of Prime Minister Dr D.F. Malan. It immediately put its apartheid policy into action by passing numerous laws that separated 'race groups' and continued to keep white people in a position of economic domination. Some examples of these laws are in the box on the left.

It now became more important than ever that all South Africans who were committed to democracy should work together.

Cooperation between the ANC and the SAIC was not without its difficulties, however. In 1949, riots broke out between Zulus and Indians in Durban after a false report that a Zulu boy had died as a result of severe beating by an Indian trader. The government did nothing to resolve the conflict. Instead, they let it grow. When they eventually acted, the police opened fire indiscriminately, killing many people. According to reports, 142 people were killed and 1 087 were injured; 58 of the injured later died. The ANC and the SAIC submitted a joint memorandum to a Commission of Enquiry. However, they withdrew from the enquiry when they were prevented from cross-examining witnesses.

In February 1949, 30 African and Indian leaders issued a joint statement in which they emphasised: *"the fundamental and basic causes of the disturbances are traceable to the political, economic and social structure of this country"*.

THE DEFIANCE CAMPAIGN

The first successful collaboration between the SAIC and the ANC was the Defiance Campaign of 1952. Together, they protested against the unjust laws and took the struggle to new levels of mass action.

In 1952, Dr J.S. Moroka, the new President of the ANC, sent a letter to Prime Minister Malan asking him to abolish the laws that the people felt were oppressive and unjust. He informed Malan that if he failed to do so, a campaign of non-violent defiance against these laws would begin.

A Defiance Campaign Planning Council was set up and chaired by Dr Moroka. Walter Sisulu and Dr Dadoo prepared a detailed report on how to keep the campaign a disciplined and peaceful protest. The two men became very close life-long friends as a result of their work together.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Dr. Dadoo was arrested when he spoke in defiance of the ban that had been placed on him by the Minister of Justice. Demonstrations followed. Crowds gave the 'Afrika' salute - a clenched fist, thumbs up - the sign of the Congress Alliance, and shouted, ***"Afrika! Afrika!"***

Defying the laws

On 26 June, the Defiance Campaign began in full force. Law-breakers defied curfew regulations and entered locations without permits. Many were arrested, deliberately refused to pay fines and went to jail. Those arrested included a lone Chinese shopkeeper who protested against the Group Areas Act by entering a location without a permit. By August, the police had begun raiding homes with search warrants looking for evidence of treason. By the middle of October, arrests had passed the 5 000 mark.

Two protests turned violent; one in Port Elizabeth and another in East London. Up until then it was always the police who had been violent, but now protesters were actually killing white people and destroying property. The white town councillors of East London blamed the government, saying that all had been peaceful until a government ban on meetings was imposed. The Congress Alliance realised that, while it encouraged its members to remain peaceful, it could not control all the participants – many of whom were unemployed youth.

On 8 December, Patrick Duncan, the son of the ex-Governor-General of the Union of South Africa, and Manilal Gandhi, the son of Mahatma Gandhi, entered a Germiston location without a permit and they were arrested. During his trail, Duncan said, *"I wished to show that there were at least some whites who were prepared to cooperate on the basis of loyalty with the two congresses"*. He and his fellow accused were charged with *"behaviour … calculated to cause Natives to resist and contravene a law"*. Following this judgment, The Criminal Law Amendment Act (1953) made it a serious criminal offence to break a law in protest against that law – even if it was sitting on a park bench marked 'Whites Only'.

Campaign suspended

The new laws provided for brutal sentences, including the whipping of non-violent protesters. Many struggle leaders felt that these laws threatened to turn a peaceful Defiance Campaign into a violent revolution. The Defiance Campaign was suspended in 1953, but remains a testament to the cooperation of those who are committed to democracy.

Massive increase in membership

"Although the Defiance Campaign petered out, the positive results far outweighed the negative perceptions:

- *The ANC membership catapulted from a mere 7 000 to more than 100 000, with a large number of functioning branches all over the country.*
- *It was the first major act of defiance against the apartheid regime, and gave concrete meaning to the 1949 programme of action.*
- *It was the first action of its type and scale conducted jointly by the ANC and SAIC (in the spirit of the Dadoo-Xuma-Naicker Pact).*
- *For the thousands of volunteers, and many thousands more, it helped remove the stigma and fear of prison.*
- *It made huge strides in winning global support for the plight and struggle of the oppressed.*
- *It influenced the formation of the Congress of Democrats to carry the policies and message of the Congress to the white sector of the South African population, and paved the way for the Congress Alliance (with SACTU and FEDSAW as adjuncts).*
- *Most importantly, it gave rise to a new breed of leaders who recognised that the struggle called for courageous actions, which entailed danger and sacrifice."*

– Ahmed Kathrada in his *Memoirs* (2004)


Courtesy Ahmed Kathrada

Ahmed Kathrada was an activist from the age of 12 and was intimately involved in the Defiance Campaign. He was also one of the Rivonia Treason trial prisoners. He spent 26 years imprisoned on Robben Island. Soon after his release, he became the chairman of the Robben Island Museum.


Courtesy Mayibuye Centre, UWC

Above (background): 6 April 1952, Defiance Campaign. People from all over the Reef attend a mass meeting at Freedom Square, Fordsburg.

Left: The masses hear Moroka and Dadoo speak from the platform.

Right: A passive resistance mass meeting in Durban.

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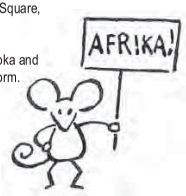

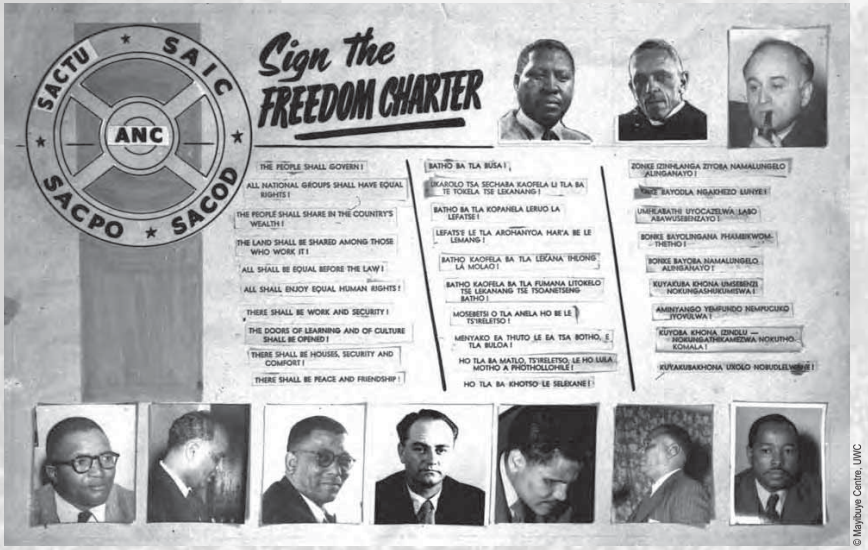

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Background: Part of the 3 000-strong crowd at the Congress of the People in Kliptown, 26 June, 1955.

Right: A leaflet to publicise the Freedom Charter. Top, left to right: Chief Albert Luthuli, Father Trevor Huddleston, Dr Yusuf Dadoo Bottom, left to right: Moses Kotane, George Peake, Walter Sisulu, Piet Beyleveld, Stanley Lollan, and two unidentified men.

© Mayibuye Centre, UWC

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

Political beliefs and processes are often inspired and supported by well-written documents – constitutions, charters, declarations, calls to action, etc. The Three Doctors' Pact was a valuable starting point, not only for the cooperation between the SAIC and the ANC, but also because it began to lay out the thinking of what it meant to live in a democratic South Africa. The value of this document is spelled out clearly by President Thabo Mbeki:

"Throughout its 93 years, the ANC has relied on its own programmatic documents to guide it as it waged the struggle for national liberation. This ensured that the movement and the masses of the people it represents and leads, did not lose direction or allow that others should set the agenda for our struggle and its intended outcomes.

"These documents include the early Constitutions of the ANC, the 'Africans' Claims in South Africa' of 1943, the ANC Youth League Manifesto of 1944, the 'Three Doctors' Pact' of 1947, the 1949 Programme of Action, the Resolutions of the 1961 'All-In African Conference', the 1969 Strategy and Tactics, the 1989 Harare Declaration, and the 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme.

"The Freedom Charter stands out as one of the most outstanding among these programmatic documents. The vision it spells out has not lost its relevance." – Thabo Mbeki, *Letter from the President*, 7 January 2005.

The Congress of the People in Kliptown, just outside Johannesburg, was the greatest non-racial mass democratic meeting ever held in South Africa. It was organised by the Congress Alliance, which consisted of the ANC, the SAIC, the Congress of Democrats, the Coloured People's Congress, and the South African Congress of Trade Unions.

For all who truly love freedom

"The challenge of the day for all those who truly love freedom for all, will be to gear themselves to greater determination, courage, and unreserved surrender to the noble cause of freedom in our land, and everywhere in the world where man is still denied it by his brother man. If we shun this challenge, we shall rightly be held in contempt by our freedom-loving contemporaries in other lands but, worst of all, we shall earn the curse and disdain of posterity.

"But this day, no doubt, will stand as a bright torch or beacon of Liberty in the skies of South Africa that are already gloomily darkened by the dishonourable past action of those of its people who, in the past and now, have glorified and enthroned in the place of Moral Values, the evils of racism, discrimination, apartheid and the like.

"This task of gaining freedom in our multi-racial society is of considerable magnitude, and will tax severely the determination and courage of the best of us. But the need and urgency of the task, and the justice of the cause, demand us to be willing to pay the supreme sacrifice for the noble cause."
– Chief Albert Luthuli, President of the ANC (1955)

This speech for the Congress of the People had to be recorded, as Chief Luthuli was under banning orders and could not attend the Congress of the People.

Volunteers collect the people's written demands

For months before the Congress, volunteers had visited rural areas, farms, factories and townships collecting demands from South Africans of all backgrounds. These demands expressed the vision of a new South Africa. They were summarised and put together in the Freedom Charter.

More than 3 000 delegates arrived to listen to and celebrate the Freedom Charter. There were more than 300 Indians, 200 coloureds and 100 whites. Many more people were stopped from attending the meeting by the police.

The Nationalist Party government was invited to attend, but instead they sent the police. Delegates bravely continued with proceedings in spite of the police presence.
At the end of the Congress, police blocked off the exits as delegates were leaving, forcing them all through one exit, where they were searched. The police tried to confiscate all evidence of the Freedom Charter.

The Treason Trial

Not long after the Congress of the People, 156 leaders of the Congress Alliance (105 blacks, 21 Indians, 23 whites and 7 coloureds), including Nelson Mandela, were arrested. They were charged with *"high treason and a countrywide conspiracy to use violence to overthrow the present government and replace it with a communist state"*. The punishment for high treason was death.

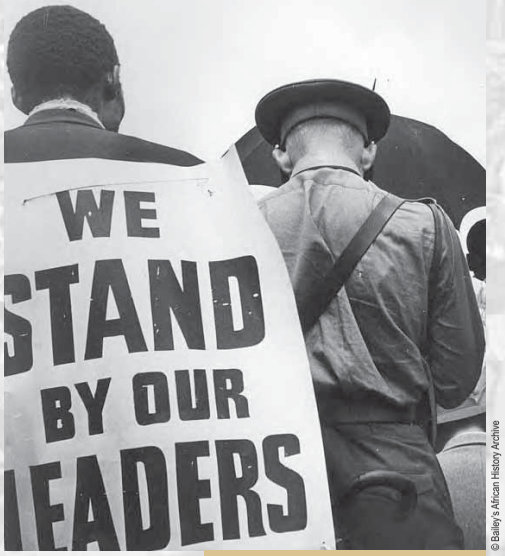
Mass demonstrations, under the banner *"We Stand by Our Leaders,"* were organised to protest the treason trial. Finally, in 1961, after a trial lasting four years, all 156 were found not guilty and released.

Documents like the Freedom Charter and our Constitution act as "overarching models" of the society we are trying to create. When we are suffering because of our convictions and actions, we can look to them for inspiration.

"Under the old Supreme Court in Pretoria, there were some holding cells... covered with the most unusual graffiti... lists of those who had been tried for treason... two complete copies of the Freedom Charter which people had known by heart and inscribed on these basement walls, so that the foundations of the Supreme Court were quite literally set in the Freedom Charter... I spent a couple of weeks there in 1983, but it was impossible to feel alone. All the great ones of the past had been there, and standing reading the Freedom Charter under those circumstances was a deeply spiritual experience." – Cedric Mayson, *A deeply spiritual document. The Freedom Charter* (2001)

The test of time

"That the Charter has stood the test of time, outlived its critics and defeated every attempt of the enemy to brand it as 'treason', demonstrates the rich heritage of struggles of our people, the justness of our cause and the necessity of the Charter as the definitive expression of the goals of our national liberation struggle... the ideas in the Freedom Charter ran like a golden thread, unifying the diverse forces that together make up our liberation movement."
– Alfred Nzo, *The Freedom Charter, a beacon to the people of South Africa*, in *African Communist.* (Second Quarter 1980)



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Hopes and dreams of the people

"Though the Congress of the People had been broken up, the charter itself became a great beacon for the liberation struggle. Like other enduring political documents, such as the American Declaration of Independence, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Communist Manifesto, the Freedom Charter is a mixture of practical goals and poetic language. It extols the abolition of racial discrimination and the achievement of equal rights for all. It welcomes all who embrace freedom to participate in the making of a democratic, non-racial South Africa. It captured the hopes and dreams of the people, and acted as a blueprint for the liberation struggle and the future of the nation."
– Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (1994: 203)

THE THREE DOCTORS

Dr Gagathura Mohambry 'Monty' Naicker

30 Sept 1910 - 12 Jan 1978

Dr Naicker's father came from a poor family but made enough money from exporting bananas to send young Gagathura to Edinburgh University to study medicine. When Dr. Naicker returned to South Africa he started the Hindu Youth Movement. In 1936, he married Mariemuthoo Appavu and they had two children. He joined the multiracial Liberal Study Group in 1940, and met many political activists. Together, they debated how South Africa could fight the unjust regime of the Nazis, but practise such injustice at home. He served as president of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) and the South African Indian Congress (SAIC). He went to prison and faced many banning orders, making it difficult to continue his practice as a doctor. He was tried for treason in 1956. He spent five months underground during the 1960s state of emergency, disguised as a Muslim imam. He made great sacrifices. Once, while in prison, he arranged for the sale of his car to pay for the NIC political campaigns. Naicker was known as 'Monty' to his friends. He was also a close personal friend of Chief Albert Luthuli and was posthumously awarded the Order of Luthuli.

Dr Alfred Bitini Xuma

1893 - Jan 1962

Young Alfred's father was a lay Methodist preacher. His mother was a traditional healer. He studied medicine in the USA and in Europe. On his return to South Africa in 1927, Dr Xuma opened a surgery in Sophiatown. His first wife, Priscilla Mason, died while giving birth to their second child. In 1940, he married Madie Beatrice Hall. He was elected president of the ANC in 1940. He worked hard to turn the organisation into a mass movement, introducing a new Constitution in 1943, which accepted people of all races as members, and gave women equal rights in the organisation. He was responsible for bringing a large element of young people like Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Oliver Tambo into the organisation. Xuma was opposed to violence. In 1949, he lost the leadership of the ANC to the younger radicals led by Dr J.S. Moroka. After fighting against the forced removal of people from the Western Areas, he was finally forced to vacate his house in 1959, and moved to Dube in Soweto. Dr Xuma's Sophiatown home survived the apartheid bulldozers of the 1950s and was declared a national monument in 1998.

Dr Yusuf Mohamed Dadoo

5 Sept 1909 - 19 Sept 1983

As a young man, Yusuf used to attend meetings of the All-Indian National Congress which struggled against British colonialism. While he was studying medicine in Edinburgh, he also read widely about political organisation. He became convinced that political organisations in South Africa would have to unite if they were to succeed. On his return to South Africa, he became involved in the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC). Up to 6 000 people at a time (25% of the total Indian population of the Transvaal) used to attend his talks. As one of the founders of the Non-European United Front (NEUF), he called for united mass action. He also served as president of the TIC and the South African Indian Congress. Through his involvement in the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), Dadoo helped strengthen African trade unions. When the Nationalists came to power, the CPSA had to dissolve to protect its members. Dadoo helped Moses Kotane create the new underground South African Communist Party (SACP). He was imprisoned on many occasions and tried for treason in 1956. He then went overseas to promote the struggle and continued working for the SACP. He was known as 'Mota' (a Gujerati term of endearment) or 'Doc' to his friends.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF NKOSI ALBERT LUTHULI

LET MY PEOPLE GO

"It is in the nature of man to yearn and struggle for freedom. The germ of freedom is in every individual, in anyone who is a human being. In fact, the history of mankind is the history of man struggling and striving for freedom." – Nkosi Albert Luthuli

Albert John Mvumbi Luthuli was born in 1898 to John and Mtonya Luthuli, in what was then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). His father died when he was only six months old, and he and his mother returned to their ancestral home in Groutville, KwaZulu-Natal.

Luthuli started his schooling in Groutville and, in 1914, went to boarding school at the Zulu Christian Industrial School at Ohlange (which had been started in 1901 by Dr. John Dube, the first President-General of the ANC). He completed his schooling at Edendale, near Pietermaritzburg. Luthuli then started teaching in 1917, and in 1920 received a scholarship to study for the Higher Teachers' Training Course at Adams College.

Luthuli's leadership skills were recognised by his teaching colleagues and, in 1928, he was elected Secretary of the African Teacher's Association. In 1933, he became President of the Association. Luthuli's leadership abilities were also recognised by the elders of his tribe, who repeatedly called on him to return home to lead them. In 1936, Luthuli left teaching and returned to Groutville, where he was elected chief.

"As far as the Africans were concerned, 1936 was a year of political disturbances, economic plunder and uncertainty in South Africa. That year, the country was faced with the notorious Hertzog Bills. One of the Bills, known as the 'Representation of Natives Act' [...], rendered the then African vote in the Cape Province valueless... The other, the 'Natives Land and Trust Bill,' sought to limit the land to be owned or occupied by the African population of 12 million to 12.5 per cent of the land, while reserving the remaining 87.5 per cent for a population of less than 3 million whites." - John Dube, *Sechaba* (January 1982)

In his new role as chief, Luthuli was confronted with the stark realities facing his people, *"... no adequate land for our occupation, our only asset, cattle dwindling, no security of homes, no decent and remunerative employment..."*

In 1938, Luthuli travelled to an international missionaries conference in India. Here, he met and was inspired by Christians who used their faith to fight poverty.

Back home, he looked for more powerful ways to participate in the struggles of his people. In 1945, he joined the ANC.

In 1927, Albert Luthuli married the love of his life, fellow Adams teacher Nokukhanya Bhengu. They had seven children.

Albert Luthuli aged 25.

Kicked away like dogs

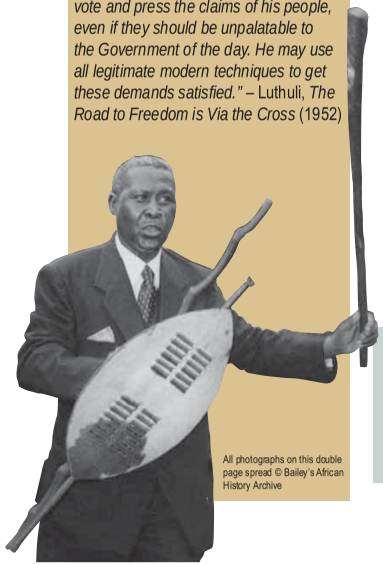
Albert Luthuli was 15 years old when the Union government passed the infamous 1913 Land Act. The following year, the founder of his boarding school, and first President-General of the ANC, Dr John Dube wrote:

"It is only a man with a heart of stone who could hear and see what I hear and see, and remain callous and unmoved. It would break your hearts did you but know, as I know, the cruel and undeserved afflictions wrought by the hateful enactment on numberless aged, poor and tender children of my race in this, their native land. From the ashes of their burnt-out kraals, kicked away like dogs by Christian people from their humble hearths, from the dear old scenes where their fathers were born and grew up in simple peace, bearing malice to none, and envying neither European nor Indian the wealth and plenty they amass themselves from this, their land, these unfortunate outcasts pass, homeless, unwanted, silently suffering, along the highways and byways of the land, seeking in vain the most unprofitable waste whereon to build their hovel and rest and live, victims of an unknown civilisation that has all too suddenly overwhelmed and overtaken them ..."
- John Dube, recalled in *Sechaba* (January 1982)

1898 – Born in Matabeleland, Rhodesia.
1908 – Returns to family home in Groutville, KwaZulu-Natal.
1911 – Starts school at Groutville.
1914 – Goes to boarding school in Ohlange and then Edendale near Pietermaritzburg.
1917 – Teaches at Blaauwbosch in Natal.
1920 – Receives a scholarship to the Higher Teachers' Training Course at Adams College.
1927 – Marries Nokukhanya Bhengu.
1935 – Elected Chief of Groutville and leaves Adams College.
1945 – Joins ANC.
1945 – Elected to Executive Committee of the Natal division of the ANC.
1946 – Elected to Natal Representative Council (NRC).
1951 – Nominated for Provincial President of the ANC in Natal.
1952 – Deposed as Chief because of political activities. Elected president-general of the ANC.
1955 – Presented with the Isitwalandwe-Seaparankoe award, the ANC's highest honour at the Congress of the People.
1956 – Arrested for high treason.
1960 – Publicly burns his pass.
1961 – Receives the Nobel Peace Prize.
1967 – Dies under mysterious circumstances.

A chief is a servant of his people

"My view has been, and still is, that a chief is primarily a servant of his people. He is the voice of his people. He is the voice of his people in local affairs. Unlike a Native Commissioner, he is part and parcel of the Tribe, and not a local agent of the Government. Within the bounds of loyalty, it is conceivable that he may vote and press the claims of his people, even if they should be unpalatable to the Government of the day. He may use all legitimate modern techniques to get these demands satisfied." – Luthuli, *The Road to Freedom is Via the Cross* (1952)



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LET US MARCH TOGETHER TO FREEDOM

In 1946, after the death of Dr. Dube, Luthuli was elected to replace him on the Native Representative Council (an advisory body of chiefs and intellectuals set up by the government). That same year, the government sent soldiers and police to suppress the Miners' Strike. Luthuli found the Council completely ineffective in representing the interests of African people, and resigned.

In 1948, Luthuli travelled to America and met with church groups who actively promoted non-racial principles and the development of youth leaders. Luthuli warned that Christianity faced its severest test in Africa, because of racial discrimination.

"My journeys to India and America did not, as such things are believed to do, fill me with a new discontent, or any half-desire to escape. I was asked often enough whether I would not like to stay in the US. I had only one reply: No. The very challenge makes me say I have work to do at home. I like to travel. But South Africa is my home, and I hanker after nobody else's." – Luthuli, *Let my People Go* (2006: 74)

In 1949, the ANC's Programme of Action (strongly influenced by the Youth League) expressed a shift in their methodology – moving away from words of protest to active demonstrations.

"Representations were done with," Luthuli said. "Demonstrations on a countrywide scale, strike action, and civil disobedience were to replace words. Influenced by the combined action of the Indian community after the passing of the Ghetto Act, we agreed to concentrate mainly on non-violent disobedience. This disobedience was not directed against law. It was directed against all those particular discriminatory laws, from the Act of Union onwards, which were not informed by morality." – Luthuli (2006: 101)

Luthuli was elected Provincial President of the African National Congress in Natal in 1951. His call was always for unity among Africans, and his mission was to increase awareness and understanding of the apartheid government's oppressive laws. He sought to bridge the gap between the educated and uneducated. His speeches fired up the masses and many became new members of the ANC, responding to the call to participate in mass action, strikes and boycotts.

As a result of Luthuli's leadership in Natal, the government asked him to choose between his chieftainship of Groutville and his leadership role in the ANC. He refused. The government removed him from his position as chief in 1952, but people continued to refer to him affectionately as "Chief".

"What have been the fruits of my many years of moderation? Has there been any reciprocal tolerance or moderation from the Government, be it Nationalist or United Party? No! On the contrary, the past thirty years have seen the greatest number of laws restricting our rights and progress until today, we have reached a stage where we have almost no rights at all: no adequate land for our occupation, our only asset, cattle, dwindling, no security of homes, no decent and remunerative employment, more restriction to freedom of movement through passes, curfew regulations, influx control measures; in short, we have witnessed in these years an intensification of our subjection to ensure and protect white supremacy..." – Luthuli, *The Road to Freedom is Via the Cross* (1952). A public statement by Luthuli in November 1952 after the government dismissed him from his position as Chief – (www.anc.org.za)

The Nationalist government may not have valued Luthuli's leadership abilities, but others certainly did. Later that same year, he was elected President-General of the ANC. In spite of repeated banning orders, and at the risk of arrest, Luthuli attended public meetings and spoke at mass rallies all over the country.

Luthuli's ideal of non-racial cooperation found its expression in the way diverse groups of South Africans worked together in the Congress Alliance towards the adoption of the Freedom Charter, at the Congress of the People in 1955. Luthuli could not attend, as he had been banned from public meetings, but a recording of his speech was played. As a result, Luthuli was arrested, together with other leaders of the liberation movement, and charged with High Treason. The 5-year trial drew international attention. The prosecution tried to link the accused to communism, but leaders like Luthuli were obviously not communists. The prosecution, therefore, tried to prove that Luthuli was being manipulated by communists. It became clear that black leaders from many different political ideologies were united in the struggle for racial inequality. This was an expression of the African unity that Luthuli valued so much. All the accused were found not guilty.

After the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, Luthuli burnt his pass in a public demonstration. He was arrested with 2 000 other leaders and detained for five months under the State of Emergency that had been declared by the Nationalist government. The ANC, PAC and the South African Communist Party were banned and had to start operating underground.

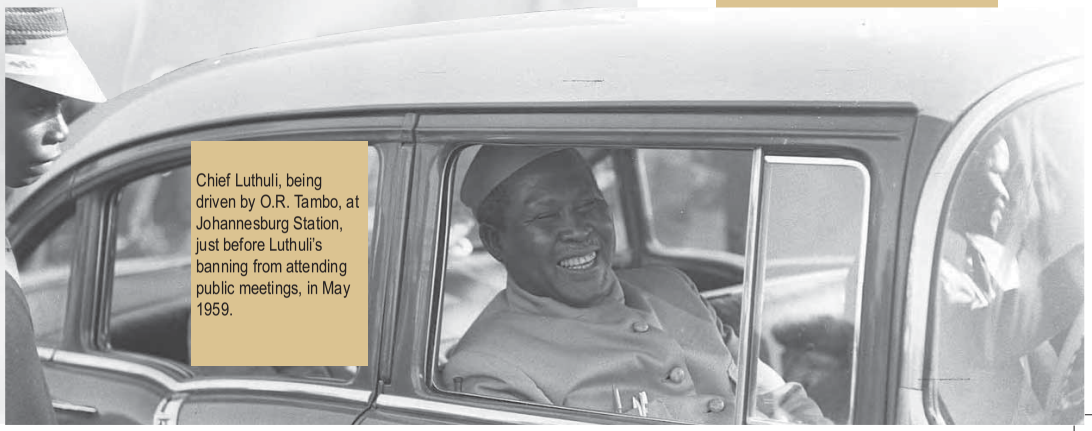
An extract from the 1956 Treason Trial court transcript:

"Mr Maisels: Mr. Luthuli, tell me what do you mean by militancy. Do you mean armed insurrection?
Baba: No, My Lords, I mean the methods used such as defiance campaign, civil disobedience, stay-at-home, stoppage of work.
Mr Maisels: It is common cause that the Defiance was a non-violent campaign?
Baba: That is so.
Mr. Maisels: In 1952, was there any difference of opinion, with some people feeling that they should take violent action?
Baba: There was no difference of opinion.
Mr. Maisels: To this day, there have never been reservations by the Congresses on the policy of non-violence?
Baba: That is so.
Mr. Maisels: Has there been a difference by individuals?
Baba: Yes... on the interpretation of African Nationalism.

Chief Luthuli went on to explain that there were people in the ANC who felt that there should be no cooperation between Congress and organisations of other racial groups. He said that these people had left the ANC and called themselves Pan Africanist Congress.

Mr. Maisels: What is the view of the African National Congress?
Baba: The African National Congress accepts the fact that South Africa is a multiracial country and that there is therefore a need for a multiracial society."

– Phyllis Naidoo, *156 Hands that Built South Africa: The 1956 Treason Trial* (2006: 87 & 88)



Chief Luthuli, being driven by O.R. Tambo, at Johannesburg Station, just before Luthuli's banning from attending public meetings, in May 1959.

Luthuli's tribute to his wife, Nokukhanya:

"... I count myself fortunate among men to have married so good a wife, and so devout a Christian woman. Her mother died when she was young, her early years were years of struggle, yet out of the struggle have come qualities of character which I have come to value more and more with the years. I have her to thank for maintaining the dignity of our home; a good deal of the time, with little time from me. She has created the one place of relative security and privacy which we know.. and on top of this, she has found herself married to a man immersed in public affairs (except when under some ban or other) given to too much travel. Yet, largely because of my wife's openness and honesty, we have our relationship with each other unthreatened and uncomplicated – and I have never known her to grumble over the things we have had to forgo." – Luthuli, *Let my people go* (2006: 30-31)

Luthuli speaks out against sexism

Luthuli praised the role of women in the struggle for freedom:

"Women concern themselves, by and large, with fundamentals. It is the fundamentals at which the Nationalists have struck. Their Abolition of Passes Act imposed the pass system on them. The intensification of measures which shattered families has made it harder than ever before to keep families together, or to be sure of earning anything with which to feed children. Allied to this fact that in recent years white wages have soared, while African wages have hardly changed. All these things are the concern of women, and the involvement of African women in the struggle in the last ten or fifteen years has made them a formidable enemy of the oppressor. The things they live for – the security of their homes and families, and the well-being of their children – have been savagely assaulted. For them, in many ways, the struggle is a matter of life and death, quite literally.

"Women in African society have never been a subservient group. They have played to the full the part allotted to them by their nature – and some have gone well beyond that. One African women of the last century led an army across the Orange Free State, and her name became the name of terror [Mateteesi] … More recently, the Swazis were ruled by a Queen. And among the Zulus, both before and since the coming of the whites, Zulu women have played a decisive political role.

"My point here is simply this: our women have never been treated by us as inferiors. It is the whites, misunderstanding the laws and customs by which we formally governed ourselves, who have done this. Having no ready-made laws in their own society to meet the needs of ours, they have declared that our women are legally minors, throughout their lives. This does not reflect the situation as seen through African eyes, and it has done great injury to the position occupied by African women." – Luthuli, *Let my people go* (2006: 187)

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Chief Luthuli with his wife Nokukhanya. After his banning, Chief Luthuli spent much of his time tending his sugar cane fields, vegetable gardens and chickens. He loved the life of the farmer, and also tended his small trading store. But he was always available for political discussions, and wrote many speeches that were read out on his behalf, as he couldn't deliver them himself.

Luthuli speaks out against racism

Luthuli dismissed the myth that Africans are uncivilised.

"The western myth goes like this: It has taken us two thousand years to reach our present civilised state. A hundred years ago the natives were barbarians. It will take them two thousand years to catch up with where we are now, and they will not be civilised till then." – Luthuli, *Let my people go* (2006: 32 & 33)

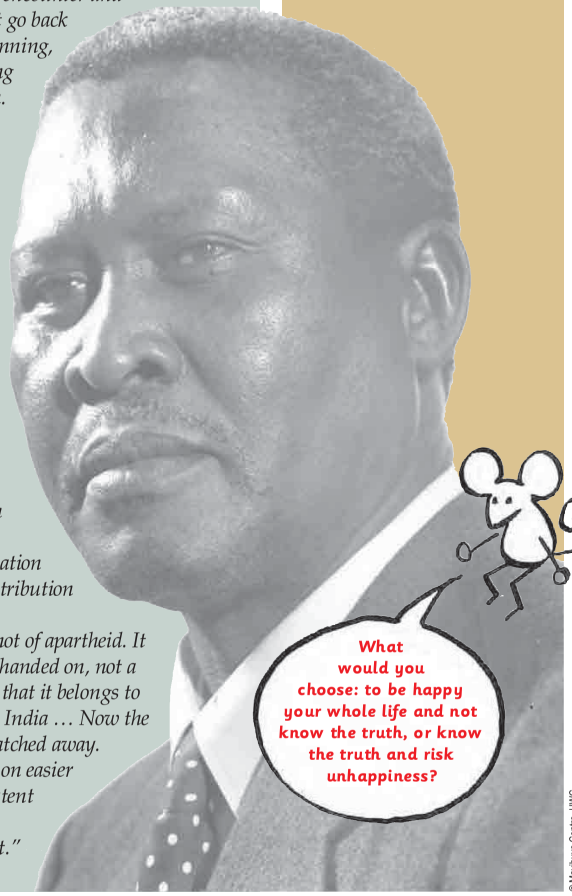
Luthuli dismissed this myth, saying: *"It is pure nonsense, of course. The argument does not arise from a survey of history, it arises from the urge to justify a course already chosen. The conclusion ("no rights for two thousand years") is there before the argument begins. An uncritical assumption ("whites are civilised") is there too. No account is taken of the fact that there have been both bad and exemplary Christians throughout the whole of the two thousand years in question, and that various societies have produced civilised beings for much longer than that. The argument assumes that, whereas whites can take up where the last generation left off, Africans cannot encounter and absorb anything in the present – they must go back and take each step of the road from the beginning, as though nothing that has happened during the last two thousand years can affect them. Must we really invent the spinning-wheel before we can wear or make clothes? Must we really invent the internal combustion engine before we can drive cars?*

"I do not agree that white South Africa, at the end of its theoretical two-thousand-year trick, is displaying at present the high virtues of civilisation, and it is doing a good deal to discredit, in African eyes, the Christianity which many of its members profess.

"But, even if it were being Christian and civilised, its values would not have been invented by white men. The Christian faith sprang from Asia Minor, and to this day it speaks with a semitic voice. Western civilisation is only partly Western. It embraces the contribution of many lands and many races. It [western civilisation] is the outcome of interaction, not of apartheid. It is an inheritance, something received to be handed on, not a white preserve. I claim, with no hesitation, that it belongs to Africa as much as to Europe or America or India … Now the cultural gifts formerly offered are being snatched away. Our children are invited to pin their hopes on easier times in two thousand years. That is the extent of the offer. In the meantime, what? In the meantime there is the Bantu Education Act." – Luthuli (2006: 33 & 34)

The motives behind Bantu Education

"So, the door has had to be slammed shut hard in the faces of the younger generation, and a system devised which will recondition [brainwash] us to accept perpetual inferiority and perpetual isolation from Western learning and culture. To isolate us and to convince us of our permanent inferiority – these two motives lie behind much legislation from the Act of Union until now, and the Bantu Education Act is a major means to this end." – Luthuli, *Let my people go* (2006: 35)



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Chief Albert Luthuli, in traditional dress, delivering his Nobel Peace Prize Lecture in Oslo, Norway, in 1961.

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Chief Albert Luthuli receiving his Nobel Peace Prize coin from King Olaf of Norway.

The Nobel Peace Prize

In 1867, Alfred Nobel, a Swedish scientist, discovered dynamite. This, and other discoveries, made him a very rich man and he wrote a will that turned his wealth into five annual prizes. These prizes honour advances in physics, chemistry, medicine, literature, and the fifth is peace: "*... one part to the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies, and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses*".

In 1984, Archbishop Desmond Tutu won the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1993, Nelson Mandela and FW de Klerk jointly won the Peace Prize for bringing about peaceful change in South Africa.

ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF SA

In 1960, Albert Luthuli was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. The Nationalist government was not impressed, but grudgingly gave him and his wife permission to travel to Norway to accept the prize. Albert Luthuli was the first African to receive the prize and did so proudly, wearing traditional dress. Awarding Luthuli the Nobel Prize for Peace was one way in which members of the international community could show their disapproval of apartheid and their support for the ANC.

"I therefore regard this award as a recognition of the sacrifices by my people of all races, particularly the African people, who have endured and suffered so much for so long. It can only be on behalf of the people of South Africa, especially the freedom-loving people, that I accept this award. I accept it also as an honour, not only to South Africa, but to the whole continent of Africa, to all its people, whatever their race, colour or creed. It is an honour to the peace-loving people of the entire world, and an encouragement to us all to redouble our efforts in the struggle for peace and friendship." – Extract from *An Honour to Africa*, Albert Luthuli's acceptance speech on receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, December 1961.

With the money he received as part of the Nobel Prize, Luthuli and his wife bought two farms in Swaziland to support ANC members in exile. The job of overseeing the farms fell to Nokukhanya, and she spent six months of the year away from her husband, creating food gardens.

Oral history: The creation of Umkhonto we Sizwe, military arm of the ANC.
A radio interview with Billy Nair (BN)
Interviewed by D Shongwe (DS)

© Bailey's African History Archive

BN: So the ANC then goes underground and decides to launch, together with the other Congresses, launch Umkhonto. Now the interesting one was Chief Luthuli; he was the first Nobel Peace Prize winner in Africa, you know? He received the Nobel Peace Prize and he returned to South Africa on the 16th December. Now they gave him ten days - actually, they expected him to stay permanently overseas.
DS: What year was that?
BN: 1961.
DS: Okay.
BN: And it was on the 16th we decided to time this launch of uMkhonto.
DS: Oh, okay.
BN: Not in his absence - but he had to return. So he returned on the 16th December 1960, and when he landed in Durban, he landed at about 7 or 8 o'clock that evening from Johannesburg and he drove with a convoy to Groutville, that's where he stayed in Stanger, and at about 9 that night, we launched Umkhonto throughout South Africa. We then hit at the Coloured Affairs Department, Indian Affairs Department and the Bantu Affairs Department. These were the three, you know, different components dividing the people, you know and we hit, we bombed all those three departments, three buildings that night and of course there was nationwide, what do you call, bombardment taking place.
DS: Okay.
BN: Railway lines, this, that and the other. Now it results in - of course we carried out the battle from 1961 to 1963, when we were all arrested.
– (http://scnc.udw.ac.za/doc/Audio/VOR/NairBilly/NairBillytranscript1.htm)

Ironically, Luthuli's return to South Africa after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, marked the launch of Umkonto we Sizwe, the military arm of the ANC. Luthuli himself recognised that passive resistance was no longer enough.

On June 12, 1964, when Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and six other leaders were sentenced to life imprisonment in the "Rivonia trial," Luthuli wrote, *"The African National Congress never abandoned its method of a militant, non-violent struggle, and of creating in the process a spirit of militancy in the people. However, in the face of the uncompromising white refusal to abandon a policy which denies the African and other oppressed South Africans their rightful heritage - freedom - no one can blame brave, just men for seeking justice by the use of violent methods; nor could they be blamed if they tried to create an organised force in order to ultimately establish peace and racial harmony."* – (www.anc.org.za)

With the imprisonment of so many ANC leaders after the Rivonia Trial, and the ban on political activities of those outside prison, it became very difficult to run the ANC from inside the country. Oliver Tambo, who was living in exile in London and Tanzania, took over the practical day-to-day leadership of the ANC.

Even though he was banned and devoted much of his days to the farming he loved, Luthuli never stopped his political activities. His main weapon against the repressive regime was his own words. He wrote speeches to be read on his behalf, and letters of appeal to influential leaders in the United Nations, Christian organisations in Britain, the American Committee on Africa, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He also wrote the foreword to a book by Helen Joseph, in 1963. At every opportunity, he spread the liberation ideals of the ANC and his people.

On 21 July 1967, Albert Luthuli was found dead near the narrow railway bridge in Groutville. Some thought he must have been struck by a train, but many suspected something more sinister. At a memorial service on the 23rd of July, 3 000 people gathered in the Groutville church to pay their respects; but not their last respects - a man like Nkosi Albert Mvumbi Luthuli continues to earn the respect of every new generation who learns of his courageous leadership.

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Chief Luthuli, his wife Nokukhanya, their daughter Albertina, and their grandchild in front of his home in Groutville.

In praise of Nkosi Albert Luthuli
A praise song by Alan Paton

You there, Lutuli,
they thought your world was small
They thought you lived in
Groutville
Now they discover
It is the world you lived in.
You there, Lutuli,
they thought your name was small
Lutuli of Groutville
Now they discover
Your name is everywhere.
You there, Lutuli,
they thought that you were
chained
Like a backyard dog
Now they discover
They are in prison, but you are
free.
You there, Lutuli,
they took your name of Chief
You were not worthy
Now they discover
You are more Chief than ever
You there, Lutuli,
may your days be long
Your country cannot spare you
Win for us also, Lutuli
The prize of Peace.

NOTE: The Zulu spelling of Luthuli is without the letter "h" – Lutuli. Both spellings are correct.

LUTHULI LEGACY

In March 2004, the Chief Albert Luthuli Legacy Project was initiated, with the launch of a Memorial Lecture at the University of Natal. On 23 August 2004, President Thabo Mbeki unveiled a memorial to pay homage to Chief Luthuli's life, works and philosophy.

Gert Swart, the sculptor, explains his design: *"The figure of Luthuli is placed on top and to the side of curved stairs. He faces the confluence of two busy roads with his arms slightly raised, his hat in his left hand just doffed or about to be lifted in salutation. A smile of greeting dawns on his face as he welcomes those who are ascending the steps with him. His open stance embraces the intersection, King Shaka Street and the Indaba Tree in acknowledgement of his past as well as the history as his people."* – (http://gertswartsculptor.homestead.com/luthuli.html)

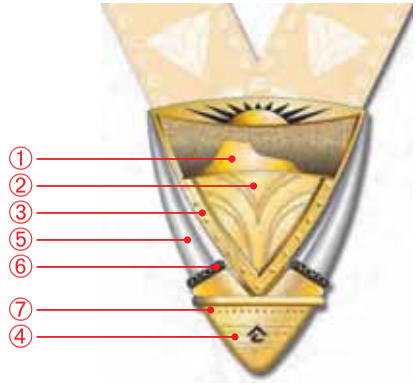
As part of the Legacy Project, Chief Luthuli's house was restored by the Department of Arts and Culture and proclaimed a museum - *"a site of struggle, a meeting place for people linked to the country's struggle for human rights and democracy"*.

Photo/Courtesy Marit Greenwood

Above: President Mbeki at the unveiling of the Nkosi Albert Luthuli Memorial statue. Below left: Detail of the statue showing wear as a result of the many people who show their respect to the great man by holding his hand.

Photo/Courtesy Peter Greenwood

The Order of Luthuli is awarded to South African citizens in recognition of outstanding contributions in the struggle for democracy, nation building, democracy and human rights, justice and peace, and conflict resolution.



Courtesy the Chancery of Orders, The Presidency

Symbolic meaning

The Flint stone shape – the triangular flint stone shape represents a basic tool of survival used by prehistoric ancestors to skin animals, construct shelters and cut strips of skin to make clothes.

1. *Isandlwana Hill* – symbolises peace and tranquillity after the Battle of Isandlwana in 1879.
2. *The South African Flag* – represents the dawn of freedom and democracy.
3. *Technology* – emphasises the development of high-tech products.
4. *The African Clay Pot* – symbolises the vision of the late Chief Albert Luthuli.
5. *Two horns* – support Chief Luthuli's vision for a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa.
6. *The leopard pattern* – represents Chief Luthuli's trademark headgear.
7. *Beads* – symbolise the beauty of Africa, and the African bull represents the empowerment and prosperity of the African people.

CHAMPION OF FREEDOM

"Our fight is for justice. We cannot cease until we have won, as we will in time. And in achieving human rights for all men in southern Africa we will be making our contribution to the fight for human rights and freedom the world over." – Oliver Tambo

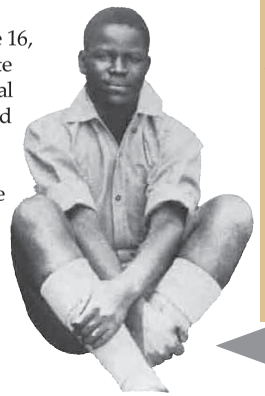
On 27 October, 1917, five years before the birth of the African National Congress, a little boy, Kaizana, was born in Nkantolo village in eastern Pondoland, to a traditionalist father, Mzimeni Tambo, and a Christian mother, Julia.

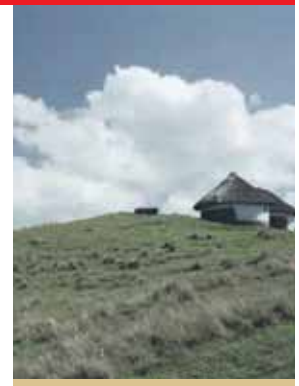
When he was 7, Kaizana was sent to the Ludeke Methodist School. On arrival, he could not give his home name; instead, his family told him to give his new English name: Oliver Reginald.

With this new name, Oliver Reginald started school, walking 15 kilometres every day. He didn't much like school because his teacher was very strict and would beat the children for the slightest offences, so he preferred spending time outdoors. He took great pride in mastering the skills of a herd boy, as well as fishing, basket-weaving, leather work and toy making. At night, there would be stories around the fire – legends of the Amapondo and narratives of brave warriors, like the men who died with the sinking of the SS Mendi in 1917. This was the world he loved. The other world, in which he had to walk to school, sit still at a desk and be called 'Oliver', he didn't enjoy at all. By the age of 10 he yearned to leave home to join the other boys who had gone to work in the sugar plantations. However, his father, though he was a traditionalist, believed in a good Western education for his children.

It was through his mother's influence that his father converted to Christianity and had all his children baptised. Oliver remained a devout Christian all his life. He was supported by his brother, and assisted by the Goddard sisters, to attend the Holy Cross missionary school in Flagstaff. It was here that Oliver became a star student and his teachers found him a place at St. Peter's, a well-known secondary school in Johannesburg.

Before Oliver completed his matric at age 16, both his parents had passed away. Despite his grief, he received top marks in the final examinations. At that time, both black and white students wrote the same exams. Oliver's achievement was praised in the black press and with great pride the Cape assembly of chiefs, the Bhunga, awarded him a bursary to study at university.





© PictureNet Africa/David Fleminger

Democracy in its purest form

The annexation of Pondoland took place in Tambo's parents' lifetime. It was an act that completed the process of colonial dispossession of South Africa. Traditional life, however, remained relatively unaffected for some time to come.

"In a society where everyone knew almost everyone else, group pressure was a strong form of discipline. The Amapondo, like many polity in southern Africa, had a consensus approach to decision making. Between headmen and the community, as well as between chiefs and the people, there was a balance of power. In his autobiography, President Mandela recalled how, 'at a council meeting, or imbizo, everyone was heard: chief and subject, warrior and medicine man, shopkeeper and farmer, land owner and labourer… it was democracy in its purest form'. After thorough discussion, the chief and his advisors would get the feel of the meeting. Opponents of the plan were encouraged to speak out. Chiefs relied on their councillors to prevent them from acting contrary to popular will. This very sound practice, of never straying too far away from their constituencies – was to play a profoundly important role in the ANC style of leadership of both Tambo and Mandela." – Callinicos (1999: 5-6)

Teachers and students at St Peter's, 1936.

Courtesy Dr. Lancelot Gama

27 October 1917 – Oliver Tambo is born in Pondoland.
1941 – Earns his degree and becomes a class teacher of Grade 8 students at Holy Cross in Flagstaff.
1942 – Expelled from Fort Hare University for protesting.
1942 – Mathematics and science teacher at St. Peter's in Rosettenville, Johannesburg.
1944 – Joins the ANC Youth League and is elected as the first National Secretary.
1946 – Elected onto the Transvaal Executive of the ANC.
1946 – African miners strike. Police open fire, kill and injure hundreds of workers.
1948 – Starts to study law by correspondence, through UNISA.
1952 – Qualifies and joins Nelson Mandela in a law practice.
1953 – Works with Chief Luthuli on the ANC's programme of mass action.
1955 – Serves on the National Action Council that coordinated the Congress of the People where the Freedom Charter is adopted.
1956 – Among the accused in the Treason Trial.
1957 – Marries Adelaide Tsukudu.
1958 – Becomes deputy president of the ANC.
1959 – Receives a five year banning order.
1960 – Instructed by ANC executive to leave South Africa and set up ANC missions outside South Africa.
1962 – Works with the Anti-Apartheid Movement to bring about sanctions and boycotts against South Africa.
1967 – Becomes ANC president-general following Albert Luthuli's death.
1969 – Leads development of strategy for integrated armed struggle, mass political demonstrations and underground ANC structures within South Africa.
1976 – Helps to settle hundreds of schoolchildren who flee from South Africa to neighbouring countries.
1985 – Calls on township residents to make townships ungovernable.
1990 – Returns from exile.
1993 – Oliver Reginald Tambo dies.

A LIBERATION LEADER EMERGES

"From the start I saw that Oliver's intelligence was diamond-edged. He was a keen debater and would not accept the platitudes that so many of us automatically subscribe to. It was easy to see that he was destined for great things." – Nelson Mandela (1994)

Oliver Tambo wanted to be a doctor, but none of the universities that offered medical studies allowed black students. So he chose to do a Bachelor of Science degree in physics and mathematics, and a Diploma in Education at Fort Hare University.

University life opened up a whole new world to Tambo. He met intelligent young men and women like himself who were politically aware, and vigorously debated the social and economic oppression of black people. He made a name for himself during these debates and was elected as chairperson of the Students' Representative Council of his Anglican residence, Beda Hall. It was in this role that he organised a student protest that led to him being expelled from Fort Hare. He went home to look for work to support the younger members of his family. But news of his expulsion soon reached his old school St. Peter's, and they immediately offered him a post as a mathematics teacher.

© Bailey's African History Archives

Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo met on the soccer field at university. They became partners in their own law practice and remained life-long friends and comrades.

O.R., as Tambo was affectionately known, taught mathematics and science, choir, soccer and cricket at St. Peter's.

"Dozens of his students remembered his distinctive, interactive and encouraging style of teaching, using methods that were well ahead of his time. O.R. inspired many to take up teaching too. After hours, he introduced the concepts of the Youth League to his senior students. Some of them went on to join the movement and became prominent comrades." – Callinicos, *Oliver Tambo: his life and legacy* (1999)

O.R. loved teaching, but when the National Party came into power in 1948, he was drawn to serve his people in more immediate ways. The new government didn't waste time in protecting their white electorate: they introduced a whole new level of racially discriminating laws and tightened the pass laws. These laws put many more black people in danger of being arrested and jailed. So, while Tambo carried on with his duties as teacher and activist, he also began to study law by correspondence, through UNISA.

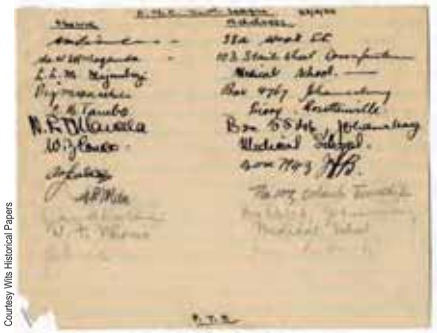
Founding of the ANC Youth League

Johannesburg was the meeting place of many young Africans who wanted to change South Africa. Tambo got to know Walter Sisulu, an estate agent, whose office served as a gathering place for intellectuals like Nelson Mandela, Anton Lembede, A. P. Mda and Jordan Ngubane. This group of young activists would also visit the house of Dr. Xuma, (then President of the ANC). It was here where the younger activists voiced their grievances that the ANC's membership was elitist, did not adequately include women and youth, and did not reach out to ordinary people.

Together, they worked on plans to transform their grievances into purposeful actions, forming the ANC Women's League and the ANC Youth League at the ANC Congress in Batho, Bloemfontein, in 1944. Of the founding members, Anton Lembede was elected chairman, Oliver Tambo secretary, and Walter Sisulu treasurer of the new youth organisation.

© Mayibuye Centre, UWC

O.R. and Nelson Mandela in Addis Ababa, 1962. Mandela was out of the country illegally at the time.



Courtesy Wits Historical Papers

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Meeting of the Korsten Branch of the African National Congress Youth League in 1957.

Left: The Youth League meeting of 24 February, 1944 in Johannesburg was attended by Walter Sisulu, W.S. Maganda, L. Majombozi, Big Masekela, Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, W.Z. Conco, Anton Lembede, A.P. Mda, Jordan Ngubane, W.F. Nkomo and Congress Mbata.

Young blood breathes new life into the ANC
Upon the founding of the ANC Youth League, Chief Luthuli recalls:

"... a further sign of the awakening of these years was the founding of the Congress Youth League. Until Dr. Xuma's time older men did not encourage younger men to join Congress, let alone participate in leading it. The organisation therefore stood in dire need of the ideas and energies of young men. Xuma brought the young men in, and the impact which the vigorous Youth League made on Congress as a whole was considerable and beneficial." – Luthuli, *Let My People Go* (2006: 92 - 93)

The Youth League injected new determination and vitality into the ANC. It inspired the drafting of a new ANC Constitution and added a more radical spirit to the ANC's strategies. Chief Luthuli recalls:

"... A new constitution was devised, one far more appropriate to the efficient working of a liberatory organisation. The machinery was overhauled and altered in ways which turned a rather vague and shapeless body into something whose workings its members could grasp, and a drive was launched to establish branches throughout the country ... The Programme of Action adopted in 1949 stressed new methods. Representations were done with. Demonstrations on a country wide scale, strike action, and civil disobedience were to replace words." – Luthuli, *Let my people go* (2006: 88 - 89)

The Programme of Action led to the Defiance Campaign in 1952 in which thousands of people were mobilised.

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O.R. in Cape Town a few days after the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960, just before he left the country.

© Mayibuye Centre, UWC

In 1957, O.R. married the love of his life, Adelaide Tsukudu, a Youth League activist and nurse at Baragwanath Hospital (now called the Baragwanath-Chris Hani Hospital) in Soweto.

Serving the people

In 1952, O.R. completed his law degree and, after completing his articles, he and Nelson Mandela opened a law practice together. Their practice became immensely popular, since it gave hope to the many who had never before had access to attorneys. On arriving at their office, O.R. and Mandela often had to climb over people sitting in the corridor, waiting for legal help. These were mostly innocent people in trouble with the government for committing some so-called apartheid 'crime', like sitting on a bench marked 'whites only,' not carrying a pass, being in a white area at the wrong time, or falling in love with a person of a different colour. Even though their clients couldn't pay much for the advice they got, the firm Mandela & Tambo flourished.

The Defiance Campaign of the Congress Alliance also began in 1952. Its successful protest led to a series of banning orders for its leaders. When Walter Sisulu was banned, O.R. took over his role as National Secretary. Together with Chief Luthuli, who was elected President of the ANC in 1953, he worked on the ANC's programme of mass campaigns. O.R. served on the National Action Council that coordinated the Congress of the People in 1955, where the Freedom Charter was adopted. Because of these activities, he was among the accused in the 1956 Treason Trial.

In 1958, O.R. became Deputy President of the ANC. The following year, he, like many other leaders, received a five-year banning order.

After the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, the ANC realised it was about to be banned. O.R. was instructed by the ANC executive to leave South Africa and set up ANC missions overseas. Between 1960 and 1990, O.R. established ANC missions in 27 countries.

THE EXILE YEARS

O.R's work in exile was not easy. The governments of most Western countries objected to the armed struggle and the ANC's willingness to work with the South African Communist Party. African countries, on the other hand, objected to the ANC's non-racial policy, as many had just been freed from white colonialism.

O.R. became the 'glue' that held the liberation movement together during the difficult years of exile outside, and armed struggle within, South Africa.

Umkhonto we Sizwe

In 1961, the ANC protested the whites-only referendum which decided to declare South Africa a republic. The government mobilised its armed forces to break up the protest. ANC leaders in South Africa concluded that the time had come to move beyond non-violent protest and form the military wing of the ANC – Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation).

Umkhonto we Sizwe, also known as MK, immediately launched a campaign of sabotage against government and economic installations - *"The symbols of oppression, not human beings"* (Nelson Mandela, 1994). Over the next two years, 200 acts of sabotage targeted power supplies, pass offices and other government buildings.

From exile, O.R. had to secure military training and camp facilities for MK in numerous African countries, including Tanzania and Zambia. As Supreme Commander of MK in exile, he continually stressed that the ANC would not deliberately attack civilian targets. On 28 November, 1980, at a ceremony in Geneva, O.R. declared that the ANC supported the Geneva Convention and the humanitarian conduct of war. At the ANC conference held in Kabwe in 1985, it was decided that the killing of white military personnel and military officials could no longer be excluded in sabotage attempts.

The Anti-Apartheid Movement

O.R. spent much of his early days in exile in London, working with the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) to promote economic sanctions as something governments and institutions could do to put pressure on the South African government, and to promote consumer boycotts by individuals.

In 1962, the AAM lobbied the International Olympic Committee, which then excluded South Africa from the Olympic Games. Thus began a series of sport boycotts that had an emotional impact on most white South Africans.

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O.R. Tambo speaking at Trafalgar Square, London, 1968. During the 1980s, South Africa House, on Trafalgar Square, was a focal point for anti-apartheid protest in the UK. As the only South African diplomatic building in a public area, the site was targeted by protestors from around the world.

Anti-Apartheid Movement

In April 1960, the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) was formed to coordinate anti-apartheid work and to keep South Africa's apartheid policy in the forefront of British politics. For the next 40 years the AAM became the driving force of anti-apartheid activities all over the world.

E.S. Reddy (1994) – Director of the United Nations Centre Against Apartheid, 1976 - 1983 – described the AAM as *"a coalition which encompassed the world and consisted of international, regional, national and local bodies. It developed a broad range of actions from public boycotts to UN sanctions, from the provision of humanitarian assistance to refugees to military and non-military assistance to the liberation movement. I can think of no other coalition of this scope, of no other campaign that was carried on so long and with such persistence, and of no other cause for which so many people in so many countries made such sacrifices."*

One of the AAM's most brilliant achievements was that it involved private individuals. It never received funds from governments. All its administration was run on donations contributed by individuals of all races from all over the world.

The work of the AAM culminated in the 'Tribute to Nelson Mandela' at Wembley Stadium to celebrate Nelson Mandela's 70th birthday in 1988. It was televised in 67 countries and boasted the world's biggest-ever audience for a live cultural event.

The world-wide network of anti-apartheid movements paved the way for non-governmental participation in inter-governmental conferences such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002.

AAM was dissolved after the first democratic elections in South Africa in April 1994, but not before creating a successor organisation, Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA), which continues to influence international decision makers.

O.R. encourages the young lions

All through the 1980s, O.R. spoke to people of the liberation movements through Radio Freedom, broadcast from Addis Ababa, regularly calling to the people to make the apartheid system ungovernable. *"The enemy forces are being compelled to recognise that the only cause that they have to defend is the survival of a dying order ... they can only die for the past and not for the future ... we know how to die for the future ... As a tribute to these heroic young lions who are daily losing their lives, it is appropriate that we in Umkhonto we Sizwe, the people's army, should pledge ourselves that they shall not die in vain and that our revolution in its triumph shall rebuild for them the childhood that they have lost."* – O.R. Tambo on *Radio Freedom*, in Addis Ababa (21 December 1987)

O.R. explains Heroes' Day

Umkhonto we Sizwe was launched on 16 December. This was the Day of the Covenant, the national holiday on which Afrikaners celebrated their victory over the Zulu King Dingaan. O.R. said, *"They celebrate the violence of a minority aimed at subjugating the majority of the people of our country, the violence of white over black. In reality it is a celebration of injustice and the inhumanity of man against man. We chose that day to show how different we were... The racists celebrate December 16 in the name of a false god, a celebration of war in pursuit of an unjust cause. We celebrate December 16, our Heroes' Day, to underline our commitment that we are waging a just war in pursuit of freedom, democracy and peace..."* – O.R. Tambo on *Radio Freedom*, in Addis Ababa (21 December 1987)

The Rivonia Treason Trial

After the Rivonia trial began on 8 October 1963, O.R. had to assume leadership for the entire ANC. His first priority was to get international support to prevent the death sentence of Mandela, Sisulu and the other Rivonia accused. O.R. told the UN: *"I cannot believe that the United Nations can stand by calmly watching what I submit is genocide masquerading under the guise of a civilised dispensation of justice"*. Three days later, the UN passed a resolution condemning the South African Government's apartheid policy and calling for the end of all political trials and the unconditional release of political prisoners.

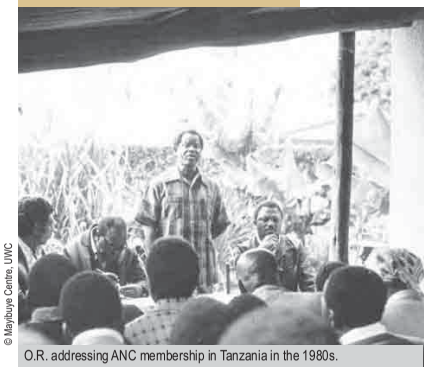
In November 1963, the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) set up the World Campaign for the Release of South African Political Prisoners (WCRSAPP) to support the UN resolution and ensure that the Rivonia trial got the widest possible publicity. A world-wide petition of 197 387 signatures demanding the release of political prisoners was presented at the UN. When the judge pronounced his verdict, he referred to the unprecedented international action around the trial. The Rivonia accused were sentenced to life imprisonment instead of receiving the death sentence. This was a great victory for both O.R. and the AAM.

Mandela said of his friendship with O.R.: *"Oliver Tambo is more than a brother to me. He is my greatest friend and comrade for nearly fifty years. If there is one amongst you who cherishes my freedom, Oliver Tambo cherishes it more and I know that he would give his life to set me free."*
– Speech by Nelson Mandela, read by his daughter, Zindzi, at Jabulani stadium in Orlando, Soweto, in 1985.

After Rivonia, it was clear that O.R. could not return to South Africa and would have to lead the ANC in exile.

President-General of the ANC

Following Albert Luthuli's death in 1967, O.R. became the president-general of the ANC. At the Morogoro Conference in Tanzania in 1969, the first ANC conference outside South Africa, O.R. led the development of a strategy that integrated the armed struggle, mass political demonstrations, the formation of underground ANC structures within South Africa, and a campaign for international support and assistance from the rest of the world. The Morogoro Conference also agreed to open ANC membership to non-Africans.


© Mayibuye Centre, UWC
O.R. addressing ANC membership in Tanzania in the 1980s.

During the 1970s O.R. travelled the world, addressing the UN and other international gatherings, on apartheid. In 1973, the UN declared apartheid *"a crime against humanity"*. O.R. was also responsible for fundraising. He raised 280 million pounds for non-combatant work against apartheid.

After the 1976 student uprising, hundreds of schoolchildren fled South Africa and tried to make their way to MK camps in other African countries, like Tanzania.

O.R. had to raise funds from the international community to provide shelter and accommodation for these children. He appreciated their determination to fight in the struggle but insisted that they complete their schooling before joining MK in the armed struggle. O.R. also helped to start the Luthuli Foundation, which made bursaries available to serious students, and placed them in sympathetic countries around the world.

Sanctions

Together with the AAM, O.R. campaigned for international sanctions against the apartheid regime. In April 1964, the AAM met with the UN Special Committee on Apartheid in London at the International Conference for Economic Sanctions Against South Africa, and started planning sanctions. This was the first working relationship between the UN and a non-governmental organisation. The UN and the AAM also cooperated in organising conferences and on the 'Free Mandela' campaign. Their greatest achievement, however, was getting international support for sanctions against South Africa.

In 1974, the Arab oil-producing states refused to sell oil to South Africa. This forced South Africa to spend huge amounts of money buying oil on the black market. The UN Security Council Arms Embargo of 1977 further crippled the apartheid machine.

O.R. helped launch the Anti-Apartheid movement in the US by focusing on raising support from US academics and university students who, in turn, influenced non-governmental organisations, community organisations, church groups and trade unions. It took the US some time before supporting sanctions, but in October 1986, the US Congress passed legislation implementing mandatory sanctions against South Africa. All new investments and bank loans were banned, air links between the US and South Africa were terminated, and the importation of many South African products was stopped.

Because of sanctions, the apartheid government had to borrow a lot of money from international banks to support the illusion of self-sufficiency. It soon exhausted its credit and banks refused to give more loans. The apartheid Minister of Finances, Barend du Plessis, would later say that sanctions were the dagger that finally immobilised apartheid and forced the government to come to the negotiating table.

All posters © Mayibuye Centre, UWC

"Sanctions will not kill us. It is the apartheid system that is killing us. Even sacrifice as a result of sanctions does not involve death, which we get from the apartheid system. Sanctions will not kill us, but sanctions will help to kill the system that does kill us ... Unemployment runs into millions as far as Africans are concerned precisely because of the apartheid system itself. So it is nothing new to be out of work ... The Government does not care if Africans lose their jobs by the millions, but the regime would care if whites lost their jobs by the thousands, or even by the hundreds. If hundreds were thrown out of work as a result of sanctions, they would want to do something about it ... " – O.R. Tambo on *Radio Freedom*, in Addis Ababa (August 1986)

Creating a vision for the future

During his time in exile, O.R. spent many hours working on guidelines for a new South African constitution and a multi-party democracy. He made sure that the ANC's Bill of Rights included children's rights and a tolerance of gay and lesbian people. O.R. was also foremost amongst those who advocated rights for women in the movement. In 1981 he said, *"Women in the ANC should stop behaving as if there was no place for them above the level of certain categories of involvement. They have a duty to liberate us men from antique concepts and attitudes about the place and role of women in society and the development and direction of our revolutionary struggle."* – Callinicos (1999)

A HERO RETURNS

When Nelson Mandela walked free on 11 February 1990, O.R. was in a hospital bed in Sweden. His gruelling work schedule over years of campaigning for freedom and liberation had taken its toll and he was often ill.

A phone-call from South Africa, with the voice of Nelson Mandela on the other end, told him that liberation and democracy had won over oppression and violence. Now all South Africans could rejoice and start working on the difficult task of healing the wounds. O.R. and Adelaide, their children and all exiles were free to return to the land of their birth.

Home at last

"From the moment that he got on the plane," said Adelaide, *"he got stronger and stronger, you could almost see the connections being made in his head. The joy of returning home, the exhilaration of returning home was a magical healing process."* – Sandi Baai, *Oliver Reginald Tambo, Teacher, Lawyer, Freedom Fighter* (2006)

On 16 December 1990, O.R. Tambo was elected national chairman of the ANC, with Mandela as president.

In January 1993, he went home to his beloved Mpondoland. *"In the tradition of the amaMpondo, when a warrior returns from war or battle, he has to find time to pay homage at the Chief's Great Place. Here a festive celebration with speeches by close associates of the chief took place. There was also dancing and singing, meant to give expression to feelings of joy: an 'ecstatic' local community welcomed him. The communal character of the celebrations was a direct inheritance from the rural African sages. At the time of the celebrations, the blood of a lamb is spilled as a symbol of sacrifice, which clarifies priorities and strengthens commitments to peace and justice …"* – Sandi Baai (2006)

Free at last: The anti-apartheid campaign reaches its goal

On 2 February, 1990, president FW de Klerk announced the unbanning of the ANC, the PAC and the SACP. On 11 February, Nelson Mandela walked free and spoke to a jubilant crowd in Cape Town. These are extracts from his speech that was heard all over the world:

"... I stand here before you not as a prophet but as a humble servant of you, the people. Your tireless and heroic sacrifices have made it possible for me to be here today. I therefore place the remaining years of my life in your hands.

"... I salute the African National Congress. It has fulfilled our every expectation in its role as leader of the great march to freedom. I salute our President, Comrade Oliver Tambo, for leading the ANC even under the most difficult circumstances.

"I salute the rank and file members of the ANC. You have sacrificed life and limb in the pursuit of the noble cause of our struggle.

"... On this occasion, we thank the world community for their great contribution to the anti-apartheid struggle. Without your support our struggle would not have reached this advanced stage. The sacrifice of the frontline states will be remembered by South Africans forever." – (www.anc.org.za)

After 30 years in exile, O.R. (middle) is reunited with Nelson Mandela (left) and Walter Sisulu (right) on South African soil.

Like Moses ...

Just a few months after visiting his home, on 23 April, 1993, O.R. died after a massive stroke. Many believe that the news of Chris Hani's assassination contributed to his death.

"Oliver Tambo was accorded a state funeral. Scores of friends and heads of state from the international community - east, west and non-aligned - journeyed to bid him farewell. Oliver Tambo, after many years of toil and conscientious care, had led his people, like Moses, to the top of the mountain range. He did not live to see the other side." – Callinicos (1999)

A year later, South Africans went to the polls for the first ever democratic election. The ANC won an overwhelming victory.

"Without him, and his close collaborator Nelson Mandela, the revolution might well have gone ahead, but it would not have taken the form that it did. Working closely with his comrades in exile, at home and on Robben Island, employing the time-honoured style of consensus and collective ownership of decisions, Tambo became the interpreter of the revolution - its teacher, its moral guide and its mediator. Oliver Tambo's ideas live on in our constitution, in the democratic and co-operative values of the African National Congress and in its vision for a just, inclusive and equitable society. At a time when we are taking stock, and preparing for the next phase of our history, it is important to reflect on our heritage and pay tribute to Oliver Tambo, revolutionary thinker, humanist and mentor." – Callinicos (1999)

The people's cause shall triumph

"Operating within the logic of a people's struggle - armed and political - and supported by the international community, we managed to push the enemy into a crisis which could not be resolved within the confines of the old order. For the first time possibilities to end apartheid and national oppression through negotiations were created. As a result of struggle the closed door that our late President, Chief AJ Luthuli, knocked on for many decades was finally opened. It is our responsibility and destiny to seize this historic opportunity.

"Before I sit down, I wish to make a few observations: we did not tear ourselves apart because of lack of progress at times. We were always ready to accept our mistakes and to correct them. Above all we succeeded to foster and defend the unity of the ANC and the unity of our people in general. Even in bleak moments, we were never in doubt regarding the winning of freedom. We have never been in doubt that the people's cause shall triumph.

"Finally I would like to thank all who have contributed to making my Presidency a worthwhile experience for me personally.

"Amandla! Maatla!"
– Oliver Tambo's opening address to the ANC National Conference (July 1991)

Adelaide Tambo

Adelaide Tambo was a teenager from Vereeniging when she joined the ANC Youth League. She soon rose to a leadership position. When she met O.R. Tambo at an ANC meeting, she was working as a nursing sister at Baragwanath Hospital (now called the Baragwanath-Chris Hani Hospital). They married in 1956, during the infamous Treason Trial. That same year, Adelaide was one of the 20 000 women who marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against the pass laws.

In 1960 she left South Africa with O.R. While in London she worked with the International Defence and Aid Fund (IDAF) to identify and offer financial assistance to families whose children had left South Africa after 1976.

Life in London was not easy. Ma Tambo, as she came to be known, had to work double shifts as a nurse at an old people's home to support the family while O.R. travelled on ANC business. Their London home became a base for many South African exiles.

Adelaide received various awards recognising her work as a freedom fighter, including the Noel Foundation Life Award, the Oliver Tambo/Johnny Makatini Freedom Award, and the Order of Simon of Cyrene.

After returning to South Africa in December 1990, Adelaide was elected treasurer-general of the ANC Women's League in 1993. After the death of O.R., she became an ANC member of parliament for five years.

Just before her death in 2007 she launched the Adelaide Tambo Trust for the aged.

Adelaide died on 31 January 2007. At her funeral, President Thabo Mbeki said: *"Adelaide Tambo represented in her very being and lived her life in a manner that served as an indestructible monument to the values and practice of ubuntu".*

"There is a danger in celebrating the lives of men, that we do not properly acknowledge the central role of the women who maintained the household, raised the family and enabled their husbands to play a leading role in the movement. The ANC, owes a great debt to them." – Callinicos (1999)

A HERO IS REMEMBERED

O.R. Tambo's grave in Tamboville Cemetery, Wattville, Benoni, bears the inscription: *'It is our responsibility to break down barriers of division and create a country where there will be neither whites nor blacks, just South Africans, free and united in diversity'.*

Courtesy Government Communication and Information System (GCIS)

Tambo Memorial Hospital in Boksburg
At the hospital renaming ceremony in April 1998, President Nelson Mandela said, *"Much of Oliver Tambo's most significant work was done in the 30 years he spent in exile when the minority government made it a crime to report his words ... Throughout those years, he never lost sight of the need to train healers, teachers, farmers, scientists, builders, artists and poets, to prepare for a liberated and democratic South Africa".*

O.R. Tambo International Airport

On 27 October 2006, Johannesburg International Airport (previously called Jan Smuts International) was renamed O.R. Tambo International Airport. President Thabo Mbeki said that the renaming was about *"our memory of ourselves"*. He spoke of the need to know where we have been in order to know who we will become.

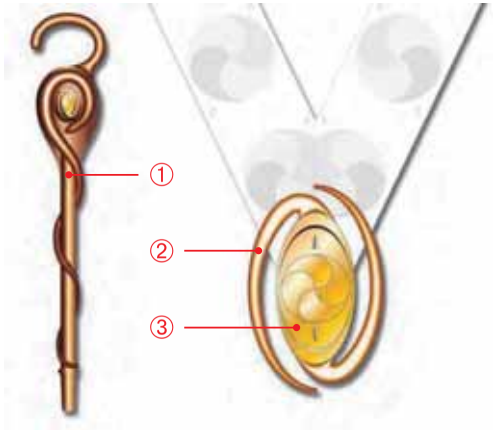
"Let all who pass through her doors come to learn that she carries the name of one who, rather than curse the darkness of savage oppression, lit the candles that today light our way to a bright future for all our people."

Many other memorials have been, and will still be, created to celebrate the life and legend of O.R. Examples are the Oliver R. Tambo Memorial Law Library at the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria; Oliver Tambo Moot Court, Faculty of Law, University of Cape Town; the O.R. Tambo District Municipality; the UNESCO "Oliver Tambo" Chair of Human Rights and the Tambo Memorial Bust in Cuba.

Courtesy Government Communication and Information System (GCIS)

Family, friends and colleagues at the unveiling of O.R's bust at the renaming of O.R. Tambo International Airport.

The Order of the Companions of O.R. Tambo is awarded to those heads of state and other foreign dignitaries who have actively promoted the interests and aspirations of South Africa through excellence, cooperation and active expression of solidarity and support.



Courtesy the Chancery of Orders, The Presidency

Symbolic meaning

1. *Walking stick* - carved out of dark, indigenous wood. The walking stick is a symbol of appreciation for the support and solidarity shown by a recipient to South Africa, and similarly in turn, South Africa's commitment to support and stand by the recipient.
2. *Majola* - the watchful eye represents recognition of the recipient's active expression of solidarity and support for South Africa.
3. *A tomoye of four sections* - is inspired by the universal yin and yang symbol. This symbol represents the meeting point of diverse spiritual energies.

29TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF ROBERT MANGALISO SOBUKWE

OF THE AFRICAN, BY THE AFRICANS, FOR AFRICANS

"Let me plead with you, lovers of my Africa, to carry with you into the world the vision of a new Africa, an Africa reborn, an Africa re-created. Young Africa. We are the first glimmers of a new dawn …"
- Robert Sobukwe, 21 October 1949.

© Bailey's African History Archives

Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe was born on 5 December 1924 in Graaff-Reinet, a rural Karoo town in the Eastern Cape. Hubert, his father, came from Basutoland, known today as Lesotho, and his mother Angelina was a Amapondo of the Xhosa peoples. His parents had seven children, six boys and one girl, but three of the boys died at an early age. Robert was the youngest child and his parents expressed their gratitude at his birth by giving him the Xhosa name "Mangaliso" – meaning "It is wonderful". His father had seven years of schooling and worked for the local municipality. In his spare time he cut and sold wood in the location to make ends meet. His mother was illiterate and worked as a cook at the town hospital for many years, and then as a domestic worker. Both his parents stressed the importance of religion and education. They went to the Methodist church every Sunday. They made sure their children grew up to love reading, by bringing home old books they found discarded by others.

Robert began his education at the Methodist mission in the location. At age 11, he moved to the Anglican school in town, where he and his brother were the only children who passed out of 13 students. The boys' success was due to their father's strictness, as his brother Ernest recalls: *"Daddy's law was that before you go and play outside, do your homework"* (Pogrund 1990: 8). His father was also a traditionalist, so before continuing with his high school education, Robert went to initiation school, where he was circumcised.

At age 15, Robert was sent to high school at Healdtown, some 225 kilometres from home. Life at the boarding school was hard, but the education was good. Robert excelled as a student and was praised for his excellent command of English - he read two or three novels a week. Robert also enjoyed playing tennis and the fullback position in the school's rugby team. It was at Healdtown that Robert qualified as a primary school teacher in 1942 and later completed his matric in 1946. Two years before matriculating he was diagnosed with tuberculosis. The principal, Mr Caley, had to convince his father not to take Robert home to die, but rather to have him admitted to hospital, where he eventually made a full recovery. In his final year at Healdtown he became headboy and obtained a first class pass, entitling him to go to university at Fort Hare.

1924 - Born in Graaff-Reinet.
1940 - Goes to Healdtown boarding school, 225km away from home.
1947 - Wins scholarship to Fort Hare and studies Native Administration.
1949 - Completes degree. Joins the ANC Youth League. Delivers his famous "Completers' Social" speech at Fort Hare.
1950 - Becomes a teacher in Standerton.
1954 - Appointed as a language assistant at Wits University with glowing recommendations from Professor Z.K. Matthews and Professor GM Mzamane. He becomes the driving force in the Africanist movement.
1955 - Accepted at Wits to do a BA where he graduates with honours in 1958.
1958 - Breaks away from the ANC.
1959 - The PAC is formed and Sobukwe is elected as president-general.
1960 - The PAC's Decisive Action Campaign against the pass laws.
1960 - Sharpeville massacre of 21 March, now memorialised as Human Rights Day.
1960 – 1963 - Sobukwe is imprisoned for 3 years in Pretoria.
1963 - Apartheid authorities decide he's too dangerous to walk free. They create the "Sobukwe clause" and imprison him on Robben Island, where he completes a degree in Economics.
1969 - Restricted under house arrest in Kimberley, where he completes a degree in Law.
1978, 27 **February** - Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe dies.

© Wits Historical Papers

Sobukwe with his parents and family at Fort Hare graduation.

© Mayibuye Centre, UWC

Fort Hare

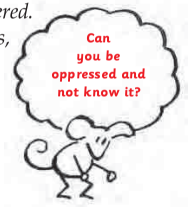
"The premier institution for blacks was near Alice - the South African Native College at Fort Hare. The college, founded in 1916, was originally intended for blacks, as the title indicated, but also had a small number of white students. Later, there were no white students, but there were coloureds and Asians ... In its time, the college nurtured many blacks who rose to leadership. Seretse Kharma, first President of independent Botswana, was there in 1946. Robert Mugabe, who led the struggle against white rule in Rhodesia, and became first Prime-Minister of Zimbabwe, graduated in 1941, as did Oliver Tambo, later the President in exile of the African National Congress. And a year before him, Nelson Mandela." – Pogrund (1990: 15)

© Bailey's African History Archives

Sobukwe (far right) with other Africanists: Nthite, Leballo, and Roboroka.

BECOMING POLITICALLY CONSCIOUS

Sobukwe had just turned 23 when he began studying for his first degree at Fort Hare in 1947. He studied Native Administration, which opened his eyes to the oppressive laws that governed black people's lives. As Pogrund, his life-long friend and author of Sobuckwe's biography, describes: *"In this course he confronted the details of the means whereby blacks were oppressed. It caused him vast shock. Suddenly he became aware of his own situation and that of his fellow-blacks in a way that he had never before considered. During his school years he had, of course, like other pupils, whether black or white, been fed the standard version of South African history which portrayed white settlers engaged on a civilising mission and bravely facing up to marauding black savages."* – Pogrund, *How can man die better: the life of Robert Sobukwe* (1990: 18)



African Nationalism

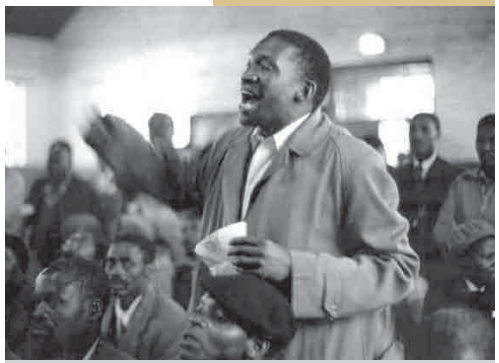
It was in his second year of study that Sobukwe became politically active. His political ideas were firmly rooted in African Nationalism, which argued that it was the African (black) race that was being oppressed, and that only African Nationalism or Africanism could save the African people. At first he found expression for these ideas in the All-African Convention. (The AAC was formed in 1935 to coordinate resistance to the erosion of black rights.) Then, in April 1949, Sobukwe joined the Congress Youth League (CYL) at Fort Hare: Pitje was elected Chairman and Sobukwe, together with Joe Matthews and P.V. Mbatha, were appointed to act as the branch's research group. Sobukwe read very widely on African philosophy, politics and history. A.P. Mda, the President of the CYL, recalls that with regard to African Nationalist philosophy, *"[Sobukwe] went on to develop our position – mine and Anton Lembede's – to a higher level …"* and Pitje recalls, *"… we were a very closely knit group ... but Sobukwe was towering over us, even those of us on the staff, intellectually, from whatever angle. We readily recognised that he was an exceptional chap. If we had a statement to be released by the group, ten to one Robert would be asked to draft it because we felt he had a better command of the language …"* – Pogrund (1990: 29-30)

In the 1940s and 50s, Africanist members were often in conflict with the more conservative ANC guard about how best to approach the struggle for freedom. The conflict was between "non-collaboration" and "collaboration" with the white authorities. One such conflict related to whether or not blacks should participate in the Natives' Representative Council. Africanists saw collaboration as a "ja baas" (yes master) stance that sold out to the oppressor.

Sobukwe was also a rising star outside of the CYL; he was elected president of the SRC in 1949. In his term of office he assisted the nurses who went on strike at Victoria Hospital. It was during this strike that Sobukwe met his wife-to-be, nurse Veronica Zodwa Mathe. Veronica says, *"I loved him at first sight"* (Pogrund 1990: 33), but it took some time before they were to cement their relationship.

"When I met my husband he was already in the struggle. He had come to the Victoria Hospital in Lovedale. As nurses we did not even know about the Youth League. We were on a strike, because we would do our jobs properly, but we were not properly treated. We wrote down our complaints, ten of them. One nurse was told to leave and we said we are all leaving. We were not members of the Youth League. They were members of the Youth League. However, the people from Fort Hare would come and help us. We were told to go home for two months, on unpaid leave. Sobukwe had been addressing a gathering in Queenstown. This is from the early years when I had just gotten to know him. Nothing came to my surprise or shock, because from the day I met him he was in the struggle and he died in the struggle." – Truth & Reconciliation Commission testimony of Veronica. Z. Sobukwe (12 May 1997)

Sobukwe recognised the valuable example provided by the striking nurses. In his famous speech at the Completers' Social at Fort Hare, 21 October 1949, he said: *"The trouble at the hospital, then, I say, should be viewed as part of a broad struggle and not as an isolated incident. I said last year that we should not fear victimisation. I still say so today. We must fight for freedom - for the right to call our souls our own. And we must pay the price. The nurses have paid the price. I am truly grieved that the careers of so many of our women should have been ruined in this fashion. But the price of freedom is blood, toil and tears. This consolation I have, however, that Africa never forgets. And these martyrs of freedom, these young budding women, will be remembered and honoured when Africa comes into her own"* (Pogrund 1990: 35).



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1958, Sobukwe at the conference where the Africanists split away from the ANC. *"We shall think of cooperation with other races when we have come into our own,"* he said.

Sobukwe completed his first degree in 1949 and took up a teaching post at Jandrell Secondary School in Standerton in 1950. This was also the year that Sobukwe was elected as National Secretary of the CYL. However, because he was 160 kilometers away from Johannesburg and the CYL President, Pitje, was not particularly effective, it meant that Sobukwe spent two uneventful years in Standerton. While he helped to popularise the ANC's agenda, including the Defiance Campaign, he did not personally become a defier.

In 1954, Sobukwe changed careers, accepting the post of language assistant at the Department of Bantu Languages at the University of the Witwatersrand (where he also completed a BA Honours degree and produced a Zulu translation of *Macbeth*.) In the same year he married Veronica and they lived together, first in White City, Jabavu, and then at 684 Mofolo, Soweto. They had four children: a daughter, Miliswa (meaning to plant deep), then a son, Dinilesizwe (sacrifice to the nation), and twin boys, Dalindyebo (to make riches) and Dedanizizwe (give way, nations). Family and work life were very rewarding, but Sobukwe hungered to get back into politics; he joined the ANC Mofolo branch and affiliated with the other African Nationalists within the ANC.

The broad struggle

"It is a struggle between Africa and Europe, between a twentieth-century desire for self realisation and a feudal conception of authority. I know, of course, that because I express these sentiments I will be accused of indecency and will be branded an agitator ... People do not like to see the even tenor of their lives disturbed. They do not like to be made to feel guilty. They do not like to be told that what they have always believed to be true is wrong ... But I make no apologies. It is [right] that we speak the truth before we die ... We have made our choice. And we have chosen African Nationalism because of its deep human significance; because of its inevitability and necessity to world progress ... I wish to make it clear again that we are anti-nobody. We are pro-Africa. We breathe, we dream, we live Africa; because Africa and humanity are inseparable." – Pogrund (1990: 34-37)

Praise for a teacher

M'Cwabenis warmly recalls: *"[Sobukwe] was loved by all who came into contact with him. He was loved by the young and the old. He became a leading member of the staff and they all accepted him as such. The pupils worshipped him and they were none the worse for it."* – Pogrund (1990: 49)

Praise from workers

On walking through the streets of Braamfontein at lunch time, black workers would often *"... stand up and give the Zulu royal salute – an upraised hand and a cry 'Bayete'. Sobukwe responded shyly and would gently say hello to them."* – Pogrund (1990: 62)

The usual kind of pass book harassment.

Pass Laws

According to Section 10 (1a-d) of the 1954 Native Urban Areas Act, Africans could only stay in an urban area for more than 12 hours if they:

a) Had been born there and had lived there ever since.
b) Had worked there for 10 years under one employer, or had lived there for 15 years without breaking any law (including pass laws).
c) Were the child or wife of a man permitted to live in the urban area on the conditions of (a) or (b) mentioned above.
d) Signed a contract to migrate from a rural reserve to a specific job for a limited period of time in an urban area, after which they must return home. Contract workers' families were not allowed to join them in an urban area.

BIRTH OF THE PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS

Sobukwe, along with Potlako Leballo and Josias Madzunya, disagreed with the non-racial policy of the ANC because they believed that only blacks could save the African people. So, in 1958, they decided to break away from the ANC. In April 1959, they attended Kwame Nkrumah's All-African People's Conference in Accra, Ghana, and were inspired to create the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) with Sobukwe as leader.

The following is an extract from Sobukwe's speech at the launch of the PAC, 1959: "*... Multiracialism is in fact a pandering to European bigotry and arrogance. It is a method of safeguarding white interests irrespective of population figures. In that sense it is a complete negation of democracy ... We aim, politically, at government of the African by the Africans for Africans, with everybody who owes his only loyalty to Africa and who is prepared to accept the democratic rule of an African majority being regarded as an African. We guarantee no minority rights, because we think in terms of individuals, not groups ... Socially, we aim at the full development of the human personality and a ruthless uprooting and outlawing of all forms or manifestations of the racial myth. To sum it up, we stand for an Africanist Socialist Democracy*".

Resistance to the Pass Laws

Both the ANC and PAC were committed to anti-pass campaigns in 1960. The Pass Laws Act of 1952 forced all black South Africans over the age of 15 to carry a pass book, also known as a *dompas*, at all times. This had to receive a stamp granting the person permission to be in a region outside their official area of residence. The pass book contained details about the person – fingerprints, photograph, name of employer, length of employment, etc. Employers often even added a record of the behaviour of the pass holder. A pass book without the valid permission allowed government officials to arrest and imprison the person. By 1960, the pass book was the most hated symbol of apartheid.

In March 1960, Sobukwe called upon the PAC membership to begin a national, non-violent campaign demanding the abolition of the pass laws and a minimum wage. Members were instructed to leave their passes at home on 21 March and present themselves at police stations to invite arrest.

Sobukwe's letter to the police ...

Sobukwe wrote to the police commissioner Major-General Rademeyer five days before the PAC's protest march to appeal for cooperation: "*My organisation, the Pan Africanist Congress, will be starting a sustained disciplined non-violent campaign against the pass laws on Monday, 21 March ... I am now writing to you to ask you to instruct the police to refrain from actions that might lead to violence ... the usual mumbling by a police officer on an order requiring the people to disperse within three minutes, and almost immediately ordering baton charge deceives nobody and shows the police up as sadistic bullies ... if told to disperse we will. But we cannot be expected to run helter-skelter because a trigger-happy, African hating young white police has given hundreds of thousands of people three minutes within which to remove their bodies from his immediate environment.*"
– Letter quoted in Karis & Gerhart (1977: 565-6)

SHARPEVILLE MASSACRE

At its December conference in 1959, the ANC had already chosen 31 March as the date for mass demonstrations against the pass books. Sobukwe's choice of 21 March pre-empted the ANC's planned demonstration.

The demonstration on 21 March, 1960, did not attract the mass participation the PAC had hoped for, but by the end of the day South Africa had passed a turning point in its history. Demonstrations in Orlando East, Soweto, led by Sobukwe, did not meet with any violence. Sobukwe was arrested when he presented himself, without his pass book, at the local police station. In Sharpeville, however, where the demonstrators were led by Nyakane Tsolo, the police fired on the crowd, killing 67 and wounding hundreds more. Many victims were shot in the back as they fled. Five people were also killed in Langa, Cape Town.

The ANC issued an immediate call for Monday, 28 March, to be observed as a day of mourning in the form of a stay-at-home strike. Chief Luthuli called on all black people to burn their passes.

Chief Luthuli was the first to burn his pass, and was followed by ANC leaders Duma Nokwe, Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, Gert Sibande, John Nkadimeng, Phineas Nene and others. The 28 March stay-at-home was backed by both the ANC and the PAC. There was almost 100 per cent support from black people in most urban areas. In the Western Cape, a strike by black workers lasted for over three weeks. On 30 March, the government declared a state of emergency under the Public Safety Act of 1953. To clamp down on liberation movement activities, the government used not only the police but military and navy personnel as well. The government rounded up 2 000 of the people's leaders and held them without trial for up to five months. Parliament immediately passed an Unlawful Organisations Bill which allowed the government to ban the ANC and the PAC as unlawful organisations. The liberation newspapers, *New Age* and *Torch*, were also banned. As a result, both the ANC and the PAC decided that peaceful protest was no longer enough. For the next 30 years, both groups launched sabotage campaigns against the apartheid government.

On the day of the Sharpeville massacre, 21 March, 1960, Sobukwe was coordinating a protest march in Soweto.

Sharpeville Remembered

The two artworks shown here are from the *Sharpeville Remembered Print Portfolio*. The portfolio was produced as a collaborative effort between the Department of Visual Arts and Design at the Vaal Triangle Technikon in Vanderbijlpark, and the Artist Proof Studio in Johannesburg. The portfolio was completed to coincide with the opening of the new monument in Sharpeville on 21 March 2002, and was exhibited in the old holding cells at the Sharpeville Police Station where the massacre took place. Featured artists: Kim Berman and Ludumo Gqotso.

Robben Island is a World Heritage Site and South Africa's most popular tourist site.

Courtesy SA Tourism

"For nearly 400 years, Robben Island, 12 kilometres from Cape Town, was a place of banishment, exile, isolation and imprisonment. It was here that rulers sent those they regarded as political troublemakers, social outcasts and the unwanted of society.

"During the apartheid years Robben Island became internationally known for its institutional brutality. The duty of those who ran the island and its prison was to isolate opponents of apartheid and to crush their morale. Some freedom fighters spent more than a quarter of a century in prison for their beliefs. Those imprisoned on the island succeeded on a psychological and political level in turning a prison 'hell-hole' into a symbol of freedom and personal liberation. Robben Island came to symbolise, not only for South Africa and the African continent, but also for the entire world, the triumph of the human spirit over enormous hardship and adversity." – The Robben Island Museum website (www.robben-island.org.za)

© Bailey's African History Archives

Sobukwe in jail on Robben Island.

PERSECUTED AND IMPRISONED

At Sobukwe's, trial the magistrate said: *"Not only was it your object to fill jails, but you intended to paralyse trade, industry and the economy of the country, in order to force the government to change laws …"* Sharpeville did have a huge impact on the economy. American banks had to lend the apartheid government one billion rand in order to keep it functioning.

According to the PAC's policy Sobukwe was not defended in court. He was sentenced to three years in prison. In 1963, after completing his sentence, Sobukwe was detained again by a special statute that became known as the "Sobukwe clause". This gave the government the power to detain him indefinitely without trial.

Sobukwe was then transferred to the notorious Robben Island. John Vorster explained that this was necessary because Sobukwe, *"… is a man with magnetic personality, great organising ability and a divine sense of mission"*. Vorster made it clear that he wanted to detain Sobukwe *"until this side of eternity"*. The government was worried about the increase in Africanist militants, like the offshoot of the PAC called Ama-Afrika Poqo ("The real owners of Africa"), or Poqo for short. They felt that Sobukwe would organise these young militants if he was released from jail.

Sobukwe spent six years in solitary confinement on Robben Island.

"On the island, [Sobukwe] enjoyed slightly better conditions than the other political prisoners, but he was completely isolated from them. At first he was kept in a house formerly used by a 'coloured' warder (all black warders were removed from the island in 1963), but later in 1963 he was transferred to a small bungalow which had been part of the 'coloured' school ... He studied by correspondence with the University of London for an economics degree, which he passed in 1968. But his time on the island was profoundly lonely, its monotony broken only by the occasional visits from his wife Veronica and their children, and by the silent salutes of passing prisoners from the main prison. When the other prisoners were marched by, Sobukwe used to go outside and take a handful of the soil from his garden, allowing the sand to run through his fingers, as if to say that nothing mattered more than the recovery of their land." – Deacon (1990)

Sobukwe was released in 1969 when the government became worried that the years of solitary confinement might permanently damage him psychologically. He was restricted to living in Kimberley, a place where he had never lived before, and kept under house arrest, under constant surveillance. He was prohibited from speaking in public or being quoted and from participating in any group activity. He could also not leave the Kimberley area. Although he was banned, he was visited by people like his friend Pogrund and others, who dodged the ever watchful police. Steve Biko also visited often, listening to and learning from Sobukwe.

FIGHTING AGAINST WHITE SUPERIORITY

Sobukwe completed his law degree and started a law practice in 1975. He continued practising law until his death, from cancer, in 1978.

Pogrund's work, *Sobukwe and Apartheid*, explores the view that the personality of Sobukwe was critical to the internal unity of the PAC, and his absence from the organisation during his years in jail created a gap no one in the PAC could fill. Internal conflict plagued the PAC all through its history. In 1979, for example, David Sibeko, the PAC's permanent observer at the United Nations, was murdered by PAC militants.

The PAC had to battle to raise funds and establish links with friendly countries where it could train its military recruits and send students for tertiary education. By the end of the 1970s, the PAC's formal military strength was estimated at less than 450 men and women, mainly in Tanzania and Libya.

Sobukwe had always objected to cooperation with white anti-apartheid groups. He believed that years of white supremacy had conditioned whites to be dominant and blacks to be submissive. His belief that blacks needed psychological independence influenced Steve Biko's ideas of Black Consciousness. Sobukwe admitted: *"There are Europeans who are intellectually converts to the African's cause, but, because they materially benefit from the present set-up, they cannot completely identify with that cause"*. Real democracy, he argued, can come only when blacks, *"by themselves formulate policies and programmes and decide on the method of struggle without interference from ... the minorities who arrogantly appropriate to themselves the right to plan and think for the African"*.

Sobukwe was aware that his ideas could be misinterpreted as anti-white instead of anti-white-superiority. He was worried that younger PAC militants, unwilling to see the subtleties in the PAC's philosophy, would develop a hatred of whites, rather than of apartheid. Many of Sobukwe's white friends, like Pogrund and Helen Suzman, were turned away from his funeral by militant PAC youth. In the 1990s, the PAC boycotted negotiations, announced their radical policy of *"one settler, one bullet,"* and was linked to some random killings of whites during South Africa's difficult transition to democracy. Sobukwe's fears had come true.

Sobukwe thought that even though blacks must be independent of the influence of sympathetic whites, it was ultimately loyalty to Africa that defined one as an African and was the only crucial requirement for citizenship in a liberated South Africa. He believed that whites would have full rights, as long as they viewed themselves as Africans and acted accordingly.

After the liberation of South Africa the PAC had to re-shape itself into a South African political party. In the 1994 general election, the PAC won 1.3% of the vote.

Black Consciousness supporter remembers ...

Yvonne Mokgoro, born in Kimberley, was a university student and Black Consciousness activist when Sobukwe was banished there, she recalls: *"Prof was our father-figure ... We were like students. We called him the Prof, as did everybody, as did women and children. He gave us a first-class political education. When we emerged and started with matured political activities, many of us were ANC; others were PAC ... I can't remember Prof ever trying to recruit any of us. He would conscientise us and talk about history and people and world events. Prof would give us the facts. He spoke well about everybody, he would never speak badly about anybody ... Prof sowed the seeds of feminism in me, he sowed the seed of legal activism in me."* – Pogrund (1990: 396-397)

© Bailey's African History Archives

Sobukwe under house arrest at his house in Kimberley.

© Bailey's African History Archives

Sobukwe photographed outside his small house on Robben Island.

BABA, WE PRAISE YOU

In her short story, *Robben Island*, Elleke Boehmer describes the words of a Robben Island tour guide, and ex-Robben Island prisoner, Tarik ...

"Sobukwe, who I called Baba, Father, he wasn't allowed to mingle with us. They say he wasn't even allowed to study. Only to weep ... They sent us kaffirs here since the beginning, since the Dutch. Muslim so-called infidels, them first. Then the lepers, the chronic sick, the outlaw chiefs, to join the ranks of the infidels ... You know our PAC leader Robert Sobukwe, champion of the Blackman in Africa, spirit of the warlike Poqo? So dangerous was he, my Sobukwe, so dangerous, so determined to return our land to its true inheritors that they created a law specially to detain him longer. And then they created this little prison specially to hold him in solitary. Six long years they held him in the solitary that killed him. The elite guys walking by to their work were forbidden to wave. Could not even sing or whistle to him. Allah, my Allah, it make my heart sob."

Radio Play

SAfm commissioned a play on the life of Sobukwe for Human Rights Day in 2006. The play is called *The Africanist*, and was written by Anthony Akerman. Akerman said, *"I then read Benjamin Pogrund's How Can Man Die Better: The Life of Robert Sobukwe, on which the play is based. Pogrund was a close personal friend of Sobukwe's and the man I encountered in these pages was someone I would also have felt privileged to count as a friend. Robert Sobukwe was a great surprise to me and I'm sure he'll be as much of a surprise to everyone who listens to The Africanist"*.

Memorials and street names

Robert Sobukwe's name is on a new monument at the entrance to Graaff-Reinet from Middelburg. A building in the town, which used to be called P.W. Botha-gebou, is now called the Robert Sobukwe building.

Courtesy Anziske Kuyster, Graaff Reinet Museum

Sobukwe's grave outside Graaff-Reinet.

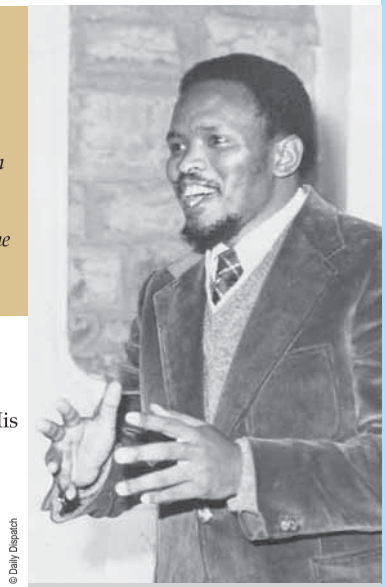
There is also a Robert Sobukwe exhibition at the local museum. When Alistair Sparks, former *Rand Daily Mail* journalist wrote "What about Sobukwe?" in the visitors' book, curator Hermi Baartman was inspired to put matters right. The exhibition is housed in the old library.

His home in Graaff-Reinet is being considered as a possible heritage site. One of the streets at the foot of Location Hill bears his name. This is where his widow, Veronica, still lives.

Robert Sobukwe's gravesite is near the entrance to the Kroonvale township.

BLACK MAN, YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN

"The first step therefore is to make the black man come to himself; to pump back life into his empty shell; to infuse him with pride and dignity, to remind him of his complicity in the crime of allowing himself to be misused and therefore letting evil reign supreme in the country of his birth."
– Steve Biko



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The charismatic young activist, Steve Biko.

The life and ideas of the young activist Steve Biko have inspired black people all over the world. His ideas and writings on Black Consciousness empowered black people with a new sense of self worth, self motivation and an attitude of activism.

Bantu Stephen Biko was born in Tarkastad in 1946 and grew up in Ginsburg Township, King Williams Town, in the Eastern Cape. His father, Mzingaye, was a clerk in town. He died when Biko was only 4 years old. His mother, Alice Nokuzola, affectionately known as MamCete, worked long hours as a domestic worker in the homes of white people. MamCete did not see much of her four children. Her second born daughter, Bukelwa, looked after her brothers Khaya and Steve and their youngest sister Nobandile.

Biko went to school in King Williams Town. His performance as a student convinced the poor community of Ginsburg to put together money to send him to Lovedale School, in Alice. He later went to live in Natal where he completed high school in 1965 at St Francis College in Marianhill, near Pinetown. Here, his excellent grades won him a scholarship to study medicine at Wentworth, Natal University's medical school for blacks.

While Biko loved rugby and dancing his chief interests were thinking, speaking and writing about the future of black people in South African politics. He wanted to create a system of thinking that would inspire all black people in South Africa.

1946, 18 December – Bantu Steve Biko is born in Tarkastad. He is brought up in Ginsberg, King Williams Town and he attends the Charles Morgan Primary School and the Forbes Grant secondary school. He joins his elder brother Khaya at Lovedale Institution and is expelled because of his brother's political activities. He moves on to attend St. Francis College in Marianhill in what was then Natal.
1966 (age 19) – Attends the University of Natal (Non-European section) at Wentworth as a medical student.
1969 (age 22) – Forms the South Africa Student's Organisation (SASO) and is elected as its first president. Also forms the Black People's Convention (BPC).
1972 (age 25) – Helps form and works for Black Community Programmes (BCP); the university discontinues his medical studies.
1973 (age 26) – Banned and restricted to King William's Town for five years. Not allowed to work for any political organisations, not allowed to be published or quoted.
1974 (age 27) – Arrested and discharged a number of times. On occasion charged and acquitted.
1975 (age 28) – Founds Zimele Trust Fund and Ginsberg Educational Trust. Is detained and held for 137 days without charge or trial.
1976 (age 29) – Elected as Honorary President of BPC. Subpoenaed to give testimony in the SASO-BPC trial. Detained in solitary confinement for 101 days.
1977 (age 30) – Arrested in March, detained and then released. Arrested again in July, charged, acquitted. Arrested again on the 18 August.
1977, 12 September – Dies in police custody.
1977, 25 September – Funeral.
1977, 14 November to 2 December – Inquest into his death.

– (www.sbf.org.za)

Courtesy National Archives

Steve Biko with Ben Ngubane while medical students at the University of Natal, 1966

Black Skin, White Masks
Biko was inspired by the writings of Frantz Fanon (1925 – 1961), a black French-speaking author born on the Caribbean island of Martinique.

Here is an extract from Fanon's book *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952):
"There is no white world, there is no white ethic, any more than there is a white intelligence. There are in every part of the world men who search. I am not a prisoner of history. I should not seek there for the meaning of my destiny. I should constantly remind myself that the real leap consists in introducing invention into existence. In the world through which I travel, I am endlessly creating myself."

Student Activist

At Wentworth, Biko was elected to the Student's Representative Council (SRC), beginning his life-long involvement in student politics. He also joined the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS). This organisation of university students had been formed in 1924, and had members of all races throughout South Africa. They spoke out against apartheid and the unfairness of racist laws, but the leadership of NUSAS consisted of privileged white students who could not fully appreciate how apartheid affected everyday life for black people in South Africa. Unlike their black friends, these white students were rarely short of money for buying books, clothing and food.

"Though the white members disliked apartheid and worked to end it, they never suffered the way that black students did. This bothered Biko. He believed that black students, not white students, should be fighting apartheid. He said that black people knew best how badly blacks were suffering and how they should free themselves."
– Chris Van Wyk, *Steve Biko*, Freedom Fighter Series (2003)

© Mayibuye Centre, UWC

Steve Biko addressing the second general students' council of the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) at University of Natal, July 1971.

"Stop being spectators"

In 1967 Biko participated in a NUSAS conference at Rhodes University in Grahamstown. Here, black and white students had to be accommodated and fed separately. Biko made it clear that he thought the integration of student politics was artificial, that all the talk of the liberal students was empty, and that the black students were being treated like second-class citizens. Black students were impressed with his stand, and in 1968, at a University Christian Movement (UCM) meeting at Stutterheim, they supported Biko's idea for an exclusively all-Black student movement. In 1969, at the University of the North near Polokwane, together with students of the University of Natal, black students created a blacks-only student union, called the South African Students' Organisation (SASO). Biko was elected president and his ideas on Black Consciousness inspired student activism all over the country.

SASO called all black students to action, asking them *"to stop being spectators in a game in which they should be participants"*. Biko said that the passivity of black students was a direct result of the oppressive political system that shaped their lives.

"The logic behind white domination is to prepare the black man for the subservient role in this country. Not so long ago this used to be freely said in parliament, even about the educational system of the black people. It is still said even today, although in a much more sophisticated language." – Steve Biko, *I Write What I Like*, African Writers Series (1978)

SASO linked student protests and their activity with community programmes by encouraging students to become involved in community activities. This was done through the establishment of community health centres, advice offices and literacy classes.

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In 1970, Biko married Nontsikelelo Mashalaba, a nursing student. They had two sons, Nkosinathi and Samora.

BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS

"So many things are said so often to us, about us and for us but very seldom by us."
– Steve Biko, *Black Viewpoint* (1972)

Courtesy Tony Nkotsi/ MTN Art Collection

Linocut print, Portrait of a Man, by Tony Nkotsi, MTN Art Collection.

Biko believed in the power of ideas to grab the imagination of oppressed people and transform their low self worth into high self esteem. He tried to find a way of uniting supporters of the banned ANC and PAC by creating a system of thought, or "ideology", for the liberation movement in South Africa. He wanted black people to understand why they were being oppressed – not just simply submit to the oppressor or defeat the oppressor. He was also speaking about something more than blind faith in a Party, a Struggle, a Leader, or a Culture. He was speaking about having a clear understanding of how power works in society and then making critical personal choices at every decision point in your life. Biko wanted black people to think for themselves.

"The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed." – Steve Biko (1978)

Biko wanted Black Consciousness to be more than a reaction to apartheid. He wanted it to be something in itself, something that would keep growing long after apartheid was gone, something that would lead people towards "a new humanity".

"We are aware of the terrible role played by our education and religion in creating amongst us a false understanding of ourselves. We must therefore work out a scheme not only to correct this, but further to be our own authorities rather than wait to be interpreted by others."
– Steve Biko (1978)

Biko believed that change must first happen within yourself. In Black Consciousness, freedom for blacks was first and foremost a freedom from the psychological oppression of their own *"inferiority complex"*. Only once the *"mind of the oppressed"* was free could black people fight for political and economic freedom from *"The System"* of white oppression.

The roots of Black Consciousness
The term Black Consciousness stems from American educator W. E. B. DuBois's evaluation of the double consciousness of American blacks being taught what they feel inside to be lies about the weakness and cowardice of their race. DuBois echoed Civil War era black nationalist Martin Delaney's insistence that black people take pride in their blackness as an important step in their personal liberation. This line of thought was also reflected in the American black nationalist, Marcus Garvey, as well as Harlem Renaissance philosopher Alain Locke and in the salons of the Nardal sisters in Paris. Biko's understanding of these thinkers was further shaped through the lens of postcolonial thinkers such as Frantz Fanon, Léopold Senghor, and Aimé Césaire. Biko reflects the concern for the existential struggle of the black person as a human being, dignified and proud of his blackness, in spite of the oppression of colonialism ... The aim of this global movement of black thinkers was to restore black consciousness and African consciousness, which they felt had been suppressed under colonialism ...

Biko's BCM had much in common with other left-wing African nationalist movements of the time, such as Amilcar Cabral's PAIGC and Huey Newton's Black Panther Party.
– (www.wikipedia.org)

A lull in the struggle
"... the struggle sort of lapsed into a period that most people came to call, you know, a lull in the struggle until such time in the 1960s the philosophy of Black Consciousness arose. I think that even that philosophy has to be understood in the context of not only South African events, but world events for that matter. What blacks were going through in America, you know, was a very important formal input into the development of this theory. Also at that time there were general student uprisings. Not only, you know, in America, but also in France and a number of areas where the war in Vietnam by America was generating a lot of opposition and we came up with SASM then, you know, riding after that development."
– Murphy Morobe, TRC statement

Courtesy Heinemann SA

I Write What I Like was first published by Heinemann Educational Books, London, Ibadan (Nigeria), Nairobi (Kenya) and the USA in 1978 - a year after Biko's death.

Courtesy Wits Historical Papers

This and all subsequent editions of the SASO newsletter were banned in July 1976. In October, SASO was declared an illegal organisation under the Internal Security Act.

© Maybuye Centre, UWC

Ramphela Mamphele at the inaugural meeting of the Black People's Convention, Hammanskraal, 1972.

Black Consciousness spreads

For Biko there was a difference between blacks and non-whites. In the philosophy of Black Consciousness "blacks" were people who defied white oppression and found solidarity with other black people. "Non-whites" were black people who collaborated with the government and who willingly submitted to white "authority".

"[T]he fact we are all not white does not necessarily mean that we are all black. Non-whites do exist and will continue to exist for quite a long time. If one's aspiration is whiteness but his [black] pigmentation makes attainment of this impossible, then that person is a non-white. Any man who calls a white man 'Baas,' any man who serves in the police force or Security Branch is ipso facto a non-white. Black people — real black people — are those who can manage to hold their heads high in defiance rather than willingly surrender their souls to the white man." – Steve Biko, *I Write What I Like*, A Selection of His Writings in a paper written for a SASO (South African Student Organisation) training course (11978)

Black Consciousness also criticised the ideology of capitalism. Biko believed that true leaders of the people would never "sell out" for power, privilege and money.

Like a fire in the veld, Biko's ideas spread amongst students. SASO became a political force, spreading to campuses across the country. Biko and his colleagues (mostly black urban intellectuals) then argued for a broader based black political organisation in the country. In July 1972, the Black People's Convention (BPC) was founded, involving not only students, but also trade unions, churches and community groups.

Inspired by Biko's teachings, high school youths began organising themselves into a movement that became known as the South African Students Movement (SASM). By 1973 it had branches in nine schools. It experienced a set back when the leadership of SASO was banned together with their SASM national secretary, Mathe Diseko. In 1974, young black activists were encouraged by the decolonisation of Mozambique. SASM became more vocal again and organised public meetings.

© Bailey's African History Archives

Fashionable young delegate at the BPC, July 1972.

1976 Student Uprising

SASO used the ideas of Black Consciousness to stimulate the minds of thousands of high school students and inspire the Student Uprisings of 1976. This was a turning point in anti-apartheid resistance in South Africa. The government reacted with levels of violence never seen before. By the end of ten months of student protests, more than 700 students had been killed and hundreds had been imprisoned. Biko considered the Student Uprisings to be a concrete expression of a new stage in the growing consciousness of black people.

At SASO, Biko helped to develop the Black Worker's Project (BWP), which was co-sponsored by the Black Community Programmes (BCP) for which Biko worked at the time. The BCP addressed the problems of black workers whose unions were not yet recognised by the law.

Courtesy Department of Education

On 16 June 1976, students march from Naledi township. Along the way they collect youth from the schools and the communities they pass until they number about 20 000. The police block them from moving towards Orlando West Junior Secondary. How and when the police open fire differs according to different people's accounts, but a march that was intended to be peaceful leads to months of violent confrontations with the police all over the country.

Black man, you are on your own

Biko's political activities left very little time for studying, and he was expelled from medical school in 1972. The following year, he was banned for five years and restricted to King Williams Town. There he set up a BCP office where he stood as Branch Executive.

Biko defied his banning order and continued working in secret. The BCP office that he had established did well, managing, amongst other achievements, to build the Zanempilo Clinic and a crèche, and set up the Ginsberg Educational trust to assist black students. In this, he was assisted by Mamphela Ramphele - a medical doctor with a PhD in social anthropology, with whom he had a lasting relationship and fathered a son. They also started community-based projects such as Zimele (Stand on Your Feet) Trust Fund and small-scale home industries. Their motto, which had been coined by Barney Pityana, was *"black man, you are on your own"*.

In order to continue publishing his writing while being banned, Biko took on the pseudonym "Frank Talk". In this way, he could continue participating in public dialogue.

Family support

While Biko was restricted to King Williams Town, under his banning order, his wife, Nontsikelelo, supported the family by commuting to work at an Anglican mission 56 kilometres away.

Biko's mother courageously supported his activities. She welcomed him home during the years of restriction, helped protect him from the inquiring eyes of government security forces, and helped with the care of his young children.

© Johncom Media

Steve Biko's wife, Nontsikelelo, and their two sons, Nkosinathi and Samora.

DEATH IN DETENTION

"In his short and remarkable life Biko was frequently harassed and detained under the country's notorious security legislation. This interrogation culminated in his arrest, together with his colleague and comrade Peter Cyril Jones, at a police road block outside of King William's Town on 18 August 1977. Biko and Jones had in fact been to Cape Town, despite the banning order, to lend their weight to efforts to get all political organisations fighting for liberation to agree on a broader programme of cooperation. Both were detained under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act. Biko's quest for black unity would eventually cost him his life. During their detention Biko and Jones were tortured at the head-quarters of the Security Division housed in what was then known as the Sanlam Building in Port Elizabeth. It was during this period that Biko sustained a massive brain haemorrhage. On 11 September 1977 Biko was transported to Pretoria Central Prison – a twelve-hour journey, naked, without medical escort, in the back of a police Land Rover. Biko died on the floor of an empty cell in Pretoria Central Prison on 12 September. It was in this way that South Africa was robbed of one of its foremost political thinkers."
– Steve Biko Foundation website (www.sbf.org.za)

In Detention
This poem, by Christopher van Wyk, speaks of the many deaths in detention that occurred at the notorious John Vorster Square police precinct in Johannesburg. It tries to show how ridiculous the 'reasons' police gave for these deaths were:

He fell from the ninth floor
He hanged himself
He slipped on a piece of soap while washing
He hanged himself
He slipped on a piece of soap while washing
He fell from the ninth floor
He hanged himself while washing
He slipped from the ninth floor
He hung from the ninth floor
He slipped from the ninth floor while washing
He fell from a piece of soap while slipping
He hung from the ninth floor
He washed from the ninth floor while slipping
He hung from a piece of soap while washing

– Christopher van Wyk, *It Is Time To Go Home* (1979: 45)

"It left him cold" – An artwork by Sam Nhlengethwa
"We know Biko was badly tortured, yet the impression Nhlengethwa conveys is of a body abused but a mind serene; no longer defiant of contemporary injustice; confident that his civil beliefs will prevail." - John Stremlau, *Voice Overs Wits, writings exploring African Artworks*, University of the Witwatersrand Art Galleries 2004.

Courtesy Sam Nhlengethwa and Standard Bank African Art Collection (Wits Art Galleries)

Sam Nhlengethwa (South Africa), **It left him cold**, 1990. Collage, pastel, paint, pencil on paper (h) 69cm x (l) 93.2cm. Standard Bank African Art Collection (Wits Art Galleries)

"It leaves me cold"

When asked what he felt about Biko's death, Minister of Justice and Police, Jimmy Kruger said, *"it leaves me cold"*. This statement was so well reported in world media, that he inadvertently became responsible for influencing millions of people against apartheid.

When news of Biko's death became known, official police statements claimed that his death was the result of an extended hunger strike. But he was found to have massive injuries to the head, which many saw as strong evidence that he had been brutally clubbed by his captors. The police changed their story saying that Biko had banged his own head against the cell wall. His friend, Donald Woods, accompanied Biko's wife, Nontsikelelo, went to the mortuary and secretly took photographs to expose the police's lie.

Biko became the 40th black South African to die in police custody under the detention without trial laws. Another 60 people would die in detention before 1990. In April 1976 about 74 people were believed to be in detention. By the end of 1977 this number would increase tenfold.

In 2003, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission reported that a number of former security policemen had filed applications acknowledging responsibility for the assaults on Steve Biko, and applying for amnesty. They were refused because the TRC found the killing of Biko to be an act of ill will, with no real political motivation. They have not been prosecuted since. Biko's wife, Nontsikelelo, feels that justice has not yet been done.

Like Biko, many other activists were murdered by the police. Some of these were Neil Aggett, Griffiths Mxenge, Looksmart Ngudie, Babla Saloojee (he "jumped"), Joseph Mdluli (he died after "bumping into chair" during interrogation), Ahmed Timol and many others.

Thousands of people from all over South Africa attended Biko's funeral at Ginsberg, King William's Town, on 25 September 1977.

Suppression of Black Consciousness
One month after the death of Steve Biko, the government declared 17 Black Consciousness organisations, including the BPC, illegal. In 1978, under the threat of new bannings, another BC organisation, the Azanian Peoples Organisation (AZAPO), was formed. Before a constitution could be drafted, the police detained the leaders (including the chairman, Ishmael Mkhabela, and the secretary, Lybon Mabasa) under the Terrorism Act. They were banned for three years.

In less than three years, almost the entire leadership of the founding Black Consciousness movement was wiped out. Thousands of young activists were imprisoned. Around 5 000 young BC-inspired revolutionaries fled the country and joined up with the ANC and PAC in exile.

While no single organisation now headed the Black Consciousness Movement, its ideas spread all through the liberation movement, connecting them through common ideas and inspiring a collective sense of pride. Many organsiations actively embraced BC ideas, like the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), Azanian Student Organisation (AZASO) and the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation (PEBCO).

During the 1980s, AZAPO became the main champion of Black Consciousness. The major AZAPO campaigns of the 1980s include the 1981 Northern Transvaal school and bus boycott, the launching of the National Forum in 1983 and the campaign against the tour of US Senator Kennedy in 1985.

Some have said that BC activists started to lose their commitment to a strong theoretical base. Many wanted a philosophy in which the enemy was more clearly and simply defined.

In the 1980s, the non-racial United Democratic Front (UDF), inspired by the 1955 Freedom Charter, dominated popular resistance. Many Black Consciousness activists joined the UDF.

© Bailey's African History Archives

1977 – Mourners gather to pay their last respects as Steve Biko. The funeral was attended by 20,000 mourners at King William's Town.

© Adil Bradlow/PictureNET Africa

At the entrance to the City Hall in East London, this sculpture is grand and imposing, showing that Steve Biko will always be a man to look up to. Created by South African artist Naomi Jacobson.

BIKO LIVES ON

Steve Biko was just 30 years old when he died, yet his philosophy had already reached into the minds of people throughout South Africa, Africa and the world. He influenced many different kinds of people, so that he is honoured in diverse ways.

Steve Biko was a prolific writer and many books have also been written about him and his ideas. This means that he is constantly re-discovered by new students of African and liberation politics, and his name appears often in universities. A campus is named after him at the University of Technology in Durban and numerous venues in students' unions bear his name, such as at the University of Cape Town and several in Britain. At Wits, there is the Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics. In Brazil, the Steve Biko Cultural Institute is dedicated to increasing the number of low-income Afro-Brazilians in institutions of higher learning.

His home at 698 Leightonville, Ginsberg Township is a national monument, as is his office in Leopoldt Street, Durban. The cemetery where he lies buried is known as the Steve Biko Garden of Remembrance. Travellers crossing the Buffalo River drive across the Steve Biko bridge.

Steve Biko in music and film

... You can blow out a candle
But you can never blow out a fire
Once the flames begin to catch
The wind will blow it higher ...

- Peter Gabriel on his album *Peter Gabriel III*. Many other artists have covered this song - Joan Baez, Robert Wyatt, Simple Minds, Manu Dibango, Black 47 and Ray Wilson.

Steven Biko
A si m'bonanga
A si m'bonanga umfowethu thina
Lapha ekhona
La wa fela khona

- Johnny Clegg on his album *Third World Child*.

But Patrice Lumumba na go rest in peace,
Steven Biko na go rest in peace,
Kwame Nkrumah na go rest in peace,
Marcus Garvey na go rest in peace,
Malcolm X 'im na go rest in peace
Mahatma Gandhi na go rest in peace
burying their bodies was like burying seeds

- Patrice Jah Jah Deh Deh on his album *How do you call it?*

Films about his life: *The Life and Death of Steve Biko, Cry Freedom, Breaking the Silence, Inquest, The Spirit Lives, Steve Bantu Biko: Beacon of Hope, Journey of the Spirit.*

Many people wear Steve Biko T-shirts. Biko has become an icon, like Ché Guevara. But such popularity also presents a danger. If just Biko's icon (or image) is kept alive, future generations may miss out on his wisdom. We may wear Biko's image, gather in centres bearing his name and visit his monuments, but it is only through reading Biko's words and developing his ideas that we can pay adequate tribute to this great South African. (T-shirts courtesy Stoned Cherry. Models: Dineo Gewer and Amira Shariff.)

ASIKWELWA! – We will not ride!

"Not since the days of the Defiance Campaign had Africans held so strategic a position. Throughout the long weeks of the boycott, the political initiative in South Africa passed out of the hands of the Government and the Cabinet and into the hands of the African people."
– Ruth First, *Africa South* (July-September 1957)

The people of Alexandra township have a long history of standing up for their rights. The many bus boycotts are examples of the community resisting economic exploitation.

Black people living in townships had to travel long distances to get to and from work. Workers were paid very low wages, so they needed cheap transport. Every time the private bus companies tried to raise the bus fares, the people of Alexandra would boycott.

For example, in August 1943, 15 000 men and women walked 15 or more kilometres from Alexandra Township to their places of work for 9 days. This boycott forced the bus companies to give in, reducing the fare from 5 pennies to 4 pennies.

Another example of the people boycotting a rise in fares was in 1944. This time they walked for seven weeks until fares were reduced. The boycott ended in March 1945 because the government bought all the bus companies. The new bus company was called PUTCO (Public Utility Transport Corporation). The government then gave PUTCO a subsidy from the city council to keep the fares at 4 pennies. The government wanted to keep bus fares low because it wanted to keep wages low, especially as the economy was in a slump after the second world war. However, low bus fares meant that it was difficult for PUTCO to make a profit.

In 1957, PUTCO tried to raise the bus fare from 4 pennies to 5 pennies. This increase meant that the poor workers would have had to carry the burden of keeping PUTCO running – and running at a profit. The Alexandra people once again resisted this increase in bus fares, giving rise to the biggest and longest bus boycott in the history of the country.

The well-known Alexandra bus boycott in 1957 was coordinated by the Alexandra People's Transport Action Committee (which included the ANC and other local township organisations). The residents demanded:

- the immediate restoration of the old bus fares.
- an increase in the number of buses on the routes to stop endless queues.
- bus shelters to protect the people from bad weather.

1912 – Alexandra township is created.
1940 – The first Alexandra bus boycott is a short "lightning strike" which forces fares down.
1942 – After the second Alexandra bus boycott black bus owners go bankrupt. The remaining companies are operated by whites.
1943 – A much longer boycott led by trade unionists included a march of 1 000 men, women and children to the city. Fares remain unchanged.
1944 – This boycott saw police intimidating pedestrians. Marches and meetings were banned. Lily Tshabalala leads women to keep up boycotters' morale. Boycotters threaten a sit down strike and the fares go down.
1945, March – The Public Utility Transportation Corporation (PUTCO) is formed by government buying out all the other bus companies and PUTCO is given a subsidy from the city council.
1957 – PUTCO, making a loss, increases bus fares by 1 penny from 4 pennies to 5 pennies.
1957, 7 January – The people of Alexandra organises another bus boycott to protest the rise in bus fares.
1957, 31 January – At the height of police violence, Joel Ramothebe is killed by police when they try to intimidate boycotters.
1957, March – A final settlement is negotiated. Fares return to 4 pennies.

© Bailey's African History Archives

Boycotting cyclists.

© Bailey's African History Archives

Alexandra Township in the 1950s. Living in Alexandra was like sitting on a volcano of violence. Anything could erupt and it usually did.

Solidarity in the Alexandra bus boycott

The three month-long Alexandra bus boycott was, from start to finish, a solid demonstration of working class solidarity.

"On 7 January 1957, workers from Johannesburg and Pretoria townships refused to ride to work in buses owned by PUTCO ... following a one penny (25 per cent) increase in fares effective that day. This spontaneous act of defiance marked the start of a three-month period during which an estimated 70 000 workers boycotted the buses; amongst them, more than 20 000 African workers each walked a total of 2 000 miles.

"They walked in the heat and torrential rains of a South African summer, harassed, arrested and beaten up by the police. Women walked, with babies on their backs and bundles of washing on their heads ...

"Cyclists' tyres were punctured by arrogant policemen, reactionary whites drove through puddles splashing the workers as they walked, and boycotters were constantly stopped and searched for no reason. Yet, despite all of this harassment, the people continued to walk." – Luckhardt, Ken & Wall, Brenda, *Organise or Starve: The History of the South African Congress of Trade Unions* (1980)

*"**Solidarity** means taking the same risks."* - Ché Guevara (Cuban revolutionary)

© Mayibuye Centre, UWC

Boycotting walkers.

Alexandra

Alexandra Township was founded in 1912 as a black freehold area. That meant that blacks could buy land there. While this was true, most people rented from a small group of black property owners. The property owners made most of the decisions in community affairs. There was a lot of tension between these property owners and the working class that rented from them. Alexandra was a self-governing community, with its own Health Committee run by black political leaders, together with some liberal whites. It managed to escape the forced removals that were seen in places like Sophiatown.

"The protest by the people which has soared to such inspiring success these few weeks has been achieved with the minimum of fuss and bother, no central coordination of the boycott and wholly local direction of the protest movement." – Tennyson Makiwane (ANC activist) in *Fighting Talk* (February 1957)

The boycott spreads

In a short space of time the boycott spread in Johannesburg (to Sophiatown and Fordsburg). In solidarity, the Indian community joined the boycott. Indian people would wake up early in the morning and walk the long distance from Fordsburg to Alexandra to catch up with the throng of walking commuters. The boycott also spread to Pretoria (Lady Selborne, Atteridgeville, Mooiplaats), Germiston and Edenvale.

Even though the bus fares had not changed in Soweto, in solidarity about 20 000 workers from Moroka and Jabavu joined the boycott on 13 January 1957. In February, solidarity boycotts began in other parts of the country, including Randfontein, Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage and Bloemfontein. In March, an existing partial boycott in Brakpan was made total. In April, a bus boycott developed in Worcester.

The people spoke with one voice

The amazing thing about this boycott was that it was a product of the frustration, determination and organisation of working class people. In solidarity they chanted, *"Asikwelwa!"* – *"We will not ride!"*

The people's solidarity was expressed in a single voice and held strong by their unrelenting committment to fight for their economic rights, as this extract from an article by Walter Sisulu shows:

"The fact that people can walk for twenty miles a day, week in, week out, in a 100% effective boycott, organised in less than two weeks; and in such diverse areas as Sophiatown and Western Native Township in less than two days – this is a tribute to the determination of the people in utilising this form of struggle.

"Tens of thousands of Africans have participated in these boycotts, and even more compelling is the fact that 20 000 Africans in the Moroka-Jabavu areas have carried on a boycott in sympathy, in support of their brothers who are struggling against higher fares.

"In these boycotts our experience is that each time they have raised the political consciousness of the people, brought about a greater solidarity and unity among the masses. In this way they have raised the peoples' organisations to a higher level, demonstrating the correctness of the action." – Walter Sisulu, *Liberation* (February 1957).
Mr Sisulu was on trial on a charge of high treason at the time.

Young and old walked and walked

"For five or six hours every day endless streams of walkers filled the pavements. Over the rise that obscures Alexandra Township from the main road came the eruption of workers in the dawn hours when mists and brazier fires mingle indistinguishably together. End to end the road was filled with shadowy, hurrying figures. Then the forms thinned out as the younger men with the firmest, sprightly step drew away from the older people, the women, the lame.

"In the late afternoons and early evenings, the same crowds turned their backs on the city and again took to the roads. Down the hill the footsloggers found it easier (though by the tenth and eleventh weeks of the boycott many shoes were worn to pitiful remnants), the spindly-legged youngsters trotted now and then to keep up, the progress of the weary women was slower still, here a large Monday washing bundle carried on the head, there a paraffin tin, or the baby tied securely to the back."
– Ruth First, in *Africa South* (July-September 1957)

© Mayibuye Centre, UWC

Police harass marchers as they walk through the white suburbs on their way to and from work.

Black Sash
The Black Sash was founded by Jean Sinclair in 1955. It originally consisted of white women who wore black sashes in a silent protest against the passing of the Senate Bill which removed coloured voters from the voters' roll in the Cape. As the influence of apartheid grew, Black Sash members began demonstrating against other things, like the Pass Laws.

Its members brought cases of injustice to the attention of their Members of Parliament, and kept vigils outside Parliament and government offices. Many were rejected by their friends and family and were even physically attacked.

Its members *"used the relative safety of their privileged racial classification to speak out against the erosion of human rights in the country. Their striking black sashes were worn as a mark of mourning and to protest against the succession of unjust laws. But they were not only on the streets. Volunteers spent many hours in the national network of advice offices and in the monitoring of courts and pass offices."* – Speech by Marcella Naidoo, National Director of the Black Sash (June 2005)

White support for the boycott

The boycott helped to draw white people's attention to the suffering of black people. Some white people supported the boycott. For example, sympathetic white people and white members of the Liberal Party, the Congress of Democrats and the Black Sash, started helping walkers (marchers) by giving them lifts. These white drivers were harassed and some were fined under the Motor Carrier Transportation Act. The solidarity of most of these white people held firm, despite the increase in police intimidation and violence.

"As the thousands of African boycotters walked their 360th mile last night, the police applied a new policy of firmness towards the marchers and to motorists who gave them lifts. At about six check points along the route they stopped all vehicles in which Natives were travelling, questioned the drivers, searched the passengers for passes, took some passengers to police stations, took the names of all drivers and passengers, and arrested many passengers." – Extract from a newspaper article in the *Rand Daily Mail* (1 February 1957)

Negotiations to end the boycott

Towards the end of February 1957, the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce took the initiative to advise businesses to pay their black workers an extra "transport allowance" of one shilling a week. Businesses were slow to respond, while government remained uncompromising.

The government would not negotiate and insisted that the boycott should end *"before the Cabinet would cooperate in any investigation of the poverty of Natives on the Rand"*. And the state-owned bus company, PUTCO, threatened to stop all its services if the boycott did not end.

The people responded to government's uncompromising stance by firming their resolve. On 1 May about 4 000 Alexandra residents met and decided to continue the boycott. PUTCO gave its staff a week's notice and sent all its buses to Pretoria for safety.

Police started arresting marchers for trivial offences. For example, one hundred marchers were arrested for crossing the road at a red traffic light at 5 o'clock in the morning!

On 2 March 1957, the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce tried again to end the boycott. It offerred to repay the extra penny to each commuter if they agreed to pay it first. And it was prepared to set up a £25 000 special fund for that purpose. But the terms of the agreement was set on fire at a public meeting in Alexandra. The people cried, *"Asikwelwa!"* –*"We will not ride!"*

A final settlement was negotiated at the end of March 1957 by a "liaison committee". A lot of work was done behind the scenes by the Bishop of Johannesburg, Ambrose Reeves, and members of the Liberal Party. The Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce and the Johannesburg Municipality agreed to pay PUTCO's losses for a period of three to six months. Fares returned to four pennies.

In June, the Minister of Transport, B.J. Schoeman, introduced the Native Services Transport Bill. This law required employers to pay a monthly transport subsidy for each black person they employed. The government also contributed to this fund.

From the bus boycott to a minimum wage

The peoples' passive resistance was powerful and also heightened awareness of workers' onging economic exploitation. This new awareness created the ideal opportunity for the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) to launch its £1-a-day Campaign. They demanded a legislated, national minimum wage of £1-a-day for all workers. But both government and employers demanded increased productivity from workers before their wages could be raised. The new rallying cry of the workers became *"Asinamali!"* –*"We have no money!"*

The call for a legislated minimum wage made the government and the wealthy ruling class see that they could no longer keep exploiting workers. They could not keep on making a profit from the workers without awakening the workers to the differences in class and sharpening public awareness of the class struggle.

As a result of the £1-a-day Campaign many workers were paid higher wages. But the main victory in the campaign was in the education of workers about apartheid's economy. The government used race and poverty to keep economic advantages in the hands of rich white people. This growing awareness led to the organisation of thousands of new trade unionists.

A taste of organised struggle
"Through five years of determined resistance, the people of Alexandra had prevented a rise in the bus fare, retaining control over two pennies of their daily wage. What were the results of the bus boycotters' actions? ... [T]heir determination forced the local government to take some responsibility for the transport of the poor ... Perhaps more important was a long-term, less obvious result. The bus boycotts over the years developed the community's resources. Alexandra residents used their power as consumers and workers. They used their women's groups, their small businessmen and women, their Health Clinic – to name but some of their community resources – to organise, over a period of years, a grassroots local movement. Although divisions existed in Alexandra, in particular between homeowners and tenants, the bus boycotts of the 1940s succeeded in mobilising the population. They gave the people of Alexandra an identity as a community, and a taste of the possibilities of organised struggle. In years to come, assaults would continue on Alexandra's right to exist. But the strengthening of Alex as a community enabled its people to resist successfully the apartheid state's worst blows in future years."
– Luli Callinicos, *A Place in the City: The Rand on the Eve of Apartheid 1886 – 1940* (1993)

We didn't even feel the distance

This is an extract from an interview with an old-time resident, Mrs S (surname not mentioned because interviewee did not want to be identified), from Alexandra (15 kilometres from the city centre of Johannesburg). The interview was done many years after the boycotts. She clearly remembered Alexandra, the boycotts and the people's determination.

"Alexandra was a very good place for poor people. We loved it for that ... When the bus fare rose from three to four pennies, we agreed reluctantly to the increase but when they increased it to five pennies we joined hands and refused to travel on buses, we walked to and from work, sometimes getting lifts from sympathetic whites ... We didn't even feel the distance ..."

Tribute to the people

President Thabo Mbeki's message on the 20th anniversary of the founding of the United Democratic Front, August 20, 2003 paid tribute to the solidarity of the people during the 1957 Alexandra Bus Boycott:

"I want to single out the Alexandra bus boycott – one of the longest and bitterest [campaigns] in living memory. Without clogging you with much detail, the outstanding achievement in so far as this campaign was concerned is the fact that, perhaps for the first time in the history of the liberation struggle, we witnessed spontaneous expression of solidarity, in particular by the Indian community in Johannesburg, with the people of Alexandra. We are told that some members of the Indian community would wake up early in the morning, walk the long distance from Fordsburg to Alexandra to catch up with the throng of marching commuters. The process would be repeated in the evenings.

"What is of relevance to us in this example is the fact that this expression of solidarity was not as a result of a resolution by the South African Indian Congress. On the contrary, the response must be seen as a product of the objective reality in South Africa at a time when popular slogans of Afrikanerdom were: "Kaffir op sy plek" and "Koelie uit die land". In the circumstances "Kaffir" and "Koelie" had enough cause to come together against the common enemy in spite of whatever other differences might have been between the two.

"And of importance again is the fact that the unity of the two was not wrenched in a conference room, but it was forged in the theatre of a practical struggle. When the doctors Xuma and Dadoo came together in 1946 as leaders respectively of the ANC and the Indian Congress to inaugurate the Congress Alliance in the name of the Dadoo-Xuma Pact, they were merely giving formal endorsement of an idea already clinched at mass level.

"This pact was in a very realistic sense a front. It was designed to coordinate and direct campaigns. The two communities (African and Indian) could speak with one voice and march forward in one step."

Below: The Evaton bus boycott in 1956 dragged on for 11 months in a blaze of violence that claimed six lives.

© Bailey's African History Archives

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DAKAR DECLARATION

DAWN OF NEGOTIATION

"I must confess that before then I do not think I had met an Afrikaner who wasn't a special branch policeman or immigration official."
– Professor Kader Asmal

"It ... undermined the prejudices the ANC had about Afrikaners, especially the monolithic-brainless-pap-en-wors-bully-from-the-Bushveld variety."
– Dr Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert

© AP photo/Schalk van Zuydam

The apartheid government was very successful at distorting the truth about the objectives of the liberation movements. By the 1980s, however, government propaganda was failing. Many white people wanted to find out the truth from the ANC itself. In 1987, a group of curious and courageous Afrikaners did just that – opening the path to negotiations. At the time, it was still illegal for South African citizens to meet with the ANC. Amongst them were the brother of the minister of defence, dominees (Afrikaans priests), academics, writers and businessmen. This was a group of Afrikaners who had rejected both the ideology and practice of the apartheid system.

"Although the group represented no organised formation within South Africa, their place within – particularly – the Afrikaans-speaking communities and the fact that they were meeting with the ANC invested the conference with an overwhelming atmosphere that this was part of the process of the South African people making history ... Participants could not but be aware that some of the adherents of apartheid regarded the participation of the group as an act of betrayal, not only of the apartheid state, but also of the community of Afrikanerdom."
– Extract from the Dakar Declaration (1987)

The Dakar Conference was organised by the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (IDASA). Dr. Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert described its aims:

"... to begin the process of demystifying an organisation [the ANC] which by the nature of its considerable support ... was destined to play a major role in negotiations towards a non-racial, democratic South Africa.

"In 1987, 61 South Africans met in Dakar, Senegal; the majority were Afrikaans-speaking South Africans and 17 were members of the ANC. It was a meeting of historic import bringing together individuals from very different political backgrounds to discuss what a non-racial South Africa could look like. The four principle themes of the Dakar meeting were: strategies for bringing about fundamental change in South Africa, the building of national unity, perspectives with regard to structures of government and the economy. The meeting ended with the now well-documented Dakar Declaration of 12 June 1987. The spirit despite the differences between those around the table was, according to the Declaration, one of 'cordiality and unity of purpose'."
– (www.idasa.org.za)

Before Dakar

"For me, one of the most hopeful signs in our desperate situation is that such a diversity of (even hostile) interest groups agree on the need for change to avoid tragedy and are applying their minds to it. If intention and motivation were all that mattered, that way would easily be found, but we are trapped in the structures of our past and live in pockets of ignorance of each other's problems, abilities and convictions. But more than that, different conceptions of power and privilege are involved, as well as what is negotiable and what not. I still believe a way can be found."
– Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert, *The Last White Parliament* (1985)

Journalist, Max Du Preez attended the Dakar meeting.

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According to journalist Max Du Preez, *"The Dakar initiative also sparked off a new progressive movement in Afrikanerdom, in music, theatre, art and the media. The full emotional realisation we'd had in Senegal and Burkina Faso, that we were full-blooded Africans, was spreading to young Afrikaners who refused to bow and scrape before the fathers of the volk."* – Du Preez, *Pale Native* (2003)

RECOLLECTIONS OF DAKAR

President Abdou Diouf of Senegal hosted the participants with exceptional hospitality, making it clear that he recognised all the participants as Africans.

© AP Photo/Dina Kraft

The infamous sweeping staircase and the "Gate of No Return" in the slave house on Gorée Island.

Dakar is well known for the old slave fort on Gorée Island. The delegates visited the fort. For many of them it was a powerful symbol of the centuries of oppression that African people have suffered at the hands of European slave traders.

The next day the delegates flew to Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso. Here they attended a ceremony to lay down the first stone of Ouagadougou's anti-apartheid monument, which they intended to complete only when apartheid had been eradicated. President Sankara entertained everyone at his residence and told the group that the Dakar meeting was *"the most important act since Moses crossed the Red Sea with his people"*.

"... for days before our arrival, the good people of Ouagadougou had been told that a Boer delegation was going to visit with a group of comrades, and that this was an important blow to apartheid. Few of them knew anything else about South Africa and hadn't seen anything about it on television, but it was remarkable that they felt that apartheid was also an assault on them personally." – Du Preez, *Pale Native* (2003)

Next, the delegation visited Accra in Ghana, where the law had to be changed to allow people carrying South African passports into the country. Here, aggressive journalists attacked the ANC for associating with whites. They did the same again at an open forum on the next day.

"If this was a test, Thabo Mbeki passed it with flying colours. Equally aggressively, he responded that the colour of one's skin did not determine one's political attitudes, and that his white guests were as African as the Ghanaians and he himself. In fact, he said, there were white people serving in the ANC's army." – Du Preez, *Pale Native* (2003)

Some of the Dakar participants in the photograph below as recorded in Slabbert, Duskant die Geskiedenis (2006)

1. Lourens du Plessis
2. Penuell Maduma
3. Johan van der Westhuizen
4. Jimi Matthews
5. Hennie Serfontein
6. Manie van Rensburg
7. Essop Pahad
8. Willem van Vuuren
9. Andrew Savage
10. Grethe Fox
11. Tommy Bedford
12. Wayne Mitchell
13. Gerhard Erasmus
14. Blackie Swart
15. Breyten Breytenbach
16. Leon Louw
17. Revel Fox
18. Ampie Coetzee
19. Jaap du Randt
20. Francis Meli
21. Peter Gastrow
22. Phillip Verster
23. Barbara Masekela
24. Thabo Mbeki
25. Beyers Naudé
26. President Sankara
27. Ilse Naudé
28. Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert
29. André P. Brink
30. Alex Boraine
31. Heribert Adam
32. Christo Nel
33. Chris Louw
34. Jacques Kriel
35. Hardy Botha
36. Franklin Sonn
37. Randall van der Heever
38. Trudie de Ridder
39. Ian Liebenberg
40. André Odendaal

© Rashid Lombard

Gate of No Return

"From the little harbour we walked to the Maison des Esclaves, the House of Slaves. Built in 1770 by the Dutch, it is today one of the best-known international symbols of the slave era. For more than three centuries, Africans were hunted down, and hundreds of thousands of them were brought to this island and put on slave ships to the Americas.

"The curator of the museum, Boubacar Joseph Ndiaye, first took us to the cells where the men were held: fifteen to twenty in a cell measuring 2.6m x 2.6m with a low roof. They were chained around their necks and arms, chains that Ndiaye showed us.

"When the group moved on, I stayed behind in one of the cells. I sat down against the wall as the slaves once had. I closed my eyes. It was a feeling as intense as I had seldom felt before.

"We went to the cells where the 'temporary unfit' men were kept – if a slave weighed less than sixty kilograms, he was fattened on beans like a goose, then shipped out. We visited the women and children's cells, where they were kept like sardines in a tin. Families were split up according to market demand; the father could be sent off to Louisiana, the mother to Cuba and the daughter to Brazil.

"The sweeping double staircase in the centre of the slave house became imprinted in our minds, because it was something so aesthetically elegant and beautiful in such a place of horror. Hardy Botha subsequently used the staircase in many of his paintings and etches – it features on the side of the ox wagon on the cover of this book for example.

"The South Africans stood there in stunned silence. After an intense four days, this was almost too much. Apartheid cannot be equated to slavery, but man's inhumanity to man was in the back of all our minds. Here was where human beings' relationships started going wrong; the dehumanisation of black people that had started with slavery was still continuing in our country in the form of apartheid.

"Then we walked down a narrow, dark corridor with a bright light at the end. The light was coming through a hole in the wall, probably a metre-and-a-half high and a metre wide. On the other side the Atlantic Ocean was quietly lapping the rocks.

"This was the Gate of No Return. This was the last the African slaves ever saw of their continent. They were pushed through this hole onto a loading dock and then onto boats that would take them to slave ships. Escape wasn't an option; the waters were infested with sharks that fed daily on the bodies of the dead and dying thrown into the sea.

"The vision of that hole in the wall will never leave my consciousness. To most of us there that day, seeing the Gate of No Return also meant that there was No Return for us, going home and continuing as before. Witnessing this together, Afrikaners from inside South Africa and ANC leaders in exile, was an intensely moving experience."

– Max Du Preez describing the delegation's visit to Gorée Island after the talks in Dakar. In *Pale Native* (2003)

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Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert – politician, social activist and businessman.
Van Zyl Slabbert was the leader of the official opposition to the apartheid government, the Progressive Federal Party (PFP), in the South African parliament from 1979 to 1986. He studied at Stellenbosch University and became a Professor of Sociology. In 1974 he won a seat in Parliament as the Progressive Party (PP) candidate for Rondebosch, Cape Town. The PP later merged with other parties to become the Progressive Federal Party. He continued to hold the seat in the general elections of 1977 and 1981. In 1979 he was elected as leader of the PFP, the official opposition party.

Van Zyl Slabbert retired as leader of the PFP and quit active politics in 1986, as he felt that Parliament had become an irrelevant institution in the context of South Africa's political problems. He returned to the political stage in 1987 in order to further the negotiations at Dakar. He later became the director of policy and planning for the Institute for a Democratic South Africa (IDASA).

Van Zyl Slabbert now works with the Open Society Foundation of Southern Africa, which identifies and invests in worthy projects in nine African countries. He also co-founded Khula – a black investment trust – in 1990. Slabbert was appointed as chairman of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) listed Adcorp Holdings in 1998 and also sits on the boards of several other JSE–listed companies.

His many writings include *Tough Choices: Reflections of an Afrikaner African* (Tafelberg Publishers, 2000) and *Duskant die geskiedenis* (Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2006).

THE SEEDS OF NEGOTIATION

The two groups were united in their commitment to ending apartheid and building a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. The negotiations were not official, of course, but they received some kind of official status when both groups were invited together to state visits in Ghana and Burkina Faso. Over the weeklong discussions, both groups started moving beyond the assumptions they had of each other. The non-ANC delegates expressed their concern over the continuation of the armed struggle. This is recorded in the minutes of the meeting that have become known as the Dakar Declaration.

"The group listened to and closely questioned the perspectives, goals and strategies of the ANC. The main area of concern arose over the ANC' s resolve to maintain and intensify the armed struggle. The group accepted the historical reality of the armed struggle and, although not all could support it, everyone was deeply concerned over the proliferation of uncontrolled violence. However, all participants recognised that the source of violence in South Africa derives from the fact that the use of force is fundamental to the existence and practice of racial domination. The group developed an understanding of the conditions which have generated a widespread revolt by the black people, as well as the importance of the ANC as a factor in resolving the conflict.

"Conference unanimously expressed preference for a negotiated resolution of the South African question. Participants recognised that the attitude of those in power is the principal obstacle to progress in this regard. It was further accepted that the unconditional release of all political leaders in prison or detention and the unbanning of all organisations are fundamental prerequisites for such negotiations to take place." – The Dakar Declaration (1987)

"We share a common belief that serious discussions with the ANC must form part of the search for the resolution of conflict and the transition towards a peaceful and just future. We believe that as a result of our conference in Dakar, we have demonstrated that such discussions can take place and that they can be constructive. We hope that what began in Dakar will continue inside and outside of South Africa and will eventually involve the South African government itself. In our discussions we found that it was possible for South Africans, who are in many ways far apart, to have frank and cordial exchanges on crucial issues facing our country." – Unpublished statement issued after the talks (1987)

Standing from left: André Odendaal, Prof Ampie Coetzee
Seated from left: Prof Jaap Durant, Dr Van Zyl Slabbert, Thabo Mbeki and Professor Jakes Gerwel

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Press Conference in Addis Ababa, July 1987

© Steve Hilton-Barber/PictureNET Africa

O.R. Tambo

Question: *Concerning the recently held historic talks between the ANC and a group of Afrikaner liberals in the Senegalese capital, Dakar, journalists wanted to know whether there was anything more that the ANC expected from these talks other than just talks.*

Tambo: *The meeting in Dakar is a continuation of a process of contacts which we seek to make, as the ANC, with the white community in our country which is denied knowledge about our struggle, about the ANC itself, and its objectives for the country, as well as the reasons for the methods of struggle we use. The regime seeks to keep this information away from the white community. But we see it as in the interests of all the people of South Africa that they hear what the ANC has, as an alternative to the apartheid system, and that it is firmly supported by the majority of South Africans. And those whites we have met previous to the Dakar meeting have discovered something they did not know about the objectives of the ANC. So, this was a continuation of that process.*

Question: *The President was asked further why the ANC had met these white Afrikaners when these Afrikaners had had an opportunity to change the situation in South Africa during the 6 May [1987] general elections.*

Tambo: *Yes, that is all the more reason why we should meet them. Those we met have learnt a great deal and perhaps they would have handled the situation differently if we had met them earlier. But it is our duty to constantly guide the people of South Africa as a whole as to the way out of the apartheid system. In particular, it is whites who are being misled about the ANC.*

Question: *A man like Van Zyl Slabbert, is he really an alternative to the apartheid system, a man who walked out of his own party, the Progressive Federal Party, not long ago?*

Tambo: *Precisely, we trust him precisely because he did that. He left the South African Parliament because he came to the conclusion that no change can come through that institution, that apartheid racist parliament. By getting out of parliament, and of course not to embarrass his own party, to get out of the party and join extra-parliamentary forces of change, that is the only sort of change, a very correct move and we have called on the rest of the members of the Federal Party to leave that body and join us to work for real change. Helen Suzman has been there for 33 years, and in the end her party is thrown out as the official opposition, but not for want of trying on her part. It is just that she is working through an institution that is not going to bring about changes.*

IDASA
IDASA is an independent non-profit organisation promoting democracy in South Africa. It focuses on issues of sustainable democracy through economic governance, active citizenship, democratic institutions and social justice. It maintains international links with many similar organisations through the world movement for democracy.

Two of IDASA's exciting projects are part of its Democracy Radio Project. The first is a Youth Development Programme which brings young people from different community groups together to produce radio dramas that deal with issues and themes relevant to their daily lives. The second project is engaged in a Municipal Journalism Programme to train local journalists to effectively cover local government and municipal affairs. See more on www.wordonthestreet.org.za.

IDASA also boasts a fantastic resource centre which houses information about democracy, government, human rights and elections. It can be found in the Kutlwanong Democracy Centre, Cnr Visagie & Prinsloo Streets, Pretoria. Although most of its resources deal with South Africa, it has access to resources related to democracy throughout Africa. – (www.idasa.org.za)

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Thabo Mbeki and Dr Van Zyl Slabbert attended the Dakar meeting.

The NGK rejects apartheid

The church that had supported the National Party, the NGK, also had a change of heart. In April 1984 it declared that there was no biblical justification for apartheid and urged its members *"to confess their participation in apartheid with humility and sorrow"*. The NGK moderator, Johan Heyns, said, *"... there is no such thing as white superiority or black inferiority ... all people are equal before God ... there may not be under any circumstances a political policy based on oppression, discrimination and exploitation ... the task of the Church is to protest unjust laws."*

– Welsh, *A History of South Africa* (2000)

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Johan Adam Heyns (1928 – 1994), was an influential Afrikaner Calvinist theologian and moderator of the general synod of the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK). He was assassinated at his home in Waterkloof Ridge, Pretoria. Although his murder was never officially resolved, it is widely believed that it was directly related to his criticism of apartheid. – (www.wikipedia.org)

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT BEFORE DAKAR

The Conference at Dakar was the beginning of a new era of negotiation. There were many local and global political events that added to the new possibility of negotiation:

- The war in Angola was over.
- Namibia was about to hold an internationally recognised election.
- The Soviet Union was withdrawing from Africa.
- The South African economy was failing due to the fall in the gold price, labour strikes and international boycotts.
- Southern African leaders were tired of war and were looking to create stability and peace.
- The South African government and the Liberation movements had also reached a stalemate.

It was also becoming difficult for the ANC to aim a violent struggle at military personnel or symbolic non-human targets. On 20 May 1983, for example, 17 innocent people died in Pretoria in what became known as "Bloody Friday". This was not the original intention of MK. State policing was also failing. In 1985, for example, 20 people, mainly women and children, were killed by undisciplined police during a protest in Langa. In June 1986, the government declared a National State of Emergency. The government started using the military, instead of the police, in the black townships and more than 25 000 people were arrested the following year.

The attitudes of many Afrikaners and other whites were also beginning to change.

In 1983, the liberal Pieter de Lange had taken over the leadership of the Afrikaner organisation, the Broederbond, from the conservative Carel Boshoff. They tried negotiating with Chief Buthelezi. This did not go down well with most blacks involved in the struggle. Then, in 1986, leading members of the Broederbond, including the older brother of FW de Klerk, met secretly with ANC officials in London – including Thabo Mbeki, Aziz Pahad and Jacob Zuma (then the head of ANC intelligence).

Other individuals, like H.W. van der Merwe, a gentle, unassuming Afrikaner Quaker and UCT academic, had also established contact with the ANC in exile a few years before Dakar, and with Nelson Mandela while he was in prison.

In September 1985, Gavin Relly of the Anglo American Corporation led a group of businessmen and opposition politicians to a meeting with the ANC executive in Lusaka, Zambia. By 1986, Anglo American was using its influence to support the release of Nelson Mandela. (www.ever-fasternews.com)

AFTER DAKAR

Before Dakar, negotiations seemed impossible. After Dakar, similar meetings between ANC leaders and white South Africans were organised by IDASA in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Germany, France and the US. These meetings didn't trigger the same extreme reactions. South Africans were slowly getting used to the idea because Dakar had set the example.

At this time, Prime Minister P. W. Botha's government followed a basic two-track policy. The Department of Constitutional Development was supposed to find a way of negotiating with black leaders who were outside the ANC. If this approach failed, the next best solution, the government thought, was to negotiate with moderate leaders within the ANC in an attempt to split the ANC. They were not prepared to talk to "communists".

In 1987, the Minister of Justice invited Nelson Mandela to his home for dinner. Mandela was still in prison. He had been transferred from Robben Island to Pollsmoor prison on the mainland. Mandela was also occasionally taken out on "sightseeing" trips so that government officials could meet and speak to him. He was offered release by P.W. Botha on a number of occasions on condition that he explicitly renounce violence, but he refused, saying that any agreement with him would be meaningless if the ANC was unable to engage in free political activity. In May 1988, the cabinet set up a four-person committee to maintain contact with Mandela.

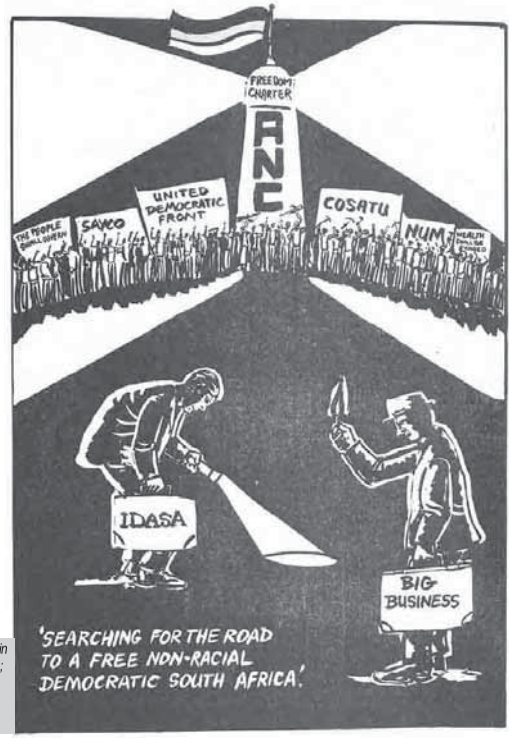
In 1989, P.W. Botha was encouraged by his own party to step down as party leader. F.W. De Klerk was voted in as the new National Party leader. Botha remained president of the country and friction between the two men soon emerged. Many ministers of parliament resigned in reaction to De Klerk's more liberal leadership. On 14 August 1989, Botha resigned and De Klerk became the new state president after the general election that year.

The year 1989 also saw the collapse of the Berlin Wall. De Klerk took advantage of this "God-given" opportunity and told his voters that the ANC and the South African Communist Party were no longer a threat to national security. On 2 February 1990, De Klerk announced to Parliament that the ban on the ANC and the PAC was lifted. On 11 February 1990, after 27 years in prison, Nelson Mandela was released.

"The Dakar meeting was important for another reason: it revealed the whites' ignorance, brain washing, sense of guilt and fear for the future. The whites are afraid of the coming revolution; they are afraid of the blacks, whom they don't know. They are vulnerable to right-wing pressure, and insulated by apartheid from progressive pressure." – Extract from, *Apartheid nervousness over the Dakar meeting*, an editorial in *Sechaba*, 12 July 1987.

Rising violence

On 12 January 1989, the private research group The Indicator Project of South Africa released a report entitled *Political Conflict in South Africa*. The report stated that unrest in the country between September 1984 and June 1988 was the worst in its history: 3 500 people were killed, over 55 000 were injured and/or imprisoned, and the country had suffered huge socio-economic losses. It also disagreed with the government's argument that the state of emergency had helped to reduce the level of violence. Some 930 people were killed in political violence between June 1987 and June 1988, compared with 731 in the same period a year earlier. The figures included more than 1 000 killed in Natal Province, between 1987 and 1988, in the conflict between the Zulu-based Inkatha movement and the United Democratic Front. Meanwhile, in a related development, the Johannesburg-based Human Rights Commission listed 113 attacks on anti-apartheid groups and individuals in the four years up to October 1988. – (www.sahistory.org.za)



12 June 1987 – Dakar Declaration.
27 May 1988 – Anti-apartheid Afrikaners led by Frederick van Zyl Slabbert, IDASA director, meet with the ANC in Frankfurt, to discuss a post-apartheid South Africa.
11 June 1988 – The British Anti-Apartheid Movement (BAAM) hold an 11-hour rock concert at Wembley Stadium in London to pay tribute to Nelson Mandela on his 70th birthday on 18 July.
18 July 1988 – The pro-government Afrikaans newspaper, *Die Beeld*, in an editorial coinciding with Nelson Mandela's 70th birthday, urges the government to release him.
16 October 1988 – ANC members and South African rugby officials meet in Harare to normalise the sport and get South Africa back into the international sporting arena.
1 November 1988 – The government suspends the anti-apartheid alternative newspaper, *The Weekly Mail*, until 28 November.
2 February 1989 – P. W. Botha, recuperating from a stroke, resigns as leader of the National Party. F.W. de Klerk is elected party leader. Botha remains state president of the country.
9 April 1989 – South Africa's three liberal opposition parties, the Progressive Federal Party headed by Zach de Beer, the National Democratic Movement led by Wynand Malan, and the Independent Party led by Dennis Worrall, agree to form a unified multiracial party that will be known as the Democratic Party.
1 May 1989 – Dr David Webster, a social anthropologist at the University of the Witwatersrand and a leading anti-apartheid activist, is shot dead outside his home. He was one of the first white dissidents to be assassinated.
29 June 1989 – F.W. de Klerk, Leader of the National Party, explains to the NP Federal Congress in Pretoria the Party's next five-year plan, giving blacks a say in running the country and at the same time maintaining white superiority. The ANC says that it will consider nothing less than a one-man, one-vote system.
5 July 1989 – Nelson Mandela meets President P.W. Botha at his official residence.

ANC President Nelson Mandela speaks at a Press Conference after the Groote Schuur talks between the African National Congress and the ruling National Party during the negotiation phase of the transition to majority rule.

At the heart of negotiations

"In 1990 the world witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of the South African government and the African National Congress socialising, even bantering, with each other for the first time. Not only was the ground irrevocably laid for negotiations and compromises between two deadly rivals, but the antagonists actually established a cordial relationship during the three days of talks at the foot of Table Mountain. They discovered, in Thabo Mbeki's words, that to their mutual amazement they 'had no horns'. Members of the dreaded Security Police, assigned to guard the ANC delegation, became buddies with their enemies and were soon on a first-name basis. While white and black South Africa wondered about respectable "terrorists" being invited into the official residence of South African prime ministers, a flabbergasted correspondent observed: 'When Mbeki began to crack jokes, accompanied by some boyish elbow-tugging with General Basie Smit, the chief of the Security Police, the unusual appeared to become elevated to the sublime'."
– Heribert Adam and Kogila Moodley in *The Opening of the Apartheid Mind: Options for the New South Africa* (1993)

12 July 1989 – Mandela releases a statement saying that only dialogue with the outlawed ANC will bring peace to the country.
14 August 1989 – P.W. Botha resigns and F.W. de Klerk becomes the new state president.
15 October 1989 – Seven jailed senior ANC leaders, and Jafta Masemola of the Pan Africanist Congress who was convicted of sabotage in 1963, are released from prison.
December 1989 – An all-inclusive black political conference is held with the main groups being the Mass Democratic Movement and the Black Consciousness Movement. The conference adopts the Harare Declaration which sets out pre-conditions for negotiations and outlines a new constitutional future.
13 December 1989 – President de Klerk and Nelson Mandela meet to discuss the country's political future.
14 December 1989 – The UN General Assembly, at its sixteenth Special Session, adopts the "Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa," calling for negotiations to end apartheid and establish a non-racial democracy.
16 December 1989 – Five anti-apartheid leaders, imprisoned in 1988 for political activities, are freed from Robben Island. Amongst these five is the general secretary of the United Democratic Front, Pope Molefe and its publicity secretary, Patrick Lekota.
2 February 1990 – De Klerk announces to Parliament that the ban on the ANC, the PAC, the South African Communist Party and the UDF is lifted.
11 February 1990 – After 27 years in prison, Nelson Mandela is released.
End of 1993 - Interim Constitution adopted.
27 April 1994 – First democratic elections.
10 December 1996 – New Constitution is signed into Law at Sharpeville.

CREATING OUR FUTURE TODAY

Voices from WSSD – *"you will follow us to our mutual destiny"*
"Listen to us. Hear our alarm. We are under attack not by our enemies, but by our friends. We do not blame you. We only seek your assistance, for your own good as well as ours. For our path is ultimately the path of all nations. We are, indeed, the last paradise on Planet Earth. Do not cause us to be a paradise lost. For surely, you will follow us to our mutual destiny. Let us underline our efforts here in Johannesburg not because the eyes of the world are upon us, but because there is a genuine love of the earth in all of us. Standing here together, today, we can change and better our destiny. We can overcome the greed of past centuries and fulfil the needs of all of our children."
– Statement by Secretary General of Youth for Sustainable Development Assembly, Philippines, at the WSSD (2002)

Courtesy NASA

This book has explored some of the events and the heroes that have shaped our country. Because of their vision, determination and sacrifices, all South Africans are now free to participate in the democratic process. All South Africans are free to play a part in creating their own future. Many heroes have given their lives to make this freedom possible, but this freedom is only an opportunity. ***The future depends on what we choose to do with that opportunity.***

Many challenges still face us. Some of these are poverty, health and the state of our environment. These challenges need a new kind of hero – a new kind of vision, determination and sacrifice. Where will today's heroes come from? What future-shaping events will they inspire? How are we giving birth to the future?

Many of the challenges that face us today are both local and global. Poverty, health and the state of the environment are all things that are affected by events both inside and outside our borders. Things like drought, pollution and HIV know no borders. If we want to protect the future of South Africa we need to play a role in protecting the future of the whole planet.

The future of this planet and the humans who live on it depends on how we take care of the planet's resources. Our main resources are the air, the water, the soil, the forests, the oceans and the creatures that live in them. These resources provide us with what we eat and the raw materials we need for our clothes, our medicine, our infrastructure (buildings and roads) and our technologies. These resources are all limited. If our activities continue to reduce and pollute these resources, without replacing them and allowing them time to heal and grow, they will run out and the future of humans on this planet will come to an end. We need to find ways of sustaining our freedom.

In 2002, South Africa was host to an International event – the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

A single web

"Only in the past couple of centuries, as every human community has gradually been drawn into a single web of trade and global network of information have we come to a point where each of us can realistically imagine contacting any other of our six billion [fellow humans] and sending that person something worth having: a radio, an antibiotic, a good idea. Unfortunately we could also send, through negligence as easily as malice, things that will cause harm: a virus, and airborne pollutant, a bad idea. And the possibilities of good and of ill are multiplied beyond all measure when it comes to policies carried out by governments in our name. Together, we can ruin poor farmers by dumping our subsidised grain into their markets, cripple industries by punitive tariff, deliver weapons that will kill thousands upon thousands. Together, we can raise standards of living by adopting new policies in trade and aid, prevent or treat diseases with vaccines and pharmaceuticals, take measures against global climate change, encourage resistance to tyranny and a concern for the worth of each human life."
– Kwame Anthony Appiah (Ghanaian philosopher) in *Cosmopolitanism – Ethics in a World of Strangers* (2006)

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The build-up to WSSD

1972: WSSD was part of a process that began in Stockholm in 1972, where the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment focused international attention on environmental issues, in particular those relating to environmental degradation and "transboundary pollution", highlighting the fact that pollution does not recognise political or geographical boundaries. Over the decades, environmental issues have been increasingly recognised as transnational in nature, requiring concerted efforts by all countries and regions to deal with them.

1992: The next step from Stockholm was the "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro, 1992 – also known as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). It brought together policy-makers, scientists, media and NGO representatives from 179 countries in an effort to reconcile the impact of human socio-economic activities on the environment. A major achievement of UNCED was Agenda 21 – a global plan of action for sustainable development.

1994 – 1996: Other conferences followed: such as the 1994 Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, the 1995 Social Summit in Copenhagen, the 1995 Women's Conference in Beijing, and the 1996 Habitat II Conference in Istanbul. All of them have reinforced the commitment to sustainable development and adopted action plans to build on Agenda 21 in specific areas.

1997: In June 1997, the General Assembly of United Nations held a Special Session (UNGASS-19), which adopted a "Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21." Among the decisions adopted at UNGASS was a new five-year programme dealing with poverty, and consumption and production patterns.

2000: In September 2000, at the United Nations Millennium Summit, 147 world leaders agreed to a set of development goals central to the objectives in Agenda 21. These became known as the Millennium Development Goals for 2015.

2001: The World Trade Organisation, at its Fourth Ministerial Meeting in Doha in November 2001, adopted a declaration stating: *"We are convinced that the aims of upholding and safeguarding an open and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system, and acting for the protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development can and must be mutually supportive."*

2002: At the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, in March 2002, governments reaffirmed the commitment to sustainable development, and donor countries promised a total of $30 billion in additional resources until 2006.

WSSD was the next step. The main purpose of the WSSD was to review the progress that had been made on Agenda 21. It was agreed that ten years after Rio, the goals of Agenda 21 had not been fully realised – and that efforts must be redoubled so that everyone can reap the benefits that sustainable development can offer.

WSSD

WSSD was organised by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development. It took place at the Sandton Convention Centre, just outside Johannesburg. Tens of thousands of people converged on Johannesburg for the event.

At the heart of the Summit was the intergovernmental agenda. Issues for the Summit's core agenda were agreed upon through a series of national, regional and global preparatory meetings with governments and other organisations. The agenda focused on the challenge of considering environmental and social issues when developing economic policy.

There was also a multi-stakeholder dialogue process that gave an opportunity to business and industry, workers and trade unions, women, NGOs, children and youth, scientific and technological experts, indigenous people communities, local authorities and farmers, to tell their stories and express their views.

Courtesy UN

President Mbeki at the Welcoming Ceremony for the World Summit on Sustainable Development at Ubuntu Village, Johannesburg, 25 August 2002.

Sustainable communities

"A more sustainable community enables people to feel empowered and take responsibility based on a shared vision, equal opportunity, ability to access expertise and knowledge for their own needs, and a capacity to affect the outcome of decisions which affect them". – Roseland, M. (ed) , *Eco-City Dimensions* (1997)

Courtesy UN

President Mbeki opening the World Summit on Sustainable Development, 26 August 2002.

What is Sustainable Development?

One way to look at sustainable development is: Strategies that allow people to meet their needs without permanently harming the environment in the process.

Sustainable development recognises that decisions taken today may limit the decisions we can take tomorrow. It also recognises that decisions we take in one part of the world may affect people in other regions, and requires far-sighted actions to promote global conditions that support progress and benefits for all.

The year 2007 is the 20th anniversary of the Brundtland Commission report, Our Common Future (1987), which was seen as a landmark document on sustainable development. That report defined sustainable development as a *"process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations."*

The poverty trap

"We will never achieve sustainable development goals as long as a third of all people do not have modern energy services … As long as women and children have to forage for firewood, as long as students cannot read after sunset, and as long as new businesses and industries cannot get the power they need to operate, we cannot expect to achieve development that is economically, socially and environmentally balanced … Countries are expected to rely on fossil fuels to meet their energy needs through 2030 and beyond, and emissions of CO^2, the dominant greenhouse gas, are expected to more than double by 2030. Developing countries, which have contributed least to the atmospheric build-up of carbon dioxide, are the ones at greatest risk and least equipped to deal with the effects of climate change."

– Mr. Abdullah Hamad Al-Attiyah, Minister of Energy for Qatar and Chair of the 15th session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD press release April 2007)

More information on CSD-15, including the full press kit, can be found at: www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/policy.htm

Agenda 21
Agenda 21, created at the "Earth Summit" in Rio, was the first global plan of action for sustainable development. Agenda 21 was based on successful best practices from all over the world. It is a "road map" to Sustainable Development with a powerful long-term vision for balancing economic and social needs with the capacity of the earth's resources and ecosystems. The preamble to Agenda 21 says, *"No country can achieve this on its own, but together we can."*

The Millennium Development Goals

One of the main objectives of WSSD was to evaluate the Millennium Development Goals. These are a list of goals or "targets" contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which was adopted by 189 nations in 2000. The idea was to set a target that could be achieved by the year 2015.

These goals are to:

- ☞ Reduce to half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day.
- ☞ Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.
- ☞ Reduce by half the proportion of people without access to safe and affordable drinking water.
- ☞ Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling.
- ☞ Achieve gender equality in access to education.
- ☞ Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality rate.
- ☞ Reduce by two-thirds the mortality rate among children under five.
- ☞ Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV and AIDS, malaria and other major diseases.
- ☞ Achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020.

© World View Images

Children collects water from a tap in the community.

How far are we from reaching the Millennium Development Goals?

According to statistics from *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2006*, Sub-Saharan Africa is developing the slowest. Here are some examples from the report, comparing the situation in Sub-Saharan Africa with other developing regions.

- ✖ In 2002, 44% of people in Sub-Saharan Africa lived on less than a dollar a day.
  The average for all developing regions is 19.4%.
- ✖ Between 2001 and 2003, 31% of people in Sub-Saharan Africa had to live with insufficient food.
  The average for all developing regions is 17%.
- ✖ Between 2003 and 2004, 36% of primary school age children in Sub-Saharan Africa did not go to school.
  The average for all developing regions is 14%.
- ✖ Of every 1 000 children born in Sub-Saharan Africa, 168 died under the age of five.
  The average for all developing regions is 87.

Stuck in the present – blind to the future

Dealing with the environment is a difficult challenge because the really sustainable solutions take a long time to show any benefit. Many solutions will only benefit the children of our grandchildren. Most people cannot see that far into future. Most people are only concerned with the present, with things that directly affect them and their family. We are, as President Thabo Mbeki said, *"prisoners of the immediate"*. To save the planet we need heroes that can think hundreds of years into the future. We need heroes who are prepared to make some sacrifices in their own lives so that humans they will never know can live their lives with less conflict, poverty and disease.

Voices from WSSD – President Thabo Mbeki has described some of us as ***"prisoners of the immediate".***

Here follows an extract from the speech that President Thabo Mbeki delivered at the opening session of the meeting of Heads of State and Government at WSSD:

"It may be that the fault rests in the fact that we are prisoners of the immediate, and consider it a cursed spite that we are called upon to right a time that is out of joint. It may be that we draw comfort from doing what we have always done. The known, order, routine, conformity, stability and inertia are, after all, an important part of what makes for a life of individual human fulfilment.

"It may be that we fear a break with the present because we know the present, ugly as it may be in many respects, and are fearful of a better future that only exists in the imagination, and may have unknown and unintended consequences, if we dared to have the courage to break into the future.

"But, surely, there is no one among us who thinks that billions in the world should continue to be condemned to poverty, underdevelopment and a denial of human dignity. Surely, there is no one among us who believes that we should not care about the natural world whose environmental integrity is the fundamental condition for the very survival of humanity ...

"It would be correct that from here [southern Africa], the home of our common ancestors, the leaders of the peoples of the world communicate a genuine message that they really care about the future of all humanity and the planet we inhabit, that they understand and respect the principle and practice of human solidarity, and are therefore determined to defeat global apartheid. From this city that owes its birth and growth to gold, itself the product of billions of years of natural evolution, must issue a strong and united voice that says – now is the time to act! A message must come from this original home of all humanity that we are ready and prepared to be judged not by the number and eloquence of the resolutions we adopt, but by the speed and commitment with which we implement our agreements that must serve the peoples of the world. Nothing, whatsoever, can justify any failure on our part to respond to this expectation."

Outcomes of WSSD
WSSD was a significant milestone on the road to sustainable development. By the end of WSSD,100 countries had committed to a Plan of Implementation that, amongst other things, agreed to:

- ✔ Halve the number of people living without access to sanitation;
- ✔ Use and produce chemicals in ways that are not harmful to the environment;
- ✔ Reduce the loss of biodiversity by 2010;
- ✔ Restore fisheries to their maximum sustainable yields by 2015;
- ✔ Establish a representative network of marine protected areas by 2012;
- ✔ Improve developing countries' access to environmentally-sound alternatives to ozone depleting chemicals by 2010; and
- ✔ Undertake initiatives by 2004 to implement the Global Programme of Action for the protection of the Marine Environment from Land Based Sources.
- ✔ A plan was also put in place to increase the amount of protected land in the Amazon rain forest by 300%.

Over 300 partnerships between different governments, NGOs, civil society, and business and industry were also announced at the Summit.

Governments are responsible for implementing the outcomes of WSSD, but the reality is that governments don't have the resources to do everything that has to be done, and the implementation of sustainable development requires building partnerships among different sectors of society, such as with business and non-governmental organisations.

What is the Human Development Index?

Agenda 21 recognises that you cannot measure a country's prosperity by only looking at its Gross National Product (GNP – the total value of goods and services produced and sold in a given time). Agenda 21 included a proposal to develop a way of measuring social, economic and environmental prosperity. GNP fails to take into account social and environmental costs. In fact, some environmental disasters are even counted as good growth because they generate business and boost GNP.

An alternative to GNP is the United Nation's Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI includes a list of indicators like life expectancy, access to education, gender equality and income per person. The HDI report currently ranks 177 countries according to their HDI score. In 2006, Norway, Iceland, Australia and Ireland were at the top of the list with the highest HDI. They all had an HDI higher than America (number 8 on the list) even though their GDP per person is less than that of America. Among poor countries, Cuba outranks Botswana, a country with a higher GDP, in keeping its people healthy and educated. In 2006, South Africa ranked a poor 121 on the HDI list.

A growing tension between rich and poor

There is a growing tension between governments of poor developing countries and those of wealthy developed countries. Governments of poor countries are expected to help solve environmental problems that have often been created by the technology and consumerism of the more wealthy developed countries. But poor countries are often not given the financial support or the technological assistance to do this. They are also prevented from growing their own economies because they are often not allowed to sell their products in wealthy countries. When they can trade, there are other challenges. For example, governments in the developing world often give subsidies to their farmers. These subsidies make it possible for those farmers to sell their products very cheaply on the international market. Struggling farmers in the developing world just cannot compete.

Everything and everyone is connected

The ideas that were shared at WSSD helped many people realise there are complex relationships between things that we do not normally consider to be linked. Advances in technology today destroy environments of tomorrow. Malnutrition in a baby today leads to an adult with an underdeveloped brain tomorrow. The extinction of one species today can interfere with a whole food chain and lead to the extinction of a whole ecosystem tomorrow.

Here are some other examples:

Voices from WSSD – *water and education*

"In many parts of the world, one of the most useful things you can do for [girls' education] is to improve water supply. Quite simply, if you improve water supply, you reduce the time the girls take to go to collect water for their house, and that improves their attendance in school. Now, imagine an education department going to a finance minister and saying that, for the education programme, they need money for water supply."
– Nitin Desai, Secretary-General of the Summit, Opening address to WSSD (26 August 2002)

Voices from WSSD – *invisible people cannot grow*

"Sustainable agriculture and rural development is not just about agriculture. It's about forestry. It's about fisheries. It's about employment opportunities. It's about food processing. It's about micro-enterprise development. It's about being able to organise to know what the market prices are in another region. It's about being able to go into a public service in a town nearby and be visible.

"A lot of poor people from rural villages look, dress, and act differently from those in authority, speak their own indigenous or tribal languages and have difficulty expressing themselves in a language of another group or in a major international language. Because of these differences, they are often treated as if they are invisible when they walk into a bank, a healthcare unit, or other public or private service. How can we build the capacity of these people not to be invisible? To have an identity and to have some say so that at every level they are heard?"
– Eve Crowley, a facilitator for the Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development Initiative, interviewed at WSSD by Nic Paget-Clarke for *In Motion Magazine* (29 August, 2002)

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A community vegetable garden.

The world is not for sale

When WSSD began, people took to the streets to protest the ways in which governments and big businesses make it so difficult for many human beings to develop to their full potential.

The WSSD protesters wanted the world to know that they were angry about the way global alliances between the rich and powerful, which are focused on profits, manipulate governments to act against the interests of their own citizens, to neglect the poor, exploit the workers and destroy the environment.

There is a growing fear that democratic processes have become powerless to stop global companies. Many politicians and international political institutions are manipulated by global companies through financial support, gifts and bribes. In particular, protesters criticised the activities of big multinationals like McDonald's and Coca Cola, and international trade agreements like the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank.

In 1999, just 25 people turned up to protest at the World Bank/IMF annual meeting in Washington. But in November that same year, protests grew to become an international phenomenon. The protests at The World Trade Organisation Ministers' Conference in Seattle, USA, attracted thousands of people, mostly young people, from all over the world. They used slogans like *"The world is not for sale"* and *"Another world is possible"*. Now tens of thousands regularly attend protests all over the world. In 2000, campaigners for debt relief for the world's poorest countries put together the largest petition in history – 24 million names.

The protesters have many demands:

- Reduce carbon dioxide emissions;
- Abolish Third World debt;
- End World Bank support to fossil fuel and mining projects;
- Withdraw coal mining and oil drilling from Third World countries;
- End exploitation of small farmers by fast-food chains;
- End the privatisation of public spaces;
- Reduce the high salaries of executives.

Are they taken seriously? Tony Blair has described such protesters as a *"travelling circus of anarchists"*.

Supporters of increasing globalisation argue that increasing trade in the global marketplace and the individual's right to trade freely are important vehicles for participation in political and economic processes and an increase in the wealth of all. They argue that global phenomena like the Internet can help those who are oppressed, and that international trade links, along with increased consumer choice, can encourage countries to respect human rights and embrace democratic values. They say, *"Open markets promote open government"*.

Voices from WSSD

"Two days ago, people took to the streets of Johannesburg to give voice to the demand that our Summit meeting must produce practical and meaningful results on very specific matters ... The message is simply this – that we can and must act in unity to ensure that there is a practical and visible global development process that brings about poverty eradication and human advancement within the context of the protection of the ecology of the planet Earth ... we are moved by a deeply-felt sense that the ordinary peoples of the world understand that a new and brighter world of hope and a better life for them is struggling to be born ...

"The question arises as to why as human beings we do not act, when we have the capacity to overcome problems that are not God-given, but are the creation of human society and human decisions and actions ... Since the means exist to banish hunger, why are so many without adequate supplies of food and others are faced with famine, including millions in this region of Southern Africa! ... Why do millions die every year from avoidable and curable diseases when science, technology and engineering have the means to save these human lives! Why do we have wars when we established institutions to end war! Why are there many who cannot read and write and count when, everyday, human intelligence breaks through many barriers of darkness to make the seemingly unknowable part of the ever-expanding stock of human knowledge! Why does the accumulation of wealth in human society produce human misery! ...

"The poor in the world believe that we travelled from all corners of our common globe to the very Cradle of Humanity to find answers to these questions."

– President Thabo Mbeki's speech at the opening session of the meeting of Heads of State and Government at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (2 September 2002)

✧ poverty ✧ violence ✧ epidemics ✧ unsustainable lifestyles ✧ pollution ✧ racism ✧ ozone depletion ✧ degradation of environments ✧ irretrievable loss of natural resources ✧ over-consumption ✧ parentless children ✧ cancer ✧ lack of clean drinking water ✧ sexism ✧ alcoholism ✧ depression ✧ poor waste management ✧ malnutrition ✧ slavery ✧ illiteracy ✧ lack of health services ✧ war ✧ animal abuse ✧ dehydration of babies ✧ homophobia ✧ extinction of species ✧ loss of fertile agricultural land ✧ unwanted pregnancy ✧ human trafficking ✧ class struggles ✧ Third World debt ✧ lack of safety ✧ sexual abuse ✧ job insecurity ✧ over-regulated industries ✧ crime ✧ unsafe toxic waste disposal ✧ discrimination ✧ suicide ✧ iron deficiency anaemia ✧ lack of economic opportunity ✧ deforestation ✧ refugees ✧ global monopolies ✧ child labour ✧ gangsters ✧ economic protectionism ✧ genetic piracy ✧ poor sanitation ✧ loss of local cultural identity in global ✧ consumer trends ✧ redundancies ✧ substance abuse ✧ depletion of ocean life ✧ greenhouse gases ✧ ethnic cleansing ✧ over-commercialisation of public spaces ✧ desertification ✧ global warming ✧

Social activism now!

The list on the left illustrates just some of the global and local challenges that face us today. There is disagreement over which of these challenges are the most urgent. Some people believe that only some of these challenges are real. While nobody can be held accountable for solving all these challenges, there are enough people on the planet to share the burden, if they decide to.

Who will act to change the way things are? Will you?
Which of the things on the list do you feel strongly about?

Key to facing these challenges are the following ideas:

- ☞ Focus on the things you feel strongly about and read as much as you can on those subjects;
- ☞ Begin to see yourself and your issues as part of a greater whole;
- ☞ Use your creative and critical thinking to imagine the future;
- ☞ Take control of those things that you can take control of;
- ☞ Talk about it;
- ☞ Act now.

What will the size of your footprint be?

"An ecological footprint is the amount of productive land area required to sustain one human being. Globally, there are about 1.9 hectares of productive area per person, but the average ecological footprint is already 2.3 hectares. So we would need 1.5 Earths to live sustainably. The largest footprint belongs to citizens of the US, at 9.57 hectares. Five Earths would be needed if everyone in the world consumed at that rate. People in Bangladesh, on the other hand, need just 0.5 hectares. And China is somewhere in the middle, at 1.36 hectares.

"But what will it look like in a few decades, when China has a population of 1.5 billion? Supposing that Chinese levels of consumption then are equivalent to American levels now, the Earth doesn't stand a chance. If the US provides the benchmark for global consumption, 25 Earths will be needed to satiate everyone's wants."
– Adbusters (September - October 2004).

What will the size of your footprint be? How much of the earth will you consume to satisfy yourself? How much of that will be destroyed forever? How much of that will we be able to put back for future generations?

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Greetings Educators

This publication is designed as a extra classroom resource. You can use it from time to time to provide your learners with interesting supplementary activities. The learning activities are designed to be a challenge to all your learners. Use them to get your learners thinking.

Each chapter in the publication has its own set of learning activities which follow a specific format:

- Each set of learning activities starts with a suggestion of how you can **READ** the chapter to the class. The read icon informs you that the activity involves reading.
- The activity based on the **TIMELINE** in each chapter provides the learners with a schema for understanding the whole chapter. The chalkboard icon reminds you to write the questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
- The **CLASS DISCUSSION** is always around a **key concept** in the chapter and discussion questions are provided. The group discussion icon informs you that the activity involves a class discussion.
- The **COMPREHENSION** activity tests how well the learners read or listened to the chapter. The first six questions are basic recall type questions for ALL grades in the secondary school. Questions seven and eight are aimed at Grade 10, questions nine and ten are aimed at Grade 11, and questions eleven and twelve are aimed at Grade 12. These **graded questions are colour-coded** for easy recognition and they require more interpretive-type responses from the learners. The read icon informs you that the activity involves reading and writing.
- The **SOURCES** activity unpacks how sources have been used in the chapter to help construct historical information. The source icon informs you that the activity involves unpacking sources in the chapter.
- Each set of learning activities ends with mouse making a statement or asking a question and in this activity learners are expected to respond with their own **POINT OF VIEW**. The mouse icon informs you that the activity involves learners considering their own point of view.

The National Schools' Oral History Competition
The topics for ***the National Schools' Oral History Competition, the*** **Nkosi Albert Luthuli Young Historians' Award** are based on the content covered in the chapters of this publication. So these chapters will help prepare you and your learners to enter the competition. This competition is open to all learners from Grade 8 to Grade 11 and all history educators in secondary schools. A total of **ten learners** and **three educators** (from each province) will be selected to represent their province at a national event to be held in September 2007, and stand in line to win the national award.

Find out more about this competition by visiting the South African History Online website for information on oral history research at www.sahistory.org.za, Or get more information from your Provincial or Area Office.

Here is a message from the winner of the 2006 Nkosi Albert Luthuli Young Historians' Award in the National Schools' Oral History Competition, Miss Siphokazi Sambumbu, from Lukhanyisweni Senior Secondary School in the Eastern Cape:

"I wish all history educators the best in their strenuous endeavours to fortify the status and uplift the standard of the usually underrated learning area, history!"

All the history learning outcomes for GET (grades 8 to 9) and FET (grades 10 to 12) are covered by the activities provided for each chapter.

GET	FET
Grades 8 - 9	**Grades 10 - 12**
Learning Outcome 1 – The learner will be able to use enquiry skills to investigate the past and present.	Learning Outcome 1 – The learner is able to acquire and apply historical enquiry skills.
Learning Outcome 2 – The learner will be able to demonstrate historical knowledge and understanding.	Learning Outcome 2 – The learner is able to use historical concepts in order to analyse the past.
Learning Outcome 3 – The learner will be able to interpret aspects of history.	Learning Outcome 3 – The learner is able to construct and communicate historical knowledge and understanding.
	Learning Outcome 4 – The learner is able to engage critically with issues around heritage.

TWO AFRICAS: THE ONE BEFORE AND THE ONE AFTER THE HOLOCAUST

READ the chapter
Read the chapter loudly and clearly to the learners, using learners who read aloud well to help you.

TIMELINE: Get the time frames
Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Allow learners to work out the answers in pairs.

- How many years does the timeline span?
- Which European country was the first to trade in slaves? For how long did this country and its colonies practise slave trading?
- How long has it been since the first international ban on slavery?

Check the answers as a class.
Then encourage learners, in their pairs, to ask and answer their own questions based on the timeline.

CLASS DISCUSSION: A key concept in this chapter is – Human Rights
Ask the learners to consider the following:

- What human rights do we as South Africans have, according to our Constitution?

COMPREHENSION: How well did you read the chapter?

Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should write their answers in full sentences in their workbooks.

General recall questions for all grades.

1. Why did Europeans turn to Africa as a source for slaves for the "New World"?
2. How were these African slaves treated once they were captured, or bought? How did the slaves respond to this treatment?
3. For how long were there slaves in the Cape? Who did these slaves belong to?
4. What kinds of things did the Society for the Effective Abolition of the Slave Trade do to try to end slavery?
5. How long did it take for the Society for the Effective Abolition of the Slave Trade to succeed? What effect did this campaign have on the rest of the world?
6. Despite the ban on slavery, how many people are enslaved today? What is the term we now use in place of slavery? What are the factors that make people vulnerable to being enslaved today?

More interpretive-type questions for:

Grade 10
7. How seriously do you think the King of Portugal took the King of Kongo's letter?
8. In what ways could the Capoeira have been preparing the Brazilian slaves for revolt?

Grade 11
9. How effective was the anti-slavery campaign in Britain? Give reasons for your answer.
10. Africa as a continent suffered greatly during the years of the slave trade as well as afterwards. Who benefited from this suffering?

Grade 12
11. Explain the effectiveness of using the term "holocaust" to describe the period in which Africa lost 20% of its male population to slavery.
12. The statistics for people being used, abused and sold world-wide today are frightening. What can we learn from the Society for the Effective Abolition of the Slave Trade so as to bring about an end to these practices?

SOURCES: Make a list
All history is constructed from many different sources. These sources may be written up in the form of documents, letters, newspaper articles, text books, etc. Sources may also be photographs or illustrations of people or events. Sources could even be items from a particular time in history that we use to find out how people lived.

Count how many sources were used in this chapter about the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Learners should draw up a table like the one below, and list all the sources they find in the chapter. The first four have been done for them as examples. Try to list about 35 sources.

No.	Kind of source	Description	Date/Place
1.	Quote	Van Sertima, African Renaissance	1999
2.	Illustration		
3.	Extract from letter	King of Kongo to King of Portugal	1552
4.	Quote	Declaration at Virginian General Assembly	1705, N. America
5.			
6.			
...			

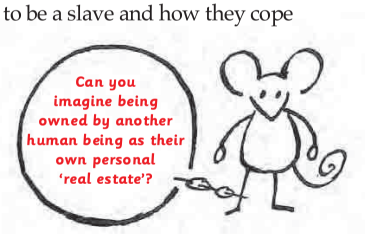
POINT OF VIEW: What does mouse ask? What do you say?

Learners should read the extract by Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1789).

They should consider what it must be like to be:

- taken away from your family,
- shipped off to a foreign place in appalling conditions,
- bought by a person whose language and culture you do not understand, and told how you are to live your life by this person, who decides when you work, what work you do, what you eat, what conditions you live in, etc.

Learners should write a one-page description of what it feels like to be a slave and how they cope with everyday slave life.



WE DIE LIKE BROTHERS... WE ARE THE SONS OF AFRICA

READ the chapter
Read the chapter loudly and clearly to the learners, using learners who read aloud well to help you.

TIMELINE: Get the basic facts
Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should work out the answers individually.

- What happened to the SS Mendi?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- How did it happen?
- Who was affected?

Discuss the answers as a class.
Ask the learners to consider the following: Besides the tragic event of the sinking of the SS Mendi, what other information is included in the timeline?

CLASS DISCUSSION: A key concept in this chapter is – Memory
Ask the learners to consider the following questions:

- What is memory? How do our memories work?
- Can we improve our memories?
- Can we control our memories?
- Are all memories of the same event the same? Why / Why not?
- Are our memories reliable as a source of information? Give reasons for your answer.

COMPREHENSION: How well did you read the chapter?

Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should write their answers in full sentences in their workbooks.

General recall questions for all grades.

1. How many South Africans boarded the SS Mendi? How many died? How many survived?
2. What kind of man was the Rev. Isaac Wauchope Dyobha? What role did he play on the sinking of the SS Mendi?
3. How were these men of the South African Native Labour Corps treated while in Europe? How did they live? What were they expected to do while they were in Europe?
4. How long did it take for news of the event to reach SA? What was the response when the news was first received?
5. What is the Order of Mendi for Bravery? How is it used in South Africa?
6. Why was a grassy embankment at the University of Cape Town chosen as the site for this monument? How did Madi Phala choose to memorialise the sinking of the SS Mendi?

More interpretive-type questions for:

Grade 10

7. Why do you think a man like Rev. Isaac Wauchope Dyobha would choose to go to war aged 64?
8. Were the contributions of these men of the South African Native Labour Corps recognised by the governments of Europe or South Africa when they died, or when they returned home? Give reasons for your answer.

Grade 11

9. What sources were used to collect the historical information we have about the day of this tragic event? How reliable are these sources?
10. Were the men who died with the sinking of the SS Mendi heroes? Give reasons for your answer.

Grade 12

11. Why has there been such a strong focus on the memorialisation of the tragic sinking of the SS Mendi since 1994?
12. After Madi Phala's death, the monument he made was cast in concrete as a tribute to the sculptor. Do you think it was appropriate to alter the monument in this way in order to pay tribute to Phala? Give reasons for your answer.

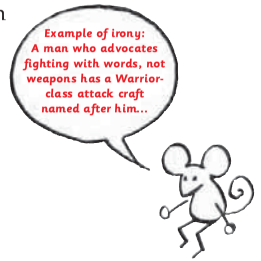
SOURCES: Make a list of memorial types
How have these brave men who died with the sinking of the SS Mendi been remembered?

Learners should draw up a table like the one below and use the information in the chapter to fill in the gaps.

Memorial	Place	Date
MPs in SA House of Assembly rise to their feet as a gesture of respect.		
		July 1917
	South Hampton, England	
		1986
Unveiling of Mendi Memorial by Queen Elizabeth and Nelson Mandela.		
		23 August 2004

POINT OF VIEW: What does mouse say? What do you say?

Rev. Isaac Wauchope Dyobha was the man who wrote a poem with the lines:



Your rights are taken away!
Grab a pen,
Load, load it with ink …
Shoot with the pen …
Engage your mind.

Dyobha was the same man who courageously led the men on the SS Mendi in the death dance, and then died himself in the icy waters.

Learners should write a paragraph in answer to the following questions:

- Should the Rev. Isaac Wauchope Dyobha be honoured for the role he played of the sinking of the SS Mendi?
- Should he have had a warrior-class attack craft named after him?
- What other kinds of honours would be more appropriate for this man?

WE SHALL RESIST

READ the chapter
Read the chapter loudly and clearly to the learners, using learners who read aloud well to help you.

TIMELINE: Get the main idea
Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should work out the answers in pairs.

- Make a list of all the congresses that are included in the timeline.
- What does "congress" mean?
- Why were all these congresses formed?
- Make a list of all the acts of defiance in the timeline.

Discuss the answers as a class.
Ask the learners to consider: What other words are repeated in the timeline? What do they mean?

CLASS DISCUSSION: A key concept in this chapter is – Defiance
Ask the learners to consider the following:
Imagine your school introduced new rules without discussing them first with the students' or parent body, for example:
"All decisions on how the school is to be run will be made by management."
"All students may only attend school if their heads are shaved."

- How would you react?
- What would you do?

COMPREHENSION: How well did you read the chapter?

Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should write their answers in full sentences in their workbooks.

General recall questions for all grades.

1. Describe how the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses reacted to the "Ghetto Acts" imposed by the Union government.
2. Why was the Three Doctors' Pact such an important document?
3. What was the Defiance Campaign in defiance of? How successful was it?
4. What was The Criminal Law Amendment Act (1953)? How did it come to be?
5. What was the Congress of the People? Where did the demands in the Freedom Charter come from?
6. Where did the three doctors study medicine? Which of the three doctors was **not** tried for treason?

More interpretive-type questions for:

Grade 10
7. How did the Defiance Campaign help the ANC?
8. How do Nelson Mandela, Cedric Mayson, and Alfred Nzo see the Freedom Charter and the role that it played in our history?

Grade 11
9. Why, do you think, India was the first country to break trade relations with South Africa as early as 1946, even before the Nationalist Party came to power?
10. What forms of resistance in this chapter do you think were most effective? Explain your answer.

Grade 12
11. Do you think it worked in the best interests of both Indians and Africans to join forces to oppose the Union Government's racist laws? Give reasons for your answer.
12. What did Kader Asmal mean when he said: *"The struggle for human rights … was both non-racial in principle and international in scope"*? What human rights are we struggling for today? Do you think Asmal's words still apply to us today? Explain your answer.

SOURCES: Documents
In this chapter we read the words from a letter by President Thabo Mbeki about the way in which the ANC has relied on documents to guide it as an organisation in its struggle for national liberation.

One of the documents listed in the letter is the "Three Doctors' Pact" of 1947.
Encourage the learners to read this document in the chapter and to answer the questions below.

1. Write out the main point of the first paragraph in not more than 12 words.
2. Why does this joint meeting refer to the members as non-Europeans?
3. What does full franchise mean?
4. What land restrictions were in place in 1947?
5. What political party was in power at the time?
6. Do you think "Europeans" had full and compulsory schooling at the time? Explain your answer.
7. What does this joint meeting believe it has to do in order to achieve its objectives?
8. How would you describe the language used in this document?
9. What is the main purpose of this document?
10. How would a document like this help the ANC as an organisation?

POINT OF VIEW: What does mouse say? What do you say?

Learners, in groups of 4 or 5, should discuss what the "Afrika!" salute symbolised. Then they develop a salute of their own for their school. Each group presents their salute to the class and explains its symbolism. The class uses a democratic process, like voting, to choose the best "salute" for their school.

LET MY PEOPLE GO

READ the chapter
Read the chapter loudly and clearly to the learners, using learners who read aloud well to help you.

TIMELINE: Get a sense of the roles the man played
Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should work out the answers in pairs.
For how long was Nkosi Albert Luthuli:

- At Adam's College?
- Chief of Groutville?
- Married to his wife Nokukhanya?
- A member of the ANC?
- President of the ANC?

Discuss the answers as a class.
Encourage learners, in their pairs, to ask and answer their own questions based on the timeline.

CLASS DISCUSSION: A key concept in this chapter is – Effective leadership
Encourage the learners to think of all the people they know who hold leadership positions in their school, church or local community. With these people in mind, ask the learners to do the following:

- List the qualities that make them good leaders.
- List the qualities that could be improved to make them better leaders.
- List the qualities of an effective leader.

COMPREHENSION: How well did you read the chapter?

Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should write their answers in full sentences in their workbooks.

General recall questions for all grades.

1. Nkosi Albert Luthuli was recognised throughout his life for his leadership ability. List the leadership roles he took on.
2. Why did Luthuli resign from the Native Representative Council in 1946? Why was he deposed as chief in 1952?
3. How did Luthuli 's travels abroad inspire him in his leadership roles?
4. Why, according to Luthuli, was there a split in the ANC that led to the formation of the PAC?
5. What did Luthuli choose to do with the money he received as part of the Nobel Peace Prize that he was awarded?
6. What kind of political activities did Luthuli continue with in South Africa after the banning of the ANC?

More interpretive-type questions for:

Grade 10

7. Why do you think Alan Paton chose to write a praise song to praise Nkosi Albert Lutuli? And which of Luthuli's qualities was he praising in this song?
8. Luthuli returned from receiving the Nobel Peace Prize to launch Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military arm of the ANC. Comment on the irony these events present.

Grade 11

9. Why do you think people continued to refer to Albert Luthuli as "chief" after the Natal government took this position away from him?
10. Do you think Luthuli was an effective leader? Give reasons for your answer.

Grade 12

11. What was the message from the rest of the world when Luthuli received the Nobel Peace Prize? What statement was Luthuli making by receiving this prize in traditional dress?
12. Of all the courageous moments in Luthuli's political life, what do you think was the most courageous? Give reasons for your answer.

SOURCES: Use information from his biography to find out the thoughts and feelings of Nkosi Albert Luthuli. He speaks out ...

Against sexism

1. How doesLuthuli see the role of women in:

- African society?
- The struggle against apartheid?
- An ideal personal relationship?

Against racism

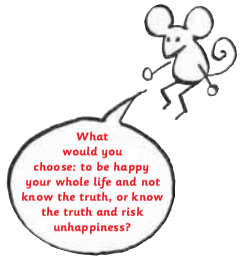
2. What is the myth that Luthuli speaks of?
3. What is the role of the black man in this myth? How is it challenged?
4. What is the role of the white man in this myth? How is it challenged?
5. How does Luthuli view the role of Bantu Education?

YOUR POINT OF VIEW: What does mouse ask? What do you say?

Encourage the learners to think carefully about what they would choose in the situations outlined below:

- If your family had secrets (which all families have), would you choose to know or not to know the truth?
- If a close friend was speaking behind your back, would you choose to know or not to know the truth?
- If your favourite teacher was involved in illegal activities that did not affect you, would you choose to know or not to know the truth?
- If your school principal or local councillor was involved in illegal activities that did affect you, would you choose to know or not to know the truth?
- If you, as a tax payer were being defrauded by a member of parliament, would you choose to know or not to know the truth?
- If you were a black student in the time of Bantu education, would you choose to know or not to know the truth?

Learners, having considered their answers to the above questions, should write a paragraph answering mouse's question.



CHAMPION OF FREEDOM

READ the chapter
Read the chapter loudly and clearly to the learners, using learners who read aloud well to help you.

TIMELINE: Get a sense of the man
Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should work out the answers in pairs.
How old was Oliver Reginald Tambo when:

- He was elected as secretary for the ANC Youth League?
- He and Nelson Mandela opened the first black law firm?
- He married Adelaide Tsukudu?
- He went into exile?
- He became president of the ANC?
- He returned from exile?
- He died?

Discuss the answers as a class.
Encourage learners, in their pairs, to ask and answer their own questions based on the timeline.

CLASS DISCUSSION: A key concept in this chapter is – Justice
The chapter begins with O.R. Tambo's words: "Our fight is for justice …"
Ask the learners to consider the following questions:

- What is justice? What was Oliver Reginald Tambo prepared to do to achieve justice?
- Do we all agree on what justice is and how it is to be achieved? Explain your answer.
- Do you think the apartheid government believed that there was justice in the apartheid system? Give reasons for your answer.
- Did the rest of the world think there was justice in apartheid?
- How do we, as individuals, communities, countries, etc., come to accept injustice in our midst?

COMPREHENSION: How well did you read the chapter?

Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should write their answers in full sentences in their workbooks.

General recall questions for all grades.

1. How would you describe the young Oliver Reginald Tambo?
2. What kind of teacher was O.R. and why did he also choose to study law?
3. How did O.R. Tambo and his contemporaries change the ANC in the 1940s?
4. What kind of work did O.R. Tambo do for the ANC while in exile? Why was this work so difficult?
5. What kind of role did the Anti-Apartheid Movement play internationally?
6. What was it like for O.R. Tambo to return to South Africa?

More interpretive-type questions for:

Grade 10

7. What kind of role did Adelaide Tambo play in the struggle for freedom in South Africa?
8. What thoughts and feelings did O.R. Tambo inspire in Nelson Mandela?

Grade 11

9. What do you think of O.R. Tambo's reason for the ANC launching Umkhonto we Sizwe on 16 December as he presented it on Radio Freedom on 21 December 1987?
10. How successful was the work that O.R. Tambo did while he was in exile? Explain your answer.

Grade 12

11. Was O.R. Tambo correct in assuming that economic sanctions would bring an end to apartheid? Give reasons for your answer.
12. What, in your opinion, makes O.R. Tambo a hero?

SOURCES: Interpretive historical texts
Interpretive historical texts are often called secondary sources. We find them in school history text books, biographies, or other books that deal with popular history topics. In this chapter on O.R.Tambo, there are six examples taken from a book by historian Luli Callinicos, called *The Life of Oliver Tambo* that was published in 1999. Another example in this chapter, is the extract from the book by Sandi Baai entitled *Oliver Reginald Tambo, Teacher, Lawyer, Freedom Fighter*, published by Mutloatse Arts Heritage Trust in 2006.

Encourage the learners to read or listen to the text in the box on the right, and answer the questions that follow:

1. What sources could have provided the historian, Callinicos, with the kinds of information she needed to write this text?
2. How would the historian know or find out that the annexation of Pondoland took place within Tambo's parents' lifetime?
3. What source did the historian use to find out how things worked at council meetings?
4. How could the historian have checked the accuracy of this source of information if she wanted to?
5. According to the historian what did Tambo and Mandela learn from the system the chiefs practised at council meetings?

Democracy in its purest form

The annexation of Pondoland took place within Tambo's parents' lifetime. It was an act that completed the process of colonial dispossession of South Africa. Traditional life, however, remained relatively unspoiled by western influence for some time to come. *"In a society where everyone new almost everyone else, group pressure was a strong form of discipline. The Amapondo, like many polity in southern Africa, had a consensus approach to decision making. Between headmen and the community, as well as between chiefs and the people, there was a balance of power. In his autobiography, President Mandela recalled how, 'at a council meeting, or imbizo, everyone was heard: chief and subject, warrior and medicine man, shopkeeper and farmer, land owner and labourer … it was democracy in its purest form'. After thorough discussion, the chief and his advisors would get the feel of the meeting. Opponents of the plan were encouraged to speak out. Chiefs relied on their councillors to prevent them from acting contrary to popular will. This very sound practice, of never straying too far away from their constituencies – was to play a profoundly important role in the ANC style of leadership of both Tambo and Mandela."* – Callinicos (1999: 5-6)

YOUR POINT OF VIEW: What does mouse ask? What do you say?

Learners should write a one-page essay explaining why we, as South Africans, find it so hard to make place in our hearts and in our country for refugees from other African countries. In this essay, learners should give at least two reasons. They should end with a paragraph explaining what they think of and how they feel about the situation of African refugees in South Africa.

29th Anniversary of the Death of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe

OF THE AFRICAN, BY THE AFRICANS, FOR AFRICANS

READ the chapter
Read the chapter loudly and clearly to the learners, using learners who read aloud well to help you.

TIMELINE: Get a sense of this man who lived to learn
Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should work out the answers in pairs.

- How many degrees did Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe complete in his lifetime? What were the degrees?
- What political organisation did he start and lead? What historical campaign was this organisation responsible for?
- How many years did Sobukwe spend in prison? Where?
- How old was he when he died?

Discuss the answers as a class.
Encourage learners, in their pairs, to ask and answer their own questions based on the timeline.

CLASS DISCUSSION: A key concept in this chapter is – Africanism
Ask the learners to consider the following:

- What does it mean to be an Africanist?
- Can a white South African be an Africanist?
- Can a black South African not be an Africanist?
- What is the difference between being "anti-white" and being "anti-white-superiority"?

COMPREHENSION: How well did you read the chapter?

Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should write their answers in full sentences in their workbooks.

General recall questions for all grades.

1. What kinds of values did Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe and his siblings learn from their parents?
2. When and what sparked his political consciousness? What role did he play in the Congress Youth League and how was he seen by his colleagues?
3. Why, according to Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, did he split from the ANC to form the PAC?
4. What did Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe do five days before 21 March 1960. Where was he on 21 March 1960 and what happened to him?
5. How did John Vorster describe Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe? Why did he feel he needed to detain him *"until this side of eternity"*?
6. Which of his ideas did Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe fear would be misinterpreted? Were his fears justified?

More interpretive-type questions for:

Grade 10

7. What kinds of issues caused conflict between the Africanist and the moderate members of the ANC?
8. When Sobukwe was kept in solitary confinement on Robben Island for six years, he developed a simple action to silently communicate with the other prisoners. Describe the action and explain the effect it had on the other prisoners.

Grade 11

9. What was so unique about this man, Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, that the apartheid government had to develop a statute specifically for him in order to keep him detained indefinately?
10. When Sobukwe walked through Braamfontein during lunch time and workers gave him the "Zulu royal salute", he would respond shyly and greet them gently. What does this tell you about the man, Sobukwe?

Grade 12

11. What do you think of Sobukwe's thoughts that: *"Even though blacks must be independent of the influence of sympathetic whites, it was ultimately loyalty to Africa that defined one as an African and was the only crucial requirement for citizenship in a liberated South Africa"*?
12. What was the cost for Sobukwe, the man, to stand so firm in his commitment to his Africanist beliefs?

SOURCES: Photographs
Photographs can tell us many things. What do these photographs tell us about Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe? Encourage the learners to look carefully at the photographs below and answer the questions that follow:

© Bailey's African History Archives

Sobukwe in his office at Wits University

© Bailey's African History Archives

Sobukwe in jail on Robben Island.

© Bailey's African History Archives

Sobukwe under house arrest at his house in Kimberley.

Consider for each of the photographs:

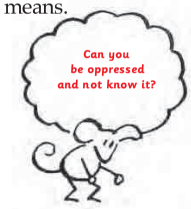
1. What is Sobukwe wearing in this photograph?
2. Where was this photograph taken?
3. What kind of expression do you see on Sobukwe's face?
4. What impression do you get of the man in this photograph?

Comparing the photographs:

1. In which photograph does Sobukwe look the healthiest?
2. In which photograph does Sobukwe look the least healthy?
3. List the factors that contributed to the deterioration of Sobukwe's apparance?

POINT OF VIEW: What does mouse ask? What do you say?

Learners look up the word "oppression" in the dictionary and discuss what it means.
Ask them to suggest synonyms and antonyms for the word "oppression".
Learners should first make a list of factors that can lead to oppression,
and then make a list of the factors that can lead to the opposite of oppression.
Learners should discuss the question asked by mouse in a paragraph,
stating whether they agree or disagree.
Learners should give reasons for their responses.



BLACK MAN, YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN

READ the chapter
Read the chapter loudly and clearly to the learners, using learners who read aloud well to help you.

TIMELINE: Get a sense of Biko's commitment
Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should work out the answers individually.

- Make a list of all the organisations Steve Biko was part of. Underline the organisations ones he led at some point.
- When did Biko receive his first banning order? What was Biko banned from doing?
- In which years was Biko arrested and detained?
- How old was Biko when he died in detention?

Discuss the answers as a class.
Encourage learners, in pairs, to ask and answer their own questions based on the timeline.

CLASS DISCUSSION: A key concept in this chapter is – Black Consciousness
Ask the learners to consider the following questions:

- What does "consciousness" mean? What does "Black Consciousness" mean?
- What kinds of feelings did Biko want to inspire in black people? Why?
- Why do you think Biko believed so strongly in "freedom of the mind"?

COMPREHENSION: How well did you read the chapter?

Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should write their answers in full sentences in their workbooks.

General recall questions for all grades.

1. What was the main problem Biko had with NUSAS?
2. Describe the formation of the first black students' union.
3. What did Biko see as the main purpose of "Black Consciousness"?
4. How did Biko see "blacks" and "non-whites" as being different?
5. Describe the circumstances surrounding Biko's death.
6. How did the police explain Biko's death? What suggests that their explanation was not truthful?

More interpretive-type questions for:

Grade 10

7. What happened to "Black Consciousness" after the death of Steve Biko?
8. What do you think Biko meant when he wrote: *"The first step therefore is to make the black man come to himself; to pump life back into his empty shell; to infuse him with pride and dignity, to remind him of his complicity in the crime of allowing himself to be misused and therefore letting evil reign supreme in the country of his birth"*?

Grade 11

9. What caused black people to become *"spectators in a game in which they should be participants"*?
10. What effect did Biko's death in detention have on South Africa and the rest of the world?

Grade 12

11. Where and how has Biko been memorialised? Will these memorials be adequate to keep Steve Biko's wisdom alive in the minds of the communities that house these memorials?
12. What was it about this man, Steve Biko, that made him into the icon he has become today?

SOURCES: A poem and an artwork that reflect on Death in Detention

Learners should read or listen to the **poem,** *In Detention*, by Christopher van Wyk on page 60.
Then answer the following questions on the **poem**:

1. What is this poem about?
2. Are the reasons the poet, Christopher van Wyk gives us in each line of his poem reasonable?
3. Why did the poet choose this particular structure for his poem?
4. What do you think of the way the poet has chosen to look at death in detention?
5. What effect does this poem have on you, the reader?

Learners should examine the **artwork,** *It Left Him Cold*, by Sam Nhlengethwa on page 60.
Then answer the following questions:

This artwork is an example of a collage. Look at how the artist, Sam Nhlengethwa, has chosen to construct this collage:

1. What is this artwork about?
2. What elements has the artist used to show the jail cell?
3. What do you see through the open door?
4. Where is the body of Steve Biko placed? How has the artist chosen to show it?
5. What other elements are in the cell with the body?
6. What effect does this collage have on you, the viewer?

YOUR POINT OF VIEW: What does mouse say? What do you say?

Learners should make a list of all the things, events, people, or groups of people that have influenced them at some point in their lives, or are still influencing them.
They should then rate each item on the list from the biggest to the smallest influence.

Then learners write a paragraph discussing how free they are to be themselves:

- To think the things they want to think.
- To act the way they want to act.
- To remain true to the values that are important to them.

ASIKWELWA! WE WILL NOT RIDE!

READ the chapter
Read the chapter loudly and clearly to the learners, using learners who read aloud well to help you.

TIMELINE: Find the details
Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should work out the answers in pairs.

- Where is Alexandra township?
- How many bus boycotts took place in Alexandra in the 1940s?
- Why did PUTCO put the bus fares up by a penny in January 1957?
- How long did the 1957 bus boycott last for?
- How many of the boycotts were successful?

Discuss the answers as a class.
Encourage learners, in their pairs, to ask and answer their own questions based on the timeline.

CLASS DISCUSSION: A key concept in this chapter is – Solidarity
In the chapter, Ché Guevara tells us: "*Solidarity means taking the same risks.*"
In 1957, tens of thousands of workers and residents of Alexandra township took the same risks by boycotting PUTCO buses and walking many miles to and from work daily.

Ask the learners to consider the following questions:

- Would you personally have been prepared to do the same as the Alexandra residents?
- Have you, as part of a group, taken a stand against authority on an issue?
  - What issue?
  - What authority?
  - What action was taken?

COMPREHENSION: How well did you read the chapter?

Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should write their answers in full sentences in their workbooks.

General recall questions for all grades.

1. What were the residents of Alexandra demanding through the 1957 bus boycott?
2. The 1957 bus boycott started in Alexandra township, in Gauteng. Which provinces did the boycott spread to?
3. How were the walking boycotters, the cyclists and those getting lifts in private cars treated?
4. What is the Black Sash? What role did it play in the boycott?
5. What final settlement was reached in March 1957? Who was involved in reaching this settlement?
6. Once the bus boycott was resolved, what issue was taken up next? Was this campaign successful? Explain your answer.

More interpretive-type questions for:

Grade 10

7. The bus fares were increased at the beginning of January 1957. How did Alexandra residents get to organise themselves so quickly as to be able to start the boycott on 7 January 1957?
8. What other hardships did the workers and residents of Alexandra have to endure at the time?

Grade 11

9. Do you think the Alexandra residents involved in the 1957 bus boycott believed they would be successful? Give reasons for your answer.
10. According to the extract, from *Organise or Starve – The History of the South African Congress of Trade Unions*, how many workers boycotted the buses? How many walked the 2 000 miles? Why was there such a big discrepancy in the figures? How do you think the remaining people got to and from work?

Grade 12

11. Discuss the role of the police in the boycott. What effect did their role have on the boycott as a whole?
12. What did the Alexandra Bus Boycott of 1957 show South Africans and the rest of the world?

SOURCES: Perspectives of two ANC leaders across time
Learners should find the quote by Walter Sisulu in the chapter that begins "*The fact that people can walk …*" and answer the following questions:

1. When was this quote recorded?
2. What were Walter Sisulu's circumstances at the time?
3. Do you think this quote was written or spoken? Give reasons for your answer.
4. How does Walter Sisulu view the boycott?

Learners should find President Thabo Mbeki's message in the chapter that begins "*I want to single out the Alexandra bus boycott …*" and answer the following questions:

1. When was this message recorded?
2. Do you think this quote was written or spoken? Give reasons for your answer.
3. In this message, what aspects of the bus boycott does President Thabo Mbeki focus on?
4. What other event that has a chapter in this publication does President Thabo Mbeki refer to, and how does it help his message?

Learners should consider the following:

1. In what aspects are the messages of these two ANC leaders similar?
2. In what ways are they different?

POINT OF VIEW: What does mouse ask? What do you say?

Learners are encouraged to consider the following:

- *Be truthful – how much of an activist are you?*

If you heard that the company that makes your favourite drink forces its workers to work really long hours and in terrible conditions, would you be prepared to stage a boycott and give up your favourite drink?
OR
Perhaps consumer issues are not that important to you; you may be much more concerned with environmental issues or local community issues.

Whatever the issues that matter to you, are you a born activist? Are you always ready and willing to take up a cause? Or don't you have an activist's bone in your body?

Learners should write a paragraph examining the kind of person they are and rating their ability to be a social activist, willing to fight for what they believe in.

DAWN OF NEGOTIATION

READ the chapter
Read the chapter loudly and clearly to the learners, using learners who read aloud well to help you.

TIMELINE: Get a sense of Dakar to Democracy
Write these questions/tasks on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should work out the answers in pairs.

- List the names of all South Africans featured in this timeline. Briefly describe the role they played on the road to democracy.
- List the international organisations featured and briefly describe their role.
- What was the first sign that the Nationalist Government was giving up on apartheid?
- How long did the journey from Dakar to Democracy take?

Discuss the answers as a class.
Encourage learners, in their pairs, to ask and answer their own questions based on the timeline.

CLASS DISCUSSION: A key concept in this chapter is – Negotiation
Learners are encouraged to think back to a disagreement they had with another person or group of people.

- What was this disagreement about?
- How well did the two parties manage to listen to one another?
- Did either of the parties, or both, take the disagreement personally?
- Did either of the parties, or both, act aggressively or defensively?
- What do people have to do to negotiate effectively despite their differences?

COMPREHENSION: How well did you read the chapter?
Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should write their answers in full sentences in their workbooks.

General recall questions for all grades.

1. Who organised the Dakar meeting? What were the four principle of this meeting?
2. Was this meeting the first of its kind between white South Africans and members of the ANC in exile? Give reasons for your answer.
3. What kinds of things were happening in and outside of South Africa that made this meeting necessary?
4. How were the delegates received in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso? How were the delegates received in Accra, Ghana?
5. What realisations did the delegates come to, as laid out in the source, unpublished statement, after the talks?
6. What happened after the meeting in Dakar?

More interpretive-type questions for:

Grade 10
7. Describe two deeply moving moments Max du Preez experienced on his visit to Gorée Island after the talks in Dakar. What was the message in these moments for him?
8. What kinds of emotions do you think the Afrikaners who were part of the Dakar Delegation felt on their return home?

Grade 11
9. What do you think forced the NGK to speak out against apartheid in 1984?
10. How does O.R. Tambo describe Dr Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert during the press conference held in Addis Ababa in July 1987? What impression of Dr Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert do you get in this chapter?

Grade 12
11. What do the statistics quoted in a report entitled *Political Conflict in South Africa* (compiled by the private research group, "The Indicator Project of South Africa", and presented in January 1987) tell us about what was happening in the country between 1984 and 1987?
12. There were meetings between white South Africans and the ANC before Dakar as well as afterwards. None of these meetings were as successful as Dakar. What do you think made Dakar the success that it was?

SOURCES: Political cartoons
Encourage learners to use the information they have learnt in the chapter to help them interpret the political cartoon (on page 75) and answer the following questions:

1. List the two groups and the tools they are using in their "Search for the road to a free non-racial democratic South Africa". Which group is more likely to succeed? What chance does the other group have?
2. Who will lead us at the end of the road to a free non-racial democratic South Africa? What is the shining light that will be guiding us all?
3. Why did the cartoonist choose a lighthouse to symbolise the organisation that will lead us? How useful is this image? Explain your answer.
4. How does the cartoonist suggest that this lead organisation is well supported?
5. What other organisations does this cartoon suggest will have a say in the free non-racial democratic South Africa?
6. List the two issues the cartoonist suggests the lead organisation will work on in the free non-racial democratic South Africa. Why are these shown as placards in the cartoon?
7. What aspect of this cartoon suggests that this source is 20 years old?

POINT OF VIEW: What does mouse say? What do you say?

Mouse is referring to the Afrikaners who went to Dakar to meet with the ANC.

Learners discuss the answers to the following questions:

- What is meant by this common Afrikaans saying, "*'n boer maak 'n plan*"?
- Why did the Afrikaners at this meeting in Dakar feel that they needed a plan?
- What was the plan of action drafted at the Dakar meeting and who made sure it happened?

Learners should then write a paragraph describing what the Afrikaners think could be achieved through the Dakar Declaration.

CREATING OUR FUTURE TODAY

READ the chapter
Read the chapter loudly and clearly to the learners, using learners who read aloud well to help you.

TIMELINE: Get a sense of when, where and who was involved
Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should work out the answers in pairs.

- When did the world start addressing environmental issues?
- Make a list of all the places in the world that have hosted events concerned with environmental issues. Are all the continents represented?
- Make a list of all the organisations mentioned in this timeline.
- When and where did Agenda 21 emerge? What is Agenda 21?

Discuss the answers as a class.
Encourage learners, in their pairs, to ask and answer their own questions based on the timeline.

CLASS DISCUSSION: A key concept in this chapter is – Sustainable Development
Ask the learners to consider the following questions:

- What does "sustainable" mean? What does "development" mean? What does "sustainable development" mean?
- Does sustainable development automatically happen? Why? /Why not?
- Whose responsibility is sustainable development?

COMPREHENSION: How well did you read the chapter?
Write these questions up on the chalkboard before the lesson.
Learners should write their answers in full sentences in their workbooks.

General recall questions for all grades.

1. What are some of the challenges that face us today as South Africans?
2. Where was the WSSD held? How many people attended the WSSD? What was the main purpose of this event?
3. What kinds of issues do the Millennium Development Goals address? Which region is finding it the most difficult to reach these goals?
4. Why, according to President Thabo Mbeki, are we not as committed to sustainable development as we should be?
5. What is the Human Development Index? Why is it useful? How do we rank against the other 176 countries on the HDI list?
6. How are people starting to show their dissatisfaction with the way the world is being managed? What kinds of things are they dissatisfied with?

More interpretive-type questions for:

Grade 10

7. What do you think is the biggest challenge facing us as South Africans today? Explain your answer.
8. Examine the list on page 84. Then choose an issue you would be prepared to protest for. And explain what you hope to do to reduce your "environmental footprint" on this planet with regard to the issue you have chosen.

Grade 11

9. What challenge does Eve Crowley, facilitator for SARDI, highlight for us? What can be done to improve this situation?
10. Do you think enough countries are prioritising environmental issues and are prepared to cooperate sufficiently to reverse the effects of greed on this planet? Explain your answer.

Grade 12

11. Explain the logo for the WSSD.
12. Mr Abdullah Hamand Al-Attiyah, Minister of Energy for Qatar and chair of the 15th Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, believes that: *"Developing countries, which have contributed least to the atmospheric build-up of carbon dioxide, are the ones at greatest risk and least equipped to deal with the effects of climate change."* Do you agree or disagree with Al-Attiyah? Give reasons for your answer.

SOURCES: Speeches
In a number of the chapters in this book, we have read or listened to many speeches given by various people at different times in our history and learnt about the important issues of the time.

Encourage the learners to read/listen to the speech (opposite) speech by President Thabo Mbeki and answer the questions that follow.

1. Who was President Thabo Mbeki speaking to in this speech?
2. Do you think he agrees with the people who took to the streets to protest? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Is it possible to "eradicate poverty"? Explain your answer. Suggest other verbs that could be used instead of the word "eradicate".
4. Why are there people starving (when we have enough food) and people dying of diseases (that can be cured)? What can be done to change these things?
5. Explain the main point of Mbeki's speech.
6. How does something that is written to be **spoken** differ from something that is written to be **read**?
7. What do you think of Mbeki's speech? Does the speech come across as being sincere? Give reasons for your answer.

POINT OF VIEW: What does mouse say? What do you say?

Learners, in groups, should make a list of all the issues that affect their lives. They then choose one issue from the list and write a report to be published in a newspaper. In this news report they should: Firstly, describe the issue as they understand it; secondly, explain their plan of action to improve the situation; thirdly, try to convince readers to join them in their plan of action.

Voices from WSSD

"Two days ago, people took to the streets of Johannesburg to give voice to the demand that our Summit meeting must produce practical and meaningful results on very specific matters ... The message is simply this – that we can and must act in unity to ensure that there is a practical and visible global development process that brings about poverty eradication and human advancement within the context of the protection of the ecology of the planet Earth ... we are moved by a deeply-felt sense that the ordinary peoples of the world understand that a new and brighter world of hope and a better life for them is struggling to be born ...

"The question arises as to why as human beings we do not act, when we have the capacity to overcome problems that are not god-given, but are the creation of human society and human decisions and actions... Since the means exist to banish hunger, why are so many without adequate supplies of food and others are faced with famine, including millions in this region of Southern Africa! ... Why do millions die every year from avoidable and curable diseases when science, technology and engineering have the means to save these human lives! Why do we have wars when we established institutions to end war! Why are there many who cannot read and write and count when, everyday, human intelligence breaks through many barriers of darkness to make the seemingly unknowable part of the ever-expanding stock of human knowledge! Why does the accumulation of wealth in human society produce human misery! ...

"The poor in the world believe that we travelled from all corners of our common globe to the very Cradle of Humanity to find answers to these questions."

– President Thabo Mbeki's speech at the opening session of the meeting of Heads of State and Government at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (2 September, 2002)

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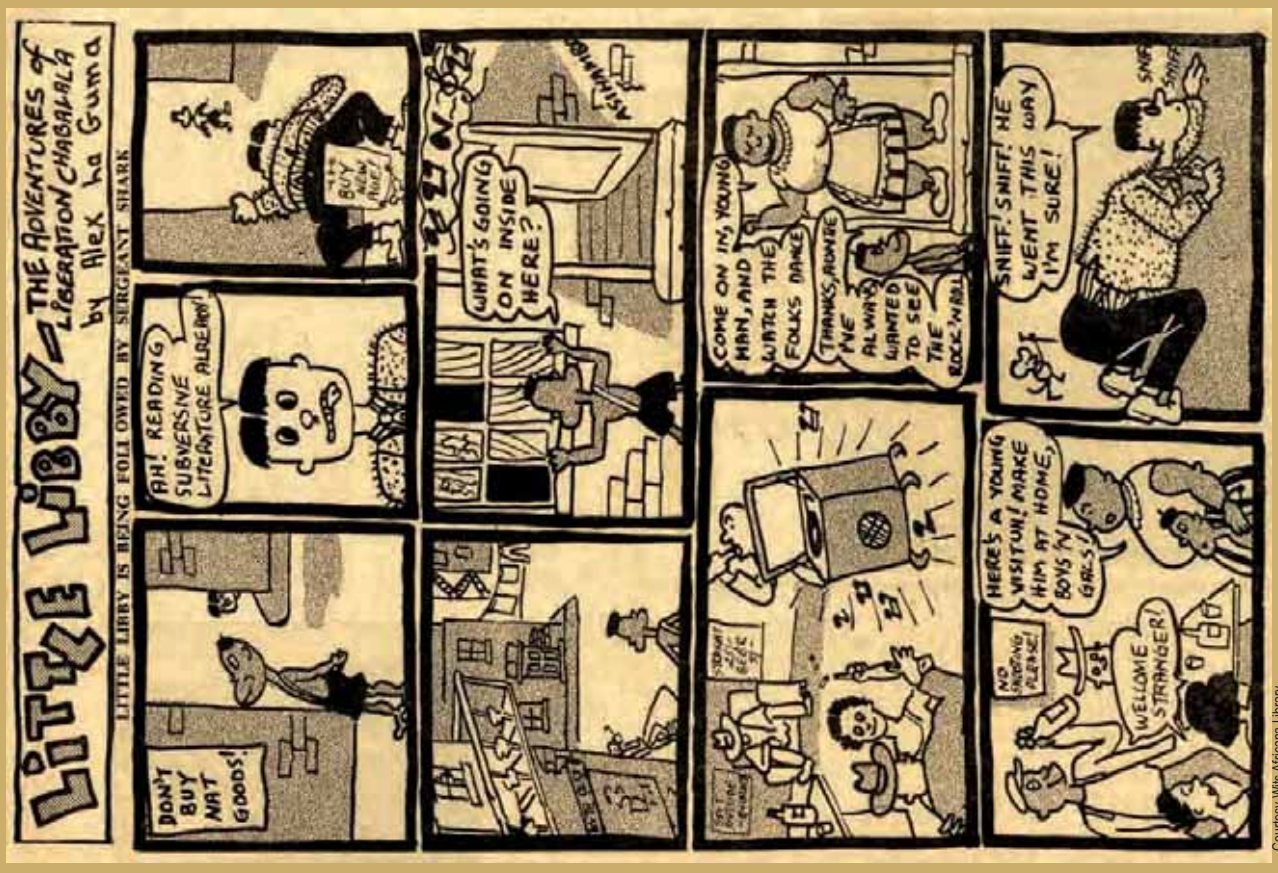

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