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

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.

“So, what ‘footprints in the sands of time’ will you leave behind?”

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

“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’.”
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 - 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 forever, 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.

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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 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)

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 1532, 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 everywhere 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 Virginia 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.”

200th Anniversary of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

1464 — The first public sale of African slaves, from northern Mauritania, in Portugal.
1482 — The Portuguese start building a slave trade in 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.
1787 — The Transatlantic Slave Trade reaches the peak of its activity.
1807 — Britain passes the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act.
1811 — Spain abolishes slavery. Its colony Cuba resists the ban.
1834 — Slavery is abolished in the United States of America.
1888 — Slavery is abolished in Cuba.
1888 — Slavery is abolished in Brazil.
1926 — The League of Nations adopts the Slavery Convention abolishing slavery.
1948 — 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.”

Illustration of slaves being sold to the highest bidder.

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 105 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 1989. It tells the story of a small, impish character. Little Libby, whose adventures take him from the countryside to the city, and living 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

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

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.

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.

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.

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 rum and two ounces of tobacco.” – Thom. Journal of Jan van Rebeek (1932), cited in Potenza & Favis, Hands on History (1994)

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 1711, there were 16,000 slaves brought to the Cape. 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 belong to the government, and are, undoubtedly, the most valuable of all. They also receive the same treatment. Their food is scanty and coarse; their weekly dose 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 slaves who are owned privately are, with few exceptions, much better treated and much more amenable to good treatment.” – Otto Mentzel, Description of the Cape (1735)

The Cape came under British control in 1806. On 27 October 1808, two slaves, Louis of Mauritus 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 Kookerg 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.
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. This successful passage of these Acts of Parliament was partly the result of an intense and well-organised anti-slavery campaign over many years.

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 neither 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.

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.

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, thumb-screws and a device for force-feeding slaves who went on hunger strike, to provide physical evidence of abuse and confirm the testimonies he had recorded. He also recorded 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.

Human Rights Campaigns Today: Information and Statistics

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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.

“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 were come on board, though it was in the evening. They put us in separate parcells, 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 acted 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 put 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 relatives 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.)
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.

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.

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, hat pins and other fashion accessories. People used these items to show their support for the Anti-Slavery Campaign.

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.

Case, ye British Sons of murder! Case from forging Afric’s Chains; Mock your Saviour’s name no further, Case 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 kind be free.

Hannah More, The Sermons of Yahweh (1797)

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.manchestergov.co.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 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.
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.nottorsalecampaign.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$8 000. 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.

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“We are the sons of Africa. Raise your war cries, brothers, for though they made us leave our assegais 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 Battalion 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 sign, 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.

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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.
Would you go to war without a gun?

THE MEN OF THE SS MENDI

Among the Africans who died when the SS Mendi sank were some prominent men, such as the Pondoland chief Henry Bokleni, Dokoda Richard Ndame, Moonywa 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 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

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.

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.

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 Uitenhage near Uitenhage, into a family with strong connections to early Christian missionaries. After finishing school at Loxdale Institute, he worked as a teacher in Uitenhage. In September 1892 he played a key role in establishing Imbumba Yamiyamaya, 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 1886, 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 Loxdale. On March 6, 1892 he was ordained and installed as pastor of the Congregational Native Church of Port Beaufort and Binkwana.

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 South African Native Labour Corps came to France in early 1917, and established a base at Arques-la-Bataille. Respectful warriors and tribal leaders, men of the South African Native Labour Corps found themselves delegated 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)

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.

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)."

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.

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.

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The Shield

The shield 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.

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The shield contains symbols which bear meaning:

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.
5. Lion spoor – represents 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.
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 resisters (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 resisters had gone to prison. Many of these passive resisters were women.
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 of 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.
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 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.
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.

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, “Afrikal Afrikal!”

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 5 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 trial, 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 great races”. 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.

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Background:

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Volunteers collect the people's written demands

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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.

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.

“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.”

– Thabo Mbeki, Letter from the President, 7 January 2005.

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.

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 treachery, demonstrates the rich heritage of struggles of our people, the justices 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 remain a beacon to the people of South Africa, in African Communist. (Second Quarter 1980)

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 an unreserved surrender to the noble cause of freedom in our land, and everywhere in the world where man is self-denied by his brother man. If we fail in this challenge, we shall quite possibly be held in contempt by our freedom-loving contemporaries in other lands but, worst of all, we shall earn the curse and disdilation 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 few of us, 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)

We stand by our leaders

“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 sets the ideal of social equality 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.”

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 Maseko, died while giving birth to their second child. In 1940, he married Madlela Bizikiel. 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 into politics. Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Oliver Tambo into the organisation. Xuma was opposed to violence. In 1948, he lost the leadership of the ANC to the younger radicals led by D.J. 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.

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’ [...], took 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.
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 determination or any half-hidden yearning. 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 shudder 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 Ghut to 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 restrictions to freedom of movement through passes, curfew regulations, influx control measures; in short, we have witnessed in these years as 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 equality. 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 government. The ANC, PAC and the South African Communist Party were banned and had to start operating underground.

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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, have there 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 multi-racial country and that there is therefore a need for a multiracial society.

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. Alas, to this fact that in recent years white wages have soared, while Africans 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 [Maletelesi] . . . More recently, the Squatters 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 normally 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)

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 knew... 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 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 in the last two thousand years can affect them. Must we really invent the spinning-wheel before we can weave 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 spangles with a sententious voice. Western civilisation is only partly Western. It embraces the contributions of many lands and many races. If [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 ... Since the cultural gifts formerly offered are being snatched away. Our children are invited to put their hope 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)
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.”

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. 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 pen, and he used it to write articles and books. 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 Luthuli.

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

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

The Nobel Peace Prize
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 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 re-double 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.
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.

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 playing and not watching properly. 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 parents in his education. At 16, he became a star student and his teachers found him a place at St. Peter's, a well-known secondary school in Johannesburg.

Before Oliver had completed his matric, he was 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 press and with great pride the Cape assembly of chiefs, the Bhunga, awarded him a bursary to study at university.

"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

"In a society where everyone knew almost everyone else, group pressure was a strong form of discipline. The Amapondo, like many polities in southern Africa, had a consensus approach to decision making. Because of this, most people were not in any hurry to get their way. If someone had a disagreement with his chief, he just talked about it. There were no revolts or revolutions in Africa. People were more likely to go to the chief and say, 'Look, I want this or that.' They believed in peaceful resolution of disputes. This was an important factor in maintaining social harmony." – Callinicos (1999: 5-6)

"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.

Symbolic meaning:
1. 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.
2. Isandlwana Hill – symbolises peace and tranquility after the Battle of Isandlwana in 1879.
3. The South African Flag – represents the dawn of freedom and democracy.
4. Technology – emphasises the development of high-tech products.
5. The African Clay Pot – symbolises the vision of the late Chief Albert Luthuli.
6. Two horns – support Chief Luthuli's vision for a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa.
7. The leopard pattern – represents Chief Luthuli's trademark headgear.
27 October 1917 – Oliver Tambo is born in Pondoland.
1941 – Eats his degree and becomes a class teacher of Grade 8 students at Holy Cross in Pietermaritzburg.
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, killing hundreds of workers.
1942 – Starts to study law by correspondence, through UNISA.
1945 – Qualifies and joins Nelson Mandela in a law practice.
1953 – Works with Chief Luthuli on the ANC’s programme of mass action.
1955 – Nelson Mandela is elected as the first National Secretary.
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.
1963 – Becomes ANC president-general following Albert Luthuli’s death.
1969 – Following Albert Luthuli’s death.
1976 – Helps settle children 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 chairman 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.

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

“Dozens of his students remember 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)

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 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)

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

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.

Upon the founding of the ANC Youth League, Chief Luthuli recalls:

“Young blood breathes new life into the ANC. … 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 Programme of Action led to the Defiance Campaign in 1952 in which thousands of people were mobilised.
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.

In 1952, O.R. completed his law degree and, after completing his articles, he and Nelson Mandela opened a law practice. They практике 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.

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, the face of apartheid” (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.
After the 1976 student uprising, hundreds of schoolchildren fled. 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 and 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. The UN Security Council later 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.

**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 am not 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 197,382 signatures demanded 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.”


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.

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.

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 Finance, 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.

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.
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 anestoxin 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)

Like Moses ...

Just a few months after visiting his home, on 23 April, 1990, 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 AF Luithi, 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 T ambo

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. 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. Ms 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 in her life a manner that served as an indelible 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.”

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.

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 recipients active expression of solidarity and support for South Africa.
3. A tamoye of four sections - is inspired by the universal yin and yang symbol. This symbol represents the meeting point of diverse spiritual energies.

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 Afrixt re-created. Young Africa. We are the first glimmers of a new dawn …”

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.

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 at age 17, he won a scholarship to Fort Hare. At Healdtown he became headboy and obtained a first class pass, entitling him to go to university at Fort Hare.

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When I met my husband he was already in the struggle. He had come to the Victoria Hospital. 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 known 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 allow the martyrdom of the striking nurses to go unnoticed.

I shall continue to 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 arraignment of so many of us should have been raised in this fashion. But the price of freedom is blood, toil and tears. This consolation I have, however, that African women and these martyrs of freedom, these young budding women, will be remembered and honoured when Africa comes into her own” (Pogrund 1990: 35).

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 unhappy 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 and accepted 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 Machet). 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, Mlisa (meaning to plant deep), then a son, Danindyebo (to make rich) and Dedanizivoe (give way, nations). Family and work life were very rewarding, but Sobukwe hungered to get back into politics; he joined the ANC Moloto branch and affiliated with the other African Nationalists within the ANC.
On the day of the Sharpeville massacre, 21 March, 1960, Sobukwe was coordinating a protest march in Soweto.

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 Africans 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.

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.

Pass Laws
According to Section 10 (a-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.

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 mauling 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 like rabbits when we are being arrested without any care or consideration for our age, sex or race. You have given hundreds of thousands of people three minutes within which to remove their bodies from their immediate environment.”

– Letter quoted in Karis & Gerhart (1977: 565-6)
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 Pogo 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 Veniuka 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 Pogud, and others, who dodged the ever watchful police. Steve Biko also visited often, listening to and learning from Sobukwe.

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. He believed that blacks needed psychological independence. 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 Pogund and Helen Zumwane, 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.
30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF BANTU STEVE BIKO

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. It was his mother who first noticed his interest in politics. He moved to the Charles Morgan Primary School, then on to Lovedale School in Alice, and finally to Lovedale College. His political activities were not allowed to be published or quoted.

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.

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 Ginsberg, 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 MamGete, worked long hours as a domestic worker in the homes of white people. MamGete 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 Ginsberg 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 Pietermaritzburg. 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.

Radio Play

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

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-gou, is now called the Robert Sobukwe building.

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 gravestones is the entrance to the Kromvlei township.

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 kaffir here since the beginning, since the Dutch. Muslims so-called infidels, them first. Then the kapers, the chronic sick, the outlaws, 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 Poop? 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 but killed him. The sable guys walking by to their work were forbidden to wince. Could not even sing or whistle to him. Allah, my Allah, it make my heart sob.”

BABA, WE PRAISE YOU
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 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 dwelling. I should constantly remind myself that the real leap consist 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 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.”

– 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.

“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 students 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 black-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.

“BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS”

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

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, so that black people could 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.
Black Consciousness spreads

For Biko there was a difference between blacks and non-whites. In the philosophy of Black Consciousness “blacks” were people who defined 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”.

“The 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 ‘Baa’s’, 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 (1978)

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.

1976 Student Uprising

SASO used the ideas of Black Consciousness to stimulate the minds 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 Programme (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.

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 creèche, 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.
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 headquarters of the Security Division housed in what was then known as the Sandlam 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, asked, 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 hanged 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

“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 chubbed by his captors. The police changed their story saying that Biko had hanged 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.
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.

ASIKWELWA! – We will not ride!

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 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 they 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.

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.

Steve Biko
A si’mbonanga
A si’mbonanga umfowethu thina
Lapha aikhona
La wa fela kha

- 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 nga rest in peace
Mahatma Gandhi na go rest in peace
burying their bodies was like burying seeds

- Patrice Jahn Jah Deth Deth on his album How do you call it?


FREE TO BE ME!

Many people wear Steve Biko T-shirts. Biko has become an icon, like Che Guevara. But such popularity also presents a danger if jubilant icon (or image) is kept alive, future generations may rise up on his wisdom. We may wear Biko’s image, garnish in various bearing his name and visit his monument, but it’s only through understanding his words and developing his ideas that we can pay adequate tribute to the great South African. (Tshibola courtesy Stoned Cherry, Modiba, Dineo Queer and Amira Sharif.)

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALEXANDRA BUS BOYCOTT

1912 – Alexandra township is created.

1940 – The first Alexandra bus boycott is a short “lightning strike” which forces fares down.

1942 – A much longer boycott led by trade unionists included a march of 1 000 men, women and children to the city. Fares remain unchanged.

1943 – A much longer boycotted 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 Thabahala 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, 7 January – The people of Alexandra organise another bus boycott to protest the rise in bus fares. 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.

No 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 into the hands of the African people.” – Ruth First, Africa South (July-September 1957)
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, “Achikwela!” – “We will not ride!”

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

“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).

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.”


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, Mooiplaas), 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 county, 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.
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 to 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 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 offered 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 pence.

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’ ongoing 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 pence of their daily wage. What were the results of the bus boycotters’ actions? [Their 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, even a period of years, a grassroot 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 Africa 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 kilometers 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 pence, we agreed reluctantly to the increase but when they increased it to five pence 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 evening.”

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 “Kodie uit die land”. In the circumstances “Kaffir” and “Kodie” 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 wrecked 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 (Afrikaner and Indian) could speak with one voice and march forward in one step.”

Dawn of negotiation
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, dominies (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)
**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.

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 ... 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)

Then 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 Ndaiye, 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 Ndaiye 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 etchings – 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 the cycle 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, Africans 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)
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 weekend 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 unabated 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 revulsion by the black people, as well as the importance of the ANC as a factor in resolving the conflict.” – The Dakar Declaration (1987)

“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)

“Conference reached a conclusion that it was our duty to continue the dialogue with representatives of the white population in South Africa. We believe that this dialogue is a necessary step in the process of achieving national unity and democracy. We believe that the dialogue should be based on the following principles:” – The Dakar Declaration (1987)

Press Conference in Addis Ababa, July 1987

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: 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 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 wanting of her party. It is just that she is working through an institution that is not going to bring about changes.
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. The government was preparing Nelson Mandela for release. 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 South Africa.

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.

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 Bosshoff. 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.

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 be under any circumstances a political policy based on repression, discrimination and exploitation ... the task of the Church is to protest unjust laws.”

5th Anniversary of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

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 ... change and better our destiny. We can overcome the greed of past centuries and fulfil the needs of all our children.”

– Statement by Secretary General of Youth for Sustainable Development Assembly, Philippines, at the WSSD (2002)

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his 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 the 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).
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.

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 nondiscriminatory 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.

The poverty trap

“...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 CO₂, 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
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 who lack 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.
- Halve 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.

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 lived on less than a dollar a day. The average for all developing regions is 31%.
- 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 the 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 fulfillment.

“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, far greater than we 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 dogmatism 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.”
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

“To 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 ‘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 Parget-Clarke for In Motion Magazine (29 August 2002)

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;
☞ Withhold 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 “traveling 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 democratic values. They say, “Open markets promote open government.”

“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 Parget-Clarke for In Motion Magazine (29 August 2002)

Voices from WSSD

“Another world is possible”

“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 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 ailable 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 everybody, human knowledge breaks through many barriers of darkness to make the seemingly unlearnable part of the ever-expanding edifice 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)
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?
Whichever 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 satisfy everyone's wants."
☞ Al Saudiers (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 uphold the usually undervalued 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.

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

- poverty
- violence
- epidemics
- unsustainable lifestyles
- pollution
- racism
- ozone depletion
- deforestation
- environmental degradation
- irreversible 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
- babies
- homophobia
- discrimination
- suicide
- iron deficiency anaemia
- lack of economic opportunity
- deforestation
- refugees
- global monopolies
- child labour
- gangsters
- economic protectionism
- gender inequality
- poor sanitation
- loss of local cultural identity
- global consumer trends
- redundancies
- substance abuse
- depletion of ocean life
- greenhouse gases
- ethnic cleansing
- over-commercialisation of public spaces
- desertification
- global warming
Can you imagine being owned by another human being as their own personal 'real estate'?

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? 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.

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

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 conditions like 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Memorial Type</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPs in SA House of Assembly rise to their feet as a gesture of respect.</td>
<td></td>
<td>July 1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unveiling of Mendi Memorial by Queen Elizabeth and Nelson Mandela.</td>
<td>South Hampton, England</td>
<td>1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unveiling of Mendi Memorial by Queen Elizabeth and Nelson Mandela.</td>
<td></td>
<td>23 August 2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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?
60th Anniversary of the Three Doctors’ Pact

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 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 time when the Nationalist Party was in power at the time?
3. Do you think “Europeans” had full and compulsory schooling at the time? Explain your answer.
4. What does this joint meeting believe it has to do in order to achieve its objectives?
5. How would you describe the document?
6. What is the main purpose of this document?
7. 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.
30th Anniversary of the Death of Nkosi Albert Luthuli

**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**
  1. 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?
  2. 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.

**SOURCES: Use information from his biography to find out the thoughts and feelings of Nkosi Albert Luthuli. He speaks out ...**

**Against sexism**

1. How does Luthuli 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.
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 Mutlootse Arts Heritage Trust in 2006.

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.
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?
- 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 indefinitely?
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:

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 appearance?

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.
30th Anniversary of the Death of Bantu Steve Biko

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 one 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?
50th Anniversary of the Alexandra Bus Boycott

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.
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.

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.
LIBERATION CHABALALA

By Alex la Guma