THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND THE PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS, 1959-1990

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EXPRESSION OF THANKS

I would like to thank the following persons for their contribution to this thesis:

My late father, Daniel Mohau Dhlamini, who inspired and encouraged me to be educated.

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SUMMARY

Not much has been written about the relationship between the ANC and the PAC in the liberation struggle of South Africa, especially during their exiled period. Consequently, there is a missing link in our understanding of the history of the liberation struggle in South Africa between 1960 and 1990. Moreover, the tendency has been to write only about the history of the ANC as if it is the only liberation movement that has played the most important role in the history of South Africa in the struggle for freedom by the oppressed. The inclination of many historians and writers has been to write more about the ANC and very little about other liberation movements such as the PAC. As would be expected, this tendency has reinforced the conception that the ANC is the only liberation movement that has played a major role in the liberation struggle of South Africa. In trying to reconstruct the history of the liberation movements by filling in the missing gaps, an attempt is made to indicate how the struggle for freedom affected the relationship between the ANC and the PAC.

The thesis traces the events within the ANC which led to the split in 1959 between the supporters of inclusive nationalism (Charterists) and narrow nationalism (Africanists). The split happened at the time when there was an unprecedented repression and brutality on the side of the regime. Instead of burying their differences and joining forces against the intransigent regime, the irreconcilable differences between the ANC and the PAC made co-operation between them impossible. This lack of co-operation between these movements displayed itself in their exiled life. The thesis discusses the attempts of the ANC and the PAC to launch the armed struggle, seek foreign help and isolate the regime internationally. It proceeds to examine the reasons why the liberation movements failed to co-operate and how this lack of co-operation affected their relationships.

The thesis also highlights the fact that even though the ANC had problems, it was able to overcome them and concentrate on the aims of prosecuting the struggle. This achievement could be attributed to their effective and visionary leadership, especially the role played by Oliver Tambo as a unifying factor during the exiled life of the movement. On the other hand, the PAC lacked a sound organisational foundation and this manifested itself in the policies which lacked clarity. As a result, friction and internal

wrangles resulted. This turbulence could be attributed to lack of visionary leadership. Leballo's presidency, which was characterised by internal fights, subterfuge and mutual suspicion, made it difficult for his successors to correct the damage immediately. As a result, the PAC was largely handicapped by these internal problems to the extent that it was unable to contribute to the liberation struggle like the ANC.

In all the chapters, the unifying theme or golden thread is that the ANC and the PAC competed for supremacy in the political history of the oppressed in South Africa. The relationship between them manifested itself in negative actions like competition, hostility and recriminations. In their struggle against the apartheid regime in South Africa, the thesis concludes that the ANC contributed more than the PAC.

OPSOMMING

Daar is nie veel geskryf nie oor die verhouding tussen die ANC en die PAC ten opsigte van die bevrydingstryd in Suid Afrika, veral tydens hulle verbanningperiode. As gevolg daarvan, is daar 'n leemte in ons begrip van die geskiedenis van die bevrydingstryd in Suid Afrika tussen 1960 en 1990. Aanvanklik was dit die tendens om net oor die geskiedenis van die ANC te skryf, asof dit die enigste bevrydingsbeweging was wat 'n belangrike rol in die Suid-Afrikaanse geskiedenis gespeel het. Dit was ook die neiging by baie historici en skrywers om meer oor die ANC te skryf en baie min oor ander bevrydingsbewegings soos die PAC. Soos wat dit verwag kan word, het hierdie tendens die opvatting dat die ANC die enigste bevrydingbeweging was wat 'n groot rol in Suid-Afrika gespeel het, benadruk. 'n Poging word hier aangewend om die geskiedenis van die bevrydingstryd weer te gee deur die gapings te vul met die rol wat die PAC gespeel het en hoe die stryd vir vryheid die verhouding tussen die ANC en die PAC beïnvloed het.

Hierdie proefskrif ondersoek gebeure binne die ANC wat gelei het tot die skeiding in 1959 tussen die ondersteuners van die inklusiewe nasionalisme (Charteriste) en die eng nasionalisme (Afrikaniste). Die skeiding of skeuring het gebeur toe daar 'n ongekende verdrukking en brutaliteit van die regering van die tyd ondervind was. In plaas daarvan om van hulle geskille af te sien en saam te staan teen die regering, het hierdie onversoenbare geskille tussen die ANC en PAC samewerking onmoontlik gemaak. Die gebrek aan samewerking tussen hierdie bewegings het sterk na vore gekom gedurende die bannelingperiode. Die proefskrif bespreek die pogings wat die ANC en die PAC aangewend het om die gewapende stryd van stapel te stuur, buitelandse steun te soek en om die regering van die internasionale wêreld te isoleer. Dit begin deur redes te ondersoek waarom die bevrydingsbewegings misluk het om saam te werk en hoe die gebrek aan samewerking hul verhouding geraak het.

Die proefskrif wys ook uit dat selfs al het die ANC probleme gehad, was dit in staat om dit te oorbrug en te konsentreer op die doelwitte van die bevrydingstryd. Hierdie prestasie kan toegeskryf word aan die beweging se effektiewe en skerpsinnige leierskap, veral die rol wat Oliver Tambo gespeel het as die verbindingsfaktor gedurende die ballingstyd van die beweging. Die PAC, aan die ander kant, het nie 'n stewige

organisasiebasis gehad nie. Dit was duidelik in die beleide wat nie doelgerig was nie. As gevolg daarvan, was daar wrywing en interne geskille. Hierdie onstuimighede kan toegeskryf word aan die gebrek van doelgerigte leierskap. Die leierskap van Leballo is gekenmerk deur interne gevegte en onderlinge agterdog, wat die taak van sy opvolgers, om sy foute onmiddellik reg te stel, bemoeilik het.

Die PAC was grotendeels gekniehalter deur hierdie interne probleme, in so 'n mate dat die beweging nie in staat was om 'n bydrae tot die bevrydingstryd, gelykstaande aan dié van die ANC, te lewer nie.

In al die hoofstukke is die deurlopende tema of die goue draad dat die ANC en PAC meegeding het om die oorheersende rol in die politieke geskiedenis van die onderdruktes in Suid-Afrika te speel. Die verhouding tussen die ANC en die PAC was gekenmerk deur vyandigheid en gebrek aan samewerking. Hierdie proefskrif kom tot die slotsom dat in die stryd teen die Suid Afrikaanse regering het die ANC meer bygedra as die PAC.

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INTRODUCTION

1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the history of the black liberation struggle in South Africa, the names of the ANC and PAC are often mentioned. This is largely due to the fact that the two liberation movements were actively involved in the black freedom struggle since their establishment in 1912 and 1959 respectively until 1990 when they were unbanned after thirty years' operation as banned political organisations in apartheid South Africa.

The ANC operated lawfully in South Africa from 1912 to 1960 and was banned from 1960 until 1990 when it was reorganised in South Africa.[1] As a liberation movement, the ANC historically aspired to represent the whole oppressed population in the country. For this reason, the ANC assumed the role of being the most outspoken critic of the policies of successive white governments of South Africa. The determination of the ANC to get rid of oppression and apartheid appealed to the majority of black South Africans as they firmly believed that the ANC was the only liberation movement which could topple the South African regime. Therefore, the ANC initially adopted tactics such as resolutions, deputations, enquiries, lectures, the distribution of literature and passive resistance, which featured as strategies in its early constitution.[2] As the struggle deepened and intensified, the ANC embarked on the Defiance Campaign in 1952, which attracted a large number of people.[3] After its banning in 1960, the ANC was compelled to change its strategies and chose to isolate the regime internationally and to launch an armed struggle or revolutionary war against the South African government until its suspension during the negotiation process which led to the birth of the new South Africa in 1994.

The second most important liberation movement was the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania or simply the PAC. The Pan Africanist Congress was formed in 1959 as the

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1 M. Ottawa, *South Africa: The Struggle for New Order*, p. 42.

2 "Constitution of the South African Native National Congress, September 1919", in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge, A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa*, vol. 1, pp. 74-75.

3 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, pp. 195-196.

result of a schism and split within the ANC.[4] The PAC is the offspring of the ANC, because its founder members accused the ANC of having deviated from its radical traditions and policies.[5] As a result, the rebels in the ANC decided to form a new liberation movement called the PAC. The division within the ANC was caused by the differences between the supporters of a narrow nationalism and those who believed in multiracial political co-operation or multi-alliance. Like the ANC, the PAC was banned in 1960 and immediately went underground and also resorted to the armed struggle and the isolation of the regime internationally until the new dispensation came into being in 1994. However, unlike the ANC, the PAC experienced leadership crises, which clouded its objective of fighting for the liberation of the black people in South Africa. These clashes affected the scope and significance of the contribution of the PAC in the black freedom struggle in South Africa. Nevertheless, the PAC was able to carve for itself a viable role, despite its apparent lack of support.

Even though the majority of South Africans recognised the roles the two liberation movements played in the black freedom struggle in South Africa, the status assigned to the ANC and the PAC differed. The notion persisted amongst South Africans that the PAC was never a threat to the South African government like the ANC. Obviously, these kinds of perceptions were caused by the fact that there were similarities and differences between the ANC and the PAC, which manifested themselves in the pursuance of their common goal to liberate the black people from the oppressive rule of the successive South African governments.

The extent to which the relationships between the ANC and PAC affected their existence and contribution towards the struggle for freedom in South Africa will be examined in this thesis to find out why the ANC was regarded as a more dominant and successful movement than the PAC. Some of the issues addressed in this regard include:

- Was this perception the result of the differences and similarities in ideologies and strategies between the ANC and PAC?
- How did the two movements compete to gain local and international support?

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4 G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa: The Evolution of an Ideology*, p. 178.

5 G.M. Gehart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 178.

- To what extent did the armed struggle of the two movements promote their image?
- Why did the various attempts to form a united front fail up to the unbanning of all political movements in 1990?

For the purpose of this study, the relationship between the ANC and PAC will be examined from 1959, when the latter was established, up to 1990, which was the year during which all the liberation movements were unbanned in South Africa. Both the ANC and PAC then became free political parties. Therefore, 1990 represents the climax of the period of the struggle by the two liberation movements.

In view of the foregoing background the following research focuses have been identified:

- Differences and similarities in ideology and strategy.
- Competition for international support.
- The armed struggle.
- The failure of the united front idea.

It is important that the relationship between the ANC and PAC should be researched and analysed in order to come to an understanding of contemporary history. When the reasons for and expressions of ANC domination in the liberation struggle are clarified it will become clear why liberation has followed the path of non-racialism rather than Africanism. It is evident that the relationship between the ANC and the PAC, as the two most important and internationally recognised South African liberation movements, is an important component of the liberation struggle period.

2 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

In an attempt to contribute towards the analysis of the research focuses stated above, this study aims at describing and analysing the relationship between the ANC and PAC with the view of establishing why the ANC emerged as a more powerful force in South African politics than the PAC by the end of the liberation period.

In order to accomplish this purpose, the following specific objectives will be pursued:

- To investigate the differences and similarities in terms of ideologies and strategies between the ANC and PAC.
- To show how the ANC and PAC used diplomacy to obtain international help and recognition and to investigate how their competition for local and international recognition and support influenced their relationship.
- To research the role played by the armed struggle of the two liberation movements in the fight for freedom and its impact on their relations.
- To determine the reasons why the attempts to form a united front failed.

3 SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

To achieve the aims stated above, the following methods of investigation were followed:

3.1 Literature study

To do a thorough search of the available literature the following databases were used: South African National Bibliography (SANB), Index to South African Periodicals (ISAP), National Research Foundation Nexus database on completed research in South Africa, Institute for Contemporary History (INCH) press cutting services, Humanities Index, and Social Sciences Index. All relevant secondary literature, including books, articles in journals and newspapers, theses and dissertations was thoroughly researched.

This section examines the literature on the relationship between the ANC and the PAC between 1959 and 1990. For this research, the literature tracing the origin of the ideological clashes within the ANCYL and the ANC from the early 1940s is of crucial importance. This is the conflict which manifested itself as the clash between those Africans who favoured multi-cultural co-operation and those who were against it. Arguments of the two groups, which are identified in the literature that was consulted, provide a point of departure and justification for this research.

Standard academic work on both the ANC's and the PAC's history is captured in the published five volumes of *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African*

Politics in South Africa, 1882-1979.[6] The volumes consist of documents and supporting texts. More significantly, the volumes represent more longstanding academic views on the history of the ANC and the PAC. However, quantitatively and qualitatively, the volumes tend to give a more favourable account of the history of the ANC rather than the PAC. This could be attributed to the fact that the documents of the ANC were much easier to acquire due to the organisation's more open propaganda and strategy as compared to the PAC.

Another academic approach is indicated by G. Gerhart in *Black Power in South Africa: The Evolution of an Ideology.*[7] The book gives attention to the formation of the ANCYL (in chapter 3) and highlights the pioneering role played by Anton Lembede on the ideology of African nationalism. His philosophical and political beliefs on African nationalism were adopted by the PAC in 1959, when it was established. Gerhart's views on the development of African nationalism are important in understanding the origin of the conflict within the ANCYL concerning the interpretation of its philosophy of African nationalism.

Tom Lodge wrote *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, which is acclaimed as a work of a high academic standard.[8] The book explores the origin of the conflict between the staunch Africanists and the supporters of inclusive nationalism within the ANCYL. Lodge indicates the transition from radicalism to moderacy by Youth League members such as Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo, after which they started promoting co-operation with white communists and Indians. Lodge emphasises the dominant trend of inclusive African nationalism within the ANC.

Another book which gives invaluable insight into the development of African nationalism

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6 T.G. Karis and G.M. Carter, *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1964, volumes 1-4.* Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1973, 1977, 1977, 1978 and T.G. Karis and G.Gerhart, *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1964-1979, volume 5.* Pretoria: UNISA Press, 1997.

7 G. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa: The Evolution of an Ideology.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.

8 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945.* Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983.

in South Africa, written by Peter Walshe, is *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa.*[9] Although the book also highlights the origin of African nationalism as advocated by the PAC, it, nevertheless, pays more attention to the dominant trend in the ANC of inclusive African nationalism. As a result, the book is generally regarded by the Africanists as being pro-ANC in its approach.

Freedom in Our Lifetime, the collected writings of Anton Muziwakhe Lembede, compiled by Robert R. Edgar and Luyanda ka Msumza, may not be of a high academic standard, but it nevertheless gives more information on the philosophy of African nationalism as conceived by Lembede.[1010] The book is clearly a dedication and a sort of a praise song to Lembede, of whose legacy the PAC regard itself as the natural heir. It also describes the formation of the ANCYL and its activities through excerpts from newspapers like *Ilanga lase Natal, Inkundla ya Bantu, Umteteleli wa Bantu* and *African Advocate.*

Several books have been written by the people who participated in the liberation struggle themselves. Besides throwing more light on the nature and scope of the liberation struggle, their approach was to justify the overthrow of the South African regime. Examples of these books are A. Luthuli, *Let My People Go*, N. Mandela, *No Easy Walk to Freedom*, N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*, R. Kasrils, *Armed and Dangerous: From Undercover Struggles to Freedom*, E. Khopung, *Apartheid : The Story of a Dispossessed People*, B. Leeman, *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania: The Origins and History of Basutoland Congress Party and the Pan Africanist Congress*, B. Mtolo, *Umkhonto We Sizwe: The Road to the Left*, J. Ngubane, *An African Explains Apartheid*, M. Nkoana, *Crisis in the Revolution*, E. Ntloedibe, *Here is a Tree: Political Biography of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe*, M. Pheko, *The Story of a Dispossessed People*, J. Slovo, *The Unfinished Autobiography*, A. Tambo, *Prepare for Power: Oliver Tambo Speaks*, B. Turok, *Strategic Problems in South Africa's Liberation Struggle: A Critical Analysis*, M. Dingake, *My Fight Against Apartheid*, D. Dube, *The Rise of Azania: The Fall of South Africa*, H. Isaacs, *On the PAC: A Struggle within Struggle*,

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9 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa.* London: Hurst & Company, 1970.

10 R. Edgar and L. ka Msumza (comp.), *Freedom in Our Lifetime: Collected Writings of Anton Muziwakhe Lembede.* Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers, 1996.

E. Maloka, *The South African Communist Party in Exile, 1963-1990*, L. Mphahlele, *Child of this Soil - My Life as Freedom Fighter*, T. Sono, *Reflections on the Origin of Black Consciousness in South Africa*, M. Ramphele, *A Life*, R. Bernstein, *Memory Against Forgetting: Memoirs from a Life in South African Politics, 1938-1964,* S. Plaatjie, *Native Life in South Africa*, F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us,* M. Motlhabi, *The Theory and Practice of Black Resistance to Apartheid,* Z.K. Matthews, *Freedom for My People*, G. Mbeki, *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa: A Short History,* I. Vadi, *The Campaign for the Congress of the People and the Freedom Charter,* M. Pheko, *The Land is Ours: The Political Legacy of Mangaliso Sobukwe* and S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid: The ANC and the South African Communist Party in Exile.*[11] The shortcoming associated with these books is that the majority of them represent the ideology of the organisations' history. Nevertheless, the information from these books is useful for the thesis as it describes the thoughts and perceptions of the people who helped to shape the history of the liberation struggle in South Africa.

Other interesting studies which inform this research include S.M. Davis, *Apartheid's Rebels: Inside South Africa's War*, B. Pogrund, *Sobukwe and Apartheid*, H. Pike, *A History of Communism in South Africa*, J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, A.W Marx, *Lessons of Struggle: South African Internal Opposition, 1960-1990*, H. Kenney, *Power, Pride and Prejudice*, H. Holland, *The Struggle: The History of the African National Congress*, B. Hirson, *Year of Fire, Year of Ash, The Soweto Revolt: Roots of a Revolution?,* J. Grobler, *A Decisive Clash? A Short History of Black Protest in South Africa, 1875-1976*, J. Fredickse, *The Unbreakable Thread: Non -Racialism in South Africa*, H. Barrel, *MK: The ANC's Armed Struggle*, E. Feit, *Urban Revolt in South Africa, 1960-1964*, R. Gibson, *African Liberation Movements: Contemporary Struggles Against White Minority,* E. Gilbey, *The Lady: The Life and Times of Winnie Mandela*, R. Debray, *Revoltion in the Revolution? Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin America*, V. Shubin, *ANC: A View from Moscow,* M. Norval, *Inside the ANC: The Evolution of a Terrorist Organisation,* E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright,* J. Schadeberg, *Nelson Mandela and the Rise of the ANC*, V.B. Thompson, *Africa and Unity: The Evolution of Pan-Africanism*, D. Davidson, *The Search for Africa: A History in the Making*, S. Pillay, *Voices of Liberation: Albert Luthuli*, S.

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[11] See the bibliographical details of these books in the bibliography.

Johnson and R.H. Davis, *Mandela, Tambo and the African National Congress*, E. Feit *South Africa: The Dynamics of the African National Congress,* E. Feit, *African Opposition in South Africa: The Failure of Passive Resistance,* J.N. Lazerson, *Against the Tide: Whites in the Struggle Against Apartheid*, A. Attwell, *South Africa: Background to the Crisis*, P. Frankel et al., *State Resistance and Change in South Africa*, I. Liebenberg et al., *The Long March: The Story of the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa*, G. Leach, *South Africa: No Easy Path to Peace*, A. Sparks, *Tomorrow is Another Country: The Inside Story of South Africa's Negotiated Revolution,* L. Thompson, *A History of South Africa,* SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* A. Reeves, *Shooting at Sharpeville: The Agony of South Africa* and M. Benson, *The African Patriot: The Story of the African National Congress of South Africa.*[12] The approach of most of these books was to highlight the various aspects of the liberation struggle and point out why there was a need to resist white domination and oppression.

3.2 *Primary research*

Archival research was done at the following South African institutions:

- Fort Hare University, ANC and PAC archives.

Many primary documents used in this thesis were consulted at the ANC archives in the Howard Pim Library at Fort Hare University. Documents from the various missions of the organisation in Europe, Africa, Asia, the United Kingdom, America and Canada have been used extensively. The documents are important in that they throw more light on the activities and internal dynamics of the ANC during its exiled period. The largest collection in the ANC archives come from the Lusaka mission in Zambia, and most of the documents used for the thesis come from the Lusaka mission. The information from these documents gives one more or less a picture of what was taking place in the ANC during its exiled period. However, some of the information had to be verified through interviews.

Interestingly enough, there are also PAC documents from the archives of the ANC.

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[12] See the bibliographical details of these books in the bibliography.

They tend to be critical of the PAC as a rival movement and one needs to be very cautious when subjecting them to scrutiny and a vigorous process of verification.

The PAC archives are kept separately at Fort Hare University. They are housed in the National Arts and Heritage Cultural Centre (NAHECS) archives. Previously, they were called the Centre for Cultural Studies at the University of Fort Hare. They contain documents of the PAC and the Black Consciousness Movement, which were accumulated during the exile period. The materials have been used to shed some light on the exiled history of the PAC. Like in the case of the ANC, the PAC documents also come from the different missions of the PAC. The largest collection in the PAC archives came from Tanzania.

- Mayibuye Centre, University of the Western Cape.

The Mayibuye Archives at the University of the Western Cape, which is linked to the Robben Island Museum, have a large collection of primary documentary materials of the ANC, mainly from the London and Lusaka missions of the ANC. The documents cover aspects such as international relations, MK activities, intelligence and missions, policies of the movement and speeches of various leaders. These documents indicate internal dynamics and operations of the ANC, which enabled the movement to survive the harsh conditions of its exiled life.

PAC documents are also found at the Mayibuye Archives. However, they are fewer than those of the ANC. Newspaper cuttings on the various activities of the PAC were relevant to the research.

- Witwatersrand University, William Cullen Library (Johannesburg).

The Karis-Gerhart Collection at the University of the Witwatersrand was extensively consulted. The material was found to be relevant to the thesis, as it focuses on the events of the 1950s split within the ANC and the exile histories of the ANC and the PAC from the 1960s to the 1980s.

- National Archives Repository (Pretoria).

The National Archives in Pretoria is an important source for apartheid state policies and attitudes towards the black people. There are many materials dealing with the personalities involved in the history of the struggle for liberation in South Africa. The National Archives are in possession of apartheid state records, such as laws, policies and copies of court cases. There are also copies of old newspapers. These sources are important for the research, because they indicate the general attitude of the apartheid state towards the ANC and PAC leaders, who were involved in the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed.

In general, this research uses mostly documentary sources from the above-mentioned archives as major sources of information. Some documents are undated, anonymous or pseudonyms were used and certain issues were addressed through pictures or coded messages. As a result, interpretation was always difficult. However, this problem was overcome by filling in the gaps through interviews. Moreover, existing literature was extensively consulted in order to make the sources more meaningful.

3.3 Method

With regard to the search for, the selection of and recording of the research material, as well as the process of historical criticism, the analysis and synthesis of the collected material and the written research report, accepted procedures and principles of history writing were applied. The analytical questions stated in the problem statement were used to integrate the element of interpretation into the historical narrative.

4 CHAPTER DIVISION

After this introductory chapter, the rest of the research is constructed in the following way:

Chapter 1: Historical background of the ANC and PAC.

Chapter 1 concentrates on the formation and development of the African National

Congress from 1912 up to 1959. In particular, it explores the aims, beliefs and ideologies of various factions within the ANC, which precipitated the schism of 1959. The roots of the ideological tensions within the ANC, between the Africanist group and the supporters of inclusive nationalism, are also examined.

Chapter 2: The ideological split in the liberation movement (1959-1960).

Chapter 2 focuses on the conflict regarding the political ideology of African nationalism, as espoused by the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) in particular and the African National Congress in general. The important role played by Anton Lembede in the formation of the Youth League is discussed. More significantly, the essence of African nationalism, as well as its interpretation by members of the ANCYL and the ANC, is exposed in order to show how it created and heightened ideological tensions which led to the split within the movement in 1959.

Chapter 3: The 1960s - banning, exile and new strategies.

Chapter 3 discusses the origin of the competition between the ANC and the PAC, when they organised the anti-pass campaign in 1960. The campaign ended with the banning of both the ANC and the PAC from the South African political scene. It is investigated how the banning resulted in the employment of new strategies such as operating from the underground, using the armed struggle and isolating the regime internationally. It is emphasised how these actions increased the competition between the ANC and the PAC, and how the relationship between them worsened.

Chapter 4: Mobilisation of international support in the 1960s.

Chapter 4 discusses the way the ANC and the PAC mobilised for support in the 1960s in order to isolate the regime. It also examines the way in which their attempts to isolate South Africa internationally increased tension between them.

Chapter 5: The 1970s - growth, struggle and hope.

Chapter 5 pays attention to the emergence of militant students' and workers'

associations, which revived the spirit of defiance and resistance against apartheid and white rule in the 1970s. The extent to which both the ANC and the PAC were involved in the revival of internal disturbances and military action against the regime, and how their relationships were affected are also investigated.

Chapter 6: The 1980s - on the brink of a new era.

Chapter 6 discusses how both the ANC and the PAC used opportunities that presented themselves in order to advance the aims of the liberation struggle in South Africa during the 1980s. In particular it investigates the impact of their military activities.

Chapter 7: Mobilisation of support by the ANC and PAC in the 1980s

Chapter 7 explores the extent to which both the ANC and the PAC tried to isolate South Africa internationally and how they failed to form a united front against the regime. The birth of the new South Africa is discussed.

Chapter 8: Conclusion.

Chapter 8 summarises important ideas and conclusions are made.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE ANC AND PAC

1.1 ORIENTATION

This chapter focuses on the development of the African National Congress from 1912 and the origin of the Pan Africanist Congress in 1959. The goal of the chapter is to analyse the strategies, beliefs and aims of the ANC with the view to determine how they led to the split within the movement, which culminated in the formation of the PAC towards the end of the 1950s. It will be emphasised that the PAC was established as a result of the dissatisfaction of the Africanist group within the ANC, who did not agree with its policy of multiracialism.

1.2 THE FORMATION OF CONGRESS

1.2.1 Introduction

Before the Union of South Africa came into being in 1910, small groups of politically conscious Africans had been established in all four provinces. Africans who owned a certain property and obtained a specified level of education were eligible to vote and stand for office in the Cape Colony.[1]. However, Africans in the former Boer republics of the Transvaal and Free State as well as the Natal Colony were not allowed to vote because of the strict application of the policy of racial discrimination.

A new elite of mission-educated Africans, who were thoroughly committed to the principles of non-racialism, which they had acquired from their Christian background, the Negro struggle in America and mid-Victorian liberalism in the Cape Colony took up the lead in challenging white political domination. Some Africans had already attained a reasonable level of political maturity by 1910, which they could use to advance the interests and rights of their fellow Africans. These Africans were bitter and frustrated when the Cape franchise was not extended to other provinces when the Union of South

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[1] T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 1.

Africa was proclaimed in 1910. As a result, the need to eradicate white supremacy and minority rule became the most vexing problem which confronted African political leaders.

Factors which had promoted the earlier growth of political consciousness also contributed towards the evolution of the ideology of African nationalism after the formation of the Union. Of particular importance was the fact that new influences like Garveyism, the Communist Party of South Africa, Joint Councils, the Congress Youth League and decolonisation of African states facilitated the emergence of a more radical form of African nationalism.[2] However, African nationalism in South Africa followed a broader course based on non-racialism.

1.2.2 Reasons why Congress was formed

The most important reason for the formation of Congress was the exclusion of Africans from full political participation in the Union in 1910. This exclusion of Africans from the main stream of political developments did not go unchallenged. When it became crystal clear in 1909 that Britain was intending to hand over Africans to the rule of the privileged white minority in a union, African political associations came together to resist under the leadership of the three editors of African newspapers, the Rev. John Dube, John Tengo Jabavu and the Rev. Walter Rubusana. Africans voiced their disapproval against the colour bar in the draft constitution. Their major argument was that the Act of Union restricted the vote to whites in all provinces except in the Cape, and even there deprived Africans of the right to elect one of themselves to Parliament.[3] Consequently, they demanded full and equal rights for everybody.

As suspected, the all-white National Convention, which represented the four provinces of South Africa, ignored the grievances of the Africans when it met in Bloemfontein in 1909.[4] The National Convention approved the proposed constitution for Union. Knowing that the ultimate responsibility for the approval of the draft constitution rested with the British Parliament in Britain, an African delegation under Rubusana, Jabavu and

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2 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, pp. 24-25.

3 M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright*, p. 20.

4 C.F.J. Muller (ed), *500 Years: A History of South Africa*, p. 375.

W.P. Schreiner protested to the British Government with the hope that it might reject the colour bar in the constitution. To its utter disappointment, the deputation got the response that the whole problem would be settled in South Africa itself.[5]

It is understandable that the Africans in the Union felt betrayed by the British government. To the Africans the Act of Union not only gave the whites "unlimited power over the non-whites, it also paved the way for the Afrikaner - who already formed the majority of white voters - eventually to win control over the people of British stock who had so passionately worked for Union".[6]

The establishment of the Union of South Africa on 31 May 1910 ushered in a stormy period in the history of South Africa. Africans objected strongly to the policy line of the government. For the majority of Africans the Act of Union meant that their "repression and exploitation would worsen as they feared that it would restrict their freedom of movement, rob them of trading rights in their own areas, handicap their education, deny them basic human rights and upward mobility in social life."[7] While Britain regarded the Act of Union as part and parcel of the process of decolonisation, the majority of blacks regarded it as a mere transfer of power from Britain to white oppressors in South Africa.

Mistrust and the feeling of being discriminated against increased when other laws were passed to entrench white power and continue with the racist policies of the previous years. The repressive laws were the Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911, which made it illegal for black workers in mines and industries to strike, the Defence Act of 1912, which established an all white defence force and debarred blacks from military service and the Squatters Bill, which was the predecessor of the Natives Land Act of 1913.[8] Another racist law was the Church Act of 1911, which excluded blacks from the Dutch Reformed Church.[9]

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5 W.P. Schreiner, *et al.*, "Petition to the House of Commons" in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 1, pp. 55-56.

6 M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright*, p. 21.

7 F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, p. 34.

8 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, p. 67.

9 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 31.

In the Union of South Africa white people were placed in an even more privileged position and black people in a more deprived position than in the previous political dispensation. Benson describes how the Act of Union rendered Africans helpless and politically handicapped: "The Africans, their tribal society and pastoral economy disrupted by the expanding migrant labour system, and naturally drawn to the few towns, were indeed becoming a vast engine of labour. Potential Makanas were thrown into a fantastic new world of kitchen boys, garden boys, cleaners, pass bearers, vagrants, forces to earn wages in order to pay tax, turned into criminals if they failed to pay or to produce a pass, their chiefs turned into servants of the white government, sons of chiefs, often, into domestic servants. In essence, their humanity was denied."[10]

Through the growth of national consciousness, subjection to colonialism and suffering a common oppression, the African peoples of South Africa began slowly "to develop a national, South African consciousness as opposed to the old tribal or ethnic consciousness."[11] All these injustices made educated Africans aware that what they actually needed was an organisation of their own, which could be used to fight white domination and supremacy. In other words, opposition to white supremacy needed a concerted effort from the African community. This point was made clear by Pixley ka Isaka Seme, when he said: "The Natives everywhere now and today know that a South African Native Congress such as is proposed in these columns, will give them the only effective means whereby they will be able to make their grievances properly known and considered both by the Government and by the people of South Africa at large."[12]

1.2.3 The forming of Congress

Confronted by a new situation which developed after 1910 many politically conscious Africans decided to form a country-wide organisation, which would unite Africans throughout South Africa. The initiative for organising African political life came from Pixley ka Isaka Seme, who had studied law overseas and practised in Johannesburg.

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10 M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright*, pp. 21-22.

11 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, p. 55.

12 Pixley ka Isaka Seme, "Native Union", *Imvo Zabantsundu*, October 24, 1911 in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 1, p. 72.

Seme was appalled and discouraged by the conditions under which Africans lived. According to him, "Africans were not allowed to walk on the pavements and had to raise their hats to white men; they had to travel fourth class on trains in a sort of cattle-truck; white politicians openly admitted that taxes were imposed on Natives to make them work; policemen repeatedly demanded to see their passes and tax receipts, even raiding churches on Sundays to do so, arresting those without the documents; they were hardly heard, seldom believed in the courts; politically they had no voice. Children were not allowed high school education".[13] Therefore, Seme and his like-minded colleagues, such as Richard Msimang, George Montsioa and Alfred Mangena, rose to the occasion. It was through Seme's great organisational skills that Africans from all walks of life met on 8 January 1912 in Bloemfontein to form the South African Native National Congress (SANNC).[14]

The task of the representatives was extremely difficult, since tribal loyalties and suspicions were very strong. It was against this background that Seme made this memorable statement in his speech: "The Xhosa-Fingo feud was an aberration; the animosity between the Zulus and the Tongas, between the Basuto and every other Native, must be buried and forgotten. We are one people. These divisions, these jealousies, are the cause of all our woes and of all our backwardness and ignorance today."[15]

As a result, the South African Native National Congress was established as an African united front, which would serve as a counterbalance to the white front, which had been formed by the Union of South Africa. Stated otherwise, the South African Native National Congress's primary aim was to "weld together the scattered local and provincial African organisations concerned with liberation from white power into one national body."[16] Ngubane added another dimension and said that "white unity could be effective only to the extent that the Africans allowed it to be". If the Africans stood firmly by each other, white unity would crack; if they wavered, it would be reinforced.[17]

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13 Cited in M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright*, pp. 23-24.

14 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, pp. 32-33.

15 Cited in M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright*, p. 24.

16 M. Motlhabi, *The Theory and Practice of Black Resistance to Apartheid*, pp. 38-39.

17 J.K. Ngubane, *An African Explains Apartheid*, p. 73.

On the day of the meeting the proceedings were opened by Rev. Henry Ngcayiya with a prayer and the anthem composed by Enoch Sontonga, *Nkosi Sikelele iAfrica* (Lord Bless Africa) was sung for the first time. In his keynote address, Seme explained the purpose of the gathering by saying that he and his colleagues "have discovered that in the land of their birth, Africans are treated as hewers of wood and drawers of water. The white people of this country have formed what is known as the Union of South Africa - union in which we have no voice in the making of laws and no part in the administration."[18] Consequently, they convened the meeting in order to "unite all the different tribes in South Africa, to demand on behalf of black South Africans equal rights and justice and to put forward the political demands of the people on all occasions".[19] All the delegations cherished the hope that freedom would be achieved soon.

Organisationally, the constitution of Congress made provision for a structure based on the British parliamentary model with an Upper House of Chiefs and Lower House of Commons. However, real executive powers were in the hands of the committee, whose members were Rev. John Dube, the first President, Pixley ka Isaka Seme, the Treasurer and Solomon Plaatjie, the Secretary-General. Four Vice-Presidents were also elected and they were Alfred Mangena, Rev. Walter Rubusana, Meshack Pelem and Sam Makgatho. Congress was able to obtain huge support from ordinary people by honouring the chiefs and placing them in the Upper House. The Paramount Chief of the Basuto, Letsie II, was unanimously chosen leader of the Upper House, in which chiefs were to hold their seats permanently.[20]

After being elected as the first President of the SANNC, Dube explained the aims of forming the new body in this manner: "Native races had formed a Congress of their own and were coming before the Government. Not with assegais but respectfully as loyal subjects, with the intention of airing their grievances and removing the obstacles of poverty, prejudice and discriminatory legislation which made it hard for Natives to hold their own with their fellow European citizens". In addition, Dube argued that "the time

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18 Cited in M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright*, p. 25.

19 E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, p. 118.

20 T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 1, p. 68.

has come when we shall have some measure of legislative representation, some way of making our influence felt in the law-making powers."[21] This means that African leaders not only wanted to use their concerted efforts to fight white domination, but also expected Africans to exercise some form of limited representation in parliament. Congress would enlist the support of white liberals and sympathetic European organisations in pursuance of its goals.

In addition to the policy statements made by leading members of the SANNC, the first constitution of the Congress, which was formally adopted in 1919, clarified some of the objectives, which included amongst others the following:

- "to be the medium of expression of representative opinion and to formulate a standard policy on Native affairs for the benefit and guidance of the Union government;
- to educate Parliament and Provincial Councils, Municipalities, other bodies and the public generally regarding the requirements and aspirations of the Native people.
- to recommend, propose and lay before the Government for consideration and adoption laws for the benefit and protection of Native races and
- to agitate and advocate by just means for the removal of the 'colour bar' in political, education and industrial fields."[22]

Therefore, the tone of the objectives of the Congress indicated that it wanted to co-operate with the government. It was not a confrontational movement, but was rather a reformist body which desired recognition of the rights and just treatment of the Africans. The aim was to attempt to reach a political settlement, which would satisfy both whites and Africans.

The accommodative and pacifist attitude of the Congress was also confirmed by the methods and tactics used to challenge white supremacy. Their concerns and problems would be addressed through means such as "resolutions, protests and constitutional and

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21 Cited in P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 39.

22 "Constitution of the South African Native National Congress, September, 1919 " in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge,* vol. 1, pp. 76-79.

peaceful propaganda, deputations and other forms of representations, holding enquiries and the investigation of grievances and other matters, passive action of continued movement, education, lectures and distribution of literature on the objects of the Congress."[23] In other words, Congress would use legal and constitutional means in seeking redress for its grievances.

The most important achievement of the Congress at this stage was the establishment of a national newspaper called *Abantu-Batho* ("People"). In fact, the newspaper was founded by Seme with the financial backing from the Queen Regent of Swaziland, Natotsibeni, who supported his ideal of uniting the African people.[24] *Abantu-Batho* contained articles in English and the leading African languages, such as Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana and Sotho. It amalgamated with several newspapers, which had been distributed in particular towns or provinces only. D.S. Letanka's *Motsoalle* ("The Friend") was included in 1912, whereas Saul Msane's *Umlomo wa Bantu* ("Mouthpiece of the People") became part of *Abantu-Batho* in 1913.

The amalgamation of African newspapers was of crucial importance, because *Abantu-Batho* became a national paper, which attracted experienced and outstanding journalists like Mweli Skota, Saul Msane, Robert Grendon, R.V. Selope Thema and D.S. Letanka. Indeed, *Abantu-Batho* gained widespread popularity as it promoted literacy and political awareness in the African community. Besides breaking down tribal barriers, the newspaper popularised different national slogans such as "Vuk' Afrika!" ("Wake up Africa!") and "Mayibuye' I Afrika!" ("Let Africa come back!").[25]

According to the constitution of 1919, the structure and organisation of Congress could be described as loose and ill-defined. Besides the supreme authority, which was exercised by the National Congress, local and provincial branches also existed. Their main task was to recruit members. It seemed as though there was very little control, as provincial branches operated quite independently and funds were not properly handled by the officials, who in some cases acted largely on their own. As a result, certain

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23 T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge,* vol. 1, p. 78.

24 M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright*, p. 28.

25 E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, pp. 119-120.

provincial or local branches were more militant and active, whereas others were moderate and inactive. No wonder then that the vibrancy of the branches depended upon local conditions and personalities involved. In 1925 the SANNC adopted a new constitution, which brought about the following changes: The organisation was retitled the South African National Congress or simply the African National Congress (ANC); it adopted *Nkosi Sikelele' iAfrika* ("Lord Bless Africa") as its anthem; and chose a flag with black, green and gold colours, which respectively represented the people, land and riches.[26]

In the light of the above, the South African National Congress came into being as a result of a rising political consciousness, which had its roots in the nineteenth century. Of particular importance was the fact that Congress was formed to fight white domination and the racist laws which were enacted after 1910. In seeking ways and means of dealing with these problems, Congress decided to use peaceful methods such as negotiations and moral persuasion.

1.3 THE RESPONSE OF CONGRESS TO SEGREGATION LAWS

1.3.1 The Natives Land Act of 1913 and the Beaumont Commission

The first major test for the South African National Native Congress (SANNC) presented itself immediately after its formation, when the Union government passed the Natives Land Act of 1913. This act embodied the principle of territorial segregation, as blacks and whites were to occupy and acquire land in separate areas.[27] Walshe describes the significance of the Natives Land Act in this manner: "The Act checked squatting by forbidding the movement of Natives from farm to farm and requiring those who chose to remain on White property to work ninety days per annum for the privilege. Share cropping was terminated and individuals offered the choice of returning to overcrowded reserves, working as labourers for a particular farmer or seeking employment on the mines and in the cities."[28]

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26 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 204.

27 T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 1, p. 63.

28 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 45.

As a result, the Natives Land Act of 1913 had the dual aim of destroying African farmers and providing a source of cheap labour for white farmers and mine owners. Solomon Plaatjie, one of the founder members of Congress, describes the plight of the Africans, caused by the Natives Land Act, in this way: "Awakening on Friday morning, June 20, 1913, the South African Native found himself, not actually a slave, but a pariah in the land of his birth."[29] There was a storm of protest from the black community against the act. Members of Congress seized this opportunity to condemn the action of the government. They held the view that the Natives Land Act was based on the principle of segregation, which "would drive black and white into racial opposition and which were subversive of all that is right, just and likely to conserve the peace, prosperity and happiness of the various races of South Africa".[30] The most complicating factor was that channels for opposing this Natives Land Act of 1913 were minimal and dangerous. For example, open resistance was out of the question, since the government had a strong military force. Under these circumstances lobbying, no matter how weak it was, remained the only viable option at this time.

The law was vigorously opposed by Congress, when a delegation led by Dube approached premier Louis Botha to protest against its provisions. Unfortunately, the appeals of this delegation fell on deaf ears and another delegation headed for Britain to present its grievances before the British crown and government. Once more the delegation was led by Dube and included Solomon Plaatjie, Saul Msane, Thomas Mapikela and Walter Rubusana.[31] Again, the delegation was unsuccessful to persuade the British government to intervene in South Africa on behalf of the Africans. Interestingly enough, the failure of the Congress for the second time clearly confirmed its belief in negotiations and delegations. It was not yet ready at this stage to take any radical steps as its way of waging the struggle and to act "beyond the confines of legal protests".[32]

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29 S. Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, p. 17.

30 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 47.

31 S. Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, p. 188.

32 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, pp. 77-78.

This tendency of appeasing the government was seen again when the First World War broke out. Congress almost immediately suspended all its criticisms and protests against the government. Moreover, a delegation was sent to Pretoria to assure the government of African support during the course of the war. This submissive attitude by Congress leaders was adopted with the hope that it would be recompensed by British support of their complaints against the Natives Land Act and other discriminatory laws.

The Natives Land Act made provision for the appointment of a commission to look into further grants of land to Africans. The commission was chaired by Sir William Beaumont, hence it was known as the Beaumont Commission. It was during the period of voluntary political restraint by the Africans that the Beaumont Commission toured the country, taking evidence and hoping to discover areas which would be added to the reserves without making white farmers angry. As a result, the Beaumont Commission recommended the allocation of an additional area of approximately 8,3 million morgen to the blacks, which would bring their land up to a total of approximately 18,7 million morgen.[33]

The Beaumont Commission indicated that the government acknowledged the fact that the existing land allocation to the Africans was unjust and unsatisfactory - hence there was a great need to increase land allocation to overcome the problem of overcrowding in the reserves.

1.3.2 The Native Administration Bill of 1917

The official response to the Beaumont Commission's report was an attempt to replace the Natives Land Act with the Native Administration Bill of 1917. The plan was to separate the administration and legislation with regard to Africans from those of whites. More importantly the Native Administration Bill was aimed at establishing a uniform policy in respect of Africans throughout South Africa. Following the recommendations of the Beaumont Commission, the Bill stated that:

- "the governor-general was to legislate by proclamation for the native areas and was

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33 C.F.J. Muller (ed), *500 Years: A History of South Africa*, p. 396.

to be advised by a permanent commission with the Minister of Native Affairs as chairman;

- Native Councils were to be gradually introduced in the reserves with the intention of giving Africans a voice in their own affairs and enabling them to interest themselves in their own evolution;
- the Bill avoided the erroneous approach of equality for both races;
- it offered the first step in the eventual replacement of the Cape Native franchise with councils, not as supplementary institutions for local government, but as alternatives to direct African influence in parliament;
- given the actual allocation of land envisaged, it also ensured a steady stream of native labour for the white economy."[34]

There was an outburst of anger from those white farmers who would be affected by the commission's delimitation proposals. At the same time, local committees were set up in the Cape, Natal, the Orange Free State, the Eastern Transvaal and the Western Transvaal to study further the delimitation proposed by the Beaumont Commission. Because there were sharp differences between the recommendations of the local committees and those of the Beaumont Commission, the government decided not to go ahead with the Native Administration Bill.[35] In essence, this meant that the "recommendation of the Beaumont Commission and the local committees on the allocation of further land to blacks failed to become law".[36]

These developments caused serious divisions within Congress. The bone of contention was the reaction of Congress members to the government's policy of segregation and separation. Clashes emanating from the problems were so serious that Dube and Thema were forced to resign. Makgatho succeeded Dube as President and Msane became the new Secretary-General. Of particular importance was the fact that the unfair legislation of the South African government was causing a mood of anger and desperation amongst Congress leaders. As a last-ditch attempt, Congress leaders decided to make appeals once more in Europe.

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34 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, pp. 56-57.

35 C.F.J. Muller (ed), *500 Years: A History of South Africa*, p. 397.

36 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 60.

1.3.3 Last Appeals Abroad by Congress

In the face of white South Africa's lack of concern for African grievances, Congress leaders turned their attention once more to Britain. Their loyalty to Britain during the course of the First World War increased their hopes that justice would prevail at the end of the war. Consequently, Congress sent another delegation to Britain to plead the African cause. The aim of this delegation was to present a petition to King George of Britain, in which they strongly urged him to revise the South African constitution and grant Africans in South Africa the right to vote.[37] The members of the delegation also had to see Lloyd George, the British premier, who was at Versailles in France where the Peace Conference, which ended the First World War, was held. To its utter dismay, the delegation failed in its mission. The response of the British prime minister was that Britain was unable to interfere in the internal affairs of South Africa. The petition, which was sent to King George V, was referred back to the governor-general of South Africa. Even in this particular case, the petition did not achieve its intended goals.[38]

As a result, the last visit to Britain was, according to Walshe, a turning-point in the history of Congress: "It was the last serious attempt to obtain British intervention in South African affairs and it brought to a close the early period of activity when, in the first flush of its formation and stimulated by the Land Act and Native Administration Bill, Congress had immediately become the widely accepted channel for African political protest."[39] Thereafter, Congress would be subjected to many influences during its long struggle of fighting white domination and unjust laws.

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37 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, pp. 105-106.

38 C.F.J. Muller (ed), *500 Years: A History of South Africa*, p. 400.

39 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 65.

1.4 THE INFLUENCE OF NEW IDEAS ON THE ANC AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR

1.4.1 Introduction

Towards the end of the First World War a wave of unrest engulfed many parts of South Africa, because new problems such as rapid urbanisation, unemployment and rising prices cropped up. These problems increased tension in the situation, which was already fraught with anger caused by strained race relations. As a result, the ANC was entangled in many socio-economic problems of black people, which resulted from a developing economy. New organisations emerged, which actively interacted with the ANC. The ideological commitments of these new organisations not only affected the ANC, but also heightened the level of political awareness of the Africans.

1.4.2 External Influence

Even before the end of the First World War, the ideas of President Wilson of America and the proposed League of Nations encouraged leaders of the ANC tremendously. Their hope of getting support internationally was demonstrated by the ANC delegation, which went to England and Versailles in France to plead for the case of Africans in South Africa.[40] Nevertheless, this delegation failed in its mission. But on the positive side, Sol Plaatjie remained behind and made political contact with Africans from other parts of the continent and with American Negroes. In particular, he attended the Pan-African Congress in Paris, which was convened by Dr W.E.B. du Bois with the purpose of influencing the Peace Conference. From France Plaatjie proceeded to countries such as Canada and the United States of America to tell people about the political situation in South Africa.[41]

Even though the ideas of American Negroes seemed to have influenced Congress before the First World War, the period after the war saw a growing interest in W.E.B. du Bois and Marcus Garvey, both of whom linked their very different approaches to USA

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40 T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 1, p. 68.

41 M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright*, p. 42.

politics with a wider concern for Pan-African and Pan-Negro ideals.[42] In his early Pan African Conferences, Du Bois impressed it upon the minds of Congress leaders that only political representation was important in checking racial discrimination. For this reason, Congress adopted a strong Du Bois character and moderate approach to racial discrimination and disregarded a Pan-African approach in dealing with its problems in South Africa. This tendency was reinforced by the fact that the ANC was not thinking in terms of an independent multiracial South Africa without racial discrimination.[43]

On the other hand, Garvey's Pan-African views of "Africa for Africans" were not accepted by most Congress members, especially after the First World War. In South Africa, Garvey's ideas were viewed as being in conflict with the ANC's policy of multiracialism. As a result, it was argued that his tendency to preach racialism offered no solution for the problems of South Africa. But Garvey had a delayed influence on Africa and the ANC in South Africa. His ideas had a limited but important impact on a group of young radicals within the ANC towards the end of the 1930s. In the meantime, the ANC's "political attitude remained essentially and persistently concerned with eradicating racial discrimination and establishing equality of opportunity."[44]

In describing the impact of new ideas which African soldiers imbibed from Europe after the First Word War, Roux said: "Those who returned from Europe came back with new ideas. They had been in places where colour bars were unknown. Their eyes were opened. They did not at all relish returning to old life of colour bar and pass law, of liquor law, urban areas law and poll tax."[45] As a result, there were men who were prepared to stir up their fellow Africans to revolt against white domination and oppression.

1.4.3 Internal influences

Besides being subjected to these external ideological influences, the ANC was also

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42 C.J.B. le Roux, "Pan-Africanism in South Africa", *South African Journal of African Affairs*, vol. 9, no. 1, p. 34.

43 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 91.

44 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 93.

45 E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, p. 121.

compelled to grapple with new developments inside South Africa. The period 1917 to 1922 was one of great upheaval in South African history. The first African strike took place in Johannesburg in 1918, when night-soil workers downed tools in demand of higher wages. They were feeling the effect of the rising cost of living. Inspired by the success of the white municipal workers, these workers downed buckets to demand a wage increase of sixpence a day.

The government took action against the instigators of the strike, who were members of Congress, such as N.D. Ngojo, A. Cetyiwe, H.Kraai, D.S. Letanka and L.T. Mvabaza, as well as members of the International Socialist League, such as S.P. Bunting, M.C. Hanscombe and T.P. Tinker. They were charged for incitement even though the case was cancelled later on due to lack of sufficient evidence.[46]

The beginning of 1919 saw a high point in the African struggle against the pass system. Under the leadership of Charlotte Maxeke, President of the newly formed Bantu Women's League of South Africa, African women achieved some measure of success in their campaign of refusal to carry passes. Hundreds of women were imprisoned in the towns such as Bloemfontein and Winburg for refusing to carry passes. As a result of the successes of women, men were encouraged to resist the pass laws. Congress, under Makgatho, organised a massive demonstration of Africans to hand in their passes in Johannesburg.[47] However, this movement against the passes did not bring about any significant changes in the whole system.

Following upon the abortive pass resistance movement on the Reef in 1919 came other more spectacular events in the country. In 1920 police and white civilians put down an African strike in Port Elizabeth. Not long after this incident the police killed 163 members of the religious sect called the Israelites at Bulhoek in the Eastern Cape. A few months later the army killed members of a Khoi tribe called the Bondelswartz in the mandated territory of South West Africa. The last straw was the brutal manner in which the 1922 Rand Strike by white miners was suppressed. The opposition parties criticised the high-handed manner in which Smuts's government was dealing with all these disturbances.

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46 E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, pp. 130-131.

47 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, pp. 81-82.

The South African Native National Congress declared it had no confidence in the oppressive government.[48]

All sorts of political movements arose, some for a short time only, whereas others were more enduring. The emergence of these movements was accompanied by a considerable ferment of ideas and notions which gripped the imagination of the Africans and also had a lasting impact on Congress.

1.4.4 The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU)

The cost of living continued to rise after the First World War in South Africa. At the same time there was no comparable increase in wages, especially in the wages of the Africans. As a result, there was a general dissatisfaction amongst African workers as inflation worsened and hit them hard.

It was against this background that another movement, called the ICU or Industrial and Commercial Workers Union, was formed. The movement was formed as a trade union of dock workers by Clements Kadalie at Cape Town in 1919. Because the ICU promised to demand higher wages and better conditions of service for its members, many Africans began to pay their fees and to join in their thousands. The result was that the ICU became a vehicle for the struggle of the Africans, as even former supporters of the ANC joined its ranks. In fact, the ICU became an alternative organisation of Africans who were disappointed by the failure of the ANC to end white domination. Roux states that "in this atmosphere of dissatisfaction the newly formed ICU spread from Cape Town like a veld fire over the Union of South Africa, first to the seaport towns of Port Elizabeth and East London, then to the country districts of the Central and Eastern Cape Province, then to the Orange Free State, then to Johannesburg and the Transvaal."[49] The ICU grew from strength to strength to the extent that by 1928 it had registered 200,000 members.[50] By this time the organisation had become so popular that important leaders from other movements, like A.M. Jabavu and A.W.G. Champion, joined.

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48 M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright*, p. 43.

49 E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, pp. 161-164.

50 M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright*, p. 49.

On the negative side, rapid growth of the ICU outstripped its own organisational capacity. The movement was rocked by large-scale internal crises like petty quarrels over funds, personality clashes and inactivity. No positive gains had been achieved for the masses by the movement. Consequently, the ICU split into two distinctive groups; the right wing which believed in the policy of approaching matters carefully ("hamba kahle" or "go slow"). The group did not have any definite plans, with the result that their approach contributed towards a general lack of interest in the activities of the movement. The left wing, led by communists who believed in the militant policies of the struggle, believed in "direct action, strikes, the burning of passes, refusal to pay taxes" and other activities which could justify the existence of the ICU.[51]

As a result of these internal squabbles, the ICU lost much of its vigour and support towards the end of the 1920s. Its membership dropped sharply and the movement itself disappeared from the scene of South African politics. On the other hand, the movement succeeded to raise the prestige of the Africans and put some fear into the heart of the government. Indeed, at some stage during its existence, it seemed as though it was going to transform the whole South African political and industrial scene. But its most important contribution to African nationalism was not ideological, but was rather based on the new method of the power of mass membership.[52]

1.4.5 The Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA)

Unlike the ICU, which did not have a clear-cut ideology, the International Socialist League or the Communist Party, as it became known later, evolved a non-racial working class policy.[53] Prominent leaders of the Party, like D.I Jones and S.P. Bunting, tried to establish links with black political organisations and also wished to help black workers. The party worked together with the Transvaal Congress on union matters, distributed pamphlets in favour of boycotts and encouraged municipal workers on the Witwatersrand to go on strike. It also played a major role in the 1922 Rand Strike.

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51 E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, pp. 168-169.

52 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 5.

53 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 57.

However, the big problem of the Communist Party in the 1920s was how to win support from black people.

Fortunately, by 1927 some ANC leaders had become despondent with the politics of diplomatic persuasion.[54] Radicals within the ANC wanted to rebuild the movement. They complained about the declining influence of the ICU and the proposed Hertzog legislation of 1926. The radical section of the ANC was strengthened by the election of Josiah Gumede as the new President of the ANC. Gumede wanted Africans to depend on their own strength and encouraged tactics such as strikes, demonstrations and anti-pass campaigns.[55] Having been influenced in the 1920s by the American Negro doctrine of Garveyism, which encouraged black pride and exclusiveness, Gumede was now encouraging co-operation between the ANC and the Communist Party. He attended a conference in Russia, where he was very much impressed by the progress made by formerly oppressed and colonised people of Central Asia. He was also the ANC delegate to the International Congress of the League Against Imperialism in Brussels. In 1928 the Communist Party adopted the slogan "an independent native republic as a stage toward a workers' and peasants' republic", which became the goal of the party.[56]

Gumede's conservative colleagues within the ANC opposed his militant policies. He found himself attacked from all sides. As a result, the more conservative members ganged up against him and worked for his removal from the Presidency. At the Bloemfontein conference in 1930 Gumede was replaced by Pixley ka Isaka Seme as President of the ANC. Gumede's friends in the Western Cape, B. Ndobe and E. Tonjeni, were expelled from the ANC by James Thaele. The replacement of Gumede by Seme as President marked an end to militant activity by the ANC. At the same time, co-operation with the Communist Party was stopped immediately. Under Seme the ANC once more reverted to its moderate stand and continued to lose its strength and vigour.[57]

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54 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 70.

55 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, p. 133.

56 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, pp. 9-10.

57 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, pp. 178-181.

Even though the ANC stopped co-operation with the Communist Party, the influence of communism could not be completely eradicated. This was because some Africans played an important role in the ranks of the Communist Party. Edwin Mofutsanyana, S.M. Kotu, Johannes Nkosi and Moses Kotane were influential in the Communist Party.[58] In particular, J.B. Marks and Moses Kotane would play major roles in the activities of the ANC later on. Together with some of their fellow white members in the Communist Party, they participated vigorously in the activities of the ANC which concerned the national struggle.

1.4.6 The Non-European Conferences

Yearly conferences of non-white people met under the presidency of Dr Abdurahman and the chairmanship of Professor D.D.T. Jabavu. Most conferences were attended by moderates from the ANC. Since 1927 these conferences had been held in order to protest against the Hertzog bills, which became laws from 1936. The conferences, attended by people who believed in equality of opportunity in the economic and political spheres, were concerned about the same issues that the ANC was complaining about, like education, the pass laws, the economic colour bar and taxation.[59] In addition, the Non-European Conferences brought Africans and coloureds together because of their common threat by the Hertzog bills and the native policy. The conferences made no extraordinary contribution to the ANC ideology, except to reaffirm its longstanding ideals of non-racialism. But these conferences suggested the possibility of a non-European united front being achieved at some future date in South Africa.

1.4.7 White Liberals

During the period 1919-20 some Congress leaders supported striking municipal workers, encouraged the anti-pass campaign and became involved in the strikes of the mineworkers.[60] There were outside ideological influences like communism and Pan African and Pan-Negro ideals. As a result of this discernible shift in the position of the

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58 E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, pp. 223-224.

59 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 196.

60 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 31.

ANC, more moderate members in the movement, like Sol Plaatjie, felt uncomfortable with the radical methods of the working class.

For this reason, the moderates within the ANC "believed that the best way for Africans to exercise political influence was by cultivating contacts with influential whites".[61] The main reason behind the establishment of these links was to promote understanding between the races. Of particular importance was the fact that African moderates within the ANC believed that they could persuade liberal whites to help Africans in obtaining maximum concessions from the government.

Although there was suspicion on both sides at first, the situation improved somewhat with the arrival of the Rev. James Kwegyir Aggrey in South Africa. Rev. Aggrey was able to form a bridge between European liberals in the Transvaal and African leaders who were willing to direct the ANC back into an organisation which used constitutional methods to fight for its rights. According to Aggrey political advance should be coupled with educational, social and religious progress in a multi-racial community where white support was of cardinal importance for the progress of black people. The racial policies of Garvey were unacceptable to the liberals.

Despite the good intentions and efforts of these liberals, the South African government continued with its discriminatory laws. A case in point was the passing of the Hertzog Bills in 1936, which actually wounded the pride of white liberals. The prestige of African moderates also suffered and the radical stand of certain congress members was vindicated. The passing of this legislation "contributed directly to a determination in the late 1930s and 1940s to strengthen and revive the ANC, to build up its organisation and so to provide a distinct and independent African base for political influence".[62] Even though the ideology of the ANC did not degenerate into racialism, it suddenly became clear that it should organise itself and depend on the strength of its African members.

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61 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, p. 118.

62 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 118.

1.4.8 The All African Convention (AAC)

In the meantime, the support of the ANC continued to dwindle under the Presidency of Seme. Matters came to a head in 1935, when Hertzog realised that he had enough support in parliament to pass his Native Bills. The old guard in the ANC could not perform or offer any resistance. Consequently, Hertzog managed to pass the Representation of Natives Bill and the Native Trust and Land Bill. According to the Representation of Natives Act, Africans would be left out of the common voters roll in the future, while some Africans already on the roll would not be removed immediately. Furthermore, Africans throughout South Africa would elect four white senators to represent them in parliament. This legislation dashed the hopes of many Africans who expected that the Cape franchise would be extended to the other three provinces of South Africa. The second act fulfilled the promise of the Natives Land Act of 1913 by increasing the area of land which blacks could occupy to nearly 13,7 percent of the country.

It was against the background of this threatening situation that Africans from all shades of the political spectrum met in Bloemfontein in December 1935 under the chairmanship of Professor Jabavu to form the All African Convention (AAC). The new body "provided a new national umbrella organization within which all existing African political groups could be linked".[63] The organisation included, amongst others, moderates from the ANC, Communist Party members and people who had been active in the defunct ICU. The discussions of the members of the AAC centred around the African franchise problem, Africans were not happy with the proposals contained in the Native Trust and Land Bill. Although the AAC members were in favour of mass protests, they used traditional methods of the ANC like negotiations and moral persuasions against the government. But the most important contribution of the AAC to African politics was that it brought together Africans from widely different backgrounds.

After the formation of the All African Convention, a special meeting of ANC members from Johannesburg and Pretoria was held in order to revive the organisation. It was decided that the ANC should not be dissolved in favour of the AAC. Instead the

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63 T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 16.

formation of the AAC as a rival of the ANC forced its leadership to reassess its future as a viable political movement. This meant that Seme's presidency of the ANC came under heavy criticism for its lack of dynamic leadership and vision. Consequently, he was replaced by the Rev. Mahabane. Mahabane was ably assisted by the Rev. James Calata, who was the Secretary-General, to revive the structures of the ANC throughout the country. Of particular importance was the fact that a number of ANC leaders such as Selope Thema, R.G. Baloyi and T. Mapikela even used their positions as councillors in the Native Representative Council (NRC) to revive dormant branches of the ANC. Even though these efforts were made to strengthen the ANC, it struggled to establish itself again as a dominant African liberation movement.[64]

Therefore, the period after First World War saw the ANC being subjected to many influences and challenges. It also became apparent that Congress had at different stages of its existence been superseded by other organisations, which purported to represent the Africans. Nevertheless, all these organisations at this stage never completely overshadowed the ANC. Instead, it survived many challenges and its leaders stood firmly committed to the ideals of non-racialism and equal justice. This inclination towards racial equality and co-operation persisted in spite of the fact that there were clear signs of an Africanist tendency within the ANC. More importantly, from the 1940s onwards, this ideal of creating a non-racial country would be accompanied by a determination of enlisting the support of the African masses.

1.5 PROFILE OF PRE-1959 CONGRESS LEADERSHIP

The following table provides a profile of the pre-1959 leadership of the ANC with regard to several aspects which must have influenced the views of the leaders on African nationalism and multiracialism. The ANC presidents, having been entrusted by the members of the organisation with the leadership, are taken to be broadly representative of the views inside the organisation with regard to intergroup relations.

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64 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, pp. 254-257.

Table 1: Profile of SANNC/ANC presidents, 1912-1959

Name and period of presidency	Educational background	Religious background	Professional career	Views on intergroup relations
John Langalibalele Dube, 1912-1917	Inanda, Amanzimtoti, Oberlin College (Ohio, USA).	Christian, Son of pastor of the American Zulu mission, ordained in USA as minister of the Congregational Church.	Worker, teacher, preacher, founder-principal of Zulu Christian Industrial School at Ohlange, founder-editor of *Ilanga lase Natal*, politician.	Proud of Zulu ethnic origins, but called for African unity, believed in racial equality, challenged white power, but was willing to work with whites, liberal views on establishing racial harmony between black and white.
S.M. Makgatho, 1917-1924	Kilnerton Training Institute (Pretoria), Ealing (Middlesex, England).	Christian, Studied theology, Methodist leader and lay preacher.	Teacher, editor of *The Good Shepherd*, politician.	Opposed colonisation of Africa, believed in racial equality, challenged white power, showed inclination towards racial cooperation.
Z R Mahabane, 1924-1927, 1937-1940	Morija (Basutoland), Cape Town.	Christian, theology student, Methodist minister.	Methodist minister, politician.	A moderate whose political philosophy was grounded in Christian ethics, propmoted reconciliation and unity, ardent supporter of multiracial cooperation.
J.T.Gumede, 1927-1930	Grahamstown Native College.	Christian, Catholic.	Teacher, advisor to chiefs, land agent, shopkeeper, politician, editor of *Ilanga lase*, proprietor of *Abantu-Batho.*	Pinned his hopes on Britain to help free non-whites in South Africa, believed in racial equality, encouraged the ANC to work with other races.
Pixley ka Isaka Seme, 1930-1936	Mount Herman School (Massachusetts), Columbia University, Jesus College (Oxford)	Parents were Christians, grew up on Inanda Mission in Natal.	Admitted to the bar in London, established legal practice, started *Abantu-Batho*, politician, driving force behind founding of Native Farmers' Association.	Proud of Zulu background, but believed in unity of Africans, against racialism, believed in equality of races and a multiracial South Africa.

A.B. Xuma, 1940-1949	Clarkebury Institute (Tus-kee), College of Agriculture at University of Minnesota, Marquette University Medical School, Northwestern University, also studied in Hungary, Scotland and London.	Father was a Methodist lay preacher.	Qualified primary school teacher, me-dical doctor, politi-cian.	Staunch African nationalist, felt that Africans ought to en-joy the same rights as every-body else, emphasised self-help and self-reliance of Afri-cans, promoted a united African front, but also be-lieved in black and white working together.
J.S. Moroka, 1949-1952	Village school in Thaba Nchu, Lovedale College, Royal High School (Edinburgh), studied surgery in Vienna.	Christian upbringing strengthened at Lovedale.	Medical doctor, politician.	Promoted new militant image of the ANC in the 1950s, his medical practice even attracted white patients, believed in equality of black and white people.
Chief A.J. Lutuli, 1952-1967	Edenvale (near Pietermaritzburg), Adams College.	His father was an evangelist at Seventh Day Adventist Mission, confirmed in Methodist Church and became lay preacher, Christian principles affected his political style and beliefs.	Teacher, Zulu chief, politician.	Advocated non-violence, believed in equality between black and white, made speeches to whites and mixed audiences, supporter of multiracial Congress Alliance, his appeals for balanced reason in race relations earned him the praise of many liberal whites.

From the information in the above table the following conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, it is clear that all the leaders of Congress from Dube to Luthuli were educated under the influence of Christian missionaries or parents who were also influenced by missionaries.

Secondly, the mission schools and the universities that they attended abroad, not only provided these Congress leaders with skills, but they also prepared them for membership of the multi-racial society. Once they completed their studies, these leaders developed certain aspirations, which they expected to see within the multi-racial society. However, they soon realised that they were not accorded the same rights and privileges as their white counter-parts. Racial discrimination was rife. As a result, they became angry and frustrated. Thirdly, their anger and frustration saw them becoming involved in Congress politics in order to attempt to reform society through the influence of the African majority. This desire to participate in a white-dominated society led to the rise of political consciousness and African nationalism. In their quest for equality between black and white, the attitude of these educated Congress leaders indicated cautiousness and moderation, which made inter-racial co-operation possible. This means that African nationalism as practised by the above-mentioned Congress leaders laid down the solid foundation of the tradition of political moderation and a focus on non-racial ideals. This political attitude could be ascribed to the impact of their Christian education. This view of promoting a future inter-racial democratic society in South Africa by these early leaders of Congress would cause conflict within the organisation itself as indicated later in this chapter.

1.6 ACTIVITIES OF THE ANC WHICH LED TO THE RISE OF THE AFRICANISTS.

1.6.1 Introduction

Since its inception in 1912 to the Hertzog legislation of 1936, the ANC had made clear its ideology and development policy by opposing discriminatory laws of the South African government. Its policy revolved around a moderate and strictly non-violent representation of African demands and grievances. However, from the outbreak of World War II onwards, Congress "underwent a gradual process of revival, rejuvenation and re-emergence as the central body, co-ordinating and expressing the views and opinions of Africans in South Africa".[65] When World War II started in 1939, attention was focussed on the international scene to issues like colonial affairs and the formation of a new world forum. Stimulated by these new developments, the African National

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[65] F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, p. 87.

Congress hoped that there would be fundamental changes in the South African government's policy towards Africans. But this renewed optimism soon faded during the premiership of Smuts, who failed to change the existing legislative structure. The situation worsened when Malan took over in 1948 and introduced his policy of apartheid, which intensified racial discrimination. As a result, shattered hopes within the ANC were replaced by a determination to defend non-racial ideals with new methods such as mass mobilisation of people and non-collaboration with the government. But it was the failure of the government to end its oppressive laws and lack of power on the side of the ANC to challenge the government which precipitated the formation of the Africanist group towards the end of the 1950s.

1.6.2 The Reorganisation of the ANC by Dr A.B. Xuma

Historians of African nationalism in twentieth century South Africa agree that the "inertia and decay" which characterised the ANC during the greater part of the 1930s had by 1939 given way to a resurgence. This gradual revival and reorganisation of the ANC became more apparent when Dr A.B. Xuma was elected as President of the organisation in December 1940. During his presidency, which lasted for nine years, the ANC entered a period during which much energy was expended to transform it from a loosely structured federal movement, whose major activity was its annual conference, into a more centralised and active national organization. It was hoped that such a transformation would attract graduates and other intellectuals.[66]

In his efforts to improve the organisational structure of the ANC, Xuma worked on the earlier constitution of the ANC, which was replaced by a new constitution adopted in 1943. In terms of non-racialism the new constitution called for equality between blacks and whites. Organisationallly it made provision for a tighter centralised structure. This would be achieved by a powerful National Executive Committee, which was to carry out day-to-day functions through a Working Committee. All the members of the Working Committee lived within fifty miles of the national headquarters in Johannesburg.[67] Under

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[66] P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, pp. 256-257; T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 71.

[67] J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, p. 158. See also T. Karis and G.M.

the new constitution the old Upper House of Chiefs was abolished and women became full members of the ANC.

Dr Xuma also improved the system of collecting fees from ANC members, raised standards of public financial accounting and highlighted the recognition of presidential authority over provincial and branch misconduct. But, the most important innovation of Xuma was the preparation and adoption of the most important set of objectives since 1919, which were called African Claims in South Africa.

1.6.3 The Atlantic Charter and African Claims

The Atlantic Charter was a document which was signed in 1941 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the USA and the British premier, Winston Churchill, on a post-war settlement and it stated, amongst other points, that the sovereignty of those states which had been robbed of their freedom would be restored.[68] The ANC under Dr Xuma exploited this opportunity to its advantage by using the Atlantic Charter to lend weight to its claims when it drew up the African Claims.

The underlying motive for the publication of the African Claims by the ANC could be found in the hardships the Africans had experienced in South Africa for a long time and the stubborn manner in which the successive white governments dealt with their problems. In the 1940s the Second World War was still in progress. As a result of this war, the world atmosphere was charged with the spirit of nationalism and defence of one's country and rights. This atmosphere highlighted the conditions under which the black people were living in South Africa. According to Duma Nokwe, a member of the ANC Youth League in the 1940s who would become the Secretary-General of the ANC in the 1950s, the Second World War and the slogans which were bandied around like "Freedom, Justice and Democracy" acted like electric charges which charged even the feelings of dormant people.[69] Black soldiers who participated in this war wore the same

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Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, pp. 84-86.

68 T. van Wijk and M. Boucher, *Europe, 1848-1980*, p. 394.

69 Archives of William Cullen (AWC), Witwatersrand University (Wits), Braamfontein, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Dar-es-Salaam, 29 October 1970, p. 4.

uniforms as their white counterparts in defence of South Africa and expected to be treated like equals at the end of the war. However, this did not happen and there was a deep sense of anger and frustration.[70]

As a result, the real purpose of drawing up the African Claims was to elicit a reply from the government concerning the clarification of its official policy towards Africans in the face of new developments which were brought about by the Second World War. Xuma established a committee, whose aim would be to study and interpret the Atlantic Charter from the African's point of view. As would be expected, "the terms of reference of this committee were to study and discuss the problems arising out of the Atlantic Charter in so far as they relate to Africans, to formulate a comprehensive statement embodying an African Charter, and to draw up a Bill of Rights which Africans were demanding as essential to guarantee them a worthy place in the post war world."[71]

These African Claims, which analysed the Atlantic Charter from the standpoint of Africans in Africa in general and in South Africa in particular, included the Bill of Rights which called for, amongst others, the following:

- "the abolition of political discrimination based on race, and the extension to all adults regardless of race, of the right to vote and be elected to parliament, provincial councils and other representative institutions;
- a fair redistribution of the land as a prerequisite for a just settlement of the land problems;
- equal opportunity to engage in any occupation, trade or industry as well as the recognition of the rights of the Africans to freedom of trading;
- the right of the African child to education, like children of other sections must be recognised as a state duty and responsibility;
- and adequate medical and health facilities for the entire population of the country."[72]

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70 For information on the participation of South African blacks in the Second World War see L.W.F. Grundlingh, *The participation of South African Blacks in the Second World War* (D Litt et Phil thesis, RAU, 1987).

71 F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, pp. 94-95.

72 African National Congress (ANC), The ANC and the Bill of Rights, 1923 to 1993, pp. 5-9.

In short, the ANC demanded the scrapping of laws that discriminated against the Africans in any way whatsoever on the basis of creed or colour in the Union of South Africa. In other words, the African Claims demanded a substantial improvement in the socio-economic conditions of the Africans. It also called for the rejection of previous oppressive laws and the acceptance of full political rights as a prerequisite for a just social order in South Africa after World War II.

What was the response of the government to the African Claims? Xuma sent the copy of the African Claims to Smuts and requested a face-to-face meeting with him. However, the document was treated as if it did not exist by the government of Smuts. His reply was that the African Claims was a propagandist document which did not contain practical proposals.[73] Smuts's response convinced Xuma that whites in South Africa would not willingly grant Africans full political rights. As a consequence, leaders of the ANC considered alternative methods of pressurising the government to respond promptly and favourably to the grievances of the Africans.

Nevertheless, the publication of the African Claims marked an important milestone in the development of African nationalism and it also indicated that Africans were becoming more assertive in fighting for their political rights.

1.6.4 The formation of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL)

Another notable achievement of Xuma was that the ANC witnessed an influx of young intellectual Africans into its ranks. These intellectuals came from the small African middle class and had been educated in missionary schools and abroad. Consequently, well-known figures such as Anton Lembede, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, A.P. Mda, Walter Sisulu, Dr James Njongwe, Dr William Nkomo, Jordan Ngubane, Robert Sobukwe, Ntsu Mokhehle and others emerged on the scene and began to question the

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Booklet in possession of author. See also "African Claims in South Africa", "The Atlantic Charter from the standpoint of Africans within the Union of South Africa", and "Bill of Rights adopted by the ANC annual conference" in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, pp. 209-222.

[73] C.F.J. Muller (ed), *500 Years: A History of South Africa*, p. 453.

weak and conservative leadership of the ANC.[74] These young men were well-equipped and educated to take over the leadership of the ANC and were determined to rebuild and strengthen the movement from within. Of particular importance was the fact that these young ANC activists were impatient with the unwillingness of their seniors to adopt radical methods in order to engage the oppressive white governments of South Africa.

Joe Matthews, one of the founder members of the Youth League, revealed interesting developments in the formation of the organisation. Firstly, he said that the movement was formed as a result of the resolutions of the ANC in the national conference of 1943. Next, he mentioned that the Youth League was primarily a Transvaal organisation from 1944, although there were individual members in the other provinces. A few branches were formed in the Cape in 1948 and 1949. In 1948 the Herschel or so-called Sterkspruit branch was established. T.T. Letlaka, who became prominent in the Pan Africanist Congress later on, was one of those who started the Xalanga branch in the Transkei. The Cradock branch was started by G.C. Socenywa. The Fort Hare branch, of which Matthews became a member, started in 1948 and spread into the Cape. In the Free State, the Bloemfontein branch was started by a teacher called Boikanyo. In Natal, it was only mentioned in the columns of *Inkundla ya Bantu* by the journalist Jordan Ngubane. The formation of the ANCYL in the province started seriously from 1949.[75]

The formation of the Youth League was accompanied by a lot of political rivalry. Although it officially started in 1944, Peter Raboroko claimed that already in 1943 he played a major role in its formation. He presided over the first meeting to launch the movement. Raboroko was the president of the Transvaal African Student Association (TASA) at that time. As a result of his position in TASA he was able to convene and chair the first meeting of the ANCYL. William Nkomo became the chairman of the provincial executive committee before the election of Anton Lembede as national president.[76] Raboroko did not become the president of the Youth League in spite of

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74 R.R. Edgar and L.K. Msumza, *Freedom in Our Lifetime*, p. 16.

75 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/8: Interview between Joe Matthews and Gail M. Gerhart, Gaborone, 15 August 1970, p. 1.

76 Interview with Peter Raboroko, Soweto, 17 February 2000 (information in possession of the author). See also Peter Raboroko, "Defier of the Undefiable, R. Mangaliso Sobukwe", p. 6 (document in possession of the author).

having chaired its first meeting. Instead Lembede became the first president of the ANCYL.

The most important aim for the formation of the ANCYL was to strengthen the ANC by establishing a pressure group within the organisation. In other words, the Youth League's aim was to remould and reshape the ANC.[77] Because these young men rejected the idea of forming a rival movement, they decided to form the Youth League within the ANC. According to the version published by Karis and Carter in *From Protest to Challenge*, which differs from the information supplied by Raboroko, this decision was taken in April 1944 at an inaugural meeting at the Bantu Men's Social Centre in Johannesburg.[78] As the first President of the Youth League, Anton Lembede worked with other outstanding future leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu.[79] Lembede held strong nationalistic views concerning the freedom struggle of the Africans in South Africa to the extent that his philosophy was commonly known as "Africanism."

Lembede felt that for the Africans to fight white domination, they should "overcome psychological disabilities" first.[80] To Lembede, "Africans had become a derelict nation, uncertain of their cultural identity, their rights, or their place in relation to the rest of mankind". He felt that the Africans were facing a disaster if this situation was not remedied. For this reason, Lembede argued that "there could be no cure for these evils except African freedom, and no means to the achievement of freedom other than a ruthless struggle grounded in the inspiration of a well-devised ideology, a credo addressed to the deepest strivings and needs of the African spirit".[81] In other words, his panacea for curing all the evils of the Africans was based on a strong sense of nationalism. His view was that nationalism would serve as an antidote to "the loss of self-confidence, inferiority complex, a feeling of frustration, the worship and idolisation of whiteness, foreign leaders and ideologies," common among Africans.[82] In this way,

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77 F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, pp. 108-109.

78 T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 102.

79 G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa: The Evolution of an Ideology*, p. 51.

80 R.R. Edgar and L.K. Msumza, *Freedom in Our Lifetime*, p. 24.

81 G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 58.

82 R.R. Edgar and L.K. Msumza, *Freedom in Our Lifetime*, p. 24.

Lembede suggested the need for psychological liberation of the Africans in order to inculcate in their minds African pride, self-reliance and solidarity.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the emphasis on national and African ideals, which resulted in the philosophy of African nationalism, became crucial in the formation of the Youth League. African Nationalism was used by the League to glorify the past history of Africans. In particular, the League urged Africans to commemorate their past heroes, such as Shaka, Moshoeshoe, Hintsa, Sikhukhuni, Khama, Sobhuza and Mzilikazi.[83] The lives of these great leaders had to serve as a reminder to Africans of a glorious past.

The ANC Youth League's provincial committee issued the Congress Youth League Manifesto in March 1944. The manifesto contained the aims and the objectives of the ANCYL. In the preamble of its manifesto the ANCYL set for itself the task of fighting white domination and oppression by promoting Africanism, that is "Africans must struggle for development, progress, and national liberation so as to occupy their rightful and honourable place among nations of the world".[84] Implicit in this statement is the fact that the Youth League was determined to achieve equal rights between Africans and whites by challenging white domination and oppression. In order to realise this aim, the ANCYL Manifesto proceeded to criticise trusteeship as a policy designed by whites to "mislead the world and make it believe that the white man in South Africa is helping the African on the road to civilised life, the white man has arrogated to himself the title and role of Trustee for the African people".[85] Apart from this, the Youth League saw itself as a body that would help Congress to gain a truly national character as a liberation movement. It would be the "brain-trust and the power-station of the spirit of African Nationalism, the spirit of African self-determination: the spirit that is so discernible in the thinking of our youth".[86]

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83 E. Ntloedibe, *Here is a Tree: Political Biography of Robert Sobukwe*, pp. 46-47.

84 Provincial Committee of the African National Congress Youth League, "Manifesto", March 1944, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 300.

85 African National Congress Youth League, "Manifesto" in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 302.

86 African National Congress Youth League, "Manifesto" in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 306.

It was not surprising to see that this spirit of African nationalism became the driving force behind the ANCYL constitution, which was drawn up in 1944. The constitution contained the following aims:

- "to arouse and encourage national consciousness and unity among African youth;
- to assist support and re-enforce the African National Congress in its struggle for National Liberation of the African people;
- to study political, economic and social problems of Africa and the world;
- to strive and work for educational, moral and cultural advancement of African youth."[87]

In the same way, the revised 1948 Manifesto of the League rejected the importation of foreign ideologies and tactics.[88] This was an obvious reference to communism and the whites, who were beginning to be influential within the ANC circles. For this reason, it was not surprising that the Youth League rejected the request and invitation to affiliate with the Progressive Youth Council of which Ruth First was the secretary. Their response to this organisation was that the Youth League was devoting its energies to the preparation for the national struggle and cooperation at that time was too soon as it could "result in chaos, ineffective action and mutual jealousies, rivalry and suspicion".[89] Despite this wariness of the ANCYL, the communists and whites actually joined the ANC later on, which caused ideological clashes, conflicts and tensions within the ANC.

The Youth League also "believed in the unity of all Africans from the Mediterranean Sea in the North to the Indian and Atlantic Ocean in the south … and that Africa must speak with one voice."[90] To achieve this unity and freedom the Youth League believed that the

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87 "Constitution of the ANC Youth League" in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 310.

88 African National Congress Youth League, "Manifesto" in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 308.

89 "Letter from the ANC Youth League (Transvaal) to the Secretary (Ruth First) of the progressive Youth Council, March, 16, 1945", in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 316.

90 African National Congress Youth League "Manifesto" in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 308.

Africans should build a powerful national liberation movement, which would be led by the Africans themselves. For this reason, they expressed the wish that Africans in South Africa should free themselves from oppression without help from any other racial group. To them it was very important that the African leaders should "come out of their loins".[91] They believed in self-reliance. Compromise with whites was possible, but only if they could abandon their domination of Africa and assist in building up a free democracy in South Africa.[92] This willingness to compromise explained why the Youth League rejected an African nationalism based on the slogan "Quit Africa".[93] Instead, it supported inclusive nationalism, which regarded anybody who was loyal to Africa and espoused the principle of democracy as an African. Indians were also in the category of the oppressed in South Africa "as long as they do not undermine or impede our liberation".[94] This means that the Indians, especially the merchant class, was treated with some reservation, because of its exploitation of the Africans. Like the ANC as mother body, the Youth League also believed in the ideals of non-racialism and multi-racialism. The implication was that the struggle was not directed at all whites, but was aimed at the eradication of white oppression and domination.

As a consequence, the formation of the Youth League created an awareness within the ANC that Africans would have to take a huge responsibility of developing their political influence and using it for the transformation of the South African society. From the above summary of viewpoints in the ANCYL during the 1940s it is clear that the establishment of the Youth League brought to the fore the ambiguity between Africanism and multi-racialism - the problem which would haunt the ANC for a considerable time.

However, all these policy changes within the ANC remained on the level of theory and alternative strategies or approaches were not spelt out. This mistake was corrected after Lembede's death, when the Youth League decided to pressurise the ANC to adopt the Programme of Action in response to the government's intensification of its policy of apartheid.

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91 "Policy of the Congress Youth League", in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 317.

92 F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, p. 72.

93 G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 72.

94 F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, p. 115.

1.6.5 Reaction to the Apartheid Policy

The 1948 white elections brought the National Party of Dr D.F. Malan into power. During the elections whites were "assured that Smuts's policy would lead to the downfall of the whites, whereas Malan's policy would safeguard them against the Black peril."[95] Therefore, the new government committed itself to a programme of introducing a policy of apartheid, that would ensure white supremacy in South Africa. Because the National Party was not in favour of racial integration, "the country's racial groups were to be rigidly segregated with a view to self-sufficiency in their own areas, the reserves would become the national homelands of the Bantu, and Native labourers in the remaining white areas would be regarded as migratory and not entitled to comparable rights with Europeans."[96]

As a result of these new developments, the African National Congress was compelled to revisit and evaluate its commitments to its long-standing methods of making known their grievances to the government and following legal procedures. Chief Luthuli, who would be the President of the ANC later on, summarised the position in these words: "The constant and unremitting curtailment of our liberties was beginning to evoke, on a new scale, our refusal to sit by and watch our claims to humanity being whittled down until there was almost nothing left. The patient beast of burden was but a human being."[97]

Africans were determined to challenge their national oppression under the banner of African nationalism. For this reason the African National Congress decided to support fully the Programme of Action in December 1949, which would have far-reaching consequences on the methods and the strategies of the movement.

1.6.6 The Programme of Action, 1949

When Dr Xuma took over the national leadership of the ANC, he became the real builder

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95 C.F.J. Muller (ed), *500 Years: A History of South Africa*, p. 463.

96 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 286.

97 A. Luthuli, *Let My People Go*, p. 101.

of the movement. However, by the time Dr D. F .Malan came to power in 1948, Xuma's influence within the ANC was declining. This was largely due to the fact that the Youth League was looking for a leader who would suit their agenda. To them time was ripe for action. They believed that "for too long the ANC had been a talking shop for intellectuals, passing splendid resolutions, dispersing and returning the following year to find out whether the resolutions have been implemented, getting satisfaction out of the knowledge that they were discussing national affairs and enjoying the social get-together."[98]

At last, at its conference of 1949, the Youth League plotted the replacement of Dr Xuma by Dr Moroka. According to Nokwe, Dr Xuma had to relinquish the presidency of the ANC because of his opposition to this Programme of Action, which he felt was too radical. He did not like the sudden transition of a complete break with the past and the beginnings of direct confrontations between the ANC and the government.[99] After his dismissal Congress proceeded to formulate a decisive Programme of Action. What did the Programme of Action entail? It involved the rejection and termination of white domination over the Africans by "employing the weapons of immediate and active boycott, strike, civil disobedience, non-co-operation and such other means as may bring about the accomplishment and realisation of our aspirations."[100] Because the Programme of Action called for tactics such as civil disobedience, strikes, boycotts and stay-at-homes, it undoubtedly committed the ANC to a new strategy based on extra-parliamentary tactics, which involved methods such as non-collaboration and mass-mobilisation.[101]

In addition, the Programme of Action urged the Congress "to struggle for the rights of national freedom, political independence, self-determination and the rejection of segregation."[102] As Luthuli put it, "the challenge was to be on fundamentals, we were no longer interested in ameliorations and petty adjustments", as "there was no longer any

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98 M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright*, p. 127.

99 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Dar-es-Salaam, 29 October 1970, p. 5.

100 T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, pp. 337-338.

101 G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 83.

102 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 26.

doubt in our mind that without the vote we are helpless."[103] It was not surprising to find that the Programme of Action included other proposals such as "the establishment of an African Academy of Arts and Science, the promotion of adult business ventures, the establishment of an African press and the promotion of adult education."[104] The Programme of Action endorsed the growing influence of African nationalism and the ideas of the Youth League within the ANC.

However, it is worth mentioning that the Programme of Action became a controversial document from its inception. In his interview with Gerhart, Joe Matthews gave a background to the writing of the Programme of Action as it became a contested terrain between the Africanists and the advocates of a broad nationalism within the ANC. According to him it was written by a committee, which included people like Dr Xuma, A.P. Mda, S.Msimang, Oliver Tambo, Moses Kotane and L.K. Ntlabathi from Bethlehem. But the confusion surrounding the document worsened when it was implemented, especially during the 1st May strike in 1950. It was alleged that the implementation of the Programme of Action had been taken over by the communists, Indians and whites.[105] There was the danger that the implementation of the Programme of Action might cause a clash of ideas instead of becoming a real programme to be acted upon.

Consequently, the Programme of Action not only indicated that the militants were successful, because they had scored a resounding victory over the conservatives within the ANC, but also that there were contending ideologies within the movement. After the 1949 conferences it became clear that the ANC had chosen a path of struggle with a more concrete and radical programme than ever before.

1.6.7 The Defiance Campaign, 1952

After the adoption of the Programme of Action three major demonstrations were held in 1950 as a prelude to its implementation. The first was a Freedom of Speech

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103 A. Luthuli, *Let My People Go*, p. 109.

104 G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 84.

105 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/8: Interview between Joe Matthews and Gail M. Gerhart, Gaborone, 15 August 1970, pp. 6-7.

Convention, followed by May Day or Freedom Day demonstrations against discrimination and finally a National Day of Protest.[106] The latter was mainly a day of mourning for those who had lost their lives in the struggle for freedom.

The Defiance Campaign began when non-white leaders met in 1951 to form a Joint Planning Council, whose aim would be to plan a strategy for uniting Indians, coloureds and Africans in their attempt to resist oppressive laws. Through this campaign the ANC planned to violate unjust and objectionable laws such as the Separate Representation of Voters Act, Group Areas Act, Bantu Authorities Act and the Suppression of Communism Act.[107] Luthuli aptly describes the situation in this manner: "The intention was to disobey these laws, suffering arrests, assault and penalty if need be, without violence. The method was to send in groups of carefully trained 'volunteers' to disobey publicly." Luthuli pointed out that the "main force of the Defiance Campaign was directed against the national motto of South Africa, EUROPEANS ONLY."[108] The plan was to use those facilities reserved for whites only in public places like railway stations, waiting rooms, post offices, public seats and train accommodation. The ANC hoped that the apartheid regime would change its laws and accommodate Africans.

Instead, the campaign dragged on for several months and many leaders of the ANC, the SAIC (South African Indian Council) and communists were imprisoned or banned. These restrictive measures imposed on many ANC leaders created a vacuum in its leadership. In December 1952 Dr Moroka was replaced by Chief Luthuli as President-General of the ANC. It was during Luthuli's term of office that the ANC turned into a militant and mass-based organisation. However, the repressive laws of the white regime, especially the Criminal Laws Amendment Act of 1953, ensured that anybody who broke the laws by way of protesting would receive severe punishment.[109] It was not surprising when Luthuli was deposed as a chief and later banned. Other leaders throughout the country were also served with bans or were involved in what became known as the Treason Trial. At this stage, the campaign lost much of its vigour and

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106 Jordan K. Ngubane, "Post Mortem on a Tragedy", *Inkundla ya Bantu*, May 20, 1950 (editorial) in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 441.

107 F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, p. 121.

108 A. Luthuli, *Let My People Go*, p. 117.

109 E. Feit, *The Failure of Passive Resistance*, p. 35.

momentum.

Despite these negative developments, the Defiance Campaign was significant to the ANC in many ways. The influx of members had enabled the ANC to become a mass movement as it increased its paid membership from 7,000 to 100,000.[110] Meli states: "The oppressed people became directly involved in the struggle for freedom and this embodies the process of radicalisation and the principle that the oppressed people had the right to fight for their freedom."[111] The Defiance Campaign also consolidated the Xuma-Dadoo-Naicker agreement of 1947, which established good links between Indians and Africans and extended a hand of friendship to coloureds to join the alliance. Friendly whites who belonged to the Congress of Democrats (COD) also supported the campaign. As a result the campaign formed the solid base for the co-operation of different organisations which were against white domination.

In spite of being regarded as a logical outcome of the unfolding Programme of Action, the Defiance Campaign of 1952 exacerbated tensions and heightened conflict and suspicion between the Africanists and the communists within the ANC. The adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955 would indicate this untenable situation.

1.6.8 The Freedom Charter, 1955

The idea of writing the Freedom Charter was the brain-child of Professor Z.K. Matthews, the Cape leader of the ANC, who expressed the following ideas: "I wonder whether the time has not come for the African National Congress to consider the question of convening a national convention, a congress of the people, representing all the people of this country irrespective of race or colour, to draw up a Freedom Charter for the democratic South Africa of the future."[112] At this suggestion the African National Congress (ANC), the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), the Congress of Democrats (COD) and the South African Coloured People's Organisation (SACPO) decided to hold a big national congress of progressive people who wanted changes in South Africa. All

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110 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa,* p. 178.

111 F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, pp. 122-123.

112 Z.K. Matthews, *Freedom For My People*, p. 173.

these groups constituted the so-called Congress of the People or Congress Alliance. The meeting, which took place on 25-26 June 1955 in Kliptown near Johannesburg, included "workers and trade unionists, peasants and traders, intellectuals and clerks, men and women, youth and students of all colour and ethnic groups, Christians, Moslems, Hindus, Communists and non-communists".[113] It demonstrated that the ANC was increasing co-operation with other non-African organisations in the spirit of multi-racialism.

The document known as the Freedom Charter was adopted at this meeting of Kliptown. The preamble of the Charter declared that South Africa belonged to all of its people, black and white, and that no government could justly claim authority unless it was based on the will of the people.[114] According to Nelson Mandela, those who adopted the Charter demanded nothing less than complete transfer of political power to the people, which meant the immediate overthrow of the apartheid regime, because they said "we pledge ourselves to strive together sparing nothing of our strength and courage" until the democratic changes were realised.[115] The Charter's ten point commitment includes the following intentions: "the people shall govern, all national groups shall have equal rights, the people shall share in the country's wealth, the land shall be shared amongst those who work it, all people shall be equal before the law, all shall enjoy equal human rights, there shall be work and security, the doors of learning and culture shall be opened, there shall be houses, security and comfort, there shall be peace and friendship."[116]

What was the reaction of the government? The response of the government was to arrest almost the whole leadership of the ANC and the long trial known as the Treason Trial began in December 1956.[117] The argument of the state was that the Charter was a plan to overthrow the government by violent means and replace it with a communist government. As a result, many Congress leaders where charged with treason in 1956. The Treason Trial disrupted the lives of many of the accused, as it was the aim of the government to deprive people of leadership and direction.

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113 F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, p. 124.

114 ANC, *The ANC and the Bill of Rights, 1923-1993*, p. 11.

115 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 162.

116 ANC, *The ANC and the Bill of Rights, 1923-1993*, pp. 12-14.

117 A. Luthuli, *Let My People Go*, p. 159.

The adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955 was an important milestone in the history of South Africa. Its supporters viewed it as the blueprint for a future South Africa, which would respect basic human rights. The achievement of the Charter was that the liberation struggle stopped to be associated with Africans only. The racial composition of the Congress of People transformed the fight against white domination into the struggle of all just people against injustice.

On the other hand, the detractors of the Charter questioned the roles played by the communists, whites and Indians in its drafting. The argument of this group was that the presence of the communists, whites and Indians within the ANC showed suspicion and dissensions in the ranks of African nationalism, thereby preventing the rise of a strong nationalistic leadership of the Africans, which would fight for genuine freedom.[118] The Africanists increased their criticism of the Communist Party, which they regarded as having captured the ANC leadership. The Alliance became a focus of their criticism and ridicule. According to Joe Molefi, one of the Africanists at that time, he did not participate in the formation of the Congress of the People, because the ANC was controlled by the Congress of Democrats and the Indian Congress, who were financially strong "foreign elements".[119] This control was seen by the Africanists as a continuation of white domination, which was contrary to the spirit of African nationalism. The Africanists wanted to see the struggle from the perspective of narrow nationalism.

From the above it becomes apparent that the Freedom Charter was open to criticism. Certainly one of the imperfections was that the ANC failed to show the means through which the democratic future would be achieved. The Freedom Charter highlighted the perennial problem of the ANC: the ideological clashes between the supporters of interracial co-operation (who became Charterists) and those who advocated a narrow nationalism (Africanists).

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118 J.K. Ngubane, *An African Explains Apartheid*, p. 161.

119 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/13: Interview between Joe Molefi and Gail M. Gerhart, Maseru, December 1969, p. 8.

1.6.9 The emergence of the Africanist group within the ANC

The rise of the movement which emphasised African predominance in South Africa should be considered against the background of what was happening in Africa in particular and the rest of the world in general. Walshe describes the impact of world events on the ANC in this manner: "Pan African attitudes within Congress were stimulated by anti-colonial developments in Africa, Asia and at the UN, while the Manchester Pan African Conference of 1945 exercised an additional influence."[120] Many people of Africa were on the brink of being freed from foreign domination after the Second World War. African countries were no longer content with being ruled by white oppressive governments. As would be expected, the hopes of many South Africans were raised by the anti-imperialist revolution led by Colonel Nasser in Egypt in 1952 and the winning of independence by Libya (1952), Sudan, Morocco and Tunisia (1956), Ghana (1957), Guinea (1958) and a number of other African states in 1960.[121]

Furthermore, in April 1955 the ANC sent an official observer, Moses Kotane, to the Bandung Conference in Indonesia, where some newly independent African and Asian countries convened to form an international anti-imperialist movement.[122] This special occasion indicated to the oppressed people of South Africa that they were part of a world struggle for freedom. Fundamental political changes, especially to the territories north of South Africa, were watched with keen interest by the oppressed.

What was the reaction of the oppressed people of South Africa to these events? The emergence and the growth of the new radical trend in South Africa was highlighted by the formation of the Youth League in 1944. The establishment of the Youth League provided an ideology of "Africanism" or "African nationalism", whose main aim was to encourage national pride and self-reliance in Africans.[123] These ideas of self-reliance and national pride were coupled with the vision of Pan-African unity as stated in the constitution of the ANCYL by the following motto: "Africa's Course Must Triumph", and

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120 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 336.

121 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, p. 192.

122 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, pp. 192-193.

123 G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 61.

that there should be "a rejection of foreign leadership in Africa and a belief in the unity of all Africans from the Mediterranean Sea in the North to the Indian and Atlantic Ocean in the south."[124]

However, within the Youth League there was a sense of ideological tension between the "Nationalists" and" Africanists." At that stage the nationalist group included individuals such as J. Ngubane, A.P. Mda, V. Mbombo, Oliver Tambo, M.B. Yengwa and Vivian Ncakeni, who were insistent on the "need for African political assertion but constantly aware of the dangers of being an extremist and inward-looking black racialism." On the other hand, the Africanist group consisted of people such as Anton Lembede, Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela and Peter Raboroko, who cared less about the danger of being labelled anti-white as long as they could develop an ideology which was "dynamic enough to rouse the African masses to political awareness and action".[125]

Thus, the ANCYL in particular and the ANC in general were faced with two streams of African nationalism. One was based on the ideas of Garvey, that is "Africa for the Africans" and the slogan "Quit Africa". This brand of African nationalism was not popular within the ANC because of its extreme views and radicalism. Instead, the moderate form of African nationalism, based on multiracialism or interracial co-operation, usually prevailed.

With regard to the origin of the Africanist group within the ANCYL and the ANC the most important questions are: What led to the formation of the Africanist group within the ANC and how did this Africanist element try to gain ascendancy in the movement until the break-away of 1958? The Africanist Youth Leaguers were particularly opposed to the communists, whom they accused of weakening the struggle of the Africans. At the core of the Africanists' criticism of the Communist Party was the fact that they were regarded as foreigners. The Communist Party was perceived as outsiders, who wanted to impose on the Africanist struggle their "cut-and-dried formulae, which so far from clarifying the issues of our struggle, only serve to obscure the fundamental fact that we

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124 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, pp. 335-336.

125 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, pp. 356-357.

are oppressed not as a class, but as a people, as a Nation."[126] In other words, the Africanists were very critical of the Communist Party's ideology, because they saw it as being incompatible with the realities of South Africa. Before the start of the December 1949 ANC conference in Bloemfontein rumours were doing the rounds that the Communist Party had nominated its candidate for the position of Secretary-General. The rumours seemed to contain an element of truth, since the communists wanted to capture the leadership of the ANC. For this reason, they contested several positions with the Africanists. However, their attempts were frustrated by the Africanists, who ensured that Walter Sisulu was elected as Secretary-General under the banner of the Africanists.[127]

At the Youth League conference of 1949 the thumbs up sign was adopted. The first four fingers were to indicate Unity, Determination, Solidarity and Militancy and the raised thumb was to represent a prayer that Africa should return to the Africans.[128] The thumbs up symbol was in keeping with the Africanists' demand for the return of their land. As would be expected, the communists did not feel comfortable with the symbol as it emphasised the exclusive African nationalism of the Africanists.

The Africanists were satisfied after the 1949 ANC Conference in Bloemfontein, as they felt that the old guard and the communists had been eliminated. A number of the Africanist nominees occupied important positions in the ANC National Executive Committee, including Dr Moroka, Walter Sisulu and G.M.Pitje.[129] As a result of these developments, the Africanists felt that they had become a strong factor within the ANC. They had demonstrated their power by removing Dr Xuma from the Presidency of the ANC in favour of Dr Moroka, whom they expected would advance their programme.[130]

The Africanists' efforts of dominating the executive committee of the ANC did not deter

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126 "Basic Policy of Congress Youth League", in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 330.

127 Interview with Peter Raboroko, Soweto, 17 February 2000.

128 "Minutes of the Annual Conference of the ANC, December 15-19, 1949", in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 291.

129 T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 403.

130 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 107.

the communists. They came up with the new strategy of fraternising and associating with certain members of the ANC. Some Youth Leaguers and members of the ANC were invited to frequent parties and social gatherings by the communists. One such invitation was extended to the Youth League by Ruth First of the wing of the Communist Party called the Progressive Youth Council. These frequent associations between the communists and some members of the ANC led to disputes and criticisms. For example D.Mji, a Youth Leaguer who became the chairperson of the ANCYL in 1951, was said to be "guilty of hobnobbing and consorting" with whites at Wits University, because he tried to canvass their support. On a more serious note, the Africanists accused some of their fellow Youth Leaguers of going out with Ruth First and other white girls in Park Town North. Mji was said to have had white girl friends, whereas Robert Resha allegedly liked to be admired by whites.[131] These criticisms not only showed the extent to which the Africanists were suspicious of the communists, but also how they differed from them ideologically. To them the communists were only weakening African nationalism.

The fact that the radical African nationalist outlook and roots of some of the former Youth Leaguers had been modified and shaken could also be found when the Africanists accused Nelson Mandela of having changed his political inclination. They believed that his stay at Wits University could have made him more susceptible to the influence of the white communists.[132] There was an element of truth in their suspicion, as Mandela himself admitted that "my long-standing opposition to communism was breaking down".[133] This was despite the fact that he had earlier been opposed to the idea of working with communists and Indians. Although Mandela admitted during the Rivonia Trial that he had been influenced by Marxist thought, he never joined the Communist Party in his life as "I have always regarded myself, in the first place, as an African patriot."[134] His associations and friendships with Ruth First, Ismail Meer and Moses Kotane transformed him, as he observed how they sacrificed for the liberation struggle.

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131 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/15: Interview between Peter Molotsi and Gail M. Gerhart, Nairobi, 23 April 1972, p. 12.

132 Interview with Peter Raboroko, Soweto, 17 February 2000.

133 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 112.

134 University of the Western Cape (UWC), Robben Island Mayibuye Archives (MA), Bellville, ANC Office in London, Box 1: Testimony of Nelson Mandela at the Rivonia Trial, 1964, p. 14.

Mandela said he found it "more and more difficult to justify my prejudice against the party".[135]

The Africanists contrasted this transformation of Nelson Mandela with Robert Sobukwe, who was a lecturer at Wits University. According to them, his daily contact with his white colleagues and students could have made him vulnerable to the ideologies of communists and liberals. However, because they say he was "like fish in the water" or "green incorruptible", he was able to turn down many invitations and advances.[136] An element of subjectivity cannot be discounted in this instance, as many Africanists held Sobukwe in high esteem. Their comparison of the two leaders simply indicate that there was a clash of ideologies - whether to follow a strict narrow nationalism or an inclusive one.

The social contact with the communists further widened the gulf between individuals like Mandela, Tambo and Sisulu and the orthodox African nationalists. The other Youth Leaguers such as A.P. Mda, G.M. Pitje, Potlako Leballo and Peter Raboroko maintained orthodox African nationalism, as expounded by Anton Lembede.[137] This division indicated that there was an ideological tension within the ANCYL and the ANC itself. The distinction between the ANCYL and the ANC had become blurred in the early 1950s, because some members of the ANCYL were also occupying important positions in the National Executive Committee of the ANC. Nevertheless, these ideological tensions indicated a lack of a clear-cut direction the movement was taking.

The level of tension between the Africanists and the communists heightened with the implementation of the Programme of Action. The Africanists felt that the communists were exploiting the Programme of Action to embarrass them. As the spirit of mass action continued, the Communist Party and the Indian Congress passed a resolution for a one-day strike on 1 May 1950, called Freedom Day, which demanded the scrapping of the pass laws and every discriminatory law. This call of the communists was probably

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135 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 112.

136 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/15: Interview between Peter Molotsi and Gail M. Gerhart, Nairobi, 23 April 1972, p. 12; Interview with Peter Raboroko, Soweto, 17 February 2000.

137 Interview with Peter Raboroko, Soweto, 17 February 2000.

done on purpose, because they knew that the Programme of Action would call for a national day of work stoppages in protest against the racist laws. At that time they were aware that leading communists, such as J. B. Marks, Moses Kotane and Yusuf Dadoo, were about to be banned. Consequently, the Communist Party declared 1 May as stay-away day in recognition of the Worker's Day and in protest against the bannings of their members. However, the Africanists, including Mandela himself, criticised the communists by saying that they "were trying to steal the thunder from the ANC's National Day of Protest".[138] The main argument of the Africanists was that May Day was associated with communism.[139] They insisted that May Day was not intended by the communists to advance the interests of the struggles of the Africans. They argued that the communist May Day demonstrations "were intended to be part of a world campaign engineered by the Communists to help advance the cause of Communism and not of the oppressed African".[140] As a result, it would have been contradictory for the Africanists to have supported the May Day call, as it clashed with their ideological inclinations.

The penetration of the communists into the ANC was facilitated by the government when it prepared the Unlawful Organisations Bill, which was aimed at suppressing the Communist Party. In anticipation of the passing of the law, which was going to restrict them, the Communist Party dissolved itself. The ANC became their alternative political home. This tactical move inevitably led to heightened tensions within the ANC.

Once the Africanists suspected that the communists intended penetrating the ANC in big numbers, they also developed their own strategy of capturing the leadership of the ANC. A.P. Mda, who had become the leading African nationalist after the death of Lembede, organised the Africanists. According to Z.B. Molete, one of the Africanists at that time, Mda sought a more "conspiratorial approach" as an architect of an underground Africanist cell within Congress, which would produce a nucleus of the pure ANC pan-Africanist leadership.[141] For this reason, Mda rallied together the so-called "hard core"

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138 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 109.

139 Interview with Peter Raboroko, Soweto, 17 February 2000.

140 Jordan K. Ngubane, "Post Mortem on a Tragedy", *Inkundla ya Bantu*, May 20, 1950 (editorial) in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 441.

141 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/14: Interview between Z.B. Molete and Gail M. Gerhart, New York, 30 June 1970, p. 2.

members of the Africanists in Orlando East. Members of the hard core included N. Mokhetle, Dr Conco, J. Ngubane, V.Sifora, R.M. Sobukwe, P.K. Leballo, M.Yengwa, J.N. Fazzie, J.N. Pokela and A.Z. Gwenje.[142] These persons were prepared to defend African nationalism at all costs. They became a pressure group within the ANC.

There were also the African nationalists called the Inner Circle. This group consisted mostly of Africans from Orlando and the Eastern Cape. Some of its members were A.P. Mda, P. K. Leballo, S. Ngendane, P. Molotsi, Z. Mothopeng, R. M. Sobukwe, J.N. Pokela and Z.B. Molete. Leballo and his Inner Circle comrades began to call themselves the Africanist Central Committee or "Cencom". They wanted to promote African nationalism and inspire the Africans to be proud of their past and traditions.[143]

The Inner Circle spearheaded the formation of the Bureau of African Nationalism throughout South Africa. This Bureau of African Nationalism was based in the Eastern Cape and issued articles, pamphlets and statements which attacked communists and promoted African nationalism. Contributing authors included Africanists such as A.P. Mda, T. Letlaka, C.J. Fezzie, J. N. Pokela and other Cape Youth Leaguers.[144] The members of this Bureau of African Nationalism regarded themselves as a watchdog group, which had to ensure that the Defiance Campaign was based on the Programme of Action and not being hijacked by the communists.[145]

It is also important at this stage to mention the importance of Fort Hare University as a fertile ground for the growth of the Youth League's militant creed of African nationalism. The Youth League's creed of African nationalism added fuel to the already militant and politicised body of students at Fort Hare. As an institution of higher learning Fort Hare produced future leaders who came from as far as the present Zimbabwe, Lesotho,

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142 B. Leeman, *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania. The Africanist Movement in Lesotho and Azania: The Origins and History of the Basutoland Congress Party and the Pan Africanist Congress, 1780-1966*, p. 60. See also G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, pp. 134-135.

143 G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 141.

144 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/8: Interview between Joe Matthews and Gail M. Gerhart, Gaborone, 15 August 1970, p. 9.

145 G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 135.

Swaziland and Botswana. When those students, who had been imbued with the creed of African nationalism, completed their studies, they also helped to spread it. Mda spoke of Fort Hare in this way: "The young people there are the intellectual leaders to be and a growing consciousness of their role in the national liberation struggle will add new vigour and force to the struggle for national freedom".[146] Z.B. Molete also spoke well of Fort Hare as a nucleus of the Bureau of African Nationalism, where they discussed strategies like "build a strong Africanist nucleus within the ANC, propound the nationalist slogans from all platforms, raise experienced cadres from this nucleus to top ANC leaders and capture it to implement the 1949 Program and other African nationalist programs that will accrue."[147] Fort Hare was ideally situated to act as a springboard for launching African nationalism.

After the adoption of the Freedom Charter there was a noticeable division between the Africanists and those who desired co-operation with the non-Africans within the ANC. The Africanists denounced all whites and Indians and merely regarded them as stumbling-blocks in the path of African self-realisation. Their ideology of African nationalism was dismissed by the moderate ANC members as irrelevant and racist after the formation of the Congress Alliance. To strengthen their organisation, the Africanists in the Transvaal regrouped and consolidated themselves in the Orlando branch under Potlako Leballo. Leballo and his comrades would use this branch as a base from which they were going to promote African nationalism.

In his interview with Gail M. Gerhart, Duma Nokwe seemed to be against the existence of the Orlando branch. He said that Leballo was able to form this branch because he was staying in Orlando. He was able to gain some support of extreme nationalists because he "yelled a few slogans against the whites and a few against Moscow". Leballo expelled Duma Nokwe from the Orlando branch. However, Nokwe was immediately reinstated by the national conference in 1956, as he was the secretary in the province. Instead, Leballo and his comrades were suspended from the Orlando

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146 "Letter on the Youth League, from A.P. Mda to G.M. Pitje, August 24, 1948" in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 2, p. 319.

147 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/14: Interview between Z.B. Molete and Gail M. Gerhart, New York, 30 June 1970, p. 2.

branch by the national conference.[148]

It soon became clear that Leballo was suspended from the ANC, because he had used the Orlando branch as a launching pad for attacks and ridicules against the movement and its alliance partners, especially the communists. Duma Nokwe and Walter Sisulu attended the World Youth Festival in Bucharest, Rumania, Moscow and Peking. The Festival was held under the auspices of the Communist Parties of Russia and China. The Africanists criticised Nokwe and Sisulu as puppets and lackeys of the East. As a result of this Leballo was urged to appear before a tribunal of the Provincial Committee, but he refused. His stubbornness and refusal to appear before the Provincial Committee led to his suspension from the Youth League. His defiant actions provided the Youth League with a golden opportunity of clamping down on him and his entire executive, which included Josias Madzunya, Peter Molotsi and Charles Lekaje.[149]

As the Africanist group became stronger, it attracted influential people like Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, a lecturer in African studies at the Witwatersrand University, and Jacob Nyaose, a leading anti-communist trade unionist. Moreover, they started their own journal called *The Africanist*, which was published from November 1954. The journal became a rallying-point for Africanist members and was used to criticise the ANC's policy of co-operating with other races.

In the midst of this power struggle, the adoption of the Charter was followed by massive crackdowns and arrests of ANC leaders. Consequently, the Treason Trial of the ANC leaders threw the organisation into confusion and disarray. The banning and arrests of ANC leaders led to a crisis of authority in the Transvaal Executive at the national conference in 1957.[150] The Africanists drew up a list of grievances against the provincial leaders, which included, amongst others, complaints such as rigging the elections, misuse of funds and disregard of grassroots membership. They joined forces with a group of petitioners to demand another Provincial Congress, which was held on 23

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148 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Dar-es-Salaam, 29 October 1970, p. 14.

149 J.K. Ngubane, *An African Explains Apartheid*, p. 99. See also G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 135.

150 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 82.

February 1958. The latter Congress was characterised by squabbles between the Africanists and supporters of the executive of the Transvaal. Sensing trouble, the national leaders of the ANC decided to replace the provincial executive with a temporary leadership. The intervention of the national leadership meant that the policies and beliefs of the ANC were the primary targets which had to be defended. In other words "who was to control the ANC, and what the organisation should do, were issues at stake."[151]

The anti-Congress activities by Leballo and Madzunya led to their expulsion from the movement in May 1958, because they repeatedly opposed the ANC's policies with regard to the Freedom Charter, the policy of co-operation with other racial groups and the stay-at-home campaign during the white general election in 1958. Instead of accepting his expulsion, Leballo defiantly expelled Duma Nokwe, who as the ANC's Assistant National Secretary-General had sent him the expulsion notice. Leballo and Madzunya showed that they were not deterred by their expulsion by establishing the Anti-Charterist Council to advance the course of the Africanists.[152]

Finally, the long-awaited Transvaal conference was held in November 1958. Dramatic things were anticipated at the conference of the Transvaal branch of the African National Congress. The defiant stance of the Orlando Africanists had been shown by their attendance of the ANC Youth League meeting, despite the fact that they were suspended. The presence of Leballo, Madzunya, Sobukwe, Mothopeng and other prominent Africanists caused tension on the first day of the conference on 1 November 1958. Under the chairmanship of Oliver Tambo, the conference pushed ahead with the election of a credential committee, whose task would be to verify who the official delegates were. The Africanists were frustrated, because some of their delegates had their credentials rejected. The strict action taken by the ANC under these circumstances was understandable if we consider the tactics and the aims of the Africanists at this time. Molete said that the Africanist strategy of capturing the leadership of the ANC was well known by its bureaucrats, which prevented it by building "a wall through which we could never penetrate - questioning our credentials, seeking membership cards - paid up - of

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151 B. Pogrund, *Sobukwe and Apartheid*, p. 83.

152 G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 177.

all delegates at all conferences and all such other devices to prevent Africanist vote preponderance at all times".[153]

However, during the first day everybody was allowed to attend the deliberations, including Leballo and Madzunya. Chief Luthuli gave his presidential address, in which he criticised apartheid for the deterioration of race relations in South Africa and exhorted Africans to co-operate with whites and not follow the path of narrow African nationalism.

According to Ellen Molapo, one of the Africanists, who had come to Johannesburg from Basutholand during World War 2 and took part in the activities of the Youth League, the Africanists were a small but influential group. She explained the tactics and tricks used by the Africanists during the meetings by saying that they would meet before conferences and plan their course of action. In the conferences, she said that the Africanists would spread out in the hall in a v-shape and they would raise their hands at question time and the chairman would be bound to call one of them.[154] Therefore, the Africanists were given a chance to express their views. Mothopeng was the first Africanist speaker to condemn the multiracial society in this way: "In this country the people are divided into two groups only: the oppressed and the oppressors." According to Schadeberg other Africanists also criticised the speech of Luthuli in the following way: "This presidential address asks us to co-operate with apartheid, we don't accept whites at this stage. Let us not forget our origin; we shall consider co-operation when we have come into our own first."[155]

The second day of the conference would reveal how successful the strategy of Oliver Tambo was. The Africanists were prevented from entering the hall by Congress youths, who were armed to the teeth with various weapons. Ellen Molapo explains how tense the situation was before Sobukwe finally persuaded them to launch their own movement: "The next morning we waited for the leaders to come to the hall at 9'o clock. They didn't come, and there were police everywhere with Saracens. Finally the leaders arrived,

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153 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/14: Interview between Z.B. Molete and Gail M. Gerhart, New York, 30 June 1970, p. 2.

154 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/14: Interview between Ellen Molapo and Gail M. Gerhart, Leribe (Lesotho), 3 January 1970, p. 2.

155 J. Schadeberg, *Nelson Mandela and the Rise of the ANC*, p. 130.

accompanied by thugs they had recruited in Alexandra. They entered the hall, and refused entry to our supporters. There were more people outside the hall than inside. Meanwhile, the Boers were fixing up their machines. Both sides had weapons, sticks, etc. - both our side and the ANC."[156] When the Africanists realised that they had been outwitted, they deemed it advisable to part ways with the ANC. They quickly wrote and handed in the letter in which they announced their separation with the ANC. In the letter the Africanists emphatically stated that they were not prepared to remain tied any longer to an organisation which had adopted the Freedom Charter in defiance of the principles of African nationalism as embodied in the 1949 Programme of Action. They were, therefore, forming their own movement, which would serve as the custodian of the principles surrounding the ANC's establishment in 1912 and pursued up to the time of the Congress Alliance.[157]

Eventually, the parting of ways came, even though the Africanists claimed that they did not want to break away from the ANC. Interestingly enough, it seems as if it was mostly the Africanists in the Transvaal who broke ties with the ANC first. Z.B. Molete confirms this by saying that "when we broke off in Nov.'58 the Cape in particular and A.P. personally thought that this was destroying the liberation movement. Or rather that not all the channels of co-operation had been fully exploited. The breakaway had always been thought of as last resort."[158] Indeed, it became the last chance of the Africanists to indicate their dissatisfaction as members of the ANC.

From the ANC's side, Duma Nokwe's reaction to the departure of the Africanists could have epitomised the feeling of the majority of his comrades, when he said: "The fact that they broke away was a clear demonstration of their complete frustration within the ANC. They had been a great nuisance and instrumental for a long time in trying to disrupt and upset. They attacked the Freedom Charter which was the foundation document of the

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156 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/14: Interview between Ellen Molapo and Gail M. Gerhart, Leribe (Lesotho), 3 January 1970, p. 2.

157 S.T. Ngendane, "Copy of a letter sent to Mr Speaker, ANC Conference held at Orlando on 1 and 2 November 1958", *The Africanist*, January 1959 in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 3, pp. 505-506.

158 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/14: Interview between Z.B. Molete and Gail M. Gerhart, New York, 30 June 1970, p. 2.

ANC with a view of getting it retracted, they failed. And in utter desperation, there were about ninety nine of them in a huge conference ... they walked off, to strike it out alone and I thought this very act of moving out of the ANC demonstrated a complete failure over many years in the ANC to get to adopt this puerile and infantile policy."[159]

The bitterness felt by the Africanists at the course of events taking place in the ANC led to the launching of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) on 6 April 1959 at a conference held at the Orlando Community Hall. Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe was elected as President and Potlako Leballo as National Secretary. The founding conference adopted a manifesto, a constitution and a statement of policy.

In the constitution adopted at the Africanist Inaugural Conference held between 4-6 April 1959, the PAC reiterated its standpoint against the dilution of African nationalism by other race groups by saying that:

- "African nationalism be the basis of our political philosophy for an Africanist Socialist Democratic State;
- To maintain ourselves and the movement as vanguards of the struggle for African liberation, with courage and determination;
- To wage the struggle in this country for national independence under the banner of the Programme of Action of 1949 adopted in Bloemfontein;
- Africanism shall be the ideal for an Africanist Socialist Democracy;
- To secure and maintain the complete unity of the movement;
- To maintain complete purity of the PAC as the only organisation of the African people struggling for their liberation in Africa;
- To work with other nationalist democratic movements in Africa, with a view to the overthrow of imperialism, colonialism, racialism, tribalism and all forms of national and racial oppressions of the African people."[160]

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159 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political material, A2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Dar-es-Salaam, 29 October 1970, p. 18.

160 MA, Bellville, ANC London Office, Box 1: The Constitution of the Pan Africanist Congress, adopted by Inaugural Conference, held at Orlando, Johannesburg, 4th – 6th April 1959, p. 1. See also Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), *The Basic Document of the*

The colours of the PAC would look like those of the ANC: "Green to represent the youth and vitality of the continent, black, the colour of its people, and gold, wealth, actual and potential." Their motto was represented by the three S's: "Service, Suffering and Sacrifice."[161] In this way the PAC tried to state its philosophy and what it stood for.

It is important to mention that there were divisions concerning the election of the members of the National Executive Committee (NEC) at the inaugural conference of the PAC. The division was between the intellectuals as represented by Sobukwe and non-intellectuals as represented by Josias Madzunya. The intellectuals were victorious and dominated positions in the NEC of the PAC. This made Madzunya and his supporters bitter and frustrated. Although his pioneering work had brought big support for Africanist ideas before the conference, he was not given any leadership position despite the fact that he stood as a candidate for the position of treasurer of the party. Abednego Ngcobo was elected as treasurer. This action is said to have made Madzunya unhappy to the extent that he encouraged his followers from Alexandra not to participate in the anti-pass demonstrations that led to the Sharpeville massacre.[162] This episode indicates that there were from the very outset leadership tussles in the PAC, which may have created tension between members, despite the claims that Robert Sobukwe's personality and leadership style served as unifying forces before the PAC went into exile.

The birth of the Pan Africanist Congress showed that the ANC's course of action was not opposed by the white government only, as there was also resistance to it from the Africanist group. Above all, the ideological split between the ANC and the Africanists, who formed the PAC, indicated that Africans had failed to present a united front against white domination.

Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, p. 33.

161 MA, Bellville, ANC London Office, Box 1: The Constitution of the Pan Africanist Congress, p. 1.

162 B. Leeman, *African Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, p. 97.

1.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter the origin and development of the ANC was discussed up to the end of the 1950s, when the Africanists broke away and formed their own movement called the PAC. Throughout these early years the strategy of the ANC was based on merely submitting grievances to the government for discussion and redress and this depended on negotiations and moral persuasion for the achievement of its limited goals. It also believed that liberal whites would help the movement to reduce discrimination against blacks. As a result, those who were opposed to the idea of co-operation with whites were inclined to believe that the ANC at this stage was a reformist rather than a revolutionary movement.

After the First World War the ANC became a very weak and inactive organisation. However, after the takeover of the Presidency by Dr Xuma, the ANC underwent a complete revival. Under Xuma the ANC formulated the African Claims and called for the granting of political rights to the Africans. More importantly, it was the formation of the Youth League that injected energy into the ANC. The pressure mounted by the ANCYL turned the ANC into a mass movement. The Programme of Action of 1949 heralded a period of strikes and boycotts, which culminated in the Defiance Campaign.

However, the co-operation of the ANC with whites, communists and Indians led to dissatisfaction and the development of the Africanist group within the ANC. Matters came to a head when the Freedom Charter was introduced in 1955. The Africanists criticised the ANC openly. There were two opposing groups, the Charterists who were the supporters of the Freedom Charter and inter-racial co-operation and the Africanists who were against co-operation with other racial groups. The result was that the ideological balance between the advocates of multiracialism and the proponents of narrow nationalism became impossible to maintain in the ANC. This tension led to a split within the ANC and a new liberation movement called the PAC was born in 1959.

CHAPTER 2

THE IDEOLOGICAL SPLIT IN THE ANC

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will seek to describe and analyse the factors that caused the split between the ANC and the PAC. It will be shown that it was in relation to ideology and broad strategy rather than organisation that the PAC followed a new course quite different from that of the ANC. In particular, it will be apparent why the conflict between those who believed in multiracialism and supporters of Africanism or narrow nationalism caused a schism within the ANC, which led to the formation of the PAC in 1959.

The PAC came into existence eleven years after the intensification of racial segregation through the implementation of the apartheid policy by the National Party government. The members of the PAC were dissatisfied with the lack of progress in the ANC's struggle against apartheid in general and white domination in particular. By forming a new party the members of the PAC thought that they would be able to deal effectively with the shortcomings they experienced in the ANC. As a result, after the split in 1959 the PAC became part of the national liberation movement, which protested against the erosion of African civil and political rights.

However, the two liberation movements held distinctly different ideologies and followed diverse strategies and approaches in pursuance of their common goal, which was to end white supremacy and bring about equal rights between the various races of South Africa.

2.2 THE SOURCE OF CONFLICT

The ideological tensions within the ANC, which resulted in a schism in 1959, did not happen by chance. Rather, they represented a high-water mark of the simmering tensions which beset the ANCYL in particular and the senior ANC in general since the early 1940s. The root cause of the ideological conflict between the ANC and the Africanists, which led to a rupture in 1959, could be described by the different approaches within the ANC to the question: How should Africans eliminate white domination in South Africa? In other words, the strategy which Africans considered to

employ in eradicating white supremacy was the main cause of friction.

Even though they claimed to share a common aim of radicalising the ANC from within, the Youth Leaguers were not ideologically uniform. Their main ideological trends could be identified within the ANC in general and the ANCYL in particular. These groups were the Africanists, the communists and the African nationalists. The communists were largely distrusted by the other two groups, because the Communist Party based their basic ideological premise on class struggle, whereas the Africanists argued that the African people were not oppressed as a class, but as a nation.[1] Their view was diametrically opposed to the communist class struggle idea. Their rejection was a clear indication that the African people wanted to promote African nationalism, rather than the communist ideology.

W. Nkomo, D. Bopape and L. Majombozi were prominent communists in ANC ranks, and J. Ngubane, A.P. Mda, O. Tambo, V. Ncekeni and M. Yengwa were leading African nationalists.[2] The African nationalists were moderate in their political outlook. This could be ascribed to their close association with liberal whites in the urban areas.

On the extreme side, there were the Africanists, or militant African nationalists, who were represented by A. Lembede, W. Sisulu, N. Mandela and P. Raboroko. This group was radical and uncompromising in its political stand towards white people in general. Under the presidency of Anton Lembede, the Africanists dominated the African National Congress Youth League. As the membership of the Youth League increased, the Africanist group also gained staunch nationalists such as Z.B. Molete, P.K. Leballo, R.M. Sobukwe, N. Mokhehle and J.N. Pokela.[3] After the death of Lembede, the latter group became the prominent supporters of the ideology of African nationalism. Communism was greatly detested and disliked by this group. According to Z.B. Molete, communism was not "good enough for us", as they saw no future of the ideology within the context of their struggle.[4]

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1 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 355. See also G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa: The Evolution of an Ideology*, p. 76.

2 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 355.

3 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 356.

4 Archives of Willam Cullen (AWC), Witwatersrand University (Wits), Braamfontein, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A 2422/14: Interview between Z.B.

The formation of the Youth League promoted the ideology of African nationalism. This ideology of African nationalism radicalised and revolutionised African politics to the extent that the Youth league and the ANC Old Guard clashed. The conception of African nationalism was at the centre of the clashes of African people. In his presidential address of the Transvaal branch of the ANCYL in December 1959 Nelson Mandela noted this great weakness of the African resistance movement when he said: "I have no doubt that so far as this stage of struggle is concerned our language is sufficiently uniform. It is however, when we seek to apply our creed to concrete situations that there are revealed different approaches."[5]

As a result of the conflicting viewpoints, which came to the surface within the ANCYL, two brands of African nationalism manifested themselves.

2.3 THE IDEOLOGY OF AFRICAN NATIONALISM

The philosophy of African nationalism, as formulated by the Youth League, ushered in the new radical trend in African politics. This new approach indicated a sharp break with the traditional approach of the ANC, which strove to bring together the various races of South Africa on an equal footing. African nationalism, as understood by the Youth League, aimed at uniting all the people who were against oppression and conservatism.[6]

With the passage of time, the philosophy of African nationalism became controversial, as opposing viewpoints surfaced from the members of the ANCYL. The first strain of African nationalism developed as a result of the influence of Anton Lembede, who was the first president of the Youth League. Under his guidance the Youth League strove for African political independence and the desire to promote self-reliance and national pride.

Molete and Gail M. Gerhart, New York, 30 June 1970, p. 3.

5 S. Johnson and R.H. Davis (eds), *Mandela, Tambo and the African National Congress: The Struggle Against Apartheid, 1948-1990. A Documentary Survey*, p. 38.

6 "Constitution of the ANC Youth League, 1944", in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1964*, volume 2, p. 306.

Lembede was born on the farm of Frank Fell at Eston in Natal. His parents were extremely poor farm labourers. Jordan Ngubane, who was a Youth Leaguer and a Zulu like Lembede, said that he was not ashamed of his background, even though it was one of "extreme deprivation and humiliation".[7] Poverty could have motivated Lembede to be serious about African freedom, considering the fact that many Africans at that time readily accepted oppression and hardships. His mother was a big inspiration in his life, as she taught him at home in the basics of reading and writing. The family relocated to Mphepheto in the Umbumbulu district, mid-way between Pietermaritzburg and Durban. Lembede attended school at Adams, where he left an indelible mark on his classmates as a brilliant learner. After leaving Adams in 1936, he taught at Utrecht and Newcastle in Natal before he proceeded to the Free State, where he took up teaching posts at Heilbron and Parys as a principal.[8]

What motivated Lembede to formulate his ideology of African nationalism? It is undoubtedly clear that Lembede was an exceptionally good scholar. Besides obtaining the Bachelor of Law (LL.B) degree, he also registered for a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree through the University of South Africa and he completed it successfully after submitting his thesis, entitled "The Conception of God as Expounded by, or as it Emerges, from Great Greek Philosophers from Descartes to the present". It is undeniable that Lembede's philosophical background and knowledge of African struggles had a big impression on his conception of African nationalism. Ngubane, who had a long association with Lembede, said that he was terribly proud of being an African. He also said that he understood the element of Zuluness in Lembede's mental make-up, as Zulus "always feel they must achieve something greater; higher; they must climb to heaven by a spiritual cord".[9] Lembede believed that an ideology was important to the Africans' struggles and he was consciously trying to build up his ideology of nationalism.

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[7] AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/16: Interview between Jordan Ngubane and Gail M. Gerhart, Washington D.C., 24 September 1972, p. 1.

[8] R.R. Edgar and L. ka Msumza, *Freedom in Our Lifetime: The Collected Writings of Anton Muziwakhe Lembede*, p. 8.

[9] AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/16: Interview between Jordan Ngubane and Gail M. Gerhart, Washington D.C., 24 September 1972, p. 1.

Of particular importance was the fact that Lembede saw the primary need to develop an ideology that would confront that of Afrikaner nationalism and white domination. In ideology Lembede and his admirers discovered an antidote for the psychological oppression of the African people. They advanced an assertive ideology, aimed at psychological liberation and the restoration of a positive self-image of Africans. According to Lembede, Africans had become a directionless and frustrated nation, uncertain of their cultural identity, their rights or their place in relation to the rest of mankind.[10] He was shocked and disheartened by the lifestyles of the African people on the Reef. The admiration and idolisation of American clothes, symbols, movies, values, drunkenness and low morals was unacceptable to him. As a result of these social maladies Lembede firmly believed that Africans were suffering from moral decay, had lost their self-worth, direction and sense of pride. He would try to free Africans from such a bad value system with his ideology of African nationalism. He hoped that the solution to these social evils would be "Africanistic, i.e. governed by African values, and dominated by Africans politically."[11] He hoped to use African nationalism to instill and encourage pride and self-reliance in the culture of the Africans.

According to an author who wrote under the pseudonym of "Black Savage", African nationalism was an ideology, a "gospel of self-love, respect for the esteem and cherishing of things material and spiritual which we inherit from our sires and not of hatred for another."[12] Nelson Mandela explained African nationalism and its aim as "giving the African people the self confidence and subjective liberation without which a people can never hope to challenge effectively any national oppression".[13] The necessity of self-reliance and pride was emphasised.

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10 A.M. Lembede, "Policy of the Congress Youth League", *Inkundla ya Bantu*, May 1946, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, p. 318.

11 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/16: Interview between Jordan Ngubane and Gail M. Gerhart, Washington D.C., 24 September 1972, p. 1.

12 Black Savage, "African Nationalism in Multi-Racial Africa", *The Africanist*, vol. 11, no. 1, Jan.-Feb., 1955, p. 7.

13 Nelson Mandela, "Presidential Address: Annual Conference of the African National Congress Youth League, December 1951", in S. Johnson and R.H. Davis (eds), *Mandela, Tambo and the African National Congress*, p. 38.

What also became apparent in Lembede's African nationalism was that it was militant and radical, as it did not hesitate to challenge white domination or directly offend the white rulers. This attitude of Lembede could have been influenced by what was happening politically in South Africa in the 1940s as far as race relations were concerned. Ngubane, who was a staunch nationalist with Lembede, explains how the clash of colour was sharper in Johannesburg than in the rural areas of Natal, where they originated: "If an African was walking alone on the street he might meet a gang of white youths who would beat him up. The spirit of the time, esp. in the YL was shaped by this kind of experience. The races were far apart. We were anti-contact, because we couldn't conceive of wanting to associate with whites."[14] It is not surprising to find out that Lembede was not afraid of being labelled "anti-white", rather than change his ideology of African nationalism. In the same vein, he denounced whites as oppressors, who dictated to the African people everything that was wrong or right.[15]

In addition, Lembede insisted that the struggle for freedom should be led by the Africans only. He fervently believed that Africans could achieve their freedom without help or favours from sympathetic whites, Indians and coloureds. He rejected the idea that Africans should merge their cause with that of sympathetic whites and non-white groups like Indians and coloureds. To him this was a "fantastic dream", which was unachievable, because these races were split along the lines of national origin, religion, culture and their relative positions in the hierarchy of segregation.[16] His stance towards the Indians and coloureds was surprising, since the two groups also suffered from white oppression. However, his argument was that Indians and coloureds benefited from an "inequality of oppression", that afforded them certain privileges which were denied to the Africans.[17] Co-operation between African and other races could take place only under certain conditions. The most important amongst them was that the African people should first achieve internal cohesion and self-confidence.[18] This narrow and rigid view

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14 AWC, Wits, Braamfontein, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/16: Interview between Jordan Ngubane and Gail M. Gerhart, Washington D.C., 24 September 1972, p. 2.

15 G. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa: The Evolution of an Ideology*, p. 74.

16 A.M. Lembede, "Policy of the Congress Youth League", *Inkundla ya Bantu*, May 1946, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, pp. 317-318.

17 R.R. Edgar and L. ka Msumza, *Freedom in Our Lifetime*, p. 26.

18 F. Meli, *A History of the ANC: South Africa Belongs to Us*, p. 110.

of Lembede's African nationalism showed the extent to which he distrusted other races and how important to him African leadership was to the African national struggle.

Lembede's African nationalism emphasised the unity of Africa. His ideas linked up with those of many African leaders, like Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere and others of his era. To him, what united the people of Africa and made them unique, irrespective of language, colour, geographical location or national origin, was a spiritual force known as "Africanism".[19] His brand of nationalism made him a true Pan Africanist, as he regarded South Africa as part of the whole of Africa, where all Africans were one and their leadership of Africa should "come out of their own loins", because "no foreigner can ever truly and genuinely interpret the African spirit which is unique and peculiar to Africans only".[20]

Lembede emphasised the fact that every nation was endowed with its own unique and divine destiny. In his view, the destiny of the African people was political freedom.[21] He believed that the Africans would be able to reassert their own independent identity once they were free. National freedom would aid them to earn the respect of other nations, especially if they could reverse the distorted image of the past. This could be achieved through constructing a history that stressed the positive achievements of African civilisation and praised the heroic deeds of African leaders who resisted white domination, such as Shaka, Moshoeshoe, Makana, Hintsa, Khama, Mzilikazi, Sekhukhuni, Sobhuza and others.[22] In this way, the pride of the Africans would be restored and they would be able to be respected by other nations.

As an African nationalist Lembede was concerned about the increasing influence of the communists in the ANC. In the 1930s the Communist Party was rapidly expanding its membership by associating itself with popular struggles in the black community, like organising trade unions and night schools, launching a national anti-pass campaign and

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19 R.R. Edgar and L. ka Msumza, *Freedom in Our Lifetime*, p. 21.

20 A.M. Lembede, "Policy of the Congress Youth League", *Inkundla ya Bantu*, May 1946, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, p. 317.

21 A.M. Lembede, "Policy of the Congress Youth League", *Inkundla ya Bantu*, May 1946, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, p. 318.

22 A.M. Lembede, "Policy of the Congress Youth League", *Inkundla ya Bantu*, May 1946, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, p. 317.

actively being involved with the ANC and the South African Indian Council.[23] Lembede was particularly suspicious of the motives of white communists, who assumed leadership positions in African organisations. He believed that their presence undermined African leaders and divided African unity. His Transvaal Youth League rejected an invitation to affiliate with the Progressive Youth Council, which had connections with the Communist Party. The Youth League replied to Ruth First, the Council's secretary, by saying that it could not join any youth organisation, especially when there was "a yawning gulf between your policy or philosophic outlook and ours".[24]

Concerning intellectual influences, Ngubane believed that Lembede was eclectic in his borrowings from other thinkers like Hegel and Kant. According to Ngubane, he would borrow from anywhere as long as he could get an "idea that could be used to reinforce what he wanted for Africans."[25] For example, Lembede borrowed from Darwin's law of variation in nature to prove man as a peculiar being distinct from others. He argued that because nations differed in the same way as flowers, plants, animals and humans, they also had special qualities and unique features.[26] For this reason, he believed that Africans were also different from other groups and should be able to realise their own potentialities, develop their own talents and maintain their own peculiar character.

Following Lembede's death on 29 July 1947, A.P. Mda took over as President of the Youth League. Although he was an African nationalist of the calibre of Lembede, he did have some differing visions of nationalism. His views concerning African nationalism were not as militant and rigid as those of Lembede. For example, his view concerning the inclusion of other races, like Indians and coloureds, in the Youth League was that the League could not "debar such youths from joining the Congress Youth League, precisely

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23 H.R. Pike, *A History of Communism in South Africa*, pp. 237-243.

24 "Letter from the ANC Youth League (Transvaal) to the Secretary (Ruth First) of the Progressive Youth Council, March 16, 1945", in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, p. 316.

25 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/16: Interview between Jordan Ngubane and Gail M. Gerhart, Washington D.C., 24 September 1972, p. 2.

26 A.M. Lembede, "Some Basic Principles of African Nationalism", *Inyaniso*, February 1945, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, p. 315.

because the League aims at creating an all-in national liberation front".[27] It could be argued that Mda, unlike Lembede, advocated a broad nationalism. This attitude was also confirmed by his moderate views concerning race relations, when he said: "We as African Nationalists do not hate the Europeans - we have no racial hatred - we only hate white oppression and white domination, and not the white people themselves! We do not hate other human beings as such - whether they are Indians, Europeans or Coloureds."[28]

Mda also distanced the Youth League from some of the radical positions held by Lembede, when he drafted the Youth League's Basic Policy in 1948. When he wrote about "Two Streams of African Nationalism", he rejected the stream associated with Marcus Garvey's slogan of "Africa for the Africans", which was associated with the "Quit Africa" slogan and the cry "Hurl the Whiteman into the sea".[29] This was a subtle way of rejecting the brand of African nationalism that was linked with Lembede's speeches and approaches. It seemed as if Mda's conception of African nationalism gave more clarity to the ANCYL ideological direction. However, it was after this period that the ideological conflicts within the ANCYL in particular and the ANC in general would be more pronounced.

The advocates of Lembede's line of thinking held him in high esteem, to the extent that they continued to expound his views after his death. It was not surprising, therefore, that they decided to call themselves the Africanists and split from the ANC in 1959 to form another liberation movement, the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, generally known as the PAC. As would be expected, the PAC adopted African nationalism as the basis of its political philosophy from the beginning.[30]

In the PAC's view, African nationalism was a key component of expressing the self-

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27 A.P. Mda to G.M. Pitje, "Letter on the Youth League", August 24, 1948, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, p. 320.

28 A.P. Mda to G.M. Pitje, "Letter on the Youth League", August 24, 1948, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, p. 320.

29 National Executive Committee of the ANC Youth League, "Basic Policy of Congress Youth League" (manifesto), 1948, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, p. 328.

30 "PAC Constitution, 1959", in PAC, *The Basic Documents of the PAC of Azania*, p. 101.

worth and pride of Africans in South Africa. In other words, African nationalism to them was a way of expressing African uniqueness and individuality, which was characterised by the African's sense of self-worth. As described by them, it was "a fact of our birth and very growth of the self, to the consciousness of oneself among other Selves".[31] According to Z.B. Molete, a founder member of the PAC, "we knew African nationalism like we knew ourselves because it came from our very loins. Its postulates mirrored the aspirations of the people and through it they realised themselves".[32] Another founder member of the PAC, Peter Raboroko, following the terminology used by other African leaders at the time, called this sense of self-worth of Africans the "African Personality".[33] African nationalism, as understood by the Africanists, would be used by the PAC to restore the shattered self-confidence of the Africans and also serve as a rallying point, which would motivate them to resist white domination and oppression.

Africanists argued that Africans should be proud of being themselves and should also strive to get rid of any feelings of inferiority. They called for the unity of all Africans for the purpose of taking their rightful place in world affairs. According to the Africanists, Africanism was Pan-Africanistic in nature, purpose and direction. It was a social force that was intended to serve "the material, intellectual and spiritual interests of Africa, and does not in any way serve the interests of either the Eastern or Western powers. It is continental in scope, covering the entire continent, from Cape to Cairo and from Madagascar to Morocco. It is a social force functioning through the media of African social conditions, and operates to liberate Africa and to create a socialist social order, original in conception, Africanistic in orientation, and creative in content."[34] The

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31 N. ka Linda, "Africa for the Africans", *The Africanist*, vol. 1, no. 111, May 1955, p. 12.

32 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970 Political Material, A 2422/14: Interview between Z.B. Molete and Gail M. Gerhart, New York, 30 June 1970, p. 1.

33 Interview with Peter Raboroko, Soweto, 17 February 2000. The term "African Personality", emphasising African individuality and uniqueness, was propagated by the Negro leader, Dr Edward Blyden, who had settled in Liberia. African leaders, such as Leopold Senghor, Kwame Nkrumah and Jomo Kenyatta, used the term to emphasise the beauty and richness of Africa. See V.B. Thompson, *Africa and Unity: The Evolution of Pan-Africanism*, p. 34; Basil Davidson, *The search for Africa. A History in the Making*, pp. 79-93.

34 "Manifesto of the Africanist Movement, Africanist Inaugural Convention (4^{th}–6^{th} April, 1959)", p. 5. (Document obtained from Peter Raboroko in possession of author).

Africanists were trying to justify their claim to Africa as a continent of the Africans through African nationalism.

In the case of South Africa, the Africanists were of the view that the days of white domination were numbered. They rejected white domination in any shape or form and were determined to eradicate it. This determination of the Africanists could be seen by the use of expressions like "they are unflinchingly determined to wrest control of their country from alien hands" and "to exercise the most fundamental of human rights, the inalienable right of an indigenous people to determine and shape their own destiny". They also stated: "South Africa, which is an integral part of the continent, is the inalienable heritage of the African people and its effective control is their undoubted and unquestionable birthright."[35] At the inaugural conference of the PAC in 1959 Leballo also highlighted this determination of the Africanists, when he said: "None can stem the tide of Pan Africanism that is sweeping the continent like an avalanche force. Throughout Africa then the forces of foreign domination are in retreat before the irresistible march of African nationalism. This is the era of African emancipation. Africa holds the stage, and here we are called upon to facilitate this great moment."[36] In this context, the Africanists regarded an assertive African ideology as being relevant for the achievement of African rights and national freedom. They were not apologetic in expressing their desire for independence and freedom.

The other strand of African nationalism was fundamentally opposed to the Africanist view. Although its basic concern was, like the Africanist group, to strive for the freedom of Africans it, however, highlighted the idea of co-operating with other races, especially liberal and progressive whites. Ideologically, this grouping continued to pursue liberal practices and firmly believed in evolutionary changes and reforms. They wished to be accommodated and assimilated into the existing social and political set-up of South Africa.[37]

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35 "Manifesto of the Africanist Movement, Africanist Inaugural Convention (4th–6th April, 1959)", p. 23.

36 Mayibuye Archives (MA), University of the Western Cape (UWC), Bellville, ANC, London Office, Box 1, Leballo's Speech at the First Annual National Conference, Communal Hall, Orlando, Johannesburg, 19th–20th December 1959, p. 5.

37 B. Turok, *Strategic Problems in South Africa's Liberation Struggle: A Critical Analysis*, p. 31.

The contribution of the latter group to African ideology was that "once the ANC had embraced the strategy of a multi-racial united front, the adoption of any more racially exclusive creed became politically impossible".[38] This suggested that the ANC never whole-heartedly embraced the idea that South Africa should be a nation politically dominated by the Africans only. Instead the ANC encouraged the formation of alliances with other racial groups like the Indians, coloureds and whites, which indicated a preference for a broad nationalism.

The adherents of this line of thinking seemed to be pragmatic and practical in analysing the problems of South Africa at that time. For example, Joe Matthews was of the view that, if you wanted to change the situation in South Africa, you were forced to consider these burning questions: "With whom, or how are you going to do it? What about the other groups in the country?"[39] In supporting this line of thinking, Duma Nokwe also expressed the same views of selecting the realistic option in South Africa: "You have not only Africans oppressed, exploited. We have a whole number of other groups - Indians, Coloureds and so on. And then you have got whites who are driven by perhaps ideological rather than social and material, concrete position to support the struggle. Now what do you do with them? Do you say 'wait', let the Africans first free themselves, then we will consider what to do with you and your goodwill and your support."[40] This group presented a fundamental problem of South Africa of the time, which heightened ideological clashes with the Africanists within the ANC.

The views of these proponents of a broad nationalism contrasted sharply with those of the Africanists. According to one of the Africanists, Z.B.Molete, the fact that some leading African nationalists spoke of "throwing the white man into the sea", did not mean that they did not understand the historical perspective of the South African situation. Their only problem was that the white man was arrogant and beyond redemption. In order to destroy white oppression and domination, they reasoned that they had to destroy the white man, because he did not want to change. As he put it, it is "the

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38 G. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa: The Evolution of an Ideology*, p. 101.

39 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/8: Interview between Joe Matthews and Gail M. Gerhart, Gaborone, 15 August 1970, p. 11.

40 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Dar-es-Salaam, 29 October 1970, p. 8.

arrogance of the white man, of the Indian for that matter, that the African nationalist cannot tolerate. Not in the blackman's country."[41] Another Africanist, J.D.Nyaose, put it concisely by saying that "whites and other non-Africans are guests of the African and South Africa is the African house".[42] On the other hand, Duma Nokwe said that the adherents of this "pure" African nationalism, which expanded into Pan-Africanism, had an unrealistic assessment of the situation in South Africa. He criticised them by saying that their ideological struggle in search for "pure" African nationalism amounted to "just extreme nationalism, and anti-so many things, but very little pro-something".[43]

What emerges from the above, is that a constant dilemma was developing within the ANCYL in particular and the ANC in general. The problem manifested itself in this question: Is it the best policy to create a united and exclusive African community or should Africans join the mainstream with whites, Indians and coloureds in a multi-cultural community?

It was not strange that the members of the ANCYL and ANC were engaged in these intellectual and academic discussions, since most of them were highly educated. However, the importance of their discussions was that they were in search of an ideology of African nationalism, which might be used to govern South Africa. Was it practical or idealistic to use a broad African nationalism or a narrow one in ruling South Africa? This dilemma was at the heart of the ideological conflict which emerged within the ANC in the 1940s and which would lead to the split between the ANC and PAC.

This ideological conflict reached its peak during the term of office of Albert Luthuli as president of the ANC in the 1950s. In criticising internal wrangles and dissensions and at the same time forcefully defending African nationalism from the point of view of the ANC, Luthuli said: "The African National Congress should not dissipate its energies by indulging in internal, ideological feuds - a fight on -isms. It is not practical and logical, however, to expect the congress to be colourless ideologically. It should in some way

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41 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/14: Interview between Z.B. Molete and Gail M. Gerhart, New York, 30 June 1970, p. 2.

42 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/19: J.D. Nyaose, Comments and Oversimplification, Gail M. Gillan manuscript, 1969, p. 1.

43 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Dar-es-Salaam, 29 October 1970, p. 8.

define or re-define its stand and outlook as regards, for example, its interpretation of African nationalism which it made the philosophic basis of our struggle for freedom."[44]

Thus, in the face of extreme oppression by an oppressive and intransigent regime, Africans were clashing over the direction of the nationalist movement. Nelson Mandela recognised the existence of this problem when he said: "In certain quarters there is a feeling that the language of African nationalism within the movement is not uniform. It is said that there are various brands of nationalism."[45]

Of particular importance was the fact that the choice of any stream of African nationalism would always be contested. This view is corroborated by Walshe, who explains: "The ideological balance between a reforming nationalism taking up responsibility for the wider South African society, and a narrow nationalism remained a difficult one to keep."[46]

2.4 AFRICAN NATIONALISM VERSUS COMMUNISM

In their ideological clashes with the ANC, the Africanists were vociferous about the presence of the communists within the ANC. To the Africanists, communism was incompatible with African nationalism. They regarded communism as a foreign ideology. For this reason, the Communist Party was viewed by the Africanists as foreigners, who wished to impose their pre-determined solutions on the oppressed Africans in South Africa. According to them, it was one of the reactionary creeds which they regarded as "foreign ideologies" and it was "clear that the exotic plant of communism cannot flourish on African soil".[47]

Another bone of contention of the Africanists was with regard to the intentions of the Communist Party. In their view, the communists were weakening African nationalism and the struggle, which was essentially that of the Africans. According to Joe Molefi,

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44 S. Pillay, *Voices of Liberation: Albert Luthuli*, p. 90.

45 S. Johnson and R.H. Davis, *Mandela, Tambo and the African National Congress*, p. 3.

46 P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, p. 356.

47 M. Nkoana, "Birth Pangs of an Ideology", *The New African*, vol. 6, no. 1, March 1967, p. 29.

one of the Youth Leaguers who became an Africanist, it was a difficult thing to have people with different interests, loyalties and ideologies in one organisation. These various people had completely different problems and motives. However, as for the Africanists, he said that they "agreed on a philosophy of African nationalism, and could not embrace the philosophy of Communism. And Communists on the other hand cannot embrace the philosophy of nationalism."[48]

The Africanists criticised the basic premise of the Communist Party, which emphasised class struggle. Instead, the Africanists asserted that the Africans suffered national oppression and not class oppression.[49] To them, the experience of the betrayal of the African mineworkers by the Communist Party in the 1922 Rand Strikes was a good example of the insincerity and untrustworthiness of the communists. In these Rand Strikes, the Communist Party blundered by associating itself with the white miners at the expense of the African mineworkers. Against this background, it became very difficult for the communists to earn the trust and respect of the Africanists. Moreover, the Africanists could also have been aware of the clashes between Clements Kadalie of the Industrial and Commercial Worker's Union (ICU) and the communists in the 1920s and 1930s. For this reason, the Africanists generally regarded them as "Communist quacks".[50] According to them, there were no true communists in South Africa, except "pseudo-communists" who were against African unity and African leadership.[51] The rejection of a class struggle by the Africanists should be viewed as a promotion of African nationalism at the expense of communism.

What was the reaction of the ANC to these attacks on the communists by the Africanists? Generally, the ANC was not overly worried about the criticisms levelled against the communists within the movement, even though they reacted at appropriate times. It could be argued that the fact that the ANC was beginning to be an amorphous

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48 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/13: Interview between Joe Molefi and Gail M. Gerhart, Maseru, December 1969, p. 5.

49 Black Savage (pseudonym), "African Nationalism and the 1949 Programme of Action", *The Africanist*, vol. 11, no. 1, Jan.-Feb. 1955, p. 4.

50 M. Nkoana, "Birth Pangs of an Ideology", *The New African*, vol. 6, no. 1, March 1967, p. 29.

51 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/19: J.D. Nyaose, Comments and Oversimplification, Gail M. Gillan manuscript, 1969, p. 2.

body, accommodating everybody who was against oppression and white domination, was the reason why the movement was slow to respond to these accusations. It could also be an indication of a lack of a clear-cut ideology. Nevertheless, some of the ANC members tried to defend the standpoint of the movement in this regard. For example, Joe Matthews said that what the PAC was trying to achieve with its criticisms was actually to suggest that the ANC's ideology should be defined in such a way that some people could be excluded from the nation. According to him, this argument of the PAC was wrong, particularly with Africans who were members of the Communist Party. Names of African communists, such as J.B. Marks and M. Kotane, are important in this respect. To some members of the ANC, as Joe Matthews put it, "you don't exclude a man from fighting for his national freedom because he has got particular ideas as how he wants society organised."[52] In other words, to the ANC the question of using everybody, irrespective of whether he was a communist or not, was immaterial. What was important to them was whether a person could be used to achieve national liberation or not. This view contrasted sharply with that one of the Africanists, who believed that "the trick of the Reds in Congress was always to capture the popular leaders and use them to their advantage".[53] However, Duma Nokwe said that this PAC element of "pure" Africanism, with its consequence of a bit of anti-everybody who was not an African, was actually "unreal, very unreal, immature".[54]

These ideological differences highlighted the clashes that occurred within the ANC. The communist factor would dominate in the ANC in the 1950s and the whites and Indians who were communists would be seen by the Africanists as people who were promoting their own sectional interests.

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52 AWC, Wits, Braamfontein, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/8: Interview between Joe Matthews and Gail M. Gerhart, Gaborone, 15 August 1970, p. 25.

53 AWC, Wits, Braamfontein, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/18: Interview between Z.B. Molete and Gail M. Gerhart, New York, 30 June 1970, p. 1.

54 AWC, Wits, Braamfontein, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Dar-es-Salaam, 29 October 1970, p. 8.

2.5 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF 1949

In 1948 the National Party was unexpectedly voted into power by the white electorate of South Africa. This election of the Nationalists to power enabled Dr D.F. Malan, leader of the NP and Prime Minister from 1948 to 1954, to start implementing the harmful policy of apartheid. Although segregation and separateness of races had been applied by the previous white governments of South Africa, it was Malan's intention of implementing his apartheid policy vigorously and systematically which angered the oppressed Africans. According to the policy of apartheid, blacks were going to be discriminated against socially, residentially, culturally, economically and politically.[55] Politically, the apartheid policy robbed Africans of their participation at the central level of government and extended rigid administrative control over them. It was these restrictions which provided a context for the mounting of popular democratic struggles against the apartheid regime after 1948.

In response to threats from the apartheid regime, the ANC embarked on a new course based on mass mobilisation. For this reason, the ANC committed itself to a strategy of mass action at its 1949 conference. It adopted the Programme of Action, which emphasised non-cooperation and mass opposition to white rule. The campaign specifically rejected white leadership and all forms of segregation and segregated political institutions. It encouraged the use of tactics such as boycotts, passive resistance, civil disobedience, strikes and stay-aways, which were aimed at securing mass involvement in the Congress and forcing the nationalist government to change its attitude towards the Africans.[56]

However, these new tactics were not accepted by everybody within the ANC. According to Nelson Mandela, Dr Xuma and other conservatives opposed the new changes, "claiming that such strategies were premature and would merely give the government an excuse to crush the ANC."[57]

Another important development of that time was the replacement of Dr Xuma as President-General by Dr J.S. Moroka. Dr Moroka accepted nomination and election as

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55 C.F.J. Muller (ed), *500 Years: A History of South Africa*, p. 481.

56 W.M. Sisulu, "Programme of Action", *The Africanist*, June-July 1958, p. 5.

57 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 107.

ANC President-General on a platform of militancy, as required by the Youth League. Historians such as Gerhart believe that the adoption of the Programme of Action was a coup by the Youth League over the ANC's Old Guard.[58] Although this view is convincing, it was by no means the only likely reason. The other aim of adopting the Programme of Action was to contain the influence of the communists. For example, Duma Nokwe said that fervent adherents of African nationalism like Mda "really and truthfully thought that the Youth League must keep itself intact as a custodian of African nationalism in order to be counter-weight to the Bolsheviks and the Marxists within the African National Congress. So it was more or less keeping the Youth League as an ideological weapon against communism."[59] As a result, the adoption of the Programme of Action not only decided the fate of the Old Guard, but also indicated that the intention of the Africanists was to confront the influence and penetration of the communists.

With these new leaders the ANC changed its tactics of working within the law and it became a radical organisation. The new radical stand adopted by the ANC was described by Govan Mbeki, who was a communist and member of the ANC at that time, when he said: "A change of gears took place as the struggle moved into the offensive, first building up the mass support of the oppressed people and then throwing their weight behind a series of actions that forced the Nationalist government onto the defensive."[60]

However, the implementation of the Programme of Action saw the escalation of ideological division between the Africanists and the communists. The Africanist camp within the ANC voiced its dissatisfaction with the way in which the Programme of Action was implemented. They hoped that the Programme of Action would be based on the clear concept of African nationalism and militant action. Ardent Africanists, such as P.K. Leballo, A.P. Mda and Peter Raboroko, criticised R. Resha, D. Mji and others for fraternising with communists and drifting from orthodox African nationalism. According to the Africanists, this "hobnobbing was weakening our political stand, exposing ourselves to inimical influences."[61] This apparent split within the ranks of the ANC

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58 G. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 83.

59 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Dar-es-Salaam, 29 October 1970, p. 7.

60 G. Mbeki, *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa: A Short History*, p. 63.

61 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/15: Interview

threatened the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Matters came to a head when the communists recommended action in line with the aims of the Programme of Action in 1950. By that time the prominent communists, like J.B. Marks, Moses Kotane and Yusuf Dadoo, were about to be banned by the government. The Communist Party reacted to the threats of the banning of its leaders by launching the Defend Free Speech Convention in March 1950 in Johannesburg's Market Square. Surprisingly enough, the meeting was chaired by Dr Moroka, who had been elected as the President of the ANC by the Africanists. Through the initiatives of the Communist Party and the Indian Congress, the Convention passed a resolution for Freedom Day mass action in the form of a stay-away on 1 May 1950. The Africanists and conservative elements within the Transvaal ANC distanced themselves from the call. Even Nelson Mandela complained bitterly that the Communist Party had set out to pre-empt the ANC campaign by organising a one-day strike on 1 May 1950.[62] The Africanists regarded this move as an independent Communist Party initiative, which disturbed the implementation of the Progamme of Action under the leadership of the ANC.

Whatever its motives were, the Communist Party's demand for the May Day demonstrations was a serious blunder. It did not only increase suspicion, but it also strengthened the belief amongst the Africanists that the communists were motivated by their fear of African nationalism rather than a genuine interest in promoting the welfare and well-being of the black workers. The situation was worsened by the fact that the Communist Party did not campaign amongst white workers to the same extent as it did amongst African workers.[63]

The main criticism of the Africanists against the May Day stay-away was that such a day actually belonged to the communists. It was totally irrelevant to the national struggle of the oppressed Africans. In a hard-hitting article in *Inkundla ya Bantu*, J.K. Ngubane criticised the Communist Party's May Day demonstrations in this manner: "The Communist Party apparently are satisfied that they have, by stampeding our people into the May Day demonstration, gained a major propaganda victory for Communism. After

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between Peter Molotsi and Gail M. Gerhart, Nairobi, 23 April 1972, p. 12.

62 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 109.

63 M. Nkoana, "Birth Pangs of an Ideology", *The New African*, vol. 6, no. 1, March 1967, p. 29.

years of obstructing the struggle of the African people, one way or the other, now that they are about to be banned they want to go down having at least summoned a little courage to convince Moscow that they are not always lackeys to the oppressors ... The May Day demonstrations were intended to be part of a world campaign engineered by the Communists to help advance the cause of Communism and not of the oppressed Africans ... They are trying to sow division in the ranks of Congress."[64]

The May Day demonstration resulted in bloody clashes between the police and the demonstrators. Africans were angry with the results of the May Day stay-away and accused the communists of exploiting African people for their political gain.[65] Dr Moroka was also blamed for being "a very valuable tool" in the hands of the communists. After his poor handling of this situation, it was clear that his days were numbered.

Speaking in support of the passing of the Suppression of Communism Bill of 1950, Senator P.M.K. le Roux said that the National Party "will act against communism to prevent its taking root in its early stages". [66] After receiving strong support from those members of parliament who opposed communism the Minister of Justice, C.R. Swart, was able to pass the Suppression of Communism Act, which severely restricted people or organizations which promoted the aims of communism.[67] The act indicated that the Communist Party was in danger of being banned. To save itself from facing embarrassment, the Communist Party decided to dissolve itself. This robbed the Communist Party of the base from which it could operate. The communists were forced by their new circumstances to target the ANC as a political home.[68] The ANC provided them with a shelter, from which they could operate freely without any fear of government action.

After these incidents the Africanists became aware of the ideological deviations from the

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64 J.K. Ngubane, "Post-mortem on a Tragedy", *Inkundla ya Bantu*, May 20, 1950 (editorial), in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, p. 441.

65 T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, p. 441.

66 South Africa (Union), Debates in the Senate: Third Session, Tenth Parliament (Fifth Senate), vol. IV, 23 June 1950, col. 6221.

67 South Africa (Union), *Government Gazette*, vol. CLXI, no. 4428, 17 July 1950, Suppression of Communism Act, 1950, Act no. 44 of 1950, p. 38.

68 E. Feit, *South Africa: The Dynamics of the African National Congress*, p. 13.

1949 Programme of Action in the early 1950s. They had hoped that the Programme of Action would represent resistance by Africans only. However, to their complete surprise, the ANC's campaign became a multi-racial affair, as other races like Indians and whites became involved in the African struggle for freedom. In the final analysis, the ANC had to address these significant questions: In which direction was the leadership taking the organisation, and what was the new ideological inclination of the movement?

2.6 THE DEFIANCE CAMPAIGN, 1952

The advent of the 1950s saw different ideological perspectives competing for greater influence within the ANC. In this period the level of conflict increased between the communists and the Africanists. By 1952 the moderate Africanists, like N. Mandela, O. Tambo and W. Sisulu, were showing signs of sympathising with the communists who were joining the ranks of the ANC.

The ANC's major attempt of implementing the Programme of Action was made on 26 June 1952, when protests against the racially discriminatory laws and regulations were organised. The Planning Council, consisting of Dr A. Moroka, W. Sisulu, J.B.Marks, Yusuf Dadoo and Yusuf Cachalia, drafted a resolution calling upon the government to abolish six laws: the Suppression of Communism Act, the Group Areas Act, the Separate Representation of Voters Act, the Bantu Authorities Act, the pass laws and the stock limitation laws.[69] Of particular importance was the co-operation displayed by the ANC with organisations such as the South African Indian Congress, the African People's Organisation, the Communist Party and the Transvaal Council of the Non-European Trade Unions on the 26 June Day of Protest, which facilitated the establishment of the Congress Alliance. This campaign represented the national attempt by the ANC to implement in practice the Programme of Action, despite doubts from the Africanist group.

The suspicions of the Africanists against the Planning Council for its alleged lack of

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69 Dr J.S. Moroka, J.B. Marks, M.W. Sisulu, Dr Y.M. Dadoo, and Y. Cachalia, "Report of the Joint Planning Council of the ANC and the South African Indian Congress", November 8, 1951, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, pp. 458-459.

consultation and transparency were deep-rooted. This was indicated by Ellen Molapo, an Africanist at that time, when she said: "At the time of the Defiance Campaign, there was already a split between the African-minded and others. Some people were opposed to the way the ANC was being run. Things were being brought to conferences ready-made. We wanted to discuss, ask questions, but this was ruled out. Decisions were being made, we didn't know how - but we saw our leaders going around with Indians and Whites. We knew there was co-operation, especially with Indians, and we knew that somehow decisions were being made without consulting the people. We didn't like the Consultative Committee."[70]

The Africanist camp within the ANC denounced the Defiance Campaign as the work of the communists. They increased their criticism of the Communist Party, which they accused of having hijacked the ANC leadership. Some Africanists even saw the Defiance Campaign as an attempt to revive the Communist Party, which had been dissolved in 1950. Apart from the Communist Party, the Indian Congress was also targeted by the Africanists. They rejected co-operation with these organisations on the grounds that "Indians and Europeans all benefited from African oppression, they were unreliable allies in a struggle that must harm their economic interests."[71]

The expectation of the Africanists of the Programme of Action was that it would be used to achieve national freedom, described as "the rejection of segregation, apartheid, trusteeship, or white leadership which are all in one way or another motivated by the idea of white domination or domination of whites over the blacks."[72] To the Africanists, the newly established alliance of the ANC seemed to indicate that Africans could not achieve anything without the assistance of whites.[73] They felt that any credible alliance should be based on principles.

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70 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/14: Interview between Ellen Molapo and Gail M. Gerhart, Lesotho, 3 January 1970, p. 1.

71 E. Feit, *South Africa: The Dynamics of the African National Congress*, p. 12.

72 Archives of the PAC (PAC), University of Fort Hare (UFH), Alice, PAC Political Material, Box 27: "M. Pheko and the Four Freedom Documents which the White Liberals and Charterists Sabotaged", n.d., p. 21.

73 A.B. Ngcobo, "A Natal Youth League member who became part of the Africanist breakaway from the ANC", in J. Frederickse, *The Unbreakable Thread: Non-Racialism in South Africa*, p. 71.

This turbulent struggle clearly indicated a very serious lack of unanimous support for the Defiance Campaign, which could be ascribed to the absence of a common ideology within the ANC. The moderate Africans regarded the Defiance Campaign as a move towards forming a front by all forces opposed to the evil forces of apartheid. The Africanists, on the other hand, did not only complain about the presence of the communists, but they also expressed dissatisfaction with the passive resistance strategy used against the ruthless government. According to the Africanists, "through the May Day strikes, our people lost lives, properties, and jobs ... Before these wounds are healed, we are again formulating another strike ... If we are to be at the mercy of the Communist Party ... the Congress hasn't got another year to live. The engine and brain of the Congress cannot be the communist influence ... No army ever marched into the battle unarmed and untrained."[74]

The criticisms levelled against the ANC by the Africanists were not ignored. Duma Nokwe, for example, was critical about objections raised by A. P. Mda and other Africanists concerning the Defiance Campaign. He called these Africanists "Bafabegiya", which meant an extreme left-wing group that targeted N. Mandela, W. Sisulu and himself as right-wingers, because of their frequent associations with whites and Indians. He said that these Africans were spreading all sorts of rumours, like people who wanted to stage a coup.[75] Indeed, the penetration of whites and Indians into the ANC was actually cementing solidarity among the Africanists.

The non-violent approach to civil obedience, as preached by Dr Moroka, did not improve the situation. His utterances, like "there is a crying need to evangelise the Europeans" and "our struggle is a moral one, but it is waged on the principle of no-violence", discredited him.[76] His election as President-General of the ANC was based on pure political expediency and not on his ideological orientation. For this reason, he became helpless in the face of competing and contending ideologies within the ANC. As a result,

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[74] Rev. J.J. Skomolo to Prof. Z.K. Matthews, "Letter on Plans for June 26", June 16, 1950, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 2, p. 447.

[75] AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Dar-es-Salaam, 29 October 1970, p. 12.

[76] M. Nkoana, "Birth Pangs of an Ideology", *The New African*, vol. 6, no. 1, March 1967, p. 29.

he was relieved of his duties as President-General of the ANC in 1952. He was replaced by another moderate leader, Chief Albert Luthuli. Luthuli's term of leadership was characterised by a marked increase in the co-operation of various races in South Africa. As a moderate leader, he soon made his position clear as far as civil disobedience was concerned, by saying: "I maintain, however, that since this is no longer 1949, we have gone some way beyond the Programme of Action. It would seem to me unnecessarily doctrinaire to cling to an outlook which may have been appropriate then. The Programme of Action was an adaptation to prevailing circumstances. Since then further adaptations have been necessary to meet changing circumstances."[77] This statement was obviously directed at the Africanists. He was supported by another moderate leader of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, who also defended co-operation between the ANC and like-minded organisations, by stating that "they would know that on the field of political strife the COP has stood, not with the Nationalists, but with the ANC as a friend and ally, and not a dictator and controller, and that it hardly merits the place in the position of an enemy of the oppressed people."[78]

These ideological divisions generated internal tensions and conflicts, which weakened the ANC. The absence of a unified ideology showed a lack of a commonly acceptable political programme within the ANC. This lack of a cohesive ideology threatened to tear Congress apart.

What is suggested by the analysis thus far, is that the Congress Alliance, which was seen by many as an effective unity of the different races in South Africa in opposition to white domination, actually created even wider divisions among Africans. This split widened and became permanent after Professor Z.K. Matthews, the Cape leader of the ANC, suggested the meeting of a multi-racial forum in 1955.

2.7 FREEDOM CHARTER SUPPORTERS VERSUS AFRICANISTS, 1955

The formation of the Congress of the People and the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955 precipitated the breakaway of the Africanist group from the ANC. Africanists'

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77 A. Luthuli, *Let My People Go*, p. 185.

78 S. Johnson and R.H. Davis (eds), *Mandela, Tambo and the African National Congress*, pp. 73-74.

opposition to the leadership of the ANC was actually directed at its multiracial stand, which reached its peak when the Freedom Charter was adopted in 1955.

The Africanist group firmly believed that the ANC leadership, which was allegedly controlled by the white ruling class, was misleading the Africans about the aims of the struggle. Their contention was that "following the capture of a portion of the black leadership of South Africa by a section of the leadership of the white ruling class, the masses of our people are in extreme danger of being deceived into losing sight of the objectives of our struggle. This captured black leadership claims to be fighting for freedom when in truth it is fighting to perpetuate the tutelage of the African people ... It has completely abandoned the objective of freedom."[79] To them, the Charter was merely a device by means of which the Indians and whites could lead Africans by the nose.

From the beginning the Africanists questioned the source of the Charter. They believed that the Charter had been smuggled into the ANC by the communists. These Africanists made wild statements or derogatory remarks in trying to question the origin of the Charter. For example, P.K. Leballo said that the Charter had been drawn up in Russia.[80] This statement was not surprising, because Leballo was, according to his opponents, known for exaggerating things and coming up with complete fabrications. Many Africanists were of the view that the Charter had been planned at the cocktail parties of Parktown and Lower Houghton and drawn up in the fashionable suburbs of Johannesburg, where the white multi-racialists lived among other rich whites.[81]

Raboroko claimed that the Charter had been drawn up by Rusty Bernstein.[82] The assertion seems plausible since Rusty Bernstein himself, in his autobiography *Memory Against Forgetting*, confirmed the story, when he said that he had written a draft of the Charter, together with his unnamed team members. According to him, "time was

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79 "Manifesto of the Africanist Movement, Africanist Inaugural Convention (4th–6th April, 1959)", p. 25.

80 I. Vadi, *The Campaign for the Congress of the People and the Freedom Charter, 1953-1955: A Focus on the Transvaal*, p. 332.

81 M. Nkoana, "Birth Pangs of an Ideology", *The New African*, vol. 6, no. 1, March 1967, p. 30.

82 Interview with Peter Raboroko, Soweto, 17 February 2000.

running out. It was urgent that we turn our thousands of bits of paper into a draft ... The Working Committee decided that it was 'just a writing job', and handed it on to me. I had no more idea of where to start than anyone else, but I dusted off the cabin trunk and made a start."[83] Even the President of the ANC, Albert Luthuli, heightened the suspicion when he complained that the principles of the Charter had not previously been discussed.[84] Rusty Bernstein confirmed the complaints of Luthuli, when he said that the controversial issues had not been discussed beforehand. As a result of this lack of discussions, "the controversial elements of the Charter inspired argument and disagreement after it, both inside and outside the ranks of Congress."[85] The uncertainties surrounding the writing of the final form of the Freedom Charter remained.

Notwithstanding the mystery surrounding its origins, the Charter was surely an imaginative document, designed to guarantee the interests and privileges of various races in South Africa. Its endorsers were the ANC, the Congress of Democrats (COD) which later on became a front of the Communist Party, the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), and the South African Coloured People's Congress (SACPC). All of them formed the Congress of the People or Congress Alliance.

The Freedom Charter starts by rejecting the Africanists' slogan of "Africa for the Africans", by saying that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, Black and White".[86] Therefore, the Africanists believed that the statement was in direct conflict with African nationalism as espoused by Anton Lembede. To them, the Charter did not represent the interest of the oppressed people in South Africa. They equated the statement to saying that "Japan belongs to all who live in it, yellow and white - all because the American army of occupation is resident in Japan". This declaration would obviously shock the Japanese themselves and even the world. However, as far as South Africa was concerned, the Africans believed that "it is part of Africa and every inch of Africa belongs to the Africans".[87]

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83 R. Bernstein, *Memory Against Forgetting: Memoirs from a Life in South African Politics, 1938-1964*, p. 153.

84 A. Luthuli, *Let My People Go*, pp. 143-144.

85 R. Bernstein, *Memory Against Forgetting*, p. 159.

86 "The Freedom Charter", in ANC, *The ANC and the Bill of Rights*, p. 11.

87 U. Khoruba and K. Lekwame, "The Basic Conception Underlying Ownership", *The Africanist*, vol. 4, no. 6, June-July 1958, p. 16.

Rusty Bernstein, who allegedly authored the final draft of the Charter, criticised the Africanists by saying that most of them were inexperienced students, who were entering politics for the first time and had not taken part in the steady ANC progress from an exclusive nationalism to non-racialism. He was probably right, as most members of the Youth League were the ones who were vociferous about the slogan "Africa for the Africans" and were not comfortable with the mixing of races. He also showed that he was a strong supporter of multi-racial co-operation and at the same time despised the Africanists, when he said: "Who were these 'Africans' to whom South Africa belonged exclusively? Did they include such non-white minorities as Indians and Coloureds who suffered lesser discrimination than blacks? Or such whites as had put themselves unequivocally on the side of black liberation?"[88]

The land issue was also central to the Africanists' rejection of the Freedom Charter. They vehemently rejected the Freedom Charter's stance on "the land belonging to all who live in it". To the Africans, "the nationalisation of the land is the heart and core of a communist programme for agrarian reform".[89] According to the Africans, the clause of the Charter on land simply confirmed land robbery and political subjugation of the Africans as they claimed that the truth was that "we have been robbed of our birthright to the effective control of our county, and consequently our freedom, independence and happiness." The Africanists said that it was inconceivable to them to speak of land ownership while there was political disparity between Africans and whites. To them, the Charter implied that "the alien dispossessors and the indigenous dispossessed, the alien robbers and their indigenous victims", were regarded as equals. In their view, the differences between Africans and whites were irreconcilable and would only be removed once oppression was eradicated. In the meantime, they objected to equality being accorded to other national groups, whom they accused of weakening African nationalism.[90]

What was the response of the ANC to these accusations and criticisms? Congress

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88 R. Bernstein, *Memory Against Forgetting*, p. 161.

89 M. Nkoana, "Birth Pangs of an Ideology", *The New African*, vol. 6, no. 1, March 1967, p. 30.

90 "Manifesto of the Africanist Movement, Africanist Inaugural Convention (4th–6th April, 1959)", p. 26.

leaders were compelled to issue reassuring statements before discontentment and disaffection spread too widely amongst the rank and file. For example, Luthuli emphasised the historical importance of the Freedom Charter by saying that it was open to criticism because it was not a perfect document.[91] On the other hand, Oliver Tambo argued in favour of co-operation with other racial groups when he said: "The ANC is not led by inferiors. It does not suffer from any nightmares about being controlled or dominated by any organization; it will not run away from the political struggle or from any group or organization. On the contrary, it will continue to lead the movement for liberation against injustice and tyranny to freedom and democracy."[92] Nelson Mandela was more forthright when he asserted that the Charter was a revolutionary document, which advocated "a melding together of the people's demand to end oppression".[93] From their responses, it could be argued that the ANC leadership succeeded to display and maintain a certain level of political maturity and professionalism in their replies to stinging attacks and criticisms from the Africanists.

Notwithstanding these ideological clashes between the supporters of inclusive nationalism and those of exclusive nationalism, the Freedom Charter was significant in that it redefined the political struggle in South Africa. It actually facilitated the parting of ways between the Africanists and the so-called "Charterists", who were the supporters of the Freedom Charter.[94] The Africanists felt that the Charter failed to address the primary question of achieving self-determination and self-rule for the African people. They realised that the Charter would never revive the 1949 Programme of Action. As a result, the Africanists rejected the Charter and discredited it by referring to it as the "Kliptown Charter" and a "pseudo-democratic document wishing to superimpose a false brand of democracy which attempts to ignore the grim realties of the situation".[95] Interestingly

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91 A. Luthuli, *Let My People Go*, p. 142.

92 "Inferiority Complex", *New Age*, 13 November 1958, in A. Tambo, *Prepare for Power: Oliver Tambo Speaks*, p. 38.

93 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 164.

94 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/21: Interview between Peter Raboroko and Gail M. Gerhart, Nairobi, 25 September 1969, p. 2. In the interview Raboroko explained that they referred to the supporters of the Freedom Charter as Charterists to emphasise their ideological struggle.

95 U. Khoruba and K. Lekwame (pseudonyms), "Rejection of the Charter", *The Africanist*, vol. 4, no. 6, p. 19.

enough, the ANC similarly accused the Africanists of being out of touch with reality in South Africa, since they did not want to co-operate with people from other races who wanted to help to end white oppression and domination.[96]

What emerges from the above is that the Freedom Charter had become the point of divergence between the rival African factions within the ANC. It led to a fierce contest between those who espoused a multi-racial approach and those who pursued narrow nationalism in order to solve the problems of South Africa. The Charter itself changed African politics radically in a way no one had expected or predicted. The future form of society in South Africa was being contested. Whether South Africa was on its way to become an African dominated society or a multi-racial society was at the centre of the ideological conflict between the Africanists and those who supported a broad nationalism within the ANC.

2.8 RACE QUESTION

The Freedom Charter highlighted that the involvement of whites in the freedom struggle was for the Africans actually problematic and controversial. Given South Africa's peculiar conditions in the 1950s, when race determined one's political rights, it was not surprising to find that some Africans questioned the participation of whites in the liberation movement. Their presence in the freedom struggle of the Africans created an atmosphere of confusion, hatred , intolerance and even suspicion.

The predicament suffered by white volunteers and sympathisers in the struggle of the Africans was two-fold. Despite their determination to destroy the society in which they had been brought up, it was a society in which their cultures, traditions, and values were rooted. By virtue of the colour of their skin and their dominant culture, they enjoyed many rights and advantages like better education, secure housing and access to capital. Others had international connections, friends in parliament and even in the business world. As a result of these benefits, whites showed a certain innate self-confidence when they mixed or worked with blacks. The picture was described by William Modise, who was a Youth Leaguer that studied and observed the conduct of many Africanists

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[96] AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Dar-es-Salaam, 29 October 1970, p. 8.

before he settled in Sweden in 1963, when he said the following about whites: "Their opinions about what was possible, wise etc. carried a lot of weight. They could think of things that could be done that we couldn't think of because it was outside our experience. When a man like Bram Fischer gave you advice, you listened."[97]

It was the obvious advantages of white people and their readiness to help the blacks that the Africanists suspected and rejected. Their problem was that they suspected that whites would take control of the liberation movement and dilute the liberation struggle. To counter this problem in the meantime, the Africanists wanted "to instil a spirit of self-reliance among our people, to learn to do things themselves".[98] This means that the Africans actually feared that whites would still be in control, since many blacks at that time showed a built-in deference to whites in general. It was this behaviour that they feared would perpetuate their psychological subservience and dependency on whites. This was the problem that Anton Lembede wanted to address, when he came up with his philosophy of African nationalism. Hence, the Africanists who regarded themselves as the true successors of Lembede's philosophy, believed that this sense of psychological inferiority, self-bondage and deference to whites could only be eradicated through a separatist philosophy and a "go it alone" programme.[99]

As far as the ANC was concerned, South Africa was a multi-racial country, in which all racial groups had the right to co-exist peacefully and in prosperity. According to Oliver Tambo, those Africans who believed that they could not compete with other races in an alliance, were advised to stop participating in the liberation struggle.[100] Implied in this statement was the fact that the ANC was not afraid to work with anybody, as long as it was for the achievement of basic human rights for all the people. This means that Congress was actually representing the progressive and democratic interests of various groups, like the Africans, Indians, whites and coloureds through the formation of the Congress Alliance. Of particular significance was the fact that the non-racial democratic

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97 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/12: Interview between William Modise and Gail M. Gerhart, Nairobi, 14 July 1970, p. 3.

98 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/13: Interview between Joe Molefi and Gail M. Gerhart, Maseru, December 1969, p. 6.

99 J.N. Lazerson, *Against the Tide: Whites in the Struggle Against Apartheid*, p. 192.

100 "Inferiority Complex", *New Age*, 13 November 1958, in A. Tambo, *Prepare for Power: Oliver Tambo Speaks*, p. 37.

policy of the ANC showed that its leaders were broad-minded and principled, because theirs was a "struggle not against whites as oppressors, but rather against an evil - a struggle in which all right-thinking South Africans could involve themselves".[101] In other words, the leadership of the ANC avoided African nationalism that was anti-white, sectarian and that encouraged racial hatred. Rather, they channelled the liberation struggle into a positive wide-ranging democratic movement, which involved people of all races in South Africa. As a result, what the ANC hoped to achieve was that "the new South Africa would not be defined by racial and ethnic majorities and minorities but by a common defined standard of citizenship, which would guarantee that no one would have to feel a second or third or fourth class citizen".[102]

All those who wanted to work for the upliftment of the African people and the establishment of a common society would be accommodated in the ANC. This means that, to the ANC, the question of ideology had to be left in abeyance in order to give the pursuance of the national struggle a chance. Thus, Luthuli felt that the Africanists were a disruptive and harmful factor in the democratic movement. He spoke in defence of the multi-racial community in this way: "I believe that our vision of democracy in South Africa will be realized because there is a growing number of people who are coming to accept that in South Africa we are a multi-racial community, whether we like it or not ... What is important for our situation is that we are all here ... And since we are all here, we must seek a way whereby we can realize democracy so that we can live in peace and harmony in this land of ours."[103]

Multi-racialism showed that the ANC was cautious and concerned about generating racial tensions and white fears which might cause a bloodbath in South Africa. The desire to promote multi-racial co-operation in South Africa was "an expression of political goals, a framework within which African liberation would be fought for, and clearly and unambiguously against conceptions like an independent African state, African separatism, or even African domination. All nationalities were assumed to have equal rights, though being the largest group and the most oppressed, it was understood that

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101 J.N. Lazerson, *Against the Tide*, p. 192.

102 J.N. Lazerson, *Against the Tide*, p. 192. See also B. Turok, *Strategic Problems in South Africa's Liberation Struggle: A Critical Analysis*, pp. 30-31.

103 S. Pillay, *Voices of Liberation, volume 1: Albert Luthuli*, pp. 123-124.

the African people would constitute the most important section."[104] The crucial point to note is that the ANC did not want to be accused of practicing racism in reverse by emphasising unity amongst Africans against whites or other races.

With regard to race, the Africanists' standpoint and actions were motivated by what was happening in South Africa in the 1950s. Their contention was that racial discrimination in South Africa was worse than anywhere in the civilised world. To them, the "system of 'race', 'racial differences' or even 'racial harmony'; of 'racial superiors'; must needs be boosted to bolster an untenable and wicked system whereby the futile and suicidal attempt is made to segregate man into kraals by artificial barriers, and whereby man's highest merit for promotion and status in his community is decided on the magical formula, 'race' - which in South Africa reduces to its simplest element - colour."[105] The Africanists wanted to get rid of what they perceived as excessive racism practiced through white domination and oppression.

The Africanists maintained that they regarded all human beings as members of one race, the human race. To them, there were no fundamental differences among members of the three main branches of the human race, who were the Caucasoids, Mongoloids and Afrinoids. What was observable, was only the physical differences, which were the result of mainly environmental factors. What they disputed was the theory that there were inherent mental, emotional and psychological differences among the members of the three branches of the human species. Specifically, the Africans hated the granting of rights on the basis of ethnological origin, as they regarded this practice as the entrenchment of racial arrogance and the perpetuation of contempt for human worth and dignity.[106] Of relevance to the South African situation was the fact that the myth of race had been propagated by the "imperialists and colonialists from Europe" to justify their exploitation of the indigenous people. It was from this myth of race that the claims of cultural superiority and white supremacy originated.[107] In South Africa, the

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104 B. Turok, *Strategic Problems in South Africa's Liberation Struggle*, p. 30.

105 U. Khoruba and K. Lekwame (pseudonyms), "Only One Race", *The Africanist*, June-July, 1958, p. 10.

106 "Manifesto of the Africanist Movement, Africanist Inaugural Convention (4th–6th April, 1959)", p. 21.

107 R. Sobukwe, Inaugural Address, 4-6 April 1959, in *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, p. 18.

Africanists were not prepared to allow any division that would promote racial arrogance and continued disregard for human dignity and the worth of human personality.

The Africanists regarded as a complete African every person whose loyalty was to Africa, who accepted the primacy of African interests and was willing to identify with Africa and the Africans. They claimed that they were not racists, because they regarded even whites as Africans. Their explanation of a true African could be linked to the French "evolué" policy. Just as an African in a French colony had to accept the supremacy of French culture and civilisation before he could be accepted as French, the Africanists also wanted other races in South Africa to be given the same treatment. Any person who joined the PAC in this spirit would, according to one of the prominent PAC leaders, J.D. Nyaose, not be regarded as a settler or coloniser, but would be accepted as "an 'African' in which case his or her colour shall not be a criterion to determine nationality of a South African"[108] This goal was not easy to achieve in the 1950s, given the fact that the Nationalist government was treating the Africans and whites differently. The reality of the situation was that whites were not going to relinquish their privileged positions easily for the sake of being called "Africans".

As would be expected, Africanists viewed the South African society as conflict-ridden. They did not believe that in South Africa the races were equal. To them, there was white domination, which had been established and maintained by the "sword".[109] The end of white domination to the Africanists would mean "the dawn of a free Azania, the birth of a new era of freedom, of creative production and abundance for all the people in Azania".[110] In this situation, whites would qualify as South African citizens with full rights. It would not be strange in the future South Africa if Africans could decide to elect a white person to represent them in parliament. This would be possible, since all would be Africans and would be guaranteed human rights as individuals and not as groups.

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108 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/19: J.D. Nyaose, Comments and Oversimplification, Gail M. Gillam manuscript, 1969, p. 2. For similar statements by later PAC leaders, see Z.L. Mothopeng, "Ideology is There", *The Sowetan*, 14 December 1988; P. de Lille, "Eers Afrikaan dan vrou", *Die Suid-Afrikaan*, no. 43, 1993, p. 14.

109 PAC, "Constitution of the PAC", in *The Basic Document of the PAC of Azania*, p. 22.

110 J. Mlambo, "The Future Democratic Azania", *The Parliamentarian*, April 1988, p. 78.

However, the Africanists objected strongly to the policy of multi-racialism. Their argument was that "the history of South Africa has fostered group prejudices and antagonisms, and if we have to maintain the same group exclusiveness, parading under the term multi-racialism, we shall be transporting to the new Africa the very antagonisms and conflicts".[111] For this reason, the PAC insisted on regarding Africans, Indians, whites and coloureds as equals and not giving special privileges and monopolies to groups. According to Mlamli Makwetu, they were "not worried about guarantees and safeguards for minorities".[112] In other words, the PAC rejected any group or minority rights, as they feared that this practice could perpetuate the mistake of group exclusiveness.

Instead of multi-racialism, the Africanists firmly believed in the term non-racialism and they claimed to have used the term before the ANC.[113] According to the PAC they preferred non-racialism as opposed to multi-racialism, because this indicated a rejection of group exclusiveness, prejudice and antagonisms and was the only basis for a true democratic system. They firmly believed that the myth of race and white supremacy was spread by Europeans to justify their ill-treatment, dehumanisation and humiliation of the Africans.[114] The PAC claimed not only to recognise the existence of different races in South Africa, but also to strive for equal treatment of all races.

What emerges from the above is that the Africanists' stance concerning equality between Africans and whites was confusing and ambiguous. Unlike the ANC, which had a clear-cut policy with regard to inter-racial co-operation, the PAC's policy towards other races was unclear. For example, the uttering of slogans such as "Africa for the Africans" and "throwing the white man into the sea" drew criticism. It was possible that there could have been an element of cynicism in the PAC's formulation of these slogans. They might have been used to gain mass support of Africans by utilising their hatred of whites or to threaten whites into submission. Their utterances and comments were not only ambiguous, but also indicated some fear of working with whites. For example, they believed that "whenever Europeans co-operate with African movements, they keep on

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111 PAC, "Constitution of the PAC", in *The Basic Document of the PAC of Azania*, p.18.

112 Copy of notes found in Mlamli Makwetu's room, which were used as evidence during case no. P226/62 (obtained from Peter Raboroko and in possession of the author).

113 Interview with Dr P. Molotsi, Kroonstad, 15 May 1999.

114 PAC, *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe from 1949 –1959*, p. 8.

demanding checks and counter-checks, guarantees and the like, with the result that they stultify and retard the movement of the Africans and the reason is, of course, that they are consciously or unconsciously protecting their sectional interests".[115] Sobukwe was forthright when it came to co-operation. He said that "co-operation was possible only between equals. There can be no co-operation between oppressor and oppressed, dominating and dominated. That is collaboration and not co-operation! We are not anti-white, therefore, we do not hate the European because he is white! We hate him because he is an oppressor. It is plain dishonesty to say I hate the sjambok and not the one who wields it".[116]

The crucial point to note is that the Africanists' fear was based on the political situation prevalent in South Africa at that time. Many feared that the participation of whites and Indians in the struggle would undermine the development of self-confident leadership qualities among the Africans. Others could not believe that some whites could identify themselves whole-heartedly with the struggle, which was essentially for the Africans. To them, these white liberals would only weaken the struggle. The argument of these Africanists was that many "progressive white intellectuals fail to outgrow the racist environment into which they are born and bred...they seek to infiltrate the liberation movement in order to shape its policy and programme in the image of their own intellectual wavering".[117]

What did the PAC offer as a solution? Johnson Mlambo, at one stage chairman of the PAC, argued that the South African conflict-ridden society could be corrected through the clash of antithetical social forces: "Herrenvolkism - which represents the material, intellectual spiritual interests of the oppressor, and African nationalism, which represents the material, intellectual and spiritual interests of the oppressed. Herrenvolkism is reactionary; African nationalism is progressive and liberating".[118] The synthesis of these social forces might lead to the success of Africanism, "which caters for the material and spiritual needs of all of those who identify with the Africans, or all who accept African majority rule".[119]

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115 PAC, *Time for Azania*, p. 11.

116 E. Ntloedibe, *Here is aTree: Political Biography of Sobukwe*, p. 103.

117 PAC, *Time for Azania*, p. 19.

118 J. Mlambo, "The Future Democratic Azania", *The Parliamentarian*, April 1988, p. 78.

119 G. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 140.

The suggestion of the analysis thus far is that the question of race in South Africa soured the relationship between the ANC and the Africanists. The PAC was diametrically opposed to the ANC as far as working with whites was concerned. While the ANC's approach encouraged interracial co-operation in order to end white domination, the PAC rejected it on the ground that rights enjoyed by other races gave them undue advantage and exploitative powers over Africans when they worked together in one movement. To the Africanists, the primacy of African leadership and solidarity should be taken into consideration by any African movement in order to achieve the aims of the freedom struggle.

2.9 SOUTH AFRICA AS AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY VERSUS SOUTH AFRICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

Another bone of contention between the ANC and the PAC was the way in which the two liberation movements viewed the status of South Africa as an independent country. The PAC challenged the status of South Africa as an independent country. Right from its inception on 6 April 1959, the PAC repudiated the idea that South Africa was different from other colonies. It regarded South Africa as an integral part of the African continent. The African decolonisation struggle, which was sweeping across the whole continent in the late 1950s, seemed to have appealed to the PAC. The PAC regarded the struggle in South Africa as part of the struggle being fought throughout the African continent for the return of the land to the indigenous people. In his inaugural address, Sobukwe indicated his Pan-African outlook when he said that the Africanists "do not subscribe to the doctrine of South African exceptionalism and are committed to Pan Africanism and a Union of African States which we would like to see as a unitary, centrally controlled organic whole".[120] Their argument was that South Africa could not solve her immense problems if she remained isolated from the rest of the continent. Nevertheless, the biggest arguments of the PAC were based on what they termed "land robbery" and "political subjugation".[121] According to them, there would be no genuine liberation and

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120 PAC, *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, p. 25.

121 "Manifesto of the Africanist Movement, Africanist Inaugural Convention (4th–6th April, 1959)", p. 26.

independence, unless and until land had been returned to the African people as the basis of political power and sovereign control.

Recognition by the ANC of the existence of a permanent white community in South Africa was rejected by the PAC. In particular, the PAC criticised the moderate approach of the ANC towards the South African regime. According to them, the ANC objected only to the policies of successive governments of South Africa. In their view, the ANC was satisfied with demanding equal rights and citizenship for all. According to Peter Molotsi, the ANC believed that anybody who was against the Nationalist government was accepted as a friend irrespective of his/her political agenda.[122] As a result, the ANC was seen as a reactionary and indecisive liberation movement.

The PAC represented the view that white domination, as entrenched in the 1909 South Africa Act, should be completely rooted out by force. According to Sobukwe the PAC's stance was the total overthrow of "white domination in any shape or form" and to be "unflinchingly determined to wrest the control of their country from alien hands".[123] In the view of another Africanist, Motsoko Pheko, "it was a struggle to establish majority rule which is democracy and destroy the minority rule of the settlers which is a negation of democracy".[124] In this way, the PAC aimed at overthrowing the white regime and setting for itself the goal of challenging the white settler minority government with direct action.

2.10 RESULTS OF THE IDEOLOGICAL CLASHES: SPLIT IN ANC AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PAC

As these different ideological perspectives were competing for supremacy within the ANC, the state continued to harass its leaders who had participated in the Defiance Campaign. These leaders were unable to make public statements or actively take part in the activities of the ANC, due to their banning orders. The Africanists decided to seize this opportunity and increased their criticisms of the ANC.

In particular, the Africanists of Orlando under Potlako Leballo spearheaded attacks

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122 Interview with Peter Molotsi, 15 May 1999.

123 PAC, *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, p. 41.

124 M. Pheko, *The Story of Dispossessed People*, p. 85.

against the ANC and the Congress Alliance. Leballo and his branch were suspended for criticising Duma Nokwe and Walter Sisulu for undertaking their trip to Russia. The Africanists said that they had lost faith in the ANC leaders because they "rammed down their throats unpopular decisions".[125] For example, they complained about the Transvaal Provincial Conference of 1956, which they claimed supported an incompetent and unpopular Executive Committee. Furthermore, they were not happy with the "un-Africanistic policies", which they claimed were dominated by non-African elements. This point was highlighted by J.D. Nyaose, who expressed dissatisfaction in this way: "Any action that the ANC could contemplate to implement even if such popular action would have been advocated by the African nation at the ANC conference, such action would be shelved by the ANC leadership, if the ANC-Congress Alliance affiliates decide to veto it".[126]

The Africanists claimed to have lost confidence in their leadership because of their vacillations during the stay-at-home campaign in 1958. According to the Africanists they were angered by the fact that the campaign was meant to support the United Party in the elections. However, within three days the campaign was called off due to the fact that some people said that there was no difference between the United Party and the National Party.[127] Their complaints about weak leadership of the ANC at this time were probably right, as many prominent members of the movement were in prison or banned due to their involvement in the Defiance Campaign. This assertion is supported by Joe Matthews, who said that the ANC's affairs were left in the hands of some "fairly mediocre chaps" and "political lightweights", because of the bannings of their leaders.[128]

It could perhaps be argued that the Africanists could have decided to seize this opportunity to take over the control of the ANC. The Africanist leader, Z.B. Molete, confirmed this assertion when he said that the Africanists never worked towards

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125 K. Lekwame, "Africans Have Faith in ANC Leadership", *The Africanist*, June-July 1958, p. 11.

126 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/19: J.D. Nyaose, Comments and Oversimplification, Gail M. Gillam manuscript, 1969, p. 1.

127 K. Lekwame, "Africans Have Faith in ANC Leadership", *The Africanist*, June-July 1958, p. 12.

128 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/8: Interview between Joe Matthews and Gail M. Gerhart, Gaborone, 15 August 1970, p. 30.

breaking away from the ANC. When they broke away finally in 1958, A.P. Mda, who was highly influential and regarded as the repository of the Africanists' ideas, was against them on the ground that not all the channels had been used to express their grievances. But, as Molete put it, the Africanists' strategy had always been "to capture the leadership" of the ANC.[129]

Meanwhile, the Africanists were becoming restless and despondent with what they perceived as a bankrupt ANC leadership and the direction in which it was taking the movement. Matters came to a head after Leballo and Madzunya had been suspended for publicly criticising and consistently disregarding the policies of the ANC. The parting of ways between the ANC and the Africanist Orlando branch under Leballo came in November 1958 during the annual congress. The defiant stance of the Orlando Africanists was shown by their attendance of the ANC annual congress, even though they were suspended. However, the Charterists took a hardline stance against these Africanists, when they rejected their credentials and refused them entry. At this particular point, the Africanists avoided a crisis by deciding to leave the ANC in order to form the Pan Africanist Congress.[130] As they stated in their letter of withdrawal: "We are launching out openly, on our own, as the custodians of the ANC policy as it was formulated in 1912 and pursued up to the time of the Congress of Alliance".[131]

As a result of these developments another liberation movement called the PAC came into existence. At its Inaugural Convention held between April 4th and 6th, 1959 Robert Sobukwe was elected as President. According to Peter Raboroko, the election of Sobukwe to the position of "first among equals" meant that he became "destiny's chief tool for filling the political and ideological vacuum in South Africa" and also assuming the role of "defier of the anti-defiance measures of the settler community".[132] This statement does not only indicate how Raboroko idolised Sobukwe, but also how white domination

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129 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/14: Interview between Z.B. Molete and Gail M. Gerhart, New York, 30 June 1970, p. 2.

130 For more details, see the discussion of the formation of the PAC in chapter 1, pp. 53-54.

131 S.T. Ngendane to Mr Speaker ANC (Transvaal) "giving notice" of Africanist disassociation from the ANC (Transvaal), November 2, 1958, in T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 3, pp. 505-506.

132 "Defier of the Undefiable", document obtained from Peter Raboroko, in possession of the author.

might, perhaps, be confronted for the first time. This desire to challenge white domination can also be found in the new constitution of the PAC, which indicated one of the reasons for the existence of the PAC as being "to fight for the overthrow of white domination and the implementation of the right of self-determination for the African people".[133] In other words, the PAC saw itself as the champion of the oppressed with its creed of African nationalism.

What was the reaction of the ANC to this break-away? The attitude of the ANC seemed to be that it was merely another splinter organisation, which would experience a quick demise. The fact that it was the Orlando branch of Leballo which facilitated the break did not help matters. They were actually regarded as another dissident group. This attitude was epitomised by Joe Matthews, who said: "We just don't know on what basis even this is described as a split in the ANC, which removes some branch chaps. What sort of a split is this one? We never had a split like that".[134] Duma Nokwe even said that the whole Africanist group consisted of position-seekers, who constantly and viciously had criticised the ANC leadership, because they wanted an "alternative leadership".[135] From the above analysis it becomes clear that the ANC leadership despised the Africanists and wrote off the PAC as not being a serious factor in African politics.

The impact of the schism and the formation of the PAC was described by Nelson Mandela in this manner: "Because of the PAC's anti-communism, it became the darling of the Western Press and the American State Department, which hailed its birth as a dagger in the heart of the African left. Even the National Party saw a potential ally in the PAC: they viewed the PAC as mirroring their anti-communism and supporting their views on separate development. The Nationalists also rejected interracial co-operation, and both the National Party and the American State Department saw fit to exaggerate the size and importance of the new organisation for their own ends". At the same time Mandela describes what the ANC's standpoint would be with regard to the formation of the PAC: "While we welcomed anyone brought into the struggle by the PAC, the role of

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133 "PAC Constitution Adopted at Inaugural Conference held at Orlando, Johannesburg, on the 4th–6th April 1959, in *The Basic Document of the PAC of Azania*, p. 43.

134 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/8: Interview between Joe Matthews and Gail M. Gerhart, Gaborone, 15 August 1970, p. 19.

135 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970. Political Material, A2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Dar-es-Salaam, 29 October 1970, p. 18.

the PAC organisation was almost always that of a spoiler".[136]

This sort of description of the schism between the ANC and the Africanists (PAC) in 1959 highlights the sharp ideological differences between them. What actually emerges is the basic conflict between the ANC and the PAC, which revolved around the national question: the necessity of a national freedom struggle in order to achieve for the Africans self-determination and the right to exercise political freedom in their own country.

The breakaway of the Africanists from the ANC did not come as a surprise to the movement. When the key leadership of the ANC in the Transvaal was detained in 1956 and charged in the lengthy Treason Trial (1956-1961), the Africanists of the Orlando branch under Leballo saw their opportunity of challenging for provincial leadership positions. As already indicated in this chapter, these Africanists actively and publicly criticised the policies of the ANC. According to Duma Nokwe, they tried "to get themselves legally elected to office in the ANC" and "Leballo himself aspired in his deeper heart for the presidency."[137] Matthews showed his contempt to Africanists like Leballo, Madzunya, Sobukwe and others for masterminding the split by using newspapers like *The World* and *The Argus*, which he said, claimed to be the mouthpiece and "chief advocate or chief platform of ideas intended to liberate African people".[138]

The split itself seemed not to have caused a big loss to the ANC. However, the process which led to the split seemed to have hurt the ANC seriously as Duma Nokwe said that the Africanists "had been a great nuisance and instrumental for a long time in trying to disrupt and upset".[139]

In the beginning, the PAC seemed not to be a serious threat to the ANC. This was

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136 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 216.

137 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970 Political Material, A 2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Dar-es Salaam, 29 October 1970, p. 18.

138 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970 Political Material, A 2422/8: Interview between Joe Matthews and Gail M. Gerhart, Gaborone, 15 August 1970, p.19.

139 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970 Political Material, A 2422/18: Interview between Duma Nokwe and Gail M. Gerhart, Gaborone, 29 October 1970, p. 18.

because the ANC relied on its long history as a liberation movement. The movement had never in its history competed against a rival organisation that it had not been able to outlive and outdo. It also boasted of well-known leaders like Albert Luthuli, Z.K. Matthews and others. Mrs Modise, the head of the Youth League branch at Victoria East in the Eastern Cape in 1959, not only claimed that Peter Molotsi tried to convince her to side with the Africanists, but also explained the strength of the ANC at that time in this way: "I believed that the ANC was the organization of the people; it had a long tradition and the people were loyal to it. I couldn't see how a breakaway could accomplish anything ... Whatever the weaknesses of the ANC, it was the established organization. For the any new position or organisation to catch on was difficult".[140]

The new leaders of the PAC did not have such unquestioning loyalty and such an established base of supporters. Moreover, they did not have money and famous leaders like the ANC. Although they claimed the history of the ANC before the implementation of the Programme of Action of 1949, they had to start politically from the beginning. The fact that they lacked a huge following like the one of the ANC seemed to have troubled them. It was not surprising, therefore, when they appealed to the masses of the oppressed people for support. Their first strategy of drumming up support seemed to be to use the ideology of African nationalism. It should be noted that many African leaders like Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya won independence for their countries because they were talking about the ideology of African nationalism. This trend also emerged among the Africanists when they held their first national meeting at the Orlando Community Hall in April 1959. The walls of the hall were lined with placards which highlighted the ideology of the movement and what it stood for: "Africa for Africans, Cape to Cairo, Morocco to Madagascar", "Imperialists Quit Africa", "Forward to the United States of Africa" and "Izwe Lethu I Africa" ("Africa, our land").[141] The meeting was attended by roughly four hundred representatives from all over South Africa. Many delegates came from the Transvaal and there were only fifteen women out of nearly four hundred delegates.[142]

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140 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970 Political Material, A 2422: Interview between Mrs William Modise and Gail M. Gerhart, Nairobi, 14 July 1970, p.3.

141 T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol 3, p. 314.

142 See T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 3, pp. 307-322; B. Leeman, *Africanist Political Movement in Lesotho and Azania*, p. 156.

The second strategy used by the PAC to win the support of the oppressed masses was to appear more radical than the ANC. They questioned the methods and tactics of the ANC of engaging the masses in the liberation struggle against the South African regime. The leaders of the movement seemed to operate from the premise that "time was ripe for a successful confrontation with white power".[143] Their argument was that "a new climate of thought exists in the country, and there is overwhelming evidence that our people today are ready to achieve the unachieved but not unachievable, to rise to unprecedented heights of self-sacrifice and heroism ... nobody will ever extinguish the flame of freedom kindled in the hearts of our people by the emergence of the Pan Africanist Congress. Sons and Daughters of Africa, we have arrived – SIFIKILE!!!".[144] The path of confrontation chosen by the PAC manifested itself in the campaigns like the Status Campaign, which led to the Sharpeville massacre, as will be explained in the next chapter.

2.11 POLITICAL PROGRAMME

Another main criticism by the PAC of the ANC was that the ANC did not have its own political programme. Rather, it kept on reacting to the political programmes of the government. In this way, the PAC regarded the political activities of the ANC, like protests, strikes, consumer boycotts, demonstrations and petitions, as mere reactions to the government policies. Even the ANC's Programme of Action of 1949 was regarded by the PAC as having been based on "spectacular activity" instead of "principled action".[145] What they actually suggested, was that the approach of the ANC was reformist rather than confrontational.

However, the criticisms of the PAC seemed to be unfair to the ANC, given the fact that the ANC had a long tradition of opposing white domination and discrimination. Besides the well-known Defiance Campaign, which was actually aimed at unjust laws and discrimination against the blacks, the ANC had always responded creatively to

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143 G. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 216.

144 "The Editor Speaks - Sifikile", *The Africanist*, December 1959, p.1 (editorial).

145 M. Motlabi, *The Theory and Practice of Black Resistance to Apartheid: A Social-Ethical Analysis*, p. 79.

spontaneous upsurges of revolts, like rent boycotts and labour issues. For example, in 1959 the ANC succeeded in organising a successful consumer boycott of potatoes in protest against the treatment of farm labourers.[146] Moreover, they were also involved in the protests for better wages and transport, like the Alexandra bus boycott. As a result, these accusations levelled against the ANC by the PAC only emphasised wide divergences on strategy and tactics employed by the two liberation movements.

The PAC represented the view that Africans should build a new society through "positive action". For this reason, the PAC was prepared to challenge the regime immediately after its formation. In preparation for its confrontation with the South African regime, the PAC leaders deemed it fit to first prepare the oppressed Africans politically and psychologically. This campaign, which began in late November 1959, called the "Status Campaign", was centred around the fact that Africans had been subjected to fear and submissiveness by successive white governments since 1652. The campaign was based on African nationalism as a creed, which the Africanists hoped would restore the self-confidence and pride of the Africans.

Sobukwe went ahead to launch the Status Campaign. He said that for more than three hundred years, the white foreign ruling minority had used its power to indoctrinate the Africans to accept white supremacy and African inferiority. Therefore, the purpose of the campaign was that before the Africans could seriously start a revolution to free themselves, they would have to undergo a mental revolution. According to Sobukwe, "it is our task to exorcise this slave mentality, and to impart to the African masses that sense of self-reliance that will make them prefer self-government to the good government preferred by the ANC's leaders".[147] This statement seems to be in keeping with the PAC's declared aim of restoring the pride and dignity of the Africans. The PAC called upon its supporters to assert their personality as it prepared itself for this unfolding and expanding campaign.

As a result, the PAC decided to get tough with shops that treated Africans badly. According to Leballo, "while white customers are welcomed to these stores with courtesy, the African is given the most off-hand reception - and sometimes meets with

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146 G. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*, p. 101.

147 PAC, *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, p. 34.

absolute arrogance. He is kept waiting and is never helped in making a wise choice of goods".[148] Furthermore, Sobukwe encouraged African men to reject derogatory terms used by whites, such as "kwedini, umfana or moshemane", which means "boy".[149] According to the PAC, acceptance of these insults and humiliations meant acceptance of inferiority by the Africans.

With this campaign, the myth of white superiority would be exposed. On the other hand, the campaign would encourage Africans to regain their self-confidence and pride. It would prepare African people to actively resist white domination and oppression. Once the PAC had achieved its goal of motivating Africans to reclaim and restore their human dignity and pride, it would then focus its attention on the positive action campaign against the passes.

2.12 SUMMARY

From the foregoing, it becomes crystal clear that the Africanists and the Charterists held ideological differences, which ended in a split in 1959. The core of the conflict was differences about the course that the liberation struggle had to follow - whether Africans could achieve their freedom through reconciliation and co-operation with other races, especially whites, or rather go it alone. This clash led to the development of two schools of thought: those who believed in inclusive African nationalism (Charterists) and those who believed in narrow African nationalism (Africanists).

The ANC favoured cross-racial alliances and co-operation with other races in order to achieve the aims of the freedom struggle. On the other hand, the PAC opposed this view vigorously on the basis that co-operation between Africans and other races would be a sham, as these races would still dominate because of their wealth and education. According to the PAC, for genuine co-operation to exist and not co-option, there should be absolute equality of treatment of all the races in South Africa. In addition, they wanted Africans to unite and restore their pride in order to meet other races on the basis

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148 P.K. Leballo, "Pan Africanists to get tough with discourteous stores", *The Star*, December 22, 1959.

149 PAC, *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, p. 34. See also E. Khopung, *The Story of a Dispossessed People*, p. 67.

of equality.

As a result, the two contending ideologies of the ANC and the PAC bitterly criticised and rejected each other's policies and aims. Their divergent views started a new wave of organised African resistance, as they began to compete and outdo each other from 1960 onwards to gain supremacy in South African politics.

CHAPTER 3

THE 1960S - BANNING, EXILE AND NEW STRATEGIES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The advent of the 1960s saw the competition between the ANC and the PAC coming into the open. In fact, the appearance of the PAC on the South African political scene, which had been dominated for a considerable number of years by the ANC and the government, intensified the level of conflict. The presence of the PAC provided an additional pressure on the South African regime, which triggered the last phase of the legal existence of the two liberation movements. Each movement was forced to enter into a competition in radicalism in order to win over the support of Africans so as to establish its supremacy and hegemony in South African resistance politics.

The opportunity of showing dominance in South African politics by either of the two liberation movements was presented by the mass killing of people in Sharpeville, near the town of Vereeniging. The Sharpeville massacre which took place on 21 March 1960 provided an ideal opportunity to both the ANC and the PAC to try to gain massive support of the Africans. The incident was a watershed in the history of the liberation movements, as it marked the end of legal operation of both the ANC and the PAC in South Africa. This means that the Sharpeville incident ushered in a period during which the two liberation movements found it almost impossible to operate freely inside South Africa.

Denied the right and chance to exercise their political rights freely, the two liberation movements decided to resort to tactics and new strategies such as fleeing into exile, operating underground, gaining diplomatic support abroad and using the armed struggle against the government. The decision to move to violent forms of the struggle was taken by the two liberation movements to end apartheid and white domination. Through the use of these new tactics and strategies, the ANC and the PAC began a protracted struggle of seeing which liberation movement would be able to achieve and realise the vision of a free, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

3.2 THE ANTI-PASS LAW CAMPAIGN OF 1960

3.2.1 Reasons

The revolutionary climate of the early 1960s was promoted by the launching of the anti-pass campaign by both the ANC and the PAC. As would be expected, the two liberation movements were aware of the intransigency of the South African government to bring about changes which would improve the living conditions of the Africans. It became much easier for the two liberation movements to exploit the impatience, restlessness, frustrations and discontentment of the Africans in general.

At the same time, the actions of the liberation movements should be assessed against the background of what was happening in Africa in general, where the "freedom struggle was marching on", as some former colonies were about to achieve their independence.[1] On the African continent the winds of change had gained momentum through the attainment of independence by Ghana in March 1957 and the meeting of the All-African People's Congress in Accra in1958. In 1957 Kwame Nkrumah declared that Ghana's independence was incomplete and useless unless it was linked with the whole of Africa. Nkrumah succeeded in 1958 to bring together leaders and representatives of liberation movements and political parties from all over Africa and the surrounding islands which were still under white rule. The nationalist movements which gathered in Accra in 1958 targeted 1963 as the date for Africa's freedom and independence.[2] It was not surprising that this revolutionary climate also affected South Africa. The ANC and the PAC decided to seize this opportunity and undertook a risky step of challenging the might of the South African government.

At this point, it is important to determine why the two liberation movements decided on the anti-pass campaign in order to attempt to elicit favourable responses from the South African regime. Obviously, the pass system was chosen on purpose, because Africans regarded it as the cornerstone of the apartheid policy - as it restricted their free movement throughout South Africa. In fact, the pass system was a political tool used by the regime in the subjugation of the Africans. The fact that the pass system was the

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1 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*, p. 224.

2 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 231.

political instrument of the government could be seen in the laws that became part and parcel of it, like the Group Areas Act, which confined Africans to certain residential areas only, and the influx control legislation, which regulated the movement of the Africans throughout the country.[3] Under the pass system every African, from the age of sixteen years, had to carry a pass. Failure to produce this document on demand resulted in immediate arrest. Worse still, the complete lack of respect for personal privacy, frequent house to house searches and constant harassment everywhere were cold reminders that Africans were foreigners in the country of their birth. Thus the pass laws affected every living African in South Africa. The frustrations and anger caused by the pass laws are explained better by Michael Ndobongwana, who was a PAC activist based in Langa in 1960: "It was the bad treatment that an African man faced, who was in chains, facing the police who often unleashed their dogs to feed on African people. If one wanted to visit Gugulethu, one would have to go to a particular office to seek permission. This applied to Nyanga as well. If one wanted to visit the place, one had to get a permit. There was no place where an African man wasn't asked about his identity in the form of a pass, stating who you were, where you came from and where you were going."[4]

As would be expected, any campaign aimed at removing this oppressive and distasteful system would enjoy massive support from the African community. Africans regarded the pass laws as measures that were specifically designed to maintain and perpetuate white domination and oppression. For this reason, the liberation movements decided to use the pass laws to enhance their prestige and increase their support in the African community.

3.2.2 The March 1960 Debacle

According to Rusty Bernstein, a member of the South African Communist Party who was working closely with the ANC from the 1950s, the ANC had been preparing since the Defiance Campaign for an anti-pass campaign, which would result in the public burning of the passes. To him, the burning of passes was a high risk strategy, although "it was

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3 N. Muendane, *Sharpeville: The Epic Goes On*, p. 16.

4 B. Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State, 1960-1963", in South African Democracy Trust (SADET), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol.1, 1960-1970, p. 259.

not a new idea. It had been tried without much success several times before".[5] This means that he doubted the success of the new campaign, because he knew that the response of the state would be ruthless and merciless. However, the ANC had to take a final decision on the matter.

Delegates at the ANC national conference, held in Durban in December 1959, requested the movement for "bolder action" and criticised the ANC executive for its "cautious leadership".[6] For this reason, the conference decided on the anti-pass campaign, which was scheduled to start on 31 March 1960, the 41st anniversary of the Johannesburg anti-pass campaign of 31 March 1919. According to the decision of the conference, the ANC would embark on a nation-wide campaign of active massive resistance against the government, which would include, amongst others, national stoppages of work and burning of passes.[7] Other dates targeted by the ANC included 15 April or Africa Day and 31 May or Union Day. The culmination of all the protests would be the burning of passes countywide on 26 June 1960.[8] In the light of these resolutions it seems as if the ANC approached its campaign systematically and cautiously.

At the same time the PAC was also planning an anti-pass campaign. In line with the strategy of the PAC, the next phase of their unfolding and dynamic programme of action would be the launching of the so-called Anti-Pass Positive Action Campaign. The first exercise was to be the Status Campaign, which would prepare the ground for the Anti-Pass Campaign by freeing the mind of the African people from the feelings of inferiority inculcated into them over a long time. As Sobukwe said, "once the mind is free, the body will soon be free ... once white supremacy has become mentally untenable to our people, it will become physically untenable too - and will go".[9] This means that the PAC

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5 Rusty Bernstein, *Memory Against Forgetting*, p. 189.

6 B. Magubane, "The Turn to Armed Struggle" in South African Democracy Trust (SADET), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* vol.1, p. 68.

7 Archives of the ANC (ANC), University of Fort Hare (UFH), Alice, ANC SOMAFCO, Director's Office, Box 65: The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa: Whom Does It Serve?, pp. 3-4.

8 T. Lodge, *Black Power in South Africa since 1945*, p. 201.

9 The PAC of Azania (PAC), "Sobukwe's State of the Nation Address, Orlando Community Hall, Johannesburg, December 1959", in PAC of Azania, *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe from 1949-1959 and other documents of the Pan Africanist Congress of*

wanted to prepare the Africans mentally first in order to boost their self-confidence so as to face the dangerous anti-pass campaign. In this way, the PAC hoped to use the anti-pass campaign as a stepping-stone to challenge the regime and ensure that national freedom for the oppressed Africans was achieved.

With this aim in mind, the PAC leadership wanted to give their followers "something the ANC could not or would not offer - an opportunity to give full and unrestrained vent to political emotion".[10] Notable campaigns against pass laws had been fought by the Africans before, for example the pass burning campaigns of 1919 and 1944 and the well-known women's Anti-Pass March to Pretoria in August 1956. As a result, the leaders argued that the mentally liberated and politically conscious Africans, following the PAC's organised Status Campaign, would not plead for their inalienable rights, but would demand them. Nana Mahomo, one of the founder members of the PAC, was of the view that many Africans did not see any reason of changing their affiliation to join the PAC after the 1958 split. To them, the ANC was the organisation with the longest tradition as compared to the PAC. Consequently, he wanted the PAC to use the anti-pass campaign as an opportunity of gaining support from the Africans.[11] His reasoning was convincing, given the fact that the PAC's membership could have been below their expectations and the movement needed a bolder and spectacular initiative to attract people so as to increase its following among the Africans.

It was this crying need of the PAC which motivated them to do something unparalleled and unprecedented in the history of South Africa. Hence, the go-ahead for launching the Positive Action Campaign was announced at the first and only legal annual conference held in Orlando, Johannesburg on 19 and 20 December 1959.[12] According to the plan of the PAC, the national campaign to abolish the pass laws would be the first step of overthrowing white domination. Their protest march against the carrying of the passes would take place on 21 March, before the campaign of the ANC. This decision seemed to be consistent with the view that the PAC regarded itself as the leading nationalist

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Azania, p. 34.

10 G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa: The Evolution of an Ideology,* p. 215.

11 Archives of Willem Cullen (AWC), Wits University, Braamfontein, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1965 Political Material, A 2422/ 6: Interview between Nana Mahomo and Gail Gerhart, New York City, 2 July 1967, p. 2.

12 The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), *Time for Azania,* p. 5.

movement of the Africans at that time.

What emerged at this time was a spirit of intense competition and rivalry between the ANC and the PAC. According to Nelson Mandela, the PAC "knew of the anti-pass campaign and had been invited to join, but, instead of linking arms with the Congress movement, they sought to sabotage us".[13] The desire to outrival and upstage their opponent was also evident in the attitude of Sobukwe, who believed that "however ready or not ready, the PAC could not afford to wait any longer".[14] Sobukwe expected that the ANC's anti-pass campaign would fail dismally and people would be reluctant to support any later calls from the PAC against the pass laws. The lack of co-operation between the two movements at this stage was also explained by Jordan Ngubane, who was ready to work as an intermediary between the two movements, when he said: "Luthuli was willing to try to work out a common programme with PAC, to co-operate with them on the pass campaign; but his executive, esp. Nokwe, vetoed it".[15] This lack of co-operation concerning a sensitive issue like the anti-pass campaign, which affected all the Africans, clearly indicated the deteriorating relationships between the two African movements.

It was against this background that the PAC went ahead with its preparations. Sobukwe and his supporters toured the country to explain how the campaign had to be conducted. Preparations involved rallies, the issuing of circulars and pamphlets as well as campaigning for support from door to door. A flyer, which urged people to join, was also distributed throughout the country and it had this powerful message: "These laws must be brought to complete standstill. They must be blown to oblivion this year, Now and Forever. Are you with the downtrodden black masses or are you with the enemy? You must make up your mind Now".[16]

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13 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 224.

14 B. Pogrund, *Sobukwe and Apartheid*, p. 121.

15 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970 Political Material, A2224/ 16: Interview between Gail M. Gerhart and Jordan Ngubane, New York, 24 September 1972, p. 4.

16 PAC, "The Pan Africanist Congress (Ama-Africa Poqo) Has a Message for the Downtrodden Black Masses of Afrika", flyer distributed by the PAC on the eve of the anti-pass campaign throughout the country. Obtained from Peter Raboroko, in possession of the author.

Sobukwe and his comrades also explained that the campaign would be qualitatively and quantitatively different from the previous ones. The intended campaign would not be based on mere "protesting against this diabolical piece of legislation but on challenging the validity of the apartheid colonial status-quo".[17] According to the PAC, weaknesses in the previous campaigns against the pass laws had been caused by the following:

- "Belief that our white Christian oppressors could suddenly change their hearts, consequently, much time was spent on appealing to them;
- Inciting the masses to burn passes, without having mentally liberated them from white domination;
- The masses were often left to rot in jail, whilst their leaders could bail themselves out or pay fines".[18]

From the above, it was clear that the PAC was against all the tactics that were used by the ANC in the conduct of their anti-pass campaigns. As a result, the slogan under which the PAC would launch the campaign on March 21, 1960 would be "no bail, no defence and no fine". This slogan itself reflected a new political approach and attitude as well as the prevailing mood of the time, which, as Sobukwe explained, was to fill to capacity prisons with African workers until "industry will come to a standstill and the government will be forced to accept our terms".[19] In other words, the determination of the PAC to challenge the pass laws reflected a conscious and principled rejection of the whole system of apartheid as practised by the South African regime.

In pursuance of this aim, the PAC went ahead with its anti-pass campaign and asked its followers to display the spirit of non-violence when confronted by the police. To ensure maximum support, Sobukwe exhorted his followers to join the campaign in big numbers, because as he put it: "Sons and Daughters of Africa, we are standing on the threshold of an historic era. We are blazing a new trail and we invite you to be with us, creators of history. Join us in the march to freedom. March with us to independence. To independence now. Tomorrow the United States of Africa. Izwe Lethu!" (our land).[20]

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17 Archives of the PAC (PAC), University of Fort Hare (UFH), Alice, PAC Tanzania, Box 81, Chairman's Message for March 21, p. 1.

18 PAC, UFH, Alice, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Chairman's Message for March 21, p. 1.

19 PAC, *Time for Azania*, p. 56.

20 PAC, "Sobukwe's State of the Nation Address, Community Hall of Orlando,

According to Peter Raboroko, the PAC leaders were going to march with the protesters in the various regions and towns targeted by the movement. For this reason, George Zwidi Siwisa, Chairman of the Rand region and Vice-President of the PAC, Zeph Lekwame Mothopeng, Judicial Affairs Secretary, Selby Temba Ngendane, Foreign Affairs Secretary, Potlako Kitchener Leballo, National Secretary, Matthew Nkoana and others accompanied Sobukwe when he surrendered himself at the Orlando police station. Z.B. Molete, Information and Publicity Secretary, surrendered at Evaton on the same day as Abednego B. Ngcobo of Durban, who was the National Treasurer. In Sharpeville, Nyakale Tsolo led a big march to the police station. In the Cape Province Elliot Mfaxa, National Organiser, C.J. Fazzi, National Executive Member, Phillip Kgosana, Western Cape Regional Secretary and many others surrendered in various centres of the Cape. Elias Ntloedibe, Pretoria-Pietersburg Regional Chairman, and others surrendered in Pretoria.[21] This means that Sobukwe's trusted men were actively involved in leading the anti-pass campaign throughout the country.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the response to the call was positive and massive in some places where the PAC appeared to have support. Large numbers of African people supported the march in places like Sharpeville (near Vereeniging), Langa and Nyanga (Cape Town), Orlando (near Johannesburg), Pretoria and Durban. For the purpose of this research, it is not necessary to go into detail about what happened in Sharpeville on 21 March 1960, as the story is well-documented. However, what needs to be said is that the police fired on a crowd of demonstrators - killing about 69 and wounding about 178 people.[22] The Sharpeville massacre plunged South Africa into a deep crisis.

The shooting angered many people, even those who were reluctant to join at first. Even

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Johannesburg, December 1959", in *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, p. 36.

21 Peter Raboroko, "Defier of the Undefiable", p. 12 (obtained from Peter Raboroko, in author's possession).

22 South Africa (Union), U.G. 87: Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into and to Report on the Events which Occurred in the Districts of Vereeniging and Vanderbijlpark on the 21st Day of March, Cape Town, April 1960, p.25. See also the story of the Sharpeville incident in Ambrose Reeves, *Shooting at Sharpeville: The Agony of South Africa*.

the ANC, which blamed the PAC because of its hasty preparations for the campaign, also condemned the government for using brutal force. Following the mass killings at Sharpeville, Luthuli called for a day of mourning and a stay-away on 28 March 1960. Shock and anger made many people to respond positively to the call of Luthuli for a stay-away. Chief Luthuli, Nelson Mandela and Duma Nokwe even burnt their passes in public as a demonstration of anger.[23]

A few days later a large crowd of about 3000 people marched into the city of Cape Town. The march was led by Phillip Kgosana, the Western Cape branch leader of the PAC, and the aim was to enter parliament, where demands would be made to see the minister of police. However, the crowd dispersed peacefully in exchange for the concession of seeing the minister later on. The planned meeting did not take place. In the meantime, the regime replied by temporarily suspending the operation of the pass laws. This was a resounding victory for the PAC, as it felt that its actions had a major impact on the regime, even though it was for a short time only.

Sensing and fearing that the situation might get out of control, the government decided to get tough with the offenders. Outbreaks of violence and pass burnings, which took place in places like Durban, Port Elizabeth and Bloemfontein, were met with swift police action. Enforcement of the pass laws was resumed throughout the country. Moreover, the government even declared a state of emergency on 30 March 1960.[24] By doing so the government used its powers to clamp down on all suspected trouble-makers and people who were engaged in anti-government activities. Several opponents of the government were detained or arrested, even for minor offences. A serious consequence was that the government also decided to ban the ANC and the PAC on 8 April 1960 under the newly passed Unlawful Organisations Act.[25] This show of power enabled the government to prohibit political gatherings, arrest and detain its enemies, seize and confiscate undesirable books and documents.

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23 R. Bernstein, *Memory Against Forgetting*, p. 191.

24 South Africa (Union), *Government Gazette*, vol. CXCIX, no.6403, Cape Town, 30 March 1960. Proclamation no.90, "State of emergency exists within certain areas".

25 South Africa (Union), *Government Gazette*, vol. CXCIX, no. 6414, Cape Town, 8 April 1960. Proclamation 119, "Banning of the bodies known as ANC and PAC".

After passing these laws, the attitude of the government was unapologetic and remorseless. This attitude was reflected in the parliamentary debates in which the National Party ministers defended their government. Their attitude was that the activities of the ANC and the PAC exceeded the limits of legality, as their aims appeared to be to overthrow of the government by violent means. The Minister of Justice, Francois Erasmus, told parliament on 29 March 1960: "Their aim is to bring to its knees any White Government in South Africa which stands for White supremacy and for White leadership...{They} do not want peace and order; what they want is not 1$ a day for all the Bantu in South Africa; What they want is our country!"[26] The Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, M.D.C. de Wet Nel, condemned Chief Luthuli and his supporters by labelling them as agitators, who incited violence and revolt "particularly on the part of the Bantu who has not yet reached the standard of civilisation of the White man, it is then very easy {for agitators} to strike the match, in which case the law-abiding Bantu become the victims of what is happening in the country today".[27]

The Minister of Justice justified the proposed banning of the ANC and the PAC. According to him, it would be a futile exercise to consult or negotiate with these organisations, because they did not represent the interest of the majority of the Africans, as "they are just a small coterie of terrorists".[28] However, these strong-arm tactics, advocated by Erasmus, seemed to be contradicted by his fellow National Party member, Paul Sauer, who acted as premier, when he said: "The old book of South Africa was closed a month ago, and, for the immediate future, South Africa will reconsider in earnest and honesty her whole approach to the Native question..."[29] In essence, the debates indicated that the revolutionary climate was slowly engulfing South Africa.

Meanwhile, the ANC accused the PAC of having caused disunity by issuing the call of 21 March 1960. It also accused the PAC of confusing Africans by using the word

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26 Union of South Africa, House of Assembly Debates, Third Session, Twelfth Parliament, volume 104, 29 March 1960, col. 4302-3.

27 Union of South Africa, House of Assembly Debates, Third Session, Twelfth Parliament, volume 104, 29 March 1960, col. 4328.

28 Union of South Africa, House of Assembly Debates, Third Session, Twelfth Parliament, volume 104, 29 March 1960, col. 4302.

29 Union of South Africa, House of Assembly Debates, Third Session, Twelfth Parliament, volume 105, 16 April 1960, col. 6428.

"Congress" when it mobilised for support. Their argument was that since the ANC had massive support amongst the Africans, they were actually misled when "the newly-formed counter-revolutionary Pan Africanist Congress issued a treacherous call to the people to go and stand outside police stations".[30] Furthermore, Duma Nokwe of the ANC wrote in a letter that the ANC was reluctant to support a campaign which had "not been properly prepared for, and which has no reasonable prospects of success".[31] On the other side the PAC countered what Duma Nokwe said through Phillip Kgosana, who said that "those who are not with us are with the enemy - at least Mr Nokwe told us where he stands yesterday...Yes, it is the work of the good white man...Perhaps Duma Nokwe is not carrying a pass - we do not know".[32] This public exchange of views by leaders of the two movements concerning the anti-pass campaign indicated that their relationships were actually falling apart.

3.2.3 The Aftermath of Sharpeville

The shocking news of the shooting at Sharpeville confronted the South African regime with a political crisis unequalled in its history. Many whites, perceived to be threatened, went to the extent of making enquiries about emigration to countries such as Canada and Australia.[33] Newspaper reports about the Congo crisis exacerbated white fears. The economic situation deteriorated due to political uncertainties. The Johannesburg Stock Exchange experienced massive sellings and investments were threatened. The anti-pass campaign exposed internationally the true nature of the brutality of the apartheid regime, which killed and seriously injured people. This brutality led to the start of South Africa's economic and political isolation. Dr Motsoko Pheko, one of the prominent current leaders of the PAC, said: "The Sharpeville Uprising resulted in the involvement of the United Nations in the problems of apartheid and colonialism in South Africa and internationalised the apartheid problem to a point that the United Nations

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30 ANC, UFH, ANC SOMAFCO, Director's Office, Box 65: The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania: Whom Does It Serve?, p. 4.

31 *Sunday Times*, 20 March 1960.

32 Phillip Kgosana, "Launching Address" {quoting text of R. M. Sobukwe's final instructions}, March 20, 1960, in T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge, 1882-1964*, volume 3, p. 567.

33 G. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa since 1945*, p. 242.

declared apartheid a crime against humanity".[34] From then on South Africa's racial problems were taken more seriously and became part of the agenda of the United Nations Organisation (UNO) frequently.

For the liberation movements the consequences of the events of 1960 were tragic and serious. Neither the ANC nor the PAC appeared to be ready to face the challenges. The regime looked quite strong and unconquerable, whereas the liberation movements seemed weak and decisively defeated. Mandela firmly believed that the massacre at Sharpeville had created a new situation in the country. He reluctantly praised the PAC by saying that, in spite of the amateurishness and opportunism of their leaders, the PAC rank and file displayed great courage and fortitude in their demonstration at Sharpeville and Langa, with the result that "in just one day, they had moved to the frontlines of the struggle and Robert Sobukwe was being hailed inside and outside the country as the saviour of the liberation movements".[35] This view is supported by Dr Pheko, who maintains that Sobukwe's leadership had "changed the reformist cap in hand politics of this country and exposed the evil system internationally and without Sobukwe's leadership there might never have been any historic political watershed like the Sharpeville incident of March 21 1960".[36] In other words, Sobukwe and his organisation were being praised for being bold enough to challenge the validity of the hated pass laws and the integrity of the organs which implemented such unjust laws. As a result, the prestige and image of the PAC appeared to be enhanced at the expense of the ANC at this time.

Nevertheless, the speed and haste with which the anti-pass campaign was undertaken by the PAC would have disastrous effects on the movement in the long-term. The regime arrested and detained important leaders of the two movements. However, it should be noted that the PAC had been in existence for less than a year when it suddenly undertook the task to organise the massive anti-pass campaign. Its leaders had not had sufficient time to be known to the public, like those of the ANC. Moreover, the PAC did not have enough time to build more "layers", or a hierarchical structure of

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34 M. Pheko, "Was Rivonia a Turning Point in South African Struggle?", p. 1.

35 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom,* p. 226.

36 *The City Press*, 1 January 1988; Interview with Dr Peter Molotsi, Kroonstad, 15 May 1999.

leaders, so as to ensure continuity should something happen to the top leaders.[37] When it stated that the leaders should sacrifice and be with the people during the anti-pass campaign, the PAC exposed almost its entire leadership to police brutality. When the police clamped down on the well-known and suspected leaders of the anti-pass campaign, the PAC was the most hard-hit movement. Sobukwe and other top leaders of the PAC were removed from the political scene for long periods and this would affect the quality of the leadership of the PAC. After the arrests of the movement's top leaders the PAC headquarters in Johannesburg was left in the hands of William Jolobe, who was a student.[38] This lack of foresight and thorough planning at this time would haunt the PAC in the future.

After Sharpeville the liberation struggle entered a new phase in which, according to Mandela, "we were now, all of us, outlaws".[39] This means that the banning of the liberation movements actually forced them to change their strategy of operating legally, above the ground, to one of working illegally from the underground. Moreover, the banning represented a turning point in the history of African nationalism, when protest finally changed into outright and open resistance. As a result, no African political movement was taken seriously if it still regarded non-violence as the principal form of the struggle. Hence John Nyati Pokela, who was the Chairman of the PAC in the early 1980's, summarised the situation in these words: "It was said at the time before Sharpeville the oppressed, exploited and discriminated against people of Azania were prepared to suffer for their freedom, but after Sharpeville they were not only ready to die for it, but also to kill for it. Continued reactionary violence of the oppressor was to be answered not with the proverbial 'other cheek' but with revolutionary violence of the masses".[40]

From the foregoing, it becomes evident that the African politicians were forced to start thinking about other ways of furthering the aims of the struggle. As a result, the ANC and the PAC had to reorganise and readjust themselves to the new methods and

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37 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge, 1882-1964*, vol. 3, p. 331.

38 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge,* vol. 3, p. 341.

39 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom,* p. 231.

40 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Speech Delivered by the Chairman of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania Comrade John Nyati Pokela on the Occasion of the 22nd Anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre, Dar-es-Salaam, March 21, 1982, p. 3.

strategies of operating illegally in South Africa.

3.3 METHODS AND STRATEGIES OF THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS BETWEEN 1960 AND 1969

As pointed out above, the banning of the ANC and the PAC was a turning point in the history of South Africa. As banned organisations, the ANC and the PAC could no longer openly challenge the laws that they regarded as being unjust to the Africans. The result was that many Africans felt politically impotent and this led to mounting tensions and frustrations. Undoubtedly, their lack of political power inevitably led to the politics of confrontation and violent resistance. It could also be argued that the banning of the liberation movements promoted the deterioration of race relations, that is, especially between Africans and whites.

Of particular importance was the fact that the banning of the ANC and the PAC in April 1960 led to two major decisions. The first was to establish missions in exile in order to ask for financial and moral support for the liberation movements. As Oliver Tambo put it, "our brief was to establish the external mission in order to win friends for our struggle and thereby isolate the apartheid state, and secondly, we were to create a reliable rear base for our struggle".[41] In the case of the PAC those who escaped the raids left the country for the High Commission territories (Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland) and other parts of Africa and Europe, where they could reconstruct their lives and seek help so that they could rescuscitate the struggle against the South African regime. Peter Raboroko said that they were sent on secret missions together with Peter Molotsi and Nana Mohomo, when other PAC leaders were involved with the anti-pass campaign.[42] According to Molotsi they were requested by the PAC leadership to go and seek foreign help and he went straight to Ghana.[43]

The second decision was to set up underground structures in order to wage the struggle

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41 ANC, UFH, Alice, ANC SOMAFCO, Director's Office, Box 18: Statement of the President of the African National Congress Oliver Tambo to the African National Conference, Durban, 1 July 1991, p. 3.

42 Peter Raboroko, "Defier of the Undefiable", p. 12.

43 Interview with Dr Peter Molotsi, Kroonstad, 15 May 1999.

inside the country. After the Sharpeville massacre, the weaknesses of the liberation movements were revealed by the regime, which arrested important leaders and made it impossible for the remaining ones to engage in free political activity. In anticipation of the government taking strong actions against them, the ANC specifically re-introduced the M-plan in order to be able to work from the underground. The system was named after Mandela and was used during the Defiance Campaign of the early 1950s. Its aim was to build up mass support and to organise it through a hierarchy of accepted leaders, who could transmit information and decisions from the national level to the grassroots.[44] The M-plan enabled the ANC to operate from the underground without convening any public meetings. When the Communist Party was banned in 1950, some of its members operated from the underground in co-operation with some of the ANC members. Even though it was not a perfect system, the M-plan enabled the ANC to survive operating under illegal conditions. For this reason, the ANC was able to release information from the underground, which defied the regime, like the one which said: "We do not recognise the validity of this law, and we shall not submit to it. The African National Congress will carry on in its own name to give leadership and organisation to our people until freedom has been won and every trace of the scourge of racial discrimination has been banished from our country".[45] There was also a clandestine bulletin, which the ANC released from the underground structures and which indicated that the movement was still prepared to fight for its aims and rights: "We shall carry on our fight of the past half century for the rights and freedom of the African people".[46]

On the other hand, the PAC seemed to be less prepared for the harsh conditions of working underground. Most PAC leaders were in prison or had decided to flee the country. However, what was clear was that the PAC had exaggerated its capacity to challenge the South African regime. As a result of the clamp down on its important leaders like Sobukwe, the PAC was incapacitated and handicapped to the extent that it would take the movement a long time to recover fully.

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44 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 3, p. 36.

45 "A Statement by the Emergency Committee of the African National Congress, April 1, 1960" in T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 3, p. 572.

46 "Congress Fights On ... Release the Detainees!!!", *African National Congress Voice*, no. 1, April 1960, in T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 3 p. 574.

Despite the problem of being immobilised and rendered ineffective by the regime, it was clear that African political attitudes were hardening and taking the new realities into consideration. This new attitude was highlighted by Mandela in 1963 when he told the court the following: "My colleagues and I, after careful consideration, decided that we would not obey this decree. The Africans were not part of the Government and did not make the laws by which they were governed ... for us to accept the banning was equivalent to accepting the silencing of the Africans for all time. The ANC refused to dissolve, but instead went underground. We believe it was our duty to preserve this organisation which had been built up with almost fifty years of unremitting toil".[47] In the same way, Nyati Pokela of the PAC believed that the events of the early 1960s "unequivocally cleared the political deck and decisively paved the way for a protracted armed struggle inside occupied Azania".[48] In other words, the banning of the liberation movements decisively moved the struggle from that of mere protesting to that of challenging the legality of the South African regime.

3.3.1 Peaceful methods explored

The Afrikaner nationalist ideal of re-establishing an Afrikaner-dominated republic was realised on 31 May 1961, when the Republic of South Africa came into existence. In the midst of the state of desperation and hopelessness into which the liberation movements had been thrown by their proscriptions, the South African government, under the premiership of Dr H.F. Verwoerd, showed even more arrogance and intransigence when it excluded all non-white people from any share in the making of the Republic. This indifference and insensitivity became a reality when the government allowed only whites to vote in the republican referendum in October 1960. Interestingly enough, the decision to make South Africa a republic of whites came just after the Sharpeville massacre, when there was widespread international condemnation and the Commonwealth debated whether to expel the regime from its membership or not. It was not surprising that the white electorate voted in favour of declaring South Africa a republic outside the

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47 N. Mandela, *No Easy Walk to Freedom*, p. 166.

48 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: John Nyati Pokela (Chairman of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania), Speech, 22nd Anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre, Dar-es-Salaam, March 21, 1982, p. 2.

Commonwealth during the referendum. Many National Party supporters and sympathisers appeared pleased, as they regarded their international isolation not as a disaster but as a chance of asserting their freedom and independence. These developments created the impression that the government would never accede to the requests and demands of the oppressed people of South Africa.

The uncertain political future of the Africans was described by Mandela at his trial in 1963, when he said: "All of us were apprehensive about our future under a proposed White Republic, and a resolution was taken to hold an All-in-African Conference [in 1961] to call for a National Convention { to adopt a democratic constitution representing all the peoples of South Africa}".[49] Thus, the deterioration of the political scene in South Africa necessitated the convening of a meeting of the various organisations of the oppressed for the purpose of charting the new path of dealing with the government.

Having realised that it was unthinkable to give up the struggle, African leaders of all political persuasions began to seek one another out and devised a way of continuing with the struggle. Through the initiative of the ANC, a meeting of African leaders was called in December 1960 in Orlando, near Soweto, to consider joint plans of action to stop the regime from further harassing the Africans. Despite the efforts of the police to make sure that the planned conference would not be held, it did take place and the following important resolutions were taken:

- "the formation of a Continuation Committee elected from representatives of all participating organizations like the Liberal Party, ANC and PAC;
- preparations for a country-wide All-in-African Unity conference of the African people targeted for March 1961;
- waging war against apartheid, and
- the formation of a non-racial democracy".[50]

The temporary unity achieved by the Orlando Consultative Conference was brought to

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49 N. Mandela, *No Easy Walk to Freedom*, p. 167.

50 Mayibuye Archives (MA), University of the Western Cape (UWC), Bellville, ANC London Office, Box 1: Resolutions Adopted at the Consultative Conference of African Leaders, Donaldson Community Centre, Orlando, 16-17 December 1960, p. 1.

an end by quarrels among the leaders of the ANC, the PAC and the Liberal Party. Each party tried to push its own agenda or line of thinking. Moreover, the deep-rooted suspicion between the ANC and the PAC could not be corrected soon after the 1959 split.

From the beginning, the diverse political views represented on the Continuation Committee caused problems. While the ANC was represented by Duma Nokwe, Govan Mbeki and Alfred Nzo, the PAC was represented by Joe Molefi only. In addition, there were also the chairman of the Continuation Committee, J. Ngubane and his fellow members of the Liberal Party, Julius Mabe and H.J. Bengu, Mark Shope (SACP), the Rev. Tantsi, Paul Mosaka, J.C. Mbata, B. Rajuili and W.B. Ngubane.[51] It was not surprising that the PAC felt that it was outnumbered by the ANC on the Continuation Committee and expressed the fear that the Continuation Committee would be turned into another "multiracial convention", which would be dominated by the superior numbers of the ANC communists.[52] To worsen matters, the Liberal Party also supported the PAC, when it complained about the domination of the Continuation Committee by the communists in the ANC.[53] Matters were complicated further when the committee sat down to plan for the All-in-African Unity Conference.

In particular, the PAC and the Liberal Party delegates felt that important decisions were taken without the knowledge and the agreement of all the members of the committee. They complained about pamphlets that were printed and distributed in the name of the Continuation Committee. They were not happy with the leaflet that announced the All - in-African Conference of March 25-26, which would be held in the city hall of Pietermaritzburg.[54] Again, they expressed their dissatisfaction when large sums of

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51 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box1: Letter Addressed to All African Political, Cultural, Social and Religious Bodies: Continuation Committee of African Leaders, 12 January 1961.

52 E. Feit, *Urban Revolt in South Africa, 1960-1964*, p. 52.

53 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), From Protest to Challenge, vol. 3, pp. 354-356.

54 See Continuation Committee of African Leaders, "The African Leaders Call to the African People of South Africa", leaflet announcing the All-in-African Conference of March 25-26, 1961, n.d., in T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 3, p. 629.

money, whose sources could not be traced, became freely available.[55] Extravagant parties were frequently held for members of the Continuation Committee. The secrecy surrounding the acquisition of these funds generated endless tensions within the Continuation Committee.

As would be expected, the Africanists were the first to leave the Continuation Committee. The PAC argued that the committee was violating the mandate granted to it by the Orlando Consultative Conference. From their side the ANC accused the PAC of sabotaging unity. After the walkout of the PAC member from the committee, money continued to pour in from the unidentified source. There was agreement in PAC ranks that the ANC was not interested in unity. This line of thinking was confirmed by the refusal of the ANC to agree to postpone the All-in-African Unity Conference, thereby ruining the chances of resolving its differences with the PAC. Even the Liberal Party decided to leave the committee at this point and apart from the ANC only a number of sporting, cultural and religious organisations remained behind. As a result of the approach of the ANC, Ngubane argued that this "invisible hand" was not interested in genuine African unity, but was more interested in advancing its own ideological ends.[56]

From the above, it is clear that the ANC and the PAC were competing for leadership in African politics. In future anything the ANC wanted to do would always be opposed by the PAC and anything the PAC wanted to do would be fiercely opposed by the ANC. Each would go out of its way to disrupt the activities of the other.

Although hostilities between the two principal African opposition groups nearly ruined the Continuation Committee, it continued with the planning of the All-in-African Conference. Prior to this important conference, the police harassed and arrested some of the ANC leaders. However, the government did not succeed to sabotage the preparations of the conference.

In spite of the early setbacks, the All-in-African Conference duly met in Pietermaritzburg on 25 and 26 March 1961. The proceedings were dominated by the ANC and its allies. The growing dissatisfaction of the African people against the regime was shown by the enthusiasm of delegates from all over the country, who challenged all government

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55 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 3, p. 355.

56 J. Ngubane, *An African Explains Apartheid*, p. 170.

intimidation and obstruction in order to attend this important unity conference. The climax of the conference was the surprise appearance of Nelson Mandela from the underground. He delivered a keynote address to the conference on which most of the resolutions were based. The almost mysterious appearance of Mandela was not a big surprise to the PAC. Members of the PAC always suspected that plans were being made to build up Mandela as a hero in order to outclass Sobukwe.[57] This suspicion could be one of the reasons why the PAC was not committed to the All-in-African Conference.

Notwithstanding the problems of the PAC regarding the conference, important resolutions were taken. The most important resolution was one calling on the government to prepare a National Convention, which would represent "all adult men and women on an equal basis irrespective of race, colour, creed or other limitation, be called by the Union Government not later than May 31st, 1961".[58] Failure by the government to accede to this request would be faced with massive demonstrations and protests towards the end of May. The demonstrations would then be followed by the refusal of the Africans to work together with the government. The wide-spread campaigns were planned to coincide with the proclamation of the Republic of South Africa.

What emerges from the above is that the conference was dominated by the ANC. This was the concern of the PAC. It was also clear that the ANC had no intention of giving up its fight against the government or letting other groups gain political ascendancy in South Africa

After the formation of the National Action Council (NAC) at the All-in-African Conference, preparations were made for the end of May strike. For this reason, the NAC proceeded with the difficult task of informing the public about the resolutions of the All-in-African Conference and in particular highlighting the end of May strike. Even the government was informed about the impending strike, but simply ignored the ANC and failed to respond.

Meanwhile, the ANC distributed large quantities of pamphlets and flyers throughout the

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57 T. Karis and Gail. M.Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge,* vol. 3, p. 355.

58 "Resolutions of the All-in-African Conference, Pietermaritzburg, March 25-26, 1961", in T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge,* p. 632.

main centres of the country to publicise the strike. One such pamphlet encouraged and exhorted students and learners to support the resolutions of the All-in-African Conference, especially the call for a National Convention and the end of May strike.[59]

What was the outcome of the strike? Although the strike itself was planned to last for three days, it had to be cancelled after one day due to lack of enough support. Given the difficult circumstances under which it was planned, the strike was a no-starter. It faced stiff and formidable opposition not only from the government, but also from the PAC.

Amongst Africans, the fiercest opposition came from the PAC. After the ANC had made a clarion call to action to the "African Youth" to support the strike on 31 May 1961, the PAC countered by releasing thousands of leaflets in which it urged Africans to ignore and boycott the ANC's anti-Republican protests. Like at the time of the parting of ways in 1958, the PAC associated the ANC with the Communist Party. The attitude of the PAC was evident from these words, which appeared in its flyer: "We, the PAC, say: Do not follow the Congress Alliance. The PAC do not support the Congress Alliance with their present move to a National Convention. We do not want our people to become Russian ... All PAC supporters must go to work and not support the Alliance!"[60]

On the other hand, the ANC released its own flyer to counter the harm already caused by the PAC. The position adopted by the ANC is explained by the following words: "The great three-day strike of May 1961, which turned the planned Republic Day celebrations into a farce, with a tense atmosphere of martial law, found the PAC leadership once again in the role of strike-breakers. The PAC which had remained as silent as the grave since Sharpeville, made a brief and inglorious appearance on the South African scene to issue leaflets calling on the workers to ignore the stay-at-home call of Maritzburg and Mandela - and to go to work as usual. The excuse was that the declaration of a republic was the white people's affair. Small wonder that Vorster's police were delighted and even helped distribute the PAC leaflets. This was, incidentally, the PAC's final exit from

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[59] Nelson R. Mandela (Secretary), "An Appeal to Students and Scholars", flyer issued by the All-in-African National Action Council, n.d., in T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge,* vol. 3, pp. 633-634.

[60] PAC, "Poqo. Poqo. Poqo", flyer, n.d. in T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge,* vol. 3, pp. 639-640.

the stage of South African politics".[61] For this reason, the ANC believed that there was complete identity of aims between the PAC and the fascist government of South Africa, which raised the poignant question: Who was serving whom?[62]

At the same time, the government also used the restrictive measures in terms of the state of emergency, which allowed suspects to be detained for at least twelve days at a stretch.[63] Moreover, the Minister of Justice, F.C. Erasmus, announced that gatherings and meetings were prohibited and high penalties would be imposed for advertising or attending such events. The ban was to remain in force until 26 June, but was lifted prematurely due to the failure of the end of May strike.[64]

Legislation was accompanied by large-scale police raids all over the country, which dampened the spirit of many strikers. A warrant of arrest was issued for the immediate imprisonment of Nelson Mandela. His evasion of the police for nearly a year and half endeared him to many Africans, who nicknamed him the "Black Pimpernel".[65]

The whole plan of the NAC failed to achieve the desired results, because the PAC discouraged its members to participate in the activities mainly organised by the ANC. More importantly, the government was always ready to take unprecedented steps in order to maintain law and order. Hence, the police reacted with large-scale arrests of important leaders. At this stage, once it became clear that the strike could not be sustained any further, Mandela decided to call it off from his hideout. The mood of this time is described by Mandela himself in this manner: "...the response as whole appeared less than we had hoped. Communication was difficult, and bad news always seems to travel more efficiently than good. As more reports came in, I felt let down and disappointed by the reaction. That evening, feeling demoralized and rather angry, I had a conversation with Benjamin Pogrund ...in which I suggested that the days of non-

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61 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76: Statement of the African National Congress of South Africa on the Question of Unity with the Pan Africanist Congress, pp. 8-9.

62 ANC, UFH, ANC SOMAFCO, Director's Office, Box 65: The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania: Whom Does It Serve?, p. 5.

63 South Africa (Union), *Government Gazette*, vol. CXCIX, no. 6403, Cape Town, 30 March 1960. Proclamation no. 90 of 1960, pp. 1-13.

64 T. Karis and Gail. M.Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge,* vol. 3, pp. 362-364.

65 T. Karis and Gail. M.Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge,* vol. 3, p. 652.

violent struggle were over".[66] Mandela was suggesting that African leaders had to look for alternative forms of perpetuating the struggle in the face of the massive show of force and tough stance taken by the South African regime.

3.3.2 Transition to violence

With the strike broken, the liberation movements were left with the choice of reassessing their precarious existence in the face of the might and the power of the South African regime. The quelling of the strike by brutal police action actually confirmed that even open peaceful mass action was no longer safe. The bitter memories of the Sharpeville massacre were still fresh in the minds of most Africans. Open and peaceful resistance had exposed that the liberation movements could not provide protection to their defenceless members.

At this point, it becomes necessary to explain how the regime prepared itself for the revolutionary climate that existed in South Africa between 1960 and 1965. The events from 1961 indicated clearly to the regime that the showdown between the liberation movements and itself was imminent. For this reason, in 1961 the regime decided to add to the tasks of the Minister of Justice, B.J. Vorster, the responsibility of managing the police. Mr Vorster appointed Lieutenant-General J.M. Keevey as Commissioner of Police in 1962. In 1964, he appointed Hendrik van der Bergh as head of the Security Branch. According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report, in the history of the police in South Africa the three were known as a formidable triumvirate, whose main task was to "safeguard and protect the country" against its enemies. Stricter security measures were introduced, including the establishment of a special unit called the "Sabotage Squad" and a covert intelligence section known as the Republican Intelligence (RI), which operated as part of the Security Branch. The Republican Intelligence had many informers and was aimed at tracking down the liberation movements and their armed formations. Officials were armed with laws that created an environment of surveillance and repression, like the General Law Amendment Act of 1962, which imposed a host of restrictions in the form of banning orders on specific people, and the Indemnity Act of 1961, which gave the police indemnity for acts committed in good faith. These laws gave the police unlimited powers and placed them

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66 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom,* p. 258.

above public condemnation.[67]

Of particular significance was the fact that when the regime was readying itself for the eventual and unavoidable confrontation with the liberation movements, liberation leaders were also toying with the idea that the violence of the regime could no longer go on unchallenged. Despite their recent quarrels and differences over the planned Republic Day strike, both the ANC and the PAC believed that the violence of the regime had to be reciprocated. In other words, whites had to be shown that the Africans also had the capacity and determination to fight back.

In describing the prevailing mood at that time, the PAC's view was that the minority regime of South Africa had closed all doors for the peaceful resolution of the problems of South Africa. As a result of the new political situation, the basic form of human survival could be likened to the crudest law governing the survival of animals: "kill or be killed."[68] Molotsi confirmed this notion of fighting, when he said that the PAC did not believe in "making non-violence a policy; to us it was just a tactic."[69] The position of the PAC was clear and unequivocal in that it committed itself to violence as a weapon of waging the struggle. This indicates that the PAC believed that no serious liberation movement could advocate non-violence at this time as the principal form of waging the struggle against a government which was brutal and unshakeable.

Mandela also expressed the same sentiments as the PAC by asking these questions: "Is it politically correct to continue preaching peace and non-violence when dealing with a government whose barbaric practices have brought so much suffering to Africans and as a result have we not closed a chapter on this question?"[70] Mandela indicated that some of the leading members of the ANC were questioning the wisdom of continuing with its long tradition of non-violence and were considering changing this policy. Some of these members, whom Mandela was talking about, included people such as Joe Slovo, Duma Nokwe, Walter Sisulu and Rusty Bernstein. Since the inception of the

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67 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Report, October 1998, vol.2, chapter 4, pp. 11-13.

68 M.Nkoana, "Kill or be Killed", *The New African*, November 1966, p. 6.

69 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 Political Material, A2422/15: Interview between Gail M. Gerhart and Peter Molotsi, Nairobi, 30 June 1972, p. 9.

70 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, p. 220.

state of emergency in 1961, this group, which was mainly based in Johannesburg, "already put forward a concrete, consistent line on armed struggle."[71] Interestingly enough, the overlapping between the ANC members and the core group from the Central Committee of the SACP was noticeable. This means that these individuals were not only pressing the decision for the armed struggle in both the ANC and the SACP, but were also working together.

Although calls for old-style strategies and tactics were becoming unpopular within the ANC-SACP alliance, the alternative strategy of resorting to violence was not acceptable to everybody. In the case of the SACP, the issue of turning to the armed struggle was complicated by race. The discussion which took place between Raymond Mhlaba, Rusty Bernstein and others in 1960 explains the problem succinctly: "... why we as communists are ashamed to handle this matter of armed struggle? Why are we so hesitant? But you know what makes our people hesitant - they are convinced, really convinced that it is going to be racialistic ... It's going to be white man versus black. They said how are you going to handle this in South Africa?"[72] Because of this problem, the most cautious people regarding the introduction of the armed struggle within the SACP were Moses Kotane and Bram Fischer. Nevertheless, the SACP took the decision to use the armed struggle against the regime before the ANC did so, around December1960. According to Essop Pahad, it was easier for the SACP to take a formal decision before the ANC, because their movement was smaller.[73] Besides sending Wilton Mkwayi for military training in China in 1961, the SACP discussed the issue of the armed struggle at their conference in December 1960, after Michael Harmel's visit to Moscow. After this meeting, Rusty Bernstein said that the Central Committee (CC) "would consider the matter further, but in the meanwhile it was to set up small units in all districts to familiarise themselves with the practice and techniques of forms of armed struggle."[74] From the above, it seems probable that the SACP took the decision to embark on the armed struggle before the ANC.

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71 B. Magubane et. al., "The Turn to Armed Struggle", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 1, 1960-1970, p. 86.

72 B. Magubane et. al., "The Turn to Armed Struggle", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 1, 1960-1970, p. 71.

73 B. Magubane et. al., "The Turn to Armed Struggle", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* vol. 1, 1960-1970, p. 82.

74 R. Bernstein, *Memory Against Forgetting*, pp. 226-227.

Unlike the SACP, the ANC seemed to have resorted to the strategy of using violence with some difficulty or reluctance. The turn to violence provoked opposition from the ANC President, Chief Albert Luthuli, who still believed in non-violence and negotiations. Luthuli was noted for being a man of peace, who preached non-violence because he was by nature deeply Christian and friendly. It was not surprising to find out that the ideology of a broad African nationalism and inter-racial co-operation gained prominence during his term of office as President of the ANC. This was often misconstrued as a sign of weakness and submission by his detractors, who were mostly the Africanists. The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1961 to Chief Luthuli confirmed that he believed in the policy of non-violence. In criticising the leaders of the ANC and Chief Luthuli in particular about the policy of non-violence, the PAC said: "The ANC leaders were so gentle in their attitude toward the oppressors and dispossessors of the African people that Chief Albert John Luthuli, this Congress leader was honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1961. He was the only leader of a political party in Africa struggling for the rights of an oppressed and dispossessed people to be so honoured. It was certainly a reward for the Congress policy of non-violence."[75] The criticism of the PAC against Luthuli and other ANC leaders was unfair and could have been motivated by bitterness and jealousy, since the PAC did not have a leader of the calibre of Luthuli. The award itself was important for the ANC, as it gave the movement some form of respectability, prominence and credibility in South Africa and internationally.

Nevertheless, violence was accepted as a last resort by the ANC, as explained by Mandela from the dock in the Rivonia Trial: "It was only when all else had failed; when all chances of peaceful protest had been barred to us, that the decision was made to embark on violent forms of political struggle, and to form Umkhonto We Sizwe. We did so not because we desired such a course, but solely because the Government had left us no other choice."[76] Therefore, the implication was that the policy of non-violence, as had been practised by the ANC since its inception, was now over.

The desperation in which the ANC found itself forced its national executive to consider Mandela's proposal in favour of violence. However, as has already been noted,

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75 E. Khopung, *Apartheid: The Story of Dispossessed People*, p. 99.

76 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box1: I am Accused: Evidence Given by Mandela at the Rivonia Trial, n.d., p. 4. See also N. Mandela, *No Easy Walk to Freedom*, p. 169.

Congress under the presidency of Chief Luthuli had objections to the proposal. Despite these objections Mandela was able to convince the meeting to accept his proposal, especially when he indicated that the regime did not give the ANC any alternative and the people had started fighting on their own. Furthermore, he indicated the following: "Violence would begin whether we initiate it or not. Would it not be better to guide this violence ourselves, according to principles where we saved lives by attacking symbols of oppression, and not people? If we did not take the lead now, I said, we would soon be latecomers and followers to a movement we did not control."[77]

In spite of his steadfastness on maintaining the policy of non-violence, Mandela's plea seemed to have convinced Chief Luthuli to a certain extent. His yielding to Mandela's argument could probably be an indication that he did not have any alternative to the regime's insensitivity and brutality to the Africans. For this reason, he gave permission to his members who wished to join a separate body, which pursued violence, the freedom to do so. Joe Slovo put it succinctly when he said : "Indeed that grand old man of the ANC, Chief Albert Luthuli, whose presidential leadership had made immeasurable contributions to the radical struggle of the 1950's was not a party to the decision nor was he ever to endorse it. It was a measure of his greatness that despite his Christian commitment to non-violence, he never forbade or condemned the new path, blaming it on the regime's intransigence rather than on those who created MK."[78]

As a result of the new situation, the ANC and the SACP lost no time in setting up sabotage units. These units led to the formation of the ANC's military wing known as Umkhonto We Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), or simply as MK. The actual date of its formation, 16 December 1961, coincided with the date on which the Afrikaners commemorated their victory over Dingane's Zulu warriors at the Battle of Ncome River (Blood River) in Natal in 1838. The date was chosen for its historical importance of symbolising white domination over Africans. However, for the ANC-SACP alliance, the formation of MK started a new phase of revolutionary war as a means of overthrowing the government of South Africa.[79] According to Mandela, the explosions which occurred on 16 December 1961 in major towns like Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg and Durban, not only shocked the white South Africans, but also made Africans aware that the ANC "was

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77 N. Mandela, *No Easy Walk to Freedom,* p. 260.

78 J. Slovo, *The Unfinished Autobiography*, p. 147.

79 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 3: Methods of the Struggle in South Africa, n.d., p. 1.

no longer an organization of passive resistance, but a powerful spear that would take the struggle to the heart of white power."[80]

In explaining the reason why it became important to embark upon the armed struggle, the ANC said: "We are launching out on a new course for the liberation of the people of this country. The government's policy of force, repression and violence will no longer be met with non-violent resistance only, the choice is not ours; it has been made by the Nationalist government which has rejected every peaceful demand by the people for rights and freedom and answered every such demand with force and yet more force."[81] Moreover, the ANC described the role of MK in this way: "MK will be at the front line of the people's defence. It will be the striking force of the people for liberty, for rights and for their final liberation. In these actions we are working in the best interests of all the people of this country - black, brown, and white - whose future happiness and well-being cannot be attained without the overthrow of white supremacy and the winning of liberty, democracy and full national rights and equality for all the people of this country."[82] In other words, the ANC wanted to free all races in South Africa in keeping with its long tradition of establishing a multi-racial society. The implication was also that it was fighting in order to free the oppressors of the Africans, which were the white regime and its supporters.

Interestingly enough, the ANC claimed that it was fighting the white government in order to avoid a civil war, which could cause a bloodbath: "We of Umkhonto We Sizwe have always sought as the liberation movement to achieve liberation without bloodshed and civil clash. We do still. We hope even at this late hour that our first actions will awaken everyone to a realisation of the disastrous situation to which the Nationalist policy is leading."[83] This attitude of the ANC was indicated by the form of violence it chose, which was by its very nature, extremely restricted. The strategy was based on "disciplined violence" or "controlled violence", which purposefully avoided the taking of life.[84]

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80 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom,* p. 275.

81 J. Slovo, *The Unfinished Autobiography*, p. 147.

82 "Mkhonto We Sizwe Manifesto", in G. Mbeki, *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa: A Short History*, p. 92.

83 "Mkhonto We Sizwe", in F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, p. 146. See also M. Barrel, *MK: The ANC's Armed Struggle*, p. 3.

84 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 1: Joe Slovo: South Africa - No Middle Road, n.d., p.

According to Mandela, their strategy was to attack only government military installations, power plants, telephone lines and transportation links.[85] It was hoped that this strategy would disturb the military functioning of the regime, threaten the National Party supporters, scare away foreign capital and weaken the economy.[86] This means that the ANC believed that violence would not be necessary as long as the government was prepared to abandon apartheid and oppression. More importantly, the ANC hoped that its action on 16 December 1961 would persuade the National Party and whites in general to stop actively supporting apartheid policies.

Another important development was that MK would accommodate recruits into its ranks on a non-racial basis. This was because the ANC no longer wanted to use non-Africans to fight the government while, at the same time, it was not prepared to open its membership to them. This belief was closely related to the one of avoiding a civil war in South Africa. Given the state of race relations in the country at that time, which was also noted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report in its findings, a civil war could only take place between whites and Africans.[87] This attitude of the ANC underscores its long-standing belief of promoting a multicultural society and avoiding war between Africans and whites in South Africa.

The way in which MK viewed armed activities in South Africa in the early 1960s showed that the ANC assumed a high moral ground to justify its use of violence. Reasons advanced for starting with the sabotage campaign were: (1) to make a sharp and open break with the politics of non-violent resistance, (2) to bridge the gap between non-violence and armed struggle, (3) to demonstrate clearly to the people who the enemy was by selecting government installations and symbols of apartheid as targets, (4) to give direction to and control the violence of the people, (5) to build a nucleus of the future revolutionary army by sending men for training, and (6) to demonstrate that responsibility for the slide to civil war lay squarely on the enemy.[88]

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85 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom,* p. 272.

86 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom,* p. 272.

87 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report, October 1999, vol. 2, chapter 2, p. 6.

88 ANC, UFH, ANC SOMAFCO, Director's Office, Box 1: Why Sabotage?, p. 1.

There were to be no actions such as the seizure of power or attacks on the army, police or white people. Any action which might precipitate a bloodbath would be avoided by the ANC and MK. Politically the strategy was aimed at winning support for the ANC, as there were planned actions only, which avoided spontaneous actions or terrorist actions. This strategy was also in keeping with the policy of promoting multicultural co-operation.

However, it should be noted that the strategy of using controlled violence was to lay the foundation only. According to Mandela, if the strategy of sabotage was not producing the desired results from the regime, then guerrilla warfare and terrorism would follow.[89] The strategy of sabotage was used by the ANC to prepare itself for the next level of the struggle, which was guerrilla warfare. Slovo confirmed this when he said that sabotage was "a politically useful bridge between the period of non- violent campaigning and the people's armed struggle ... it was necessary to begin building a revolutionary armed force, under the overall leadership and direction of the political movement but with a distinctive apparatus and function ... The sabotage campaign thus became a proving ground for establishing which activists of the existing organizations could make the transitions to the new tactics."[90] It could also be argued that the ANC-SACP alliance at this time was not only announcing to the Africans that it still existed, but that it was also increasing the level of political awareness amongst them, which could encourage the militants to join and support the liberation struggle.

Meanwhile the newly-formed ANC-SACP alliance formed a National High Command, which would control the military activities of MK. It was also responsible for finance, strategy and other general activities of MK.[91] The High Command was led by Nelson Mandela and also included men such as Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Andrew Mlangeni, Raymond Mhlaba, Joe Slovo and Joe Modise, who joined later on. Towards the end of 1961, the High Command sent its comrades to China to train as officers in guerrilla warfare. These comrades were Raymond Mhlaba, Wilton Mkwayi, Andrew Mlangeni, Patrick Mthembu and Steve Naidoo.[92] At this stage, there was no doubt about the close

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89 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom,* p. 272.

90 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box1: Joe Slovo: South Africa - No Middle Road, n.d., pp. 86-87.

91 T. Sechaba and S. Ellis, *Comrades Against Apartheid: The ANC and the South African Communist Party in Exile,* p. 33.

92 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1977-1978 Political Material, A 2675, III, 28:

co-operation between some members of the ANC and the SACP in MK. Regional commands were established in major towns like Durban, Johannesburg, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. These regional commands directed the activities of MK at regional level. Recruitment of people in the regional commands targeted members of the Congress Alliance organisation or those who had technical or military knowledge and skills. For this reason, Curnick Ndlovu, a senior SACTU official led MK's Natal region; Looksmart Ngudle, a unionist, and Fred Carneson, a communist, commanded MK in the Western Cape; Washington Bongo, another SACTU unionist, led in the Border region and a trade unionist Vuyisile Mini in the Eastern Cape, and the Transvaal had leaders like Elias Motsoaledi and Jack Hodgson.[93]

Another interesting development at this time was that MK was run as a separate organisation - a semi-independent body with a military inclination. The purpose was to protect the known members of the ANC at the time of its banning from possible prosecution for the activities of MK. The ANC itself would remain a non-violent political party, which would be available to the regime in case it decided to negotiate a political settlement for South Africa.[94]

The Umkhonto We Sizwe High Command developed good international connections through the influence of the Communist Party members in the organisation. These communists were able to arrange for volunteers to be trained in Eastern Europe, China and Africa. Some of the communists who supported the ANC at this time were Michael Harmel, who bought the farm Lilliesleaf, and Arthur Goldreich, who negotiated with East German and Russian officials to help the ANC. A technical committee under the guidance of a white communist, Harold Strachan, was established. He trained future MK members in Durban and Port Elizabeth in preparation for a campaign of violence scheduled to begin on 16 June 1961. According to Slovo, the Central Committee

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Statement by Gqabi , Accussed no. 7, 1977, Act 1, p.1A. See also G. Mbeki, *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa*, p. 91.

93 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1965 Political Material, S. 4/ 2705: Testimony of Bartholomew Moru Hlapane at the Rivonia Trial, 1964, pp. 8-28. See also H. Barrel, *MK*, pp. 9-10. More names of MK members in the regional commands are cited in B. Magubane , "The Turn to Armed Struggle" in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, pp. 91-132.

94 G. Mbeki, *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa*, p. 91.

succeeded also to get help from the Chinese Communist Party to train cadres in the art of people's war.[95]

Even more important at this stage was the fact that the ANC now acknowledged the existence of MK and the link between the two organisations. According to Slovo, Robert Resha was the first ANC leader based externally in London to admit publicly that MK was the military wing of the ANC. The reasons were: "The sabotage campaign was being attributed to the ANC in the press and other media and there were no disclaimers. Robert was part of the external team negotiating training facilities and other forms of help from African states for the armed struggle on the basis that the ANC's military wing was already on the go inside the country. He was also influenced by a desire to counter the PAC's stepped up propaganda campaign which attempted to paint a picture of the ANC as a moderate and passive organisation."[96] As a result, the ANC wanted to upstage its rivals, in particular the PAC, and to create a revolutionary climate in which young radicals would be able to join its underground in big numbers.

The early activities of the ANC in the 1960s were strengthened by Mandela's tours for the movement. He skipped out of the country and toured Africa and the West to enlist diplomatic and military support. Mandela attended the Pan African Freedom Movement for East, Central and Southern Africa (PAFMECSA - a forerunner of the Organisation of African Unity) conference on behalf of the ANC and he was able to address the African leaders on their intended campaign to apply economic sanctions against South Africa. From Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, Mandela was able to meet, amongst others, the following African leaders: Julius Nyerere and Rashidi Kawaka (Tanganyika), Emperor Haile Selassie (Ethiopia), General Abbound (Sudan), Habid Bourguiba (Tunisia), Modiba Keita (Mali), Leopold Senghor (Senegal), Sekou Toure (Guinea), William Tubman (Liberia), Ben Bella and Colonel Boumedienne (Algeria), Kenneth Kaunda (Northern Rhodesia), Oginga Odinga (Kenya) and Joshua Nkomo (Southern Rhodesia). Mandela even received a basic course in military training in Algeria, which was ruled at that time by Ben Bella. After this, Mandela also toured Britain, where he was well-received by the British Liberal Party leader, Jo Grimond, and the Labour Party leader, Hugh Gaitskell.[97] Viewed as a whole, the touring of Africa by Mandela was

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95 Cited in M. Norval, *Inside the ANC: The Evolution of a Terrorist Organisation,* p. 63.

96 J. Slovo, *The Unfinished Autobiography*, p.148.

97 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, pp.276-295.

significant for the ANC, as he was able to secure arrangements for the training of the recruits of MK.

Upon his return to South Africa, Mandela explained to the ANC branches how recruits could undergo military training as guerrillas in Algeria and that Haile Selassie had offered financial assistance for the training of recruits in Ethiopia. Significantly, Mandela's tour of the African states reminded him of the friction between the staunch Africanists and those who believed in multiracial co-operation. During his briefing of the Working Committee meeting, attended by Walter Sisulu, Moses Kotane, Govan Mbeki, Dan Tloome, J.B. Marks and Duma Nokwe, Mandela made startling revelations that the African states were against the ANC's co-operation with whites, Indians and particularly the communists. According to him, what baffled him most was "my final meeting with the Zambian leaders, who told me that while they knew the ANC was stronger and more popular than the PAC, they understood the PAC's pure African nationalism but were bewildered by the ANC's non-racialism and communist ties."[98] Bruno Mtolo, a sabotage expert in the Natal Regional Command, who would betray his comrades at the Rivonia Trial, spoke about Mandela's experience concerning the African states' suspicion and hatred of the influence of communism on the ANC and its support of multiracial co-operation in his book *Umkhonto We Sizwe: The Road to the Left.*[99] Mtolo was actually trying to show the court during the Rivonia Trial how the ANC was completely under the control of the communists. This shows how difficult it was for the ANC to convince the African states about the legitimacy of maintaining and defending their multiracial policy.

The matter was complicated even further when Mandela went to Durban to brief Chief Luthuli about his trip to Africa and abroad. The response of Luthuli was almost predictable about his policy of multiracial co-operation as he said to Mandela that "he did not like the idea of foreign politicians dictating policy to the ANC. He said we had evolved the policy of non-racialism for good reasons and he did not think that we should alter our policy because it did not suit a few foreign leaders." Interestingly enough, Mandela's response to Chief Luthuli indicated that he was actually threatened by competition with the PAC, especially the possibility of their rival overtaking them in the popularity stakes. According to Mandela, "my plan ... was simply to effect essentially cosmetic changes in order to make the ANC more intelligible to our allies. I saw this as

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98 N .Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom,* p. 299.

99 B. Mtolo, *Umkhonto We Sizwe: The Road to the Left,* p. 38.

a defensive manoeuvre, for if African states decided to support the PAC, a small and weak organization could suddenly become a large and potent one."[100]

After his meetings with Luthuli and MK's Natal Regional Command, Mandela proceeded to Johannesburg. Unfortunately for him, he was arrested on his way back. He was accused of inciting people to strike and leaving the country illegally without a valid passport. His trial attracted a lot of attention, as he had been evading the police for a long time. He was imprisoned until he was called to court in 1964 during the Rivonia Trial.

At this stage the National High Command was not pleased with the progress made with the sabotage campaign. They realised that the regime was increasing its repression and arrests, while at the same time the strategy of sabotage was not exerting enough pressure on the regime. For this reason, there was a great need to move to the next phase and change the old strategy. Commenting on the need to change the old strategy, Govan Mbeki said: "The sabotage fails. It's frustrating in fact. It's no longer successful, and we think this is going to peter out, and we can't allow that. Let's get on to the next phase, which is the armed struggle itself."[101]

As a result of this observation, Govan Mbeki and Joe Slovo were expected by the National High Command to draw up a document on how MK would proceed to the next level of challenging the regime. At this point, the situation was actually heading towards a civil war, when these two leaders started working out a plan named Operation Mayibuye (Mayibuye being a Zulu word meaning "return"). The document was a comprehensive, six stage detailed plan aimed at seizing power in South Africa.[102] The discussion of Operation Mayibuye cannot be dealt with here in any detail, nor is it necessary for our analysis. What needs to be said, however, is that the main thrust of the revolt would be sabotage and invasion of South Africa by freedom fighters sufficiently armed to destroy white rule and replace it with African majority rule. The plan envisaged the establishment of MK regions in urban and rural areas, each with full time

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100 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p.300.

101 Interview with Govan Mbeki, in B. Magubane et. al., "The Turn to Armed Struggle", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* vol. 1, p. 138.

102 Republic of South Africa, Supreme Court, Transvaal Division, Case 64/65: The State Against N. Mandela and Others: First Indictment, pp. 1-4.

organizers. Hundreds of activists would be sent to some of the newly independent African states, where they would be trained in the techniques and art of organising guerrilla warfare. Inside South Africa these freedom fighters would be joined by other revolutionaries, who would attack strategic targets and cause sabotage. The identified regions were Port Elizabeth and Mzimkulu, Port Shepstone to Swaziland, North Western Transvaal and North Western Cape - South West Africa.

All these technical and organisational measures were to be accompanied by an intensive campaign of mass mobilisation. The whole strategy was likened to the Guevara/Debray model of revolutionary warfare by Morgan Norval in his book *Inside the ANC: The Evolution of a Terrorist Organization.* According to Norval, the freedom fighters of the ANC would serve as a stimuli to bring about a quick reaction from the population, which would lead to a general chaos in South Africa.[103] In this way, the ANC/ SACP alliance was slowly but surely promoting the revolutionary climate in South Africa with its ambitious plan.

Unfortunately, the clandestine activities of the ANC and SACP suffered a serious blow on 11 July 1963, when the police raided the headquarters of MK at Rivonia, near Johannesburg, and arrested members of the High Command and seized important documents, which would be used as evidence during the trial. Among the documents seized, was one dealing with Operation Mayibuye. Some of the people arrested at Rivonia included well-known ANC-SACP members like Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Bop Hepple, Lionel Bernstein, Walter Sisulu, Raymond Mhlaba and Dennis Goldberg. Following the raid on Rivonia, others were arrested like Arthur Goldreich, James Kantor, as well as Nelson Mandela who was already a sentenced prisoner. Numerous detentions followed and the liberation movement lost many of its key leaders at this time.

In order to smash up the subversive activities of the underground the Minister of Justice, B.J. Vorster, told parliament in 1963 that it had become absolutely important for the regime to introduce the General Law Amendment Bill.[104] According to the proposed legislation, the minister could detain anybody suspected of subversive activities for a

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[103] M. Norval, *Inside the ANC*, pp. 67-68. See also R. Debray, *Revolution in the Revolution? Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin America,* p.156.

[104] Republic of South Africa, House of Assembly Debates, Second Session, Second Parliament, vol. 6, 24 April 1963, col.4639.

period of 90 days. Although the act did not put an immediate end to the activities of the underground and the sabotage campaign, it, nevertheless, forced the remaining leaders to curtail their actions and become more careful.

Those captured were charged with recruiting men for training with the purpose of overthrowing the stare and also working in collusion with foreign armies who wanted to invade South Africa.[105] Consequently, the incarcerated ANC members were sentenced to life imprisoment in what became known as the Rivonia Trial. Some detainees became state witnesses and turned against their former comrades. Amongst them were Bruno Mtolo, Bartholomew Hlapane, Piet Byleveld and Kholisile Mdwayi.[106] Bruno Mtolo alleged that some of the ANC members were deeply under the influence of the SACP and furthered the aims of communism rather than of the oppressed Africans.[107] All the state witnesses were granted indemnity.

At the end of the Rivonia Trial it was clear that the ANC, SACP and MK had been dealt a severe blow. However, the raid on Rivonia and the imprisonment of the MK members did not wipe out underground and subversive activities completely. After the Rivonia Trial, Wilton Mkwayi and Abram Fischer took control of the underground struggle and tried to re-establish the MK High Command. At this point, there was complete interdependence between the SACP and Umkhonto We Sizwe.[108]

Although the Rivonia Trial closed another chapter in the struggle, it did not in any way signify the end of the liberation struggle. The impression was created by some ANC members that the smashing of the activities of the ANC, MK and the SACP in South Africa rendered these structures completely inoperative. They believed that power to continue with the struggle resided with only the important leaders, who were either in

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105 Republic of South Africa, Supreme Court, Transvaal Division, Case 65/64: The State Against N. Mandela and Others. First Indictment, pp. 1-4.

106 AWC, Wits, Karis- Gerhart Collection, Political Material 1960-1965, A2675, 111, 11: Testimony of Bartholomew Moru Hlapane at the Rivonia Trial of 1964, S.4/2705, pp. 2-45. See also G. Mbeki, *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa,* p. 96.

107 B. Mtolo, *Umkhonto We Sizwe*, pp. 182-183.

108 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, Political Material 1960-1965, A2675, 111,11: Testimony of Bartholomew Moru Hlapane at the Rivonia Trial of 1964, S.4/2705, pp. 22-23.

prison or outside the country. This line of thinking was clear in what Francis Meli wrote: "After Rivonia, the underground machinery of the liberation movement was almost completely destroyed, with the ANC and other political leaders in jail, exiled, banned or under one form of restriction or another. The External Mission of the ANC, hitherto engaged in vital international solidarity work, began, therefore, to take over the onerous task of training people, infiltrating trained cadres, weapons and ammunition, resuscitating underground units - in short, the whole process of preparing for the armed struggle."[109] This misleading information was also suggested by Joe Slovo himself, when he said: "After 1963, with virtually complete destruction of internal leadership of both organisations (ANC and SACP), MK was to come almost exclusively under the direction of the ANC's External Mission."[110] Although there is an element of truth in their statements, there is also a tendency to overlook the contributions of some ANC and SACP leaders, who tried to rebuild MK and continued with the struggle in the face of extreme danger.

Towards the end of 1962, the ANC established the Secretariat to continue performing the functions of the National Executive Committee (NEC), which could no longer function effectively because of the banning of the liberation movements and the imprisonment of leaders.[111] The members of the Secretariat were Gabula Mahlasela (chairman), Michael Dingake (publicity secretary), Alfred Nzo, Ruth Mompati, John Mavuso, Bartholomew Hlapane, Henry Makgothi and NEC members like Govan Mbeki and Dan Tloome. With so many leaders either imprisoned or in exile, the Secretariat assumed the full functions of the NEC, which included the rebuilding of the ANC structures. In other words, the Secretariat consisted of the remnants of the ANC leadership inside the country, which concentrated on keeping the movement intact and functional. However, the biggest problem was that from time to time members were either arrested or leaving the country due to police harassments.

The most important question at this stage is: How did the ANC continue with the struggle after the destruction of its structures? It was important to keep the name of the ANC alive in order to make sure that people did not forget about it and the liberation struggle. To realise this aim, propaganda became significant. It became important to

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109 F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us: A History of the ANC*, pp. 160-161.

110 J. Slovo, *The Unfinished Autobiography*, p. 152.

111 M. Dingake, *My Fight Against Apartheid*, p. 78.

produce pamphlets and flyers, which refuted the claims that the regime had crushed the ANC. One flyer was distributed during the Rivonia Trial, which indicated that the ANC would never give up by saying that "violence and civil war will not be averted by the trial of the Rivonia men nor all those others accused of sabotage. These trials will only make the struggle more relentless. We will never surrender - we cannot."[112]

The ANC also commemorated certain important historical events, like 26 June or Freedom Day. Political slogans were also painted or written on the walls in towns and cities. However, the most important action was the re-establishment of the second National High Command (NHC) under the leadership of Wilton Mkwayi. According to the testimony of Bartholomew Hlapane, Wilton Mkwayi, who was also known as 'BRI-BRI', was given absolute freedom and power over the affairs of MK after the Rivonia Trial.[113] Mkwayi went abroad in 1961 for military training and took part in the sabotage campaigns of MK when he came back. He escaped miraculously during the police raids of the Lilliesleaf Farm. He escaped to Soweto, where he started acting as commander-in-chief of MK. Others who served on the new High Command were the SACP members David Kitson and Lionel Gay, and Laloo Chiba of the SAIC.[114]

Despite operating under dangerous conditions, the members of the second National High Command were able to revive the Regional Commands, recruit cadres who went for training and commit acts of sabotage. However, several MK members of the new NHC, including Wilton Mkwayi, David Kitson, Laloo Chiba and Mac Maharaj, were arrested in July and September 1964 and convicted of 50 acts of sabotage in what came to be called the "little Rivonia Trial".[115] The incarceration of the members of the new NHC only a year after the Rivonia raid had serious consequences for the continued existence of the internal structures of MK. Former underground cadres, like Lionel Gay, who turned state witnesses, further helped the police in their search of MK members. As a result, many MK cadres either fled the country or went underground. The smashing of

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112 ANC, "The Message of Rivonia", flyer n.d., in T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge,* vol. 3, p. 797.

113 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, Political Material 1960-1965, A2675,111,11: Testimony of Bartholomew Moru Hlapane at the Rivonia Trial in 1964, S.4/ 2705, p. 24.

114 G. Houston, "The Post-Rivonia ANC/SACP Underground", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* p. 606.

115 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 393.

the second NHC and the departure from the country of the remaining ANC leaders, like Michael Dingake, late in 1964 weakened the internal and military structures. The task of continuing with the struggle fell mostly on the shoulders of the SACP leaders like Bram Fischer.

Abram ("Bram") Fischer was born in 1908 into a prominent Afrikaner family.[116] His father was a Senior Judge in the Supreme Court in Bloemfontein and his grandfather was a senior politician of the Boer Republic of the Orange Free State. As a member of a prominent Afrikaner family, he took the unusual step of crossing the political divide by joining the SACP, which became a close ally of the ANC since the 1950s. He had strong links with the underground SACP units of MK. Besides being part of the legal team during the Rivonia Trial, he also assisted a lot in the reconstruction of the MK structures. As acting chairperson of the SACP after the departure of Joe Slovo in 1962, he helped fund the new MK High Command from the money he received for communist affairs from the SACP office in London. Money from the London office usually went to Joe Matthews in Lesotho, from where it was sent to Fischer.[117] Hlapane said that at a secret meeting of the Central Committee, held in Johannesburg in June 1964, Abram Fischer reported that about R36,000.00 was with Joe Matthews in Basutoland. According to Hlapane, "I was given to understand that this was in fact funds sent for the Party to him and that he thus far failed to pay over anything."[118] This means that Fischer passed funds for the NHC to Hlapane, who would in turn send them to Wilton Mkwayi, who would then use them for various purposes connected with the struggle.

Fischer's actual promotion to the internal leadership took place after the arrest of members of the second NHC between June and September 1964. His important

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116 Gail M. Gerhart and T. Karis, "Political Profiles, 1882-1964", in T. Karis and G. M. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa*, 1882-1964, volume 4, p. 29.

117 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box1: A Letter Written by London Secretariat to Moses about the Misappropriation about Funds, 12 April 1965 (pseudonyms). The letter explains how money was sent from London to Joe Matthews in Basutoland, who was expected to send it to Bram Fischer in South Africa. However, there was no flow of money since the end of August 1964 between South Africa and Basutoland.

118 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1965 Political Material, A2675, 111, 11: Testimony of Bartholomew Moru Hlapane at the Rivonia Trial, 1964, S.4/2705, p. 33.

contribution was to provide the NHC with valuable information about possible sabotage targets and plans for blowing them up.[119] This was part of the information which was produced as evidence during the Rivonia Trial. He also set up a new Central Committee, consisting of Ruth First, Dan Tloome, Piet Beyleveld, Bartholomew Hlapane, Hida Bernstein, Eli Weinberg and Ivan Schermbrucker. However, police agents like Gerard Ludi and Piet Beyleveld infiltrated the SACP and passed on valuable information to the police about the underground activities of the movement. Once more, police were able to embark on a general sweep of political activists throughout the country. Fischer was arrested with members like Schermbrucker, Weinberg, Middleton, Levy and others. While the trial was in progress, he skipped bail and went underground again. During the period of his underground activities, Fischer like Mandela, who was called the "Black Pimpernel", was nicknamed the "Red Pimpernel" by the press.[120]

At the beginning of 1965, Fischer was the only well-known remaining national leader besides Chief Luthuli in South Africa. He was the only person in the country who could lead the establishment of the underground and receive guerrillas who were coming back into the country.[121] His arrest in November 1965 disturbed his work of reconstructing the SACP internally and reviving underground units throughout the country.

It is clear that the second NHC was important in that it was able to provide support and direction to a few returning cadres. The efforts of Fischer were extremely important for the continuation of the underground activities of returned cadres. After the arrests of Wilton Mkwayi and Bram Fischer there was a serious decline of trained cadres coming back into South Africa. According to Gregory Houston, the arrest of Fischer "had a direct influence on morale in the MK camps in Tanzania, leading to an escalation of complaints by cadres that the leadership was hesitant to send them back to South Africa to fight."[122] This indicates that the underground work done by Mkwayi and Fischer was important for the continuation of the liberation struggle. Their imprisonment meant that

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119 G. Houston, "The Post- Rivonia ANC/ SACP Underground", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, p. 620.

120 *The Sunday Times,* 11 April 1965.

121 G. Houston, "The Post-Rivonia ANC/SACP Underground", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* p. 624.

122 G. Houston, "The Post-Rivonia ANC/SACP Underground", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, p. 632.

the task of resuscitating the internal structures was now under the external mission.

As the ANC's rival the PAC was also fighting an uphill battle to continue the liberation struggle. From its inception in 1959, the PAC was determined to end white domination and oppression. At first, the PAC organised the Status Campaign, which was aimed at achieving courteous treatment for Africans in shops and in everyday life from whites in general. However, the next attempt of the PAC of challenging white domination and oppression was to undertake the risky and ambitious anti-pass campaign on 21 March 1960, which ended tragically with the massacre and injury of people. Apart from the two campaigns, there appeared to be no clear-cut policy or plan of usurping power from the white regime.

Nevertheless, the brutal killing of people at Sharpeville, Langa and other places during the anti-pass campaign initiated by the PAC, marked a turning point in the struggle for freedom in South Africa. After being banned the PAC, just like the ANC, went underground and began to organise for an armed struggle. As a liberation movement, which had just been formed in 1959, adapting itself to new conditions of operating illegally in South Africa gave the PAC more problems than the ANC, which had been in existence since 1912. To add to its woes, its key leaders, including Robert Sobukwe, Peter Molotsi and Nana Mahomo, were either in prison or advancing the liberation struggle outside South Africa.

Despite these problems, the PAC members were organising secretly to revive the internal structures of the movement. Lodge records that the Western Cape was one of the areas where the PAC enjoyed the support of the African migrant labourers. According to him, extensive recruitment and organisation, which led to the formation of the "cell system", took place vigorously from 1960 in places like Langa and Nyanga.[123] Secret meetings were held in these places in order to revive the PAC. It became common among the Africans to describe themselves as belonging to *Umbuthowana Afrika Poqo,* which meant the Pan Africanist Congress.[124] In this way, the attention of the police was deliberately distracted so as to avoid arrests. The situation is described by one of the PAC members in this way: "At the time, we were starting to develop an

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123 "The Poqo Insurrection", in T. Lodge, *Resistance and Ideology in Settler Society*, p. 180.

124 B. Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State, 1960-1963", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, p. 262.

underground coding system, because we could not do anything above ground, because of the oppressive system that was there. Now we had to decipher codes to be able to communicate with each other as PAC members."[125]

The name by which the PAC operated clandestinely and illegally after its banning was "Poqo", which is a Xhosa word meaning "pure or something that is not diluted or, politically speaking, one who speaks out and is not afraid or apologetic for standing firmly in the interest of his people."[126] In other words, "Poqo" was associated with a true and real African patriot.

PAC cells were being organised and had different names to divert the attention of the police. They were able to circumvent the law by posing as football clubs, music schools or simply calling themselves *Into ayibizwa* (which means the thing whose name is never revealed and mentioned).[127] Sometimes the PAC underground would organise false and simulated funerals, where supporters would be addressed at the graveside. Attempts were made to distribute PAC information through these underground structures. For example, the flyer which opposed the stay-at-home on 29-31 May 1961 was suspected to have come from the PAC underground.[128] These pseudo-organisations and sham meetings were meant to create a diversion and confuse the police. It was very difficult for the police to prosecute members of these "groups" for furthering the aims of the banned PAC.

According to Peter Molotsi, it was incorrect to say that the PAC believed that the government could be overthrown without violence.[129] As far as he could remember, there were many Africanists who were thinking ahead of the stage of violence and were even urging the movement to prepare for it. In preparing the organisation for this eventuality, he said that the movement established the so-called "Task Force", which was to be "the training ground for the braves". Their job wasn't to make political

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125 B. Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State, 1960-1963", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, p. 263.

126 Azanian People's Liberation Army, (APLA), *Azania Combat*, issue 3, 1987, p. 12.

127 E. Khopung, *The Story of a Dispossessed People*, p. 73.

128 "Poqo. Poqo. Poqo", Flyer opposing the stay-at-home on May 29-31, issued by the PAC, n.d., in T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol.3, p. 639.

129 Interview with Dr Peter Molotsi, Kroonstad, 15 May 1999.

decisions; "it was to carry out and develop ideas along those lines. If they have to blow up the Orlando pass station, they must do so."[130]

Such a Task Force, called *Lutsha*, which is a Xhosa word meaning youth, was formed as a military or defence unit of Poqo.[131] It accommodated members between the ages of 16 and 35. Even men as old as 50 were allowed to join as long as they were very fit. A Task Force cell usually had 10 members and cell leaders in Langa reported to a man known as Philapi.[132]

The duty of the Task Force was to eliminate opposition and traitors. According to a TRC Report, a group of disgruntled and dissatisfied PAC supporters called the "Katangese" (the traitors who played the same role as Moise Tshombe in the Congo) in the Western Cape, started to operate independently of the movement in 1960. Some of these dissidents, including Lamstead Giyose, Alfred Canca and Ndikho, were attacked and assaulted by Poqo men, armed with pangas, sticks and other traditional weapons.[133]

Furthermore, Task Force members had to provide PAC meetings with security. Those who attended these meetings had to greet them by saying *Izwe lethu ma Africa* (meaning "Our land, Africans"). To ignore or fail to observe such rules and practices could arouse suspicion that you were not a PAC member. Task Force members were also expected to collect and manufacture weapons and explosives and in the event of an uprising to take the lead.[134]

Poqo was established immediately after the 1960 positive action campaign against the oppressive laws. Poqo was formed when it became clear "not only to the Africanists, but to the entire African people that state violence, as demonstrated at Sharpeville, had to

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130 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, Political Material 1960-1970, A2422/ 15: Interview between Peter Molotsi and Gail M. Gerhart, New York, 23 April 1972, p. 9.

131 B. Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State, 1960-1963", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, p. 263.

132 B. Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State, 1960-1963, in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, p. 263.

133 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report, October 1999, vol.2, chapter 4, pp. 367-368.

134 T. Lodge, "The Poqo Insurrection", in *Resistance and Ideology in Settler Society*, p. 190.

be met with revolutionary violence."[135] Like in the formation of MK by the ANC, Poqo came into existence to address the new conditions, which had arisen as a result of the state of emergency and the banning of political organisations. According to the PAC, "we were faced with new and advanced tasks and had to organise our work on revolutionary struggle for state power. This was a stage of open clashes with enemy forces as the people's forces were being mobilised and the field being cleared of enemy agents and informers within the ranks of the people."[136] This indicated that the banning did not deter the Africanists from pursuing their legitimate national aspiration, which was to overthrow the South African regime and replace it with a democratic one based on the African Socialist Democracy.

Interestingly enough, Poqo became the military wing or the guerrilla army of the PAC. Unlike the ANC, which did not readily admit its new stance on violence and allowed MK to remain a separate organisation from the beginning, Poqo was regarded as a single organisation with the PAC from the start. Poqo did not hesitate to state categorically that it opted for violence in order to defend Africans and its formation "constituted the foundation for the launching of the armed struggle now sweeping apartheid South Africa."[137] While MK used sophisticated weapons such as explosives and guns, Poqo relied heavily on less sophisticated weapons such as pangas, knobkierries and knives and to a lesser degree on home made bombs and guns.[138]

Whites were allowed to become members of MK from the outset, whereas Poqo did not allow them. This could be attributed to the policies of the PAC, which were perceived to be anti-white. As would be expected, Poqo criticised Umkhonto for weakening African nationalism by admitting whites. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that Poqo "presented itself as the standard-bearer of a true African nationalism and untainted by either an alien membership or a foreign ideology."[139] In this way, the PAC believed that

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135 APLA, *Azania Combat*, issue 3, 1987, p. 13.

136 E. Ntloedibe, *Here is a Tree: Political Biography of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe*, p. 127.

137 APLA, *Azania Combat*, issue 3, 1987, p. 13.

138 B. Mtolo, *Umkhonto We Sizwe*, pp. 30-63; *The Rand Daily Mail*, 23 March 1963; *The Rand Daily Mail*, 19 June 1963; *The Cape Times*, 6 February 1963. The book indicates the weapons used by MK, even the self-made ones. The newspapers show a wide range of mostly traditional weapons used by Poqo members.

139 E. Feit, *Urban Revolt in South Africa*, p. 4.

the ANC had clearly mistaken its real target, which was the white regime.

However, the ANC defended its standpoint of not attacking whites indiscriminately by clinging to its multi-racial policy. For this reason, MK distributed a leaflet in May 1963, which emphasised its stance in this manner: "Why make enemies of our allies? The Leballos spurn men of other races. We say that just as Africans bear the brunt of oppression under the white state, so will the white state be broken by the man forces of African people. But this is no reason, we say, to reject comrades of other races whom we know are ready to fight with us, suffer, and if need be, die. Find a way - but not the Leballo way. Umkhonto We Sizwe ... is for activists. We have struck against the white state more than 70 times ... We are trained and practised. We shall be more so. We attack PAC-Leballo policy not out of petty rivalry but because it takes us back, not forward along the freedom road. Genuine freedom fighters must find a way to fight together, in unity in unbreakable strength. There is room in their freedom struggle for all brave men - and women. With your support we will win."[140]

Thus the ANC's military wing, MK, and the PAC's military wing, Poqo, reflected their divergent and ideological differences, which had led to their schism towards the end of the 1950s. Despite its differences with MK, the formation of Poqo was important in that it promoted the revolutionary climate that engulfed South Africa in the early 1960s. Its plan of overthrowing South Africa caused a sensation, which stirred the emotions of white people.

The strategy of a general uprising became evident in Poqo activities, just like in MK, when the PAC started a campaign of terror to bring down the white regime of South Africa. Unlike MK, which aimed at destroying buildings, telephone lines and electricity poles, as well as other symbols associated with the regime, Poqo's approach indicated terror against whites, clashes with police and the African supporters of the government. In other words, the PAC wanted to cause a bloodbath.

Poqo's militant approach reflected attacks on human targets rather than government buildings or installations. In March 1962 Poqo members killed a policeman, sergeant

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[140] ANC, "The ANC Spearheads Revolution - Leballo? No!", leaflet distributed in May 1963, in possession of the author, obtained from Peter Raboroko. See also J. Frederickse, *The Unbreakable Thread: Non-Racialism in South Africa*, pp. 87-88.

Moyi, in Langa. Armed with stones, petrol bombs and bricks, the mob of about 50 stormed two police vans and Moyi was dragged from one van. He was killed, other policemen were injured, while others escaped unhurt. According to a police report, Poqo Task Force leader Sharps Qoba was imprisoned for the murder of Moyi.[141] Another policeman, Mthobeli Nathaniel Magwaca, was killed later on in Langa. At the trial of his killers, Golifile Tile, Goli Zonanzi, Gladstone Nqulwana and Yasofisi Yeni, the court heard that these Poqo men had been ordered by their leadership to kill any policemen found in the township of Langa. It was also revealed that these men visited their witchdoctor, Siyotula, whose task was to perform rituals for Poqo members. Siyotula normally gave the Task Force members a white powder, which they had to use when they washed. It seemed as if Poqo members believed in witchcraft and they had a belief that traditional medicine could strengthen them against their enemies and even prevent bullets from penetrating their bodies.[142]

PAC members who gave evidence against their comrades generally did so under tremendous pressure and intimidation. For instance, Golifile Tile was removed from Robben Island to testify against Nqulwana in the murder of Magwaca after investigating officers threatened that if he refused to give evidence they would get someone to implicate him. Yeni testified against Gladstone Nqulwana, who was already serving his sentence for the murder of Magwaca. He was hanged in 1967. Sharps Qoba was also executed for murdering Moyi. During the TRC hearings Kwedi Mkhalipi, the PAC executive member in Langa, informed the Commission that Qoba was not present at the killing even though he was a Task Force leader.[143] This mistake shows what intimidation and suspicion can do, especially during times of lawlessness and confusion.

The township of Mbekweni in Paarl was another stronghold of the PAC. It was actually a settlement of migrant labourers from the Eastern Cape. According to Lodge, the anti-white sentiments and radicalism which developed could be attributed to the strict

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141 National Archives of South Africa (NASA), South African Police (SAP), File 1/223/62 (1): Progress Regarding Investigations of 1962/63 of Poqo-Inspired Murders: Langa Location, Cape Town, B. C. 398, vol. 11, 7 September 1966.

142 B. Brown, "The PAC's War Against the State, 1960-1963," in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* vol.1, pp. 265-266.

143 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report, vol.3, chapter 5, p. 401.

application of influx control.[144] Murders which took place in Paarl seemed to have been directed at people associated with the apartheid regime, including informers, police officers and whites in general. For example, Klaas Hoza, a cleaner at the local municipal office, was hacked to death by Poqo members for allegedly spying for the police.[145] It also appeared that Poqo had imposed a strict disciplinary code on its hostel members in Mbekweni. One of the rules was a ban on the presence of women in the hostels. Failure to observe this rule led to death. The hacked bodies of three women, Sarah Kamos, Magriet Samuels and Susie Noriet, were found in a gum plantation near Mbekweni location. The police found that the three women had been smuggled into the men's hostel for a party on a Saturday night. At a trial in 1963 Lucky Ndibiza, who was a state witness, told the court that the three women had been killed by men known as Njokwane and Makaleni, wearing balaclavas, masks and armed with axes and assegais.[146]

However, the most serious clash took place when a group of Poqo members attempted to attack the police station, the prison and whites in the town of Paarl. Clashes between the police and Poqo members armed with pangas, axes, sticks and sabres ensued. Two white people, Rencia Vermeulen and Frans Richards, were killed. A Paarl resident, Cyril Heckmann, chased the attackers from his house and killed one person. After this incident, the police searched for the Poqo members, who had fled as far as they could. Some sought refuge in Langa, where they joined another group sent to kill chief Kaiser Matanzima in the Eastern Cape.[147]

The activities of Poqo also manifested themselves in the Eastern Cape. A newspaper report in the *Cape Times* identified Langa as the headquarters of Poqo terrorists and described the activities of Poqo: "Poqo, the African terrorist organization has the Transkei in a grip of fear. The chiefs, the law-abiding inhabitants and the White traders living in rural areas all live in fear of the Poqos, who appear suddenly and murder

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144 "The Poqo Insurrection" in T. Lodge, *Resistance and Ideology in Settler Society*, p. 180.

145 B. Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* vol. 1, p. 269.

146 *The Cape Times*, 13 February 1963.

147 B. Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State" in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* vol. 1, p. 273.

brutally."[148] Poqo activities, which seemed to have been planned in the Western Cape, were directed at disrupting the installation of Bantu Authorities by attacking headmen and chiefs and resisting the implementation of land rehabilitation. The regime seemed to be protecting all headmen and chiefs who were implementing its policies. It also appeared that the regime protected the life of Kaiser Matanzima, destined to become the leader of the Transkei on its path towards self-government under the homelands policy, because his death could be of propaganda value to those people who were against chiefs and the Bantu Authorities Act. Matanzima was about to become the paramount chief of Tembuland in 1962. Many Poqo members from the Transkei wanted to kill Mantanzima, because they felt that he harassed migrant labourers whenever they came home during the holidays.[149] There were rumours that young men, coming from the Transkei, were indoctrinated under threat of violence and when they returned back home, they formed cells in the kraals and spread Poqo propaganda.[150] Even the Commissioner of Police, Lt.-General J. M. Keevey, noted this problem of destabilising the Transkei, when he said that "the trouble-makers in the Transkei and Queenstown areas had come from Cape Town. They belonged to Poqo organization ... the aim of which was to wipe out the Whites and to prevent co-operation between Whites and Blacks."[151]

Several attempts to kill Matanzima were unsuccessful, as they were frustrated by the regime, which gave him security. An armed clash took place at Ntonze on 12 December 1962, when armed Poqo members were intercepted by police while they were on their way to kill Matanzima. However, other headmen who were representatives of traditional authorities were not so lucky. On 16 October 1962 Gwebindlala Gqoboza, the headman of St. Marks district in Cofimvaba, was killed by Poqo members. In February 1963 another headman, Jongimamba Deliwe, of Qitsi location near Cofimvaba, was also hacked to death by Poqo members. In its TRC submission the PAC described the incidents as being "aimed at those headmen and chiefs assisting the dispossession of African people through the rural rehabilitation scheme."[152]

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148 *The Cape Times*, 4 March 1962.

149 B. Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* vol. 1, p. 273-274.

150 *The Cape Times,* 4 March 1962.

151 *The Cape Times*, 7 February 1963.

152 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report, vol. 2, chapter 4, p. 369.

The other well-publicised murder by Poqo involved the gruesome murder of Norman Grobler, Natalie Grobler and their daughter Edna Grobler near the Bashee/Mbashe River bridge. There were also numerous reports from the police concerning the activities of Poqo in the neighbourhood of East London. One report reveals that about 150 Poqo members met on the night of 8 April 1963 north-west of the African township of Duncanville. The police informer reported that Poqo members were told by their leaders to bring along with them the next night food and weapons, because they were going to attack whites. When they met the next day, they were surprised by the police who had surrounded the area. As they were running away, one of them turned back, brandishing a panga and said to sergeant Card: "Kom hier witman ek sal jou wys" ("Come here white man, I will show you")."[153] However, the police were able to foil these attempts of attacking whites by arresting those Poqo members suspected of inciting people.

There were noticeable signs of Poqo underground activities and a vigorous recruitment drive in several parts of the country like Durban, Pietermaritzburg, King William's Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg, Vanderbijlpark and Port Elizabeth.[154] This expansion of Poqo was a clear indication that it was readying itself for challenging the might of the South African regime. Undoubtedly, Poqo's activities during the early 1960s showed that its involvement in violence stimulated the revolutionary climate in South Africa. Its tactics of intimidation and indiscriminate killing of whites and supporters of the regime caused consternation and alarm. Debates in parliament at this time indicated the level of fear and concern among whites. Senator McCord drew the attention of the parliament to the dangerous aims of Poqo by saying: "As far as they are concerned there may not be any white man in S.A. The Europeans ... are slowly but surely driven out, one after the other, and that will be the result in all the countries."[155] Senator Fagan showed how PAC-Poqo was more dangerous than the ANC-SACP alliance when he said: "We often hear that people speak of communism as the cause of our difficulties. There is, however, another movement which requires no less, but in fact greater attention. That is

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153 NASA, SAP, File 1/223/62/3, C. 3/1/5: Activities of PAC: East London: Telegram dated 17 April 1963.

154 *The Rand Daily Mail*, 25 March 1963. See also *Die Vaderland,* 22 March 1962.

155 Republic of South Africa, Senate Debates, Third Session, First Senate, vol. II, 27 March 1963, col. 2336.

Pan Africanism. I am using this term to indicate the movement which aims at black domination from the Southern border of the Sahara to the Southern point of the continent, and which launches direct attacks on the welfare, the authority and influence of the White man in an attempt to achieve their object."[156]

As a result, the government appointed a Commission of Enquiry under Mr Justice Snyman into the country's armed uprising. The judge uncovered that a revolutionary situation existed in the country. Consequently, he recommended that the government should stop the PAC and Poqo from causing bloodshed in South Africa. The bloodshed of Poqo was likened to the Mau-Mau revolution of Kenya where whites were being massacred.[157]

What the analysis has indicated thus far is that Poqo, unlike MK, which tried to avoid a loss of life, unleashed a reign of terror, which led to the killing of black and white people, albeit on a relatively limited scale. Amongst its victims were policemen, especially those living in the black townships, dissidents who opposed the campaign, some headmen and traditional leaders, and whites in general. With the help of hindsight, its campaign, according to the TRC, constituted serious violation of human rights, even though the PAC claimed that its activities of the early 1960s should be understood in the context of the liberation struggle and the "land wars of the time."[158] There was no sign of trying to unite people of various races, beliefs and backgrounds - something which the ANC and MK were wary of and jealously guarding. Moreover, the campaign of terror seemed to have taken place with little or no control from the national leadership of the PAC. Besides the Task Force there were no other visible structures from the national leadership which gave direction or channelled the activities of Poqo so that it could have a systematic approach to its attempts at liberating the oppressed. Its approach contrasted sharply with that of the ANC, which had control structures, national, regional

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156 Republic of South Africa, Senate Debates, Third Session, First Senate, volume II, 30 April 1963, col. 2710.

157 South Africa (Republic), *Government Gazette*, vol. VI, no. 391, Pretoria, 30 November 1962, Proclamation no. 310: Department of Justice, Commission of Enquiry into the Events at Paarl, in the Province of the Cape of Good Hope, on 20th to 22nd November 1962, p. 8. See also M. Pheko, *The Story of a Dispossessed People*, p. 102.

158 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report, October 1999, vol.2, chapter 4, p. 370.

and local leaders in charge, as well as plans according to which the process of the liberation struggle would unfold.

What was even more astonishing was the fact that the PAC decided to proceed with the 1963 uprisings, even though the regime focused on its activities in the light of the Snyman Commission of Inquiry into the activities of Poqo. This became evident when Potlako Leballo confirmed that Poqo and the PAC were the same and that the movement stood by its pledge to free the African people by 1963.[159]

The PAC's abortive plan to overthrow the South African regime in 1963 is often associated with the disruptive and divisive behaviour of Potlako Leballo. He was born in Basutoland (now Lesotho) and received his education at Lovedale College. His defiant actions in the Lovedale College strikes of 1946 showed that he had no respect for authority and control.[160] During the Second World War Leballo served in the army in North Africa. His tendency to flaunt authority made him a troublemaker. As a result, he was discharged from the army. He was one of the founding members of the Africanist group within the Youth League of the ANC. He was expelled from the ANC in 1958 for defying the policies of the ANC. When the PAC was established in 1959, he was elected secretary. He was arrested for taking part in the anti-pass activities of 21 March 1960. His two-year gaol sentence ended in August 1962. Upon his release from prison, he settled in Basutoland and assumed control of the PAC in Maseru. He operated from Maseru to prepare for the mass uprising. His lack of co-operation with his comrades and defiant nature would in the years to follow contribute significantly towards the decline of the PAC, as his actions promoted conflicts, dissensions and even murders within the PAC later on.[161]

The PAC established its first headquarters in exile in Basutoland in 1962 after operating underground for some time in South Africa. Basutoland seemed to have been chosen as a convenient venue for attacks against the South African regime, because of is proximity. However, the danger was that Basutoland was easily pressurised by the South African regime to suppress the activities of the liberation movements. PAC

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159 *The Rand Daily Mail*, 25 March 1963. See also *Die Vaderland*, 22 March 1962.

160 J. Bolnick, "Potlako Leballo - The man who hurried to meet his destiny", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, volume 3, no. 29, 1991, pp. 418-428.

161 M. Nkoana, *Crisis in the Revolution*, p. 17.

members were often arrested and handed over to the South African regime.[162]

To prepare itself for the revolution, the PAC sent some of its members from Cape Town abroad for military training in 1961. The first group went to Ethiopia in early 1961 and consisted of Phillip Kgosana and four other members. The next group went to Egypt in 1962 and consisted of Gassen Ndlovu and other people from the Cape and Natal. At the end of their training, Nana Mahomo and Peter Molotsi were invited by the Egyptian government to collect the weapons. However, the biggest problem became the transportation of the weapons to South Africa. Maaba notes that, according to Ndlovu, Nana Mahomo was actually given money to transport weapons to South Africa through Port St. Johns in the Transkei. However, since the PAC never received the money, Ndlovu alleges that Mahomo misappropriated these funds.[163]

Operating from his headquarters in Maseru, Leballo disclosed at a press conference in early 1963 the impending uprising of about 150 000 PAC freedom fighters. He said that this force was ready and impatient to overthrow white domination in South Africa. At the same time, secret letters were sent to underground structures of the PAC, which informed Poqo members to be ready and that "the tide of African nationalism is surging on as never before, galvanising, steeling, and imbuing the African masses with a spirit of determination never before witnessed in this country."[164] Leballo was criticised by African leaders for his untimely disclosures at the press conference, which cost the PAC its political fortune.

What could have motivated Leballo to plunge the PAC into a state of disorganisation at this early stage after its formation? While it is not entirely clear that there were other PAC leaders who gave Leballo overt or tacit support for calling the press conference, there were those who openly condemned him. Leballo's actions reveal that he could have been motivated by his own desire for power. His actions did not only raise suspicions, but they also indicated that he was not a very subtle tactician.

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162 B. Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State, 1960-1963", in SADET, *The Road to Freedom in South Africa*, vol. 1, p. 286.

163 B. Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State, 1960-1963", in SADET, *The Road to Freedom in South Africa*, vol. 1, pp. 286-287.

164 P. K. Leballo, "African Nationalism is Irresistible", *The Africanist*, January-February 1965, p. 6.

Leballo's press conference, where he also announced that he had taken over the leadership of the PAC from Robert Sobukwe, aroused suspicions. The press conference was held three days before Sobukwe was to be freed. Detractors of the PAC in the ANC and among other Africanists believed that the impulsive behaviour of Leballo had actually given the regime an excuse for prolonging the imprisonment of Sobukwe, who was the PAC leader. It was not surprising, therefore, that Leballo's opponents suspected that his dirty tricks had secured him the leadership of the PAC.[165] However, at the time he was not openly repudiated from within PAC ranks.

Matthew Nkoana, in his article *Crisis in the Revolution* made a scathing attack on Leballo, when he said: "You went back to Maseru and shortly afterwards hit the headlines with your infamous disclosures. For this, in Party circles, you as usual passed the buck to those of your colleagues who were around you at the time, and therefore earned an undeserved 'reprieve' from the Party. But at the time you made an ass of yourself and the Party by making public denials of what was undesirable."[166] According to information divulged by the ANC J.D. Nyaose, another PAC leader, attacked Leballo on the same issue in a letter sent to PAC rebels in Nairobi, Kenya on 6 February 1967 by saying: "Mr Leballo ceased in March 1963 to be an accredited leader (National Secretary) of the PAC when he informed the SA Government to arrest more than 1 500 freedom fighters members of the PAC of SA stating that he feared that they were about to start another Sharpeville in which European men, women and children would be murdered one night in SA."[167] Leballo's comrades were actually showing publicly his weaknesses as a leader of the liberation movement. Furthermore, they were also portraying him as an enemy agent, whose aim was to try to wreck and betray the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed in South Africa. This break of trust among the PAC leadership would haunt the organisation in the years to come.

Being aware of the nature and scope of the activities of Poqo the police reacted swiftly after the announcement of Leballo. The British colonial police in Lesotho raided the

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165 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76: The Call for Unity and a United Front, pp. 12-13.

166 M. Nkoana, *Crisis in the Revolution*, p. 17.

167 ANC, UFH, ANC, SOMAFCO: Director's Office, Box 65: The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania: Whom Does It Serve?, p. 11.

offices of the PAC and confiscated important documents. Further raids and arrests were carried out in South Africa by the police. The countrywide swoop ended with the imprisonment of about 10 000 PAC members, who included, amongst others, leaders like Jafta Masemola, Isaac Mthimunye, Philemon Tefu, John Nkosi, Dimuke Malepe and Samuel Chiloane.[168] In addition, the South African government passed a special law to prolong the incarceration of Robert Sobukwe through the so-called "Sobukwe Clause", which was a special clause in the General Law Amendment Bill.[169] Speaking in parliament about the reasons why the Sobukwe Clause was passed, the Minister of Justice, B.J. Vorster, said: "Clause Four makes provision to detain a man under those circumstances, and I know that if a man has paid penalty, one cannot lightly take a step like this. But in view of ... the disclosures of the Snyman Commission, I think ... will agree with me that it is necessary in the interests of the safety of the state to detain such a man, a government cannot shirk its duty to do it. It is not the sort of clause, sir, which will be invoked lightly. It is not the sort of clause, candidly, which one likes to put in any Bill unless there is urgency, extreme urgency to do so."[170] In other words, the "Sobukwe Clause" indicates how extremely dangerous the South African government regarded Sobukwe. It was also quite obvious that the regime feared the possibility of Poqo's reign of terror resuming on a high note and resulting in a full-scale revolutionary war. Free political activity was discouraged through the detention of suspects for 90 and later 180 days without trial.

Leballo went into hiding. Both the South African Police and the Basutoland Police issued warrants for his arrest. However, Leballo was able to avoid arrest and proceeded safely to Tanzania, where he joined other PAC leaders in the external mission. Again the ANC criticised Leballo by saying that this "great revolutionary" was a free man, while thousands of other cadres were languishing in jail because "he had given the fascist police an excuse to bludgeon the liberation movement in South Africa."[171]

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168 M. Pheko, "Was Rivonia a Turning Point in South African Struggle?", n.d., p. 1. Obtained from Dr Motsoko Pheko, in possession of author.

169 South Africa (Republic), *Government Gazette*, vol. VIII, no. 488, Cape Town, 2 May 1963. General Law Amendment Act, 1963, Act no. 37 of 1963, pp. 1-15.

170 Republic of South Africa, House of Assembly Debates, Third Session (First Senate) volume 11, 18 March 1963, col. 2698.

171 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76: The Call for Unity and United Front, pp. 13-14.

What also emerged from the evidence of the accused in the South African courts at this time is that the PAC, like the ANC, plotted to overthrow the government. Many South African newspapers reported in the early 1960s that the PAC was committed to pursuing the struggle vigorously as from 1960 in accordance with the 1963 target date of the freedom of all Africans.[172] Evidence from the police reports and courts also showed that Poqo's Task Force members were instructed by their leaders to gather materials and manufacture weapons with which to overthrow white rule in South Africa.

The PAC plan seemed to have been that many towns should stage their own revolts, thereby forcing the forces of the regime to be deployed over a large area. The logic behind the plan was that once the army and the police were overstretched in this way, the regime would found it impossible to protect every area and subdue the revolt country-wide. Many towns indicated their commitment to participate in the uprisings, even though there was a lack of thorough preparations and no weapons of note. The fact that the PAC cadres had access to mostly pangas and axes seemed not to worry the leadership of the movement. In the words of one cadre, Mgaza, it was not necessary to have sophisticated weapons like those of the regime because: "You start a revolution with what you can manufacture around you. You start a revolution by a knife the little thing you think cannot do anything against a machine gun. These things develop and that takes you from a knife to a panga, from a panga to something else. You go on stage by stage until you get to an AK47. Our type of war was a war of surprise ... You start with guerrilla warfare. We knew that we would have to use guerrilla warfare to be able to fight a powerful system..."[173]

From the court cases and newspaper reports on the activities of Poqo, it was clear that the PAC cadres were preparing for war in 1963. The confessions of Dikgang Moseneke on 10 April 1963 in court in Pretoria give an idea about the activities of the PAC and Poqo around Pretoria. He told the court how Philemon Tefu and Jeff Masemola and others visited Leballo in Basutoland in early 1963 and received instructions to prepare for the uprising. He also revealed that John Nkosi, one of the Task Force leaders, was told by Jeff Masemola that when they start fighting against whites they were first going to

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172 *The Rand Daily Mail*, 25 January 1962; *Die Vaderland,* 22 March 1962; *The Rand Daily Mail*, 25 March 1963.

173 B. Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State, 1960-1963," in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* p. 287.

send technicians to "hit the main spots" like Voortrekkerhoogte and the Gymnasium at Potchefstroom. Other targets were not named, but the technicians were also going to "break open the Pretoria prison and let the prisoners free."[174] Moses Masemola confessed on 19 April 1963 in the Pretoria court that a teacher called Mogoba had encouraged them to join the PAC and they had also been shown by Philemon Tefo and Isaac Mthimunye how to make petrol bombs.[175] Nico Kekana confessed on 27 May in the Pretoria court that he had attended several meetings of the PAC where they were told about the aims and objectives of the PAC, the plans to set the building of the Dutch Reformed Church in Mamelodi on fire, waylay the lorry conveying explosives and destroy or damage petrol tanks, telephone lines and the electric power station in Pretoria.[176] From the confessions, the court was able to come to the conclusion that since October 1962 a policy of violence and armed revolution was being advocated by the PAC.

Once Philemon Tefu and his comrades returned from Basutoland, they started preparing for the insurrection. They began stockpiling weapons such as firearms, pangas, bombs, axes and dynamite. The collection and safe-keeping of these weapons was confirmed by Dikgang Moseneke in his confession when he said that Isaac Mafatshe had informed him that "they had a cave where they have dumped all their weapons."[177] As it was Poqo's aim to confuse the police, they used codes to refer to certain weapons. Flutes were pangas, guitars firearms, whereas saxophones were bombs. However, the urgency of starting with the revolution was indicated by Leballo, who issued a circular in which he called himself "McDonald, Acting Director of the Dance Association" and proceeded to goad his comrades into action in this way: "Situations throughout the Cinemas and Halls (branches of the Organisation) is becoming extremely serious, and graver and graver everyday as a result of deliberate provocation by the forces of darkness (that is the police), and the informers. Already five halls have been wiped out

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174 NASA, Supreme Court of South Africa, Transvaal Provincial Division (TPD), Criminal Case 233/ 63: The State vs. Jeff Masemola and 15 Others, p. 21.

175 NASA, Supreme Court of SA, TPD, Trial Records, File 234/63: State vs. Isaac Mthimunye and Others, pp. 2-6.

176 NASA, Supreme Court of SA, TPD, Criminal Case 233/63: The State vs. Jeff Masemola and 15 Others, pp. 1-3.

177 NASA, Supreme Court of SA, TPD, Criminal Case 233/63: The State vs. Jeff Masemola and 15 Others, p. 18.

by the forces of darkness, and other cinemas. Therefore I am directing to you the final warning, for every cinema, every hall, every proprietor, every hall usher, hall-keeper, and all the digits and dancers, that the date of the jive session (that is the Revolution) has now been chosen and it can no longer be postponed. Unless the dancers are ready within three weeks of receipt of this order you will be guilty of a very serious crime of betrayal. Time is now running out. The property recently received by the halls from the night club is still safe. Thanks for that. This is a very grave situation indeed. The Acting Director and the R.C. are left with no alternative, namely to shorten the days before the session."[178]

In reply the number 3 accused, Philemon Tefu, wrote to McDonald that he would be sending him R10-00 and also mentioned: "I have got here one change room and 450 flutes, 5 guitars and 20 saxophones. The number of digits is growing daily. We are rehearsing twice a week, and the digits are crying for the Twist Session, and it is very difficult to cool them down."[179] This means that the Mamelodi branch of Philemon Tefu was committed to Leballo's plan of the 1963 uprising. In Atteridgeville there were also plans to set alight the Shell petrol depot near Iscor. Once it would start exploding and burning, it was obviously going to attract the attention of the police and give the Poqo cadres enough chance to attack whites.[180] They were also preparing themselves for the day of the insurrection. These activities of PAC members around Pretoria seemed to be given scant attention by many historians, although they form part and parcel of the history of the liberation struggle, which should not be ignored.

What is revealed by the analysis thus far is the fact that the PAC leaders were using young school children around Pretoria townships to challenge the regime. They seemed to be instigating a premature revolution for which they were ill-prepared and not ready. Nevertheless, their desire for competition with the ANC in the South African liberation struggle and the events in Africa, where many former colonies were fighting for their freedom seemed to have influenced the movement. While the ANC's armed struggle

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178 NASA, Supreme Court of SA, TPD, Criminal Case 234/63: The State vs. Isaac Mthimunye and 10 Others, p. 6.

179 NASA, Supreme Court of SA, TPD, Criminal Case 234/63: The State vs. Isaac Mthimunye and 10 Others, p. 7.

180 S. Mathabatha, "The PAC and Poqo in Pretoria, 1958-1964" in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, pp. 316-317.

had symbolic significance as part of their broader propaganda campaign, the PAC regarded the armed struggle against the regime as of crucial importance in its own right.

However, their preparations for the insurrection were cut short by the crackdown of the police, who arrested all the suspects. From the evidence of the court cases, it became clear that the police had been watching their movements after receiving a tip-off from one of their informers. The PAC members from Pretoria, including Philemon Tefu, Isaac Mthimunye, Samuel Chiloane, John Nkosi and Jafta Masemola, were taken to Robben Island, where they joined other Poqo members from all over South Africa. Dr Motsoko Pheko, one of the leaders of the PAC, claims that these PAC-Poqo members were the first political prisoners to be sent to Robben Island.[181] The ANC/MK prisoners joined them later. This fact was confirmed by Mandela, when he arrived on Robben Island in 1962 and noticed that competition between their movements continued even in this place. In reflecting upon their relationships, Mandela commented: "Yet, from the beginning, relations with the PAC had been more competitive than co-operative. Some of the PAC men were already on the island, and saw our arrival as an encroachment on their territory. We heard from some of our men that the most senior PAC prisoners had expressed regret that we had not been hanged ... In 1962, on my first stay on the island, the PAC had greatly outnumbered the ANC. In 1967 the numbers were reversed. Yet this seemed to harden the PAC in their positions. They were unashamedly anti-communist and anti-Indian."[182]

The area around Johannesburg is another one where minimal attention has been given to the activities of Poqo. Maaba mentions the activities of PAC/Poqo underground cells in Alexandra under Solly Ndlovu, Soweto under S. Gwabeni, especially in Orlando East and West, and Daveyton on the East Rand, where Johnson Mlambo was very active.[183] In all these branches the members were preparing themselves for the uprising by collecting weapons, training and planning to attack police stations and military installations in accordance with the elements of guerrilla warfare. In Natal, however, Lodge indicates that there was very little PAC activity, except that Jordan Ngubane

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181 M. Pheko, "Was Rivonia a Turning Point in the Struggle?", p. 1.

182 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 426.

183 B. Maaba, "The PAC's War Against the State, 1963-1964, in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, pp. 293-295.

spoke about the Task Force at Ohlanga Institute, which planned to burn cane fields.[184] In the Free State it seemed as if the gold-mining town of Welkom was the only area after the banning of the PAC in 1960 where there was some activity.[185]

To deter the would-be activists from joining Poqo, the government arrested many Poqo members and put them in prison. The detentions and trials, which started in 1963, continued into 1964 and 1965 throughout the country. All the time the building of new underground cells or subversive activities were closely watched by the police. The work done by the police in general to smash Poqo's activities can be summarised by the words of the Commissioner-General of the South African Police, Lieutenant-General J.M. Keevey, in a speech delivered during the opening of the Transkei Area Authority on 13 May 1963 and quoted in a memorandum of Colonel J.F. Rossouw, Divisional Commissioner in the Transkei: "A matter that greatly affected the Transkei and indeed the whole of South Africa during the past year was the subversive activities of 'Poqo' … I would like to stress the debt of gratitude that you and members of this Chamber owe to the S.A. Police. They never spared themselves in the protection of the law-abiding Bantu of the Transkei. The fact that some of them sacrificed their lives in the fulfilment of this task is a magnificent reflection of their devotion to duty. A duty that calls for the protection of all law-abiding persons irrespective of race and colour."[186]

Despite the actions of the police in trying to root out subversive activities, news filtered from the underground that the PAC was reactivating and rebuilding its cells. News concerning the internal activities of the PAC followed the conception of a plan around July 1964 by the Presidential Council to launch a guerrilla operation against South Africa from Maseru in Lesotho. The operation seemed to be based on the PAC's strategic thinking of waging the people's war, which was to fight from the countryside and turn the backward villages into bastions of political, economic, cultural, and military power in a long and protracted struggle.[187] The document, which outlines the launching of a

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184 T. Lodge, "The Poqo Insurrection," in *Resistance and Ideology in Settler Society*, p. 188.

185 T. Lodge, "The Poqo Insurrection" in *Resistance and Ideology in Settler Society*, p. 188.

186 NASA, SAP, File 1/223/ 62: Quelling of Unrest: Poqos-Transkei: Memorandum Addressed to the Commissioner of Police in Cape Town by the Divisional Commissioner in the Transkei, 21 May 1963, p. 2.

187 Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), The Principle of the United Front in the People's War, p. 3.

guerrilla insurgency discusses, amongst others, the escape routes, training programmes, the use of explosives, logistics, lines of communication and the role of external diplomatic representatives of the movement and the completion of the groundwork for a long-term goal rural insurgency operation based in Qacha's Nek, a village on the Lesotho border with the Transkei. While these activities were taking place, support for the PAC would be sought by generating a campaign of terrorism, which would include assassinations of important whites, kidnapping of school children, the destruction of important buildings as well as the seizure of gold bullion, money, arms and ammunition.[188] Unfortunately for the Maseru-based members of the Presidential Council, the plot was uncovered and they were arrested by the Basutoland police. Those found not guilty were acquitted. Some of them joined their comrades in Dar-es-Salaam, where they also became embroiled in the leadership quarrels which beset the movement. One of these Maseru leaders, John Pokela, the acting national secretary, was kidnapped by the South African Police, allegedly with the help of the Basutoland police. This incident sparked a row between Leballo and the premier of Lesotho, Leabua Jonathan, as indicated by these accusations of Leballo: "Your guilt in the whole conspiracy that led to Pokela's abdication is unquestionable and all you can do to exonerate yourself is to intervene with your South African friends and see to it that Pokela, if still alive, is returned to Lesotho – forthwith - where, as you claim in your letter to me, he lived, 'peacefully' until he left."[189]

The activities of the PAC at this time indicated that the movement, just like the ANC, also existed in the front line of the liberation struggle against the South African regime. However, the mass arrests of the PAC leaders before and after 1963 robbed the movement of many of its important leaders. The fact that the PAC was a relatively new movement in the liberation struggle of the early 1960s and its subsequent loss of its leaders meant that the movement would take years before it could regroup and challenge the might of the South African regime again.

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188 "The Poqo Insurrection" in T. Lodge, *Resistance and Ideology in Settler Society*, p. 196.

189 PAC, "Leballo Accuses Leabua of Conspiracy in J.N. Pokela's kidnap by SAP," *News and Views*, vol.1, no.9, 21 October 1966, p. 9.

3.3.3 Was Rivonia a watershed in the South African struggle?

Having examined the underground activities and the abortive attempts of both the ANC and the PAC in the early 1960s at overthrowing the white regime, the following question posed by Motsoko Pheko in his article needs to be answered: "Was Rivonia a Turning Point in the South African Struggle?" Stated differently, the question might read like this: Did the Rivonia Trial determine the course of the national liberation struggle in South Africa? Only out of an understanding of these questions would emerge a clearer picture of the direction the struggle was taking and the extent to which the liberation movements were trying to shape it. Implied in these questions is the desire to dominate the political scene in South Africa. It was clear that the ANC and the PAC were already in competition at this time. Each movement was out to convince the world in general and Africans in particular, that it alone was the sole representative of the Africans. In other words, the answer to these questions must be referred to the political ambition of the two liberation movements - which one was to gain political ascendancy and dominance of African politics?

What needs to be emphasised here, is that the inclusion of the white communists in the Rivonia Trial was important to the ANC, in that these whites had wide connections in overseas countries. They were able to secure funds and make the trial well-known in overseas countries through their contacts. At the same time the PAC, whose freedom fighters were accused of more or less the same offences as the ANC, did not attract so much attention during its trials to the same extent as their rivals. This could be attributed to the fact that the PAC did not attract whites and communists with world-wide connections. In fact, the PAC was against communists and it was also perceived as a movement that was against whites. It was a surprise when Patrick Duncan joined the movement in the early 1960s, because he was white. Apparently he joined the PAC from the Liberal Party because of his anti-communist stand and to help the PAC to raise funds for the struggle.[190] He was not of much help to the PAC in raising enough funds. On the other hand, the PAC accused organisations like the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the Defence and Aid Fund of supporting financially only the ANC activists during the

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[190] Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), "Notes on the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC)", July 1987, p. 3. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatje, in possession of the author. See also *The Star,* 18 May 1963.

Rivonia Trial, while its members were languishing in jail.[191] In the PAC's view, this support gave the ANC more credibility and influence in the eyes of the world.

It is this biasness and lack of fairness that Dr Pheko is highlighting in his question: Was Rivonia a watershed in the South African struggle? After the attempts by the two liberation movements to overthrow the regime in the early 1960s, when they began seriously with the strategy of using violence against the state, it would be unfair to regard the Rivonia Trial as the turning point in the liberation struggle in South Africa. In fact, it becomes a watershed in the annals of the history of the ANC only. However, when other liberation movements like the PAC are involved, it is better to use the years to indicate demarcations. From our analysis of the attempts of the two movements, it is clear that their serious attempts at overthrowing the state ended in 1964. From 1965 the two liberation movements started relying heavily on their external missions to revive the internal struggle vigorously and seriously. Hence, the exiled leaders of the ANC and the PAC gained prominence in furthering the aims of the struggle. In this manner, the prominence given to the Rivonia Trial is actually the impression which is created by some writers and senior members of the ANC-SACP alliance, like Francis Meli, Joe Slovo and Ben Turok, who wrote about the history of the ANC as if it is the only movement which contributed towards the liberation struggle of the Africans.[192]

3.3.4 Had the liberation struggle come to an end?

In the early sixties, South Africa's liberation movements believed that a move towards armed struggle would result in freedom. Besides the intolerable situation in South Africa, events outside also played a major role in developing an offensive mood and stimulated a search for a strategy to end minority rule. In Africa, for example, many African states were becoming independent. As a result, "the prospects of self-rule were firing the imagination of people throughout Africa" and South Africa was no exception.[193] Successful armed struggles were being waged in countries such as Algeria, Guinea-

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191 E. Khopung, *The Story of a Dispossessed People*, p. 89.

192 See B. Turok, *Strategic Problems in South Africa's Liberation Struggle: A Critical Analysis*, pp. 47-49. References to the publications of Francis Meli and Joe Slovo can be found on page 140.

193 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 1: J. Slovo - No Middle Road, n.d., p. 81.

Bissau and later on in Angola and Mozambique. These struggles were being waged by national liberation movements against regimes with superior military power and strength. Therefore, the decision to fight in South Africa was a conscious and calculated decision: "For people who had not been allowed to bear arms in the South African army and who even in time of war were only allowed to serve in menial positions, it means taking on the full might of an army that served to defend the apartheid policies of the government."[194] Failure by the liberation movements to act against such unbearable conditions would have been regarded by Africans as an abdication of responsibility and indecisiveness.

However, the liberation movements suffered some serious reverses and disappointments when the police smashed their underground activities. Be that as it may, the liberation movements did not suffer a political defeat. The spirit of resistance was by no means crushed. Why? Because the very same conditions, which had led to resistance and fighting, were still in existence. Moreover, repression and oppression continued to increase. It was obvious that there would be no end to the freedom struggle as long as oppression persisted. More significantly, the prevailing conditions indicated that the struggle would be a long and protracted one. For this reason, the struggle did not come to an end - it was only the strategies and tactics which had to be changed and improved.

In the final analysis, the insurrectionary activities of the liberation movements between 1960 and 1964 revealed that there was a total lack of co-operation between them. This lack of a concerted effort from the liberation movements only benefited the white regime. It underlined their relationships, which by 1964 were characterised by competition and rivalry.

3.4 REGROUPING AND THE RELAUNCHING OF THE ARMED STRUGGLE BY THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

By the end of 1964, it became obvious that the underground structures of the liberation movements had been liquidated by the security forces of the South African regime. Furthermore, it also became clear that a strategy by Africans to seize power in South

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194 G. Mbeki, *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa*, p. 97.

Africa through massive uprising was almost impossible. This means that alternative strategies and tactics of engaging the regime had to be devised and developed.

In spite of the problems that the liberation movements faced, greatly increased presence of trained cadres was of critical importance in order to reactivate internal activities. This was because the vital and central task of the liberation movements was the intensification of the armed struggle for the overthrow of the government and the liberation of the Africans. Thus, the most important questions are: How did the ANC and the PAC ensure that the underground structures continued to function through the infiltration of the newly-trained freedom fighters in the face of constant police harassments and arrests? To what extent did the two liberation movements put pressure on the South African regime through the armed struggle in the second half of the 1960s?

3.4.1 The role of Umkhonto We Sizwe

The commitment to revolutionary war or guerrilla warfare was made more explicit by the foremost leaders of the ANC at the Rivonia Trial as the ultimate means by which the white regime would be overthrown. In fact, the ANC abandoned the reliance on exclusively non-violent means of struggle, which had played its part in the past. For this reason, in the post-Rivonia period, the ANC firmly believed that "the key to the liberation of South Africa is in the reorganisation and intensification of the revolutionary struggle inside the country."[195]

Despite the fact that the ANC and the SACP wanted to keep the spirit of revolt alive, there were many challenges which had to be overcome. They were confronted with formidable obstacles like how to create an effective leadership, develop strategy and tactics of armed struggle, provide guerrilla training for their recruits, organise support structures for returning cadres inside the country, solve problems of trained cadres, who wanted to fight, and integrate members from other races into the ANC.[196] Even more

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195 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 2, File MCHO2-2: Problems and Perspectives - A Discussion Statement, n.d., p. 2.

196 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge: Nadir and Resurgence, 1964-1979*, vol. 5, p. 27.

serious was the fact that South Africa was isolated from friendly African states by the buffer territories of Rhodesia, Mozambique, and Angola, which were white controlled. Furthermore, Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland were not yet politically independent, and also at the mercy of South Africa economically.[197] As a result cadres trained in exile had to travel long distances before reaching South Africa. Because of this, the vital link between the internal and external resources was almost non-existent.

Besides the pressing problem of sending trained cadres to South Africa, it also appeared that the most important aim of the ANC was to keep its image alive amongst the oppressed. This point was emphasised by Joe Slovo at the meeting of the Congresses in 1966 in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, when he said that the biggest weakness of the movement was that the new generation of youths who were sixteen years of age at that time were the same youths who last heard about the ANC when they were still fourteen years of age.[198] Drastic steps had to be taken to remedy the situation. For this reason, Slovo believed that the strategy of increasing propaganda dissemination in South Africa in new imaginative ways was greatly needed.[199] The new methods of circulating information among the masses should be made known to every person who had been given a specific task of furthering the cause of freedom. It was not surprising, therefore, that the ANC's alliance partner, the SACP, played a prominent role in propaganda operations during the latter half of the 1960s.

Towards the middle of 1966, the London office of the SACP formed a committee to deal specifically with the home front. The members of the committee were Yusuf Dadoo as chairman, Joe Slovo as secretary, Ronnie Kasrils and Jack Hodgson as additional members. Ronnie Kasrils enlisted the support of young communists for propaganda work when he was still a student at the London School of Economics in 1966.[200] These recruits were to be used as couriers, who would be transporting leaflets and other secret

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197 H. Barrel, *MK*, pp. 18-19. See also B. Turok, *Strategic Problems in South Africa's Liberation Struggle*, p. 49.

198 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, ANC Political Material, 1965-1970, A2775, III, 13: Minutes of the Meeting of the Congresses, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 26 November 1966, p. 16.

199 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 3: Joe Slovo: Methods of Struggle in South Africa, n.d., p. 7.

200 R. Kasrils, *Armed and Dangerous: From Undercover Struggle to Freedom*, p. 106.

documents to South Africa. The first material to be sent to the ANC-SACP underground in South Africa was on the SACP's 45th anniversary celebrations and the trial of Bram Fischer. The first propaganda courier was the sister of a friend of Ronnie Kasrils, who agreed to bring leaflets into the country when she came back from the holidays in Britain. Another courier was Alexander Moumbaris, a member of the British Communist Party, who smuggled letters into the country in a double-bottomed suitcase.[201] In 1967, the distribution of propaganda material was facilitated, when the leaflet which bore the message "The ANC Lives" was sent to thousands of addresses at the same time from Johannesburg, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Durban.[202] In November 1969, tape recordings of ANC and MK propaganda were placed in different places in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Kimberley and Port Elizabeth. At the Cape Town railway station, a "bucket bomb" was placed at the non-white entrance, while a tape recorder was broadcasting its message nearby.[203] In addition to these attempts of disseminating propaganda, the SACP also tried to set up a network of units throughout the country, which would recruit members for the national liberation struggle.

Nevertheless, the most important work of the ANC was to reactivate the underground cells. One of these underground cells consisted of Albertina Sisulu, John Nkadimeng and John Mavuso and its main task seemed to have been to facilitate the passage of ANC members who wished to leave the country for education and military training.[204] The cell was also involved in activities such as the distribution of ANC and SACP leaflets, recruitment of new comrades and maintenance of underground structures. The admission by the South African government of the existence of the underground work of the ANC was revealed by the 1969 Pietermaritzburg trial of the movement's cadres, who had entered the country after undergoing military training abroad.[205] Three of the insurgents, Bifana Matthews Ngcobo, Lungapi Amos Lengisi and Themba Linus Dlamini, were able to enter the country secretly by ship in February and March 1968. Dlamini and Ngcobo were withdrawn from the Wankie campaign so that they could come into the

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201 G. Houston, "The Post-Rivonia ANC/SACP Underground", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, pp. 633-634.

202 *The Sunday Times*, 6 August 1967.

203 *Die Transvaler*, 17 November 1969.

204 G. Houston, "The Post-Rivonia ANC/SACP Underground", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* p. 640.

205 Vladimir Shubin, *ANC: A View from Moscow*, p. 84.

country first in order to establish MK structures that could link up with the Wankie infiltrators.[206] However, they were arrested when they were still busy with the setting up of underground structures.

In May and June 1969, the police raided the homes of the people suspected of furthering the aims of banned organisations in major towns like Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban, Pietermaritzburg and other smaller towns. The Chief of the Security Branch, Brigadier Tiny Venter, said that those in detention in Soweto were held in connection with the activities of the ANC.[207] Amongst those arrested was Winnie Mandela, the wife of the famous prisoner on Robben Island. Because the leaders of the ANC were either imprisoned on Robben Island or living in exile, Winnie Mandela seemed to have arrogated for herself the authority of keeping the ANC alive inside the country.[208] She started an underground cell in Soweto and assumed a leadership role without being authorised to do so. It seems as if other ANC operatives were reluctant to work with her, because they did not like her style of operation, which attracted notice from the police. In fact, this reluctance corroborates what Bartholomew Hlapane said in his trial of 1964, when he disclosed that Winnie Mandela was "widely suspected to be a Police informer".[209]

Despite these attempts of reviving the ANC internal structures, the biggest problem of the movement still remained the infiltration of trained cadres into South Africa. The situation grew worse when more young men and women went abroad for military training, while others who had been trained in the Soviet Union, Algeria, Egypt and China were neglected in the camps in Tanzania. In 1966, the majority of the cadres were based in the Kongwa camp in Tanzania. There were three other camps in Mbeya, Bagamoyo and Morogoro.[210] At the Kongwa camp, many of the trained cadres, especially those of the early 1960s were complaining bitterly about the leadership's

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206 G. Houston, "The Post-Rivonia ANC/SACP Underground." in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* pp. 641-642.

207 *The World*, 13 June 1969.

208 E. Gilbey, *The Lady: The Life and Times of Winnie Mandela,* p. 68.

209 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, ANC political Material, 1960-1965, A2675, III, II: Testimony of Bartholomew Moru Hlapane given at the Rivonia Trial in 1964, S.4/ 2705, p. 45.

210 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p.298.

indecisiveness in sending them back to South Africa to fight. To complicate matters, Julius Nyerere was concerned about the growing numbers of southern African liberation movements in his country. The African Liberation Committee of the Organisation of African Unity and the Tanzanian and Zambian governments wanted to know "when organizations were going to get down to real fighting."[211]

It was against this background that from 1966 onwards unsuccessful attempts were made to send trained cadres back into the country through Botswana. Attempts to infiltrate guerrillas through Botswana were frustrated by Botswana's own security forces. As a result, finding the most suitable route to South Africa became a serious problem. In what proved to be a premature effort to indicate to South Africa's black people that the liberation movement was alive and well, the ANC decided to promote co-operation with other anti-colonial movements - hence the freedom alliance with Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), which was starting its war of resistance against whites in Rhodesia.[212] The latter step was taken after the ANC had realised that it was difficult for MK cadres to infiltrate South Africa through Rhodesia and the Portuguese territories of Angola and Mozambique. As a result of the alliance, the ANC attempted to send its own cadres to cross the Zambezi River into South Africa. This group was called the "Luthuli Detachment", in honour of the ANC president who had just passed away.[213]

The discussion of the whole campaign in detail is not necessary for our analysis. However, what needs to be highlighted, is that the freedom fighters of the ANC and ZAPU acquitted themselves well in their first military operation with their respective enemies from South Africa and Rhodesia. This became clear from the statement released by Oliver Tambo of the ANC and James Chikerema on 19th August 1967, which announced: "We wish to declare here that the fighting that is presently going on in Wankie area is indeed being carried out by a combined force of ZAPU and ANC which marched into the country as comrades-in-arms on a common route, each bound to its destination. It is the determination of these combined forces to fight the common settler enemy to the finish, at any point of encounter as they make their way to their respective

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211 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart, *From Protest to Challenge*, vol.5, p. 28.

212 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, p. 237. See also S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 48.

213 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 20.

fighting zones."[214] The Wankie battles, which ultimately became known as the Western Front, took place between 13 August to mid-September 1967. MK headquarters in Lusaka decided to send another unit to Rhodesia to divert the enemy's attention. The idea was to attack the enemy from the east toward Sipolilo so as to open up a second front that would weaken the Rhodesian forces. The Sipolilo campaign took place between December 1967 and July 1968.[215] Even though the MK forces put up a brave fight, some of them were killed or captured by the security forces. As a result the road of the freedom fight to South Africa was blocked.

From the ANC point of view, the Wankie campaign was a resounding success in spite of the fact that they were defeated militarily. The whole campaign was of great political significance as MK succeeded for the first time in engaging their enemies in guerrilla warfare. The importance of the campaign to the ANC is described in this manner: "The credit for these achievements naturally lies with the heroic members of our liberation army. The deeds of our comrades in Zimbabwe were of utmost political-military importance. In fact we will under-estimate the Zimbabwe events only at our peril. The campaigns there constitute some of the finest achievements of the African people since our defeat in 1879 - ninety years ago."[216] In other words, the ANC likened the ANC-ZAPU campaign to the successful humiliation of the British forces at the battle of Isandhlwana in 1879 by the Zulu warriors during the wars of resistance. The ANC-ZAPU campaign became part of MK mythology in the opening round of a new phase of the struggle. This is because the campaign produced heroes who, amongst others included Paul Peterson, Patrick Moloa, Lennox Zuma and Chris Hani.[217] Chris Hani, especially, established a following in the army, which increased his power base in his rise within the ANC structures. He became the spokesperson of the MK soldiers whenever they had

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214 "Statement issued on 19 August 1967 by Oliver Tambo, deputy president of the ANC and James Chikerema, vice-president of ZAPU," *Spotlights on SA*, vol. 5, no. 33, 25 August 1967, p. 3.

215 For the details of the Wankie and Sipolilo campaigns read Chris Hani, "The Wankie Campaign", *Dawn: Journal of Umkhonto We Sizwe* (Souvenir Issue), 1986, pp. 1-7. See also R.M. Ralinala et.al., "The Wankie and Sipolilo Campaigns" in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* pp. 479-536.

216 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 1: Political Report on the National Executive Committee to Consultative Conference of the ANC-Morogoro, April 1969, p. 27.

217 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid,* p. 50.

problems.

As a result, the ANC regarded the campaign as a source of inspiration and encouragement to the liberation struggle in the whole of Southern Africa. That is why Oliver Tambo, the Acting President of the ANC, firmly believed that the ANC-ZAPU clashes with the Vorster-Smith forces actually marked the beginning of the armed struggle for which they had been preparing from the early 1960s.[218] For this reason, the ANC believes that the people who criticise the campaign do so unfairly and underestimate the achievement of the liberation movement by saying that the "tendencies we sometimes hear expressed to minimise or under-rate the Zimbabwe campaign and the great alliance of ZAPU-ANC are a serious deviation and betray complete lack of understanding of the political-military strategy and tactics of the revolution in our part of the world."[219]

Even though the ANC regarded the campaign as successful, not everybody agreed with them. The campaign gave the PAC a chance to make political capital out of the Rhodesian events. The PAC severely criticised the strategy of the ANC of direct confrontation and clashes with the enemy forces in a publication called "The Wankie Fiasco in Retrospect" by saying that: "You cannot hope to gobble up, a regular army all at once in a conventional war style, as our brothers tried to do, and still claim to be waging a guerrilla warfare."[220] Even within the ranks of the ANC, the failure of the campaign caused criticisms and discontentment. The Africanists, including T. Bonga, A.M. Makiwane and J. Matlou, released a statement, which condemned the leadership of the ANC for the ill-advised and ill-fated incursions of guerrillas into Rhodesia in 1967 and 1968. These Africanists believed that the guerrillas were demoralised by badly planned strategies and ill-timed operations.[221]

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218 Oliver Tambo, "The beginning of the armed struggle", in A. Tambo, *Preparing for Power: Oliver Tambo Speaks,* p. 53.

219 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 1: Political Report on the National Executive Committee to Consultative Conference of the ANC-Morogoro, April 1969, p. 27.

220 Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), What Kind of Revolution is This? The Wankie Fiasco in Retrospect, January 1969, p. 1. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatjie, in possession of author.

221 PAC, UFH, ANC SOMAFCO, Box 81: African National Congress of South Africa's Statement on the Expulsion from the ANC of T. Bonga, A.M. Makiwane and Others, pp.

Strangely enough, much criticism was levelled against the campaign by the SACP as the partner of the ANC. The Central Committee claimed that it was completely unaware of these events until they were widely reported in the press: "We confess to a substantial ignorance about the present scale of the armed struggle and are simply in no position to intelligently discuss the scope for its 'intensification.' But there are certain policy issues which arise in this respect. In the past eighteen months or so the most visible and publicly reported aspect of the armed struggle has been the ANC's decisions to despatch contingents of guerrilla fighters (in company with those from ZAPU) across the Zambezi into Zimbabwe. This vision has been represented as a 'new phase' of the struggle but what tactical considerations or calculations were involved in the decision was never adumbrated to us."[222] Although the SACP claimed that it had not been informed about the Rhodesian incursions, its response indicates its veiled and subtle criticisms of its alliance partner's decision and strategy of the mission. Even though Joe Slovo also criticised the mission, he nevertheless suggested how future missions should be carried out and planned: "... the Zimbabwe incursions once again underlined the need for careful political preparation of the population and for guerrilla groups to be integrated within the community rather than functioning as isolated foci."[223]

The analysis provided thus far of the ANC-ZAPU campaign reveal that it was planned and implemented hurriedly. It could have been prematurely implemented to satisfy the wishes of disgruntled guerrillas in the camps who wanted to go into action immediately. This view is also held by Ellis and Sechaba in their book, in which they expressed the belief that the dissatisfied trained cadres were sent on a suicidal mission to prove themselves.[224] This suspicion was confirmed by the critical memorandum about the campaign, which was written and signed by Chris Hani and his six comrades. Their displeasure and disgruntlement was indicated in this way: "Towards the end of 1968 we realised that there was a widespread dissatisfaction in the movement, and that there was an urgent need and desire for radical changes in organisation, policy and strategy. We agreed to act with the sole intention of invigorating the movement with a new spirit.

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222 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 1, File MCHO2-1: Some Drafts Comments for the SAIC Group on the Issues to be Discussed at the ANC Conference, n.d., p. 1.

223 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box1: J. Slovo: South Africa - No Middle Road, p. 94.

224 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 48.

We wished to create a new feeling of urgency that would lead to a renewal of the offensive against the enemy."[225]

Their criticisms were levelled at leaders such as Duma Nokwe and Joe Modise for seeming to be enjoying their political life, while neglecting the cadres who were living under harsh conditions. However, their harshest criticism was directed to the secretary-general, Moses Kotane, who was accused of giving priority to exile life over going home.[226] There was no doubt that there was a great deal of bitterness and disillusionment with the ANC leadership. As a result, the campaign actually revealed that the ANC was plagued with factional fighting and breakdown in communication within its alliance.

Obviously, the problems confronting the ANC-SACP alliance called for the review of the alliance and the future strategy of continuing with the struggle. Many people believed that the way forward was to draw the ANC and the SACP into a closer alliance so as to work out a comprehensive military and political strategy.[227] These problems pressurised the ANC leadership to the extent that the holding of a conference for the purpose of discussing alternative strategies was unavoidable. The situation was aptly described by Francis Meli in this way: "Despite the fact that the ANC had gained a lot of experience in Rhodesia, its External Mission still had to cope with the problems of assuming responsibility for the fate of the entire movement both inside and outside the country. This was no longer a theoretical question, but a hard, cold and at times an unpleasant fact of life. New plans for prosecuting the revolution had to be worked out."[228]

3.4.2 The Morogoro Conference, April 1969

The self-introspection of the ANC resulted in the holding of the Morogoro Conference from 25 April to 1 May 1969. There was a great need for a complete restructuring of the ANC and MK in order to create a suitable climate to enable the latter to resume the

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225 ANC, UFH, ANC Morogoro Papers, Box 65: Grounds of Appeal and Addendum thereto in the Matter of Exclusion from the African National Congress, 1969, p. 1.

226 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart, *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 5, p. 34.

227 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 52.

228 F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, p. 162.

struggle inside South Africa. The necessity of solving the problems of the ANC could be seen in the directive concerning preparations for the conference, which contained the following central issues which faced the movement:

- "The intensification of the armed struggle;
- The situation at home in the political, economic and social spheres;
- The consolidation of the various national groups and progressive organisations in the revolution;
- The strategy and tactics of the revolution and the people of the different revolutionary forces such as the workers, peasants and intellectuals in the revolution;
- The structure of our movement and the consolidation of all revolutionary forces;
- The relationship between the political movement and the national liberation army - Umkhonto We Sizwe;
- Strengthening of the Alliance between ZAPU and the ANC in the revolution;
- Revolutionary propaganda at home and abroad;
- The role of political prisoners at home in the revolutionary struggle;
- Aid to victims of Apartheid at home and abroad."[229]

It is important to note that memoranda of grievances and comments on the above-mentioned points were solicited widely from members of the ANC, Umkhonto, SACP and other alliance partners. One SACP member, Ben Turok, submitted a memorandum titled "What is wrong?", which was very critical of the way the struggle was conducted but at the same time calling for the movement to take stock of its activities and do a serious soul-searching and introspection. Joe Matthews replied and in his memorandum he was able to analyse the various aspects of the liberation movement, like the theoretical, political, style of work, diplomatic, propaganda, solidarity, mobilisation of rank and file, the army, and expose wrong things and highlight those that warranted immediate attention.[230] The idea of inviting these comments and suggestions from the ANC's political and military structures on these directives was to enable them to participate fully in the preliminary discussions organised by the leadership. Implied in

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229 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 1: Directives Concerning Preparations for Conference, 18 February, 1969.

230 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 111, 15: "What is Wrong": A Discussion on the Present Situation in the South African Liberation Movement, March 1969, pp. 1-16.

these directives and how they were handled was that the ANC was not only showing signs of being a democratic movement, but was also focusing its attention on the new methods and strategies of waging the struggle against the South African regime.

More importantly, the agenda of the Morogoro Conference emphasised the fact that the ANC wanted to activate itself from its state of inactivity. Its agenda included items like, amongst others, intensifying the armed struggle, improving organisational structures and giving more attention to involving the masses in the struggle.[231] From these items, it was clear that the ANC was ready and prepared to adopt new policies aimed at strengthening and streamlining the leadership as well as infusing the movement with a sense of purpose and direction.

At this stage something needs to be said about the achievements of the conference with regard to the prosecution of the struggle. What were these achievements? The major achievement was the adoption of two major documents, called "Strategy and Tactics for the ANC" and the "Revolutionary Programme of the ANC". According to Pampallis, the former explained the new broad policy and strategy of the ANC as the achievement of the national liberation of the African people through the armed struggle, whereas the latter highlighted the creation of a new society in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom Charter.[232] The document contains important aspects of the new revolutionary strategy of the ANC-SACP alliance such as the relationship between the political and military, political leadership, mobilisation of the African masses as the main force of the liberation struggle, the role of the Coloured and the Indian people in the fighting alliance as well as the role of the working class.[233] Its significance lies in the fact that, for the first time in its policy, the ANC regarded the urban working class as the leading force in the struggle.[234] Up to this time, the ANC firmly believed that the rural areas offered better prospects for launching guerrilla warfare, because these areas were generally not being controlled by local governments and the regime's forces. However, after the Wankie

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231 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 1: Agenda of the African National Congress Consultative Conference at Morogoro, April 1969, p. 1.

232 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa,* p. 238.

233 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 Political Material, A 2675, 1II, 16: Forward to Freedom: Strategy, Tactics and Programme of the African National Congress of South Africa, 1969, pp. 1-8.

234 S. Ellis and S. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 58.

Campaign, it became clear that South Africa, unlike Rhodesia, lacked the sort of jungle terrain and mountains as well as black peasantry which could offer a good shelter to guerrilla fighters. For this reason, the ANC now believed that the correct strategy was to launch campaigns based on the urban working class. The new approach stressed the classical Marxist ideology that indicates that the urban working class is the part of the population which is ready for the spread of socialism.[235]

Nevertheless, the ANC did not advocate the use of urban warfare only. Instead, they believed that the white regime could be removed from power only through violence by the African majority. More importantly, Slovo believed that South Africa was ideally suited for guerrilla warfare, because it did not have impregnable jungles or unfavourable terrain. On the positive side, South Africa was vast and offered a variation of topography like deserts, mountains, forests, veld and swamps, which could be important to the people's army. However, to Slovo "the sole question is one of adjusting survival tactics to the sort of terrain in which operations have to be carried out."[236]

Be that as it may, the document called "Strategy and Tactics" emphasised the point that the ANC's strategy was aimed at reviving its support structures inside South Africa and eventually seizing power by violent means. The new approach ruled out the possibility of a revolution in South Africa taking place as a result of a sudden and spontaneous uprising of the oppressed masses. This strategy failed dismally with the insurrectional activities of the early 1960s. Instead, the new strategy recognised the fact that maximum mobilisation of the masses should be taken into account. Once the masses could be mobilised, the work of the "foco" or a small cadre would be to "create a reaction from the population favourable to the advancement of the revolution."[237] For this reason, the "Strategy and Tactics" document suggested the idea of a highly trained and committed vanguard party, which would act as a catalyst to start a revolt which would engulf the whole of South Africa. Moreover, the document became the most important programme of the ANC since the Freedom Charter of 1955. As a result, it became the liberation movement's basic policy on strategy in the war fought against the South African regime until later on when political developments forced the ANC-SACP alliance

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235 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 58.

236 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 2, File MCHO2-2: Prospects for Armed Struggle in South Africa, 9th March 1968, p. 12.

237 M. Norval, *Inside the ANC: The Evolution of a Terrorist Organisation*, p. 97.

to change its programme or tactics. Most importantly, the document itself indicates that the ANC-SACP alliance was not only organised, but also that it could plan strategies for the future once the current ones were unsuccessful.

Another important development was the creation of a new body called the Revolutionary Council, which was headed by Oliver Tambo and whose secretary was Joe Matthews. Its main task was to "integrate political and military strategy for the struggle within South Africa."[238] In other words, this body was created with the sole aim of controlling MK and directing the armed struggle in South Africa. More significantly, the establishment of the Revolutionary Council seemed to have increased the influence of the SACP over the ANC. This was because leading strategists of the SACP like Joe Slovo, Reginald September and Yusuf Dadoo were allowed to be the members of the council.[239] Furthermore, the upper hand gained by the SACP at the Morogoro Conference can be seen with some draft comments the SAIC (Indian Communists) presented at the conference. They proposed the following:

- "The setting up of a supreme Liberation Front or Council to represent all oppressed national groups and revolutionary forces in South Africa;
- Such a front or council to prepare a programme of revolutionary struggle and of objectives as would provide more effective political basis for mobilising all sections of the oppressed people; such a programme should take into account the many changes that have occurred in the country since the Freedom Charter was formulated, and ipso facto such a programme should be an advance on the Freedom Charter and be indubitably rooted in revolutionary principles;
- The council or front will have the task of co-ordinating the efforts of all its constituents bodies to re-establish their organisations on South Africa, to study and prepare a training scheme for cadres in the matters of underground activity, organisation, and survival and to be responsible for their return home;
- The council or front to be fully represented on MK command structures so as to ensure the effective linkage of armed preparations with those of political organisation, propaganda and leadership;
- The membership of the council or front should be full-time working closely together, preferably in one location; this alone will ensure that it will function effectively and

238 T. Karis and G. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge, vol.5*, p. 35.

239 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 56.

fruitfully."[240]

From the comments above, it becomes obvious that the Revolutionary Council accommodated the aims, views and the structure suggested by the Indian section of the SACP. At the same time the ANC's National Executive Committee (NEC) was reduced from 23 to 9 members. The nine members were Oliver Tambo, who became President-General, Alfred Nzo, secretary-general, J.B. Marks, Moses Kotane, Moses Mabhida, Joe Matthews, T. Nkobi, W. Mokgomande and M. Piliso.[241] Only Africans could be members of the NEC, which was regarded as the governing body of the ANC. The exclusion of the non-Africans from the NEC highlighted the old controversy surrounding the domination of the ANC by the Communists of Indian and white origin. This clearly indicated that the policy of multiculturalism followed by the ANC was still not accepted by everybody in the organisation even long after the walkout of the Africanists in 1958.

From the foregoing analysis, it becomes apparent that it was not an easy task for the ANC-SACP alliance to regroup during the second half of the 1960s. However, despite the new exile problems that the movement encountered , it was able to reorganise itself and even began to focus on waging the struggle again. There were various attempts of infiltrating trained cadres in South Africa and rebuilding the shattered underground cells, even though they were easily destroyed by the ever vigilant South African security forces. More significantly, the movement showed that its leaders had foresight when they decided to address its problems at the Morogoro Conference of 1969. They were able to come up with the changes and strategies which indicated that they were committed to the liberation struggle. This was in spite of the fact that the problem of inclusive or narrow nationalism had cropped up again during the conference. At this time, the problem had even assumed the label of "communist influence". As a result, it became obvious that the ANC would always be haunted and challenged by the question: Whose freedom was being fought for or who should be in charge of the liberation struggle in South Africa?

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240 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box1, File MCHO2-1: Some Draft Comments for SAIC on the Issues to be Discussed at the Conference, 1969, pp. 4-5.

241 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, pp. 55-61.

3.4.3 The role of the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA)

Like the ANC's MK activities, which were contained by the police by 1965, the PAC's Poqo activities also seemed to have been kept in check by the security establishment of the South African regime. The PAC was faced with a formidable challenge to transform its own Poqo guerrilla army, which was not well-organised and co-ordinated like the one of the ANC, into a formal guerrilla army called the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA). This means that the External Mission of the PAC was faced with difficult tasks of regrouping its cadres, reorganising them and starting with its programme of infiltrating them back into South Africa.

The task of rebuilding its cells and keeping its name alive amongst its supporters in South Africa was even more difficult, since its internal structures were under the watchful eyes of the security forces. However, after 1965 the PAC seemed to have kept its name alive by many of the court trials that were taking place. Many of its men were often charged of recruiting or attempting to recruit men for military training which could be used to further PAC objectives. For example, in July 1966 in the Grahamstown court, four PAC men were sentenced to five years imprisonment for illegally leaving the country, undergoing military training in guerrilla warfare in which instructions were given in fighting with inadequate weapons, surprise attacks, hit and run tactics and the art of camouflage.[242] In one case in the Port Elizabeth Regional Court, which involved seventeen PAC men accused of furthering the aims of the PAC, the magistrate, Mr C.J. Bezuidenhout, was shocked by the bravery of the men who admitted in 1966 that they were members of Poqo: "In 1966 I do not think that any man is likely to claim membership of Poqo ... these men do - it takes a fairly stout heart to make such an admission".[243]

More importantly, the year 1968 witnessed the activities of Poqo cells in South Africa. In April 1968, a Poqo cell in Victoria-West attacked the police station and seized important points in the town. However, the town was surrounded by the army and many Africans were arrested. There were similar activities in the towns of Graaff-Reinett, Oudshoorn and Uitenhage. In court, evidence was given that insurrectionists planned to attack the

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242 *Contact*, 25 July 1966.

243 *Evening Post*, 25 June 1966.

police station, murder policemen, steal weapons, poison drinking water, cut the electricity supply and telephone lines.[244] As would be expected, the PAC would use these incidents as an indication of the presence of their guerrillas inside the country.

As noted before, the PAC also sent its members abroad to Ethiopia and Egypt for military training in the early 1960s, although it was on a small scale.[245] Training in exile in Lesotho took place secretly under Pearce Gqoboshe and Templeton Ntantala. Some members of the PAC were also sent for military training in the Congo, Ghana and Algeria with funding from the Liberation Committee of the Organisation of African Unity. By 1968, the PAC had more or less 200 trained cadres who formed what came to be known as the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) in the same year.[246]

The word "Azania" comes before the name of the military wing or the liberation army of the PAC. This is because the word "Azania" is very important to the Africanists. According to Ethel Khopung, the word means "Blackman's country" and seemed to have gained prominence around 1964, when the Africanists renamed South Africa "Azania" from their underground structures. Their argument was that "South Africa" was an apartheid name given by Europeans to the southern tip of the African continent after imposing their government on the oppressed people by the gun. As a result, the Africanists were not proud of the name "South Africa" and wanted to get rid of it as it was associated with white oppression. Later on the PAC and other Africanist movements like the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), which opposed racism in South Africa, would ensure the usage of Azania in their publications like "Azania Combat" and "Azania News" or in their youth movements like the "Azanian Youth Movement" and the "Azanian Student Movement"[247] For ideological reasons, the ANC did not use the name "Azania".

As a point of departure, the PAC indicated at the Moshi conference that it was waging a

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244 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1976 PAC Political Material, A2675, III, 601: A.G. Ebrahim, "Struggle of the People of Azania" from "10th Anniversary of Sharpeville", 1971, p. 13. See also E. Khopung, *The Story of a Dispossessed People*, p. 80.

245 See page 154.

246 T. Lodge, "The Pan Africanist Congress, 1959-1990" in I. Liebenberg, *The Long March: The Story of the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa*, p. 118. See also T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 258.

247 E. Khopung, *The Story of a Dispossessed People,* p. 78.

"people's war", which they described as "a revolutionary war of the oppressed masses of the people, and takes the form of guerrilla warfare, in which the whole nation, men and women, old and young, take part and their creative energies and resourcefulness are brought into full play."[248] In other words, the Azanian People's Liberation Army or simply APLA was the army of the oppressed people which was formed to fight for their own liberation.

It was against this background that the new military strategy of the PAC was announced by P.K. Leballo at the Moshi conference in September 1967. The Liberation Committee of the OAU seemed to have pressurised the PAC into convening this conference. The problems of the PAC were of a serious nature and included endless quarrels between leaders, lack of organisation, unclear strategies and ideology.[249] The movement was compelled to resolve these internal problems, as they dented its image. This aspect will be elaborated on in chapter 4. Suffice it to say that the PAC was forced to show its commitment to waging the struggle against the South African regime in order to justify the reason why it should continue receiving money from the OAU.[250]

The Moshi Conference met in Tanzania from the 19th to 22nd September 1967 against the background of tensions and conflicts. At this conference P.K. Leballo, as the Acting President of the PAC, used his dictatorial powers and ideological inclinations to outline his new approach based on "people's war", which amounted to a guerrilla warfare based on the countryside in South Africa.[251] According to Leballo and his supporters, guerrilla warfare by its very nature is fought from the countryside as they believed that "experience has shown that this can most effectively be done by waging the struggle from the countryside and turning the backward villages into bastions of political, economic, cultural and military power."[252] Through guerrilla warfare, the people could start destroying the military strength of the enemy systematically from the countryside to

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248 PAC, The Principle of the United Front in People's War, p. 3. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatje, in possession of the author.

249 J. Grobler, *A Decisive Clash? A Short History of Black Protest Politics in South Africa, 1875-1976,* p. 136.

250 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 5, p. 49.

251 PAC, Report of the National Executive Meeting, Moshi, Tanzania, 19th to 22nd September 1967, p. 13. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatje, in possession of the author.

252 PAC, The Principle of the United Front in People's War, p. 3.

the cities.[253] Moreover, the notion of a protracted guerrilla warfare was introduced at the Moshi Conference. This means that the PAC was actually deviating from its original revolutionary strategy of the early 1960s, which was based on a type of blitzkrieg guerrilla warfare. In this way, the new strategy seemed to be an admission of failure of the old strategy of seizing power quickly and violently from the regime. With the new strategy, the PAC seemed to have conceded that the regime would be overthrown after a long and protracted struggle in which the people would have to systematically build up their own revolutionary political power throughout the country.

Leballo's new military strategy was motivated by the influence he received in China in 1965 when he attended the Nanking Military Academy. He took part in the Cultural Revolution and was fascinated by the military tactics of Mao Tse Tung, which were based on peasant guerrilla warfare. Since this period, the Chinese connection became important to the PAC to the extent that the movement was greatly influenced in exile by the Mao Tse Tung's interpretation of Marxism-Leninism.[254] As a result of this connection, the PAC sent its own cadres to China for military training. However, it seemed as if not everybody accepted or understood Leballo's new Maoist approach or strategy to the liberation struggle in South Africa that was outlined in Moshi in 1967. Elliot Mfaxa, one of the PAC members who attended the conference, said that many PAC members were uncertain and did not understand what Leballo's future struggle was all about or entailed.[255] It should also be noted that the conference took place amidst tensions and internal wrangles, as some members had been suspended as will be explained in chapter 4. Nevertheless, the Moshi Conference seemed to have exacerbated latent ideological conflicts between Leballo and his rivals. Matthew Nkoana, one of Leballo's fiercest critics, spoke about the confusion that reigned immediately after the conference in this way: "A particularly bad case of ideological muddle in the PAC made its appearance since around December last, throwing the whole organisation into a traumatic upheaval, with far-reaching repercussions throughout Southern Africa. The product is a hybrid that is neither internationalist nor nationalist, a cross between ill-digested Maoist concepts and adulterated African

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253 R. Gibson, *African Liberation Movements: Contemporary Struggles Against White Minority Rule*, p. 100.

254 B. Leeman, *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania,1966-1984, volume 3*, p. 9.

255 K.M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution: The Exile History of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa): 1960-1990,* p. 296.

nationalism."[256] This means that a fierce struggle started between those who believed in African nationalism and Marxist-Leninist ideology. Some of the old guard, like Matthew Nkoana, Peter Raboroko and Abednigo Ngcobo, opposed Leballo and his supporters, who included men such as Enoch Makoti and Elias Ntloedibe. One document even describes the conflicts within the Central Committee and among the rank and file of the PAC in this way: "Seriously speaking the majority of the Central Committee was either paying lip service to the Marxism-Leninist or did not understand what it was about. That section became increasingly hostile towards the members who were taking Marxism-Leninism seriously."[257]

The conclusion reached from the above is that there was no unanimity with regard to the strategic course outlined by Leballo at the Moshi Conference. This lack of clarity concerning the strategy to follow actually exposed the lack of commitment or seriousness of the movement to wage the liberation struggle. This line of thinking is supported by Peter Raboroko and Abednigo Ncgobo, who said: "It is only when the principles and policies as well as strategy and tactics of the Pan Africanist Congress are on the correct path that it will be possible for the Azanian Revolution in particular and the African Revolution in general to win final victory."[258]

Shortly after the Moshi Conference, the PAC decided to shift its External Mission Headquarters from Dar es Salaam to Lusaka. It seemed as if the motive was to get nearer South Africa so as to increase the possibility of launching the home-bound infiltrations. The PAC established its military bases at Senkobo on the southern border of Zambia where its guerrillas were also stationed. From this area, the PAC in alliance with COREMO (Mozambique's Revolutionary Committee), an opponent of FRELIMO (Mozambique Liberation Front), tried to open up an infiltration route known as "Operation Crusade."[259] The operation was aimed at infiltrating 12 highly trained PAC cadres into South Africa to establish bases in preparation for the "people's war" against South

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256 M. Nkoana, "Southern Africa: Internal Problems of the New Phase", *The New African,* volume viii, no.1, 1969, p. 14.

257 PAC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, File PAC: Observation and Recommendations to the Consultation Conference Outline, p. 3.

258 AWC, Wits, Braamfontein, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 Political Material, A 2675, 599: Comment on the Joint Meeting of February 24, dated 6 April 1967, p.6.

259 South Africa (Republic), TRC, Report on the PAC/Poqo/APLA, P.13.

Africa. However, information about this mission leaked to the Portuguese intelligence, who organised an army to intercept the PAC cadres. Gerald Kondlo, the commander of the PAC army, was killed with several of his men during clashes with the Portuguese army at Vila Pery, on the Mozambique-Rhodesian border.

What was the reaction of the South African government to these developments? Obviously, the South African regime would react on the ground of protecting its territorial integrity. Potlako Leballo and David Sibeko made a blunder when they made a press statement to confirm that "Radio South Africa" beamed broadcasts that identified PAC cadres in Mozambique.[260] To them, this incident should have indicated a heroic achievement worthy to be proud of. However, their Zambian hosts were not impressed, as the South African government threatened them with punitive military action should they ever allow PAC cadres to use their country to launch attacks against them. The South African regime itself mobilised its large army of about 5000 men in the Northern Transvaal in what came to be called "Operation Sibasa".[261] The aim of the operation was to ambush PAC cadres who might have survived from Mozambique.

The PAC was unashamed and unapologetic about the abortive attempt to infiltrate its cadres into South Africa. The movement had to defend its basic policy of waging the liberation struggle inside South Africa. Furthermore, the PAC found itself in the very same situation in which the ANC was during the Wankie campaign. Whereas the ANC used ZAPU to infiltrate its cadres into South Africa through Rhodesia, the PAC tried to use COREMO to infiltrate its cadres through Mozambique. After the Wankie campaign, the PAC accused the ANC of waging the armed struggle for the mere sake of armed struggle, when it said that "the struggle it was waging in Zimbabwe was not revolution, but a costly Sham Revolution, to maintain the status quo in Rhodesia through the United Front as a prelude to what the policy of non-violence was meant to achieve in South Africa."[262] The question is: Was the PAC not also guilty of waging the struggle outside the borders of South Africa like the ANC? The killing and the capture of their well-

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260 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 Political Material, A2675, 111, 606: The Profiles of Leballo's Gang, 5 May 1978, p. 11.

261 E. Ntloedibe, *Here is a Tree: The Political Biography of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe*, p. 130.

262 PAC, What Kind of Revolution is this? The Wankie Fiasco in Retrospect, p. 9. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatje, in possession of the author.

trained cadres in Mozambique at Vila Pery exposed the vulnerability of their strategy, which was the same as that of the ANC.

The exposure of the strategy of the PAC was a clear indication that it was not easy for the liberation movements to enter South Africa without the presence of friendly borders. Their firm belief that the white settler regime of South Africa could only be defeated by the determined liberation struggle within the borders of South Africa proved to be almost unachievable. They denied the fact that their fight with the Portuguese security forces outside the borders of South Africa was an indication of pandering to South Africa's strategy - which was to keep the liberation movements outside its borders. To them, the defeat outside the borders of South Africa did not show any shift in their basic policy as they argued that they "did so because of the colonialists' efforts to prevent them from reaching their objectives within the Republic of South Africa. It is well-known that the broad strategy of the PAC calls for the movement of troops along the various undisclosed channels to the fighting front in the South, and the presence of PAC units in Mozambique is merely part of this strategy at this stage of the armed struggle in Azania."[263] Moreover, they even argued that up to the time of their clashes with the Portuguese security forces they had been resisting armed resistance even though they were provoked and confronted by security forces in the independent African states.[264] Despite the defence of its stance, the PAC was actually contradicting itself and seemed to have broken its strategy with impunity. It also committed the mistake of adventurism of which they accused the ANC. The conclusion reached here is that the PAC did not want the ANC to outdo it when it came to challenging the South African regime militarily.

The ANC also criticised the PAC's "blueprint for revolution" in South Africa as being mass produced and distributed to boost the revolutionary image of the PAC. In particular, the ANC criticised the PAC's attempt to infiltrate its cadres into South Africa via Mozambique by saying that the movement "at no stage had any serious intention of launching an armed struggle, this operation was mere window-dressing intended to deceive the African States and the world."[265] The ANC also claimed that the operation of

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263 Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), Document on the Public Statement Concerning the PAC Incursion, 20 June 1968, p. 1. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatjie, in possession of author.

264 PAC, Document on the Public Statement Concerning the PAC Incursion, p. 1.

265 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 Political Material, A 2675, 111, 13: The

the PAC was prepared by a deserter from their guerrilla forces called Gerald Lockman whom the movement recruited to show its cadres the way across the Zambezi near the Kariba where they gave up without firing a single shot.[266] They also claim that this abortive operation had even led to renewed bickering, accusations and mutual recriminations among the PAC leaders in Lusaka. These allegations were confirmed true by the criticisms within the PAC that were directed at Leballo and his military men (from the High Command) by their rivals when they commented in this way: "This was not only total defiance of the political and military leadership of the PAC in critical times, but also a deliberate betrayal of the men who were marching in the shadow of sudden death every moment of their waking lives. That this treasonable act did not provoke a bloodbath in our ranks is due solely to the complex problems that confronted us in Zambia at that very time. At any rate, no PAC member, especially leaders, has forgotten or forgiven that brazen, arrogant treachery."[267] These differences of opinions within the PAC ranks indicated that the style of leadership in the movement did not allow for free debates on the strategic course that was introduced by Leballo in 1967.

What was the most important lesson that the PAC learnt after its failed attempt to infiltrate cadres into South Africa. A careful analysis of primary sources indicates that the PAC did not have a post-mortem conference to review its military strategy or even discuss it. Rather it seemed as if Operation Crusade evoked a sense of achievement and heroism. On the other hand, the ANC was able to do a thorough soul-searching and introspection after the Wankie campaign. Even though the discussions were robust and tough at the Morogoro Conference, the ANC was able to chart a new path of conducting the revolutionary struggle. In other words, they were able to learn from their mistakes. It was not clear what kind of lessons were learnt by the PAC from Operation Crusade.

Even though Operation Crusade was unsuccessful, it should be noted that its unit was an advance party that was sent to set up the nucleus of a liberated zone in rural South Africa and even to start to train local Azanian Liberation Army members. These ideas originated from the speech of Leballo at the Moshi Conference of 1967. These ideas

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Pan Africanist Congress Exists to Subvert the South African Liberation Struggle, p. 7.

266 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970 Political Material, A 2675, 111, 13: The Pan Africanist Congress Exists to Subvert the South African Liberation Struggle, p. 7.

267 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970 Political Material, A 2675, 111, 607, The Profiles of Leballo's Gang, p. 11.

were then consolidated into a document called "Directives to APLA", which contained strategy and tactics against the South African regime. The document indicated some of the combat methods like seizing the initiative on the battlefield, forcing the regime to spread its forces when APLA was deployed to every corner of South Africa, preventing government forces from using the best methods of fighting, luring them out of their bases so that APLA could strike at them unexpectedly. Moreover, the document also included the elements of a successful armed struggle like adopting "a correct political line", a disciplined people's army; a competent command and a strong base of operation".[268] These were seen as the key areas of importance and competence in APLA's military strategy. Moreover, the document also included the building of the PAC structures throughout the country and the expansion of the people's army. Greater emphasis was put on fighting strategies and ethics of action in battle. However, the crucial factor of mobilising the people to participate fully in the revolutionary struggle in accordance with the Maoist strategy was lacking in the document. Nevertheless, the elements of the strategy were difficult to implement, because of the internal wrangles and feuding amongst the PAC leaders, especially during the tenure in office of Potlako Leballo as the president of the movement.

3.5 Summary

The above analysis indicates that there were both similarities and differences between the historical circumstances of the conflict with the South African government of the ANC and of the PAC. The primary aim of the two liberation movements was to liberate the oppressed African masses by destroying white domination and apartheid. To achieve this aim, the ANC began with the armed struggle when non-violent means it used before 1961 were ignored and made impossible by the South African regime. On the other hand, the PAC's method of confronting the government immediately after its formation, forced it to resort to the armed struggle almost at once. The Sharpeville incident made the PAC well-known internationally. This incident worsened whatever rivalry existed between the ANC and the PAC.

Both liberation movements attempted to overthrow the regime by using their military wings called MK and Poqo/APLA. Unfortunately, their attempts were foiled and frustrated by the government. Their key leaders were imprisoned on Robben Island. However, the Rivonia Trial of ANC leaders attracted more international attention than

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268 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 24: MC: Directive to APLA, pp. 3-4.

those of the PAC leaders. After this trial there was a noticeable reduction in political activity inside South Africa. Despite some feeble attempts at reviving some form of resistance against the regime, by 1965 there was much less free political activity inside the country and there also was a corresponding increase in repression by the police.

The roles of MK and APLA in the latter half of the 1960s reveal that both used guerrilla warfare revolutionary strategies. It is evident that the liberation movements' attempts to implement their revolutionary strategies were effectively thwarted by counter-measures from the South African security forces and their friendly neighbours in Rhodesia and Mozambique. More importantly, the failure of the liberation movements to revive the struggle inside South Africa also reveals their lack of organisation and preparedness. This assertion is underlined by the fact that both movements were forced to hold organizational conferences at Moshi and Morogoro in 1967 and 1969 respectively to outline their conduct of the revolutionary struggle. However, in spite of their problems, the ANC seemed to be relatively better organised and ready to continue with the armed struggle than the PAC. But the fact that the liberation movements failed to infiltrate their freedom fighters into South Africa in the late 1960s meant that they had to continue waging the struggle on other fronts, especially by trying to obtain foreign or international help against the South African regime.

CHAPTER 4

MOBILISATION OF INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT IN THE 1960S

4.1 INTRODUCTION

On the international front, the liberation movements established external missions with the aim of continuing with the struggle. They wanted to gain international support in their struggle against apartheid, while at the same time they campaigned for the complete isolation of the South African regime. However, what became noticeable was the fact that the ANC and the PAC were not working together on the international front, just like they had not worked together on the home front. Competition to gain international support also affected the relationship between the ANC and the PAC.

4.2 THE FORMATION OF THE UNITED FRONT

The question of a concerted effort to isolate the South African regime internationally by the liberation movements is significant at this stage, as it reveals the relationships between the ANC and the PAC. The opportunity of working together to isolate the regime presented itself when the South African United Front (SAUF) was established in June 1960 by the ANC, PAC, the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) and the South West Africa National Union (SWANU) of Namibia. According to the minutes of the SAUF meeting, held on 19th June in Addis Ababa, the following aims were adopted at its formation: to overthrow white domination and destroy the myth of white supremacy and to substitute it by a democratic state based on universal adult suffrage. In addition, the following programme was adopted:

- "Information bureaux were to be established to disseminate information about SA through the press, radio etc., and to mobilise international public opinion against white domination and apartheid;
- To canvas African independent states and other states for individual or collective action against South Africa and;
- To raise funds for the pursuance of the struggle and to campaign vehemently for the

immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners."[1]

In this way, the SAUF was aimed at bringing unity and co-operation of the organisations in exile and at the same time presenting a united front to the international community in search of financial and diplomatic support. It seemed as if the South African liberation movements might be able to present a united front against the regime.

However, the SAUF did not last for a long time. The ideological clashes between the ANC and the PAC on multi-culturalism and rigid nationalism, as well as tactics used by the two liberation movements against white domination in South Africa, led to the dissolution of the united front in 1962. In particular, the break-up was hastened by differences in policies and activities. This was reflected in campaigns where one organisation opposed the campaign of the other or where separate campaigns were embarked upon, the activities abroad of representatives of these organisations, who were not attached to the United Front, attacks on one organisation by the other in South Africa and separate appeals which were made for funds and support.[2]

From the above, it is clear that there was very little co-operation between the ANC and the PAC. It was not surprising, therefore, that the SAUF actually was reduced to no more than a temporary initiative, because of the rivalries of the ANC and the PAC. This was despite the fact that the formation of the United Front threatened the South African regime and its allies. Immediately after its formation, the regime and its allies, who included local leading industrial and commercial houses, feared being isolated through the world-wide influence of the United Front. Consequently, the South Africa Foundation, an organisation formed by leading capitalists in South Africa in league with international monopolists, who had vast investments and interests in South Africa, "undertook to parry the impending isolation" by launching a massive campaign to present the oppressive policies and laws of the regime in a "better light."[3]

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1 Mayibuye Archives (MA), University of the Western Cape (UWC), Bellville, ANC London Office, Box 1: Minutes of Meeting held in Addis Ababa on the 19th June 1960, p. 1.

2 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 1: Minutes of the 9th Session of the SAUF Conference held in London, August 30th, 1961, p. 1.

3 Archives of the ANC (ANC), University of Fort Hare (UFH), Alice, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76: The Call for Unity and a United Front, n.d., p. 9.

From the beginning hostilities between the ANC and the PAC came to the fore, when the PAC accused the ANC of dominating the SAUF.[4] Even though their allegations might have been right, the question of ideological differences, which had caused the split in 1958, might also have contributed again. The PAC still regarded the ANC as a movement which was dominated by white communists. Moreover, the ANC complained that the representatives of the PAC (who were Peter Molotsi and Nana Mahomo) had started a campaign of projecting themselves as the only leaders of the "revolutionary organization fit to be spokesmen of the oppressed people of South Africa."[5] Hence, the ANC saw the PAC as a movement that was sabotaging and weakening the collective efforts of the South African United Front.

Describing the disintegration of the United Front, Oliver Tambo said that this experiment in unity had been ridiculous and absurd, because "whatever the division at home, it was terribly embarrassing to have more than one organisation abroad claiming to speak for Africans in South Africa."[6] The implication was that Tambo himself was no longer in favour of the SAUF. More significantly, the fragile unity of the ANC and the PAC showed that the two liberation movements also displayed their competition abroad. Subsequent attempts at uniting them would be very difficult. For this reason, it became very easy for each organisation to try to persuade overseas opinion that its rival was not important, as it was the only proper and authentic representative of the South African oppressed.[7]

With the collapse of the SAUF, the ANC and the PAC finally turned their backs on direct co-operation with each other. It would be extremely difficult for the two liberation movements to work together on the international scene in the future, as they were now determined to embark on antagonistic courses.

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4 Interview conducted with Elliot Mfaxa, 26 July 1998, in K.M. Kondlo, *The Twilight of the Azanian Revolution: The Exile History of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa), 1960-1990*, p. 142.

5 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76: The Call for Unity and the United Front, n.d., p. 9.

6 *The Star*, 16 March 1962.

7 *The Star*, 3 June 1962.

After the dissolution of the SAUF, the liberation movements focused their attention on building up and consolidating their solidarity movement, by expanding and strengthening their diplomatic contacts with all the friendly countries and non-governmental organisations that were prepared to offer any support. The aim of expanding this network of friendly countries and non-governmental bodies was not only to isolate the regime, but also to try to get material support for conducting the liberation struggle. At this stage the most important question becomes: To what extent did the ANC and the PAC succeed in realising these aims?

The following discussion serves to highlight the extent to which the ANC tried to secure diplomatic support in order to advance the freedom struggle in South Africa.

4.3 THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE ANC'S FOREIGN POLICY

The basic principles of the ANC foreign policy were being developed over a long period and are found in some well-known documents, including the "African Claims of 1943", presidential addresses, National Executive reports to various national conferences and the Freedom Charter. The most important question is: What was the purpose of the ANC's foreign policy? The response is: "The unchanging principle influencing the foreign policy of the ANC is the aim of achieving freedom for all the nationally oppressed people of South Africa; removing all traces of racialism and discrimination in the state structure and in the society of South Africa; and creating a genuine, non-racial democracy based on equality for all."[8]

The next logical question, which needs to be asked, is: How did these aims of the ANC's foreign policy manifest themselves outside South Africa? The answer is found in the following: "In the external field these principles have been reflected in unreserved support for all people fighting for independence and freedom, friendship with all which sympathise with and support freedom and equality; co-operation with organisations dedicated to similar ideals; and support for all efforts dedicated to the elimination of imperialism and colonialism which are the main sources of war and oppression."[9]

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8 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 3: Freedom and Independence, n.d., p. 2.

9 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 3: Freedom and Independence, n.d., p. 2.

Even though the ANC depended on international campaigns to draw the attention of the world to the problems of the oppressed in South Africa by calling for the condemnation of apartheid and pressing for sanctions and boycotts of all kinds, it nevertheless believed that its main strength lay in mass and revolutionary action by the oppressed South Africans. According to them, the key to the liberation of South Africa is in "reorganisation and intensification of the revolutionary struggle inside the country."[10]

More significantly, the cardinal feature of the policy of the ANC has always been to work for the unity of all the people involved in the "common struggle for attainment of common objectives."[11] In South Africa, the ANC implemented this policy by bringing together all the liberation movements and parties which were opposed to the regime and also wanted to overthrow it. Even outside South Africa, the ANC established close working relationships with the liberation movements that were also fighting against tyranny and oppression in their own countries.

The banning of the ANC in April 1960 forced the movement to set up a mission in exile with offices around the world. According to Albert Luthuli, the President-General of the ANC in 1960, the decision to establish a mission in exile and send people out of the country to direct this mission was taken just before the crisis of the Sharpeville shooting. At this time Luthuli sent out Oliver Tambo to act as sort of a "roving ambassador" for the ANC in order to ask for financial help for the movement from sympathetic countries and raise the international level of awareness on the nature of the South African government's policy of apartheid.[12] The external mission was destined to play the most important role of isolating South Africa internationally and at the same time controlling and directing the armed struggle against the regime.

The ANC first looked to Ghana, as the first country in Africa to have gained independence, for support. This move was understandable, because Kwame Nkrumah,

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10 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 2, File MCHO2-2: Problems and Perspectives - Discussion Statement, n.d., p. 1.

11 A. Tambo, *Preparing for Power: Oliver Tambo Speaks*, p. 55.

12 A. Luthuli, *Let My People Go*, p. 199. See also J. Grobler, *A Decisive Clash? A Short History of Black Protest Politics in South Africa, 1875-1976*, p. 139.

the first president of independent Ghana, was regarded as a key player in the struggle against colonialism and imperialism. Moreover, the Conference on Decolonisation and Pan African unity was held in Accra, the capital of Ghana, in 1958. For these reasons, the ANC used the offices of the South African Political Bureau (SAPB) in Accra and in London at first. These offices seemed to have been formed by the Ghanaian government in 1959 in order to help the liberation movements in South Africa.[13] However, Nkrumah's personal liking for the PAC forced the ANC to relocate to Tanzania, which was becoming a popular country for hosting liberation movements.[14]

4.3.1 International relations of the ANC

The ANC had always recognised the importance of maintaining relations with the independent African countries. It was not only because of their importance to the struggle of the oppressed in South Africa, as they provided a rear base for their revolutionary activities, but also as an area from which to launch and maintain the international solidarity movement throughout the world.[15]

The collapse of the SAUF coincided with the trips of Mandela to Africa and Europe, where he tried to get military and diplomatic support for the ANC. His first stop was Addis Ababa for the annual Pan African Movement of East and Central Africa (PAFMECA) conference in 1962 where he met many African leaders. However, Mandela noted at this conference how the PAC had improved its image amongst the African states. He noticed that a negative attitude towards the ANC was spreading, as it was perceived to be a communist-dominated movement. Moreover, he also observed that movements like the PAC gained ideologically, unlike the ANC, because they opposed partnerships and alliances with parties dominated by whites.[16] He felt that the

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13 J.D. Nelson, *Some External Aspects of Internal Conflict within South Africa: Study of the Place of International Activities in the Development of the African National Congress*, p. 168.

14 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 309.

15 Archives of William Cullen (AWC), Wits, Braamfontein, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1976 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 111, 22: A Brief Report of the Activities During the Period from September 1971- April 1974, p. 1.

16 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, pp. 284-285.

Congress Alliance reinforced the perception that the ANC was a movement of stooges.

The Sharpeville killings had also boosted the image of the PAC. Furthermore, the imprisonment of Robert Sobukwe and other leaders had enhanced the status of the PAC as a more militant and mature movement than the ANC.[17] On the other hand, Chief Luthuli's Nobel Peace Prize had created the impression that he was not militant, but rather the lackey of the West.[18] All these issues created the impression amongst the African states that the PAC was the legitimate movement of the oppressed people of South Africa. As a result, Mandela believed that the ANC had to work much harder in order to counter the negative impression created by the PAC.

Despite the negative things that he noticed during his trip, Mandela also visited other countries, which included the United Kingdom, Tanzania, Sudan, Algeria, Tunisia, Mali, Senegal, Uganda, Guinea and Zambia. The ANC received financial support and was also promised military training facilities by Algeria and Tanzania. Training camps were set up by Algeria, Tanzania and Ethiopia, while at the same time recruitment took place from foreign missions of the ANC in Egypt, Tanzania, Morocco and Ghana.[19] Mandela's visits to these African states would serve as a basis later on for expanding the diplomatic ties of the ANC.

By taking examples from the successful trips of Mandela earlier on, the ANC emphasised the commencement of visits by various ANC delegations to as many African countries as possible for the sole purpose of strengthening the image of the organisation and soliciting help for the movement's conduct of the struggle from 1966. For example, Oliver Tambo completed a tour of some African countries, including Algeria and Tunisia, in 1967. He indicated that the need for the delegations to undertake those missions arose directly from the unfolding crisis in Southern Africa, where an armed struggle

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17 ANC, UFH, ANC Morogoro Papers: A Letter from J. Makatini Addressed to J. Hadebe, dated 7 January 1966.

18 E. Khopung, *Apartheid: The Story of a Dispossessed People*, p. 99. See also S. M. Ndlovu, "The ANC in Exile", in South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, p. 433.

19 N. Mandela, *No Easy Walk to Freedom*, pp. 161-175. See also E. Feit, *Urban Revolt in South Africa*, pp. 232-247.

against South Africa was posing a threat to peace.[20] Furthermore, other ANC leaders paid visits to countries such as Tanzania, Ghana, Algeria, Cuba, and the United Kingdom to seek material support and call for the international isolation of South Africa.[21] Improvement of their relations with certain African countries was such that quite a number of their leading cadres were able to use national passports of countries such as Tanzania, Somalia, Uganda, and Algeria.[22] As a result, the ANC benefited greatly in getting other forms of assistance, besides gaining the advantage of being able to move its operatives freely when executing certain missions.

In addition to the fact that the ANC was able to increase its sphere of influence through bilaterals relations and personal visits by some of its leaders, it also succeeded in increasing its network of multilateral relations. The existence of the United Nations Organisation (UN) provided the ANC with the opportunity to raise the international level of awareness of the nature of apartheid. It helped the ANC to call for sanctions and international isolation of the South African regime. The United Nations had been opposed to the racial policies of South Africa since 1946, when the Indian government complained about the treatment of Indians in the country.[23]

The ANC initiated various UN resolutions, which were introduced through the Indian delegation. After the Sharpeville incident of 1960, the racial policies of South Africa had become a permanent item on the agenda of the UN. A permanent committee was even appointed by the General Assembly in 1962 to monitor developments in South Africa.[24] This committee became known as the Special Committee Against Apartheid and was charged with the task of reporting to the General Assembly about the living conditions of the oppressed in South Africa. In a strongly worded memorandum, the ANC called upon the UN to take urgent steps against apartheid and white racialism in South Africa and condemn Britain, France, West Germany and Belgium, which collaborated with the

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20 *Sechaba*, June 1967, pp. 3-4.

21 R. Gibson, *African Liberation Movements*, pp. 65-74.

22 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1976 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III,22: A Brief Report of the Activities During the Period from September 1971 - April 1974, p. 5.

23 J. Grobler, A *Decisive Clash*, p. 145.

24 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC: A Struggle within a Struggle,* p. 56.

regime.[25]

Oliver Tambo appeared as a petitioner before the Special Committee on 8 October 1963 to call for urgent action against trials in South Africa, when Mandela and other ANC leaders were charged with attempting to overthrow the government. This petition was followed by others of Miriam Makeba (South African singer), Mary Benson (South African writer) and Tambo (representing the ANC) respectively on 9, 11 and 12 March 1964. The three petitions appealed for urgent international action to save the lives of persons threatened with death sentences under arbitrary laws in South Africa for their opposition to apartheid and racial discrimination.[26]

Moreover, the UN also appeared to be giving the ANC support when it accepted a petition, which was submitted by the movement on 9 June 1965. The ANC delegation consisting of A. Kgokong (Director of Publicity), assisted by M. Msimang (Head of the ANC Bureau of African Affairs) and J.J. Hadebe (ANC Chief Representative in East Africa), presented a petition on decolonisation to the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonisation, which was then sitting in Dar Es Salaam.[27]

The African, Asian and South American states put pressure on the General Assembly to isolate South Africa and impose sanctions. Towards the end of the 1960s South Africa

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25 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1965 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, II: Memorandum Submitted by the African National Congress to the United Nations Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa, July 1963.

26 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1965 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, II: Call for Urgent Action to Stop Repression and Trials in South Africa: Address at the Meeting of the Special Political Committee of the General Assembly on 8 October 1963, pp. 1-6. See also AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1965 ANC Political Material, A 2675,III, II: Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa: Three Petitions for the Release of Prisoners in South Africa, by Miriam Makeba, Mary Benson and Oliver Tambo, March 1964, pp. 1-26.

27 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1965 Political Material, A 2675, III, 12: *South Africa Freedom News*: Excerpts from ANC Petition to the UN Committee on Decolonisation, June 1965, pp. 7-11.

had been expelled from a number of UN agencies, such as the Commission for Technical Co-operation in Africa South of the Sahara, the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agricultural Organisation, the International Civil Aviation Organisation, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.[28]

Oliver Tambo appeared in person at the sitting of the UN Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of South Africa, in Stockholm, Sweden, on 17 June 1968 and thanked the United Nations and other international organisations for working hard to ensure that there was "now an articulate, well-informed world public opinion on the apartheid issue."[29]

How successful the efforts of the UN and the international organisations were, was indicated by the fact that many states broke off diplomatic relations with South Africa or refrained from establishing them, boycotted their trade, closed ports to vessels flying the South African flag, refused landing and passage facilities to South African aircraft and debarring South African sporting and cultural bodies from being admitted or participating in world sports, such as the International Olympic Committee and the Federation of International Football Associations.[30] These successes in the diplomatic field indicate that the UN gave the ANC the much-needed exposure and a platform to reveal the atrocities of the South African regime, as well as enabling the movement to canvass for support. In this way, the ANC ensured that it participated in the activities of the UN and used every available opportunity to make its voice heard.

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28 S.M. Ndlovu, "The ANC and the World," in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* pp. 544-545.

29 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Box 17: Statement of Mr Oliver Tambo, Acting President General of the African National Congress of South Africa to the United Nations Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa, at Stockholm, Sweden on the 17th June 1968, p. 5.

30 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Box 17: Statement of Mr Oliver Tambo, Acting President General of the ANC of SA to the UN Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the RSA, at Stockholm, Sweden on the 17th June 1968, pp.5-6. See also S. M. Ndlovu, "The ANC and the World", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, p. 545.

The establishment of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in May 1963 provided the ANC with another chance of increasing its foreign relations. The ANC welcomed the formation of the OAU as the body which had resolved to speed up the liberation of those African states still under foreign or white rule.[31] One of the OAU structures was the Liberation Committee and it was responsible for co-ordinating assistance from the African states and managing a special fund earmarked for efforts to liberate countries. The OAU played a significant role through the Liberation Committee in trying to help the ANC and other liberation movements financially. Even though most African countries lacked the economic and military strength to support a vigorous foreign policy, the ANC believed that they were collectively united as a powerful force. This potent force could be used by the African states when they pooled their limited resources in supporting freedom movements against oppression in those parts of Africa, like South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Rhodesia and South West Africa, where foreign rule was still intact.[32]

The OAU discouraged its members to have diplomatic relations with South Africa. However, not all African states heeded this call, as Malawi, under Dr Hastings Banda, maintained a formal policy of rapprochement with the South African regime.[33] The OAU also went out of its own way to appeal directly to Western powers to stop trading with the white minority governments of South Africa, Rhodesia, Mozambique and Angola.[34] Nevertheless, the most important help that the ANC received from the OAU was with regard to the armed struggle. This was because the OAU was inclined to support the liberation movements which chose to pursue the armed struggle.

Although the ANC believed in the OAU and its historic mission of uniting Africans and in assisting to forge them into an effective instrument for their liberation from colonialism and oppression, it did not support the idea of forming a single liberation movement with the PAC. In South Africa, the OAU recognised both the ANC and the PAC. However,

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31 S. M. Ndlovu, "The ANC and the World", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, p. 559.

32 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 3: Freedom and Independence, n.d., p. 9.

33 S.M. Ndlovu, "The ANC and the World", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* pp. 558-559.

34 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 56.

the attitude of the ANC was that the OAU was wasting valuable time, money and energy in re-creating the PAC and giving the wrong impression that there were two liberation movements in South Africa.[35] The ANC resented the idea that the Liberation Committee of the OAU was sponsoring an organisation which was in competition with her. The implication was that the ANC regarded herself as the sole liberation movement in South Africa.

The ANC succeeded in establishing good relations with non-governmental organisations in Britain, such as the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM), the International Defence and Aid Fund (IDAF) and the Africa Bureau. The AAM was directly linked to the struggle in South Africa and its policy was to campaign for sport, cultural, academic and economic boycotts of apartheid South Africa.[36] The ANC's London office and the British Anti-Apartheid Movement established a solid working relationship. The influence of the joint solidarity action by the ANC and the AAM was reflected in the formation of anti-apartheid movements in other parts of the world, such as Europe, North America and also in many countries which were members of the Commonwealth. On the other hand, the IDAF provided for the victims of the apartheid government. It did not only provide every person charged with legal defence, but it also exposed the inhumane conditions of the prisons as well as calling for the release of political prisoners.[37] For example, the IDAF provided for the legal defence of the Rivonia Trialists. Organisations such as the Africa Bureau gave the ANC more publicity. As a result, the ANC's stature as an organisation, fighting for the freedom of the Africans, was greatly enhanced.

Massive world support was received by the ANC in 1968, when the movement commemorated June 26 as South Africa's Freedom Day. On this day progressive forces in the world identified themselves with the national liberation movement in remembering

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35 *Spotlight on South Africa*, volume 5, no. 35, 8 September 1968.

36 S.M. Ndlovu, "The ANC and the World", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* p. 550.

37 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 1: Draft letter addressed to editors of newspapers in England by the Secretary of the International Defence and Aid Fund, entitled "Victims of Apartheid Need Your Help", n.d. See also MA, UWC, ANC London Office, MCHO2-2: International Defence and Aid Fund, World Campaign for the Release of South African Political Prisoners, 9 June 1967, pp. 1-4.

all the oppressed people of South Africa, those who were in jail or who had died as result of police brutality, and also orphans. Many international organisations called for the observance of June 26 in solidarity with the oppressed and struggling people of South Africa. The OAU regarded June 26 as a day on which Africa rededicated herself to the cause of the achievement of national liberation and the ending of colonialism in South Africa. The workers of free and independent Africa pledged support for the workers of South Africa through the All-Africa Trade Union Federation. The British Anti-Apartheid Movement also recognised June 26 as a day of solidarity with the people fighting apartheid. The World Campaign for the Release of Political Prisoners called for the release of all political prisoners. Other organisations, which played an active role in the anti-apartheid struggle, included the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO), the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), the Tricontinental Organisation of Solidarity of Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America (OSPAAAL) and the International Organisation of Journalists (IOJ). In addition, many other social, political, cultural and regional organisations throughout the world, which demonstrated their hatred of apartheid, colonial oppression and exploitation, as well as supporting June 26, included the following: the Canadian Anti-Apartheid Movement, the Indian Afro-Asian Solidarity Association, the South Africa Protest Committee of Austria, the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee of the People's Republic of China, the Geneva Anti-Apartheid Movement, the Afro-Asian Comrades of Japan, the German Democratic Republic Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, the USSR Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, the Ceylonese Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee and many others.[38] These groups, which expressed their solidarity with the ANC, indicated the extent to which the organisation had created a vast network of solidarity in the international field, especially in the socialist world. In other words, these organisations were committed to promoting the cause of the ANC, particularly in propagating its struggle in a favourable light.

The liberation struggle should be seen in the context of the politics of the Cold War, i.e. the struggle for world leadership between Western or capitalist countries led by the USA and the communist states of the east led by the Soviet Union, that started after the end

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[38] MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 2, File MCHO2-2: Commemoration of June 26, South Africa's Freedom Day, 26 June 1968, pp. 5-6.

of the Second World War in 1945 and continued to the late 1980s, when the Soviet empire disintegrated. South Africa was seen by the ANC as a major ally of the West and the capitalist system. The ANC believed that the enormous military might of South Africa was built with the help of the Western imperialist countries, such as the United States of America, Britain, France, West Germany, Japan and others. According to Oliver Tambo, South Africa was "the treasure house of the imperialists", as it was their most important "strategic military base and ally in their global strategy directed against the forces of national liberation, democracy and peace." Tambo likened the role of South Africa in Africa to that of the US in the world, because it was also claiming to be fighting communism.[39] For this reason the Western countries supplied South Africa with the technical knowledge, materials and the manpower to speed up the growth of its huge arsenal.

The formal working relationship between the ANC and the SACP gave the South African regime a good reason to fight the ANC. For this reason, the South African regime used the Suppression of Communism Act (Act no. 44 of 1950) to act against communists and non-communists who were against the state.[40] It was common for the National Party leaders to state unequivocally that they were fighting against the "terrorist or communist onslaught", whenever they were fighting against the freedom fighters or dealing with anybody who was against the policies of the regime.[41] The working relationship between the ANC and the SACP was based on the whole conduct of the revolution. This mutual relationship was explained by Joe Slovo, when he said that "this is not surprising for nothing separates us on the immediate and foremost task - the destruction of white domination, a national democratic revolution whose main content is the liberation of the African people."[42] As a result of these intimate ties with the SACP, the

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39 A. Tambo, "The Role of South Africa", in *Oliver Tambo Speaks*, p. 84.

40 C.F.J. Muller (ed), *500 Years: A History of South Africa*, p. 493.

41 In 1976, the government incorporated the Suppression of Communist Act into the Internal Security Act (Act no. 79 of 1976), thereby amending the law in such way that any person suspected by the Minister of Justice to be a threat to the security of the state could be restricted.

42 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 2, File MCHO2-2: Notes on the discussions between a delegation from the Central Committee (CC) of the SACP and the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the ANC, n.d., p. 1.

ANC had access to material and financial assistance from the USSR, which was accompanied by diplomatic support in international forums and propaganda in its media.[43] To the ANC, support from a major world power like the USSR was extremely important, as it was aware that the independent African states were politically and economically too weak to provide much-needed help against the strong regime of South Africa.[44] What became a long and protracted war against South Africa needed constant supply of financial and material resources, which most African states could not sustain.

The German Democratic Republic, Bulgaria, Poland and Czechoslovakia were also close friends of the ANC. Furthermore, the ANC had always had close ties with the people of India. This close relationship existed since the times of Mahatma Ghandi and developed further when India became the first country to raise the issue of South Africa's apartheid policy at the UN. The ANC opened an office in India and this opened up the prospect of contact with the multi-million people of Asia.[45] The Scandinavian countries, especially Sweden, were also good friends of the ANC and leading supporters of international funds giving help to victims of apartheid. Cuba also maintained friendly relations with the ANC. The ANC received support from the People's Republic of China, but cut ties with this country after its clash with the Soviet Union.[46]

The cardinal role of the ANC's propaganda and information was to enhance the prestige of the organisation and mobilise public opinion in its favour.[47] The success of their solidarity campaign required timely reaction from the propaganda section to ensure that all their people were fully informed about the activities of the movement and the statements of their important organs and external missions. For this reason, their publications should as much as possible publish favourable statements or manifestations of support for the movement's cause, which covered the broadest

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43 M. Norval, *Inside the ANC: The Evolution of a Terrorist Organisation*, pp. 84-86.

44 S.M. Ndlovu, "The ANC and the World" in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, p. 548.

45 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Political Report of the National Executive Committee to the Consultative Conference of the ANC, Morogoro, April, 1969, p. 28.

46 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, pp. 42-44.

47 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, Political Material 1970-1975, A 2675, III, 23: Resolutions on International Solidarity, 17 May 1975, p. 4.

possible range of interests at international level.

To support and consolidate its international solidarity, the ANC developed its publicity and information department. For this reason, the London Committee of the ANC established the Information Service and International Relations Divisions (ISIRD) in 1962 to campaign for the isolation of South Africa internationally. The ISIRD was aimed at formalising and expanding scattered contacts throughout the world by, amongst others, stepping up general propaganda to expose the effects of apartheid on every facet of South African life, presenting a proper image of the liberation movement, working on the expansion of the sanction campaign against South Africa, counteracting the efforts and propaganda of the regime to attract immigrants to South Africa and direct specialised propaganda to specific sections of the population so as to expand the area of world solidarity with the oppressed South Africans.

For this reason, press agencies like Reuters, Press Trust of India, United Press and friendly newspapers like the *Observer* and *New Statesman* had to be kept informed about important developments in the liberation movement and in South Africa.[48] Amongst the ANC's journals, which enjoyed prestige world wide, were *Sechaba*, *Mayibuye* and *Spotlight*. The movement also wanted to step up the production of pamphlets, fact papers and leaflets, which dealt with various aspects of its policy and conditions in South Africa in a more attractive way. These documents were not only meant for increasing ANC propaganda at home, but also for popularising ANC struggles abroad.[49]

As a result of the work of the external solidarity field the ANC gained much. These victories prompted Oliver Tambo to say: "On the international front things looked different. If successive white regimes managed to contain our initial efforts to relocate inside the country, they failed dismally to do so on the international front. From the very beginning we made modest but steady gains in our endeavour to isolate the racists and

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48 S.M. Ndlovu, "The ANC and the World", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* p. 553.

49 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 1: Political Report of the NEC to the Consultative Conference of the ANC, Morogoro, April 1969, p. 1.

create a reliable rear base for our struggle."[50] As a result of this enormous expansion of publicity and information, the ANC successfully countered the influence of the regime.

4.3.2 Problems of the Congress Movement

However, the ANC experienced serious problems, despite the fact that it was able to gain some prominence internationally. Ronnie Kasrils captured the mood of the mid-1960s when he said: "We expected that we would return as part of a victorious revolutionary army in a couple of years at the most. Not for a moment did we anticipate that we were going into exile for decades."[51] Implied in this statement is that the ANC faced formidable problems in the external mission in launching and sustaining an all round offensive internally and externally. In other words, the external mission had to be turned into a fully-fledged ANC to control and direct all the activities of the movement. To worsen matters, the failure of the ANC to reconstruct internal structures to receive trained cadres forced the movement to rely heavily upon international support. This concentration on extending networks internationally would have far-reaching consequences - as its cadres would be frustrated by not returning to South Africa immediately.

The same mood was captured by Oliver Tambo at the first meeting at Morogoro in 1966, when he said that they were meeting at a time when the international situation was beginning to look rather gloomy. He compared the favourable international situation of the early 1960s with the one that prevailed after 1965: "If we examine everything, the support we have been able to rally - if we look back at the time of Rivonia, the work of our people, the strength of the international campaign, it is impossible not to have a feeling that we have lost some ground."[52]

The conditions externally differed and required that the image of the ANC as the leading

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50 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Box 18: Statement of the President of the African National Congress, Comrade Oliver Tambo to the ANC National Conference, Johannesburg, June 1991, pp. 3-4.

51 R. Kasrils, *Armed and Dangerous: From Undercover Struggle to Freedom,* p. 74.

52 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 13: Minutes of the Meeting of the Congress in Morogoro, 26 November 1966, p. 1.

organ of the liberation movement should be projected. As a result, the problem of adjusting the machinery of consultation and co-operation between its internal organisation and external missions had to be examined. The biggest problem that confronted the ANC was to decide what form of machinery should be established in order to continue with the struggle. It was in that spirit that the ANC believed that "leaders outside the country have to do what can no longer be done at home - to formulate policy and take practical steps to give leadership to our respective communities and to South African people as a whole."[53]

By the beginning of 1964 the ANC's National Executive Committee (NEC) abroad had the following members: Oliver Tambo as Acting President, J.B. Marks as Director of Transport and Communication, Moses Kotane as Treasurer-general, Alfred Kgokong as Director of Publicity and Information, Mendi Msimang as Administrative Secretary, James Hadebe as Director of Youth and Student Affairs, Joe Matthews as Head of the Welfare Department and Robert Resha as Head of Information and International Affairs. In addition, there were NEC members who represented the ANC in different countries who included, amongst others, Tennyson and Ambrose Makiwane, Mzwai Piliso, Joe Matlou and John Makatini.[54]

It was clear that an adjustment and reconstitution was necessary for strengthening the existence of the ANC as a liberation movement abroad. The onset of the ANC's armed struggle, especially, demanded that its foreign policy should be more clearly defined and directed by level-headed leaders. Their foreign policy and approach was directed towards the fulfilment of the following objectives:

- Consolidating their position with firm friends like the Soviet Union, East Germany, Bulgaria and other Socialist countries in Eastern Europe. In Africa, the friendliest countries were Algeria, United Arab Republic, Zambia and Tanzania. Friendly countries in Europe included Sweden and other Scandinavian countries.

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53 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 13: Problems of the Congress Movement, 3 July 1966, p. 2.

54 S. M. Ndlovu, "The ANC in Exile, 1960-1970" in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, pp. 436-437.

- Target countries that are not firm friends, but which generally support the struggle against apartheid. This category included most countries in Africa and Arab countries of the Middle East like Iraq, Kuwait, Iran and others.
- Focus on countries which oppose the ANC, like France and Italy. Powerful opposition could be mobilised to embarrass their governments.
- Pay attention to countries with no powerful opposition, but which were somehow friendly to the ANC, like Britain, West Germany, United States of America and Japan. The main aim was to influence the press and public opinion by a powerful campaign against apartheid.
- Target countries with no particular attitude towards the ANC, which could be influenced through international agencies, such as the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity.[55]

This knowledge about the countries of the world showed that the ANC could properly analyse the political situation in the world so as to be able to build up its image and raise practical aid for its struggle. This approach had the potential of raising solidarity to a new political level and making collaboration with South Africa very difficult.

As a result of these extensive foreign relations, the ANC was forced to admit at its Morogoro Conference in 1969 that more than enough attention was focused on the international and diplomatic work at the expense of returning its trained cadres into the country. The consequence of this rethinking was to revise its international position as indicated by some of the following decisions:

- The ANC forged alliances with other liberation movements, such as ZAPU, FRELIMO, MPLA, SWAPO and PAIGC of Guinea- Bissau.
- It extended "revolutionary greetings" to other organisations and freedom fighters in Vietnam, Africa and the Middle East, which opposed imperialism.
- Other greetings were sent to liberation movements of Southern Africa and Portuguese colonies.
- The ANC supported the demand of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam

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55 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1960-1970 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 16: Our Foreign Policy Objectives, 1969, pp. 1-2.

for reunification with Vietnam and US withdrawal.

- It backed the Arabs in the Palestinian struggle for their independent homeland against the Zionists (Israel).[56]

Further insight into the ANC's international posture can be deduced from the movement's determination not to rely solely on the sympathy and assistance of their well-wishers and brothers on the continent and all over the world. Instead, the ANC made its position categorically clear as far as its foreign policy was concerned: "We do not expect and have never advocated the liberation of our people by others. We are convinced that the South African people are destined to organise and emerge victorious in a revolutionary struggle waged by and led by themselves. From the world we appeal for political and material support. The internal fight for freedom backed by the overwhelming majority of mankind must prevail over the Apartheid rulers."[57] This attitude indicates that the ANC was cautious and wary of being dictated to and controlled by its supporters and benefactors.

In 1969, the ANC continued to make its presence felt internationally, when the Soviet-aligned World Peace Council (WPC) and the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) held an International Conference on Southern Africa in Khartoum, Sudan. Only liberation movements backed by the Soviet Union, which included the ANC and SWAPO, amongst others, were invited. On the other hand, those movements which were supported by China, including the ANC's rival, the PAC, were not invited. This event can be attributed to the broader, ideological struggles between the Soviet Union and China. The conference recognised the Moscow orientated organisations and movements like the ANC (South Africa), MPLA (Angola), PAIGC (Guinea Bissau), Frelimo (Mozambique) SWAPO (Namibia) and ZAPU (Zimbabwe) as the genuine liberation movements of their respective countries.[58] In South Africa, it was stated, the ANC was regarded as the only authentic liberation movement of the oppressed African

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56 African National Congress (ANC), "Resolutions of the Morogoro Conference", *Mayibuye*, volume 3, no.10, May 1969. See also MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 1: Political Report of the NEC to the Consultative Conference of the ANC, Morogoro, April 1969, p. 1.

57 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 3: Freedom and Independence, n.d., p. 14.

58 R. Gibson, *African Liberation Movements*, p. 70.

majority. Thus, the conference reaffirmed its support for the six "authentic liberation movements from Southern Africa" and adopted a programme aimed at maximising international support for the six.[59] It is clear from the outcomes of this conference that the Sino-Soviet rivalry for influence in Africa also had an impact upon the rivalry between the ANC and the PAC for foreign support.

All these examples indicate that the ANC was held in high regard in a broadening circle of solidarity towards the end of the 1960s. Although, as Mandela experienced during his African visit in the early 1960s, the PAC initially had certain ideological considerations working in its favour, it was the ANC that managed through its better organised diplomatic efforts to overcome any disadvantage it may have had at the outset to become the liberation movement that was widely recognised to have the higher status.

4.3.3 Internal problems

Despite these attempts at establishing a well-developed network of supporters and friends, the ANC was still faced with internal problems and divisions. Many people believe that the ANC did not have problems abroad. History writers such as H. Holland, J. Pampallis, S. M. Davis and many others normally concentrate mainly on the successes of the ANC. Others like H.R. Pike, E. Roux, M. Norval and many others focus mainly on the ANC as a liberation movement dominated by the communists. All these writers give the internal problems of the ANC only a cursory glance.

While the operations of the liberation movements in a strange exile environment contributed to tensions and internal dissensions, which affected both the performance and the cohesion of these organisations, it was how they solved these internal problems which made a difference. The most important questions in this regard are: What were the internal problems of the ANC? Was the ANC able to solve them or not? To what extent was the performance or cohesion of the movement affected by the success or failure to solve these problems?

The most serious problem of the ANC was how to bring together the members of the

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59 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC: A Struggle within a Struggle*, p. 72.

Congress Alliance, who apart from the ANC belonged to the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), the Coloured People's Congress (CPC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP). When the ANC still operated in South Africa, the coloured and Indian people, who also suffered different forms of humiliation, discrimination and oppression, were an integral part of the progressive forces, which fought against white domination. When the ANC was forced into exile by the South African regime, its operations were greatly affected. According to the memorandum of Ben Turok, a white SACP member, there was a total collapse of the Congress Alliance abroad. As a result, he complained that there was "no secret that the ANC has as a matter of policy down-graded non-African Congressites in the many spheres of our activity."[60] Condemning this "lack of unity" or "absence of the spirit of oneness", John Makatini, at the meeting of the Congresses in Morogoro on 26 November 1966, exhorted everybody to co-operate by saying that "when people speak of protecting the African image it must be by seeing certain facts in view ... pay tribute to members of other organisations for what they have done and sacrificed ... we must accept the realities of the SA situation."[61]

The problem of leaving the allied Indian, coloured and white exiles in limbo was partly addressed at the Morogoro Conference of 1969. The conference decided to open ANC membership to all members of the Congress Movement in exile, with the exception of the National Executive Committee, which was open only to Africans.[62] This arrangement was done to ensure that the image of the ANC as an African liberation movement was maintained. This was a sensitive matter, which cropped up from time to time in the history of the ANC. However, the ANC avoided being a liberation movement which practiced narrow nationalism and excluded other races from contributing to the build-up to the South African revolution. For this reason, membership of MK remained opened to all the races and the Revolutionary Council, which was formed at the Morogoro Conference of 1969, included an Indian (Yusuf Dadoo), a coloured (Reginald September) and a white (Joe Slovo). These changes raised controversies regarding the

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60 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 15: "What is Wrong?": A Discussion on the Present Situation in the South African Liberation Movement, March 1969, p. 10.

61 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 13: Minutes of the Meeting of the Congresses held on 26 November 1966, pp. 8-9.

62 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 5, p. 36.

role of communists and non-Africans in the ANC.[63] However, it should be noted that these decisions were taken in order to provide for the participation in full of all members of the oppressed groups, so that they could support the liberation struggle.

Another problem which emerged strongly was one of factionalism. It manifested itself in divisions based on ethnicity, regionalism and even race. According to Joe Matthews, there was a tendency among the Xhosa-speaking cadres from the Eastern Cape to practice regionalism. For example, he said that Xhosas from the Eastern Cape complained that he was not made a chief representative to the ANC London office, despite the fact that he was the senior of the unknown incumbent, Raymond Mazisi Kunene. Matthews believed that they were prejudiced against Mazisi Kunene, because he was a Zulu. Another example was that of R. Moagi, a Tswana-speaking cadre, who accused Tennyson Makiwane of practicing tribalism and regionalism. Makiwane placed an isiXhosa-speaking leader, Mark Futha, to lead a group consisting of three Tswana cadres, R. Moagi (whose MK name was S. Modisane), Michael Matladi (Mike Themba) and Jack Ramusi (Johannes Pilanyane). What caused suspicions and bitterness was the fact that this group was to infiltrate South Africa through Botswana and the three cadres were more familiar with the territory than their commander. The mission failed and Moagi ascribed its failure to "the problem of the Xhosa-speaking people that you cannot be on your own if you are a non-speaking Xhosa unless you are under the supervision of a Xhosa."[64] This perception has kept on haunting the ANC, even after the organisation assumed power after the democratic elections of the new South Africa in 1994.

In 1968 and 1969 the ANC was embarrassed by a case of dissidents from its own ranks that came to light when Lawrence Makhubu, the former secretary of the Orlando West branch in South Africa and later of the ANC National Committee in the Soviet Union, led a group of disgruntled cadres from their camp in Tanzania to seek political asylum in Kenya. In 1969, the four ANC dissidents, Omar Bhamjee, Hoosain Jacobs, Maurice Mthombeni and Amin Cajee, issued a damning statement against the ANC in Nairobi

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63 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol.5, p. 36.

64 S.M. Ndlovu, "The ANC in Exile, 1960-1970", in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, pp. 442-443.

and Europe. They did not only complain about the SACP's control of the ANC, but they also spoke about tribalism, nepotism, unexplained murders in the camps and lack of free discussion on the Sino-Soviet dispute.[65]

As noted before, the formal working relationships between the ANC and SACP seemed to be a serious problem to the ANC. The suspicion that the SACP dominated the ANC hounded the movement. The co-operation between the two parties was always exploited by their enemies and this sensitive matter was well-known within the ANC and SACP circles, as indicated by Slovo during a meeting when the relationship between them was discussed: "We have always recognised and do so now that the ANC faces many objective difficulties in Africa. This explains the care with which we have always approached the problem of Party-ANC co-operation. We are aware at this stage an open association between our bodies would be exploited by our enemies at a time when we are vulnerable and when so much depends upon the courtesy of not-so-advanced friends. This is why we are not talking of the creation of any sort of public alliances."[66] This observation by Joe Slovo indicates that the association between the ANC and the SACP was a firm one, which could not be dissolved as a result of criticisms from their opponents. This association was also an indicator of their relationship, which was mutually beneficial. The ANC needed financial and material support, which the SACP had through its connections with the Soviet Union and communist parties of other countries. The SACP, on the other hand, did not have much support in South Africa, and it appeared that it could only justify its existence as long as it was in partnership with the ANC.

One of the events which disturbed the ANC in exile, was the political conduct of James Jobe Hadebe, the Chief Representative of the movement in Dar-es-Salaam. James Hadebe resigned from the ANC in 1968, after the movement had spent much time to persuade him not to resign. The point at issue was his transfer from Dar-es-Salaam to Morogoro in December 1965. After his transfer, he complained in a confidential memorandum about many problems in the ANC that had led to his resignation. These

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65 R. Gibson, *African Liberation Movements,* pp. 70-71.

66 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 2, File MCHO2-2: Notes on the Discussions between a Delegation from the CC of the SACP and the NEC of the ANC, n.d., p. 6.

included, amongst others, the relationship between the individuals and the organisation, different problems of exile life, such as dislocation, home-sickness, day-to-day life of exiles, their interpersonal relationships and the impact these relationships had on their families. Besides regarding his transfer as a demotion, he also highlighted problems of favouritism, ethnicity and tribalism in the ANC.[67]

However, the ANC responded in a memorandum, which summarised the events which led to Hadebe's resignation. Examples of his allegedly despicable and reprehensible behaviour were mentioned, including, amongst others, demanding money from the ANC for services rendered, publishing a booklet with the title "Xmas Greetings" with a picture of himself on the outside without authorisation, issuing a leaflet announcing that he would lead a group of youths from the liberation movements, abandoning his duties at headquarters and his disregard for elementary procedures. He had also published in the press an unauthorised statement that he was to lead a march by the ANC youth to State House in support of the Arusha Declaration and a statement in the *Standard* daily newspaper of Tanzania on 4th December 1967 that he had resigned from the external mission of the ANC in Tanzania due to health and personal reasons.[68] Although his conduct seemed to have embarrassed the ANC, the movement's response to Hadebe's complaints seemed to be an attempt to justify the need to expel an important member of the NEC.

Another sensitive matter, which highlighted internal differences and misunderstandings between the ANC headquarters in Tanzania and offices of the representatives of the movement in the various countries, took place in 1965 when Mzwai Piliso was transferred from Egypt to Tanzania. In a letter sent to the head office, he complained about the unfriendly and unsympathetic letter about his transfer to Dar-es-Salaam and how the ANC failed to support him financially.[69]

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67 ANC, UFH, ANC Morogoro Papers, Box 5: Memorandum of James Hadebe on Issues Influencing My Thinking at Present, March 1967, pp. 1-4.

68 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 14: Summary of the Events in Connection with Mr James Jobe Hadebe from the External Mission of the African National Congress of South Africa, 12 January 1968, pp. 1-3.

69 ANC, UFH, ANC Morogoro Papers, Box 5: Mzwai Piliso's Letter Addressed to the ANC's Headquarters, 1 January 1965.

Oliver Tambo complained in a letter addressed to Joe Matthews in 1966 about the way each of the offices of the ANC abroad was too independent and not promoting the spirit of solidarity and cohesion which was necessary for waging the liberation struggle.[70] Tambo wanted to get rid of all stumbling blocks, which might immobilise and incapacitate the movement. It was not surprising, therefore, when he convened a meeting of the ANC's Executive Committee on 27 February 1966 to deal with disciplinary matters. He identified several problem areas, which might render the movement useless, like the careless control and abuse of limited funds, members sent on official missions undertaking different missions without approval, lack of discipline and the negative attitudes and conduct of some members of the NEC, which dented the image of the movement.[71] The meeting also ordered the finance committee to update its records, furnish financial statements regularly and plan how to provide financial help for the members based in South Africa. This indicates that Tambo wanted to root out corruption and chaos and recommitted the movement to its task of waging the struggle. His leadership style made a difference at a time when other liberation movements like the PAC were riddled with corruption and inept leadership.

From the above, it is evident that during the 1960-1969 period the ANC had established itself as a creditable liberation movement making an impact on the international scene. Its long history as a liberation movement counted in its favour. Its influence was gained at this stage largely through the influence and backing of the Soviet Union. The ANC developed strategies, based on tactical decisions, to balance their support from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries with backings from Africa, Europe and other parts of the world, including international agencies such as the UN and the OAU and a host of non-governmental organisations. Although the ANC made significant progress on the international field to isolate the regime and get material and financial help in the 1960s, it did not make any significant progress as far as returning its trained cadres to South Africa was concerned. For this reason, its influence in South Africa was of little

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[70] ANC, UFH, ANC Morogoro Papers, Box 11: Tambo's Letter Addressed to Joe Matthews, 2 March 1966.

[71] ANC, UFH, ANC Morogoro Papers, Box 11: Resolutions Adopted by the Executive Committee of the African National Congress of South Africa, 27 February 1966, pp. 1-3.

importance towards the latter half of the 1960s.

4.4 THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE PAC'S FOREIGN POLICY

The development of the PAC's foreign policy should be seen against the background of its founding policies. In fact, the background to the PAC's foreign policy is better understood in the context of what took place internationally before 1960, when the ideological clashes between the supporters of a narrow African nationalism and a broader African nationalism emerged within the ANC. What is of crucial importance about the formation of the PAC is that it was formed at the time when many African leaders were adopting Pan Africanist ideas in their own countries. The most important exponent of Pan Africanism amongst these African leaders was Dr Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. The 1960s saw many African states being liberated from their colonial masters as a result of the influence of Pan Africanist ideas. These events generated a mood of optimism in South Africa, which encouraged the development of Pan Africanist ideas. These ideas manifested themselves when the PAC was established in 1959.

As would be expected, the ideology of the PAC contained external Africanist influences and South African experiences. These ideas are found in the basic documents of the movement, such as the Pan Africanist Manifesto, PAC Disciplinary Code, the Constitution, Oath of Allegiance and Sobukwe's inaugural address. In these documents the Africanists viewed the South African struggle as part and parcel of the broader struggle of the oppressed people in Africa, which was against white domination, colonialism and imperialism.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the ideas of African liberation and Pan Africanism became synonymous with the PAC. The movement aimed at achieving the ideal of Africa for the Africans and supported ideas of Pan Africanists such as William Du Bois, George Padmore and Kwame Nkrumah of realising a United States of Africa.[72] In this way, the Pan Africanist concept of continental unity dominated the political thinking of the PAC members.

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[72] Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), *The Basic Document of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania,* pp. 12-15. See also PAC, *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, pp. 15-17.

At the same time, the PAC protested vehemently against colonialism and imperialism, which had contributed to the loss of sovereignty and independence of the indigenous people of Africa. For this reason, the PAC vigorously opposed white domination and demanded the right of the Africans to decide on their own future and destiny. As the founding Manifesto of the Africanist Movement states, one of the PAC's historic tasks and missions was to "implement effectively the fundamental principles that the dominion or sovereignty over and the dominion or ownership in the whole territory of the continent rest exclusively and inalienably in the indigenous people."[73] As would be expected, the PAC criticised the ANC's standpoint on Pan Africanism. The ANC was accused of lacking a revolutionary character, despite the fact that it had attended the Pan Africanist conferences held before the beginnings of the 1960s.

More importantly, the PAC outlined its non-aligned foreign policy through Sobukwe's speech at the inaugural conference of 1959. In this opening conference of the PAC, Sobukwe explained how the movement would conduct itself in its foreign affairs with the superpowers: "We see the world split today into two large hostile blocks, the west or the so-called capitalist block represented by the USA and the Soviet Union respectively. These two blocks are engaged in a terrible competition.[74] Consequently, the PAC committed itself to follow a policy of neutrality on the international front. It would not support either the United States of America or the Soviet Union. However, in instances where they were forced to borrow the "best from the East and the best from the West, we nonetheless retain and maintain our distinctive personality and refuse to be stooges of either power block."[75] From the foregoing, it was clear that the PAC was determined and prepared to be totally independent in its foreign relations. It did not want its backers or supporters to control its affairs. This stance of the PAC contrasted sharply with that of the ANC, which was heavily backed by the Soviet Union as a super-power. It is possible that its frequent lack of resources, including finances, could be as a result of its

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73 The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), "The 1959 Pan Africanist Manifesto", in *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe from 1949-1959*, p. 45.

74 PAC, *The Basic Documents of the Pan Africanist Congress*, pp. 10-13. See also PAC, *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, pp. 14-16.

75 PAC, "The 1959 Pan Africanist Manifesto", in *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, pp. 46-47.

independent stance as far as its foreign policy was concerned.

The PAC was aware of the fact that the sovereignty and independence of small countries were threatened by bigger federations like the European Community and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). For this reason, it was in favour of the formation of a United States of Africa. In this union of independent African states, Africanism would be viewed as a Pan-Africanistic social force, which would serve the needs of Africa, and not the interests of either the Eastern or Western blocks. This social force should be regarded as being "continental in scope, covering the whole continent ... functioning through the media of African social conditions, and operating to liberate Africa and to create a social order in conception, Africanistic in orientation, socialistic in content, democratic in form and creative in purpose."[76] The holding of the All-Africa People's Conference in Accra in December 1958 was seen by the PAC as a positive step of laying the foundation for African nationalism on a Pan African basis. Thus the PAC's foreign policy conception showed a strong Pan Africanist orientation and emphasis on independent foreign policy thinking.

Against the background as set out above, it becomes clear that the PAC was faced with a formidable challenge in order to implement its ideas on Pan Africanism and adopt a neutral stand in the politics of the Cold War. It should also be noted that the PAC had to reconcile its Pan Africanist ideals with the realities of the South African situation. What should also be taken into consideration is the fact that the PAC, like the ANC, had to operate outside South Africa as a banned movement after April 1960. It is therefore important to determine to what extent the PAC succeeded in legitimising itself, and endeavoured to isolate the South African government from the international community in the 1960s.

The PAC gained international recognition after the Sharpeville massacre. The massacre of Sharpeville not only demonstrated to the world the viciousness of the South African regime, but also gained for the PAC sympathy from the international community. This fact became evident when the UN declared 21 March as International Day for the

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[76] N. Muendane, *Sharpeville: The Epic Goes On*, p. 8.

Elimination of Racial Discrimination through resolution 239 (xxiii) in 1968.[77] However, the ANC was of the opinion that the PAC was using the Sharpeville tragedy to score political points. For this reason they maintained that the tragedies like those of Sharpeville and Langa "should not be gloated over and used for party political purposes."[78] However, the PAC believed that their history would not be complete without referring to the massacre of Sharpeville.

4.4.1 International relations of the PAC

Even before the proclamation of the state of emergency after the Sharpeville incident in 1960, some of the PAC leaders, like Peter Molotsi and Nana Mahomo, fled the country.[79] They left the country in March 1960 on the instruction of the PAC that they should mobilise the international community, including the rest of Africa, against the apartheid regime and also to generate resources for the establishment of the movement's bases outside the country. Many of the PAC leaders in the early 1960s preferred Ghana, as it supported their Pan Africanist ideals. According to Nana Mahomo, Ghana was thought of as "a base, a stable point in a fluctuating situation, a source of money, arms, international status, a voice on the world scene, an ally."[80] As would be expected, the attitude of the government of Ghana was positive towards the PAC exiles.

However, the Lesotho office became the most important PAC mission abroad, as the formal leadership structures of the movement were re-constituted in its capital Maseru. The office became functional in 1962, when P.K. Leballo arrived from South Africa, where he had been serving a two-year prison sentence for being involved in the anti-pass campaign. Leballo took over from Z.B. Molete, who was made Acting President of

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77 J. Grobler, *A Decisive Clash? A Short History of Black Protest Politics in South Africa, 1875-1976*, pp. 155-156.

78 "Copy of the letter sent to the PAC by the ANC on the Sharpeville tragedy", *Spotlight on South Africa*, vol. 3, no.12, 19 March 1965, pp.1–2.

79 T. Lodge, *Black Power in South Africa since 1945,* p. 297. Dr Peter Molotsi confirmed this move during the interview in Kroonstad, 15 May 1999.

80 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 6: Interview between Gail Gerhart and Nana Mahomo, New York City, 2 July 1967, p. 2.

the PAC by Robert Sobukwe.[81]

Towards the end of 1962 the PAC convened a Presidential Council in Maseru, which was actually a meeting of PAC leaders from different parts of Africa, including regional heads from South Africa. The Presidential Council decided to confirm the appointment of P.K. Leballo as Acting President (since Sobukwe was still in prison), and elected J.N. Pokela as Secretary, Z.B. Molete as Secretary for Publicity and Information, Zeph Mothopeng as Acting National Treasurer, E. Mfaxa as National Organiser, M. Gqoboshe and T.M. Ntantala as ordinary members of the Presidential Council.[82] Representatives of the PAC in the various missions were also members of the Presidential Council. The importance of this Presidential Council lay in the fact that "from now henceforth we deem it in the interests of the African Revolution that orders and commands should emanate only from the Presidential Council at its headquarters in Maseru. Every other wing of the movement shall take instructions from the headquarters."[83] This means that power to take any important decisions of the movement was centralised at the headquarters in Maseru. However, this centralisation of power would exist in name only, as some prominent members of the very same Presidential Council would violate its decisions and policies, thereby denting the image of the PAC, as explained later on in this chapter. Nevertheless, the formation of the Presidential Council seemed to have enabled the PAC to reconstitute itself as a serious movement, which was determined to wage the liberation struggle.

Besides Basutoland , the other offices of the PAC in the early 1960s were in London, Cairo, Accra, Algiers, Francistown (Bechuanaland), Dar-es-Salaam, Leopoldville (in the Kinshasa Congo) and Lagos in Nigeria. These missions appeared to be operating independently, even though the Maseru headquarters were considered as being in charge of the others.[84] The establishment of the network of diplomatic offices indicated how the PAC was growing in stature internationally.

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81 B. Leeman, *Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania*, p. 177.

82 B. Leeman, *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania*, vol. 3, p. 8.

83 Archives of the PAC (PAC), UFH, PAC Tanzania, PAC Tanzania, Box 24: Background to Official Appointments and Policy Statements, p. 4.

84 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 306.

As already noted, Ghana encouraged the ANC and the PAC to form a united front. However, the united front was dissolved in 1962 because of the irreconcilable differences between the PAC and the ANC, especially with regard to the communist domination of the ANC and the prominent role of whites. The split was speeded up by the PAC's constant and vicious attacks on the ANC through the Voice of Africa, a popular radio station in Ghana, which broadcasted throughout the continent.[85] Nelson Mandela was disturbed and disappointed by the PAC for "spreading lies" in the African states that the ANC was controlled by white communists. At the conference of PAFMECSA in Addis Ababa, which Mandela attended in 1962, he noticed the wide-spread anti-white feeling that permeated the mood of the conference. He realised that the impression was created by the PAC that the ANC was a "communist dominated organisation" and the party of "stooges".[86] This observation of Mandela was a clear indication that the PAC had done a lot of work in order to try to win the support of many African countries at the expense of the ANC.

In order to further counter the influence of the ANC effectively and to obtain financial and military aid, the PAC focused on the fields of diplomacy and training. For this reason, Nana Mahomo and Patrick Duncan toured the United States in 1963 and met labour officials, businessmen, churchmen, government officials as well as UN officials. Besides fund-raising, the other main aim of the tour was to organise oil and arms boycotts against South Africa. However, Mahomo's acquisition of funds from AFL/CIO contacts in America started the rumours that the PAC was obtaining funds from the Central Intelligence Agency.[87]

Another attempt of the PAC in the field of diplomacy succeeded, when Nana Mahomo negotiated an agreement with the FNLA, through which PAC cadres would receive military training in the Congo. However, the PAC neglected its recruits in the Congo. As a result, the whole exercise failed dismally.[88]

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85 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 1, MCHO2-1: South African United Front Press Statement, n.d., p. 1.

86 S.M. Ndlovu, "The ANC in Exile, 1960-1969" in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, p. 433.

87 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 307.

88 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 308.

Nevertheless, the PAC and the ANC scored a major victory when the United Nations condemned the racial policies of South Africa in 1960, following the massacre of people in Sharpeville. Since then, the apartheid policies of South Africa became a permanent item on the agenda of the UN. Moreover, a permanent committee was appointed in 1962 by the General Assembly to monitor developments in South Africa. Their efforts to expose the evils of apartheid bore fruits in 1974, when the UN recognised the ANC and PAC as the liberation movements of the oppressed people in South Africa.[89] The General Assembly even granted them observer status since 1974.

However, the Special Committee Against Apartheid, as a sub-organ of the General Assembly, which mobilised international support for the liberation movements, experienced serious problems in solving conflicts between the ANC and the PAC. For example, the Special Committee found itself participating in or supporting financially international conferences from which the PAC had been excluded. This problem was caused by the fact that the ANC had many bilateral relations with a great number of governments and organisations in the world, particularly from the Eastern block. As a result of the hostility between the ANC and the PAC, the Special Committee decided in 1979 to provide financial and material support for conferences which were organised and co-sponsored by both the ANC and the PAC, even if one of them was excluded from taking part in such conferences.[90] This means that the competition and enmity between the liberation movements was also being displayed on the international arena.

In the same way as in the UN, the PAC continuously sought and obtained support from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). Like the ANC, the OAU provided the PAC with an international podium from which it could carry out its objectives of isolating South Africa internationally. The OAU consistently supported the PAC efforts in South Africa. For example, the PAC received funds from the OAU and managed to obtain Algerian facilities, which were superior to those offered by either the Angolans or Ghanaians.[91]

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89 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC: A Struggle within a Struggle,* p. 56.

90 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 58.

91 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 310.

Even though the PAC was recognised by the OAU, some of its members refused to recognise the movement. For example, Zambia banned the PAC since 1968 and the governments of Angola and Mozambique also decided to de-recognise the movement from the late 1970s. Just like in the case of the UN, both the ANC and the PAC competed for support and influence within the OAU. To worsen matters, efforts to reconcile and unite the two South African liberation movements were unsuccessful. Instead, supporters of both sides campaigned for the de-recognition of their rivals. In order to stop outside interference and manipulation of differences between liberation movements, the OAU wanted all aid to be channelled through the Liberation Committee.[92] Even this strategy failed, as the liberation movements continued to have separate negotiations for help from friendly countries on a bilateral basis.

In the middle of the 1960s the PAC supported non-alignment as an international policy. Despite its declared policy of non-alignment, the PAC indicated a strong pro-Chinese sentiment and an intense anti-American attitude. The PAC's association with the Communist Party of China was surprising, given the fact that the movement claimed that it was against "foreign ideologies" like communism. As Mlamli Makwetu, one of the PAC leaders and the contemporary of Sobukwe, put it, "we stand outside of those instruments and ideologies".[93] Its neutral stand in world politics was compromised, because it decided to side with Communist China, which was involved in an ideological struggle with the Soviet Union.

4.4.2 Diplomatic bungling

Even though the PAC wanted to obtain foreign help and project the correct image abroad, the opposite actually took place. The image of the PAC was dented by the behaviour and conduct of its leader Potlako Leballo. The period from 1962, which could have been used to build up the PAC into a strong and effective exile movement, actually saw the foundations of disorder being laid by Leballo. Unlike Oliver Tambo, who was a

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92 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 70.

93 Copy of notes found in Mlamli Makwetu's room, dated 1 November 1959, and used in his case (Court Case no. P 226/ 62), p.2. Obtained from Peter Raboroko, in possession of the author.

visionary, democrat and well-organised leader, Leballo was known by his comrades as a "demagogue, not a good organised man, too erratic" and fond of "fabrications, pleadings, threats and betrayals".[94] His desire for absolute personal power over the whole movement led him to serious clashes with his comrades over the question of how to approach, in the international field, established supporters and potential friends.

Leballo's poor handling of the PAC's external relations unavoidably led to poor performance by the movement internationally. The type of complaints within the PAC against Leballo could be deduced from the following: "To trade in outright lies, elaborate half truths, distort facts and make false promises in any presentations to governments, international organisations, fellow liberation movements and personages of goodwill, and making large and groundless claims everywhere in the world, or, the simple truth, the bare facts of our situation, and a fair appraisal of our own standing at any one time? Surreptitious backstabbing of colleagues at sensitive moments in our dealings with outsiders, or, a democratic and co-ordinated approach and mutual respect and trust amongst ourselves even before going to address ourselves to outside people whose respect and trust we desire? Double-talk or straight talk inside and outside the PAC? What could be said to be so revolutionary about a national liberation movement whose topmost leader knows no better than all the negatives in the above questions?"[95] The importance of this information is that it gives the gist of the formative period of the exile life of the PAC under the leadership of Leballo, which was characterised by failure to develop and portray a positive political image of the movement.

One of the incidents that indicated that Leballo did not respect the PAC's founding principles of collective leadership, common responsibility and democratic centralism, was when he surprised his comrades by calling an unscheduled press conference on 24 March 1962 in Maseru, where he announced that the movement had already mobilised more than 150 000 forces for an armed uprising in South Africa in 1963. He also revealed to the journalists, mostly South Africans, that the killings of enemy agents and

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94 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 6: Interview between Gail M. Gerhart and Nana Mahomo, New York City, 2 July 1967, p. 2.

95 Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), The Crisis in the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (by T.M. Ntantala), 1978, pp.14-15. Information is in the possession of the author and obtained from Thami ka Plaatjie.

policemen were actually the work of the PAC.[96]

Leballo's ill-advised behaviour had devastating effects for the PAC. Some of his comrades had already been arrested and were facing prospects of death sentences or long imprisonment like Sobukwe. The regime used Leballo's sensational press conference as a good reason for using the security forces to crack down upon the African liberation movements, especially the PAC. Many PAC offices were raided by the police, who seized important documents. Moreover, many PAC members were either imprisoned or hanged.[97]

Leballo's comrades blamed him, because these events took place after his startling revelations. As would be expected, this serious blunder crippled the PAC to a large extent. It would take the movement many years before it could regroup and rebuild what it had lost during the raid of its offices by the police. However, the most serious concern was that Leballo was careless and casual about the sensitive information and security secrets of the movement.

What also tarnished the image of the PAC and made the movement to lose its good reputation, which it had earned under the leadership of Sobukwe, was the friendship of Leballo with dubious characters who were suspected of being spies of the regime. For example, Leballo became a close friend of Hans Lombard, a white South African, who carried a British passport. Despite warnings from some of his comrades, Leballo gave Lombard "glowing credentials which gave him easy access to PAC offices abroad and also served as introduction to some independent states and Liberatiom Movements which had confidence in Leballo."[98] The ANC, as the political rivals of the PAC, called Lombard the "roving spy", as he travelled a lot in Africa and gathered a mass of information about the liberation movements. It was even suspected that he knew about the pending arrests, which followed the dramatic press conference of Leballo. Lombard narrowly escaped arrest by the Tanzanian security forces, as they became suspicious of

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[96] PAC, The Crisis in the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, p. 9. See also T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol.5, p. 47.

[97] For more details see chapter 3, section 3.3.2, from p. 154.

[98] ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76: The Call for Unity and a United Front, n.d., p. 13.

his activities in 1965. One of Leballo's main critics within the PAC, Matthew Nkoana, commented in this way about the relationship between Leballo and Hans Lombard: "The extent and volume of the intelligence massed by Lombard over the years must be staggering. The field was thrown wide open for him by Leballo, who acted purely for personal gain, which blinded him to the far-reaching questions of security involved."[99] The suspicion that he was probably a spy might have been confirmed by his appointment later by the South African prime minister, B.J. Vorster, as the "political editor of the protagonists of the outward- or Northward-looking policy".[100] With his knowledge of the liberation movements Lombard became a political advisor of the Vorster regime. His advice encouraged Vorster to ease tensions with African states with the aim to immobilise the liberation movements.

Another incident involved a close relationship between Leballo and an American academic. This American academic used to help PAC refugees from Lesotho to Botswana in his Landrover. However, some PAC members were unhappy when this American academic travelled as far as Mbeya, which was one of the movement's camps in Tanzania, where its cadres were accommodated.[101] The friendship of Leballo with the American academic caused a stir within the PAC circles, given the fact that Leballo always claimed to be anti-American. The ANC felt justified to have associated the formation of the PAC with those movements that were suspected of being counter-revolutionary in their activities, when they said that the decision to form the PAC had actually been taken in the luxurious premises of the library of the United States Information Service (USIS) in Johannesburg.[102]

Another incident which dented the image of the PAC and damaged its political stature and credibility was when Leballo, "this great revolutionary who claimed to be the most wanted man in South Africa, arranged for his safe passage through Jan Smuts airport in

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99 M. Nkoana, *Crisis in the Revolution*, p. 28.

100 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76: The Call for Unity and a United Front, n.d., p. 14.

101 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 24: A Statement Concerning the Disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa to the Liberation Committee, p. 3.

102 ANC, UFH, ANC London Office, Box 1: The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa: Whom Does it Serve?, p. 1.

South Africa under the noses of the Security Police."[103] What was surprising was the fact that Leballo passed through South Africa after he had disappeared for about five and a half months. During this period his comrades were still in prison following their arrests after his press statement in Maseru. The intriguing and knotty question which should be asked at this stage is: How was it possible that such a dangerous and highly wanted man in South Africa was allowed easy entrance in the same country? This incident did not only indicate how controversial Leballo was, but it also showed how careless and casual the security clearances concerning some of the PAC leaders were handled by the movement.

In 1966 the PAC's disregard for its international image resulted in another blunder. On 23 August 1966 J. Raboroko and A.B. Ncgobo attended the UN Seminar on Human Rights and Apartheid in Brasilia and presented papers on behalf of the PAC of Azania. Two of the papers were called "Role of the Security Council in the Anti-Apartheid Fight" and "Measures to Achieve a Non-Racial Society". The third document, which was presented to the delegates as background material in an organ, the *Pan Africanist*, was called "The Declaration on Principled Intervention in South Africa" or "The six point programme for international action against apartheid in South Africa." The biggest embarrrassment was that the papers were presented to the UN Seminar without the knowledge or the approval of both the external and internal leadership of the PAC. Moreover, the names of three PAC members, M. Nkoana, K. Jordaan and V. Mngadi, appeared on all the documents without their knowledge and permission.[104] This amounted to fraud and it was a clear indication that corruption, in order to gain certain advantages or favours, was rampant among some members of the PAC.

Leballo associated the documents with Raboroko and Ngcobo. For this reason, he issued in the name of the PAC a public repudiation of the call for UN military intervention in Azania. Leballo maintained that the PAC was opposed to any intervention by the Western countries in South Africa. According to him, it ran "counter to the PAC policy of

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103 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission. Box 76: The Call for Unity and United Front, p. 14.

104 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 596: Official Statement on the Repudiation of "The Declaration on Principled Intervention in South Africa", 27 October 1966, p. 1.

mobilising the people themselves to secure freedom by their own revolutionary efforts and thus to settle, without foreign interference, their destiny according to their own lights."[105] In this way, the PAC leaders were clashing publicly about policy matters, which was not good for the image of the movement. However, what emerged from the saga was not only a lack of uniformity in the PAC's ideological approach, but also that the members of the movement were guilty of displaying a serious lack of collective responsibility.

Another diplomatic blunder took place in 1968 during the PAC's incursions of its highly trained cadres to South Africa through Mozambique. The PAC High Command in Lusaka gave strict instructions that the mission should not be publicised for security reasons. Despite these strict security regulations, Potlako Leballo and David Sibeko released a press statement in Dar-es-Salaam, in which they confirmed that the PAC cadres had indeed been killed in Mozambique during clashes with Portuguese soldiers.[106] This announcement encouraged the South African regime to deploy its troops in an area at Sibasa to waylay any survivors from Mozambique.

It soon came to light that the fate of the PAC in Zambia "was determined by an incredible breach of diplomatic confidence that followed Leballo's confidential talks with a Zambian minister then responsible for the activities of national liberation movements."[107] The information of the incursions reached South Africa and it subsequently threatened Zambia with military action, should it facilitate the passage of the PAC trained men to South Africa again. What was disconcerting was the fact that the exposed details revealed that Zambia not only allowed the PAC guerrillas transit to South Africa via Mozambique, but had also helped the PAC materially to carry out the mission. Consequently, South Africa had to offer its informant personal protection by way of arranging for a special police protection for him. This serious breach of diplomatic

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105 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 Political Material, A 2675, III, 596: Official Statement on the Repudiation of "The Declaration on Principled Intervention in South Africa, 27 October 1966, p. 2.

106 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1978 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 607: The Profiles of Leballo's Gang, 5 May 1978, p. 11.

107 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1978 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 607: The Profiles of Leballo's Gang, 5 May 1978, p. 11.

confidence further indicates the clumsy and awkward way in which Leballo as a leader of a liberation movement was handling the foreign policy or external affairs of his movement. This poor handling of the PAC's foreign relations actually contributed to the movement's low support as compared to the ANC. The conclusion reached is that as long as Leballo was the PAC's leader, "it might well be still too difficult for Zambia, or any other Frontline State for that matter, to positively commit itself to the PAC ... without any misgivings or apprehensions."[108]

4.4.3 Internal wrangles and strifes

Although the PAC believed in the unity of all the Africans, the movement experienced frequent internal conflicts and wrangles. The internal clashes of the PAC harmed the international standing of the movement. It was hardly surprising that the ANC alleged that the PAC existed only to subvert the South African liberation struggle.[109] How did the internal struggles of the movement undermine its international credibility and stature?

A careful study of the PAC documents point out that Potlako Leballo was the chief architect and culprit of these clashes and crises. He caused the first major crisis in the PAC in Maseru, with his dramatic and well-known press statement. His press statement led to the imprisonment of PAC members and cadres on Robben Island and in other prisons. In releasing the press statement, Leballo actually violated the principle of collective decion-making. When doing an introspection and analysing their problems, the PAC members always started off from the premise that most of their troubles could be traced to a departure from the path and principle of collective leadership and democratic centralism.[110] In other words, the use of "absolute powers" by Leballo in 1963 and repeatedly thereafter corroded the principle of collective leadership.

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108 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1978 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 607: The Profiles of Leballo's Gang, 5 May 1978, p. 12.

109 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 13: The Pan Africanist Congress Exists to Subvert the South African Liberation Struggle, 1967, p. 1.

110 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 599: Formula for Solving Party Problems and Difficulties, 9 January 1967, p. 1.

After the disastrous press statement of Maseru, everybody thought that Leballo would employ the method of criticism and self-criticism as a leader to avoid serious mistakes in the future. However, he continued to bring the name of the PAC into disrepute. In 1965 J.D. Nyaose, a founder member of the PAC, who was also the national President of the Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa (FOFATUSA) was expelled from the PAC. Apparently he refused to surrender the independence of FOFATUSA to the PAC. To frustrate Nyaose, Leballo informed the African Liberation Committee of the OAU and the Tanzanian government of the expulsion. In his reaction, Nyaose protested against the expulsion to the Liberation Committee and the Tanzanian government by stressing the point that the matter had been handled unconstitutionally as it was supposed to have been handled by the Disciplinary Tribunal of Justice members.[111] In spite of Nyaose's protests to the Tanzanian government and the Liberation Committee, he did not succeed because of the support Leballo apparently enjoyed from these institutions. However, Nyaose continued to defy the expulsion until he was reinstated at the Moshi Conference in 1967. The dictatorial manner in which the expulsion of Nyaose was carried out clearly indicated the way Leballo misused his power and authority to deal with his rivals, critics and opponents within the party.

In 1966, the PAC crisis escalated into an explosive situation, when Leballo issued a public statement repudiating P. Raboroko and A.B. Ngcobo about the papers that they had presented at the UN Brazil conference. This incident resulted in the accusation of the two PAC leaders as renegades and lackeys of imperialism, who had "sold the PAC and their people for millions of American dollars, naturally finding themselves in full agreement with the pro-imperialist and counter-revolutionary line of the African National Congress."[112] In other words, their statement ran counter to the PAC policy of mobilising the oppressed themselves in order to secure their own freedom through their own efforts. These accusations not only showed mutual suspicions concerning raising money in the name of the movement, but also a lot of indiscipline which could be ascribed to a serious lack of ideological clarity.

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111 J.D. Nyaose, "Circular Letter No. 1: Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa at Home and Abroad", in K.M. Nkonlo, *The Exile History of the PAC of Azania*, pp. 60, 61.

112 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 596: Official Statement on the Repudiation of the "Declaration on Principled Intervention in South Africa", 27 October 1966, p. 4.

This absence of a clear-cut foreign policy manifested itself when the ideological conflicts emerged within the PAC after Leballo had struck a friendship with the People's Republic of China as from 1965. This Chinese connection was significant in that the PAC and the Chinese Communist Party started working together towards a synthesis of Pan Africanism and Marxism-Leninism as interpreted by Mao-Tse-Tung. As a result, many exiled PAC members became influenced by Mao-Tse-Tung's thinking, which emphasises mass mobilisation in the revolutionary development of national independence, socialism and internationalism.[113]

In the course of time, the movement split into two distinct groups. On the one hand there were those who followed Marxism-Leninism and Maoism, like Potlako Leballo, David Sibeko and Edwin Makoti. Those who professed Africanism and Pan Africanism saw those who adopted Marxism-Leninism as being treacherous and insulting to the dignity and integrity of the Africans. For this reason, they maintained that those who wanted to convert the PAC into a Marxist-Leninist party should be advised to resign and form their own party as the movement was "not a fishing ground for Marxist-Leninist-Maoist."[114]

As would be expected, the influence of Mao's thoughts was unacceptable to PAC members who were opposed to Leballo's close relationship with China. They condemned the ideological developments as a deviation from the PAC nationalist standpoint. As a result, labelling and denouncing depended on where one stood in the ideological divide. As the ideological clashes intensified in the 1970s, they also assumed veiled ethnic, tribal or regional dimensions. For example, the Leballo faction was mainly the Sotho ethnic group based in the Transvaal, whereas the Ntantala group comprised the majority of the Xhosa-speakers from the Transkei and Cape. The ideological conflict was also termed the "two-line struggle" by the Ntantala faction, which argued that there was a clash between the Marxists and the anti-Marxists and that the

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113 B. Leeman, *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania*, vol. 3, 1966-1984, p. 9.

114 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1978-1979 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 606: A Letter from Geoffrey Sefako Mokoka Accusing L.R. Molomo of Supporting Marxist-Leninist and Maoist Philosophy, dated 4 September 1979, pp. 1-5.

Leballo group victimised them for their ideological inclination.[115] In this way, the organisation suffered a two-way ideological split. This crisis reached its peak at the Arusha unity conference of 1978. At the core of the ideological clashes was a hidden struggle for power. The climax of the struggle for power, which was masqueraded as ideological clashes, will be explained in the next chapter. However, what needs to be said about this problem in the late 1960s is that Leballo as the leader of the PAC was unable to transcend the ideological divide and act as a unifying force.

In 1967, the PAC's persistent internal strife precipitated a crisis. Another major problem cropped up when there was an abortive attempt by Ngcobo and Raboroko to take over the PAC office in Dar-es-Salaam. They received support from J.D. Nyaose, Peter Molotsi, and Nana Mahomo. Leballo, Z.B. Molete and their supporters asked the Tanzanian government to intervene in order to resolve the crisis. After negotiations with George Magombe of the African Liberation Committee (ALC) and the Tanzanian authorities, it was decided that the PAC offices in Dar-es-Salaam should be closed for a short time. Meanwhile, the OAU in 1967 suspended its recognition of the PAC until such time that the Standing Committee on Information, Administration and General Policy became satisfied that normality and unity had been restored in the movement.[116] The Standing Committee was requested to consider and report whether the suspension of assistance would be an effective way of exerting pressure on the PAC to maintain unity within its ranks. At the same time, Tanzania and Zambia together with the ALC were called upon to help the PAC achieve this unity.

At the height of this confusion, Matthew Nkoana and A.B. Ngcobo proposed that the PAC members should avail themselves of the golden opportunity of putting their house in order by holding a conference to salvage the party. They wanted the following points to be discussed at that conference:

- "All suspensions , expulsions and any form of punishment or ostracism meted out to

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115 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC,* p. 102.

116 PAC of Azania, P. Leballo, Report on Talks Between the Pan Africanist Congress and the OAU Liberation Committee Sub-Committee Charged with Assisting the Organisation to Solve Problems with Certain Sections of the Leadership, 20 November, 1968, p.1. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatjie, in possession of author.

any or all members of the PAC should as a first step be revoked and abrogated;

- All members of the National Executive Committee elected by National Conference in 1959, and who were at that time abroad and those duly co-opted should be summoned to a meeting in conclave."[117]

With this conference, Nkoana and Ngcobo hoped that the problems of the movement could be resolved quickly before it might collapse completely. It was against this background that in September 1967 the PAC made an attempt to unite the many factions, which had developed within its ranks since the split from the ANC in 1959. When the PAC "reunification" talks took place in September 1967 at Moshi, it happened against the background of serious internal bickering and faction fights among members in Dar-es-Salaam. The Moshi Conference suspended Ngcobo and set up a commission of enquiry to investigate the duties of Ngcobo as Treasurer-General. When Ngcobo circulated a damning document, showing how Leballo and Nyaose had individually failed to hand over to the Treasurer-General of the PAC the funds which they had obtained in the name of the PAC from various countries, such as the United Arab States and China, the commission of inquiry could not conduct its investigations any further. The commission was compelled to abandon its duty as one of its members, J.D. Nyaose, was directly involved in the failure to hand over funds to Ngcobo, who was the Treasurer-General at that time. The members of the commission of inquiry decided not to go on with the investigations concerning the conduct of Leballo with regard to the funds that Ngcobo's evidence showed to have been received by him, for fear of being expelled from the party.[118] These events not only indicate rampant corruption within the PAC, but also the existence of black-mailing and manipulation.

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117 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III 598: Matthew Nkoana: Short Memorandum on the Present Crisis in the Pan Africanist Congress, 1967, p. 1. See also a similar memorandum with the same information: AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 PAC Political Material, A 2675,III, 599: A. Ngcobo: Short Memorandum on the Present Crisis in the Pan Africanist Congress, 12 January 1967, p. 1. Both of them suggest that some of the PAC members wanted a conference urgently.

118 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 Political Material, A 2675, III, 13: The Pan Africanist Congress Exists to Subvert the South African Struggle, 1967, p. 2.

Nevertheless, the conference went on and approved the formation of the Revolutionary Command for the purpose of meeting the exigencies of the military struggle by the African people in South Africa. The Revolutionary Command replaced the Presidential Council and its headquarters were based in Lusaka, Zambia, as from the end of 1967. Leballo outlined the concept of a People's War as the party's strategy and the great possibilities for guerrilla warfare in South Africa.[119] He also made it clear that the OAU supported those movements that operated effectively within their territories and equally determined revolutionaries. This statement largely explains the reason why the headquarters were relocated to Lusaka. The PAC hoped that it would be easy to infiltrate its cadres into South Africa if its headquarters could be in Zambia.[120] Nevertheless, this arrangement was only temporary, because the PAC was expelled by the Zambian government because of its endless internal conflicts.

Superficially, the Moshi conference seemed to have reconciled the warring parties and repaired the dented image of the PAC internationally. After the conference, Leballo was able to announce that the gathering was characterised by "brutally frank discussion" and "rigorous but healthy self-criticism".[121] Even some of the opponents of Leballo, like T.T. Letlaka and Z.B. Molete, were able to state the following, six months after the Moshi Conference: "Despite many grave difficulties, the Party emerged from the Moshi NEC meeting with firm decisions of rejuvenation, reconciliation, revitalization and unity. All the Leballo-inspired expulsions and suspensions were withdrawn and set aside and all Party members who were willing to join the Revolution and place themselves under democratic Party discipline were invited to return to the fold."[122] These positive

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119 PAC of Azania, Report of National Executive Committee Meeting , Moshi, Tanzania, 19th to 22nd September 1967, pp. 43-44. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatjie, in possession of author.

120 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1978 Political Material, 2675, III, 607: The Profiles of Leballo's Gang, 5 May 1978, p. 10.

121 Potlako Leballo, "PAC, Reorganisation Conference, Moshi, September 1967", in R. Gibson, *African Liberation Movements*, p. 98.

122 Z.B. Molete and T.T. Letlaka, "A Clarion Call to All Members of the National Executive Committee, Representatives, Functionaries, Cadres and General Members of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, (SA) Abroad, April 2, 1968", in T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 5, p. 49.

sentiments were expressed, even though the PAC leadership under Leballo still failed to function as a collective. The conclusion reached is that it seems as if things were done at Moshi to please the outside world, especially the OAU, which periodically put pressure on the PAC to start waging the struggle seriously.

However, if a thorough check of the PAC documents is made at this time, one finds that many PAC leaders hoped that the unity talks at the Moshi conference would provide a lasting solution to the leadership problems of the PAC. Primary documents indicate that many PAC members were concerned about the way the movement was run. The general membership of the movement was not happy with the divisive leadership style of Potlako Leballo. As a result, it seems as if unimportant issues were addressed at the conference at the expense of addressing the whole question of how the PAC should be run. One document pointed to this burning issue in this way: "The problems facing the Party at the moment are the logical outcome of a longstanding state of affairs in which the Party machinery has been disrupted and substituted by a coterie of would-be despots" and "the fundamental objective is to create a body to which the various organs of the Party will ultimately be responsible. Such a body should be as representative as possible of all strata of the Party, meeting at least once in three years, or oftener if so required, to review the work of the Party, lay down policy and set out the general direction of the revolution."[123] The memorandum of A. Ngcobo was forthright and somehow radical, because it suggested that the PAC should not only create a "viable body that would from time to time review the work of the NEC", but should also "review the constitution and documents and interpret them to meet present situation which was not foreseen at the time."[124] As already noted, the Moshi conference failed dismally to provide radical solutions to leadership problems of the PAC. No wonder, then, that failure to minimise conflict led to "harmful effects on the psychological health of organisational members and the efficiency of party performance."[125] This means that

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123 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 PAC Political Material, A 2675, 599: Formula for Solving Party Problems and Difficulties, 9 January 1967, p. 1.

124 AWC, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 PAC Political Material, A 2675, 599: A Ngcobo: Short Memorandum on the Present Crisis in the Pan Africanist Congress, 12 January 1967, p. 2.

125 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76, PAC File, Observation and Recommendations to the Consultation Conference Outline, n.d., p. 4.

conditions for future conflicts remained unresolved and it would be easy for the same mistakes to be committed again.

Despite its problems that affected is international standing, the PAC was able to claim that it had rid itself of its race label in 1966 when three Coloured People's Congress (CPC) members decided to join the movement. These three members of the CPC were Barney Desai, Cardiff Marney and Kenneth Jordaan, who became members of the NEC.[126] The CPC members decided to join the PAC, because they believed that the movement not only offered South Africa the best prospect of achieving a non-racial democracy, but also because of the fact that it was the "only political organisation in the country that set itself clear-cut socialist objectives which it seeks to attain concurrently with political democracy."[127] The entry of the coloureds in the PAC was a positive development, because the ANC was experiencing problems at that time with the people of colour. In this way, the PAC could claim that it was not the racist movement it was perceived to be.

The PAC succeeded to establish warm fraternal relationships with some liberation movements, such as the Basutoland Congress Party (BCP), Bechuanaland People's Party (BPP), Mozambique Revolutionary Committee (COREMO), Swaziland Progressive Party (SPP), South West Africa National Union (SWANU), Zimbabwe African National Union (Zanu) as well as the Angolan Revolutionary Government in Exile. However, no formal alliances were concluded with these movements, as the PAC had only working relationships with them. One of the working relationships was seen when these movements condemned the seminar on "Africa: National and Social Revolution" held in Cairo from 24th -29th October 1966 by the Prague magazine "Problems of Peace and Socialism" and a local paper "Al Talia". Their accusation was that the seminar "represented once again a gross interference in the affairs of the African continent as well as an interference in the internal affairs of the dependent African countries by the Soviet revisionist preference for one liberation movement over another."[128] In other

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126 R. Gibson, *African Liberation Movements*, p. 97.

127 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 PAC Political Material, A 2675, 596: Joint Communiqué on the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the Coloured People's Congress (CPC), 19 March 1966, p. 4.

128 Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) Statement: 10th November 1966, p. 2.

words, the seminar invited only organisations and individuals who followed the line of Russia and modern revisionism. As a result other organisations, which did not follow this line of thinking, were uninvited.

The same liberation movements condemned the Soviet Union of destroying the revolutionary unity of the peoples of Africa and Asia. They claimed that their unity was being undermined by the Soviet-sponsored Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation Council meeting held in the American-owned Hilton Hotel in Nicosia, Cyprus in 1967. Their view was that the meeting was convened specifically to attack the genuine anti-imperialist organisations from Africa and Asia. As a result, they warned that: "We, the undersigned revolutionary organisations representing the popular movements from Southern Africa, warn in unequivocal terms all splitters of Afro-Asian Solidarity that their fate will be the same inglorious defeat that awaits the imperialists. The people of Africa and Asia, are resolutely determined to overthrow, and liberate themselves from the Soviet revisionist ruling cliques in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union itself. We shall stand also with our class brothers in the rest of Europe and the United States in our common struggle to defeat imperialism and revisionism."[129] As a result, liberation movements like the ANC and ZAPU were accused of betraying the struggle of their own people by supporting the splittist policy of the Soviet Union.

The PAC protested jointly with COREMO, SWANU, UNITA, and ZANU. They complained that the British Southern Africa Solidarity Committee failed to respect the will and solidarity of the African people by perpetuating the division within the ranks of African liberation movements which were sponsored by the Soviet Union. These charges were contained in a joint statement and reminded the Solidarity Committee that the brutal repression of minority governments in Southern Africa was not borne by the Moscow aligned movements like the ANC, MPLA, FRELIMO and SWAPO only. Therefore, the PAC and other movements pleaded that the demonstrations to be held in London by the Solidarity Committee in support of the armed struggle in Southern Africa,

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Obtained from Peter Raboroko, in the possession of the author.

129 Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), The Nicosia Declaration, 15 February 1967, pp. 2-3. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatjie, in possession of author.

should indicate the support of all organisations.[130] This indicates clearly that the ANC and its allies found more support than the PAC and its allies from the Solidarity Committee. This unequal treatment perpetuated jealousies, competition and even hostilities between these two groups of liberation movements.

Major quarrels among PAC leaders in exile erupted into the open again in June 1968. A self-appointed "National Executive Committee", consisting of Z.B. Molete, P. Raboroko, J.D. Nyaose, A. Ngcobo, P. Molotsi and T.T. Letlaka, met in Dar-es-Salaam and decided to expel Leballo from the PAC. The decision to expel Leballo was communicated to George Magombe, the Executive Secretary of the Co-ordinating Committee of the African Liberation Committee of the OAU, who stated that "this decision was an internal matter and they (ALC) could only advise."[131] However, Raboroko and Molete were shocked when Magombe told them that the problems of the PAC would be discussed at the 13th session of the "Committee of Eleven", which was due to meet in Algiers on the 15th July 1968. This decision shocked the self-styled NEC members, who argued that their decision to expel Leballo "was constitutional, and the PAC, as an autonomous body has the right to implement and to ask others to observe their constitutional decisions."[132] On the other hand, Leballo released a press statement, in which he said that he was going to use his emergency powers to act against those who attended the "splittist" meeting, which was "totally unconstitutional."[133] He indicated his desire to suspend this disgruntled group in order to force them to be loyal to him.

What actually transpired was that the Tanzanian government continued to recognise

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130 Pan African Congress of Azania of Azania (PAC), Press Communiqué: Africans Condemn British Committee's Divisive Stand on African Liberation Movements, n.d., p. 1. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatjie, in possession of author.

131 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 601: Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (S.A.), Statement Submitted to the 17th Ordinary Session of the African Liberation Committee of the OAU Meeting in Addis Ababa on 18th August, 1970, p. 1.

132 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 Political Material, A 2675, 599: The Grand Epilogue - A Sequel to Leballo's Expulsion, 1968, p. 2.

133 Potlako Leballo, "Press Statement," 11 June 1968. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatjie, in possession of author.

Leballo. His office was functioning normally and he still received financial aid from the People's Republic of China. In November 1968, the leaders of the PAC were called to a meeting in Dar-es-Salaam, which was organised by the governments of Tanzania and Zambia with the assistance of the Executive Secretary of the ALC, G. Magombe.[134] When the self-styled members of the NEC of the PAC refused to restore Leballo to his position, they were all sent to jail in Tanzania. This move clearly indicated that Leballo had the support of the ALC and the two governments. With their full backing, Leballo was able to assert his authority again by saying that "in the interests of the revolution ... I will act, no matter how unpalatable the action we take might be. The OAU was not interested in supporting international tourists".[135] Leballo remained as the undisputable leader of the PAC.

Through the intervention of the Christian Council of Tanzania and the UN High Commissioner's Office for Refugees, the jailed PAC members were freed and sought political asylum in Nairobi, Kenya.[136] These internal clashes indicated that the image of the PAC had been reduced to rock-bottom. The movement was by 1968 beset with internal problems to the extent that it could no longer solve its problems, except through the intervention of its own hosts or the OAU through the African Liberation Committee. The conclusion is reached that the frequent quarrels and feuding amongst the PAC members were not only irritating to their hosts, but they also indicated that the PAC was a burden to them.

The confusion that reigned within the PAC prompted the ANC to react by saying that it was surprised that the OAU continued to fund a dysfunctional organisation like the PAC.

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134 AWC, Wits, Braamfontein, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 Political Material, A 2675, III, 601: PAC of S.A. Statement Submitted to the 17th Ordinary Session of the African Liberation Committee of the OAU Meeting in Addis Ababa on 18th August 1970, p. 1.

135 PAC, Leballo: Report on Talks Between the Pan Africanist Congress and the OAU Liberation Committee Sub-Committee Charged with Assisting the Organisation to Solve Problems with Certain Sections of the Leadership, 20 November 1968, p. 3. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatje, in possession of the author.

136 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 Political Material, A 2675, 601: PAC of S.A. Statement Submitted to the 17th Ordinary Session of the African Liberation Committee Sub-Committee of the OAU Meeting in Addis Ababa on August, 1970, p. 2.

This concern was expressed after the expulsion of Potlako Leballo from the NEC and his reinstatement by the African Liberation Committee, which handed over the PAC office in Dar-es-Salaam to him. The PAC members who were regarded as dissidents by Leballo, like Raboroko, Ngcobo and Molete, submitted a statement to the OAU in which they pleaded that the decision of expelling Leballo in June 1968 be recognised and that the PAC offices in Zambia and Tanzania be opened and restored to the National Executive Committee of the movement and not Leballo. According to the ANC, "it is tragic that the OAU should unwittingly allow the PAC to continue undermining the South African liberation struggle by squandering the financial, material and refugee assistance granted to it."[137]

Another incident, which was detrimental to the image of the PAC, was caused by Matthew Nkoana, who was a journalist and served as PAC representative in Francistown. He went to London where he campaigned for an open conference for all PAC exiles. Nkoana was apparently bitter because Leballo refused to make him a member of the National Executive Committee of the Revolutionary Command. He made a virulent attack on Leballo in his *Crisis in the Revolution*.[138] This information reached the detractors of the PAC, such as the South African regime and the ANC. On the other hand, Leballo denounced his rivals within the movement as "international tourists", while he regarded himself and his clique as "serious revolutionaries".[139] He said that all his opponents concentrated "on making scurrilous attacks on the person of the Acting President and attempted to use their personal hatred for him as a scapegoat for their anti-Party activities and non-participation in the struggle".[140]

The utterance of despicable words and public denigrations by leading PAC members was an embarrassment and setback to the movement as it reinforced the belief that the organisation had weak leaders. This actually represents the situation fraught with

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137 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1970 Political Material, A 2675, III, 13, The Pan Africanist Congress Exists to Subvert the South African Struggle, 1967, p. 5.

138 M. Nkoana, *Crisis in the Revolution*, pp. 1-18.

139 E. Khopung, *The Story of a Dispossessed People*, p. 85.

140 PAC, Leballo: Report on Talks Between the Pan Africanist Congress and the OAU Liberation Committee Sub-Committee Charged with Assisting the Organisation to Solve the Problems with Certain Sections of the Leadership, 20 November 1968, p. 2.

conflict within the movement which manifested itself in various forms like power struggles, personal ambitions, vilifications, violation of individual rights and rivalries over positions and the benefits which were associated with them.

In the meantime, the PAC condemned the 1969 meeting of the liberation movements in Khartoum, called by the Soviet Union, as yet another bid to gain control of liberation movements in Africa. Under Leballo, the PAC strongly criticised those who attended the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO) Conference for subordinating the aim of the African revolution for total liberation on a continental scale to the foreign policy of Russia. The PAC condemned the Khartoum meeting as splittist and appealed to the UN and the OAU for help to liberate South Africa. Furthermore, they regarded the meeting as bringing about confusion and sowing dissension among liberation movements. As would be expected, the PAC saw this move as an attempt to channel international aid to the ANC and disadvantage the PAC in South Africa. As a result, the PAC believed that the conference was held to mislead the whole world and Africa into believing that the liberation struggle was a monopoly of certain political organisations to the exclusion of others who were also engaged in the armed struggle.[141]

The situation in the PAC improved somewhat in early 1969, when the OAU restored financial aid to the movement. The OAU was satisfied that the problems of the movement had been caused by certain leaders, who did not respect the aims of the African revolution. The Zambian government, too, lifted the ban on the PAC. It was even invited to attend the Non-Aligned Conference held in Lusaka in 1970.

From the analysis of the role of the PAC in the international dimension, it is obvious that the liberation movement focused mainly on the support of African states. Only little contact was made with the European and other states in the 1960s. This tendency could be attributed to the fact that the PAC believed in Africanism and Pan Africanism. On the other hand, indications of internecine strife and wrangles amongst its leaders affected the influence and the role of the PAC on the international scene. Moreover, its

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[141] Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), Statement: The Pro-Soviet A.A.AP.S.O. Faction Meets in Khartoum, n.d., p. 1. Obtained from Prof Du Pisani, in possession of the author.

inability to project its revolution in South Africa added to criticisms that it was a liberation movement which was not serious enough to challenge the might of the South African government. In this way, it became quite clear that the PAC would be recognised as a serious liberation movement, only if it could institutionalise itself as a revolutionary party inside South Africa.

4.5 PROSPECTS OF A UNITED FRONT

Given the fact that there was a lot of recriminations, bickering and mud-slinging between the ANC and the PAC in the 1960s, it was unlikely that these liberation movements would form a united front. The ANC believed that the PAC was irresponsible and lacked complete interest in the struggle as indicated by these words: "They are extremely opportunistic and will say or do anything to blacken the ANC of South Africa. The PAC lack understanding of the problems involved in the South African struggle because they were preoccupied with the ANC rather than with the enemy; their major task is to criticise policies and tactics of the struggle led by the ANC."[142] Implied in this statement is the fact that the ANC did not regard the PAC as her own equal. This attitude of the ANC created the impression that the ANC regarded herself as the only liberation movement of South Africa, which could liberate the oppressed.

On the other hand, the PAC seemed to adopt the attitude that it wanted to outdo and outshine the ANC. It also seemed to be diametrically opposed to the following three conditions laid down by the ANC for the formation of a united front:

- An ageed strategy and tactics in conducting the struggle
- Mutual trust between organisations
- Internal stability of the various organisations participating in the united front.[143]

A closer study of these conditions indicate that it was a foregone conclusion that the

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142 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1965-1967 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 13: The Pan Africanist Congress Exist to Subvert the South African Liberation Struggle, 1967, p. 8.

143 Pan African Congress of South Africa (PAC), The Principle of the United Front in People's War, 1967, p. 9. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatje, in possession of the author.

PAC and the ANC would not form such a front. Firstly, there was still suspicion after the dissolution of the South African United Front in the early 1960s. Secondly, there was also different conceptions concerning the conduct of war, as the PAC believed that each participant in the united front should retain its military independence and initiative to ensure that the revolution would not be disrupted by vacillations, betrayal or political rivalry. Lastly, the PAC was experiencing internal problems during the latter half of the 1960s. As a result, it would have been well-nigh impossible for the two liberation movements to form a united front. Intense competition and mutual suspicion militated against the formation of such a front.

4.6 SUMMARY

What emerges from the foregoing is that the ANC and the PAC relied heavily on their external missions, which had to carry on with the aims of the liberation struggle. The competition between the two national liberation movements intensified outside South Africa. This rivalry between them weakened the chance of forming a strong alliance between them against the government. Moreover, their obsessions with international solidarity caused serious internal problems. They were accused of forgetting to revive internal structures inside South Africa and leading luxurious lives abroad. Nothwithstanding these problems, the ANC was able to extend its influence internationally more than the PAC. On the other hand, the PAC extended its influence mostly in Africa as compared to other parts of the world, because of its stance on Africanism and Pan Africanism. To add to the problems of the PAC, its debilitating leadership struggles led to its failure to attract more publicity for its cause. Even though it had its problems, the ANC appeared to be more organised and this gave it a better image and credibility internationally than the PAC.

Because much time was spent on solving these problems or trying to outdo each other internationally, very little was done by the two movements to try to return home. The South African regime seemed to have gained an upper hand at the expense of the ANC and the PAC in the 1960s. However, success in the revolutionary struggle of the ANC and the PAC would depend on the extent to which the liberation movements would be able to mobilise all oppressed people in active participation in the revolution in the 1970s.

CHAPTER 5

THE 1970'S – GROWTH, STRUGGLE AND HOPE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

It is discernible from the previous chapters that the liberation movements suffered some setbacks and disappointments in the 1960s in their fight against the South African regime. However, it became clearer at the beginning of the 1970s that they should make a realistic and sober assessment of the situation in South Africa, so that they could systematically rebuild their capacity for the struggles ahead.

At the start of the 1970s there were already signs of a significant uprising in political awareness and militancy. There were indications that the peoples' fighting spirit and morale were recovering from the post-Sharpeville and post-Rivonia blows. In particular, the workers and the students were the ones who were searching for a strategy, which would start to lay the foundation for the revival of the struggle for liberation. In the case of the workers, the depressed state of the economy after the boom years of the 1960s triggered economic hardships, which gave them a renewed consciousness of their collective power. On the other hand, the mood in the educational institutions, such as the universities, colleges and schools, was one of hostility towards white rule and domination. As a result, the workers and the students not only challenged their bosses and government policies, but they also involved themselves in wider political struggles.

In order to justify their existence, both the ANC and the PAC were faced with golden opportunities which, if they were effectively used, could lead to the decisive defeat of the South African regime. The aim of this chapter is to find out to what extent the ANC and the PAC used these opportunities to achieve the aims of the freedom struggle. In other words, the chapter will attempt to analyse the internal conflicts in South Africa in the 1970s, which provided the liberation movements with the new potential striking power to end white domination and exploitation.

5.2 THE REVIVAL OF INTERNAL OPPOSITION: THE BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT (BCM), SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS ORGANISATION (SASO) AND BLACK PEOPLES' CONVENTION (BPC)

The banning and outlawing of the ANC and the PAC left a big political vacuum in the black community. As a result, black people in South Africa had no political organisation which represented their interests and within which they could voice dissatisfactions. At that stage African political activity posed no threat to white domination and apartheid.

Instead, following the proscription of the ANC and PAC, black opponents of apartheid found it extremely difficult to organise in South Africa. This was understandable in the light of the fact that the police and armed forces crushed and terminated political experience amongst the blacks in a brutal manner. The new authority given to the police in the sixties was unchecked, especially when dealing with African dissidents. They had absolute powers to arrest and detain as they pleased. For this reason, blacks who dared to open their mouths in feeble protests against the regime were periodically intimidated with security visits and occasional banning orders and house arrests. Furthermore, the police had a host of informers who contributed to an atmosphere of fear and distrust in the movements, which they had infiltrated. As would be expected, the rest of the black community lived in absolute fear.[1]

Police intimidation and violence were strengthened by the fact that blacks were not regarded as permanent in the urban areas. The migrant labour system emphasised more control over the movement of Africans to the towns and cities. Moreover, the migrant labour system as a mechanism of control made it difficult for the Africans to organise themselves politically.[2]

Yet black political activity could not be suppressed indefinitely. As it started resurfacing there were encouraging signs that the Africans were recovering from the setbacks which followed the heightened repressive measures of the post-1960 period. The central issue

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1 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa*, 1882-1990, volume 5, pp. 62-64.

2 J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa*, pp. 26-30.

is: In the midst of the oppression and repressions of the early 1970s, how did it come about that there was a resurgence of political activity in the black community? The responses of the ANC and the PAC to these internal developments and how it influenced their relationship need also be investigated.

What needs to be emphasised here is that the intention of this section is not to discuss the Black Consciousness Movement in details, but rather to indicate how it contributed towards the revival and resurgence of political consciousness among the Africans.

What was this Black Consciousness? According to a document issued by SASO (South African Students Organisation), the Second Report on Arrests, Detentions and Trials of Members and Supporters of the Various Black Consciousness Movements, the following information is given: "Black Consciousness is a recognition of this (the South African) state of affairs with its multi-various criminal implications, the main of which is to keep blacks in perpetual servitude to oppression. More important, it is a call to every black man to lift off the shackles of his oppression to work and strive at all times for the attainment of his basic human rights and dignity"[3]. In a letter, titled "Black Consciousness and Human Rights", Bishop P.J. Buthelezi writes: "Blacks have begged, petitioned and demanded to be accepted as full persons and citizens. This has been refused and is being refused. Humiliating laws impose a separate, secondary and inferior position on them"[4]. As a result, he supported the Black Consciousness Movement from the Christian point of view as a movement which stood for greater freedom of political and social action, that is promoting social justice. Black consciousness philosophy might be explained as pragmatic Africanism. It can be more or less equated to Anton Lembede's doctrine of political revival through psychological emancipation.

In the Manifesto of SASO, Black Consciousness is defined as:

1. "An attitude of mind, a way of life;

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3 SASO/BPC, *Who are the Real Terrorists? A Document on the SASO/BPC Trial*, p. 10

4 P.J. Buthelezi, Black Consciousness and Human Rights: The letter written for the Southern African Catholic Bishops conference on 4 February 1974. Obtained from Prof. Du Pisani, in possession of the author.

2. Its basic tenet is that the black man must reject all value systems that seek to make him a foreigner in the country of his birth and reduce his basic human dignity;
3. It implies awareness by the black people of the power they wield as a group, both economically and politically and hence group cohesion and solidarity are important facets of black consciousness;
4. The black man must build up his own value systems, see himself as self-defined and not defined by others;
5. Black Consciousness will always be enhanced by the totality of involvement of the oppressed people, hence the message of black consciousness has to spread to reach all sections the black community;
6. Liberation of the black man begins first with liberation from psychological oppression by himself through an inferiority complex and secondly from the physical one occurring out of living in a white racist society;
7. Black people are those who are by law or tradition, politically, socially and economically discriminated against as a group in the South African Society and identifying themselves as a unit in the struggle towards the realisation of their aspirations"[5].

In other words, this philosophy stressed the importance of black unity and self-reliance. More importantly, Africans, Indians and coloureds were included in the term "black". Furthermore, the concept was based on the belief that blacks should not expect any kind of help from whites. Instead, they should work for their own self-improvement through their own efforts so as to try to regain their shattered self-confidence. It also rejected their inferiority complex, which had been thrust upon the blacks by successive white governments.

This new ideological thinking was very critical of white liberals. The white liberals were whites who claimed that they were not responsible for white racism and apartheid. Rather, they were prepared to fight alongside the black man in order to end white domination and exploitation. As a body of predominantly liberal white students NUSAS

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[5] "SASO Manifesto" in SASO/BPC, *Who are the Real Terrorists? A document on the SASO/BPC trial*, pp. 10–11. See also "SASO Policy Manifesto", in J. Fredericks, *The Unbreakable Thread: Non-Racialism in South Africa*, p. 109.

(National Union of South African Students) prided itself in its multi-racial membership and its refusal to accept apartheid norms. They, like other white liberals, were not aware that the black people wanted to speak for themselves. For this reason, many liberal whites, including amongst others Alan Paton and Donald Woods, were stunned and surprised by the new developments. As a result, the white liberals felt betrayed by the very same people they had been trying to defend. Their bewilderment is summarised by the sort of questions which they posed: "Was this authentic philosophy or was it simply opportunism, all designed to advance the cause of power for these black radicals? Was Black Consciousness not in reality a form of black racism?"[6]

In order to realise their aim, a group of black students broke away from NUSAS in 1969. They established their own all-black South African Students Organisation (SASO). Amongst its founders was a young medical student, Steve Biko, who became the leading spokesperson of Black Consciousness. Other prominent members included Barney Pityana, Themba Sono, Aubrey Mokoape, Keith Mokoape, Vuyelwa Mashalaba, Strini Moodley, Mamphela Ramphela, Pandelani Nefolovhodwe and Nkosazana Dhlamini.[7] For Biko and the other adherents of Black Consciousness the final break with NUSAS confirmed the fact that SASO was a black student organisation which was intended to advance the interests and aims of the blacks. For the students SASO brought a new and fresh feeling of organisational belongings on a national level, which black students had lacked before.

As would be expected, SASO became "a focal point around which black students could rally together and advance their demands and aspirations"[8]. As a result, SASO was

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6 T. Sono, *Reflection on the Origins of Black Consciousness in South Africa*, pp. 66-67. See also D. Dube, *The rise of Azania. The Fall of South Africa*, p. 90; S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, pp. 70 -71

7 J. Frederickse, *The Unbreakable Thread*, pp. 108–114. See also T. Sono, *Reflections on the Origins of Black Consciousness in South Africa*, p. ?

8 Archives of the African National Congress (ANC), University of Fort Hare (UFH), Alice. ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76: South African Students Organisation (SASO), by Kanwdza Nengwekhulu, "The Role, Impact and Influence of SASO and its Philosophy of Black Consciousness", paper prepared for the WCC/AACC Consultation on South Africa, n.d., p. 1.

responsible for the spread of Black Consciousness and active involvement of students in the university and college campuses as well as in schools. As soon as the South African Students' Organisation had gained a foothold in black campuses and schools, it sought ways of disseminating its message into the larger community. For this reason, it associated itself with broader community organisations such as the African Independent Churches Association (AICA), the Interdenominational African Ministers' Association (IDAMASA), the Association for the Educational and Cultural Advancement of the African People (ASSECA) and the Black Allied Workers Union (BAWU). SASO's intention was to "attach itself to existing black organisations and cultural groups with the aim of re-orienting them in a black consciousness direction"[9]

In spite of the limitations of its doctrines, the BCM helped to create a climate of black opinion that would promote self-confidence and raise expectations so drastically shattered after Sharpeville and Rivonia. More significantly, it became the voice of the rights of blacks inside South Africa after the silencing of the ANC and the PAC. For example, a new political climate was promoted by SASO in 1972, when there were disturbances at the black universities of Turfloop, Ngoye, Fort Hare, Durban-Westville and Bellville. Students of other universities decided to pledge their solidarity with those of Turfloop University. The latter university was forced to close down after Onkgopotse Abram Tiro had rendered a powerful speech, which attacked the apartheid policy in general. In his speech, he stated "we black graduates, by virtue of our age and academic standing are being called upon to greater responsibilities in the liberation of our people. Our so-called leaders have become the bolts of the same machine which is crushing us as a nation. We hope to go back to them and educate them. Times are changing and we have to change with them. The magic story of human achievement gives irrefutable proof that as soon as nationalism is awakened among intelligent it becomes the vanguard in the struggle against alien rule. Of what use will be your education if you can't help your country in her hour of need? If your education is not linked with the entire continent of Africa it is meaningless"[10]

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[9] T. Karis and G. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge: Nadir and Resurgence*, volume 5, p. 120.

[10] "Abram Tiro Graduation Speech, April 1972", in T. Sono, *Reflection on the Origins of Black Consciousness in South Africa*, pp. 75 – 76. See also T. Karis and G. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to challenge*, volume 5, pp. 125-126.

Tiro's speech resulted in his expulsion from the University of Turfloop. However, his expulsion not only caused disturbances in his university, but also affected other universities. For example, at Fort Hare University, expelled students complained about the institutions of higher learning, which were based on an "unjust political ideology of a white racist regime which sought to annihilate Black people", as is indicated by their manifesto, which stated that the "white racist regime" was bent on annihilating all intellectual maturity of black people in South Africa, that academic freedom as an inalienable right of students was wanting in South Africa, and that it resulted in the mass production of "sub-human being" certificates. The "unilateral indiscriminate mass expulsion of students in institutions of higher learning" was geared at "minimising the intellectual pace setters" in the black community, and reflected the "unchecked powers vested upon the Rectors of Tribal Universities".[11] These points indicate that SASO, with its philosophy of Black Consciousness, was responsible for the introduction of resistance and active political involvement by black students at university level.

Themba Sono raises critical issues, which would crop up during the Soweto riots. He emphasises the authoritarian nature of discipline of mostly Afrikaans lecturers and their language, which was hated by the students. He mentions issues like "unchecked intimidatory powers of the professors and lecturers, ideological differences between the Black Students and the mass of Afrikaner academicians who dominate these institutions and the forced encroachment of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction by these emissaries of Afrikanerdom".[12] Afrikaans was a thorny issue associated with the general policies of the Afrikaner government, which implemented the policy of apartheid. The defiant mood of the university students, who challenged white domination and authority, would also affect the secondary school students. The impact that SASO had on a black consciousness-orientated high school organisation called SASM (South African Schools Movement) is amply shown by Karis and Gerhart. They argue that the secondary students were exposed to this "fighting talk by press accounts or by the return of boycotting and expelled students to their homes. Some of these students, like Tiro,

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11 "The Fort Hare Students' Manifesto" in T. Sono, *Reflections on the Origins of Black Consciousness in South Africa*, p. 77.

12 T. Sono, *Reflections on the Origins of Black Consciousness in South Africa*, pp. 77–78.

taught privately in the secondary schools".[13]

SASO was also instrumental in launching the overtly political Black Peoples' Convention (BPC). The BPC became the umbrella alliance incorporating organisations such as SASO, IDAMASA, ASSECA, AICA and BAWU. More importantly, the BPC became the first overt and legal black political organisation to be established since the silencing of the ANC and the PAC. As a result, it filled the void left by these senior liberation movements. This was despite the fact that the BPC concentrated mostly on community projects like promoting literacy and trade union organisation.

Another impact of SASO was seen when there was growth in the trade union movement in the early 1970s. In fact, the Black Allied Workers' Union (BAWU) was formed under the leadership of one of SASO's leaders, Drake Koka. BAWU criticised white led trade unions like the Trade Union Council of South Africa. However, the trade union did not confront the government, but rather chose to sponsor training courses and centres for youths and other programmes aimed at psychologically rejuvenating the African community.[14] Although the union had only limited initial success and never attracted a large membership, it contributed to the growing experience and knowledge of Africans in the trade union movement.

Of particular concern was the fact that inflation and a strained economy brought forth a series of industrial strikes in the early 1970s. These strikes indicated a growing militancy on the part of the industrial workers. The year 1973 saw a dramatic increase in strikes by the black working class against their continued exploitation. The strikes took place despite the fact that there were restrictive legislation, which denied black workers the right to form trade unions or strike. These strikes were big and unusual, at first concentrated mostly in Natal and later spreading to the Transvaal and Eastern Cape.[15] During the strikes it became clear that thousands of workers not only demanded better living wages, but they also demanded the recognition of trade unions and the right to

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13 T. Karis and G. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 5, pp. 127-128

14 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76: The Role and Influence of SASO and its Philosophy of Black Consciousness, p. 2; M. Davis, *Apartheid rebels*, p. 26.

15 H. Kenney, *Power, Pride and Prejudice*, p. 243.

strike.

These unexpected industrial strikes had their effect on the government. Consequently, the government responded by passing the Bantu Labour Relations Regulation Amendment Act (Settlement of Disputes) of 1973, which legalised the right of Africans in certain jobs to strike.[16] Although the law did not satisfy the Africans, it at least recognised the principle that Africans also had the right to strike. More importantly, it also constituted the start of the changing of labour laws in South Africa, which would later on recognise the collective bargaining by especially the Africans.

Meanwhile, the leaders of SASO became more defiant and uncompromising in their demands for the recognition of the political rights of the blacks. The government decided to ban or detain several leaders of SASO in order to suppress the growing influence of the Black Consciousness Movement. The following examples show how the leaders of the BCP and other organisations within the broad-based Black Consciousness Movement suffered severe repression at the hands of the authorities:

- Mthuli ka Shezi, the BPC Vice-President in the Interim Committee, died on the 17th December 1972 after being pushed under a moving train at Germiston station;
- Drake Koka, the BPC Secretary-General in the Interim Committee, and Saths Cooper, the BPC Public Relations Officer, were banned and house arrested in March 1973;
- Sipho Buthelezi, the BPC Secretary-General, and Chris Makoditoa, the BPC Vice President, were served with banning orders in September 1973;
- In 1973 Mosibudi Mangena was sentenced to five years on Robben Island under the Terrorism Act. He was charged with attempting to recruit people for military training. At the time of his arrest he was the BPC National Organiser.[17]

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16 Mayibuye Archives (MA), University of the Western Cape (UWC), Bellville, ANC Office in London, Box 5: Draft for discussion: Forward to People's Power – the Challenges of the 1980s, n.d., p. 6. See also H. Kenney, *Power, Pride and Prejudice*, p. 244.

17 S. Buthelezi, "Historical background of the Black People's Convention (BPC)", in Black Liberation Press, *The Quest for a True Humanity*, pp. 9-10.

As a result of increasing political activity the South African regime realised that the Black Consciousness Movement was more powerful and articulate than ever. It suddenly became increasingly clear to the regime that for the first time since the banning of the ANC and the PAC, the South African blacks were again solidly represented by their own political movement. More significantly, "this movement was in direct conflict with the South African Government's apartheid and tribal policies and presented a united front against white domination".[18]

For this reason, the regime wanted to crush the Black Consciousness Movement. This opportunity presented itself when SASO decided to recognise the independence celebrations of Mozambique. The mood of the celebrations was captured in a report on the FRELIMO rally issued by SASO: "Thus, with the announcement of the FRELIMO take-over in Mozambique, SASO and BPC realised it was their duty to share in the joy of the FRELIMO victory. This was based on the fact that the struggle in this country and FRELIMO's struggle in Mozambique are clearly intertwined. For our purpose is the realisation of a free and united Africa – the birthplace and mother country of the black peoples of the world."[19]

As a result, the BPC and SASO held a "Viva FRELIMO" rally at Curries Fountain, Durban on 25 September 1974. The rally was attended by thousands of black workers and militant students. This "Viva FRELIMO" rally was held to celebrate and pledge solidarity with the Mozambican revolution.[20] However, many BPC and SASO leaders were arrested and imprisoned. This episode ended in the BPC/SASO "Terrorism Trial". The nine leaders of the BPC/SASO, who were charged with conspiring to bring about revolutionary change in South Africa by unconstitutional and violent means or causing or encouraging racial hostility between blacks and whites, included the following: Sathsivam Cooper, BPC Public Relations Officer; Maitshwe Nchaupe Aubrey Mokoape, BPC founder member and chairman of BPC Durban Central; Absalom Zithulele Cindi, BPC Secretary-General; Nkwenkwe Nkomo, BPC National Organiser; Justice Lindane Myeza, SASO Secretary-General and former BPC Organiser, Zululand branch; Mosioua

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18 SASO/BPC, *Who are the Real Terrorists?*, p. 4.

19 SASO/BPC *Who are the Real Terrorists?*, p. 4.

20 S. Buthelezi, "Historical background of the Black People's Convention (BPC)", p. 10.

Lekota, SASO National Organiser; Pandelani Nevolovhodwe, SASO President; Gaborone Sedibe, SASO member and Turfloop University SRC President; and Strinivasa Moodley, SASO Administrative Assistant.[21]

At the end of the trial, the BPC/SASO leaders were given sentences ranging between five to six years and were imprisoned on Robben Island. The imprisonment of these leaders showed that the work for liberation of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa was executed under oppressive conditions laid down by the regime. However, the desire for freedom did not stop, in spite of the harassment which was rife.

From the above, it is clear, as indicated by the words of one of the leading members of SASO, Ranwdza Nengwekhulu, in the early 1970s, that "there is no doubt that the emergence of SASO and its philosophy of Black Consciousness has changed the political complexion of South Africa. One can indeed, boldly claim that SASO, despite its limitations imposed by the fact that it is structurally and constitutionally a student organisation, has affected the entire South African political scene and introduced a new political climate to an extent that nobody will be able to reverse the situation."[22] These persistent struggles from the early 1970s helped to inspire the new generation of youths, who started to engage in sporadic acts of resistance and violence at their schools. These disturbances reached a climax in the Soweto school unrests of 1976.

5.3 REACTION OF THE ANC AND THE PAC TO INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EARLY 1970s

The unfolding events of the early 1970s indicated clearly that the regime was still using tactics like constant harassment, cruel torture, executions and imprisonment in order to deter and intimidate political activists. It was also obvious that the growing revolutionary mood among all the oppressed people needed a dynamic and revolutionary movement which could lead them in their struggle against the South African regime. The important

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21 SASO/BPC, *Who are the Real Terrorists?*, p. 1 See also S. Buthelezi, "Historical Background of the BPC", pp. 10–11.

22 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76: The Role, Impact and Influence of SASO and its Philosophy of Black Consciousness, p. 1.

questions to ask at this critical stage is: What was the reaction of the ANC and the PAC to these internal developments? Which practical steps did they take or propose in order to mobilise the oppressed people of South Africa?

From a number of primary sources, it becomes clear that the attitude of the ANC was that the oppressed people had clearly demonstrated that they were prepared to make sacrifices for their own freedom. For this reason, the ANC regarded the unfolding events in South Africa as posing "a great challenge to our leadership and organisational capacity to galvanise all these new emerging democratic and revolutionary forces and lead them through the revolution to freedom".[23] Despite previous setbacks suffered by the ANC as a result of the vigilance of the security forces of the regime and its extensive network of spies and informers, significant progress seemed to have been made by the movement in the sphere of underground organisation. In fact, the ANC studied and monitored the situation in South Africa closely through its internal operatives and contacts. One report on internal reconstruction in the Eastern Cape revealed that areas such as Western Pondoland (Libode region), Eastern Pondoland (Flagstaff region) and Maluti (Matatiele region) were ready to receive ANC underground operatives. However, the most important revelation was in connection with the political situation in the whole of the Eastern Cape. The ANC seemed to have made a proper analysis and assessment of the situation of this region and they noted that the growth of black power in schools, colleges and universities had taken the form of "bitterness and non-cooperation with the enemy but no positive confrontation." They observed strikes in high schools like Shawbury, St. John's College, Mt. Hargreaves, Matanzima Secondary and Healdtown. Their view was that "this youth will be the backbone of the armed struggle."[24] Hence, the ANC believed that they were called upon to provide constant guidance and leadership to these youths through their operatives who were within or outside the country.

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23 Archives of Willem Cullen (AWC), Witwatersrand University, Braamfontein, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975, ANC Political Material, A 2675, 23: Report on the Internal Situation Submitted to the Extended Meeting of the National Executive Committee of the ANC (SA), held in Morogoro, March 1975, p. 1.

24 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 19: Documents Submitted to the Revolutionary Council Meeting, in Lusaka, July 1971: Internal Reconstruction; Document 1. Report on the Cape, May 1971, p. 2.

Another primary source reports on an extensive project undertaken by the ANC operatives with regard to internal reconstruction in the Cape region. The report outlines the tasks that the ANC operative, Shuta Makhasi, was given, including meeting old contacts whose names were given only as Ntsangane and Silasi, organising workers outside TUCSA (Trade Union Council of South Africa), creating underground groups in factories, organising reception points and storages, communicating with Botswana and the Internal Reconstruction Committee and attending to the demands of the people in the Bantustans or homelands. Moreover, the political report reveals that students and youths had great influence among people, police members were resigning in big numbers for fear of being sent to Zimbabwe and spies, like a certain Mrs Mnini, was allegedly working with the Special Branches of the regime.[25] This report also demonstrates the way the ANC was prepared to assist with the political organisation of the oppressed people.

The assessment of the internal situation by the ANC highlights the importance of the roles that the African working class and the youths, who included students, could play in the liberation struggle of the oppressed people. The ANC firmly believed that what it needed was to "organise and mobilise these emergent revolutionary forces and transform them into conscious and active participants in our struggle for freedom."[26] According to the ANC, the African working class was a formidable political force and "would undoubtedly bear the brunt of our struggle."[27] This observation of the ANC seemed plausible, considering the fact that the African workers were angry with constant pass raids and arrests, low wages and harassment from the police and even their white bosses. Their frustrations and problems not only warranted serious attention, but they also needed constant education and direction. In this way, "well organised and politically conscious workers' unions and organisations will undoubtedly form the basis and

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25 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 22: Internal Reconstruction Committee Cape Region Monthly Report, 21 April 1974, pp. 1-2.

26 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 23: Report on the Internal Situation Submitted to the Extended Meeting of the NEC of the ANC (SA), held in Morogoro, March 1975, p. 2.

27 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 19: Suggested Tactics and Strategy in the Mobilisation and Organisation of Africans for the Revolution, 1971, p. 2.

training ground for our future urban guerrilla detachment."[28] As a result, the mobilisation of the workers by the ANC was absolutely necessary for the success of the liberation struggle.

To achieve its aim, the ANC decided to turn the factories into its own "recruiting centres and fortresses".[29] As a result, the ANC thought of having a network of agents in those parts of South Africa where there were many industries. Furthermore, they were toying with the idea of drafting a broad programme of demands which would appeal to the workers, with their trade union partner, SACTU (South African Congress of Trade Unions), which could include, amongst others, better housing, higher wages, pension and improved workmen's compensation and unemployment benefits, the right to skilled jobs and free education as well as better transport facilities.[30] The proposals of the ANC appeared to be aimed at gaining the support of the African workers through the improvement of their material and spiritual conditions.

Another component that the ANC targeted as being important in its liberation struggle was that of the youths, including students. The ANC welcomed the formation of SASO and was prepared to give direction to the students by drawing closer to them and encouraging its cadres to give direction to them. According to the ANC, a closer look at the role and activities of the students and youth would actually enable the movement to "give a clear understanding of the direction of the growth of the students movement and will help us lay a founded basis for a correct approach to all questions affecting our youth and students."[31] Consequently, the ANC viewed their duty as the vanguard

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[28] AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 23: Report on the Internal Situation Submitted to the Extended Meeting of the NEC of the ANC (SA), held in Morogoro, March 1975, p. 2.

[29] AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 19: Suggested Tactics and Strategy in the Mobilisation and Organisation of Africans for the Revolution, 1971, p. 4.

[30] AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975, ANC Political Material, A 2675, 19: Suggested Tactics and Strategy in the Mobilisation and Organisation of Africans for the Revolution, 1971, p. 4.

[31] AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 23: Report on the Internal Situation Submitted to the Extended Meeting of the NEC of the

movement as being one of using the student force and giving it relevant tasks. For example, the ANC proposed the following demands as some of the relevant and concrete tasks that the students could use to advance their struggle and solve their grievances:

- The Africanisation of all black universities from the Rector to the most junior lecturer;
- Powers and the right for the universities to recruit staff where it chose;
- The immediate setting-up of engineering faculties;
- Immediate end to the operation of police spies and provocateurs on campus;
- Freedom of speech and association;
- The Africanisation of all departments dealing with African education and repeal of the Bantu Education and Extension of University Acts;
- The same expenditure on the African child as on the white child.[32]

From the above, it is patently clear that these demands would appeal to the African students. They were not only meant to denounce apartheid education and the government's attack on academic freedom and rights, but they were also aimed at raising the sense of political awareness of the students themselves. Moreover, the aim of the ANC of being closer to the students was actually to enable themselves as a movement to "have inner information and to feel their pulse. We must be able to gather and use to the best account every protest, no matter how small. The students, like the workers, are discontented with the lack of rights and with tyranny and will thus be accessible to our propaganda."[33] The suggested demands above also correspond closely with the demands of the Fort Hare students mentioned in their manifesto earlier in this chapter and the so-called "Alice Declaration".[34] The conclusion is therefore drawn

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ANC (SA), held in Morogoro, March 1975, p. 5.

[32] AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 19: Suggested Tactics and Strategy in the Mobilisation and Organisation of Africans for the Revolution, 1971, p .6.

[33] AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 Political Material, A 2675, 19: Suggested Tactics and Strategy in the Mobilisation and Organisation of Africans for the Revolution, 1971, p. 6.

[34] See the Fort Hare Demands on p. 250 of this chapter. For the Alice Declaration see "Alice Declaration, Statement by SASO on the boycott of black universities, May 14,

that the ANC underground or SASO contacts could have influenced, and most probably did influence the riots of the students of Fort Hare in 1972.

The ANC also played its part in encouraging the internal reconstruction of its shattered structures of the 1960s by emphasising the importance of propaganda. By using propaganda effectively, the ANC believed that it would not only counter the distortions of the South African press and the regime itself, but would also "inform the people of the heroic struggles of the past, and outline concrete courses of action for the present."[35] As a result, an urgent priority of the ANC was to expand its propaganda within South Africa. The movement thought of stepping up its propaganda campaign inside the country by having leaflets bombs exploding regularly in the townships and near the bus, train and taxi queues. Such a leaflet of the ANC was scattered in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban on 13-14 August 1970. The leaflet not only reminded people about the past heroic struggles like the strikes of the 1950s, the gallant resistance of the rural areas in Sekukhuniland, Pondoland, Zululand and Transkei, including the Sharpeville incident, but it also exhorted the people to "stop the oppressors by organising to fight them now. In factories, schools, the rural areas, in your churches and in our tribes... First we must be organised... Try to get a gun and learn to use it."[36] In this way the ANC hoped to mobilise public opinion to support its liberation struggle.

What was the reaction of the PAC to the unfolding events in South Africa of the early 1970s? Like the ANC, the PAC was also discouraged by lack of significant progress against the regime until the developments in South Africa of the early 1970s rekindled some hope. The emergence of the Black Consciousness Movement was greeted with appreciation and satisfaction by the PAC that at least something inside South Africa was happening to advance the struggle of the oppressed. According to the PAC, world attention was increasingly returning its focus on South Africa because of the open confrontation of the white minority regime and the masses of the oppressed Africans

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1972", in T. Karis and G. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 5, p. 499.

35 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 28: Marius and Jeanette Schoon, A Report on the South African Situation, 1977, p. 16.

36 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 17: South African ANC Leaflet Scattered in Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban on 13-14 August 1970.

when "the brutally enforced stalemate was broken by African students' demonstrations... and the more militant strikes by over a hundred thousand black workers in Durban and neighbouring areas..."[37] This means that the PAC was not only aware of the developments in South Africa, but it was also happy with the resumption and revival of public demonstrations against the oppressive regime after a period of about ten years.

At the same time, the trial of 8 September 1971 in Bloemfontein, which involved PAC activists who were accused of engaging in secret guerrilla war preparations, indicated the determination of the movement to intensify the struggle inside the country. The accused were found guilty of participating in a recruitment campaign for youths to undergo military training abroad under the direction of the PAC cell in Welkom in the Fee State gold fields.[38] As would be expected, this incident was used by the PAC to indicate the existence of its underground resistance structures inside the country at the time when there was almost complete silence on the liberation front.

After this incident, the PAC External Mission in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, held an important consultative meeting from 9th to 18th October 1971. The meeting was attended by members of the National Executive Committee, the Revolutionary Council, representatives of various missions abroad and party cadres. It should be noted that the meeting was held after the stormy period of the 1960s. At this meeting an intensive review of the internal situation in South Africa was carried out.[39] This important work was made possible by the reports of people like Pearce L. Gqoboshe and other PAC comrades who had just arrived from the home front. This indicates that the PAC was also analysing the political developments inside South Africa. However, what seemed lacking was follow-ups and action to concretise and implement whatever decisions were arrived at.

This line of thinking is supported by the desire of many PAC cadres, who felt that the movement was not performing as it was supposed to and should rather hold a

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37 "Azanian People's Struggle Escalates", *Azania Combat*, no. 2, 1973, p. 13.

38 "Underground resistance incidents", *Azania News*, vol. 10, no. 10-12, October -December 1975, p. 4.

39 "External Mission Consultative Meeting Held", *Azania Combat*, no. 4, 1971, p. 8.

convention and not a consultative conference, because "with the history of conflicts in the party…it is difficult to imagine how more consultations will help resolve the basis of such conflicts."[40] According to the adherents of this line of thinking, a convention would be advantageous, because the entire leadership "must account for what it has been doing all the years …" and "…must step down and face re-election which will be followed by yearly elections with definite powers."[41]

For this reason, a meeting of the PAC cadres was held in London in September 1973 to discuss the possibilities of holding a "reorganisation conference". At this meeting Matthew Nkoana presented a paper, where he used Lenin's theoretical work on organisational questions in a pamphlet entitled "What Is To Be Done?" in order to draw the attention of the participants to pressing organisational problems facing the PAC. In his paper Nkoana ascribed the non-performance of the PAC to lack of democracy, which had rendered the NEC useless, and described the situation in the movement in this way: "The present emergency consists in the fact that not only did the decision-making machinery of the Party break down long ago, but what was left of the NEC is, not to say a rump, but a mere shadow of the rump that tenuously existed in 1968. The NEC is almost like a tailless fowl now … Praise be to those who are keeping this semblance of the executive machine going on (or is it just a ghost?)."[42]

Having satisfied themselves about the desirability and necessity of holding such a reorganising conference very soon, the PAC members who were based in Europe wrote a declaration to inform the Acting President about their decision of convening such a conference.[43] What emerges from the above is that the leadership problems of the PAC still continued in the early 1970s, even though there was a desire to solve them. The

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40 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, File PAC, Box 76: Observation and Recommendations to the Consultation Conference Outline, n.d., p. 8.

41 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, File PAC, Box 76: Observation and Recommendations to the Consultation Conference Outline, n.d., p. 9.

42 Archives of the PAC (PAC), University of Fort Hare (UFH), PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Towards PAC Reorganisation Conference: Paper Delivered to Meeting of PAC Cadres in London on 22 September 1973, p. 3.

43 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Declaration on PAC Reorganisation Conference, 23 September 1973. p. 1.

conclusion drawn from this is that the constant problems of the PAC disturbed the movement from focusing properly on the internal situation of South Africa.

In the final analysis, it appeared that the ANC was able to assess and monitor the unfolding events of the early 1970s in South Africa better than the PAC. This close monitoring of the situation enabled the ANC to plan better for the future, especially when it realised that the grievances of the workers and the students could be used effectively in its mobilisation of the oppressed in the future. Although the PAC acknowledged the revival of protests and resistance against the regime, it is not clear which important lessons it learnt from the internal disturbances, which could influence its strategy against the regime in the future.

5.4 THE 1976 SOWETO RIOTS

For the purpose of this study, it is not necessary to discuss the 1976 uprising in details, as it is well documented.[44] However, it is vital to indicate its historical significance of contributing to a climate of resistance and a mood of black assertiveness as well as independence, which had been missing since the middle of the 1960s. In this way, the uprising should be viewed against the whole background of renewed confidence and unwillingness to accept white authority and oppression, which manifested themselves since the early 1970s. In this sense, it would be appropriate to ask the question: How did the 1976 Soweto unrests start? Did the ANC and the PAC play any significant role in the commencement of the riots?

The escalating mood among blacks reached a breaking point with the Soweto riots of June 1976. This outbreak of violence was bigger and more sustained than the previous one of Sharpeville. The language issue seemed to be the main cause of the uprising. The Department of Bantu Education under Dr Andries Treurnicht sent out a circular, stating that half of the subjects in secondary schools should be taught in Afrikaans as

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[44] Many works on the Soweto riots have been published. Particularly important are the following standard works: J. Kane-Berman, *Soweto: Black Revolt, White Reaction*; H. Baruch, *Year of Fire, Year of Ash: The Soweto Revolt, Roots of a Revolution*; A. Brooks and J. Brickhill, *Whirlwind Before the Storm.*

from 1976. Even subjects like mathematics and social sciences had to be taught in Afrikaans. This ruling was extremely unpopular amongst the students and the teachers. Many black people regarded English as an international language, which was a key to better paid jobs, whereas Afrikaans was regarded as the language of the oppressor.[45] To make matters worse, the government ignored warnings from influential and reasonable leaders like Bishop Desmond Tutu of the Anglican Church and even dismissed some members of the schools boards.[46] In warning the government of the impending danger, Desmond Tutu said "...I am frightened, dreadfully frightened, that we may soon reach a point of no return, when events will generate a momentum of their own, when nothing will stop their reaching a bloody denouement..."[47] Tutu was speaking as if he knew what was going to happen in South Africa very soon. The situation was explosive and tense.

A month after his prophetic words, the tense situation in South Africa exploded. It is probably true that South Africa might have been spared the violence that engulfed it, had the government listened to the warnings. However, its intransigency forced the high school students of Soweto to demonstrate their displeasure. On 16 June 1976 a protest march was held in Soweto by black pupils to demonstrate their displeasure at the introduction of Afrikaans as the language of instruction. Riot police clashed with the protesters, who pelted the police with stones. The students chanted freedom songs and raised up their banners and placards, which carried the following messages: "We are not Boers!", "Down with Afrikaans", "Bantu Education - To hell with it!"[48] The police killed Zolile Hector Peterson, a school child of about 13 years. He is regarded today as one of the martyrs of the black liberation struggle. His killing enraged the marchers who went on the rampage in Soweto and set alight vehicles belonging to the West Rand Administration Board (WRAB), which was the body managing Soweto. Government property and symbols of apartheid seemed to be the main targets as post offices, schools, magistrate courts and houses belonging to policemen were attacked.

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45 H. Kenney, *Power, Pride and Prejudice*, p. 246.

46 T. Karis and G. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to challenge*, volume 5, pp. 165-166.

47 "Letter from Bishop Desmond Tutu to Prime Minister John Vorster, May 8, 1976 (Abridged)", in T. Karis and G. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol. 5, pp. 565-567.

48 H. Holland, *The Struggle: A History of the African National Congress*, p. 179.

Collaborators such as councillors in the Urban Bantu Councils (UBCs) and homeland representatives became targets as rioting spread to other black townships of South Africa. Moreover, students tried to use economic pressures when they attempted consumer boycotts and stayaways against white businesses.[49] At this point, it was obvious that the riots had assumed political overtones – it was not just a mere anger directed against the implementation of Afrikaans. However, it was the whole system of apartheid which was under attack. This became clearer when the government decided to drop the Afrikaans requirement in July 1976 in order to normalise the situation. But the situation did not improve. This clearly indicated that the students were not only against their inferior Bantu education, but that they also rejected the whole system of apartheid, which oppressed them.

Thus, the spread of the Black Consciousness ideas played a very important role in "conscientising" black students about their rights and freedom. It also added to the defiant mood which was unfolding and manifesting itself during the 1970s. This is despite the fact that Baruch Hirson argues that the wave of black industrial strikes led directly to the Soweto revolt.[50] This is not only a simplistic view of the whole situation, but it also promotes a one-sided account of the causes of the Soweto uprising of 1976. On the contrary, the cumulative effect of the industrial strikes and the spread of Black Consciousness ideas amongst the people, who were nursing grievances, became the fertile ground for the Soweto uprising. The educational policies of the regime only provided the spark to cause the rebellion by the students.

5.5 POST-SOWETO BLACK RESISTANCE

After the 1976 Soweto uprisings many Black Consciousness leaders and students were imprisoned. In 1977 the regime acted ruthlessly in order to bring this particular series of events to an end. The Security Police arrested and interrogated Steve Biko. Unfortunately, he died tragically in detention at the hands of the police in September 1977. On October 19th 1977 the regime arrested other black leaders and banned people and a number of organisations, including the Black People's Convention (BPC) and the

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49 T. Karis, and G. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume5, pp.165-168.

50 Hirson, B., *Year of Fire, Year of Ash*, pp.155-156.

South African Students' Organisation (SASO).[51] In addition, BPC and SASO supporters, including many students, fled the country to join forces with the liberation movements abroad.

However, the clampdown on political activists in 1977 did not root out the revolutionary spirit engendered by the Black Consciousness Movement. Instead new organisations came into being and openly rejected the legitimacy of the regime. In Soweto Dr Nthato Motlana, a medical doctor, chaired a Committee of Ten, which established a Soweto Civic Association to oppose the government-created body, the Urban Bantu Council. In Port Elizabeth the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation (PEBCO) was formed. The Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo) was formed in 1979. Azapo's aims and objectives as stated in its constitutions are:

- To conscientise, politicise and mobilise Black workers through the philosophy of Black Consciousness in order to strive for their legitimate rights.
- To work towards the establishment of an educational system that will respond creatively towards the needs of Azanians.
- To promote an interpretation of religion as a liberatory philosophy relevant to our struggle.
- To promote and encourage research into various problems affecting our people.
- To expose the oppressive and exploitative system in which our people are denied basic human rights.
- To work towards the unity of the oppressed, for the just distribution of wealth and power to all people of Azania.[52]

The formation of Azapo showed that black people were determined to continue with the liberation struggle, despite persistent intimidation and harassment from the regime. There was close affinity between the aims and objectives of AZAPO and those of SASO/BPC. This means that the ideas of the Black Consciousness Movement persisted amongst many members of the black population even after the bannings of October

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51 Buthelezi, S., "Historical Background of the BPC", pp.12-13.

52 Azanian People Organisation (Azapo), *Constitution and Policy – One People One Azania*, n.d, p. 3.

1977.

Thus, by the beginning of the 1980s South Africans of all oppressed groups had taken a vital step away from fear of challenging the might of the South African regime. Their resistance was causing considerable alarm in the white establishment.

Having discussed the internal opposition to the apartheid regime, it is important to see the reaction of the ANC and the PAC to these internal developments. What role did the two liberation movements play in instigating the Soweto riots? How did they use these opportunities to advance the liberation struggle in South Africa?

5.6 THE RESPONSE OF THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS TO THE REVIVAL OF INTERNAL OPPOSITION

Since the ANC and the PAC had committed themselves to the revolutionary armed struggle by infiltrating their cadres into the country, it is of crucial importance to check the state of readiness of the two liberation movements towards the attainment of their goals.

5.6.1 Attempts by the ANC and MK to return home

By 1970 the ANC still struggled to set up underground structures. This was because preparations for the armed action had been slow and not thorough during the latter half of the 1960s. However, the major stumbling-block of the ANC to return home was the absence of underground structures in South Africa. Despite this failure, it was very important that the ANC should carry out military operations inside South Africa so as to revive their structures.

For this reason, the Revolutionary Council (RC) made several attempts from 1969 to return MK cadres to South Africa in order to revive the ANC structures. Some of these cadres went to the rural areas, where they tried to set up MK networks. But, many of these structures survived only for a short period. One report of the ANC indicate that four leading ANC freedom fighters were ambushed by the regime's security forces in the Caprivi strip in August 1970 after being betrayed by an African contact. One of them

was a Chief Political Officer and a member of the Revolutionary Council, and two of the others had fought in Zimbabwe in 1967. The last member was the Acting Chief of Staff in the party. During their clashes with the forces of the regime, three were killed and the Chief Political Officer was wounded. After being tortured by the regime's forces at Katima Mulilo, he disappeared without trace up to the time of the writing of the report in December 1970.[53] This indicates that it was dangerous and difficult to return cadres to South Africa.

Despite this setback and the vigilance of the regime's forces, a big operation involving the landing of MK troops in South Africa was planned by the ANC and SACP in 1971. Supported financially by the Soviet Union, the initiative was known as "Operation J" and it involved the landing of about 20 MK cadres on the Transkei coast for infiltration into the interior of South Africa.[54] Trained and well armed guerrillas aboard the ship were to meet Alex Moumbaris and other reconnoiters within the country. Unfortunately the plan had to be abandoned when the ship, the Adventura, broke down. But, despite the fact that the plan fell through, some of the guerrillas were infiltrated into the country. One of those infiltrated was Justice Mpanza, who was unfortunately caught and leaked sensitive information under interrogation. His leaked information led to the arrest of Alex Moumbaris and others, such as Sean Hosey, who were in the country.[55] They were sentenced to long gaol terms. Once more, the failure of this incursion underlined the fact that these operations and structures survived for a short time only because of the vigilance of the regime's security forces.

Even though it was risky and difficult for guerrilla operations to succeed, other channels existed through which the ANC could inform its supporters about its existence. One of them was through propaganda. Towards the end of the 1960s and more reliably from 1973 South Africans were able to receive news from the ANC's Radio Freedom on short waves from Zambia and Tanzania. The radio station broadcasted news in two languages and a range of programmes, which included heroes of the struggle, freedom

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53 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 18: African National Congress of SA Report, 1 December 1970, p. 2.

54 T. Karis and G. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, Volume 5, p. 51. See also H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 28.

55 H. Barrel, *MK*, pp. 28-29.

songs, religion and commentaries on topical issues such as bantustans and the land question, banished people, the sale of French arms to South Africa and many more. In this way, Radio Freedom became important to the oppressed people of South Africa as its aim was "to provide our people with such a source of information about events in South Africa and Southern Africa and the world as would help orientating them properly in term of interpreting these events as well as forming an impression about the directions in which the world in general is moving".[56] As a result, the ANC was able to counter any propaganda from the regime and at the same time increasing its standing and popularity amongst the oppressed. Radio Freedom allegedly played a significant role in the ANC's propaganda campaign, by influencing public opinion.

ANC internal propaganda was also intensified in other ways. Leaflets were scattered by explosive devices in the major cities like Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth at the same time.[57] Newspapers reported these incidents on their front pages and this helped to spread ANC propaganda. There was also an ANC newsletter, *Amandla-Matla*, which began circulating inside the country. Moreover, material written outside the country was smuggled into South Africa, where it was reproduced and given to ANC contacts. Some leaflets and pamphlets were distributed by mail as "seasons greetings", including a letter which exhorted the Indians to participate in the struggle with Africans "with greater intensity and militancy in resisting every aspect of apartheid".[58] Another pamphlet, which called upon all the oppressed and exploited masses of the people of South Africa to unite and rededicate themselves to the struggle to liberate South Africa and end apartheid, stated: "We call upon the miners deep down in the bowels of the earth, we call upon the labourers on the boer farms and in farm jails, we call upon the workers in the factories, in the shops, in domestic employ, we call upon the men who keep the railways going, and on those who bear heavy loads at the ports and harbours, we call upon the men who keep the towns and cities clean, we call upon teachers, nurses, doctors, sportmen, we call upon all working people and peasants

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[56] MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 10, File MCH02 –10: Report of the Media Unit – The Propaganda Committee, 1973, pp. 1-5.

[57] T. Karis and G. Gerhart, *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 5, p. 52. See also T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 302.

[58] MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 7, MCH 02 – 07: Letter to "Dear Friends", entitled Diwali, Eid-ul-Adha and Christmas Greetings by Yusuf Dadoo, 1978.

throughout the length and breadth of our country to rise and demand the FREEDOM of the black majority".[59]

There were also attempts of reconstructing and reviving ANC internal structures in the early 1970s. Between 1969 and 1971 the SACP sent a number of cadres to South Africa to re-establish the presence of the ANC-SACP alliance inside the country by creating units and engaging in propaganda work. These operatives used various codes and false names, such as "Cobra", "Patrick", "Fred", "Stephen", "Rufus" and "Herbert". The operative called "Patrick" was active around Johannesburg between 1969 and 1970. Another operative called "Rufus" operated around Cape Town between 1970 and 1971. He was able to recruit people who would play prominent roles in the activities of the SACP, like Jeremy Cronin and Rob Davies.[60] Other operatives were not so lucky to evade police arrests. The security police intercepted leaflets and a communist publication, *Inkululeko*, in October 1971, when they stopped a car driven by Ahmed Timol. It was reported later on that Ahmed Timol had committed suicide when he tried to jump from the tenth floor at the security police headquarters. Furthermore, trials of white agents like Raymond Suttner, Jeremy Cronin, David Rabkin, Anthony Holiday, Tim Jenkin and Steve Lee indicated the existence of ANC-SACP underground activities. In addition, there were also trials of Winnie Mandela and James April, who was a young coloured MK cadre.[61] There was also a terrorism trial of the Anglican Dean of Johannesburg, Gonville Aubie Ffrench–Beytagh, who was charged with storing and distributing literature of the ANC and SACP, inciting people to terrorism, receiving funds from the International Defence and Aid Fund (IDAF) and planning to destroy buildings.[62] These arrests and trials of the ANC operatives showed that the ANC underground work was alive, but was performed on a very limited scale.

The fact that the ANC was worried about its slow progress in reactivating its internal organs was proved by the memorandum it issued in 1975 concerning the reconstruction

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59 ANC, UFH, Box 17, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and statements, 1968 – 1973: Speech delivered by Oliver Tambo on 16 December 1971.

60 E. Maloka, *The South African Communist Party in Exile, 1963-1990*, p. 27.

61 T. Karis and G. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 5, p. 52.

62 E. Gilbey, *The Lady: The life and times of Winnie Mandela*, p. 97. See also T. Karis and G. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, volume 5, p. 53.

of its structures. In this memorandum mention was made of "Operation Ploughmen", by means of which the SACP-ANC Alliance wanted to send two experienced cadres to South Africa so that they could unite and produce propaganda for distribution from time to time. According to the SACP-ANC Alliance this propaganda would reach the masses through the vanguard, that is "the articulate, politically most conscious section of the people – the banned, known sympathisers, leading spokesmen in the townships, Bantustans and other community leaders, students and professionals, trade unionists etc."[63] Their argument was that the escalating level of political activity and awareness spearheaded by the BCM was in need of leadership from the SACP-ANC Alliance. But they were unable as a liberation movement to respond to these internal developments. As a result, they had to press ahead with this operation if they wanted to maintain their credibility at home.

In the meantime, certain developments began to change prospects for the intensification of the armed struggle by the ANC. The spread of the BCM ideas contributed towards the revival of political activism amongst the blacks. However, the popularity of the BCM was not liked by the SACP-ANC alliance. They regarded the BCM's growth amongst black workers and its rejection of white liberals as a serious threat to them, as indicated by this paragraph: "We must especially be on our guard against those inside and outside our movement who jump on to the bandwagon of Black Consciousness for their own ulterior purposes whether it be for their business advancement or as a cover for political careerism. We must reject the attempts by those who would use the emotional sounding content of Black Consciousness in order to isolate the different Black Communities from one another and as a means of dividing the national liberation movement. And the ideology of Black Consciousness must not become the basis for the introduction of a crude form of anti-whiteism which diverts the attack from the main target – the white state – and concentrates its energies and passions against white groups like NUSAS, some of which can at the very least be neutralised in the struggle against extreme reaction".[64] A report by Marius and Jeanette Schoon, two of the ANC-

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63 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 3: Operation "Ploughmen", 1975.

64 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 5: Draft Report to the Forthcoming Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee by Comrade Y. Dadoo, Chairman, on Behalf of the Secretariat, October 1973, p. 14.

SACP alliance underground operatives, recognised the enormous influence wielded by the BCM. They claimed that "their following has inevitably been strengthened by the fact that they have capitalised on local issues ... and the way they have carried on with their campaigns despite shootings, detentions and torture ... Clearly they are a force which cannot be ignored."[65]

The growth and popularity of the BCM caused concern in the ANC that the new movement could replace it as the leading liberation movement of South Africa. Also the ANC was concerned about the possibility of fuelling more racial tensions in South Africa because of the ideology of the BCM. Its programme of inclusive African nationalism could be threatened if the BCM would go unchallenged. However, the most serious concern of the ANC was that the possibility existed that the BCM could be used by the regime and other anti-ANC forces in "setting up a so-called 'third force' to oppose the ANC."[66]

Nevertheless, the ANC leadership regarded the BCM, like any organisation which resisted the policy of apartheid, as an ally. The ANC did not want to antagonise the BCM. Instead, it wanted to guide and direct the supporters of the BCM in such a way that they would be "amenable in accepting the ideas of the ANC."[67] In this way, the attitude of the ANC of regarding itself as a strong and main liberation movement was discernible. It wanted to absorb other liberation movements.

Meanwhile the Black Consciousness Movement was expanding very fast. As indicated earlier on, the working class movement and students in the universities became more militant. This upsurge in political activities intensified when there was a promise of new governments by the friends of the ANC in 1974 in Mozambique (FRELIMO) and Angola (MPLA). However, the ANC was unable to exploit this situation in the country to infiltrate

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65 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979, ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 28: Marius and Jeanette Schoon, A Report on the South African Situation, 1977, p. 7.

66 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collction, 1975-1979, ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 31: Statement of the National Executive Committee of the ANC on Some Questions of the Unity of the Patriotic Forces of South Africa, 4 July 1979, p. 10.

67 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979, ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 31: Marius and Jeanette Schoon, A Report on the South African Situation, 1977, p. 7.

more of its trained cadres. There were few recruits who left South Africa to join MK at this time. Amongst those few who dared to leave South Africa was Keith Mokoape and his fellow comrades who went for training in Egypt and the USSR. Upon their return to South Africa, some of the members of this group were killed. Even though some cadres died, the whole group was very important because it was able to reactivate some of the underground cells before the Soweto riots of 1976.[68]

There was little communication between the operatives inside the country and the exiled members. Despite this lack of communication, the ANC tried to take advantage of the revival of political and labour activities inside South Africa. The SACP-ANC Alliance sent Chris Hani to Lesotho in 1974 to start a base, which would enable cadres to have free access to South Africa.[69] In the SACP circles, Hani's codename was "Phoenix" and he entered Lesotho using the assumed name of "Socishe". He was accompanied by an operative called "Thomas". Although Hani was arrested because of security lapses, his mission was successful. He and "Thomas" were able to establish an underground presence of the SACP, ANC and SACTU in different parts of the Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Natal, the Free State and the Transvaal. Known as the "Island" in the underground, Lesotho also became a very important centre of operations of the external mission of the ANC-SACP alliance.[70] Its proximity to South Africa enabled the cadres of the ANC-SACP alliance to participate in the struggle period of the mid-1970s in South Africa.

Another important development, which helped to resuscitate ANC internal structures, was the release of some of its earlier generation members. Those ANC activists included men such as Joe Gqabi, John Nkadimeng, Harry Gwala, Martin Ramokgadi and Jacob Zuma.[71] They had connections with the Black Conciousness Movement and the emerging trade unions. Jacob Zuma describes the situation in this way: "As a person who came out of prison, I immediately made contact with the other comrades and said, 'Aluta continua' (The struggle continues) and we regrouped and started

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68 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 72.

69 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 72.

70 E. Maloka, *The South African Communist Party in Exile, 1963-1990*, pp. 30-31.

71 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 29. See also S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 73.

operating again, and they actually received us with enthusiasm. They wanted to help politically. Some of them began to belong to the ANC underground inside South Africa whilst they were in the BCM – they were actually in ANC units inside the country. And some had to leave the country because the police were looking for them, because they'd come to find out that they were, in actual fact, ANC people."[72] Another ANC stalwart who was released from Robben Island in 1975 was Joe Gqabi. Soon after his release from Robben Island prison, he was invited to join the Main Machinery of the Transvaal, which consisted of John Nkadimeng (chairman), Martin Ramokgadi and Alfos Manci.[73] The Main Machinery was the body that did the underground work of the ANC and it had contacts with the ANC external missions in the neighbouring countries of South Africa like Lesotho, Swaziland , Botswana and Mozambique. As a result of these developments within the country, contact routes to Revolutionary Council (RC) structures in Swaziland and Botswana were established. In this way, there were improved prospects of rebuilding a revolutionary base inside South Africa, which would be able to receive cadres from abroad.

By all indications, the revolutionary climate was increasing in South Africa towards the middle of the 1970s. It was not surprising when the National Unit of the ANC analysed the internal situation and reported to the external wing that the situation in South Africa was explosive. This combative mood is described by Jacob Zuma: "In 1975 we actually, as an underground ANC structure inside, analysed the situation and realised that there was a political explosion coming, and our thinking was that it will come from the workers front. To me, by the time the Kwa Thema bus boycott took place, in early '76 in the Transvaal, it was proving our analysis, because people were just ready to challenge the enemy. And it moved to the students – then it burst out. I must say, we did not think the explosion will occur on the student front – we missed just the sector where it was going to occur in the end. But I think we were almost on the ball".[74] In

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72 "Jacob Zuma and his underground activities" in Frederickse J., *The Unbreakable Thread*, p. 124.

73 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A, 2675, III, 28: Statement by Joe Nzingo Gqbabi, Accused No. 7, for the Defense in State v. Sexwale, 1978, pp. 1-2.

74 "Jacob Zuma and his underground activities", in J. Frederickse, *The Unbreakable Thread*, p. 124. See also H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 30.

addition, the external mision seemed to be aware of what was about to happen in South Africa, because Joe Slovo told a woman friend to leave South Africa with her son immediately because a big trouble was about to take place.[75] Indeed, the popular political upheaval took place on 16 June 1976, initiated by the students and not by the workers as expected. A critical point had been reached in South Africa. Although the Soweto students' uprising of June 1976 had plunged the country into chaos, it also provided the ANC with training in order to pursue the aims of the struggle vigorously.

Having sketched the main events which led to the Soweto uprising in June 1976, it becomes of paramount importance to examine the state of readiness and preparedness of the ANC in exploiting this situation to its advantage. The ANC claims that it was involved in the 1976 Soweto riots. The validity of its claim needs to be investigated so as to determine to what extent it was involved in the uprising of June 1976.

The main thrust of Barrel's argument is towards undermining the role that the ANC underground units played in influencing and mobilising the students to revolt in 1976. He maintains that the ANC was unable to mount any armed activity in defence of the students, nor to provide any national political guidance. As a result, he believes that the ANC was unprepared when the Soweto riots began.[76] While it is true that the ANC was not there to defend the students when the riots began, it is not correct to say that the students were not guided. To agree to this assertion would be to downplay the influence that ANC activists such as Joe Gqabi and Mafefo Ramokgadi had on the students. Gqabi assisted in the formation of the South Africans Students Movement (SASM), a school based movement, which was aligned to SASO.[77]

According to Tebello Motapanyane, the former Secretary General of SASM, who fled the country to join the ANC in exile, underground cells had been formed by the ANC in 1974. He describes the formation of these cells and the role played by the ANC in their establishment: "They were formed by the ANC. We in SASM did not actually think of

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75 H. Pike, *A History of Communism in South Africa*, p. 483.

76 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 30.

77 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 73. See also S. Davis, *Apartheid Rebels*, p. 28.

forming such things. We were operating legally and tried to keep SASM as a broad legal organisation. But some of us listened to our elders from the ANC when they said we needed more than just mass legal organisation. Hence we founded these underground cells".[78] Therefore, the process of re-establishing the presence of the ANC inside South Africa was already in progress. As a result the riots gave the ANC the much needed injection to capitalise on the political turmoil which was generated by the upheavals themselves.

Coincidentally, the student uprising took place just after the Revolutionary Council (RC) had recommended to the National Executive Committee the resumption of the armed struggle. The main reason given was "to channel the militancy of our people in the interest of our struggle for liberation and for the movement to live up to the expectations of our people who have placed boundless confidence in the African National Congress". The secretariat of the RC suggested that the NEC should control the task of internal reconstruction. Its reason was that the NEC would be able to "properly and effectively co-ordinate the work of all machineries established in and around home".[79] For this reason, a number of changes took place. The administrative headquarters of the ANC were moved from London to bases in Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique and Angola.[80] Moreover, the NEC put Joe Modise in charge of the Operation Unit (OU) and Joe Slovo became his right-hand man. Patrick Masondo was also involved. The OU established military machinery in the so-called "forward areas" of Mozambique, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.[81] In this way, the ANC was able to absorb youths who were fleeing from South Africa, even though it experienced problems.

As would be expected, the students' support of the ANC was not only inside South Africa. Many students fled South Africa and joined the ANC in the neighbouring countries. Other students became members of the ANC before they left the country. Sikosi Mji describes how she and Naledi Tsiki joined: "He and I went to meet with some

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78 *Phakati*, no. 4, April 1977, p. 6.

79 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 3: Matters Arising from the Revolutionary Council Meeting, March 11-13, 1975, Morogoro for the Attention of the National Executive Committee, pp. 1, 2.

80 H. Holland, *The Struggle*, p. 189.

81 H. Barrel, *MK*, pp. 32-33.

people in the location who were spreading the word that the ANC still existed even though it had been quiet underground for a long time. They gave us a copy of the Freedom Charter and asked us to study it and then report back to them. We found it was a general blueprint of what we would like to see in our country. When we told them this, they asked us to work for the ANC in an underground cell and we agreed".[82] In supporting the reasons why he joined MK and defending the ANC liberation struggle in court, Tsiki said that they were forced to "counter the violence meted to us, we were forced to defend ourselves ..." and he joined the ANC because "it is a national liberation movement committed to the liberation of all the people of South Africa, Black and White, from racial fear, hatred and oppression."[83] Tsiki left the country determined to undergo military training and come back to South Africa to fight for freedom. Mji also decided to become a freedom fighter. However, others crossed the borders on their own and were recruited by the ANC when they sought political asylum. Solomon Mahlangu decided to join MK in exile late in 1976. Later on, he became one of the most famous freedom fighters in the history of MK.

Along with recruitment, the ANC strategists in 1976 wanted to take advantage of the new generation of young revolutionaries and activists growing up under the BCM umbrella. After the riots, ANC pamphlets circulated in Soweto and other places and ANC members, who were secretly in the country, actively recruited and worked together with the students. They added political objectives to the demands of the students in an attempt to expand the language issue as the riots became widespread. For example, the ANC was suspected of having helped to establish the Black Parents Association (BPA). Prominent members of the BPA included people like Winnie Mandela and Nthato Motlana. Winnie was an obvious focus of attention. She was the wife of the celebrated prisoner, Nelson Mandela. In the days immediately after the riots, Winnie was no longer only an adviser to the students, but she also became actively involved in their affairs through the BPA.[84] The BPA acted as intermediaries between the students and the government. It also organised the funerals of the victims of the unrests in Soweto. As a

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82 H. Holland, *The Struggle*, p. 193.

83 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Colletion, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 29: Statements in Mitigation of Mosima Sexwale, Naledi Tsiki and Martin Ramokgadi in the Trial of S.V. Sexwale and Others, 1978, pp. 2381-2382.

84 E. Gilbey, *The Lady: The Life and Times of Winnie Mandela*, p. 108.

result, Winnie's role in student affairs became increasingly important. The fact that she was a threat to the security of the state was seen when the Minister of Justice at that time, Jimmy Kruger, refused to allow mass burials of the victims of the unrests. He argued that the mass funerals would lead to more political agitation and issued a veiled threat to Winnie by saying that "well-known political agitators" were actively concerned with the BPA.[85]

Several members of the Soweto Students' Representative Council (SSRC) executive committee had connections with the ANC. The ANC operative, Naledi Tsiki, held a meeting in December 1976 with SSRC members, who inluded the President, Khotso Seatlholo. Besides persuading the group to join the ANC, he also offered them military training in the use of scorpion machines, pistols and hand-grenades. Another student leader, Elias Masinga, tried to recruit SSRC cardholders into the ANC. He succeeded to transport two executive members of the SSRC to Swaziland for a meeting with top ANC representatives.[86] According to Masinga, he reported to the ANC "on the activities of the students in South Africa, as well as on the political situation generally." He received political training in Mozambique from a man known as Peter and on his return he reported to the SASM Regional Committee about his successful mission in Mozambique. His report indicated that the ANC was willing to work with the students: "I told them that I had reported to the ANC on our activities, and they had appreciated what we had done inside the country. I said that the ANC was interested in working hand in hand with the student movement. This was really the ANC's proposal rather than my own, and they readily agreed to do it. This was not surprising as they had themselves been in contact with members of the ANC inside South Africa before my departure."[87] As a result of these contacts, the influence of the ANC in the upper echelons of the student movement seemed to have been boosted.

Contact between the ANC and the student movement was confirmed by several meetings that Joe Gqabi held with student leaders. He claimed to have received

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85 E. Gilbey, *The Lady: The Life and Times of Winnie Mandela*, p. 109.

86 S.M. Davis, *Apartheid's Rebels*, p. 30.

87 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A, 2675, III, 28: Statement of Elias Masinga, Accused No.5, pp. 1, 3.

instructions from the External Mission to try to persuade the students "to strive for normalisation". The ANC seemed to be concerned about the fact that the students were going on with endless demonstrations, strikes and activities at funerals instead of staying at home and attending school. The opinion of the ANC was that their problem was settled when the government retracted on the issue of Afrikaans after its meeting with the committee of 30 people. As a result, the ANC was saying to the students that they could not "call on the parents or workers to stay at home every week or every month and that it was not being realistic at all. We should try and normalise things and they should try and go back to school."[88] This shows that the ANC was concerned about maintaining the moral high ground, as they were not only concerned about the future of the students, but also about the possibility of lawlessness and chaos reigning supreme. They knew that the regime would use such a situation to dent their image internationally.

The Soweto riots had given a much needed injection to the ANC. They revealed a potential for urban uprising, which was formerly only a remote possibility. As a result of the uprisings, there were now increasing hit and run operations. Amongst the first MK cadres deployed into South Africa just after the uprisings in Soweto were Mosima Sexwale and Naledi Tsiki. Tsiki sabotaged a railway line near Pietersburg in October 1976. About a month later, Sexwale wounded two policemen near the Swaziland border when he threw a hand grenade at them.[89] These operations in the Eastern Transvaal seemed to have been facilitated by the fact that Petrus Nchabaleng rendered assistance indirectly to Sexwale, Tsiki and Simon Mohlanyaneng by making his home available to them as a base for launching their attacks.[90] For the ANC, the bombing of the railway line was significant for indicating its presence inside the country. The editorial comment of a pro-government newspaper also recognised the importance of the attack for the ANC as it conceded that it was the first time that terrorists of the African National Congress had staged an incident in the Republic itself. The operation became even more important when one considers the fact that the ANC had been involved in an

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88 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A, 2675, III, 28: Statement by Joe Nzingo Gqabi, Accused No. 7. p. 4.

89 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 34.

90 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A, 2675, III, 29: Statement of Petrus Mampogoane Nchabaleng, Accused No. 8 (detained 2nd January 1977), p. 8.

armed clash with the regime's forces outside South Africa during the Wankie campaign in 1967. This campaign prompted the regime to send security forces in big numbers to the borders between South Africa and Rhodesia to stop the ANC freedom fighters from entering the country. The regime suspected that the ANC was receiving facilities from Mozambique, which enabled them to infiltrate their cadres into South Africa through Swaziland. To them, the possibility of the ANC getting support from Mozambique could be the start of difficult years ahead.[91]

The ANC underground operative, Gqabi, made contact with Paul Langa's suicide squad. The establishment of the squad only three months after the Soweto riots and the attacks it launched against a police station, railway line and Soweto night club confirmed that it received support from the ANC. The student leadership formed the suicide squad during the riots as a military wing of some sort. There was thus some evidence of potential growth of internal armed activity. However, the arrest of ANC operatives like Gqabi, Ramokgadi, Sexwale and Tsiki seriously weakened its organisational structures.[92]

Besides scoring successful victories in underground work, the ANC became visible to the black people during the uprisings through the use of propaganda. The ANC believed that internal propaganda should also be directed to the people not yet committed to the movement. For this reason, a number of important publications and leaflets were produced and distributed inside the country for propaganda purposes. Congress made its presence felt through regular newsletters clandestinely distributed during the uprisings.[93]

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91 *Die Vaderland,* 2 December 1976.

92 S.M. Davis, *Apartheids Rebels*, p. 30. See also H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 34.

93 See the following documents which were distributed in South Africa on the eve of the riots or just after them: AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A2675, III, 24: People of South Africa – Sons and Daughters of the Soil – The African National Congress Brings You This Message (leaflet distributed in South Africa on 21 March 1976); AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A2675, III, 24: Power to the People, 23 June 1976; *Vukani – Awake*, January 1977, pp. 1-2; *Phakati*, June 1976, pp. 1-8.

Immediately after the outbreak of the June uprising in South Africa, the ANC released a statement, which amongst others, said that the students "were defending and advancing the positions of the liberation movement of our country, for a democratic, progressive and human educational system in a democratic, progressive and human South Africa."[94] This was a clear indication that the ANC was actually claiming the student struggle as their own. Another newsletter declared: "People of South Africa – Sons and Daughters of the soil – the African National Congress and its military wing Umkhonto we Sizwe has declared: We shall avenge the brutal murder of our innocent children. We shall avenge the ruthless killing and maiming of our people who have risen in heroic protest against the apartheid monster!'"[95] This message was disseminated to the public by pamphlet bombs, which exploded in the centre of Cape Town at Green Market Square, at the Mowbray bus terminus and the Salt River railway station.[96] Another leaflet was distributed at the beginning of 1977 and declared the year as one of mounting struggle: "1976 was the year which signalled the beginning of the end for Vorster and his racist followers. The popular upsurge over the past months since last June, together with events on our borders, show beyond doubt that the apartheid regime has entered its last dark days. 1977 will be a year of mounting struggle which will lead finally to the complete overthrow of the racist state. The courage and contempt for death shown by our people in the face of Vorster's brutal actions assures us of certain victory."[97] Later on in 1977, another leaflet encouraged the oppressed people to continue fighting: "We must organise now for the armed struggle which will liberate our people. We must not simply take to the streets, where gunmen can pick off our organisers, and where informers can betray our leaders."[98] The leaflets not only warned the Vorster government that MK would hit back, but also indicated the presence of the ANC inside

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94 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A2675, 24: Power to the People: Statement Made by the ANC after June 16 Uprising, 23 June 1976, p. 2.

95 MA, UWC, ANC office in London, Box 7: The Struggle Continues, Victory is Certain: ANC leaflet distributed by leaflet bombs on 15 December 1976.

96 *Die Burger*, 16.12.1976; *The Argus*, 15.12.1976; *The Cape Times*, 16.12.1976.

97 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 7: Vukani – Awake. 1977 - A Year of Mounting Struggle, Issued by Supporters of the National Liberation Movement, January 1977.

98 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 4, File MCHO2 – 4: Let Us Advance Our Liberation Struggle, Leaflet spread in South Africa by the ANC in 1977.

the country.

The ANC also benefited largely from the trial of its cadre Solomon Mahlangu. He was one of the students who had fought against Bantu Education. He had left South Africa with other students to join MK. He and his comrades were stopped by the police in the centre of Johannesburg on 13 June 1977. In the ensuing clashes with the police two white men were killed. Solomon Mahlangu and Mondy Johannes Motloung were arrested and appeared in the Johannesburg magistrate court on 26 September 1977. Motloung suffered brain damage at the hands of the police. Mahlangu was sentenced to death. When the sentence was read, Mahlangu showed his bravery by giving the ANC salute and shouting "Amandla" (Power).[99] The whole incident did not only indicate the presence of the ANC inside the country, but also the readiness and determination of its cadres to achieve freedom at all costs.

At the same time, the SACP-ANC Alliance stepped up its campaign to use sympathetic and radical whites in South Africa to realise their dream of achieving a democratic and non-racial country. They appealed to white South Africans to reject apartheid and oppression before it was too late: "The recent black unrest shows clearly and unequivocally that Blacks are totally dissatisfied with conditions in South Africa, despite all claims to the contrary. They have shown that this dissatisfaction will not be suppressed by force and that they are willing to die in the struggle for freedom."[100] According to the appeal, all the people of South Africa should meet in order to solve the problems of the country. More importantly, the SACP-ANC Alliance believed that white radicals should form a dissident group amongst themselves. This dissident group could engage itself in the following activities: "Firstly, they can play a role in underground work for the National Liberation Movement. Secondly, they can organise amongst the proletariat and thirdly they can generate further white class defectors."[101] Hence, they

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99 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC DIP File Political Material, A, 2675, III, 29: Stop the Execution of Solomon Mahlangu Sentenced to Death for Fighting Apartheid, n.d., p. 5.

100 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 4, file MCHO2 – 4: An Appeal to White South Africa, issued by the Liberation Group, n.d.

101 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 7: What is to be Done?, issued by the supporters

called upon white radicals to show their commitment and solidarity with the blacks by supporting the ANC in underground work. In this way, the ANC was not only announcing its existence in South Africa, but was also popularising its long-standing tradition of non-racialism in South Africa.

The post-Soweto riots period is significant in that it witnessed a number of crucial developments both inside and outside South Africa, which facilitated the possibilities of rebuilding underground bases and resuming the armed struggle. The granting of independence to the former Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola increased these chances. According to the ANC, the absence of friendly borders was undoubtedly a big stumbling-block in their efforts to infiltrate trained cadres into South Africa before the mid-1970s.[102] The ANC anticipated positive changes in the foreseeable future in Zimbabwe and Namibia, which would further improve their position. Because of its friendship to the new pro-Marxist FRELIMO government in Mozambique and the MPLA government in Angola, the ANC–SACP Alliance was able to establish forward bases just across the South African borders. Within a short time of the riots erupting, MK officers in Swaziland, Lesotho and Botswana made contact with student activists and encouraged them to leave the country and join the ANC abroad. The majority of these students were channeled into the ANC ranks in exile by Chris Hani in Lesotho, Marius Schoon in Botswana and Stanley Mabizela in Lesotho.[103] Most of them were determined to return to the country as soon as they have received their military training.

The wave of terror attacks that took place in the urban areas after 1976 could be ascribed to these new plans and strategies of the ANC. This line of thinking is supported by the suspicion of the regime that the ANC was launching a widespread infiltration of its trained cadres into South Africa from Angola via Botswana and from Mozambique via Swaziland to create labour unrests, recruit young Africans to leave the country for training, and commit urban terrorism.[104]

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of the ANC, n.d.

102 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Department File Material, A, 2675, III, 29: Draft Strategy and Tactics of Our Revolutionary Strategy, 1978, p. 17.

103 S. Ellis, and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 84.

104 *Sunday Express*, 4 May 1979.

The ANC-SACP Alliance showed also that it was ready to exploit this historic opportunity in expediting the recruitment of the Soweto militants. It succeeded because it was well organised and had a coherent strategy. That is why just after the riots, the ANC had acquired a training school for engineers in Luanda and training camps for guerrillas at Fundo and Nova Katenga. It also obtained additional training camps at Vienna, Quibaxe, Pango and Quatro in Angola.[105] With the connections of the SACP in Eastern Europe it was easy for recruits to receive more advanced regular courses. Once these recruits had completed their training, they returned to South Africa through the underground infiltration routes in the forward areas. The South African Security Police estimated that nearly 4000 refugees from South Africa had joined the ranks of MK by the middle of 1978.[106]

The period from 1976 to 1980 was regarded by the ANC as one of the phases of most sustained violence in its history. It was a period during which the activities of MK inside the country escalated dramatically. A breakdown of the armed struggle and acts of sabotage committed by Umkhonto we Sizwe between 19 March 1976 and 4 April 1980 has revealed that there was a phenomenal increase in the acts of sabotage. Eight different categories of targets were attacked by guerrillas. The categories of targets most frequently attacked during the period were skirmishes and shoot-outs between guerrillas and members of the security forces inside the country (14) and attacks on railway communication installations (9). There was also a significant increase in armed propaganda as seen with the release of documents and pamphlets through pamphlet bombs to announce the presence of the ANC inside the country. The idea was not to fight the regime in a conventional war, as they could not match it militarily, but it was mainly to try to win the support and confidence of its supporters and sympathisers. Two other categories of targets that were frequently attacked by the guerrillas during this period were police stations (8) and assassinations and attacks on individuals (7). Three further categories, which indicated significant increase in the number of MK activities, were attacks on administrative buildings (3), public buildings and places of public

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105 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 85.

106 Barrel, H, *MK*, p.33. See also Ellis, S. and Sechaba, T., *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p.84.

entertainment (3), as well as patrol and border incidents (2).[107] Seen in its broader context the nature and relatively low frequency of attacks during the latter half of the 1970s and the type of targets selected by the guerrillas highlighted the point that it was the era of armed propaganda and attempts at rebuilding underground structures inside the country.

Even though these military operations were on a small scale in the military sense, they marked an important milestone in the history of the liberation struggle of Umkhonto we Sizwe. The symbolic importance of launching some sort of military offensive against the most powerful regime in Africa after the Soweto revolts could not be underestimated. MK could boast that it had overcome the difficulties of the post-Rivonia period and had entered a new phase during which it was able to use the Soweto students' generation to launch attacks inside the country.[108] This was the period which produced a new breed of guerrilla fighters like Solomon Mahlangu. His execution by the South African regime immortalised his name in the history of the liberation struggle. That is why the ANC named its school in Tanzania in his memory as the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College (SOMAFCO).[109] Other capable cadres who became commanders included Montso "Obadi" Mokgabudi, Richard "Barney" Molokoane, Nelson Mlongwane, Theophilus Dlodlo and Sipho Nyanda, the current chief of the South African National Defence Force.[110]

However, MK guerrillas who entered the country during the latter half of the 1970s found it difficult to link-up with an organised political presence. Moreover, orders were given not to establish any contact with any local groupings for fear that they might be betrayed. These limiting factors militated against the successful attempts of MK to rebuild its permanent structures inside South Africa. To make matters worse, the security forces

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107 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 81: Armed Struggle inside South Africa Intensifies: Summary of the Political and Military Activities of the African National Congress of South Africa from March 19th 1976 to April 04th 1980.

108 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 100.

109 S. Morrow, et. al., "Revolutionary Schooling? Studying the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College, the African National Liberation School in Tanzania, 1978 to 1992", August 1998, pp. 1-8. Obtained from Brown Maaba, in possession of author.

110 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 42.

were relatively successful in their counter-insurgency operations against the ANC and MK in the 1970s. As a result of the revolutionary activities of the liberation movements, the government came up with a "total strategy" to fight back anti-state activities. This total mobilisation of the South African regime for counter-revolution used "all arms of the state and economy to implement and defend government policy."[111]

As a result of these difficult conditions in South Africa, the ANC realised that its guerrilla war strategy was not leading to the desired results of the seizure of power in South Africa. It became obvious that there was a need to improve the present strategies of fighting the regime. For this reason, the ANC sought to formulate a new revolutionary strategy. Consequently, it sent a high-profile delegation to Vietnam in 1978 to learn more about guerrilla war from the legendary General Giap, who was the architect of victories over both French and American armies. This delegation consisted of ANC and MK leaders such as Joe Slovo, Oliver Tambo, Joe Modise and Cassius Make. According to Ellis and Sechaba, the most important lesson the delegation learnt from General Giap was the significance of long-term planning, which takes into account the military strategy, logistics and training programmes.[112]

As a direct result of this study tour, the National Executive Committee of the ANC accepted a resolution at a meeting in Luanda, which stated that a people's war revolutionary strategy would replace the original revolutionary strategy that had been in place since 1969. This meeting, which was held between 27th December 1978 and 1st January 1979, assisted in "exposing certain shortcomings in the methods and approach to our own way of conducting our struggle."[113] The meeting elected a commission of 6 members, headed by President O.R. Tambo and including Thabo Mbeki, Joe Slovo, Moses Mabhida, Joe Modise and Joe Gqabi. The commission was instructed to make

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111 H. Barrel, *MK*, p.40. See also S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, pp. 98-99.

112 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 100.

113 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 Political Material, A, 2675, III, 30: Report of the Joint NEC/ RC Meeting Held in Luanda from 27th December 1978 to 1st January 1979, p.1. See also AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 Political Material, A 2675, III, 31: Statement of a Joint Meeting of the NEC and the ANC (SA) held in Luanda on 27th December 1978 to 1st January 1979, pp. 1-2.

recommendations to the NEC concerning the new revolutionary strategy of the ANC. The recommendations of the Politico-Military Strategy Commission were accepted by the NEC and were contained in the so-called Green Book as "Summarised Theses on our Strategic Line", in the form of thirteen questions and their answers or explanations.[114]

However, the people's war strategy would not be implemented immediately. This was because the ANC believed that "the armed struggle is secondary and our priority task is to build up political revolutionary bases out of which its armed struggle (in the case of people's war) can be developed. In the meantime the purpose of armed activity is to keep alive the perspective of people's revolutionary violence as the ultimate weapon for the seizure of power and to concentrate on armed propaganda whose purpose is to stimulate political activity and organisation rather than to hit at the enemy." This means that the ANC would use "armed propaganda" until the revolutionary situation was ripe for the seizure of power in South Africa. The approach of armed propaganda would suit the ANC in the meantime in order to inform the South African people that MK was alive and meant business. In this way, the ANC was practical in its approach, because it knew that the situation had not yet been transformed enough to move on to a new phase of people's war. According to the ANC, "by people's war we mean war in which a liberation army becomes rooted among the people who progressively participate actively in the armed struggle both politically and militarily, including the possibility of engaging in partial or general insurrections."[115]

The latter half of the 1980s represented the ripe conditions conducive for the seizure of power as will be explained in the next chapter. By this time the ANC had raised the level of political consciousness among the oppressed masses to such an extent that they were ready to participate in their own struggle. However, this scenario seemed to be remote in the late 1970s. In the meantime, armed propaganda would be employed to mobilise the people and prepare them for the intense and difficult phase of people's war.

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114 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 Political Material, A 2675, III, 31: Green Book (extract): Summarised Theses on Our Strategic Line, n.d., pp. 1-13.

115 ANC, UFH, ANC SOMAFCO: Director's Office, Box 81: Planning for People's War: Discussion Document, November 1983.

At this stage the ANC firmly believed that the primary activities of the early phases of people's war in towns or cities should be to engage, harass and disperse the regime's forces and to destroy its administrative, economic, military and communication infrastructure and installations so as to "reduce its will and capacity to pursue the struggle."[116] The ANC was actually engaged in these activities in the period between 1976 and 1980 described earlier in this chapter.

The most important question, which arises, is: How would the situation be transformed and made ready in order to move on to a new phase? In other words, which concrete steps would be taken by the ANC towards people's war? According to the Politico-Military Strategy Commission (PMSC), the ANC "had to get involved in legal and semi-legal anti-apartheid politics inside South Africa. Only in this way could the ANC guide its potential supporters to revolutionary political organisation and relate to the creativity and energy with which people on the ground inside South Africa were struggling against apartheid."[117] In the meantime the ANC would use armed propaganda to launch attacks from bases outside South African territory inside the country. Their targets would be attacked in such a way that they would attract widespread attention. In this way, MK and the ANC would be announcing their presence in the country. These political offensives would be accompanied by well-chosen slogans to attract the attention of the people.

According to the ANC, it was extremely important that the oppressed people should be educated and led into the struggle. They believed that victory would not be achieved without the "active and conscious participation of the masses of the oppressed people themselves."[118] For this reason, the ANC sought ways and means of drawing people into active struggle against the regime. To mobilise and get the support of the oppressed people, the ANC put forward the main tactical slogan of: "Confront the enemy on all fronts!" Their argument was that the oppressed people were daily confronted with the harsh realities of "oppression, repression and extreme

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116 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 Political Material, 2675, III, 29: 1st Draft: Strategy and Tactics of Our Revolutionary Struggle, 9 May 1978, p. 12.

117 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 39.

118 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 29: Draft Strategy and Tactics of Our Revolutionary Struggle, 1978, p. 6.

exploitation."[119] For example, it was easy for the oppressed to confront the regime when students complained about Bantu education, workers about wages, township residents about high rents, rural people about taxes and women about high prices. In this way, the regime would find itself being faced throughout the country with struggles of various forms, like strike actions, boycotts, mass meetings, prayer meetings and demonstrations. According to the ANC, such a programme of action would not be easily implemented unless the movement took advantage of "all legal opportunities that exist, to form legal organisations, conduct legal agitation" in order to reach as many oppressed people as possible within a short space of time.[120] In this way, the ANC was thinking of forming pressure groups or a united front, consisting of trade unions, women's organisations, youth groups, teachers' associations, church groups and so on. However, these strategies and tactics remained mostly at the level of theory towards the end of the 1970s. Favourable conditions and a conducive environment had to be created by the ANC before these plans could materialise. How they were achieved will be explained in the next chapter, as the ANC was able to form a united front against the government in the 1980s.

Once the first stage of confronting the enemy on all fronts had been achieved, the next one would start. According to the ANC, the second stage meant that the "enemy", which was the regime, would be challenged at a "higher level, putting forward demands which transcend the local and partial." The second stage would obviously prepare for the third stage of "insurrection, for that final assault on the weakened bastions of fascist power which will succeed to transfer power to the people"[121] These preparations would be accompanied by political organisation and education, continuous mobilisation into mass action and the raising of combat spirit of the oppressed people in their fight for freedom.[122] The ANC wanted to wage its guerrilla warfare in both the urban and the

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119 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 29:Draft Strategy and Tactics of Our Revolutionary Struggle, 1978, p. 8.

120 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 29: Draft Strategy and Tactics of Our Revolutionary Struggle, 1978, p. 9.

121 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart, Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 29: Draft Strategy and Tactics of Our Revolutionary Struggle, 1978, p. 11.

122 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 31: Green Book (extract): Summarised Theses on Our Strategic Line, n.d., p. 8.

rural areas. In the urban areas, the ANC was aware that many of their targets were situated in white areas which supported the regime. Obviously, guerrilla action in these areas would not be supported by local residents. Despite these problems, the ANC still felt that their guerrilla actions in these white areas would achieve the advantages of preventing the regime from concentrating all its forces in the black areas and bringing the reality of the conflict to the supporters of the regime, thereby creating a feeling of insecurity and defeatism in them. In the black areas, the ANC would then get a free hand and create "no-go" zones for the regime and its forces. Continuing events since the outbreak of the Soweto riots had actually demonstrated to the ANC the possibilities of making black areas "ungovernable from the point of view of the regime". The rural areas would be mainly used as "survival bases" or "operational bases", where even war materials would be stored, besides being used as a "temporary haven of retreat after the action"[123]

Even though the ANC was talking of attacking installations and targets in the white areas, it is important to note that they were not fighting against whites as such. According to the movement, the selection of targets would be influenced by the fundamental principle that the ANC's liberation struggle was a "struggle for national liberation and not a racial one."[124] That is why they even appreciated the participation of the coloureds, Indians and whites in guerrilla actions. In addition, the movement believed that it should take a stand with regard to other "anti-racist forces in the country as the mother body, the umbrella organisation which is obliged to unite everybody into one cohesive whole and to lead on all fundamental questions..."[125] This means that the broad alliance the ANC was attempting to mobilise, included all races and groups who supported true liberation. The ANC was, therefore, presenting itself to the general public as a movement which was not exclusively African, which appreciated the forces of change that cut across racial lines and divides and accepted efforts of all revolutionaries who strove for non-racialism in South Africa.

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123 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 29: 1at Draft: Strategy and Tactics of Our Revolutionary Struggle, 9 May 1979, pp. 12, 13, 14.

124 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 29: 1st Draft: Strategy and Tactics of Our Revolutionary Struggle, 9 May 1979, p. 12.

125 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 30: President's Draft Report, May 1979, p. 14.

One of the most fundamental tasks facing the ANC was to create conditions in which its plans and tactics mentioned in the above analysis would be implemented. The movement would use armed propaganda in the meantime to launch attacks inside South Africa. Their targets would be attacked in such a way that they would attract widespread attention. In this way, MK and ANC would be announcing their presence in the country. For example, MK operations like the "Battle of Rustenburg" on 1 August 1978, where the regime's security forces were engaged in battles with the guerrillas of the ANC over four hours could spread confidence among the oppressed and also indicate to them that the enemy could be engaged in armed combat.[126] The other incident was the high-profile case of the members of MK, which came to be known as the Pietermaritzburg Treason Trial in 1979. Twelve MK members were accused of terrorism, attempted murder, recruiting people, training them in the art of warfare, arming and deploying them in South Africa for the purpose of overthrowing the regime. According to the ANC, this was the first case in which the accused were charged with High Treason in South Africa since the 1956-61 Treason Trial.[127] Such political offensives and cases could be accompanied by well-chosen slogans to attract the attention of people.

As a result of these developments, the ANC declared 1979 to be the Year of the Spear in commemoration of the victory of the Zulu warriors over the British army at the Battle of Isandhlwana in 1879. It was the centenary of a popular victory, which symbolised all heroic wars of resistance fought by black people against foreign occupation throughout the country by leaders such as Hintsa, Makhanda, Moshoeshoe, Sekhukhuni, Cetswayo, Sechele, Magigwane, Mphephu, Waterboer, Bambatha and others. The victories at Isandhlwana and elsewhere in the country were of historic importance, because they represented the triumph of the spear over the cannon and the rifle. According to the ANC, 1979 (the Year of the Spear) "will go down in their history as the year during which by intensifying the offensive against the enemy on all fronts, we pay tribute to the gallant fighters whose fearlessness and determination throughout centuries of resistance

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126 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 29: Statement of the African National Congress on the Rustenburg Battle, 11 August 1978, pp. 1-2.

127 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A III, 32: Circular to ANC Missions: Re: Pietermaritzburg Treason Trial, 12 October 1979, pp. 1-3.

continue to inspire all our people."[128] Consequently, the ANC encouraged the oppressed people in South Africa to attack the regime on all fronts by uniting all the people in common action, developing mass action around burning issues, rejecting the Bantustans and their independence, intensifying the people's war, expanding the underground machinery of the ANC, increasing the combat strength of Mkhonto We Sizwe and celebrating Isandhlwana in music, poetry, dance, painting and sculpture. In this manner, the ANC regarded the Year of the Spear as the clarion call to the oppressed people of South Africa to intensify the liberation struggle.[129]

The year 1980, 25 years after the drafting of the Freedom Charter, was regarded as the Year of the Charter. The slogan was designed to spread the knowledge and awareness of the Freedom Charter in South Africa. Another purpose of armed propaganda was to step up the recruitment drive. For this reason, the slogan of "Swell the ranks of Mkhonto We Sizwe" was coined to increase the number of trained ANC cadres. The phase of armed propaganda was intended to end with the Year of the Youth in 1981. The Year of the Youth would be succeeded by a phase of People's War. The ANC hoped that the programme would popularise MK amongst the oppressed. Once MK was well known amongst the oppressed, it would be easier for the ANC to seize power in South Africa.

From the above, it is clear that the ANC had succeeded to a certain extent to return to South Africa, especially towards the latter half of the 1970s. The Soweto riots and the banning of the BCM and its affiliated organisations had effectively aided the ANC and MK to establish a noticeable presence inside South Africa. As a result, there was progress in the liberation struggle of the ANC in the 1970s. By the beginning of the 1980s conditions in South Africa had become more favourable for the ANC and Umkhonto to step up its armed activities.

5.6.2 Attempts by the PAC and APLA to return home

Like the ANC at the beginning of the 1970s, the PAC was also faced with a formidable challenge in order to make its presence felt in South Africa. Its underground structures

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128 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 4: The Year of the Spear, 1979.

129 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 4: The Year of the Spear, 1979.

had been smashed by the South African regime. As a result, it was very difficult for the PAC to maintain networks in the country for the purpose of recruiting cadres for military training, infiltration of freedom fighters and equipment and setting up lines of communications as well as caches of arms.

In spite of these problems, the PAC was determined to end what it regarded as fascist colonialism and tyranny in South Africa. According to Potlako Leballo, the Acting President in 1973, the PAC was convinced beyond doubt that the only way in which the regime could be defeated was through the armed struggle waged by all of the oppressed.[130] Once begun, the armed struggle had to be pursued with the greatest determination by the oppressed people of South Africa.

What was required was a militant people's army. In the case of the PAC such a militant army was the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA). The primary task facing the PAC and APLA was the unification of the oppressed people of South Africa and their organisation and mobilisation into a fighting force. For this reason, the PAC believed that, like the Vietnamese, they should organise individual men and women into guerrillas and turn "the backward villages into bastions of political, economic, cultural and military power".[131] In other words, the PAC believed in mass mobilisation of the oppressed just like the ANC. APLA was meant to become the army of the people, which would fight for their freedom.

However, the preference of the PAC for the armed struggle did not mean that other methods of waging the struggle on the political, economic, legal, diplomatic and propaganda fronts were underestimated. Rather, the PAC regarded the armed struggle as the main method of overthrowing white domination in order to achieve complete national and social emancipation in South Africa.[132] Thus, they believed that the armed struggle should be mass-orientated and protracted. For this reason, the blitzkrieg style

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130 United Nations (UN), Unit on Apartheid, Notes and documents. No. 13/73: Potlako Leballo, "The Struggle in South Africa and the Need for International Assistance: The PAC View", p. 1.

131 The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC of Azania), Principles of a United Front in People's War, p. 3. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatje, in possession of the author.

132 PAC, Principles of a United Front in People's War, p. 5.

of armed struggle, as practised during the 1960s, was something of the past. Hence, the PAC in 1973 adopted a people's war strategy as its new revolutionary strategy through the influence of military advisors from the People's Republic of China.[133] The PAC believed that the oppressed people of South Africa could liberate themselves under its leadership and guidance.

Having these noble aims was not enough. The real situation was that the PAC was operating far away from South Africa in Tanzania at the beginning of the 1970s. As a result, it needed a clear-cut programme on sending its trained cadres back to South Africa to revive their underground structures. Moreover, the PAC also needed friendly territories through which its cadres could be infiltrated into South Africa. How did the PAC overcome these problems?

From 1971 to 1975 the PAC made several attempts to negotiate a route back to South Africa for its cadres. Although reluctantly, the Zambians were prepared to allow PAC cadres to stay in their country temporarily, so that they could arrange their passage to Botswana. The PAC tried to persuade SWAPO (South West African People's Organisation) to guide APLA guerrillas through the Caprivi Strip into Botswana. When SWAPO showed lack of interest in the matter, the PAC approached UNITA for the same favour.[134] Unfortunately for the PAC, all these requests did not succeed. It seems these attempts failed as a result of diplomatic and political factors. This did not only confirm the clumsy and poor manner in which the PAC leadership handled its foreign relations, but also its failure to prepare politically for its military wing.

Meanwhile, the APLA cadres in the Chunga camp wanted to go into action. They were bored, because they had not been in action since the late 1960s. Nevertheless, the dangerous situation was defused by Libya in 1974, when it offered the PAC military training.[135] However, the PAC could only muster 25 recruits for training. Although the PAC's military position was no different to that of the ANC, its credibility as a serious resistance movement was dented by the fact that it could not organise more recruits.

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133 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, p. 314.

134 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, p. 314.

135 B. Leeman, *Lesotho and the struggle for Azania*, volume three, 1966–1984, p. 57.

Even inside South Africa, the PAC seemed to be losing ground to the ANC. Judging by the many trials that took place in South Africa since the latter half of the 1960s and early 1970s, it appears that the ANC had been better organised and more active in arousing political consciousness in the country. As already indicated in the section on the ANC, these cases revealed not only large quantities of illegal ANC material, but they also showed the extent to which the ANC and MK were active within the country.

The most serious failure of the PAC was its inability to exploit the situation or help the development of Pan-Africanism and black consciousness in South Africa. Despite its avowedly Africanist ideological posture, which more or less was compatible with the political doctrines of the BCM, the PAC's conception of the new movement reflected its inability to understand the dynamics of the political developments inside the country. The PAC did not seize the opportunity to advance its goals of liberation in the early 1970s, when the students in tertiary institutions went on strikes because they demanded equal education. More importantly, the PAC failed to exploit the situation at Hammanskraal near Pretoria in 1972 during SASO's third General Students Council. These was little reaction from the PAC when some members of SASO wanted to rename their organisation the Pan-African Students Union.[136]

In contrast to the ANC, the PAC's activities within the country were minimal. The dormancy of the PAC underground work seemed to come to an end when there was a revival of its activities between 1975 and 1977. Former PAC Robben Island prisoners, led by Zephania Mothopeng, spearheaded the reconstruction of the PAC underground cells, when they formed the Co-ordinating Committee in Johannesburg and the Planning Committee in East London.[137] In the area of Pretoria and Johannesburg, Zephania Mothopeng, John Ganya, Mark Shinners and Bennie Ntoele approached former prisoners and members of the PAC and urged them to become active again in furthering the aims of the movement. The establishment of these bodies facilitated the improvement of communication lines between PAC offices in Botswana and Swaziland and South Africa. As a result, the routes were used to transport funds, material and

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136 B. Leeman, *Lesotho and the struggle for Azania*, volume three, 1966–1984, p. 57.

137 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 343.

recruits. The recruits joined APLA and were trained in guerrilla warfare in China, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Libya. Because the PAC met with limited success in building a domestic PAC underground of loyal activists, it could only rely on its trained insurgents to do the work within the country.[138]

It is against the background of reactivating its underground cells that the PAC claimed that it played the most important role during the Soweto riots. Highlighting the significance of the PAC, Joe Mkwanazi, the administrative secretary of the PAC in 1982, argued that "those who undermine the initiative, the determination of our youth for self-determination, have said that the Soweto Uprisings were spontaneous".[139] To indicate that the PAC played a direct role in the origins of the riots, he stated: "When the Youth realised once more the power of the 'gun' as compared to 'stone', they decided to leave the country to go to free Africa to learn the art of using the gun in order to come back and face the boers as equals. They thus contacted the underground cells of the PAC inside Azania and offered themselves to join the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA). I was personally involved in the mass recruitment of the angry youth of our country. When they came to my area of operation they said one thing. That they wanted the gun to fight and liberate their country from white domination. They never talked of fighting against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction."[140] As a result, the PAC regarded the notion that the Soweto uprisings were spontaneous and that the movement was inactive during these riots as an insult.

Furthermore, the PAC proved their involvement in the Soweto riots by referring to the Bethal trial, in which its members were accused. According to the PAC, their movement was the only exiled national liberation movement charged together with the BCM for the June 16th 1976 Soweto uprising.[141] Zeph Mothopeng and other PAC members were

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138 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 605: The Bethal Trial of Mothopeng vs. State, 1977, p. (b).

139 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Speech delivered by Joe Mkhwanazi on the occasion of the 6th anniversary of the Soweto uprising, June 16, 1982, p.3.

140 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Speech delivered by Joe Mkhwanazi on the occasion of the 6th anniversary of the Soweto uprising, June 16, 1982, p.3.

141 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Speech delivered by John Mlambo at the eleventh anniversary of the Soweto uprising, 16 June 1987.

accused by Judge Curlewis for predicting and organising the events of June 16, 1976. As accused number one in this trial, Mothopeng was found guilty of having started the riots which led to the Soweto uprisings. His activities under the guise of a charity organisation, the Youth Religious Movement, in Kagiso near Krugersdorp led to his arrest. During the trial Enoch Ngomezulu, a former member of the PAC, turned a state witness and revealed in court that Zephania Mothopeng had received a message from Dar-es-Salaam that he should revive the PAC and began sending recruits to Swaziland. However, the most serious revelations concerned the involvement of Mothopeng in the establishment of the courier system (with the couriers identified as Mike Mzileni and Samuel Malinga), sending of recruits for military training abroad and communication with exiled PAC leaders like Joe Mkhwanazi through messages received from or given to couriers.[142] For his involvement in the activities of the PAC, Mothopeng received a fifteen year sentence.

According to Joe Mkhwanazi, Mangaliso Sobukwe ordered Zeph Mothopeng to guide the youth during the riots: "I can disclose here that Comrade Mothopeng had been instructed by Comrade Sobukwe directly to take his rightful position in directing the struggle. He addressed several rallies organised by BPC all over Azania. He sent word to me through Charles that he was inundated with delegations from the student movement to give direction."[143] As a result, the PAC firmly believes that the Soweto riots were unavoidable developments in the liberation struggle.

Interestingly enough, John Pokela as the chairman of the PAC in the 1980s, highlights the role of SASO and its leaders in giving direction and leadership during the Soweto riots: "The emergence of the students movement and the upsurge that resulted is umbilical associated with the role of three political figures Robert Mangaliso, Zephania Mothopeng and on the ground Steve Bantu Biko".[144] This statement is surprising, given the minimal activities of the PAC inside the country in the latter half of the 1970s. Even

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142 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 606: The Bethal Trial of Mothopeng vs. State, 1977, pp. 258-280.

143 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania Box 81: Speech delivered by Joe Mkhwanazi on the occasion of the 6th anniversary of the Soweto uprising, June 16, 1982, p. 4.

144 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Statement on the commemoration of 16th June uprisings by John Nyati Pokela, n.d, p. 4.

Henry Isaacs, who served as a representative and later a member of the PAC Central Committee, expressed disappointment at the way the movement claimed the Soweto uprising as a product of their work. He joined the other critics of the PAC, who criticised the movement for using the Soweto riots and the subsequent trials as evidence of their political presence in South Africa and the effectiveness of their underground cells.[145]

From the above analysis, it appears that the PAC was trying to recruit the students to join its underground cells like it did in the 1960s, especially around the townships of Pretoria, as indicated in chapter 3. However, its involvement with the students in the mid-1970s seemed to have been aimed at reviving their underground cells and attracting the students to undergo military training so as to increase the number of APLA cadres. There was no deliberate and conscious plan of action to guide the students to rise against the regime. The fear of attributing the origins of the Soweto riots to their arch-rivals, the ANC, might have motivated the PAC to claim the uprising. To justify their existence inside the country and their competition with the ANC seemed to have prompted the PAC to claim that it was involved in the Soweto uprising.

The minimal activities of the PAC inside South Africa became even more apparent after 1976. David Tharasimbi was found guilty of transporting PAC military recruits to Swaziland in 1978, and was imprisoned for twelve years. Bonginkosi Mngomezulu was charged in a special Supreme Court in Empangeni, Natal. His attempted killings and killings of six people were linked with the activities of the PAC in the remote villages of Natal. Stanley Pule, Isaac Mhlekwa and Morgan Gxekwa were tried for receiving military training in China and returning to South Africa to start a guerrilla base of the PAC where they trained recruits of APLA. They were sentenced for five years for taking part in PAC activities.[146] After these trials, there was little indication of any real PAC presence in South Africa.

On the other hand, the number of ANC guerrilla activities increased dramatically from

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145 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 94.

146 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 605: Appeal to Friends and Supporters of the Pan Africanist Congress, p. 1. See also The Pan Africanist Congress, "Alleged Guerrillas and Activities in Court", in G. Moss, *Work in Progress*, no. 47, April 1987, p. 17; *The Rand Daily Mail,* 1 December 1977.

1978 onwards. The ANC was also receiving more students who fled from South Africa as a result of the 1976 riots. The situation was humiliating, to the extent that Henry Isaacs commented thus: "Since December 1978 not a single military trained freedom fighter of the PAC has been infiltrated into South Africa, nor has a single one of its freedom fighters been intercepted by the regime's security forces."[147]

To crown everything, the PAC was experiencing serious internal political and organisational crises during the latter part of the 1970s. Factional fights between Potlako Leballo as the leader of the movement and Templeton Ntantala as the Commander-in-Chief of APLA, hampered the military programme of the organisation.

It is important at this point to explain the military structure of the PAC in order to understand better the origin and development of the clashes between Leballo and Ntantala. As from 1968, the Military Commission became the most important organ of the Central Committee in the army. This Military Commission was responsible for developing policies and implementing them with regard to recruitment, training and deployment of cadres. It had to ensure that the needs of waging the liberation struggle were met. Moreover, the Military Commission consisted of the following key positions:

- The Commander and his Deputy, together with the Political Commissar and his Deputy;
- The Chief of Staff and his Deputy, together with the Political Director and his Deputy;
- The Battalion Commander and his Deputy, together with the political instructor and his Deputy and the Chief of Staff at Battalion Headquarters;
- The Company Commander and his Deputy, the Squad Leader and his Deputy at Company Headquarters.[148]

Leballo wielded a lot of power in the military structures of the PAC, as he was the chairman of the movement's Military Command until 1979, besides being recognised as the Commander-in-Chief of APLA forces and Acting President of the movement. It was not surprising, therefore, when clashes were caused by the fact that he was perceived to

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147 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 94.

148 PAC, UFH, PAC Morogoro, Box 24: Military Commission (MC): Directives to APLA, p. 9.

be having extensive political and military powers. It was easy for him to interfere in the general management of the army. The High Command, which was headed by Ntantala, was the next structure below the Military Commission. Ntantala was sent for training in military academies in Ghana and Algeria in the first half of 1965. Thereafter, he proceeded with advanced military training at China's Nanking Military College. From China, in the second half of 1965, he went back to Tanzania to become APLA Commander until 1978.[149] Ntantala represented the High Command in the Military Commission. Other members of the High Command were Gasson Ndlovu, who was Deputy Commander, P.Z. Mboko, Chief Political Commissar, Zeblon Mokoena, Deputy Chief Political Commissar, Jack Jako, Head of Intelligence and Security, as well as Theophilus Bidi, who was the Chief of Staff.[150]

There was always a clash of views between the political leadership and the interests of the army. For example, the Leballo faction of politicians, which included, amongst others, David Sibeko, Vusi Make, Victor Mayekiso, Elias Ntloedibe and Edwin Makoti, was in favour of making public political statements about APLA's attacks. The reason for doing this was apparently to project the image of the PAC as a serious liberation movement involved in the liberation of the oppressed. On the other hand, the Ntantala faction, which included, amongst others, Theo Bidi, Gasson Ndlovu, P.Z. Mboko and others who constituted the military leadership, wanted to keep APLA's attacks a secret.[151] The allocation of resources to the army also increased conflict. The Leballo faction controlled the PAC's access to financial assistance from those countries that supported the movement. As a result, they were able to deny the Ntantala faction "access to such financial and material assistance, without which the military leadership was immobilised."[152]

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149 W. Mazambane, "Tribute to Late ex-APLA Chief: The Gallant 'TM' Ntantala", *Azania Combat*, Issue no. 13, 1992, pp. 12-13.

150 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, Truth and Reconciliation Report on PAC/Poqo/APLA, p. 17. See also H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 102.

151 Interview with Ntsuntwana, Umtata, 20 April 1996, in K.M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution: The Exiled History of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (SA): (1960-1990)*, p. 304.

152 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC,* pp. 111-112.

Even the youths who joined the movement after the Soweto riots experienced problems. They expected the PAC to send them home after completing their military training in China and Libya. However, the PAC could not do so, because they had neither money nor good relations with countries like Angola, Mozambique and Zambia, which could be used for transit purposes.[153] Its former connections in UNITA, the FNLA and COREMO were not helpful.

It was against this background of conflicts and tensions that the PAC held a consultative conference in Arusha, Tanzania, from 27 June to 2 July 1978. Superficially, the conference was held to renew the mandate of the liberation struggle, and review the strategy and tactics, including combat methods, of the revolution.[154] The conference was not only important for the unity of the PAC, but was also essential in coming up with a programme of action, which included determination of the targets of the revolution; formulation of an elaborate programme of action for the recruitment, training and deployment of the forces of the revolution; a clear articulation of the strategic role of leadership in the struggle; and the actual fight that had to take place in the implementation of that mandate.[155]

The above aims of the conference indicated that the PAC seemed to be very serious about solving its internal squabbles and preparing for the prosecution of the struggle. This conference was held five years after desperate calls concerning the necessity of holding a reorganisation conference were made in London in 1973 by units of the PAC from various centres in Africa and Europe. These PAC members were convinced, after analysing the "unsatisfactory state of affairs in the party", that only a "radical, even ruthless remedy can halt further aggravation of the malady and set the party once on a course of dynamism and revolutionary capacity."[156]

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153 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka, Box 76, PAC File: The report on the situation in the PAC by Reddy Mazimbu, 30/12/77.

154 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 101.

155 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 607: Potlako Leballo (Acting President), Political Report: Address to the PAC Consultative Conference in Arusha, June 27th -2nd July 1978, p. 10.

156 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Declaration on PAC Reorganisation Conference, p. 7.

The conference seemed to be directed at achieving the over-all aim of reviving the movement. However, as the conference progressed, the real aim emerged, when Ntantala and his faction were blamed and expelled for the failures of the PAC. Leballo got a chance of attacking his rivals at the Arusha Conference for their dismal failure in carrying out military attacks against South Africa. The military leaders, like Ntantala, were criticised for not listening to the grievances of the trained cadres and failing to implement the home-going programme. The "political report" of Leballo painted the picture of the situation within the PAC in this way: "The military leadership attributed its failure to implement the directives relating to home-going programme to personal differences within the party leadership and to the fact that the home front was not ready to receive the trained cadres contrary to the developing revolutionary situation throughout the country."[157]

Even in the months before the conference the Leballo faction had been able to gain the upper hand in the High Command, when it replaced Ntantala and his faction with new recruits, who had joined the PAC in 1975 and after the Soweto riots. Leballo would later justify this action on the ground that the Ntantala faction walked out of the Central Committee meeting held on 22 January 1978, because they were supposedly afraid to account for their failures.[158]

What was the reaction of the Ntantala camp to the whole saga and chain of events? Even before the Arusha Conference, Ntantala and his faction had already written what might be regarded as slanderous and disparaging reports about the PAC in general and the Leballo faction in particular. In one document, "The Profiles of Leballo's Gang", Ntantala indicated that Leballo and his faction, which included David Sibeko, Edwin Makoti, Elias Ntloedibe, Victor Mayekiso, Vusi Make and Mogale "Jimmy" Mokgoatsoane, should actually be blamed for everything that had gone wrong within the PAC.[159] In the other document, "The Crisis in the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania",

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157 The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC of Azania), The Consultative Conference held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania on 27th June-02 July 1978, p. 17. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatje, in possession of author.

158 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 114.

159 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 605:

Ntantala and his faction indicated how Leballo had staged what was called the "November 1977 coup d'etat", by replacing the old High Command leadership with the new one, consisting mostly of his young favourites, who had joined APLA and the PAC after the Soweto uprising. Ntantala said that Leballo's actions and his divisive leadership style were motivated by greed and cravings for "absolute personal power" to control the whole army, to the extent that he violated the PAC's founding principles of "collective leadership, common responsibility and democratic centralism."[160] Moreover, the areas of their differences centred around their collective decisions and co-ordinated actions, handling of internal relations, cadre policy, party building, army building, waging armed struggle and the handling of external relations.[161]

This means that PAC members failed to agree on the key areas of waging the national liberation struggle. The conclusion may be reached that the two factions held different viewpoints as far as their political, organisational and military policies and strategies were concerned.

The clashes between the two factions had worsened when APLA produced a new document in 1975, called "The New Road of Revolution". The significance of the document lies in the fact that it outlined the new strategy of APLA and ideology for the PAC.[162] Although it was adopted in 1978 by the Central Committee of the PAC, the implementation of its ideas was hampered by leadership conflicts, which emerged when a struggle between the two opposing lines intensified. The struggle was between Ntantala's faction with its Marxist-Leninist ideology and Leballo's faction with its Maoist and nationalist ideology.

Besides discussing the alleged failure of the High Command to wage the struggle, the Arusha Conference also spent a great deal of time deliberating on the problem of

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The Profiles of Leballo's Gang, pp. 1-44.

160 The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), T.T. Ntantala, The Crisis in the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, 4th April 1978, p. 9. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatje, in possession of the author.

161 PAC, T.T. Ntantala, The Crisis in the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, 4th April 1978, pp. 9-16. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatje, in possession of the author.

162 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 24: New Road of Revolution, pp. 1-3.

Marxism-Leninism within the PAC. The Ntantala camp felt that the conference was also meant to "exterminate all and any Marxist ideological influence from the movement", as "all our other 'crimes' were also 'traced' back to our Marxism-Leninism."[163] These clashes also highlight the existence of rival ideological camps within the PAC.

"The New Road of Revolution" indicated an ideological deviation from the old emphasis of the use of the peasantry in guerrilla warfare in the rural areas and the acceptance of the vanguard role the urban-based working class could play in the South African liberation struggle. Because this document turns away from the Maoist revolutionary strategy to Leninist tactics, Ntantala or one of his supporters may have been the author. As briefly discussed in the document, "the working class is the most militant and revolutionary class in society. The very condition of life of the working-class makes it the most consistent and irreconcilable opponent of the capitalist order. Their position in production connects the workers with the future of the whole society."[164] This means that some PAC leaders, like the ANC, recognised the potential that well-organised workers in the urban areas could play in the future urban guerrilla warfare.

Although the "New Road of Revolution" supported the Marxist-Leninist ideology, it did not mean that the PAC gave up their old strategy of using the peasants in the villages during guerrilla warfare. According to Leballo, guerrilla activity in the underground movement should "take root in the villages and towns in the form of cells from which the guerrilla obtains supplies, recruits and information."[165] The significance of the role of the peasants is also highlighted in "The New Road of Revolution", where it is stated that "the essence of revolution in the struggle of our people for national liberation is the people's armed insurgency - the agrarian revolution of the landless. It is the revolution of the landless peasants in the countryside and the landless labourers, who are employed on white farms, who must confiscate by force of arms, the present land held by white

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163 The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania Consultative Conference Held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, on 27th June to 2nd July 1978, p. 27. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatje, in possession of the author.

164 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 24: New Road of Revolution, p. 69.

165 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 607: Potlako Leballo (Acting President), Political Report: Address to the PAC Consultative Conference in Arusha, June 27th -2nd July 1978, p. 8.

usurpers, for distribution among themselves."[166] The insistence of the PAC to use the peasants in the rural areas in their revolutionary struggle was understandable, since the movement was outspoken and forthright in reclaiming land for the Africans.

What needs to be stressed at this point about "The New Road of Revolution" is that it is not clear what practical influence it had on the strategic direction of APLA, except introducing aspects of Marxist-Leninist ideology, which added to mounting tension within the PAC. It indicated that the problem of irreconcilable ideological differences in the PAC was alive and could not be discounted or dismissed easily. Before he was toppled in 1979, Leballo always favoured Maoism at the expense of Marxism-Leninism. Ntantala's faction, which pursued Marxism-Leninism, was victimised by the Leballo camp. In addition to these two vociferous camps, there was a third main ideological strand of the so-called pure nationalists, who followed African nationalism.[167] Although this ideological strand also existed within the PAC, it did not cause much tension like the other two, which were the main focus of attention at that stage. What also became clear later on, was the fact that even after the departure of Leballo, these ideological differences continued to plague and worry the PAC. They continued to cause ideological confusion, frustrations, disruptions, and divisions, which led to crises within the movement.

From the point of view of Leballo's faction, the consultative conference was successful in that it endorsed the expulsion of Ntantala and his faction. The expulsions temporarily ended the power struggle within the PAC, which had erupted at times into violent clashes between members of rival factions. Those expelled with the former deputy chairman of the PAC and APLA Commander-in-Chief, T.M. Ntantala, were P. Gqoboshe, T.M. Bidi, Z. Mboko, N. Tshongoy, Z. Mokoena and J.N. Jako.[168] Their expulsion brought to an end, though temporarily, the conflict which came to be known as a "two-line" struggle.[169] In addition, the Leballo faction received a backing from the other

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166 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 24: New Road of Revolution, p. 59.

167 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76, File PAC: Observation and Recommendations to the Consultation Conference Outline, n.d. p. 6.

168 *Daily News*, Tanzania, 5 July 1978.

169 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC,* p. 103. See also *Azania News*, vol.13, nos. 7&8, July-August 1978, p. 1.

section of the PAC leadership and the rank and file, who made a statement in their support by saying that the movement was not forced to fight "only against the enemy", which was the regime, but was also compelled to deal with a continuous struggle of waging war "against the enemy within".[170] This means that the notion of the "internal enemy syndrome" existed in the PAC. Anybody or any group which did not abide by the majority decisions of Leballo and his faction was in danger of being labelled as the enemy of the PAC and the liberation struggle.

After his expulsion from the PAC, Ntantala and about seventy of his fellow expellees formed a party of the working class, called the Azanian People's Revolutionary Party (APRP) in England in 1979. The new party planned to be the "vanguard proletarian party", whose aim would be to provide the older national liberation movements like the ANC, PAC, BCM and UMSA (Unity Movement of South Africa) with the sort of direction and "guidance" the Communist Party could not give when it came to issues that affected the workers.[171] However, this new party was unable to realise its aims, as it was re-integrated into the PAC by the movement's new leader, who wanted to unite various factions.

In the meantime, the relations between APLA and the Central Committee of the PAC continued to deteriorate after the Arusha Conference of 1978. Divisions and lack of discipline in the army and leadership of the PAC continued unabated. Complaints increased about Leballo's leadership style of acting without consultation and lack of accountability. For example, he appointed Vusi Make to the crucial position of Administrative Secretary and Zwai Malgas as Chief Representative to Nigeria without consulting other members of the Central Committee or following established procedures. Furthermore he encouraged the attitude among the trained cadres that the army or APLA "was an independent organ."[172] It was not surprising, therefore, that the army

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170 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 607: Statement in Support of Motion Calling for the Expulsion of Eight Central Committee Members at the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, in Arusha United Republic of Tanzania on the 27th June to 2nd July 1978, p. 3.

171 "Azania People's Revolutionary Party, Communiqué: Political Programme Manifesto", in T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge, vol. 5*, pp. 294-295.

172 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, pp. 126, 144.

developed a hostile attitude towards the leadership of the PAC.

When the PAC celebrated its twentieth anniversary on 6 April 1979 at a rally in Dar-es-Salaam, a group of cadres humiliated Leballo with boos and jeers in the presence of other dignitaries who attended the occasion. Shortly thereafter, the Central Committee announced that Leballo was immediately leaving for medical treatment and that a Presidential Council consisting of Vusi Make, David Sibeko and Elias Ntloedibe would act during his absence.[173]

The Tanzanian government and the African Liberation Committee were also convinced that Leballo was the cause of many problems of the PAC. As a result, they intervened in order to help the movement to restore order and discipline amongst its cadres and leadership. The intervention of the Tanzanian government in the PAC only worsened the situation. Two hostile camps emerged again between the political and military wings of the PAC.[174] The majority of the cadres who had joined APLA after the Soweto riots were still loyal to Leballo and distrusted the leadership of the triumvirate. The cadres from APLA regarded themselves as an independent entity, which was accountable only to Leballo as the chairman of the Central Committee. As a result, the loyalists of Leballo in the army conspired to assassinate the members of the Central Committee. They even threatened other cadres, whom they suspected of being loyal to the Central Committee. During these times of chaos and uncertainties in the PAC, David Sibeko was assassinated on 1 June 1979 by a group of PAC cadres. Six APLA cadres, Titus Soni, Daniel Monogotle, Gilbert Ntlapho, Abraham Tatu Reuben Zwane, James Hlongwane and Shindo Mahlangu were convicted of manslaughter and each of them received a sentence of ten years imprisonment.[175]

After the assassination of David Sibeko, the APLA cadres who were loyal to Leballo continued to unleash a reign of terror within the PAC. They were determined to eliminate the remaining members of the Central Committee of the PAC. According to Henry Isaacs, these cadres despatched "hit squads" to Dar-es- Salaam to eliminate

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173 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, pp. 156-157.

174 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart, *From Protest to Challenge, vol. 5*, p.293.

175 *Daily News*, Tanzania, 2 February 1981.

Central Committee members or torture other cadres suspected of being loyal to the new leadership. The Central Committee had no access to camps such as Ithumbi and transit centres such as Bagamoyo and could not even provide protection to the cadres who were loyal to them. Cohen Ntuli, a former commander, was physically eliminated and buried in a shallow grave in the camp.[176]

The division of the movement into two camps was accompanied by a general lack of direction and decisive leadership. However, in the midst of this chaos, the Central Committee convened an "extra-ordinary plenary" on 6 October 1979 in Dar -es Salaam in Tanzania, where they took a decision to expel Leballo from the PAC. He was expelled for violating the decisions of the Arusha conference of June to July 1978 and the meeting of 30 April and 1 May 1979, which established the Presidential Council. Furthermore, the press release indicated that Leballo had actually been expelled for his "reactionary and counter-revolutionary activities" and "ineffectual leadership and divisive activities", which had thrown the organisation "into a spurious crisis which culminated in the murder of Comrade David Sibeko."[177]

Thus, the chaotic exile existence of the PAC under Potlako Leballo came to an end. The failures of the PAC were attributed to him. However, the other leaders cannot be exonerated from helping Leballo to impede and sabotage the role of the PAC in the liberation struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa. The following questions become pertinent to the exile history of the PAC, particularly during the leadership of Potlako Leballo: "Is it possible for one man, P.K. Leballo, to so mesmerise an entire National Liberation Movement that all its members become blinded to his derailment of our struggle? Is there none amongst the entire movement with either the intelligence or courage to question or challenge P.K. Leballo if he is derailing the struggle?"[178]

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176 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p.182.

177 PAC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76, File PAC: Press Release: Plenary Meeting of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania Expels Potlako K. Leballo, Dar-es-Salaam, 10 October 1979, p. 1.

178 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 607: Statement in Support of Motion Calling for the Expulsion of Eight Central Committee Members at the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, on the 27th June to 2nd July 1978, p. 3.

Nevertheless, the failures and problems of the PAC during the era of Leballo hampered the attempts of his successors, when they tried to focus properly on the aims of the liberation struggle. It was, therefore, not surprising when the PAC was still trying to repair the damages caused by Leballo and his supporters at the time of the unbanning of all the liberation movements in 1990. As a result of these internal wrangles, it was hardly surprising that the PAC was rendered incapable of responding properly to political developments inside South Africa.

From the foregoing, it becomes quite obvious that the PAC was not yet ready to return its trained cadres to South Africa in the 1970s. Even the resurgence of political activities spearheaded by the BCM and the outbreak of the Soweto riots failed to elicit enough response from the PAC to be able to exploit the opportunities to make its presence felt inside South Africa. Instead , the PAC was overshadowed during this period by its arch-rival, the ANC, which was more visible inside the country. To a great extent, the PAC's limited efforts in exploiting the situation in South Africa can be attributed to its leadership crisis, especially Leballo's inability to unite factions within the movement.

5.7 INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

At the international level revolutionary movements such as the ANC and the PAC usually received political, economic, military and humanitarian support, which was essential for maintaining the momentum of the struggle. According to Booyse, the revolutionary movement "relies on the external dimension for legitimacy and acceptance and therefore undertakes specific actions in order to be recognised as a legitimate representative of the target state and its population. It is thus the primary objective of a revolutionary party in the international dimension to isolate and discredit the government of the target state, and if possible replace the target government internationally."[179]

In the light of this statement, to what extent did the ANC and the PAC use the international platform to gain international credibility and respectability as well as to isolate the South African government? It is crucial to determine to what extent the ANC

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[179] W.J. Booyse, *The Concept "People's War" in the Strategy of the ANC and the PAC: A comparative analysis*, p.146.

and the PAC went out of their way to increase their influence and support both inside and outside South Africa. In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to analyse, compare and evaluate the manifestations of the strategies used by the ANC and the PAC in trying to win foreign help and isolating South Africa.

5.7.1 The role of the ANC

According to the ANC, African and world support and solidarity were valuable and essential elements in the campaign against apartheid.[180] In fact, it was extremely important that there should always be a world-wide campaign to win the masses of the people to the struggle for the complete eradication of racialism and apartheid. As the Acting President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, put it: "We in the African National Congress have always believed that the honourable task of freeing South Africa rested firmly with the people of South Africa themselves. The task of international organisations was to assist the liberation movement."[181]

However, the destruction of the apartheid system was not easy. According to the ANC, there are many reasons why South Africa was able to sustain and maintain the system, although it was against the general trend of the African revolution and world development: Firstly, the South African regime systematically built and consolidated an alliance, referred to by its opponents as the "unholy alliance", which consisted of Smith (Rhodesia), Caetano (Portugal) and Vorster (South Africa). The common political and military objectives of this alliance were to prevent the spread of the African revolution and to thwart it wherever it might appear in Southern Africa. South Africa was regarded as the main pillar of that alliance. Secondly, the alliance received support from the more dangerous "alliance of the imperialists", which included, amongst others, the USA, Britain, France, West Germany and Japan. According to the ANC, "they deliberately tried to build Southern Africa, and South Africa in particular, into a fortress of racialism

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180 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 6: Political Report in the Internal Circular of the Plenary meeting of the Central Committee, n.d., p. 2.

181 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Box 17: Statement of Mr Oliver Tambo, Acting President-General of the African National Congress of South Africa to the United Nations Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa, Stockholm, Sweden, 17 June 1968, p. 5.

and colonialism, the last post of imperialism in Africa and a ready springboard to endanger the sovereignty of African states and threaten world peace. South Africa is the treasure house of the imperialists, but more than that, it is one of their most important strategic military bases and ally in their global strategy directed against the forces of national liberation, democracy and peace".[182]

This means that the ANC was not fighting against the regime alone, but it was also waging a struggle against a powerful combination of allies, which strengthened and supported her. Furthermore, the ANC believed that it was a well considered strategy of the imperialists to help build the military power of South Africa with their materials and technical knowledge.[183] The logistic support for South Africa's military plan and activities came from Western powers like Britain and France. According to Oliver Tambo, France surpassed other powers in supplying the regime as it "behaved like a country accustomed to kill with blissful callousness, people for whom the life of a Black man is something that is neither here nor there." This constant supply of arms to South Africa enabled her to adopt a military posture of pushing her defence line to the north in order to be ready to strike against countries to the far north which harboured freedom fighters, such as Zambia and Tanzania. For this reason, South Africa built a major military base in the Caprivi Strip, in the northernmost tip of Namibia. Tambo compared South Africa's new strategy to that which Israel was using against her Arab enemies, which was called "the doctrine of anticipatory counter-attack" or "carrying the war into enemy's territory".[184] In this way, South Africa would be able to launch swift attacks against her enemies. Acts of terror, conducted against the neighbouring countries of South Africa like Botswana and Mozambique, could be linked to this strategy. Thus the ANC confronted a rich and materially well-equipped enemy, which was able to count on the support of many great nations.

In spite of this serious problem, the ANC believed that destruction of the apartheid

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182 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 1: Political Report of the National Executive Committee to the Consultative Conference of the ANC, Morogoro, April 1969, p. 23.

183 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 1: Political Report of the National Executive Committee to the Consultative Conference of the ANC, Morogoro, April 1969, p. 23.

184 Oliver Tambo, "Apartheid - A Threat to Africa's Survival", in United Nations, Center Against Apartheid, Notes and Documents, No. 22/71, May 1971, p. 5.

system, hated by the overwhelming majority of South Africans and condemned by the entire world, could only be accomplished in the course of determined and united action by the people, employing every form of struggle, including guerrilla warfare and other forms of armed conflict.[185] According to Oliver Tambo, the legitimacy of the struggle of the oppressed South Africans was of vital importance to them. He said: "We are not engaged in an exhibition, a demonstration or a campaign to draw attention to our grievances. We are beginning a struggle for power."[186] Tambo was aware that the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed South Africans was not going to be easy against the most powerful regime in Africa.

Although the ANC was unsuccessful to return its trained cadres between 1966 and the middle of the 1970s, it did manage to increase its international standing and put pressure on the South African regime to end its racial policies. The ANC and other liberation organisations such as the PAC were given observer status in 1973 by the OAU. This enabled the ANC to attend and take part in all activities of the OAU, although it could not vote on any of its resolutions. As a result, the ANC was afforded legitimacy as well as support from Africa. In this way the ANC was able to get a platform to appeal for support or condemn the racial policies of South Africa. For example, at a special Ministerial Council meeting from 7 to 10 April 1975, convened by the OAU for the purpose of discussing the South African situation, Oliver Tambo praised the OAU for heading the call of completely isolating South Africa internationally in diplomatic, political, military, economic and cultural spheres. The status of the liberation movements in Africa seemed to have led to the weakening of the regime's international ties and worsened its economic problems by reducing its markets. Tambo believed that B.J. Vorster, the prime minister of South Africa in the early 1970s, was compelled by the policy of the OAU "to try and break out of the isolation into which he was being forced and extend South Africa's sphere of influence from its immediate environment in

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185 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 6: Political Report in the Internal Circular of the Plenary meeting of the Central Committee, n.d., p. 2.

186 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Box 17: Statement of Mr Oliver Tambo, Acting President-General of the African National Congress of South Africa to the United Nations Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa, Stockholm, Sweden, 17 June 1968, p. 14.

Southern Africa into the heart of independent Africa."[187] He was referring to Vorster's so-called "outward policy" and the establishment of formal relations between South Africa and Malawi.

Tambo's argument seemed to confirm what was happening in South Africa's diplomatic realtions with the African states. Vorster's policy of having dialogue with mainly Francophone countries (states which had formerly been colonies of France) seemed to bear fruit in the early 1970s. The Ivory Coast in 1970 indicated that it would call a meeting of other African states to consider direct dialogue with South Africa. Countries such as the Ivory Coast, Guinea and Mali declared their interest in talking to the "reasonable" government of Vorster. To highlight his eagerness to talk to any African head of state, Vorster even paid dramatic visits to the Ivory Coast and Liberia. However, in spite of appearances, the policy of dialogue failed dismally. At its meeting in June 1971 the OAU rejected dialogue with the Republic of South Africa, despite the fact that some countries were in favour of it.[188] In fact, the rejection of dialogue with South Africa was a victory for the liberation movements, especially the ANC.

On the international front, the ANC gained support when the socialist countries expressed concern over the new developments concerning détente (easing of tensions between South Africa and certain African states) and indicated their desire and readiness to help the ANC to counter the plans to sabotage and betray the liberation struggle of the oppressed. These socialist countries were led by the Soviet Union as a super power and they also included India. They were prepared to use their representatives in all international organisations like the UNO and others to support the ANC's views. This means that the ANC had to keep them fully informed of its political developments so as to enable them to successfully counter any negative influences against the movement or even lobby support on their behalf. At the same time, the ANC planned to further mobilise public opinion in Western Europe and the Middle East. In the Middle East, especially, the ANC wanted to take concrete steps to publicise its material

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187 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and statements, 1975–1980, Box 17: Statement by O.R. Tambo, Acting President-General of the African National Congress of South Africa to the 9th Extraordinary Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of African Unity, Dar es Salaam, 7–10 April 1975, p. 5.

188 H. Kenney, *Power, Pride and Prejudice*, p. 227.

in Arabic countries and try to make full use of those countries and organisations which supported them to assist them to win the remaining countries and organisations like Algeria, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the Peace and Solidarity Committee in Iraq and others.[189] In the same vein, the ANC also examined the possibility of using the South Africans who belonged to or had connections with the International Muslim Community for missions to the Arab countries. The latter step would be taken in order to fully utilise the resources at the disposal of the movement for the benefit of the liberation struggle. This was a clear indication that the external mission of the ANC took the initiative in mobilising public opinion against the South African regime.

A major development that influenced the armed struggle of the ANC in the mid-1970s was the sudden collapse of the Portuguese colonies in Angola and Mozambique. The Portuguese administration in Angola and Mozambique had to withdraw in 1975 in favour of the revolutionary movements, called the MPLA and FRELIMO respectively. It became apparent that history would not be on the side of the South African regime, as the country would be exposed to the territories now under the rule of the friends of the liberation movements of South Africa. Hence, Vorster now decided to seek détente (to ease tension) in black Africa. The aim was to have better relationships with black Africa as a whole, with the hope that they could help facilitate good relationships between South Africa and the new governments in Angola and Mozambique. However, the ANC believed that Vorster's détente strategy was prompted by the collapse of Portuguese colonialism and the threat to white rule in Southern Africa. According to them, the main objectives of the strategy were:

- "The smashing of the MPLA and the imposition on the Angolan people of a government formed by an alliance of the imperialist-backed organisations, the FNLA and UNITA.
- The imposition of a neo-colonial solution in Zimbabwe, which would preserve Zimbabwe as an enclave of imperialist domination.

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189 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 23: Draft Resolution on International Solidarity, 17 May 1975 p. 4.

- To crush SWAPO, the national liberation movement in Namibia in the process of using Namibia as a military staging post for the invasion of Angola.
- To stem the tide of militant mass upsurge in South Africa by a show of force in Angola, brutal repression of the resistance at home combined with the offer of "independence" to the Transkei as a step towards meeting the political aspirations of the African majority."[190]

In this way, the South African regime wanted to create friendly states among the independent African countries, with the aim of cutting off the South African liberation movements from all sources of assistance. However, this counter-revolutionary strategy did not succeed. Instead, the supporters of the ANC, like the Soviet Union and Cuba, came to the rescue of the MPLA in Angola. They were able to stop the South African troops and their allies such as Jonas Savimbi of UNITA and Holden Roberto of the FNLA from occupying Luanda in Angola.

As indicated previously, the independent governments of Angola and Mozambique were supported by the Soviet Union and this made them the natural allies of the ANC and the SACP. For this reason, it became easy for the ANC to acquire camps such as Fundo, Nora Katenga, Quibaxe, Pango and Quatro. More importantly, the ANC came into closer contact with SWAPO, the Namibian liberation movement. Both of them had a common enemy in South Africa. This new development exposed the vulnerability of the South African regime to these liberation movements.

South Africa's vulnerability was also exposed by the independence of Mozambique. As a result of its proximity to the Transvaal in South Africa, the ANC decided to establish its forward bases in this country. Senior ANC-SACP-Mkhonto leaders arrived in Maputo, Mozambique to set up new MK headquarters. They included people such as Joe Slovo, Ruth First, Reg September, Albie Sachs and Fred Dube. The ANC used its training facilities in Mozambique to infiltrate its cadres into South Africa. According to Barrel, most of the attacks conducted after 1976 were masterminded from Mozambique by a unit of MK called "operations unit" under Joe Modise, who was assisted by Joe Slovo

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190 *Phakati*, No. 1, June 1976, p. 4.

and Jacob Masondo.[191] The head of the South African Security Police, Brigadier C. Zietsman, confirmed this assertion when he made some major admissions that bore testimony to the increasing effectiveness of the ANC guerrillas in the Eastern Transvaal. In a radio broadcast, he admitted that the police had "clashed several times with terrorists of the banned African National Congress since police intensified their border operations in the eastern Transvaal in June last year."[192] The strategy of using this route was aimed at stimulating popular revolutionary activity inside South Africa and to lay the foundation of a people's war. In this way, the activities of the ANC internationally were directed at obtaining support for the armed struggle against the South African regime.

The UN also offered the ANC the platform to expose the evils of apartheid and racism in international forums. The ANC's efforts to end the racial policies of South Africa were advanced when it was granted observer status by the UN in 1974. This status entitled the ANC to take part in the work of the General Assembly and all its organs, although it was not allowed to vote. The Special Committee Against Apartheid, which was a sub-organ of the General Assembly, was important in raising debates concerning the apartheid policies of South Africa. Important events, which have special significance in the liberation struggle of South Africans, such as 21 March (International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) and Soweto Day (16 June) were given prominence. Since the ANC enjoyed observer status in the UN, it realised that it was absolutely important that it should take part in the sessions of the UN and its agencies. It decided to make a proper study of these different agencies so as to enable its delegates to make sure that their voices were heard and decisions were taken in their favour. Equally important was the decision taken, that only sessions where items concerning South Africa were to be discussed, should be attended.[193] This shows that the ANC carefully analysed the UN environment in order to make all efforts to ensure that the movement was represented in all relevant international conferences where the situation in South Africa was to be discussed. The conclusion reached here is that the ANC was able to use its human resources and time wisely in order to derive maximum benefits in its aims

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191 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 32.

192 "Guerrilla War Develops in Apartheid's Heartland", *New African*, June 1978, pp. 35-36.

193 AWC, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 23: Draft Resolution on International Solidarity, 17 May 1975, p.2.

of getting world-wide support and isolating South Africa.

In 1977 the ANC gained a major diplomatic victory, when it succeeded to obtain a compulsory UN arms embargo against South Africa.[194] This victory was scored despite the fact that some states were observing this embargo, whilst others were flouting it, especially France and Britain. The introduction of an arms embargo against South Africa coincided with a greater willingness by Britain and the European Economic Community (EEC) countries to introduce selective sanctions against South Africa if it continued to disregard international calls to end its apartheid policies and human rights violations. This willingness among the Western governments to distance themselves from South Africa was prompted by their desire to curb Soviet influence in Africa. The international opposition to the Pretoria regime had been boosted to such an extent by the Soweto uprising and the death of Steve Biko, that the former allies of South Africa in their own diplomatic interest had to seriously reconsider their position. The ANC renewed its call for the total isolation of South Africa, and in particular, to the ending of those connections, e.g. foreign investment, which supported and strengthened the apartheid system. As a result, a priority area for the ANC was to prevent the further export of capital to South Africa by asking the international community to sever whatever links existed with the regime.[195] Nevertheless, the ANC's campaign for economic sanctions against South Africa would continue to gain momentum in the 1980s. In this regard, the international anti-apartheid networks played an important supporting role.

Furthermore, on the international front the ANC became involved in the activities of the oganisations whose aim was to mobilise the people against imperialism, such as the World Peace Council, the Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation, the Afro/Asian/Latin American Solidarity organisation and many others. These organisations did not only promote the ANC's liberation struggle, but they also propagated it in a favourable light. The ANC believed that it was impossible and dangerous to distance the struggle of South Africans from that of the peoples of the world. They argued that their participation

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194 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 59.

195 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 28: African National Congress (SA), Submission on the Question of Foreign Investment in South Africa, 30 November 1977, p. 3.

in these bodies was useful, because "not only do we join the powerful mass of mankind fighting precisely what we are fighting for against the same enemies, but we are able to disseminate information about our struggle thereby winning and strengthening ourselves and our allies ..."[196] In this way the ANC hoped to win both moral and material support for their struggle. There were other equally important international organisations, which were ready to support the ANC as far as its struggle was presented in the light of their respective fields of activity, such as the religious, socio-cultural, humanitarian, legal and other fields. The support of an international religious body such as the World Council of Churches (WCC) was important in the liberation struggle of the ANC. In 1971, the WCC's central committee endorsed the decision taken by its executive committee in September 1970 to give $200,000 to the Special Fund to Combat Racism. The ANC was allocated $ 10,000 to help launch the Luthuli Memorial Foundation, which was aimed at informing world public opinion about alternatives to the apartheid system.[197] In this way, the ANC was able to get a good network of bodies, which enabled it to isolate and apply enough pressure against the South African regime.

Another factor which enabled the ANC to increase its influence and standing in South Africa and internationally was the backing it received from the Soviet Union. Since the Morogoro Conference of 1969, the SACP had gradually tried to gain much influence over the ANC, but more specifically over Umkhonto and the armed struggle in South Africa. This tendency was consolidated during the latter half of the 1970s, when several meetings took place between the ANC-SACP Alliance and officials of the Soviet Union. According to Booyse, the ANC delegates were treated like officials of an important government during these meetings.[198] Undoubtedly, the Soviet Union regarded the ANC as the only legitimate liberation movement in South Africa, as no such treatment was given to other liberation movements. This line of thinking was supported by the Soviet-orientated international solidarity conference held in Lisbon in July 1977, at which the

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196 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 01: Political Report of the National Executive Committee to the Consultative Conference of the ANC, Morogoro, April 1969, p. 13.

197 "World Council of Churches, Profile of the African National Congress, January 1971", in South African Democracy and Education Trust (SADET), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa,* p. 570.

198 W.J. Booyse, *The concept "People's War" in the Strategy of the ANC and the PAC: Comparative analysis*, p. 281.

resolution recognising the ANC as the sole authentic international representative of the South African people was passed.[199]

Even developments inside South Africa, like the emergence of the BCM and the Soweto riots, were exploited by the ANC to its advantage and this action substantially aided to strengthen the ANC's position at the United Nations and contributed to the quick isolation of South Africa internationally. The ANC was particularly keen to forge links with the Black Consciousness Movement and its related groups, because it believed that they were the sole surviving groups inside South Africa which could be used to advance the aims of the struggle. Even the South African Communist Party, which was cautious at first, decided to abandon its negative attitude towards the BCM and accommodated the new movement just like the ANC. The ANC decided to establish direct links with the BCM. According to the ANC, the first patriots from the ranks of the BCM approached them as part of breaking through the "legal limits" after the SASO led strike of 1972.[200] Despite the fact that they disagreed on certain issues, the ANC welcomed them since "they sought to continue the struggle as underground operatives and as armed combatants", as the ANC was the only movement which "provided the logical base for them to fulfil these objectives".[201]

The end of the Soweto uprising saw activists, formerly influenced by the BCM, aligning themselves with the ANC. Among the best known were Curtis Nkondo, Jackie Selebe (now the Commissioner of Police in South Africa), Nkosazana Dhlamini-Zuma (now the Minister of Foreign Affairs in South Africa), Barney Pityana and Zwelakhe Sisulu. Barney Pityana said that he would like to "table a position to their conference which expresses clearly that BCM membership should join the ANC" at a meeting in Lusaka in 1979, attended by O.R. Tambo, Moses Mabhida, Johnny Makatini, Yeyedwa Zungu and

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199 C.J.B. Le Roux, "Pan-Africanism in South Africa", *South African Journal of African Affairs*, Volume 9, No. 1, 1979, p. 40.

200 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 34: Alfred Nzo, Statement of the National Executive Committee of the ANC on Some Questions of the Unity of the Patriotic Forces of South Africa, 4 July 1979, p. 10.

201 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, II, 34: Alfred Nzo, Statement of the National Executive Committee of the ANC on Some Questions of the Unity of the Patriotic Forces of South Africa, 4 July 1979, p. 10.

Seretse Choabi from the ANC and Barney Pityana himself as a leader of the BCM.[202] Barney Pityana describes the reasons why many people, who had left South Africa in the 1970s, preferred to join the ANC rather than the PAC: "What actually caused this move in the first place was the fact that many of our chaps who left the country in '75, '76 didn't join PAC – at that stage they went to join ANC. So that within ANC there were many people in BC who were beginning to find a different way of working, with a commitment to coming back home. There was a link there. But the second thing is that ANC was demonstrably, visibly the more viable of the two organisations".[203]

The movement of the BCM people to join the ANC in big numbers could be regarded as an indication of support of the ANC's inclusive ideology of African nationalism. This was an important victory for the ANC, considering the fact that these BCM members did not join the PAC in big numbers despite the fact that their ideologies emphasised black consciousness. According to Oliver Tambo, "they are learning politically, they are in ANC and they have broadened their vision of the issues in South Africa."[204]

The ANC further built up its internal prestige by absorbing the youths, who had fled South Africa after the Soweto uprising. A number of these youths joined MK and carried out attacks inside South Africa. The resurgence of the ANC's armed struggle at the time when internal activists experienced repression at the hands of the regime's forces was "a source of pride, with which a growing number of South Africans came to identify themselves with."[205] According to Alfred Nzo, "all attempts to detach this generation from other generations of our fighting people and hence weaken the revolutionary movement as a whole, have failed."[206] This shows that the ANC attaches a great deal of

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202 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A III, 34: Memo on Meeting Regarding Barney Pityana, p. 1.

203 Barney Pityana, "Then Who is Our Enemy", in J. Frederickse, *The Unbreakable Thread*, p. 130.

204 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 29: The Black Scholar Interviews: Oliver Tambo, January-February 1978, p. 33.

205 N. Alexander, *Lessons of Struggle,* p. 94.

206 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 34: Alfred Nzo, Statement of the National Executive Committee of the ANC on Some Questions of the Unity of the Patriotic Forces of South Africa, 4 July 1979, p. 11.

importance to the generation of 1976 for having played an important role in its resurgence of political and military activities in South Africa.

According to Lodge, the ANC's influence on popular political perceptions increased tremendously since 1976 as a result of the revival of political activities in the African community. The ANC sought to maximise its appeal to the broadest possible section of the populace by beginning a campaign to draw attention to itself through appeals to symbolic loyalties that had been missing since the early 1960s. Besides popularising the Freedom Charter, newspapers like the *Post* ran articles on the "Release Mandela" Campaign. Moreover, a new student association called the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), also helped to inform the public about the Freedom Charter. Even among the Indians support for the ANC increased as a result of the resurgence of political activities by the Natal Indian Congress, which was critical of the pro-government South African Indian Council.[207]

As a result, the ANC's standing among South Africans was increased at the expense of other liberation movements. Moreover, the ANC made good progress regarding revolutionary propaganda at home and even abroad. The National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting of the ANC in 1975 in Morogoro felt that the question of the infiltration of books inside South Africa was an important political question.[208] To achieve this aim, the meeting requested the NEC to approach fraternal organisations like the Natal Indian Congress, the Coloured Labour Party and sympathetic whites to help in the infiltration and distribution of ANC books and materials. The presence in the country of underground publications such as *Vukani*, *Sechaba*, *Isizwe*, *Matla-Mandla*, *Inkululeko* and *Searchlight* testified to the growing capabilities of the ANC and enhanced its prestige.[209]

Even though the ANC was able to increase its standing internally and internationally, it still experienced internal problems which affected its image. There were serious

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207 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, p. 341.

208 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 3: Matters Arising from the Revolutionary Council Meeting, March 11-13, 1975, Morogoro for the Attention of the National Executive Committee, p. 1.

209 *Phakati*, No.1, June 1976, p. 5.

dissensions, which involved dissatisfaction with the role of the SACP within the exiled movement. The main problem centred around the growing division between the communists and the non-communists in the ANC-SACP alliance. In fact, the problems were very similar to those that inspired the PAC to break away from the ANC in 1959. The Morogoro Conference of 1969 did not bring about an immediate improvement to the situation within the ANC, despite the fact that it was held to solve the problems of the movement.

The opening up of the ANC membership to the minorities (non-Africans) at the Morogoro Conference caused problems. A significant group of ANC dissidents, who called themselves the African National Congress of South Africa, or African Nationalists, complained against the number of whites in senior positions in the ANC. This group was led by Ambrose Makiwane and Alfred Kgokong Mqota and claimed that they promoted their oganisation because they wanted "to review the 1969 Morogoro decision which opened ANC membership to all non-african exiles of South Africa and thereby led to the domination of the Tambo clique by the South African Communist Party of South Africa led by Joe Slovo and Yusuf Dadoo."[210]

The ANC was extremely unhappy when this group exploited the ceremonies connected with the unveiling of the tombstone of Robert Resha in London as a platform to criticise the movement. As a result, the ANC expelled them because they were doing harm to the international standing of the movement: "It is not surprising that what this group is doing is being given prominent headlines in the white South African press and is a source of comfort to all the enemies of our liberation struggle both inside and outside South Africa. Nor is it surprising that the main thrust of their activities is in London and other Western Capitals."[211] According to Alfred Nzo, the ANC Secretary-General at that time, the silence that the movement maintained seemed to have encouraged the clique to "shout their slanders louder and louder, and publish and distribute documents which challenged the very basis of the policies and decisions of our organisation."[212] To

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210 ANC, UFH, Lusaka Mission, Box 76: Bogus Organisations (PAC), African National Congress (African Nationalists), Newsletter No 1, June 1970, p. 1.

211 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 3: Draft circular on the clique of dissidents, n.d. p. 1.

212 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 23:

counter their splitting activities, the ANC expelled them immediately and accused them of promoting factionalism and encouraging a crude form of racialism. As a result, the ANC encouraged its members to be on guard against divisive tendencies within its ranks by not behaving in this manner: "In our own ranks we must cease to tolerate these and other tendencies which are allied to them. Loose talk, gossipy methods of criticism, disloyalty in the form of spreading disaffection against leaderships of the entire movement by destructive, negative and irresponsible chatter (in some cases with people completely outside our movement) all this must be guarded against with the utmost vigilance."[213] Even though the ANC wanted to protect the unity of the movement, the expulsion of these dissidents raised the question as to whether the movement was tolerant of dissenting views or not.

Another attempt of discrediting the ANC came from those BCM members who were opposed to any unity with the movement. According to Oliver Tambo, there were "attempts to create a movement rival to ANC and to keep this movement different. There is talk about black consciousness movement which is not the same as ANC and which has got somehow ultimate objectives different from those of the ANC."[214] This group of BCM members, based outside South Africa, resisted the efforts of the ANC to forge a common approach and build up a common action in the struggle against the regime. However, the ANC decided to establish direct links with those inside the country. To their disappointment and embarrassment, the ANC did not expect that the external representatives of the BCM would be involved in "a campaign of lies, calumny and distortion" against them.[215] Their anti-ANC stand received a boost when a PAC member, Geoffrey Sefako Mokaka, made the following slanderous allegations against the ANC:

Statement of African National Congress (SA) on the Expulsion of a Conspiratorial Clique, by the Secretary -General, Alfred Nzo, 11 December 1975, pp. 1-2.

213 MA, UWC, ANC Office in London, Box 3: Draft document on guarding the unity of the whole movement, 1975, p. 5.

214 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 29: The Black Scholar Interviews : Oliver Tambo , January-February 1978, p. 33.

215 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 34: Statement of the National Executive Committee of the ANC on Some Questions of the Unity of the Patriotic Forces of South Africa, p. 8.

- They usurped and neutralised SASO since the Turfloop riots of the students in 1973.
- They killed Abram Tiro and its deputy representative, John Dube, to deceive the OAU and the whole world that the ANC was a victim of Vorster's tyranny.
- They poached Soweto youths after the June 1976 uprising for rallies in Western Europe to make the world believe that the ANC was involved in the riots. In this way, the ANC was able to get a lot of financial support.
- They enlisted the services of Miss Nkosazane Dlamini (now minister of foreign affairs in the ANC government), who claimed to be SASO president, as an ANC underground activist.[216]

These were serious allegations against the ANC, which seemed to have been motivated by jealousy aimed at preventing any attempts of uniting the ANC and BCM. Even Barney Pityana, who had a secret meeting with ANC leaders as indicated in this chapter earlier on, was concerned that "if the ANC does not accept BCM people, he will not be able to prevent the use of BCM as a third force."[217] However, the ANC was not seriously affected by these allegations and negative comments. The point that it gained many of the BCM members, whose ideology was diametrically opposed to theirs at this stage, attested to the fact that their policies were accommodative and inclusive. The comments of Oliver Tambo are instructive and illuminating in this regard: "No one else can found an organization in South Africa unless they follow the path we have taken. And there's no better definition of the objectives in South Africa than the program of the ANC. As you become more and more serious about what you are doing, you can identify the objectives and your methods of struggle the way we are doing. And that is why from the early days of what is called black consciousness you have the young people moving into this stream of the ANC."[218]

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216 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 605: Geoffrey Sefako Mokaka, Who is the Authentic and Legitimate Representative of the People of Azania?, 7 November 1977, pp. 12-14.

217 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A III, 34: Memo on Meeting Regarding Barney Pityana, 1979, p. 1.

218 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979, ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 29: Black Scholar Interviews: Oliver Tambo, January-February 1978, p. 34.

The next group of dissenters who were expelled from the ANC was the Okhela (Zulu word meaning ignite or spark) Organisation. According to Lodge, the organisation was established in Paris in 1973 with the knowledge of Tambo, who wanted to neutralise the growing influence of communism (SACP) in the movement.[219] The organisation intended to use white revolutionaries to overthrow the South African regime.[220] However, the organisation dissolved after the arrest of Breyten Breytenbach in South Africa in 1975. The ANC was embarrassed by Breytenbach's comments and negative publicity during the trial. Consequently, it denied any involvement with Okhela. The movement disintegrated after the trial of Breytenbach and some of his friends. But the fact that the ANC refused to let the Okhela group circulate Afrikaans literature in South Africa confirmed a growing suspicion that the movement was prejudiced against Afrikaans. Nevertheless, the fact that Okhela was unable to dilute the communist influence in the ANC indicated how strong the bond between the SACP and the ANC was.

The other group which exposed the intolerance of the ANC towards differing views consisted of South African Marxist academics at English universities in the early 1970s. The group included people like Martin Legassick, Rob Peterson, David Hemson and Paula Ensor. They were Marxists like many other members of the ANC-SACP alliance and Mkhonto. But, they criticised the work of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), in which some of them were involved. According to Lodge, they criticised what they saw as the "petty-bourgeois orientation of the ANC's exile leadership" and the dominant perception of what SACTU regarded as their function, which was, to direct workers to Umkhonto we Sizwe. After their expulsion from the ANC, the group continued to operate. Besides making contact with other trade unions in other countries, the group distributed literature inside South Africa, which criticised the Freedom Charter, the armed struggle and Umkhonto we Sizwe. Lodge believes that this group also failed dismally to change the nationalist movement into a purely working class organisation.[221] This means that this group, like the others, did not succeed to change the policies, ideology and strategies of the ANC.

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219 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 340.

220 H. Pike, *A History of Communism in South Africa*, p. 447.

221 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, pp. 340, 342.

Yet, despite the negative setbacks that caused internal problems in the ANC, the internal and the international climates seemed to be operating in favour of the movement. Even dissension within the movement failed to paralyse it. Instead the movement seemed to have succeeded to a certain extent in mobilising support against the South African regime. This success suggested that the leaders of the movement were able to handle diplomacy well.

5.7.2 The role of the PAC

Like the ANC, the PAC believed that the struggle on the international level was essentially one of isolating the South African racist regime and winning support for the struggling African masses. The reason for seeking this support, according to the PAC, was because their struggle had to "reckon with the military might of the racist regime, the strong and booming character of its economy, the boundless array of its legal and physical machinery of repression, the seemingly granite unity of all sections of the white community, and the seemingly hopeless and helpless position of the oppressed and their division into manageable tribal partitions."[222] Even though the PAC needed outside help desperately, they had always maintained that the task of liberating South Africa from white tyranny and imperialist exploitation was one that should be carried out by the oppressed themselves. This attitude of the PAC could have been the main contributing factor to the movement's weaker links with the anti-apartheid networks in the Western world as compared to the ANC. As a result, the PAC firmly believed that the greatest service the international community could render to the oppressed South Africans, would be to help them to increase the fighting capacity and firepower of their cadres.[223]

A very important consideration in the PAC policy was that South Africa was not an independent sovereign country. According to them, the granting of independence to White South Africa in 1909 had not been a process of decolonisation. Rather, it had been a process of consolidating and intensifying imperialism and colonialism, as blacks

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222 Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC of Azania), *Time for Azania*, p. 80.

223 PAC of Azania, Principles of a United Front in People's War, p.5.

were not part and parcel of the new government.[224] Thus the PAC did not recognise the independence of South Africa under its minority government. Its creation was regarded as being based on evil intentions against South Africans.

Like the ANC, the PAC did not only oppose apartheid vigorously, but also the involvement of international imperialists. In the UN, where it was also afforded opportunities to attack and expose the racial policies of South Africa, the PAC condemned the actions of Western powers. It believed that the Western countries connived with the apartheid regime for their own imperialist gains. The argument of the PAC was that "the intransigent attitude of Western multi-national corporations who continue to build up their investments in South Africa, and the equally stubborn refusal of their governments to tell them otherwise, is the only setback we face in the struggle to isolate the anti-apartheid regime."[225] Without these investments, the PAC believed that the economy of the apartheid regime would collapse and its demise would be hastened.

However, the PAC valued the efforts of the UN against the regime and its support of the liberation struggle. The PAC used the platform at the UN to influence world opinion and gain sympathy. For example, in 1973 in Oslo at the United Nations International Conference of Experts for the Support of Victims of Colonialism and Apartheid, the PAC delegation suggested the following diplomatic actions, which should be taken against the South African regime: The UN must support and adopt the OAU resolution rejecting dialogue with the South African regime and seriously consider expelling South Africa from the world body, and it must make all its important resolutions against apartheid mandatory and thus close any loop holes that exist. In addition, the following political and economic action was suggested: The UN must take urgent steps to prevent the setting up of a relationship of preferential treatment for South Africa by the European Economic Community, and it must compile and widely distribute a list of all the foreign companies doing business in South Africa and encourage member states to stop dealing with such companies as long as they or their subsidiaries continue to operate in South

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224 PAC of Azania, Principles of a United Front in People's War, p.5.

225 J. Grobler, *A Decisive Clash? A Short History of Black Protest in South Africa, 1875-1976*, p. 155.

Africa.[226]

The suggestion of the PAC seemed to have succeeded when the Afro-Asian-bloc within the UN put pressure on the organisation and South Africa was expelled from the General Assembly in 1974. Moreover, the PAC together with the ANC, enjoyed observer status within the General Assembly of the UN and participated in all the work of the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid from 1974. Furthermore, various conferences on the situation in South Africa were sponsored by the United Nations. During these conferences, South Africa's evils were exposed, whereas the PAC and the ANC were praised. However, hostility between the ANC and the PAC was prompted by competition between them for support within the Special Committee Against Apartheid and within the entire UN. This was because there were many countries within the UN which recognised the ANC as the only legitimate liberation movement in South Africa. As a result the Special Committee found itself supporting financially conferences from which the PAC was excluded. To avoid worsening hostility between the ANC and the PAC the Special Committee decided in 1979 to provide financial support for conferences organised by the OAU, which recognised both as liberation movements, whether or not either of them was not taking part in such conferences.[227]

On the question of sanctions, the PAC consistently demanded that the regime be isolated from the rest of the international community and appealed to it to apply sanctions against the country. In this regard, the movement invariably demanded the implementation of comprehensive mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa. For this reason, the PAC was critical of members of the European Economic Community (EEC) for the very close diplomatic, economic and even military ties that existed between most of them and the South African regime. In particular, the PAC directed its anger and disappointment at France, which violated the UN sanctions against the supply of arms and the sale of war materials to South Africa. The movement wanted the Western countries to abide by the UN resolutions, which called for an embargo on trade, economic relations and supply of arms and for cutting diplomatic and cultural relations with South Africa. According to David Sibeko, "it long ago ceased to be enough merely

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226 PAC, *Time for Azania,* pp. 77-80.

227 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC,* p. 58.

to condemn the apartheid policies of the South African white minority regime, while proceeding to provide the financial and material support which makes it possible for the Pretoria Fascists to perpetrate those sanguinary crimes. It is sheer hypocrisy to grant an undertaker a licence to kill and turn around and criticise him for doing a roaring business."[228] Like the ANC, the PAC scored a major diplomatic victory when it succeeded to secure a UN arms embargo against the South African regime in 1977, even though some Western powers continued supporting Pretoria.

The PAC valued the support of the OAU against apartheid South Africa and its backing of the liberation struggle in general. As a result of its Pan-Africanist orientation, the PAC based its struggle on African support. Therefore, the PAC expected much from the formation of the OAU. It received full observer status from the OAU and the OAU's Liberation Committee provided much-needed financial support to the movement. Because of this support, the PAC regularly attended the meetings of the OAU. At these meetings, the PAC was able to get Africa's support against the inhuman system of apartheid.

In the OAU, the PAC normally questioned the legal status of the South African regime. At the 9th Extra-Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers, which was held in Dar-es-Salaam, the capital of Tanzania, in 1975, the PAC delegation made a statement requesting the re-examination, re-adjustment and re-definition of the political status of the oppressed Africans whom it defined as subjects living in conditions of slavery in the 20th century. For this reason, the PAC wanted that South Africa's legal and international status should be clarified, as there was vacillation regarding its political status and the application of the right of self-determination. The whole of Africa did not agree on the matter of the status. As a result, at the 27th Ordinary Session of the OAU in Mauritius in 1976, the PAC expressed the belief that the political status of the oppressed Africans was that of colonised people and explained its position in this way: "Our view is that the colonial authority that the South African Government was granted over the black is present and is clearly visible in the social practice of that country…We also hold that it is

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228 D.M. Sibeko, "The Final Thrust Against Apartheid is Nearing: Speech Made in Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on 26 October 1976", in United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid, *Notes and Documents,* no.34/76, December 1976, p. 10.

correct to define white alien domination as being consistent with colonial rule."[229] By explaining the status of South Africa in this way, the PAC hoped that the OAU would not only interpret the history of South Africa correctly, but would also support the oppressed people in their struggle to gain national liberation.

The PAC also used the OAU to expose the evils of apartheid and its tricks. For example, the PAC firmly believed that South Africa was deeply affected by her isolation from the rest of Africa economically and psychologically. To avoid this problem, the South African regime tried to undermine the stand of the OAU's member states by asking independent African states to enter into "dialogue" with her. This invitation caused some confusion amongst the African states. However, the PAC was happy that the OAU heads of state did not accept dialogue with South Africa. Instead, they reiterated their stand of helping the liberation movements of South Africa in their struggle against South Africa. Their support was summed up by Togo's Minister of Foreign Affairs, who said: "We will never shake the hand stained with blood of Africans extended by the racist regime in South Africa."[230]

Even though the PAC wanted to eclipse the ANC internationally, the deepening crisis of leadership within the movement prevented such a move. At the International Conference of Experts for the Support of Victims of Colonialism and Apartheid in Southern Africa, held in Oslo, Norway from 9-14 April 1973, Leballo made an attempt to stop the PAC's fast deteriorating position by calling for international support and positive action against racism and white rule in South Africa.[231] However, his speech failed to restore his already dented reputation or rekindle hope and interest in the PAC. His visit to Ghana in 1974 and the granting of observer status in the General Assembly of the UN in the same year did not really succeed in improving the image of the PAC as a serious

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229 The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), South Africa's Legal and International Status: A Statement of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania Adopted as an official Document of the OAU by the 27th Session of the Council of Ministers in June 1976, Mauritius, p. 1.

230 PAC, *Time for Azania, 1976*, pp. 77-78.

231 P. Leballo, "The Struggle in South Africa and the Need for International Assistance: The PAC View", in United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid, *Notes and Documents,* no. 13/73, pp. 1-9.

liberation movement.

The beginning of student riots in the tertiary institutions of South Africa in 1973 triggered important new political developments in South Africa. The ANC started immediately with its recruitment efforts amongst the students and the BCM members. On the other hand, the PAC seemed to be lacking the capacity to "run anything more than a minimal recruiting effort inside South Africa."[232] The internal political and organisational crisis within the PAC seemed to have rendered the movement incapable of issuing a clear-cut response to political developments inside South Africa. What was more surprising was the fact that, ideologically speaking, the BCM's approach was more in harmony with that of the PAC than that of the ANC. Both of them emphasised the primacy and dominance of the Africans in South African politics. However, the PAC failed to seize this opportunity of the beginning of a new era in African political awareness and response, especially in the 1970s when the BCM was at its peak.

Both the ANC and the PAC had substantial interests in claiming responsibility for the events of June 1976 and the unrests that followed. Their claims were understandable because this was the most dramatic period of mass political resistance in South Africa after a period of about fifteen years. The PAC's inability to respond to political developments in South Africa, such as the Soweto riots, evoked much criticism. Although, both the ANC and PAC were blamed for their lack of support and aid during the riots by the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC), more criticism was levelled against the PAC.[233]

In the period after the 1976 riots, the endemic instability within the PAC, caused by leadership crises, not only affected the international solidarity work, but also influenced negatively the ability of the PAC to launch an armed struggle or even establish an effective presence in South Africa. The disintegration of the PAC seemed to be real. Once more, Potlako Leballo's inability to unite and rebuild the movement seriously

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232 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol.5, p. 141.

233 See the views of the SSRC chairman, Tebello Motapanyane, on the liberation movement which was available to them in *Phakati*, no. 4, April 1977. See also T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, pp. 334-343; H. Holland, *The Struggle*, pp. 194-195.

affected its performance and existence. How did Leballo's conduct as a leader harm the credibility of the PAC? It is of crucial importance to note that Leballo's sole pre-occupation seems to have been to maintain personal power. He was not only accused of being untrustworthy to his own colleagues, but also of being undisciplined, deceitful and divisive. The tendency of other leaders to seek favours from Potlako Leballo added to the prevailing corruption and confusion, which dented the image of the movement internationally.[234]

When the ANC tried by all means to maintain a disciplined leadership and quietly pursued international contacts and resources in order to take care of its young exiles, the PAC was hopelessly disorganised and ill-prepared to absorb the influx of the 1976 youth. The new recruits spent a long time living in overcrowded conditions in cheap hotels in Dar-es-Salaam and camps, because the PAC lacked contacts and facilities in friendly neighbouring countries. Even the militarily trained cadres could not be infiltrated into South Africa because the PAC lacked weapons and facilities in neighbouring countries. As a result, the majority of them remained idle in the camps like the Itumbi camp in Mbeya, Mgagao in Iringa and Chunya.[235] All these camps were in Tanzania. In all of them food was not enough, training facilities were poor and general conditions led to poor health, diseases and even death.[236] Letlapa Mphahlele, one of the APLA commanders, explained the extremely bad conditions of the Itumbi camp in Mbeya: "No matter how healthy dogs and domestic pigs were when they arrived, they would get sick and die within weeks. The dogs wailed hauntingly, as if communicating some evil message, before they die. But the dog loving cadres never tired of bringing the pets to the camp and to their miserable end. Only wild pigs thrived in this wild place."[237] It was not surprising, therefore, when the frustrating economic and social conditions in these camps incited rebellion in the cadres.

Besides the unsatisfactory conditions in the camps, there was also a power struggle

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234 PAC, T.T. Ntantala, The Crisis in the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, 4 April 1978, pp. 15-16.

235 K.M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution: The Exile History of the Pan Africanist of Azania (South Africa): 1960-1990*, p. 251.

236 T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 308.

237 L. Mphahlele, *Child of this Soil - My Life as Freedom Fighter*, p. 100.

between Potlako Leballo, who was the Acting President of the PAC, and his deputy, Templeton Ntantala. The new recruits played a very important role in the power struggle of the two leaders. What was surprising was that Leballo had been Ntantala's main supporter, as he was responsible for his promotion to the deputy chairmanship of the Central Committee and the position of the commander-in-chief of APLA. With the passage of time, Leballo started to distrust him as a rival. Ntantala accused Leballo of "poisoning the young untrained minds" of Soweto recruits.[238] As a result, the recruits found themselves in a precarious position, where they had to choose between the two factions. Leballo cleverly used the grievances of these recruits by accusing Ntantala of refusing to integrate them into APLA's activities. On the other hand, Ntantala accused Leballo of building his private army out of these new recruits.[239]

Competition between Leballo and Ntantala worsened in November 1977, when Leballo engineered an uprising by new APLA recruits from the Itumbi camp in the district of Mbeya in Tanzania. This competition seemed to be around the control of the army. Ntantala had the support of the old guard, including other military leaders, as explained earlier in this chapter. On the other hand, Leballo went out of his way to endear himself to the new recruits. According to Ntantala, Leballo achieved this by acting without consultation with other Central Committee members and army commanders, when he began "frequenting our camp, made inciting speeches there, told our army men that he was giving them the right to go to Dar or Mbeya without bothering to get appropriate authority, and that nobody had the power or right to stop them or to refuse them permission to leave the camp".[240]

Matters reached a boiling point when the new recruits attacked the residences of all the other Central Committee members and High Command in November 1977. Knives were used and the injured, who included Leballo, were taken to the hospital in Morogoro. The anti-Leballo group, which wanted to form the Azanian Liberation Front, actually demanded the resignation of Leballo from the PAC leadership. These events were

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238 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol.5, p. 291.

239 T. M. Ntantala, *The Crisis in the PAC*, pp. 4-8. See also H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, pp. 90-91.

240 T.M. Ntantala, *The Crisis in the PAC,* pp. 4-5.

reported widely in local papers like the *Daily News* or broadcast through the radio. Even the PAC rival, the ANC, was watching these developments within the PAC with keen interest. Reddy Mazimba, the ANC representative in Tanzania, remarked: "Leballo organised his thugs to protect him against his opponents. His opponents demanded that he be removed from PAC leadership. This they were telling the host government and this embarrasses the government because the PAC is a loved baby. The authorities here want PAC because they want to force unity with us. The anti-Leballo group also feels that the reason ANC does not want unity, is because of Leballo. They say Leballo is corrupt and that he misuses money."[241]

The turmoil and disorder, which occurred during the fighting, attracted the attention of the Tanzanian police, the Prime Minister's office and the OAU Liberation Committee. The intervention of the Tanzanian government and the OAU Liberation Committee restored some semblance of order temporarily within the PAC. A meeting, which was chaired by Leballo and attended by "all the victims of stabbing and terror, kidnapping and confiscation, and 'a representative few' of the culprits," the Central Committee and the office staff in Tanzania, was held. The removal of Ntantala's High Command and its replacement by a new one was considered. Subsequent meetings held to stop the crisis within the PAC did not succeed. However, the Central Committee meeting of December 1977 resolved that a consultative conference be held in April 1978 to stop the imminent split and develop a policy to manage the cadres. Nevertheless, at the Central Committee meeting of 22 January 1978, Leballo caused a stir when he announced the decision that "the final and total overthrow of the whole High Command, that is, commanders both in Tanzania and out on the Home Front or in our Forward Posts" had been concluded.[242] Surprisingly enough, this instruction of Leballo was endorsed by the Arusha Conference, which was in session between 27 June and 2 July 1978. This decision seemed to be against the spirit and purpose for which the conference was convened. Ndugu H.M. Mkwizu said that it met, amongst others, in order to "reach unanimity."[243] However, what finally transpired at the conference was that Ntantala and

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241 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76, PAC File: Reddy Mazimba, Report on the Situation in the PAC, 30 December 1977, p. 1.

242 T. M. Ntantala, *Crisis in the PAC*, pp. 6-8.

243 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 PAC Political Material, A 2675, III, 607: Ndugu H.M. Mkwizu (CCM Headquarters), Address to the PAC Consultative Conference

his staunch supporters were expelled, as has already been indicated earlier in this chapter. They formed their own party, the Azanian People's Revolutionary Party (APRP), in August 1979.

The most important question at this stage is: How did the conference affect the PAC internationally? Primary sources indicate that the PAC did not only experience internal wrangles and strife, but it was also embarrassing its host, Tanzania, and its main backer internationally, the OAU. Prior to the conference, the Tanzanian government moved the general PAC membership to a place called Mashata in the Bagamoyo direction from Masala village. The fencing of the camp was financed by a donation of 5 million dollars from the Scandinavian countries. The Tanzanian government seemed to have made this move in order to make sure that its own people were not going to be disturbed by possible disruptions and fights amongst the PAC members during the movement's elections of its leadership in April 1978. At this point in time, the OAU Liberation Committee refused to give the PAC material support, despite the fact that Norway had donated two million dollars to the movement. The executive secretary of the Liberation Committee, Colonel Hashima Mbita, told Leballo that they were not going to receive money, because the PAC still had many trained cadres in Tanzania, who were doing nothing.[244] This means that the OAU realised that it was useless to continue giving money to a liberation movement, which was not active in waging the liberation struggle.

On the eve of the Arusha conference there were speculations in diplomatic circles that the anti-Leballo faction might win the elections. This perception was strengthened by the propaganda campaign launched by the Ntantala group, which wrote two documents, *The Crisis in the PAC* and *The Profiles of Leballo's Gang*. Moreover, the Ntantala group even went to the embassies in Dar-es-Salaam to seek political recognition from the socialist countries. At the same time, the Ntantala group was engaged in serious discussions with the Tanzanian government in order to try to expose Leballo, with the hope that they would be recognised as the true PAC leaders. However, it seemed as if they misplaced their trust in the OAU Liberation Committee under Colonel Hashima

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in Arusha, 27 June to 2 July 1978, p. 1.

244 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76, File PAC: Report on the Situation in the PAC, n.d., p. 1.

Mbita and the Tanzanian government, who seemed to be supporting the Leballo group. In fact, it became clear after the conference that Colonel Mbita, with assistance from the Tanzanian government, was given permission to organise the PAC conference with the purpose of "uniting the PAC in support of Leballo who is very much favoured by certain leaders in the Tanzanian government."[245] This means that the roles of the Liberation Committee of the OAU and the Tanzanian government were questionable in supporting Leballo. Their failure to take a neutral stand in the squabbles of the PAC enabled Leballo to survive in leading the movement for a long time despite fierce opposition to his presidency.

The death of Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe in February 1978 worsened the situation within the PAC. According to Henry Isaacs, the death of Sobukwe removed an influential person because as long as he lived, the PAC could use him as national figure comparable to Nelson Mandela of the ANC.[246] However, the ANC did not hero-worship and eulogise Nelson Mandela as the only important leader of the movement. They had other layers of leaders, who raised the performance of the movement militarily, politically, diplomatically and even inside South Africa. On the other hand, the PAC members regarded Sobukwe as the only saviour of the movement. For this reason, they always spoke of him as if he was the only leader who could have raised the level of performance of the movement. It was not surprising, therefore, that his death aggravated the struggle for leadership.

Even though Leballo and his colleagues believed that the Arusha conference was successful, as they had allegedly achieved unity and progress, the problems of the PAC escalated very fast. After the Arusha conference, problems like lack of effective leadership, lack of organisation, lack of authority and discipline became rife as will be explained later. These problems were caused by the fact that various groups within the Leballo faction began to compete for control of power within the Central Committee and APLA.

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245 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76, PAC File: Reddy Mazimba, PAC, 4 July 1978, p. 1.

246 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC,* p. 91.

According to Henry Isaacs, there was serious financial mismanagement within the PAC. The completion of the Bagamoyo project, which was the transit centre in Tanzania, was disrupted by the fact that the Department of Finance could not provide the necessary information about all the financial contributions received from 1977.[247] This was in spite of the fact that the PAC received donations from donors such as the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Dar-es-Salaam. The lack of progress at Bagamoyo undermined the credibility of the PAC amongst its donors.

However, the most serious threat to the stability of the PAC was posed by the cadres of APLA, who lacked discipline. Leballo made use of his militarily-trained cadres to subject loyal PAC members and leaders to a reign of terror. Because of Leballo's divisive leadership style, there was a lack of cohesion and trust amongst the members of the Central Committee. As a result, the Central Committee lacked the power and machinery to enforce discipline. The Central Committee could not discipline members of the High Command, who failed to carry out instructions from the Military Command, to which they were answerable. Moreover, the Central Committee failed to take action against militarily-trained cadres, who refused to leave Dar -es-Salaam and return to the camp at Ithumbi or those who were not trained and refused to go back to the Bagamoyo transit camp.[248] However, the most serious case of indiscipline was the one of the forty APLA cadres who invaded the Central Committee's residence at Kijitonyama. The Tanzanian government summoned Leballo to a meeting to account. It also demanded that these cadres should be removed from the country within two weeks. Furthermore, Leballo was warned that there should be no repetition of indiscipline within the PAC.[249] This step was a serious threat to the existence of the PAC in Tanzania.

Another embarrassment of the PAC took place on 8 April 1979 in Dar-es-Salaam, during the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the PAC. The commemorations were well-attended by the representatives of other liberation movements and organisations such as ZANU-PF, the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party in Tanzania, the OAU Liberation Committee and members of the diplomatic corps. When the turn of Leballo

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247 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 138.

248 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 112.

249 B. Leeman, *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania,* vol.3, p. 83.

came to address the gathering, there was a demonstration against him. The cadres jeered, heckled and shouted him down as they said: "For twenty years you have been wrecking this organisation."[250] This incident seemed to have been instigated by someone who was against Leballo. According to B. Leeman, Henry Isaacs was the man who "got some revenge" against Leballo, as he persuaded about twenty young men that Leballo had been responsible for preventing them from going for educational scholarships in West Germany.[251] This indicates that the image of the movement meant little to some of the PAC members, as long as they could advance their interests and agendas. Even more serious was the fact that, outside the place where the commemorations were held, there were also physical clashes between the cadres who supported Leballo and those who opposed him. This incident not only humiliated Leballo and the PAC, but it also showed how the organisation was divided into hostile camps.

After this embarrassing incident, the situation of the PAC in Dar-es-Salaam deteriorated rapidly. Several cadres in Dar-es-Salaam were assaulted and harassed by Leballo's supporters under the command of Justice Nkonyane. According to Henry Isaacs, Leballo was aware of these incidents and did very little to stop them.[252] Because no action was taken by Leballo to discipline his loyal supporters, the cadres who were persecuted appointed a committee to represent them. The committee visited various embassies in Dar-es-Salaam, the OAU Liberation Committee and the Tanzanian government to expose their plight. Once more, their reports gave credence to the belief that the PAC was full of political instability and internal problems.

Against this background, the Central Committee of the PAC, which included, amongst others, Jimmy Mokgoatsane (Administrative Secretary), David Sibeko (Director of Foreign Affairs), Vusumzi Make (Director of Pan-African Affairs), Elias Ntloedibe (Director of Publicity and Information), Edwin Makoti (Secretary of Defence), Erret Radebe (Director of Finance) and Henry Isaacs (Director of Education and Manpower Development) met on 30 April and 1 May 1979 to decide on the removal of Leballo from

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250 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 152.

251 B. Leeman, *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania*, vol.3, p. 83.

252 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 154.

his position as the Chairman. The meeting was unanimous in calling upon Leballo to relinquish his position as chairman of the Central Committee and the leader of the PAC. Because they did not want to get rid of him unceremoniously, the members of the Cental Committee said that he was resigning due to ill-health. In his place a three person Presidential Council, consisting of Vusumzi Make, David Sibeko and Elias Ntloedibe, was appointed. The council would consult with Leballo from time to time. As a result, Leballo departed for London where he would get better medical treatment.[253]

However, Leballo's departure from Tanzania did not solve the problems of the PAC. Rather the organisation drifted rapidly into an anarchic and chaotic state. Because the High Command was not properly nominated, it continued to unleash its reign of terror against the enemies of Leballo. Cadres supporting the Central Committee were assaulted and threatened with death in camps in Dar-es-Salaam. The Central Committee requested the detention of the members of the APLA High Command and the removal of all the trained cadres brought to Dar-es-Salaam by Leballo and their transportation to the camp in Ithumbi. Vusi Make as chairman of the Central Committee requested a thorough investigation of the following incidents:

- Members of the High Command were associated with the arms and ammunition (10 pistols and 10 sub-machine guns) that had been brought into Tanzania by Leballo. They had been given to them and the possibility existed that they might be used to assassinate members of the Presidential Council. It is possible that they could have been used in the murder of David Sibeko and harassment of other cadres.
- Justice Nkonyane and Tshepiso Gumbi escaped from prison in South Africa, allegedly with the assistance of a South African policeman, Samuel Ngubeni, who escorted them into Tanzania through Swaziland and Mozambique. This incident raised the problem of security lapses within the movement, which could endanger the movement itself and Tanzania as a host country.[254]

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253 T. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds), *From Protest to Challenge*, vol.5, p. 293. See also B. Leeman, *Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania*, p. 83.

254 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76, File PAC: Letter written by Vusi Make, Chairman of the PAC Central Committee to the Principal Secretary, Ndugu H.M. Mkwizu, in the Office of the Prime Minister in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 4 June 1979, p. 1.

This indicates that the situation in the PAC at this stage had become extremely dangerous and explosive. There was no sense of unity and direction as the leadership of the movement was weak and unsteady.

Even more damaging to the credibility of the PAC was the assassination of its prominent leader, David Sibeko. The murder of Sibeko took place after Leballo had been forced to resign. The decision to expel Leballo was apparently not accepted by the army (APLA). It was not surprising, therefore, that the army was not prepared to work together with the Presidential Council. For this reason, PAC trained cadres loyal to Leballo wandered in the streets of Dar-es-Salaam without authority from the new political leadership and the army's command. However, it could have been possible that the army's command was secretly supporting their cadres against the Presidential Council.[255]

The circumstances surrounding the assassination of David Sibeko are obscure. However, from the reports of the trial it seems that Sibeko was shot on 1 June 1979 by the former bodyguard of Leballo, Titus Soni.[256] The incident took place at Sea View flats in the city of Dar-es-Salaam in the presence of Sibeko's colleague, Vusi Make. The termination of money and other supplies to APLA seemed to have caused all the problems. Sibeko came from New York, where he was the Director of Foreign Affairs and the PAC's UN representative, to come and address the Soweto cadres over the problems of money and other supplies. The meeting was called by the cadres, who wanted to discuss the internal situation in the movement. The meeting was held at Sea View flats around midnight. Apparently, arguments took place and in the ensuing scuffles, David Sibeko was gunned down. The six APLA cadres, whose names are mentioned earlier in this chapter, were arrested and imprisoned for a fifteen-year gaol sentence.

The assassination of David Sibeko attracted a great deal of negative media publicity about the existence of the PAC as a serious liberation movement. Even before the assassination of Sibeko, the image of the PAC had already been dented by incidents of

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255 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 191.

256 *Daily News*, Tanzania, 1 June 1979.

indiscipline and continuous internal wrangles amongst its leaders and cadres. According to Henry Isaacs, Sibeko himself reported to the Central Committee on 16 September 1978 that there was an urgent need for the PAC to "polish up its image".[257] He referred to the CBS TV programme, broadcast in the United States, which praised the ANC's infiltration of its cadres into South Africa at the time when the PAC was experiencing serious internal problems. The implication was that the PAC was not doing well as a liberation movement as compared to the ANC and should end its internal problems and concentrate on infiltrating its cadres into South Africa.

As a result of these events, morale in the PAC was very low. In addition, the international standing and prestige of the organisation was deteriorating very fast. Leballo's loyalists in the military conspired to assassinate other members of the Central Committee. This threat became real when seven PAC cadres left their camp in Chunya and came to Dar-es-Salaam to "look for members of their leadership."[258] However, they could not find the place where the PAC leadership was. They then decided to stay at Keko Area for two days and two nights. They became uneasy when they heard rumours that the Tanzanian police were looking for them. At the same time, Leballo in London heard that PAC leaders were preparing for a plenary session. He immediately sent a telex to the Executive Secretary of the OAU Liberation Committee, Colonel Hashim Mbita, informing him that he "is the Chairman of the PAC and no Conference should take place without him, he must be present otherwise the Conference will have no meaning."[259] During the first week of October 1979, the plenary meeting that Leballo suspected was finally held as the "extra-ordinary plenary of the Central Committee of the PAC of Azania." The meeting disowned and expelled Leballo from the PAC and accused him of causing chaos and instability in the movement, which ended in the murder of David Sibeko.[260]

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257 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 182.

258 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 7, File PAC: Letter from Reddy Mazimba, Chief Representative of the ANC in Tanzania, which informed Alfred Nzo, Secretary-General of the ANC, about the Developments within the PAC in Tanzania, 1979.

259 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 7, File PAC: Letter from Reddy Mazimba, Chief Representative of the ANC in Tanzania, which informed Alfred Nzo, Secretary-General of the ANC about Developments within the PAC in Tanzania, 1979.

260 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76, PAC File: Press Release: Plenary Meeting of

After the assassination of David Sibeko, the OAU Liberation Committee considered de-recognising the PAC. The murder of Sibeko was regarded as enough evidence of showing the internal problems of the PAC. As a result, the wisdom of continuing to support the PAC was questioned. At the meeting of the OAU Council of Ministers and Summit of Heads of States in Monrovia, the capital of Ethiopia, in 1979 African states, which included countries such as Angola, Algeria and Benin actually called for the de-recognition of the PAC.[261] The Angolan Foreign Minister, Paulo Jorge, in particular, called upon the OAU to recognise the ANC as the only legitimate liberation movement of South Africa. However, the sympathisers of the PAC, like Liberia, persuaded other members not to force the question of de-recognition of the PAC.[262]

The next meeting where the PAC delegation was embarrassed was the Council of Ministers and Summit of Heads of States and Governments of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which was held in Havana, Cuba in September 1979. The PAC was represented at this meeting by Ngila Mundane (Chief Representative of the PAC in the UK and the European continent), Lesaoana "Sam" Makhanda (from the PAC Observer Mission of the UN) and H. Isaacs (Director of Foreign Affairs). At this meeting liberation movements reported on the progress made in their liberation struggles. According to Henry Isaacs, the PAC was forced to be on the defensive as the "internal problems which had wracked the PAC were an acute embarrassment."[263] To embarrass the PAC delegation even more, Samora Machel of FRELIMO did not hesitate to declare his support for the ANC as a sole and legitimate liberation movement of South Africa. This means that the impression was created publicly that the PAC was not a serious and genuine liberation movement of South Africa.

5.8 PROSPECTS OF UNITY BETWEEN THE ANC AND PAC

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the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania Expels Potlako Leballo, p. 1.

261 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 7, File PAC: Letter from Reddy Mazimba, Chief Representative of PAC in Tanzania, which informed Alfred Nzo, Secretary-General of the ANC about the Developments within the PAC. See also H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 186.

262 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, pp. 187-188.

263 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 188.

Towards the latter half of the 1970s, the prospects of unity between the ANC and the PAC were becoming remote. This situation had arisen because of the diametrically opposed views held by the liberation movements with regard to unity.

Firstly, the ANC was in favour of establishing a non-racial South African nation. Through this tradition, the ANC developed a positive attitude towards unity in action of all the forces which were fighting the South African regime. For this reason, the policies, programmes and tactics of the ANC were developed to unite all the people who strove to destroy completely the apartheid regime and sought to create a new society in which all South Africans would live in peace, progress and prosperity. As a result, they made it clear that there was a big role in the liberation struggle for coloureds, Indians and whites. According to the ANC, the maximum unity of all anti-racist and anti-fascist forces could only start in South Africa and would entail the following:

- "The formation of a United Front where this is called for with those organisations opposing fascism within the country and who are willing to enter into an agreement with us on a common minimum political programme.
- United action with any groups unwilling to enter into such a United Front, but who are willing to co-operate with us and confront the enemy on certain issues.
- The formation and encouragement of legal organisations to ensure the greatest possible mobilisation of the masses of the people and safeguarding the legality of these organisations to the extent that this is possible and consistent with correct revolutionary tactics.
- Ensuring that at all times the masses of our people understand and are familiar with the principle objectives of our strategies and tactics, so that the people, whether organised or not, follow the broad principles of our struggle."[264]

These were broad principles upon which the ANC based its unity with the other liberation movements and organisations. They were actually the blue-prints or strategies that the ANC used to challenge the regime in the 1980s. However, unity between the ANC and

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264 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76, File PAC: Statement of the African National Congress of South Africa on the Question of Unity with the Pan Africanist Congress at the 31st Meeting of the Organisation of African Unity, Dar-es Salaam, June 1978, p. 22.

the PAC was out of the question in the 1970s, since the two organisations were reluctant to talk to each other. More significantly, it appeared that the ANC knew quite well that they were much stronger than the PAC. They could go it alone without the PAC. In any case, with all the embarrassing fights and quarrels in the PAC, they were probably not regarded as a suitable ally by the ANC.

On the other hand, the PAC under Leballo expressed its desire to unite with the ANC. However, their understanding and view of forming a united front contrasted sharply with that of the ANC. For example, the PAC argued that the only pre-condition or qualification for any organisation to join a united front should be "the acceptance of armed struggle as the main form of struggle."[265] They regarded the armed struggle as a higher form of resistance as compared to boycotts, strikes and other forms of struggle, which played a secondary role to them. Interestingly enough, the ANC used these methods that the PAC viewed as being secondary in order to get support and popularise itself inside South Africa. According to the PAC, the parties that made up the front should "agree on grounds common to all" and base their unity on equality and mutual respect among the groups or movements. In other words, domination of such a front by any member would cause problems. Leballo was more forthright and direct as he said that each organisation should retain its own identity and autonomy despite their co-operation in certain defined areas.[266] In fact, it seems as if the PAC was reluctant to co-operate and unite with the ANC for fear that it might be dominated or even swallowed up. The way that Leballo and the PAC viewed co-operation and unity contrasted sharply with that of the ANC, which stated that unity at the top should result in unity in action at the base. More importantly, the PAC's activities towards the end of the 1970s amounted to little more than a lobby movement, which pressed claims against the ANC as its main rival in the liberation struggle in South Africa. According to Henry Isaacs, its call for the formation of a united front with the ANC, was "politicking aimed at demonstrating to the OAU member states and supporters of the liberation struggle that while the PAC is prepared to discuss unity, the ANC is intransigent."[267]

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265 *Azania News*, vol. 13, nos.9 & 10, September-October 1978, p. 7.

266 "Potlako Leballo's Speech at the Second Consultative Conference Held in Arusha, Tanzania, 1978" in H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 329.

267 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 330.

The question of unity between the ANC and the PAC worried many African states and the OAU. The bringing together of the joint military command of ZAPU and ZANU in the early 1970s was an important step towards unifying the fighting organisations in Zimbabwe. In the same way, agreements to establish joint political and military structures received favourable responses from other African states. It was, therefore, unavoidable that attention would be focused on the ANC and the PAC as the next liberation movements which should achieve unity. As a result, the Accra session of the Liberation Committee in 1973 pressurised the ANC and the PAC to unite. However, the response of the ANC to the OAU was that there were many African states and their other enemies, who wanted to destroy the movement and create a "pliable spineless organisation that will pander to the whims of its creators."[268] According to the ANC, the aims of their detractors could be summarised by the following:

- To plant the PAC within the ANC so as to neutralise the so-called "communist inspired" policies of the movement.
- To plant well-known agent provocateurs or spies of the PAC, including their self-styled Acting President, inside the ANC, so as to paralyse the movement from within.
- To give respectability and a longer lease of life to the PAC, which had been experiencing internal problems and decline since the 1960s.[269]

Superficially, the reasons given by the ANC could be interpreted as defiance of the OAU and the whole of the independent African continent. However, it should be noted that the PAC had broken away from the ANC, because it criticised the involvement of whites and Indians in the struggle of the Africans. In the 1970s, the co-operation between the ANC and the SACP was at its peak. As a result, calling for their separation would not be an easy thing to achieve. To make matters worse, the PAC kept on criticising the ANC by saying that its struggle was dominated by the communists, who were mostly whites

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268 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 22: A Brief Report of the Activities During the Period from September 1971-April 1974, May 1974, p. 7.

269 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1970-1975 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 22: A Brief Report of the Activities During the Period from September 1971-April 1974, May 1974, p. 7.

and Indians. In addition, they attacked the armed struggle of the ANC by saying that it was led by whites and their strategy avoided loss of white life, while it did not spare black life.[270] According to the ANC, "they flagrantly abuse the privilege of radio facilities offered them to heap slander and lies on the ANC and other sections of the Liberation Movement. Their so-called 'political education' in their camps consists of bitter denunciations of the ANC as if the ANC and not the Vorster regime was the main enemy."[271] Given these reasons and the fact that the ANC treated the PAC as if it did not exist, it would have been almost impossible for the two movements to unite

Nevertheless, the PAC was encouraged to unite with the ANC at its Arusha Conference of 1978 by Nduku H.M. Mkwizu, who also addressed the delegates. Amongst the significant points he mentioned, there was one of "unity within the Nationalist Movement." According to him, a divided nationalist movement was bound to divide the possible supporters and sympathisers of the liberation movements in Africa and outside Africa. However, his most serious warning was that "for Africa to arm different Nationalists Movements of a single country is to prepare that country for civil war immediately upon the defeat of the common enemy - if not before. And it is then too late for Africa to prevent the Big Powers getting involved in Africa for their own reasons and their own advantage."[272]

The question of unity between the ANC and the PAC was a big problem to the OAU. It was addressed at various conferences without success. The problem was given attention at the OAU Summit Conference held in Khartoum, Sudan in July 1978. To show how important this problem was to the OAU, it even chose the OAU Committee of Seven or the Reconciliation Committee, consisting of Angola, Egypt, Kenya, Libya, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia (whose member was also the chairman) to look into

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270 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 320.

271 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 76, File PAC: Statement of the ANC of SA on the Question of Unity with the PAC at the 31st Meeting of the OAU, Dar-es-Salaam, 1978, pp. 328-330.

272 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 607: Ndugu N.M. Mkwizu (CCM Headquarters, Tanzania), Address to the PAC Consultative Conference in Arusha, 27 June- 2 July 1978, p. 2.

the problems which prevented the ANC and the PAC to unite.[273] However, no significant progress was made in 1978 with regard to the unity of the ANC and the PAC. At the 32nd Ordinary Session of the OAU, which was attended by the Foreign Ministers in Nairobi, Kenya in April 1979, a resolution calling on all member states to observe the 20th anniversary of the founding of the PAC was adopted. However, another important call was made on the ANC and the PAC to unite and the ANC was specifically requested to exercise "more flexibility" on this matter.[274] However, even this call failed to end irreconcilable differences between the ANC and the PAC.

It is evident from the afore-mentioned analysis that the PAC did not succeed to establish itself as a credible liberation movement in the international field to the extent the ANC was able to. This was despite the fact that both of them received the same treatment at the OAU and the UN. Reasons which contributed to the effectiveness of the ANC internationally more than the PAC included the following:

- The PAC's internal fights left it weak and in disarray. In contrast, the ANC was able to deal with its internal dissensions fairly well. Leadership rivalries did not paralyse the movement.
- As a result of infighting, the PAC's programme of sending its trained cadres home was seriously affected. Therefore, it was not able to establish itself inside South Africa as a legitimate liberation movement. The ANC, on the other hand, was able to exploit its limited visibility in South Africa by way of infiltrating cadres to conduct some operations.
- The PAC lacked support from a super-power such as the United States of America or the Soviet Union. This was because the PAC claimed that it did not want to involve itself with the super-power rivalries. The ANC received constant support from the Soviet Union.

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273 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 PAC Political Material, A 2675, 610: Press Release by the OAU to mark the 20th Anniversary of the PAC, 6 April 1979, p. 1. See also *Azania News*, vol.13, nos. 9 & 10, September-October 1978, p. 1.

274 AWC, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 PAC Political Material, A 2675, 610: Press Release: OAU to Mark 20th Anniversary of PAC- 6 April 1979, p.1.

Thus, the ANC was expected to increase its standing and influence further in the 1980s, whereas the PAC needed to solve its internal problems first before it could make any significant progress.

5.9 SUMMARY

The opportunities used by the liberation movements to exploit the internal and the international situations in order to gain support against the South African regime were examined in this chapter. How the ANC and the PAC advanced the aims of the liberation struggle in South Africa was of paramount importance.

It is apparent from the analysis that both the ANC and the PAC tried to exploit the internal resistance to apartheid in the 1970s. At the same time, they tried to extend their influence internationally against the South African regime. However, the manifestations of activities on the ground pointed to the fact that the ANC was more successful than the PAC in establishing itself as a viable liberation movement fighting for the liberation of black South Africans.

It is therefore possible to conclude that by the end of the 1970s the ANC was the liberation movement which experienced growth and hope and posed a serious threat to the South African regime to a much greater extent than the PAC, which was weakened by its internal wrangles and problems.

CHAPTER 6

THE 1980S- ON THE BRINK OF A NEW ERA

6.1 INTRODUCTION

It is discernible from the previous chapter that the masses of the oppressed Africans, especially the younger generation, had taken an important step away from indifference towards defiance at the end of the 1970s. Their actions, together with the growth of guerrilla activities by armed infiltration, were causing considerable fear and alarm in the white regime. This resurgence of political resistance within the country was entering a new peak of maturity in the 1980s.

On the other hand, the South African regime, in order to undermine and nullify these achievements, was determined to destroy the renewed hopes of realising the aims of the struggle. It was ready and prepared to move on all fronts to protect and reinforce the gains of apartheid. However, despite the seemingly endless oppression, new black opposition movements emerged every time others had been suppressed. Many of them succeeded in gaining a foothold in the institutions the government itself had created. It was hardly surprising that towards the middle of the 1980s, many Africans in schools, factories and homelands were committed to the transformation of the South African society.

Consequently, the liberation movements were called upon to be as ready as never before, to meet the challenges which the 1980s presented to them. Not only were they to avail themselves of the opportunities presented to them by the internal development of the struggle, but they also had to manipulate the international situation to advance the aims of the struggle. The crucial point to note here is: To what extent were the ANC and the PAC ready to exploit these opportunities?

6.2 OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE THE STRUGGLE INSIDE SOUTH AFRICA

We must now turn our attention to the development and intensification of armed struggle inside South Africa from the beginning of the 1980s up to the end of the same decade,

when there were rumours of its suspension and its replacement with negotiations. It is important to determine how the ANC and the PAC used the internal disturbances to advance the aims of the liberation struggle. To facilitate our discussion of this important period in the history of the liberation struggle, the period under discussion has been divided into two distinct development phases.

Phase one deals with the development of the armed struggle up to the signing of the Nkomati Accord in 1984 and the insurrectionary spirit which grew stronger between 1984 and 1985. The most significant development of this period was the increase in armed activity inside South Africa and the steps taken by the regime to stamp out revolutionary activities.

The second phase to be examined in this chapter represents the period from 1986 to 1990. This period witnessed significant changes, like the isolation of South Africa and the development of sanctions against the country, and the corresponding reduction of armed activity. More importantly, there was a realisation that a negotiated settlement to deal with the problems of South Africa was the right thing to do.

6.3 THE ROLE OF THE ANC AND UMKHONTO WE SIZWE (MK)

6.3.1 Phase one: 1980-1985

At the beginning of the 1980s MK's basic position on armed struggle and strategy was that armed activity should not be the main means of rebuilding a popular revolutionary political base inside South Africa. While it was extremely important in helping the process along, the ANC firmly believed that it had to be involved in legal and semi-legal anti-apartheid politics inside South Africa. In fact, the intention was to use military combat inside the country to assist in organising and mobilising people. Operations which could have maximum political impact, such as sabotage operations against the regime's economic establishments, would not only cause maximum disruptions in the economy, but would also contribute towards mass mobilisation of the oppressed people.[1] In this way, the ANC would be able to overthrow the apartheid regime.

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[1] Archives of William Cullen (AWC), Wits, Braamfontein, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-

This line of thinking was clearly supported by Ronnie Kasrils, one of the leaders of MK, when he mentioned the following aims of the armed struggle in one of his writings:

- "Commitment to a strategy of revolutionary armed struggle to achieve our goal - the seizure of political power and the creation of a liberated South Africa based on the Freedom Charter;
- MK is the instrument of the ANC and our liberation movement and takes its leadership, direction and command from the ANC;
- Political policy and strategy determines our military strategy;
- Armed struggle must complement mass struggle and we seek to combine all forms of struggle - violent and no-violent, legal and illegal;
- The development of the armed struggle is dependent on its being rooted among the people - our MK combatants and organisers must therefore base themselves amongst the people in order to involve the masses in a People's War."[2]

What should also be stressed is the fact that, unlike the highly militarised and authoritarian army of the South African government, MK was not a regular or a conventional army, which could engage the regime's forces in an open battle. That would have amounted to committing suicide, as the regime was strong militarily. Rather, MK consisted of guerrilla fighters, who were actually not only military units, but were also "political leaders and organisers of our people". This combination of the political and military functions is common to popular armies, such as MK, which use guerrilla tactics. For this reason, the ANC did not use the armed struggle only against the regime in the 1980s, as it will be explained later on in this chapter, but it also employed "political education, leadership and mobilisation", as its aim was to "win the active support and participation of all who resist oppression, discrimination, poverty and injustice."[3]

1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 30: President's Draft Report, May 1979, p. 19.

2 Archives of the ANC (ANC), University of Fort Hare (UFH), Alice, ANC SOMAFCO, Director's Office, Box 81: Ronnie Kasrils, Politics and the Armed Struggle: The Revolutionary Army, Lusaka, 14 February 1988, p. 1.

3 ANC, UFH, ANC SOMAFCO, Director's Office, Box 81: Umkhonto We Sizwe Military Code, n.d., p. 2.

Historians such as H. Barrel and C.J.B. Le Roux emphasise the failure of MK and the ANC to seize power from the regime in the 1980s, because of their inclination to equate MK with a regular army.[4] This can be attributed to the fact that they paid little attention to the fact that MK was not a regular army. Instead, what MK was doing was that, through its skilful use of military tactics and mass mobilisation, it wanted to imbue the oppressed with pride and be seen as the protector and defender of their cause. Once this level of consciousness had been raised and enough support had been gathered, the oppressed would no longer be afraid of disobeying the policies of the regime or even challenging it. The growing mass upsurge, which swept South Africa from the middle of the 1980s up to the beginning of the 1990s, bore testimony to the success of this strategy.

It was not surprising, therefore, to find that the most important aim of the ANC in the 1980s was to root the war inside South Africa. According to them, this did not call for the infiltration of trained and armed guerrilla units only, but also the "all round mobilisation of all able bodied men and women from all sections, classes and forces ranged against the boer-fascist regime."[5] When Oliver Tambo as the President of the ANC was asked a question in March 1980 by Radio Freedom during an interview regarding the extent to which the ANC was active inside South Africa, he responded succinctly in this way: "It is very active. And is indeed constantly active, although it has not always been obvious because in South Africa, it is banned, and therefore cannot engage in overt political activity. But it achieves these, through its underground network, which works with and among the people."[6] This means that MK and the ANC worked secretly with the politically stimulated masses of the oppressed people inside South Africa to resist apartheid policies by all means at their disposal.

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4 H. Barrel, *MK: The ANC's Armed Struggle*, p. 70; C.J.B. Le Roux, *Umkhonto We Sizwe: Its Role in the ANC's Onslaught Against White Domination in South Africa, 1961-1986.*

5 ANC, UFH, ANC SOMAFCO, Director's Office, Box 81: Role of MK in the National Liberation Struggle, n.d., p.3.

6 Archives of the ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: An Interview Between Radio Freedom with Comrade Oliver Tambo - President of the African National Congress of South Africa, 31 March 1980, p.1.

In an attempt to create an armed presence in South Africa, MK came up with spectacular acts of violence from the early 1980s. On 25 January 1980 three MK cadres from Soweto held about twenty-five people hostage at a branch of Volkskas Bank in Silverton near Pretoria. They demanded the release of imprisoned ANC leaders, such as Mandela and Sisulu. The three cadres were killed in an exchange of fire with the security forces and were identified by the police as William Madela, Fanie Mafoko and Humphrey Makhubo, ANC members trained in Angola. They had left Soweto during the 1976 uprising. Their funerals in Soweto were well-attended. At the funeral of Madela, the mourners sang freedom songs, gave black power salutes and shouted "Amandla (power to the people), he was not a terrorist but a hero."[7] Although the ANC did not support hostage taking as a tactic, it nevertheless accepted it, for it helped the movement to step up its armed propaganda.

Implicit in the above, was the fact that the armed struggle should be based on and grow out of the political support of the oppressed people. The Volkskas incident appeared to be one of those operations which were planned to have maximum political impact. In other words, the ANC wanted to incorporate MK units into the political underground structures in order to generate political resistance. In this way, the masses could be politicised to the extent that they threatened the regime's grip on its reins of political, economic, social and military power.

From the attacks that took place between 1980 and 1982, it seemed that the ANC had infiltrated many of its cadres into South Africa, with plans to hit at certain targets and intensify urban guerrilla warfare. The targets had often been those of strategic importance, such as the Soekmekaar police station in Northern Transvaal on 4 January 1980, where guerrillas inflicted casualties to the police and damaged property.[8] The next attack was that of the Booysens police station, where MK cadres pounded buildings for about ten minutes with a combination of rocket-propelled grenades, AK-47 fire and

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7 Mayibuye Archives (MA), University of the Western Cape (UWC), Bellville, ANC London Office, Box 11: The Battle for South Africa: Armed Resistance in South Africa, May 1980, p. 14. See also the following newspapers on the Silverton incident: *The Star*, 26 January 1980; *Daily News*, 7 February 1980; *The Citizen*, 11 February 1980; *The Rand Daily Mail*, 12 February 1980.

8 *Daily News*, 20 February 1980.

hand grenades.[9] The attack on the Booysens police station prompted a visiting professor of strategic studies at the University of Leicester in Britain to comment that "South Africa might be entering the first phase of guerrilla warfare, characterised by surprise hit and run tactics and an attempt by the political arm of the insurgents to establish its authority."[10] In addition to these attacks, the biggest cache of Russian-made weapons ever found in South Africa, were uncovered at several remote places in Northern Natal. Moreover, two highly trained ANC guerrillas were arrested near Durban.[11] These guerrillas seemed to have been infiltrated across the Swaziland border. Their arrest and the discovery of the weapons, which were earmarked for use during attacks on specific targets, confirmed the ANC's plans of intensifying its urban guerrilla warfare.

However, the most significant evidence of the return of the ANC to South Africa came on 1 June 1980 with a spectacular act of sabotage. Joe Slovo's Special Operatives blew up six oil storage tanks of the state-controlled oil from coal refineries at Sasolburg in the Orange Free State. Days latter fuel tanks were still burning and a pall of smoke drifted 80 kilometres over the Witwatersrand near Soweto. This was an embarrassment to the security establishment of the government, because these refineries were always closely guarded. The attack was significant in South Africa, as it constituted the first major attempt by a liberation movement to sabotage a target of considerable economic value.[12] The *Daily News* estimated the cost of the damage at R5,8 million.[13] This incident was a clear indication to the South African regime that its sophisticated economy was actually vulnerable to acts of terror. However, the most serious threat was the psychological effect of such actions on the white supporters of the regime, especially if these attacks could continue unabated. They had the potential of undermining the morale of white people and causing panic in the long run.

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9 *Sunday Post*, 6 April 1980.

10 *The Rand Daily Mail*, 9 September 1980.

11 *Daily News*, 20 February 1980.

12 *Sunday Express*, 3 June 1980. See also the detailed report of the incident in the following document: AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1980 ANC Political Material, A 2675, 35: Explosions at Sasol Plants, Radio South Africa Reports (R.S.A.) at 9 a.m. and 2.00 p.m., 2 June 1980.

13 *Daily News*, 2 June 1980.

The spate of attacks on government property and people associated with it prompted the Deputy Minister of Defence in South Africa, H.J. (Kobie) Coetzee, at the opening of the Jacobsdal agricultural show, to say that the ANC had declared 1980 its "year of action". He also said that the ANC had gained rising international recognition as South Africa's leading liberation movement.[14] As a result, it had to prove to the international community that it was worthy of the trust placed in it. Coetzee seemed to be confirming Tambo's message at the commemoration of the ANC's 69th birthday, when he said that 1980 was the "initial year of our Decade of Liberation."[15]

Over the next four years there was a dramatic increase in sabotage. The most important incident was an attack at the Voortrekkerhoogte military complex in August 1981. White agents infiltrated South Africa to set up an isolated farmhouse as a base, from where five ANC insurgents could launch the 122-mm rocket attack on Voortrekkerhoogte military base. Even the head of the South African security police, Lieutenant-General Johan Coetzee, confirmed the incident on a news bulletin of the BBC. He said that an increasing number of white agents were being sent to South Africa from different countries to support the ANC with acts of terrorism and sabotage plots.[16]

Amongst others, there were attacks on power stations, electrical power installations and railway lines, police stations in East London, Sibasa in Venda, Mabopane and Wonderboom near Pretoria, the offices of the Department of Co-operation and Development in Durban and Cape Town, the premises of the South African Indian Council in Durban (amidst tensions over the proposed elections for the state-created body), and the showroom of a motor company locked in an industrial dispute with black workers.[17]

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14 *The Citizen*, 1 March 1980.

15 MA, UWC, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: President's Statement, 8 January 1981, p. 1.

16 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 11: South African Security Chief on "White Communist Infiltrators": British Broadcasting Corporation Reports (BBC), 17 March 1982, p. 1. For reports on the attack, see *The Star* ,14 March 1982; The *Rand Daily Mail*, 15 March 1982.

17 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 48. See also ANC, UFH, ANC SOMAFCO, Director's Office, Box 81:

Widespread opposition to Republic Day celebrations in 1981 reached a climax when there was a bomb explosion in Durban. The ANC claimed responsibility and indicated that the bomb was aimed at disrupting celebrations marking the 20th anniversary of the Republic of South Africa.[18] There was also another attack on the unfinished Koeberg nuclear power station near Cape Town in 1982. The attack caused severe damage.[19]

However, much consternation was caused by an explosion at the Air Force headquarters in Pretoria in 1983, which killed twenty one people and injured more than two hundred. In terms of loss of human lives and injuries this was the biggest MK attack. MK operatives, who later applied for amnesty for executing this mission, were Aboobaker Ismail, a member of Special Operations (1979-1987) and Chief of Ordinance (1987-1990), Johannes Mnisi, who tested the device, and Helene Pastoors, who delivered the car with the explosives for the two operatives who died, Freddie Shongwe and Izekiel Masango.[20] Although the ANC apologised for it by saying that it was an accident, it caused a stir amongst white people, because it killed civilians.[21]

These attacks exposed the weaknesses and vulnerability of the South African security system. The attacks indicated that MK was developing the capacity to operate inside South Africa in the urban areas. This achievement was important for inspiring the confidence of the oppressed people.

The military operations of MK continued into 1984 and 1985. According to Rocky Williams, the pattern was still one that "coincided with and reinforced popular struggles,

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Recent ANC Military Activities Inside South Africa Carried Out by Umkhonto We Sizwe, the People's Armed Forces, n.d., pp. 1-2.

18 *The Sowetan,* 29 May 1980.

19 "Koeberg Power-House for War", *Sechaba*, February 1983, pp. 20-23.

20 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report of South Africa, volume 3, chapter 6, p. 665.

21 *The Star,* 21 May 1983; *The Sowetan*, 21 May 1983; *New York Times*, 3 August 1983. See also Rocky Williams, "The Other Armies: Writing the History of MK", in I. Liebenberg, et al., *The Long March: The Story of the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa,* p. 29.

while boosting morale with specific special operations."[22] In 1985 the Kabwe Conference deemed it fit to review MK strategies and tactics, as the ANC wanted to intensify its liberation struggle against the regime.[23]

What was the reaction of the regime to these seemingly endless provocations of the ANC? As would be expected, these acts of sabotage would goad the South African regime into taking tough action. The South African regime was aware that the ANC had begun to befriend the leaders of its neighbouring states in order to obtain new bases. These bases would be used by the ANC as spring-boards to attack South Africa. The so-called frontline states, including Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Botswana and Zambia, denied doing so, even though they gave active material support to the ANC and Umkhonto. Although they did not like the apartheid policy of South Africa, it was doubtful that they could sustain their backing of the ANC. In fact, they depended heavily on South Africa to survive economically. These states were vulnerable to destabilisation by the South African regime.[24]

Ever since 1978, the South African regime had been warning these states to discontinue helping the ANC and Umkhonto. Not surprising, therefore, there was a rapid deterioration in South Africa's relations with her neighbours. It was against this background that P.W. Botha, as the Prime Minister of South Africa in 1979, came up with the "total strategy", which was based on the assumption that the country was the target of total onslaught, which was planned and organised by the Soviet Union.[25] According to this counter-revolutionary strategy, the Botha regime would use its armed forces to prevent revolutionary forces like the ANC-SACP alliance and the PAC from overthrowing the government. In order to make sure that the liberation movements were

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22 Rocky Williams, "The Other Armies: Writing the History of MK" in I. Liebenberg et al., *The Long March: The Story of the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa*, p.29.

23 O.R. Tambo, "The Eyes of Our People are Focused on This Conference", *Sechaba*, October 1985, p. 2. See also H. Holland, *The Struggle*, pp. 205-206.

24 J. Hanlon, *Beggar Your Neighbour*. The whole book gives full account of destabilisation in the early 1980s. See also R.S. Jaster, "Strengthening Regional Security in Southern Africa", in *Southern Africa in Crisis: Regional and International Responses*, pp. 53-69.

25 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 1, p. 26.

not going to gain the upper hand in the South African conflict, the Botha regime adopted the following types of operations:

- Planned operations according to which strikes would be made on foreign bases of the "terrorists";
- Hot pursuit operations would be undertaken if the state whose territory was to be entered was either reluctant or unable to act against those being pursued or where the aim was to arrest and capture the person or persons being pursued in order to bring him or them before the courts.[26]

The above operations clearly indicated that the regime was determined to pursue its enemies, the ANC and the PAC, into the neighbouring countries. Such operations did not only violate the integrity of these states, but they also led to regional destabilisation and mounting tension in Southern Africa.

One such operation of pursuing enemies into a neighbouring country threatened to take place at the beginning of 1980, when the South African regime issued a strong warning to Mozambique on the harbouring of guerrillas. It was ready to strike at the hideouts of these guerrillas in Mozambique. The threat became real, when on 30 January 1981 the South African Defence Force launched a pre-dawn raid on buildings situated in various parts of Matola, a town in Mozambique about 16 km from Maputo. Known as Operation Beanbag, the attack was planned by section A of the security police, headed by Colonel Jac Buchner, who was helped by Major Callie Steijn of military intelligence.[27] Among those killed were senior MK operatives and members of the elite Special Operations unit, including Motso Mokgabudi (the commander of the first attack on Sasol), and ANC cadres, such as William Khanhile, Mduduzi Guma, Krishna Rabillal, Sibinzo Sikweyiya, Beki Magubane, Thabang Burulani, Lancelot Mfanafuthi Radebe, Daniel Molebatsi,

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26 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 1, October 1998, p. 30. See also South Africa (Republic), House of Assembly Debates, Second Session, Eighth Parliament, vol. 4, 13-19 May 1985, cols. 8108-8109; *The Star*, 2 June 1980.

27 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 2, pp. 144-145.

Stephen Ngcobo, Nelson Manakaza and Nelson Ndunamvula.[28] According to Andrew Masondo, one of the early MK commanders and National Commissar, South Africa's aim with this attack was clearly to intimidate countries near South Africa, so that they could stop giving political asylum to supporters of liberation movements.[29] The argument of Masondo seemed to be true, as the regime wanted to create tension between the liberation movements and the host countries. It seemed to be under the impression that, once the host countries were threatened, they would be forced to expel the liberation movements.

General Magnus Malan, the South African Minister of Defence, firmly believed that destabilisation was successful. He was convinced that within five years from 1982 the ANC would have been completely expelled from the frontline states. This was despite the fact that the US government was concerned about the effects of regional destabilisation on South Africa's international relations. As a result, the US Director of Central Intelligence, William Casey, met Prime Minister P.W. Botha, the South African foreign minister and senior military advisors towards the end of 1982. He urged them to consider using diplomatic methods, as he believed that Mozambique and Angola had been weakened to the extent that they would be willing to expel MK in return for peace and South African neutrality.[30] This indicates that the liberation struggle had become an international issue.

On 9 December 1982, the South African Defence Force (SADF) launched a lightning attack on ANC bases in Maseru, Lesotho. The targets were the homes and offices of ANC representatives in Maseru. The commandos killed forty-two people, including members of the ANC. The chief of the SADF at that time, General Constand Viljoen, described the operation as a "successful raid" on twelve ANC targets, which were "planning and control headquarters for ANC action against South Africa, Transkei and

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28 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1981 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 38: ANC (SA) Dips its Revolution Banner in Tribute to the Matola 12, 30 January 1981, p. 3. See also South Africa (Republic), TRC Report of SA, vol. 2, chapter 2, p. 145.

29 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1981 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 38: ANC (SA) Dips its Revolution Banner in Tribute to the Matola 12, 30 January 1981, p. 3.

30 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid: The South African Communist Party in Exile*, pp. 125-126.

Ciskei and were used as springboard for terrorist action". He tried to show some remorse by saying that the "innocent also had to suffer because they were housed by terrorists to discourage action against them", and simultaneously blamed the ANC for building their offices "in civilian houses to complicate action against them."[31] In a letter written to support the Prime Minister of Lesotho, Dr Leabua Jonathan, Oliver Tambo launched a scathing attack on the South African regime by saying that "this coldly calculated act of terrorism will only serve to spur the ANC and the people of South Africa to redouble their efforts to remove once and for all the criminal Pretoria regime, the common enemy of the people of South Africa."[32] The raid was even condemned by the US government, which supported the resolution of the Security Council of the United Nations. However, the ANC and Umkhonto seemed to retaliate, when they attacked the Koeberg nuclear power station.

In addition to these military strikes against ANC bases and offices in exile, the South African regime was also accused by the ANC of having eliminated its members through assassinations. To destabilise the organisation, the regime murdered the following activists: Joe Gqabi in Rhodesia, Ruth First (the wife of Joe Slovo) in Maputo, Jeanette Schoon and her daughter Katryn, in Angola and Griffiths Mxenge in Durban. The ANC believed that the assassination of its members was the work of a dirty tricks department concealed within the apparatus of the South African regime.[33] The suspicion of the ANC was confirmed by security policemen, such as Almond Nofomela, David Tshikalanga and Dirk Coetzee, who later confessed that they had been members of a special death squad.[34] Dirk Coetzee, in particular, said he had the knowledge of and had taken part in the assassinations of several suspected ANC operatives. These startling revelations about assassinations were also discussed at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

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31 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol.2, chapter 2, October 1998, p.146. See also *The Star*, 10 December 1982; *The Sowetan*, 10 December 1982.

32 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Letter Sent to His Excellency, the Prime Minister, Dr Leabua Jonathan in Maseru, Lesotho, by Oliver Tambo, the President of the African National Congress, on 13 December 1982.

33 *The Sunday Tribune*, 22 August 1982. For more disclosures on assassinations, see P. Laurence, *Death Squads: Apartheid's Secret Weapon.*

34 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 115.

(TRC), chaired by Bishop Desmond Tutu, in the latter half of the 1990s.[35]

While the tragic events of the raids and assassinations were taking place, the situation in Southern Africa was generally not good for the ANC and Umkhonto. The pressure on the frontline states from the South African regime was almost unbearable. Several states began to surrender to the pressure by the South African regime. One of the countries that gave in was Mozambique. Its president, Samora Machel, realised that he could no longer afford to openly support the ANC. Economically, his country was very poor and dependent on South Africa to survive. South Africa secretly supported RENAMO (Mozambique National Resistance Movement), which successfully destabilised the government of Mozambique. Eventually, President Machel had no choice but to sign an agreement with South Africa. On 16 March 1984 Machel and Botha signed a non-aggression pact at Nkomati, in which the two parties committed themselves to stop helping each other's enemies.[36]

The signing of the Nkomati Accord put the ANC in a precarious position. It was caught unawares by this agreement with one of its best allies in Africa. Consequently, the ANC and Umkhonto had to leave their bases in Mozambique hurriedly and the important infiltration route from Mozambique was blocked. This affected the armed struggle of the ANC negatively, as its capacity to infiltrate guerrillas, arms and communications into South Africa was seriously disturbed.

Because the ANC now lacked bases, which had been developed to the level of proficiency, like those in Mozambique, it found the only alternative in Swaziland. According to Barrel, the Swazis had signed a secret security agreement with South Africa in 1982. As a result of this agreement, South Africa and Swaziland also agreed not to allow foreign military forces to use their countries as spring-boards to attack each other. Thus, there were also restrictions on the ANC in Swaziland. However, those

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35 See confessions of the regime's agents like Dirk Coetzee, Almond Nofemela, Eugene de Kock and others about many of the assassinations of the members of the ANC-SACP alliance in South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report, vol. 2, chapter 2, pp. 99-160.

36 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 137. See also *The Citizen*, 17 March 1984; *The Star*, 17 March 1984.

ANC members from Mozambique who went to Swaziland met Ronnie Kasrils, who had already established some underground presence. He was assisted by Siphiwe Nyanda. With the help of the two experienced MK cadres, truckloads of arms and explosives were smuggled over the Mozambique-Swaziland border to safe places in Manzini, Mbabane and surrounding towns.[37]

What is of crucial importance is that front line states, such as Swaziland, could not withstand the array of economic and military pressures from the South African regime. This became evident when Lawrence Mncina, the Swaziland Minister of Foreign Affairs in the early 1980s, confessed that they obtained oil, food and most of their clothing in South Africa. According to him, "what benefit would there be from taking an anti-South African position?"[38]

This explains why the Swaziland police were taking action to control the ANC presence in their country and why, from a security point of view, MK cadres in Swaziland were not safe. MK cadres could even be killed by the South African undercover units. Two leading commanders of the Special Operations unit in Swaziland were ambushed and killed by such an underground unit on 8 December 1981, while they were driving in their car.[39]

After the disruption of their routes and bases in Mozambique and Swaziland, the ANC and Umkhonto turned to Botswana to secure alternative routes for their cadres to infiltrate South Africa. The Botswana government did not sign any non-aggression pact with the South African regime. However, the Botswana Minister of Foreign Affairs, Archie Mogwe, assured the South African government that his country would not be used by the ANC to attack South Africa.[40] For this reason, the local police often captured MK cadres. Joe Modise, as MK commander, and Cassius Make, as Head of Ordinance, were arrested by the police in 1982, while carrying a plan for military operations, which they were going to discuss at a secret top-level meeting with

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37 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 53.

38 S.M. Davis, *Apartheid's Rebels: Inside South Africa's Hidden War*, p. 43.

39 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 119.

40 *The Sunday Express*, 8 April 1984.

operatives from South Africa.[41]

Even Zimbabwe, which attained its independence in 1980, was not in a position to allow the ANC to use it as an infiltration centre. On the South African side of the border, many white farmers were well-armed and had been brought into the security network of the government. Moreover, the Mugabe government of ZANU feared that its rival, ZAPU, might be helped by South Africa to destabilise the country. Consequently, the Mugabe government would not allow Umkhonto We Sizwe to send its cadres and arms into Zimbabwe just after its independence. This was despite the fact that Robert Mugabe had permitted, in 1980, a seven-person office to be established in Harare.[42]

The situation in all the front line states indicated how they could easily be intimidated and threatened by the South African regime. They were not only vulnerable economically, but they were also exposed to direct South African military attacks. It became clear that, no matter how radical a front line state was ideologically, it had to ensure that it had no open ties with Umkhonto guerrillas.[43] This means that the ANC was faced with a formidable challenge of returning trained cadres to South Africa at this stage.

However, by mid-1984 developments in black politics within South Africa had not only changed the ANC's prospects, but had also assured it of the ultimate victory of toppling the South African regime. In the political jargon of the time, many oppressed people had been "conscientised" (made politically aware of their rights) to the extent that they were ready to challenge the might of the South African regime. The mood to intensify the liberation struggle and destroy the apartheid system was captured by Michael Attwell: "... but deep within the urban black community, something profound and fundamental had been stirred. The ripples of the new South Africa which was being born touched all of them. A wholly new dispensation was coming into being. Old rigidities were being broken down for good."[44]

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41 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 119.

42 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 138.

43 S.M. Davis, *Apartheid's Rebels*, p. 43.

44 M. Attwell, *South Africa: Background to the Crisis*, pp. 137-138.

How did the new revolutionary climate engulf South Africa? What role did the ANC play? The ANC firmly believed that the key to the liberation of South Africa was in reorganisation and intensification of the struggle inside the country. As the movement tried to intensify the armed struggle in the 1980s, a number of tactical questions came to the fore. One of them was explained by the internal circular, released by the ANC-SACP alliance towards the end of the 1960s, which stated that the South African regime would be overthrown and "defeated by determined and resourceful action, employing all means of struggle, political, industrial and military, resting on organisation and unity, and able to mount a sustained and rising tempo of revolutionary action."[45] The document is important in that it predicted the strategy that the ANC would employ in the 1980s in its struggles with the regime.

The next strategy was called the "people's war" and was the brain-child of the ANC's Politico-Military Strategy Commission, and was explained in the famous *Green Book: Thesis on Our Strategic Line*. The book argued that "the armed struggle must be based on, and grow out of, mass political support and it must eventually involve all our people. All military activities must, at every stage, be guided and determined by the need to generate political mobilisation, organisation and resistance, with the aim of progressively weakening the enemy's grip on his reins of political, economic, social and military power by a combination of political and military action."[46]

Emphasis was put on the united strategy and mass mobilisation of the oppressed people in the liberation struggle of the ANC in the 1980s. Even Oliver Tambo as President of the ANC emphasised this point, when he said that their strategy was based on "the concept and the practice that our liberation can only come through the united mass action of the people, fighting as a united force."[47]

Today it is recognised that the anti-apartheid struggle of the ANC rested on four pillars:

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45 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 6: Internal Circular of the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee, n.d., pp. 5-6.

46 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 31: Green Book (extract): Summarised Theses on Our Strategic Line, pp. 10-11.

47 Oliver Tambo, "Unity in Action", *New African*, March 1990, p. 59.

the underground movement in South Africa, the armed struggle, the international solidarity movement and the mass democratic movement. The mass movement of the mid-eighties, in which the United Democratic Movement (UDF) played a significant role, was the main component of the four pillars.

The most important question at this stage is: How did the ANC implement the united strategy and encourage mass mobilisation of the oppressed? The first foundation year of 1980 was used by the ANC to advertise and popularise its political programme, the Freedom Charter. Consequently, on the wider front, the ANC moved towards uniting all the democratic forces within South Africa in a broad democratic front with much vigour. The ANC used the Freedom Charter as the basis of its constitution to unite and give direction to people. Through the Freedom Charter, it hoped to unite people across the colour line, who had an interest in confronting and defeating the apartheid regime of President Botha.[48]

In other words, the Freedom Charter was popularised as the basis of a true constitution for South Africa and a viable alternative to the apartheid system. For this reason, the ANC thanked its underground operatives, who ensured that the document was circulated throughout South Africa. Oliver Tambo, the ANC President, said: "We would like to commend the patriots who made certain that during the Year of the Charter, the Freedom Charter was available in large numbers to the people. We salute all comrades and friends in the broad movement for national liberation who ensured that the Charter was once more discussed and its correctness re-affirmed by the masses of the people."[49]

The ANC believed that the popularisation of the Charter in 1980 had the effect of raising the level of the overall struggle and heightening its impact. As a result of its secret circulation inside the country the struggle developed into a multi-pronged and effective onslaught upon the regime. According to the ANC, the response of the oppressed

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48 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Opening Speech by Comrade President O.R. Tambo at the First Conference of the ANC Department of Information and Publicity, Lusaka, 5-9 July 1983, p. 3.

49 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: President's Statement, 8 January 1981, p. 8.

people was magnificent, after they had issued a call on 8 January 1980 "for mass struggles everywhere and around all issues that both agitate us and are reflected in the Freedom Charter."[50] Many strikes of the workers occurred during the Year of the Charter, which SACTU also called the "Year of the Mobilisation of the Workers."[51] There were also rent boycotts around issues of rent increases, as highlighted by strikes at Zwide in Port Elizabeth and the anti-increase demonstrations and the stay-at-home in Soweto. Furthermore, the youth also joined in the struggle for an equal, non-racial, free education in the Year of the Charter. The Batlokwa and the Bahurutshe in the northern parts of South Africa resisted forced removals from their ancestral lands. Residents of the Ciskei region vigorously opposed the independence of their homeland. They were in favour of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. All the campaigns were characterised by the spirit of unity in action.[52]

The next foundation year of the organisational phase was 1981. The year was aimed at valuing and recognising the contribution made by the youth in the liberation struggle. As Tambo put it, they wanted "to honour our youth, to salute their heroism and their dedication to the revolution, to provide them with better possibilities to accomplish their tasks for the year."[53] In fact, the ANC wanted to mobilise and target the most active section of the society to increase the pace of the liberation struggle.

To motivate the youth, important dates, which highlighted the role of the youth in the struggle, were observed. The first one was 16 June, which in 1981 was the 5th anniversary of the heroic Soweto uprising. The next event was the 16th of December, which was the 20th anniversary of Umkhonto's establishment. In observance of these anniversaries, the ANC wanted to make sure that youths inside South Africa, who

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50 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: President's Statement, 8 January 1981, p. 9.

51 Alfred Nzo, "Freedom Charter - A Beacon to the People of South Africa", *African Communist*, no. 81, Second Quarter 1980, p. 33.

52 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: President's Statement, 8 January 1981, pp. 9-13. S. Mufson refers to the "Roots of Insurrection" of the 1980s in the book by T. Lodge, *All Here, and Now*, pp. 3-17.

53 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: President's Statement, 8 January 1981, p. 18.

included, amongst others, students, working youths and those in the rural areas, young women and Christians should be mobilised and organised into relevant structures for the intensification of the mass struggle. For example, youths should be encouraged "in even greater numbers into the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe inside and outside the country, to become part of the disciplined vanguard forces of our revolution."[54]

As a result, the ANC wanted that the youth already in the ranks of the ANC and MK should use the anniversaries to improve their skills in all the fields in which they found themselves, whether political, military, academic, administrative or otherwise. They should seek to improve their level of political understanding and cultivate good discipline in order to become better cadres of the ANC. In this way, the ANC hoped that these youths would be able to advance the struggle and be able to participate in the solution of all the problems of the liberation struggle.

More importantly, the ANC was confident that the youth would be able to accomplish the aims of the liberation struggle. According to them, the youths were already playing their part in shaping the future of South Africa. For example, the roles already played by some of the following youths in the liberation struggle could not be easily forgotten or ignored in the liberation struggle: Basil February, who had fallen valiantly in Zimbabwe in 1967 after allegedly killing fifteen enemy soldiers; Hector Peterson, the first martyr of the Soweto uprisings; Solomon Mahlangu who had been hanged by the regime; the Silverton three, Thami Mkhubo, Zamela Madeda and Fanie Mafoko, who had died while exchanging fire with the police.[55] The ANC expected more youths to continue confronting the South African regime on many fronts.

The following foundation year of the organisational phase, 1982, was closely linked to the previous one, in that it attempted to mobilise and activate the other sections of the oppressed community in South Africa. The ANC still recognised the revolutionary potential of the youth in the liberation struggle. It expressed the hope that other sections

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54 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: President's Statement, 8 January 1981, p. 16.

55 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: President's Statement, 8 January 1981, p. 18.

of the community would join forces with them. According to the ANC, 1982 was designated as the "Year of Unity in Action." This means that the oppressed people of South Africa should intensify the struggle, by using their collective power to defeat the apartheid regime. For this reason, the ANC issued a call at the beginning of 1982 to exhort the oppressed people to unite. Oliver Tambo said: "Unite in action and act in unity. Do not allow the enemy to drive wedges among your ranks. Let us all unite to strengthen the spirit of comradeship amongst ourselves."[56]

To strengthen unity for common action against the apartheid regime, the ANC made an earnest appeal to the following sections of the society to co-operate:

- The youth should overthrow the regime;
- Organised workers should organise those who were unorganised and intensify the struggle for living wages and freedom;
- Puppet and government created institutions based on separate development, such as community councils, local management committees and the South African Indian Council, should be destroyed;
- Women should strengthen their organisations, recruit more women for the struggle, and follow the example of the brave Lillian Ngoyi, who had led the anti-pass march of the women to Pretoria 25 years before;
- Black middle class and professionals, such as teachers, lecturers, journalists, medical practitioners, nurses, lawyers, social workers and office workers should resist attempts of the regime to make them collaborationists;
- Various churches, mosques and religious organisations should mobilise others to fight for a free and human society;
- Workers in the field of culture and sports should use their talents and skills to promote the revolutionary aims;
- The black business community should provide financial and material help for the conduct of the struggle.[57]

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56 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Statement by Comrade President Oliver Tambo at a Mass Rally, Bairro de Liberdade, Maputo, 14 February 1982, p. 14.

57 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: President's

In other words, the ANC wanted the oppressed people in different spheres of life to be mobilised in order to destroy or resist every manifestation of the apartheid policy or separate development scheme. However, they believed that the oppressed could reach their aim only if they could be organised, united and conscious of their potential and role as their own liberators.

The fourth foundation year of the organisation phase, 1983, was the year which saw the formation of the united front by the people who were opposed to apartheid. For this reason, 1983 was designated the "Year of United Action". It coincided with the formation of the United Democratic Front in August. As already alluded to in this chapter, the idea of forming a united front had been suggested by many documents of the ANC-SACP alliance. They all emphasised the necessity of forming a united front against the regime in order to end white domination and oppression. All that was needed was a catalyst that could create a favourable climate for the formation of a united front.

The United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed on 20 August 1983 at Mitchells Plain near Cape Town. It was a non-racial body, as besides blacks, coloured and Indian members, it boasted of a sprinkling of whites. Any use of force or violence to achieve political aims was renounced by the new movement. Moreover, it did not regard itself as a new political movement, as it believed that its role was of a temporary nature. This was because it claimed to recognise the exiled liberation movements as South Africa's political leadership.[58]

Statement, 8 January 1981, pp. 19-20.

58 M. Attwell, *Background to the Crisis*, p.140. On the formation of the UDF, see J. Seekings, "Trailing Behind the Masses: The United Democratic Front and Township Politics". *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol. 18, no. 1, March 1991, pp. 1-2. Several important studies about the UDF have been published, including Gregory F. Houston, *The National Liberation Struggle in South Africa: A Case Study of the United Democratic Front, 1983-1987* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), Jeremy Seekings, *The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991* (Cape Town: David Philip, 2000) and Ineke van Kessel, *'Beyond our Wildest Dreams': the United Democratic Front and the Transformation of South Africa* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000). From a more conservative perspective there is H. Hudson, *'n Strategiese en*

Why was the movement established? According to Stephen Ellis and Tsepo Sechaba the military advisors or securocrats in the government of P.W. Botha advised him that he should try to introduce some reforms, which would gain for South Africa some support from a significant part of the population and international recognition. They assured him that they had succeeded to eliminate the external threat from the ANC by destabilising the frontline states to the extent that they signed pacts with South Africa. However, the most serious threat to the stability of the country was an internal one. The government had to come up with a constitutional framework, which would be acceptable to the Indians, coloureds and blacks.[59] This view is supported by Michael Sutcliffe, who emphasised the fact that the P.W. Botha regime suffered a legitimacy and credibility crisis in the eyes of the oppressed and was, therefore, forced to introduce new administrative and political structures in order to address their problems.[60]

As a result, Botha realised that his government should go ahead with the business of introducing some reforms. But at most, his government would share power with coloureds and Indians. In fact, it wished to co-opt them as allies against the "total onslaught". In this way Afrikaner rule would still be safe and entrenched. Yet he was aware that it would only be safe if blacks were kept out. If they should be included in the structures of power-sharing, they would obviously use their big numbers to dominate the minority groups. This was Botha's reasoning when he announced his system, which would give some measure of political expression to coloureds and Indians at the national level. Blacks would be totally excluded. They would be given, apart from in the homelands, only limited political inputs on the local government level, in so-called community councils. As a result, Botha went on with his constitutional reforms of including only coloureds and Indians in a tri-cameral parliament after the white electorate had voted in favour of his proposals on 2 November 1983. Botha did not anticipate a backlash from the blacks, who interpreted these new developments as a deliberate attempt to exclude them from a common South African citizenship.[61]

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taktiese ontleding van die UDF (Ph. D thesis, UOFS, 1991).

59 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 141.

60 ANC, UFH, ANC Mozambique, Box 8: Dr Michael O. Sutcliffe, The Political and Administrative Structures in South Africa, n.d., pp. 1-6.

61 For an outline of the evolution of the tricameral constitution and viewpoints on the new

It was against this background that the UDF was established. In fact, the failure by Botha to accommodate blacks created an opportunity for the re-emergence of bodies sympathetic to the ANC, like the UDF. Since it was difficult for the ANC to have enough cadres inside the country, it would now be easy for the movement to have some legal representation inside South Africa.

Even though the UDF was a loose coalition of anti-apartheid forces, each with its own policies, there were a number of its features which indicated that the movement was pro-ANC. This was despite the fact that, at first, it was extremely difficult for the UDF to align itself ideologically with any of the older liberation movements, as this action might have precipitated disunity. One of the features, which showed that it was in favour of the ANC, was the way its inaugural declaration was worded. The movement did not adopt the Freedom Charter, but its inaugural declaration was reminiscent of it as it stated that: "Freedom-loving people of South Africa say with one voice to the whole world that we cherish the vision of a united democratic South Africa based on the will of the people, and will strive for the unity of all our people through united action against the evils of apartheid and economic and all other forms of exploitation, and in our march to a free and just South Africa we are going to be guided by the noble ideals. We stand for the creation of a true democracy in which all South Africans will participate in the government of our country. We stand for a single, non-racial, unfragmented South Africa, free of Bantustans and group areas."[62] This declaration not only contained the political ideas of the ANC, but it also strongly supported the non-racial ideas of the Freedom Charter.

Another deference to the ANC could be seen in the election of Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and Dennis Goldberg as UDF patrons. These were imprisoned leaders of the ANC. Activists with ANC connections got involved, like Archie Gumede, a veteran of the Congress Alliance, whose father, Josiah Gumede, first facilitated the alliance between

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constitutional dispensation from various political perspectives, see J.A. du Pisani (ed), *Divided or United Power: Views on the New Constitutional Dispensation by Prominent South African Political Leaders.*

62 "The Inaugural Declaration of the United Democratic Front" in G. Leach, *South Africa: No Easy Path to Peace*, p. 122.

the ANC and the Communist Party, Albertina Sisulu, the wife of the imprisoned former ANC secretary-general, Walter Sisulu, and Oscar Mphetla, the Cape trade union leader.[63] The Rev. Allan Boesak, who at that time was the president of the World Federation of Reformed Churches, was instrumental in the formation of the UDF. He was also appointed as the patron of the movement. The UDF would be joined later on by Steve Tshwete and former BC members, such as Patrick Lekota, Popo Molefe and Murphy Morobe, who had been released from Robben Island prison.

Another umbrella body, which became the rival of the UDF, was formed. Established under the leadership of Dr Neville Alexander, Saths Cooper and other Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) leaders just released from Robben Island, this body became known as the National Forum. From its inception, the National Forum had no chance of succeeding or being effective, given the differences between the groups the leaders represented. Saths Cooper and AZAPO were still committed to excluding whites from the struggles of the oppressed before freedom was achieved, whereas Neville Alexander was associated with the Cape Action League, which was "known for its radical advocacy of class analysis, socialism, no collaboration, and refusal to exclude whites purely on the basis of race."[64] However, the forum was an attempt to unite all those who opposed the new constitution.

Its coming into existence was reminiscent of the ANC-PAC split of 1959. It attacked the Freedom Charter for protecting group and minority rights. This is where they differed radically with the UDF, as their manifesto regarded non-racialism as a goal that could only be attained once a social revolution had destroyed racial capitalism.[65] Their strategy of opposing racial capitalism and apartheid policies did not include whites. While the UDF avoided to define itself ideologically at first and concentrated on uniting all the people to defeat the regime, the National Forum defined itself in terms of ideology right from the beginning. They believed that the total overthrow of capitalism was a prerequisite for obtaining complete freedom.[66] This means that the forum actually

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63 G. Leach, *No Easy Path to Peace*, p. 21. See also S. Ellis, and T .Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 142.

64 A.W. Marx, *Lessons of Struggle: South African Internal Opposition, 1960-1990*, p. 117.

65 AW. Marx, *Lessons of Struggle*, p. 119.

66 M. Attwell, *Background to the Crisis*, p. 141.

robbed itself of the opportunity of developing to the point where it could have attracted a broader following, which could have really been a threat to the regime. Ideological differences between the followers of Sath Cooper of AZAPO and Neville Alexander of the Cape Action League made it impossible for the two groups to work together. Consequently, the National Forum fizzled out, while the UDF grew from strength to strength. The events of the early 1980s even showed that the forum played a minor role in the resurgence of black political activity. What it indicated, however, was that there was a division in the ranks of the oppressed.

What was noticeable about the ANC's programme was that it was convinced that its internal struggle would move to the next stage with the formation of the UDF. Continuing to designate yearly themes that could be associated with their united front strategy, the ANC declared 1984 as "The Year of the Women". This was an attempt by the ANC to mobilise the women to unite with other social forces in the revolutionary struggle. With the help of women and other social forces, the ANC wanted that the oppressed people should destroy the organs of government of the apartheid regime. To achieve this aim, the ANC pinned its hope on the newly-formed UDF, as indicated by the speech of Tambo at the beginning of 1984: "At this juncture allow me to single out the creation of the UDF as a historic achievement in our people's efforts to unite in the broadest possible front of the struggle against the inhuman apartheid system. The formation of the United Democratic Front was a product of our people's determination to be their own liberators."[67]

When the UDF encouraged the Indians and the coloureds to boycott the tri-cameral elections in August 1984, it seemed to be carrying out the instructions of Oliver Tambo who said: "This year, Botha and Malan will be busy implementing the provisions of their apartheid constitution. In this regard, our democratic movement must mobilise to ensure that the so-called coloured and Indian sections of the black population refuse to be recruited to play the role of partners in apartheid tyranny. White South Africa alone should man the apartheid constitutional posts which it has created, for its exclusive

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67 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Statement of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress on the Occasion of January 8, 1984, Delivered by the President , O.R. Tambo, p. 19.

benefit. Those who elect to serve in these apartheid institutions must expect to face the wrath of the people."[68]

During the commemoration of June 16 in 1984, Oliver Tambo issued another call to the coloureds and Indians of South Africa to boycott the elections. He wanted to frustrate the expectations and the hopes of the regime. Their success in this campaign would reassert the commitment of the oppressed to fight on for a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. According to him, "our call to these sections of our people is simply: Don't vote! If you vote, you will be endorsing the perpetuation of apartheid. If you vote, you will be entrenching the view that we the black people must continue to be dominated by the white minority. If you vote, you will be subjecting your sons and yourselves to military conscription into an army whose task is to ensure our continued oppression."[69]

These calls seemed to have been heeded by the time the elections were held in August 1984. The pupils and students from the townships had been highly politicised. When the coloured elections took place on 21 August 1984, many coloured pupils in schools and students in colleges boycotted classes. Even in the black townships protest actions took place against Botha's new constitution. Furthermore, there were also sporadic incidents of violence and intimidation when Indians went to the polls on 28 August 1984. Although some people voted during the elections, there was generally a low turnout. The government ascribed this abstention to fear and intimidation.[70]

Once the problem of the tri-cameral parliament subsided, the vanguard role of the UDF, which was characterised by its dynamic contact with the oppressed masses, its ability to organise and educate the people in the struggle, seemed to be gaining momentum. By using local grievances, the UDF started using people to attack and demolish administrative institutions and systems of the apartheid regime. According to Tambo,

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68 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Statement of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress on the Occasion of January 8, 1984, Delivered by the President, O.R. Tambo, p. 6.

69 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Draft Call by President Oliver Tambo to the People of South Africa, June 16, 1984, p. 1.

70 *Beeld*, 23 August 1984; *City Press*, 29 August 1984. See also G. Leach, *No Easy Path to Peace*, pp. 142-143; M. Attwell, *Background to the Crisis*, p. 141.

the people should choose to destroy those enemy administrative systems where it was weak, such as "the organs of central and provincial government, the army and the police, the judiciary, the Bantustan administrations, the community councils, the local management and local affairs committees."[71]

In keeping with its strategy of involving people on the ground, the UDF began organising opposition to a new system of local government for the townships. The government had devolved powers on black municipal councillors to collect taxes and rents and run beer halls and sports fields. Unfortunately for these town councils, the central government in Pretoria had instructed them to be self-sufficient and self-financing. They soon ran into trouble, as people could not afford the high rents and service charges. Consequently, the people were angered by the new municipal councils. They enjoyed little legitimacy in the black community. For this reason, they were given derogatory names like "sell-outs" and "traitors". During Community Council elections, the voter turnout was also extremely low, which showed that they did not enjoy popular support.[72]

In addition to the problems of the Community Councils, there were also disturbances in the schools, especially the black secondary schools. The complaints of the students were being channelled by a nationwide pupil's representative organisation called the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), which had been established in 1979. As an affiliate of the UDF, it also believed in striving for a multi-racial and democratic South Africa. To many black students, the government was not interested in improving black education to the level of that of whites.[73] Consequently, when the UDF challenged the new constitution and the policies of the government, COSAS also "carried the struggle to its own terrain by mobilising the pupils, emphasising that their grievances were part of what the activists declared to be the whole unjust system."[74] Some COSAS members were charged in April 1983 under the Internal Security Act for furthering the aims of the

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71 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Statement of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress on the Occasion of January 8, 1984, Delivered by the President, O.R. Tambo, p. 4.

72 H. Kenney, *Power, Pride and Prejudice*, p. 348. See also H. Holland, *The Struggle: A History of the African National Congress*, p. 201.

73 F. Mkwanazi, "Education in Crisis: 1976 and Today", *Sechaba*, January 1985, p. 7.

74 G. Leach, *No Easy Path to Peace*, p. 141.

ANC. They had made contact with ANC members in Botswana and learnt how to establish an ANC cell in the country. It was not surprising for the government to believe that the activities of the students were being masterminded by the agitators.[75] Many students had become politicised towards the middle of the 1980s.

What was also of crucial importance at this time was that students normally identified much more with the problems of their parents, like housing and the standard of living. On the other hand, some parents were not bothered when their children became involved in the liberation struggle and engaged in running battles with the police and army with stones and home made petrol bombs. The most likely reason suggested by Michael Attwell was that some parents were ashamed and guilt-ridden that "while they had never offered resistance to white rule, their children had not only done so, they had been prepared to die for it."[76] As a result, these youths, who became known as the "comrades", regarded themselves as the vanguard of the struggle and the revolution.

Believing firmly that the "political mobilisation of the masses into active mass struggle and the continuous education of the people to realise that, without the revolutionary transfer of power, no single major problem of South African life can be solved satisfactorily and permanently"[77], these comrades intensified the struggle by rendering the regime's instruments of authority unworkable. For this reason, they regularly dominated the street committees, which enforced rent, consumer and school boycotts, fomented black on black violence and established people's courts to sentence councillors, black policemen and other collaborators to atrocious penalties like "necklacing". The necklace method means that a tyre was put around the neck of the "guilty one" and filled with petrol before setting it alight.[78] The results of their actions were the ever escalating mass action in the form of strikes, boycotts, mass meetings, demonstrations and other activities, which undermined and weakened the regime's control over the oppressed. The mass political upsurge developed to the point where the government believed that a revolutionary climate existed in some parts of the

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75 G. Leach, *No Easy Path to Peace,* p. 141.

76 M. Attwell, *Background to the Crisis*, p. 137.

77 ANC, UFH, ANC SOMAFCO, Director's Office, Box 81: The Way Forward - Armed Seizure of Power, n.d., p. 3.

78 H. Kenney, *Power, Pride and Prejudice*, p. 349.

country.

It was against this background that one of the major disturbances occurred in the Vaal Triangle on 3 September 1984. It happened on the same day that P.W. Botha was sworn in into office as the first executive State President under the new constitution. Rent increases had been introduced by the newly elected Lekoa Black Local Authority in the townships of Sebokeng and Sharpeville, south of Johannesburg. The Vaal Civic Association, a community based organisation, which was the alternative to the local council, organised a vigorous campaign against rent increases. They killed the deputy mayor of Sharpeville, Sam Dhlamini, and three councillors. The running battles between the police and the protesters claimed many lives.[79]

The regime thought that rioting would soon peter out. However, it continued unabated and even spread to the East Rand. Fearing for the worst, the regime reinforced the police with the army in what came to be known as "Operation Palmiet", which resulted in a house to house search operation in October 1984. The operation was strongly criticised and caused untold damage to race relations, which the TRC highlighted and strongly condemned during its sessions of the late 1990s.[80]

Despite this show of force, the political mobilisation of the oppressed and their activation into mass upsurge throughout the country seemed to be gaining more ground. Attacks on councillors, who implemented rent increases, rose dramatically between 1984 and 1986, as places such as Ratanda, Katlehong, Atteridgeville, Mamelodi, Alexandra, Tembisa, Soweto, Vosloorus and Barberton in the Eastern Transvaal were also affected.[81] From the Transvaal, where the situation was chaotic, the uprising spread to the Western and the Eastern Cape as well as Natal in 1985. Even the areas, which were politically dormant and inactive, suddenly began to experience this upsurge of

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79 H. Holland, *The Struggle: A History of the African National Congress*, p. 202. See also South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol.3, chapter 6, October 1998, pp. 602-603.

80 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol.3, chapter 6, October 1998, pp. 601-606.

81 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC of South Africa, vol. 3, chapter 6, October 1998, p. 607.

violence and militancy. That is why townships in areas such as the Western and Eastern Orange Free State, and to the west and north of Pretoria were also affected. As a result, the spread of violence and unrest indicated that the UDF's campaign of politicisation was actually succeeding and well-received in the black community.

What became evident also was the fact that the oppressed masses were being mobilised around the tactical slogan "Confront the Enemy on all Fronts."[82] The attention was not only focused on the rent issue and local governments. The national school boycott, organised by COSAS, affiliate of UDF, was also taking place at the same time. This campaign of the students started in Atteridgeville and spread to the townships of Sebokeng, Sharpeville and around Johannesburg. The protest even spread to the Free State. White business was alarmed when trade unions such as FOSATU, CUSA and CCAWUSA called a two-day general strike in the Witwatersrand between 5 and 6 November 1984. This massive workers' stay-away was timed to coincide with school boycotts. Demands such as the withdrawal of the security forces from the townships, the resignation of the councillors, the suspension of rents and bus fares, the release of political prisoners and detainees, reinstatement of dismissed workers, the abolition of the General Sales Tax and other unfair taxes and the establishment of democratically elected students' representative councils in schools were made.[83] The stay-away was a resounding victory for the workers in spite of the massive police and army presence in the townships.

Undoubtedly, the ANC seemed to be the movement which was gaining a higher profile than its rival the PAC. Even before the rebellion gained momentum, the ANC in exile could read the political events in South Africa almost correctly. Its two-pronged strategy of continuing with the armed struggle and encouraging discontent back home at the same time seemed to be succeeding.[84] The events of the mid-1980s revealed the success of the strategy. At the beginning of 1985, the ANC concentrated on building a strong underground presence of well-organised cadres from different walks of life. Not

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82 ANC, UFH, ANC SOMAFCO, Director's Office, Box 81: The Way Forward - Armed Seizure of Power, n.d., p. 3.

83 J. Middleton, "Unity of Democratic Forces to Transvaal Stayaway", *Sechaba*, March 1985, p. 15. See also H. Holland, *The Struggle*, p. 202.

84 M. Attwell, *Background to the Crisis*, p. 194.

surprisingly, therefore, the ANC declared 1985 as the "Year of the Cadre". According to the ANC, these cadres "are not special people. It is we men and women, young and old, black and white - who are the workers in the factories, the mines, the farms, the commercial establishments and offices of various kinds: we, who work in health and educational services as well as those of us occupied within the residential areas".[85] In this way, the ANC not only believed that it would be able to strengthen and expand its underground structures, but also ensuring the active presence of the movement everywhere inside South Africa.

To intensify the struggle and ensure that the ANC benefit maximally from the internal situation, Oliver Tambo delivered a well-calculated speech of "Render South Africa ungovernable" in Lusaka on 8 January 1985.[86] This speech was meant to motivate the young black South Africans to advance and speed up the momentum of the struggle. Having earned themselves the honour of being called the "Young Lions", the ANC believed that the youth, "through their action, supported and reinforced by the workers and the parents, they have forced the apartheid regime to give ground on many issues."[87] This means that the ANC was recognising the role of young blacks, who were generally in the forefront of the unrest, which had engulfed South Africa by 1985.

By the middle of 1985, the possibilities of seizing power were increasing. The events of the first five months of 1985 indicated the fighting mood and the insurrectionary spirit, which were emerging amongst the oppressed people. Apartheid was increasingly becoming unworkable and indefensible and the greater part of South Africa was fast degenerating into a state of chaos and ungovernability.

What were the indications and signs that the regime was fast losing control? Firstly, it became apparent that the government was no longer in control of the situation in some of the townships. Government-created institutions were under threat in places like Port Elizabeth, Port Alfred, Grahamstown and Cradock in the Eastern Cape, Guguletho and

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85 O.R. Tambo, "Render South Africa Ungovernable", *Sechaba*, March 1985, p. 11. See also A. Tambo, *Oliver Tambo Speaks: Preparing for Power*, pp. 151-163.

86 O.R. Tambo, " Render South Africa Ungovernable", *Sechaba*. March 1985, pp. 3-15.

87 O.R. Tambo, "Render South Africa Ungovernable", *Sechaba*, March 1985, p. 5.

Crossroads in the Western Cape, Tumahole, Bloemfontein and Welkom in the Free State, Alexandra and Soweto near Johannesburg, Mamelodi and Atteridgeville near Pretoria, as well as Sharpeville, Sebokeng and Evaton near Vereeniging.[88]

There was an upsurge of violence in these areas. In most of them, Community Councils had been destroyed, because the councillors had either been killed or intimidated to resign. Worse still, black policemen, informers and collaborators had been forced to leave the townships through mass revolutionary violence.[89] After the collapse of government-created structures, such as Community Councils, residents started establishing alternative structures called "People's Organs for People's Power", such as street committees, area committees, people's courts, school committees, residents associations and *amabutho* (self-defence units).[90] Areas where the alternative structures were operative, had become "no go areas" or "free zones", in which underground activity by the liberation movement could be carried out without any hindrances.

A good example of such a situation took place in Alexandra in February 1986, where there were serious clashes for control of this black area. Militant youths and civic organisations affiliated to the UDF used the M-Plan-style street and block committees to form a guerrilla force that fought the police and army for four consecutive days. At the end of the bloody battles, in which thirty-one people died, the police and army still patrolled the streets with their armoured vehicles. However, government structures had collapsed, as black policemen and councillors had either resigned or fled from the township, and the "comrades" had set up their own "people's institutions."[91] The creation of these "liberated zones" was meant to solve to a greater extent the problem of guerrilla survival, which was based on Mao's revolutionary strategy.

However, the reality was that such a splendid opportunity was not sufficiently exploited

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88 See "Centres of Protest in 1984", *Sechaba*, March 1985, pp. 16-18.

89 C. Mandla, "The Moment of Revolution is Now - Or Never in Our Lifetime", *Sechaba*, November 1985, p. 25.

90 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol.2, chapter 4, p. 383.

91 S.M. Davis, *Apartheid's Rebels*, pp. 89-90.

by the ANC. This was because the movement did not have a large revolutionary army situated amongst the oppressed masses. Their biggest problem was that the bulk of their army was recruited, trained and stationed outside the country. It could come into South Africa only through infiltration. But, these incursions were highly dangerous, because the security forces were merciless. As a result, the ANC was unable to use this favourable period of ungovernability to its advantage to end white rule. This weakness of failing to build a revolutionary army for the purposes of seizing power in South Africa was recognised by Ronnie Kasrils in 1988, when he said: " ... despite the tremendous upsurge of mass resistance over the past three years we were not able to take full advantage of the favourable conditions that materialised. We were unable to deploy sufficient forces at home; our cadres still found big problems in basing themselves amongst our people; our underground failed to grow sufficiently and our people were left to face the enemy and his vigilantes with sticks and stones; the incredible mass resistance and strikes were consequently not sufficiently reinforced by armed struggle."[92]

Nevertheless, the insurrectionary mood of the oppressed people seemed to grow from strength to strength. The ANC's strategy of implementing "People's War" seemed to be gaining ground very fast. According to the ANC, this was a war, "in which our entire nation is engaged - Umkhonto we Sizwe, the people's army, workers, the rural masses, women, students, intellectuals, the religious community and so on - collectively in groups, and as organised individuals. They use all forms of revolutionary warfare - armed and non-combat, legal and illegal - to attack and destroy all symbols, structures and organs of apartheid power, including all those who man them."[93] The Green Book went further, by explaining the results of the "seizure of power by the people" as being the "dismantling by the popular power of all the political, economic, cultural and other formations of racist rule and also necessitates the smashing of the state machinery of fascism and racism and the construction of a new one committed to the defence and advancement of the people's cause."[94]

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92 ANC, UFH, ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 81: Ronnie Kasrils, Politics and the Armed Struggle: The Revolutionary Army, 14 February 1988, p. 2.

93 A. Mashinini, "Dual Power and the Creation of People's Committees", *Sechaba*, April 1986, p. 26.

94 AWC, Wits, Karis-Gerhart Collection, 1975-1979 ANC Political Material, A 2675, III, 31: Green Book (extract): Summarised Theses on Our Strategic Line, p. 7.

In executing the strategy of a people's war, the ANC, whose front inside the country was the UDF, filled the vacuum left by the councillors by creating rudimentary and alternative organs of people's power, such as the Revolutionary People's Committees. In places like Port Alfred, Kwanobuhle, Mamelodi and Alexandra, the people established organs of popular power, such as street committees and area committees, to replace dummy institutions like the Community Councils. In other words, people took matters into their hands to organise their lives and administration. The urgent question after challenging and rendering the regime unworkable in these areas was: What should be done in those areas where local organs of apartheid power had been destroyed by people?

According to Mzala (Jabulani Nxumalo), the next best process to take place was the creation of a new type of governability. In his opinion, people in the liberated areas were already exercising their powers, as indicated by Alex Mashinini, who mentioned the following tasks of the People's Committees:

- "Organising the masses and transforming the no-go areas into strong mass revolutionary bases to provide the ground for the growth and development of our people's army and for the escalation of our people's army;
- Transforming these areas into strong mass revolutionary bases to serve as organs of insurrection and self-government;
- Ensuring through action, that the expelled and rejected organs of apartheid power do not return to these areas;
- Escalating and spreading to yet unaffected areas, the campaign of making apartheid unworkable and rendering the country ungovernable, and other important issues."[95]

The emergence of dual power showed that the crisis of power had started in South Africa. More significantly, it indicated that the regime was no longer allowed by the oppressed to rule in the old oppressive manner.

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95 Mzala (Jabulani Nxumalo), "Building People's Power", *Sechaba*, September 1986, p. 10. See also A. Mashinini, "Dual Power and the Creation of People's Committees", *Sechaba*, April 1986, p. 29.

In an attempt to answer the question concerning what further should be done in the liberated areas, Mzala believed that the provisions of the Freedom Charter should be introduced "as a guiding programme of action in these districts and as an alternative political principle to racist-colonial rule."[96] In this connection, the Freedom Charter's principle "The people shall govern" was of crucial importance. It was of paramount importance in the ANC's strategies and tactics. It emphasised the seizure of power from the regime. Hence, certain areas of South Africa were already being governed by the oppressed themselves.

Of particular significance was the fact that the Freedom Charter's ideas were used in the sphere of people's administration. Not surprisingly, therefore, was the birth of the organs of people's power in the liberated areas, such as people's education, people's courts, people's militia and people's army to mention a few. Such developments were of crucial importance, as they became part of the insurrectionary mood. For example, Steve Tshwete, the underground leader of the UDF who joined the exiled ANC leadership in November 1985, was struck by the emergence of what he called "popular structures", which were unheard of during the uprisings of the students in 1976 and 1977. He noted qualitative change in the struggle from 1976 to 1985. He said that "there are few features which are an indication of People's Power, an expression of People's Power" in places like Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage, where people had established their own powerful guerrilla units as part of MK.[97] It was clear that people rejected the administrative structures of the regime. Stated otherwise, the emergence of these organs of people's power were not only motivated by "subjective momentary conditions but also by the objective level of development of our revolution towards the seizure of power by the people."[98]

What became evident at this stage was that the ANC, although in exile, was able to exert direct influence on the domestic situation. The growth of support shown to the ANC by the oppressed was visible in many places in South Africa. This was despite the state of emergency passed by the Botha government on 20 July 1985 to bring the

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96 Mzala, "Building People's Power", *Sechaba*, September 1986, p. 11.

97 S. Tshwete, "I will not be bought", *Sechaba*, April 1986, p. 5.

98 Mzala, "Building People's Power", *Sechaba*, September 1986, p. 10.

situation in the country to normality. Armed with the harsh laws, the police clamped down on activists in the townships, who were suspected of fuelling the rebellion. However, with the political meetings banned, frequent mass funerals provided the legitimate rallying point for activists to resist the actions of the regime. In actual fact, funerals became political rallies, where ANC flags were displayed and freedom songs were sung. For example, at Kwanobuhle stadium outside Uitenhage on 13 April 1985, a huge crowd of about 150,000 mourners gathered at a funeral of 31 victims. The procession was led by Dr Allan Boesak, with the majority of the coffins draped in the black, green and gold colours of the ANC. Moreover, the mourners sang freedom songs and with their clenched fists raised in the air shouted slogans which praised ANC leaders: "Viva Mandela, Viva Sisulu, Viva Oliver Tambo."[99] These actions were done with the full knowledge that such actions were unlawful and illegal.

Prior to developments in 1985, Bishop Desmond Tutu of the Anglican Church and the winner of the Nobel prize in 1984 warned: "I think the authorities are really playing with fire, in the sense that they are seeking new points of confrontation and friction with a people who are already embattled by vicious and draconian laws. I'm fearful for what may actually develop. I'm fearful for an explosion one day which we will not be able to control. The consequence of putting the lid on is to allow the steam to build up."[100] Not surprisingly, therefore, the people went further during the Kwanobuhle funeral to show that their anger was combined with militancy. One poster read: "No to SADF, Yes to MK, Umkhonto we Sizwe, the people's army."[101] In this way, the oppressed were telling the regime's police and soldiers that they were the enemies of the people, because they carried out orders to kill, maim and torture their brothers and sisters.

For the ANC and SACP, the developments in South Africa favoured them. By being aware that the oppressed masses of people in South Africa were engaged in a struggle of historic importance aimed at rendering the country ungovernable, the ANC decided to exploit this opportunity by raising mass political consciousness to a scale not experienced before. It was with this aim in mind that the ANC, in April 1985, distributed

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99 "Fiddling while Rome burns", editorial comment in *Sechaba*, June 1985, p. 1.

100 H. Holland, *The Struggle*, p. 210.

101 "Fiddling while Rome burns", editorial comment in *Sechaba*, June 1985, p. 1.

several thousand copies of a leaflet entitled: "ANC call to the nation: the future is within our grasp".[102] In this way, the ANC suggested to the oppressed that the possibility of victory was greater than at any period before. "Ungovernablity" had created the conditions, which MK needed in order to be able to work inside South Africa more than before. In this manner, MK could operate much better towards the situation where it would be possible to overthrow the South African regime.

It was against this background that the ANC called a meeting in June 1985 to review its policies. The conference was at Kabwe in Zambia from 16 to 22 June 1985. The Kabwe Conference noted considerable achievements of the ANC since the Soweto riots of 1976, like establishing some presence inside the country, as manifested by MK's sabotage attacks on government buildings and installations, support shown by youths and legal protests, where ANC slogans and symbols were used. The conference actually pointed the way forward to victory. It highlighted the need and urgency of intensifying the armed struggle. But, however, the ANC lacked sufficient internal organisation to be able to cause an uprising. To achieve this aim the ANC required revolutionary cadres, who would be well-organised and rooted amongst the oppressed people.[103]

Although many of the resolutions were adopted by the Kabwe conference with regard to a wide range of issues, such as cadre policy, discipline and security within the ANC, the most significant decisions centred around the future of the armed struggle in South Africa. Challenged by the threat of the South African regime's successful counter-insurgency operations and the potential for mass uprising by the oppressed, the ANC-SACP alliance was compelled to change its strategy concerning the armed struggle in South Africa.

With regard to the development of the armed struggle inside South Africa, the mood of the conference was that there was a great need to intensify the armed struggle in order to realise the "armed seizure of power."[104] It was this realisation which led to the

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102 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 59.

103 H. Holland, *The Struggle*, p. 210.

104 "We are the Revolutionaries, Internationalists and Africans", editorial comment in

decision that in future no distinction would be made between "soft" targets (civilians), who included "enemy personnel" and "hard" or "inanimate" (economic and industrial) targets. Although the civilians would not be targeted, the ANC would increase its armed attacks on "legitimate targets", like government officials, members of the SADF, border area farmers, informers, state witnesses and security personnel.[105] Furthermore, the training of MK members would be organised inside South Africa to circumvent the restrictions placed on the ANC by the Swazi and Nkomati Accords.

To gear itself for insurrectionary activities inside South Africa, the Kabwe Conference also made a number of important decisions, which had direct influence on the structural changes that had been introduced in 1983. The conference sought to repair the damage caused by the unhealthy competition between the political and military spheres of the armed struggle. This suggested that the changes introduced in 1983 had to be changed in such a way that there would be co-operation between the political and the military spheres of the armed struggle. Accordingly, central control was now exercised by the Politico-Military-Council (PMC). The PMC became the executive body that formulated and executed the revolutionary strategy of the ANC. Even though the PMC was based in Lusaka, its control extended from Lusaka through the frontline states to street committees in South Africa through a chain command. Under the PMC a second layer of command was created in the forward areas of Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The second-tier command centres were called Regional Political-Military-Councils or RPMCs. Each RPMC had under it three departments of intelligence, propaganda and military. These RPMCs also liaised with the next layer of command inside South Africa, which was called the Area-Politico-Military Councils (APMCs). The APMCs co-ordinated and liaised with Area-People's Committees (APCs), which comprised people's committees, civic organisations, street committees and block committees in certain regions in South Africa.[106]

Sechaba, August 1985, p. 2.

105 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol.2, chapter 2, pp. 35-36. See also *Sechaba,* August 1985, p.2; R. Williams, "The Other Armies: Writing the History of MK", in I. Liebenberg et al., *The Long March: The Story of the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa*, p. 29.

106 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 152.

The importance of these structural changes in the ANC military machine was that the combination of the political and military structures became largely responsible for the intensification of the country-wide unrests that engulfed South Africa in the mid-1980s. More importantly, the viability of the united front in the military dimension was clearly shown at that time, where various sectors of the society were involved in the insurrection. Although the township uprising put the ANC in a stronger position than ever before, it nevertheless failed to exploit the prevailing conditions to its advantage. Their failure could be ascribed to the fact that the South African security forces were vigilant through their counter-revolutionary measures.

On the whole, the decision taken at Kabwe to increase the armed struggle by introducing People's War was an important milestone in the ANC's history of the liberation struggle. As a result of extensive review of its strategy and tactics, structures and internal work, it was not surprising why the ANC described the 1980s as the "Decade of Liberation."[107]

After the conference, MK intensified the armed struggle, especially after the decision to take the war into the white areas of South Africa had been made. Between 1985 and 1986 there was a steady increase in guerrilla activity in both urban and rural operations of MK as will be shown in the next section of this chapter.

6.3.2 Phase Two: 1986-1990

During 1986, the revolt by the oppressed further gathered momentum by engulfing new areas of the country, including the homelands. The deepening of ungovernability and the emergence of the Organs of People's Power were evident throughout South Africa. In the black townships, the comrades continued to terrorise residents who refused to obey their orders. These comrades routinely mounted unannounced roadblocks, subjecting people to searches, lectures and even beatings. They would also be engaged in violent activities with the police. Many schools would be empty. Funerals of police victims would be organised into mass rallies, where ANC flags would be displayed without any fear. In political terms this was tantamount to the end of white rule in the

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[107] O.R. Tambo, "The Eyes of Our People are Focused on this Conference", *Sechaba*, January 1986, p. 4.

townships and the resurgence of massive support that the ANC was enjoying.

Evidence was mounting too that violence, previously confined to the townships, was spreading to the rural areas. There was violent opposition to Kwandebele's planned independence as from 1 January 1986. Violence also flared in Lebowa , where people protested against the government of Cedric Phatudi. Even in the Bophutatswana homeland, there was violence in the township of Winterveld. These unrests showed that the people in these areas were beginning to reject the system of independent homelands.[108]

All these developments were watched by the ANC with keen interest. As a result, the movement continued to exploit the anarchic situation to suit its political programme. The ANC was propagating the concept of a People's War aimed at liberating all the oppressed townships. It believed the People's War could not be developed into its fullest sense without the all round participation of the masses of the oppressed. Hence, they believed that the political mobilisation of the oppressed throughout the country and the creation of underground structures would enhance the struggle greatly. Their aim was that MK units should establish themselves amongst the oppressed people and implement the slogan: "Wherever the masses are, political bases and revolutionary organisation must be set up." Once this condition or position was achieved, the ANC believed that a "sustained military offensive against the enemy" should start. The aim of this continuous military action should be to "give the enemy no respite, scatter his forces and thus cripple and weaken him."[109]

The most important question at this stage is: How did the ANC ensure that the regime did not find any respite from the actions of MK and the oppressed people as from 1986? Since the beginning of the 1980s, the ANC claimed credit for the development of the People's War and even trying to make the country difficult to run for the regime. On the other hand, the regime's argument that the ANC-SACP alliance was behind the

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108 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol.3, chapter 6, p. 635.

109 ANC, UFH, ANC SOMAFCO, Director's Office, Box 81: The Way Forward - Armed Seizure of Power, p. 4.

disturbances that were taking place in the country, actually reinforced the belief that the movement was responsible. The fact that the ANC, after the Kabwe Conference of 1985, wanted to capitalise on the anarchy that prevailed in South Africa, explains why the movement was serious about stepping up its military operations against the regime. Its military operations inside South Africa between 1985 and 1989 manifested themselves according to the following categories :

- Bomb attacks in the urban areas were targeted at the security forces. However, these bombs killed more civilians than the security forces due to incompetence, poor judgement, poor reconnaissance and misunderstandings by operatives.
- The next type of military operation was the "landmine campaign" of 1985-1986 that was directed at the farmers of the northern and eastern Transvaal. These farmers were regarded by the regime's security forces as being part of a "military zone" and many of them were included in the commando system. The ANC stopped its operations in these areas when farm workers, wives and children of farmers also became victims.
- The operations where MK guerrillas and the security forces were engaged in combat. The casualty rate was high for MK in the urban areas and lower for the security forces, in the rural areas MK performed better.
- Operations involving individual security force personnel and those labelled "traitors" and "enemy agents".[110]

Between 1986 and 1989 there were numerous military operations of the ANC, which corresponded with the categories mentioned above. Although it is not possible to mention all of them, only those that had maximum impact will be given as examples. Glen Moss reported on activities of MK from the Bethal court room, which confirmed that the ANC actually stepped up its attacks from 1986. According to court reports, the Swaziland RPMC met to discuss an order received from Lusaka to "apply mine warfare". Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim, who was in charge of the Swaziland RPMC, which controlled MK operations in the Transvaal and Natal, ordered the attacks on farming communities by laying land mines on farms and farm roads. The argument of the ANC was that the

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[110] South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 1, p. 35.

use of land mines on the farms was unjustified, even though the government had turned them into military zones with white farmers as part of the state security system. This line of thinking was in keeping with the earlier statement released by the ANC through Radio Freedom, which reaffirmed that it was not the movement's policy to attack civilians or "soft targets". However, the ANC was experiencing problems in distinguishing between civilian targets and enemy personnel, because the government had organised civilians into paramilitary units and was also arming them.

At another meeting, chaired by Paul Dikeledi, Acton Maseko was ordered to identify targets on farms in the Eastern Transvaal. In turn, he instructed Simon Dladla to execute this operation, which was financed by Ebrahim. On 21 April 1986, Maseko and Dladla laid land mines on the farms Mooiplaas and Vlakfontein near Breyten. The explosions which took place injured farm workers and damaged a tractor, motor car and a trailer. Again on 10 June 1986, Maseko and Dladla placed land mines on roads of the Boshoek and Bloemhof farms in the Volksrust district. The explosives injured two farm workers and the son of a farm owner and destroyed a lorry and tractor.

Thereafter, Ebrahim instructed a trained ANC cadre, Michael Molapo, who used his MK assumed name of "Clement", to infiltrate South Africa. The state revealed that Clement was responsible for the following acts of terror:

- The shooting of two Vosloorus town council policemen on 5 July 1986. One policeman died, while the other one was wounded.
- There was also an attack on a Katlehong petrol station on 5 July 1986, which was owned by a councillor.
- The killing of three Katlehong municipal policemen and wounding of nine others took place on 6 July 1986.
- Clement was killed by members of the South African police on 26July 1986.[111]

In addition to the above, Stephen Ellis and Tsepo Sechaba also indicate how frequently MK was able to strike from the underground to increase the revolutionary climate in South Africa since mid-1986:

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111 G. Moss, "MK and the Armed Struggle", *Work in Progress*, no. 52, 1988, pp. 4-5.

- On 16 June 1986, it was the commemoration of the 1976 Soweto riots and about half a million black people stayed away from work. About 11 people were killed in unrest incidents.
- A car bomb exploded in Durban, killing three people and injuring sixty nine people on 17 June 1986.
- A bomb exploded on Durban beach front on 21 June 1986 and no one was killed. On the same day Brigadier Andrew Molope, whose unit killed 26 people in Winterveldt, Bophutatswana, was assassinated.
- A bomb exploded in the Queenstown shopping centre in the Cape on 29 June 1986, injuring three people.
- A bomb exploded outside the Johannesburg stock exchange on 10 July 1986.
- Official statistics recorded 90 deaths due to unrest in the month of July 1986.[112]

Some of these deaths were reported at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the latter half of the 1990s as having constituted gross violations of human rights. For example, the Magoo's bar bombing on 14 June 1986, where three people were killed and about sixty nine injured in a car bomb explosion. The operation was executed by Robert McBride, Greta Apelgren and Matthew le Cordier. The three applied to the Commission for amnesty. The Newcastle magistrates' court bomb explosion on 11 November 1986, where twenty-four people were injured, was also reported to the Commission. MK cadres Thuso Tshika, Basil Sithole, Patrick Nkosi and Abraham Mathe were charged of terrorism in 1987 in connection with these explosions.[113]

All in all, these incidents indicated the successes of the shift from Armed Propaganda to People's War. The successes of this change in strategy were identified by Chris Hani, at that time the Army Commissar of MK, in an interview with *Sechaba* when he said that: "I think the enemy is facing a crisis of a new type. It is a very, very deep crisis. I don't think it is a crisis the enemy has faced before. We see a situation where the entire oppressed population is involved in a mass militant struggle against the enemy, not

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112 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, pp. 172-173.

113 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC of South Africa, vol. 3, chapter 3, pp. 230-231..

collaborating, and rejecting that government. A new situation is beginning to develop. In classical terms I would think that the objective elements of a revolution or a revolutionary situation are maturing. Our people have shown a willingness to sacrifice and die if necessary for the struggle."[114] This means that the situation in South Africa had raised the hopes and the expectations of the ANC to the extent that it saw the possibilities of seizing power approaching. However, this was a false hope, as the regime would exercise its powers to thwart all the attempts of the insurrectionists to seize power as will be explained later in this chapter.

The increase in MK military operations in 1986 coincided with the designation of the year as the"Year of the Cadre" by the ANC. In his 1986 new year message on the occasion of the 74th anniversary of the ANC, President Tambo also encouraged MK and the oppressed people in South Africa to confront the regime when he said: " ...attack, advance, give the enemy no quarter - an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth!"[115] In trying to prove their involvement in the deteriorating situation in South Africa, Chris Hani said that the youths were no longer confronting the security forces with stones, and petrol bombs only. Instead, they were using hand grenades and other skills "imparted to them" by the ANC, because the movement had "introduced an armed element" to the youth to eliminate the police, community councillors and other people who were collaborating with the regime.[116] In this way, it could be argued that the ANC was involved in fomenting violence in South Africa.

What was the reaction of the regime to this mayhem and general disorder? While the ANC was busy consolidating its underground and escalating the People's War, the government was threatened by the extent to which the comrades were organising themselves in the destabilisation of the townships. There were also fears of serious black violence taking place on 16 June 1986, the tenth anniversary of the Soweto riots of

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114 ANC, UFH, Chris Hani Speeches, ANC Zimbabwe, Box 2: Umkhonto We Sizwe 25 Years of Armed Struggle, n.d., n.p. See also C. Hani, "25 Years of Armed Struggle", *Sechaba*, December 1986, p. 12.

115 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Message of the African National Congress on the Occasion of 8th January 1986, Delivered by Comrade President O.R. Tambo, p. 9.

116 Chris Hani, "25 Years of Armed Struggle", *Sechaba*, December 1986, pp. 10-11.

1986. The speech of President Tambo, delivered at the beginning of 1986, not only made the regime suspicious, but it also added to the general rebellious atmosphere of that time: "Let this Year of the People's Army see us engulf the apartheid system in the fires and the thunder of a people's war! Let the Year of MK see us mount a military offensive that will push the enemy into a strategic retreat! Let us use the opportunities that this Year gives us to replace each combatant who fell last year with a hundred more, and building on our achievements, to create a formidable fighting force of the people superior to the enemy forces."[117]

It was against this background that the regime decided to declare a country-wide state of emergency on 12 June 1986. It clamped down on well-known and suspected leaders of the insurrection. More importantly, the government came up with the approach called contra-mobilisation, which was an important principle of counter-revolutionary warfare developed by American military and intelligence analysts in the 1960s. According to this approach, in revolutionary warfare, the most important battle is to win the "hearts and minds" of the people, and security strategies should be 80 per cent political and 20 per cent military.[118] With the passage of time, this approach was increasingly used in the SADF security plans, especially from the 1960s. The Botha government adopted the view that there was a "total onslaught" against South Africa as a whole. It argued that a similar strategy to that used by its "enemies", like the ANC, should be adopted. For this reason, the government felt that there was a great need to ensure stability, not only through repression, but by also winning the "hearts and minds" of the people by introducing reforms.[119] Reform measures introduced by the regime to get support from the South African population, especially the oppressed section, will not be discussed here as they fall outside the scope of this research. Instead, attention will be focused on how the regime implemented the contra-mobilisation strategy in order to try to stop the rebellion in 1986.

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117 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Message of the African National Congress on the Occasion of 8th January 1986, Delivered by Comrade President O.R. Tambo, p. 17.

118 South Africa, (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 3, p. 298.

119 ANC, UFH, ANC Mozambique, Box 8: Dr Michael Sutcliffe, The Political and Administrative Structures in South Africa, p. 3.

While the level of violence inside South Africa remained high, it soon became clear that the government's imposition of the country-wide state of emergency was reducing the momentum of the struggle. The security forces were given wide powers to deal with any organisers of violence and insurrection inside the country. The most important question at this stage is: How did the regime implement its internal strategy of counter-revolutionary warfare? Firstly, the terminology used by the security forces, as reported in the TRC sessions, indicated a strong need to get rid of the ANC and its allies. Words, which emphasised the fact that the regime was on the warpath, like "destroy", "wipe out" and "neutralise", became common in the security circles of the regime. The police also used extremely harsh and violent methods of dealing with the enemies of the regime, like detention and torture, disappearances without trace, as in the case of Ramatua Nicholas Thlapi of Ikageng, Potchefstroom, staged escapes from prison and claiming thereafter that the person had been killed while trying to escape from prison, and ambushes, as in the operation which led to the killing of six MK members, who were waylaid by the security forces near the Botswana border in 1987.[120]

There was also strategy 44, according to which the regime mobilised certain groups or individuals to defend themselves and to offer resistance against "revolutionary actions" and even giving "moderate blacks" support secretly. The regime used this approach to help black conservative groups, like Inkatha of Mangosutho Buthelezi (Operation Marion), to be strong so that they could be its surrogates in its war against the ANC and UDF alliance.[121] In addition, Operation Katzen would be used to overthrow homelands, which did not support the regime, like Ciskei and Transkei, by forming a regional resistance movement, which would counter the influence of the ANC and the UDF in that region. The regime also used vigilante groups, whose brutalities against the comrades were revealed at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission sessions, like the "Three Million Gang" in Kroonstad, "The Eagles" in Bloemfontein and Botshabelo, "Imbokodo" and another "Inkatha" in KwaNdebele and the "Witdoeke" in the Western Cape.[122] The

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120 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 3, chapter 6, pp. 624-631.

121 S.M. Davis, *Apartheid's Rebels*, p. 110. See also South Africa (Republic), TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 1, pp. 38-39.

122 *Vigilantism and where it occurred in South Africa during the mid-1980s is extensively*

regime increased the number of its police force by deploying municipal police and "kitskonstabels", who also terrorised the comrades in the towns.[123] The "kitskonstabels" (instant constables) were recruited as police constables, hastily trained and sent back to the townships as supportive arm of the security forces. These developments did not bode well for the ANC and its armed struggle.

Even though the South African regime was able to reduce the momentum of resistance against apartheid, it could not completely eliminate the influence of the ANC. Its operatives from the underground were able to assess the situation in the country and report to its headquarters in Lusaka. For example, Nthato Motlana was able to brief the ANC delegation led by Alfred Nzo, which included comrades like Thomas Nkobi, Josiah Jele, Pallo Jordan, Joe Nhlanhla and Henry Makgothi, about the prevailing situation in South Africa in general and Soweto in particular. According to Motlana, the prestige of the ANC at that time was very high, despite the fact that its political activities had been badly affected by the state of emergency. He said that everywhere in the "Black community the ANC's voice carries weight and authority and anyone who wants to do anything feels he must consult the ANC."[124]

Despite claims to the contrary by the ANC, the state of emergency did have a severe impact on ANC operations inside South Africa. Another document of the ANC, which claimed that the ANC had its "finger on the pulse" of the mood in South Africa, indicated that the "heightening militancy as expressed through the mass democratic movement and the heightening repression by the Botha regime as a means to suppress it", had actually disorganised the movement and rendered its leadership inoperative and useless.[125] This was due to the fact that the state of emergency forced the leadership

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covered in volumes 1and 2 of the TRC Reports of South Africa, October 1998. The "Three Million Gang" was well-known to the author and it harassed school children, comrades and even killed my brother-in-law in Kroonstad on 11 October 1992.

123 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 4, p. 384.

124 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 66, File 66,3: Report to the National Working Committee (NWC) on Meeting with Dr Nthato Motlana, n.d., p. 1.

125 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 66, File 66,3: Update: Situation Under the State of Emergency: Report on Meeting with Leading Activists, 21st October 1986, n.p.

and activists of the UDF and its affiliates to go underground and be removed from its followers.

The ANC identified the following strategies applied by the regime in order to render organisations linked to the movement inoperative:

(a) State strategy under which the state used three phases to regain control of the situation:
- The first phase involved the crushing of the uprising, resistance and organisation done by the activists. The state also deployed vigilantes, the army and "kitskonstabels" in the townships.
- The second phase addressed the socio-economic grievances of communities at local level.
- The third phase involved a constitutional solution, whose aim was to accommodate Africans and simultaneously slow down any meaningful structural change in South Africa.

(b) Counter-revolution, where the state used vigilantes and its constables effectively, like in Uitenhage where the Witdoeke drove activists out of the place and stopped political activity. In Lebowa the Thari ya Setshaba Cultural and Liberation Movement operated like Inkatha in Natal.

(c) Isolation of areas and fragmentation of the struggle, where the state was trying to fragment struggles by isolating regions and sectors from the national dynamic. This strategy was aimed at breaking the nationally co-ordinated approach to state strategy.

(d) Propaganda, where the state curbed the progressive press and media and simultaneously embarked upon its own propaganda campaign by means of regularly dropping leaflets over townships and the use of state controlled television. Propaganda was used to increase the isolation and despair experienced by communities under attack.

(e) Joint Management Centres, which were aimed at providing the state with the ability to respond in a centralised and nationally co-ordinated way to mass struggle. They also served as joint command structures, co-ordinating the propaganda, socio-economic and repressive aspects of their strategy at the local level.

(f) COSATU and its affiliates being discredited by the state. It marked the beginning of a campaign to crush the democratic trade union movement.

(g) Rent evictions, whose main aim was to crush the township based mass democratic structure.

(h) Large scale detentions, aimed at gaining information about structures such as street committees, recruiting informers and incapacitating progressive organisations and detaining activists.[126]

According to the ANC, the regime embarked on the above measures to crush the rebellion and create an impression of calm in the country. This gave the impression that the will of the oppressed to resist had been broken. Obviously, this would give the impression to the investors and other countries of the world that the country was stable politically. Rather, the ANC believed that the actions of the oppressed had forced the regime to declare the state of emergency. According to them, the declaration of the state of emergency was "also an admission by the enemy that it can no longer rule in the traditional manner."[127]

Even though the South African regime was able to reduce the momentum of resistance against apartheid, it could not completely eliminate the influence of the ANC. Its operatives from the underground were able to realise the need of the mass democratic movement to strengthen itself and adopt new methods of challenging the regime. To organise the oppressed people again, the ANC realised that there was a need to achieve the following inside the country:

- Revive and strengthen the civics in all areas and link them up nationally;
- Ensure that they represented everybody and work on the basis of democracy;
- Involve these civics in the process of people's power movement with the aim of changing them into township organs of people's power, the so-called "OPPs".[128]

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126 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 66, File 66,3: Notes on the Current Situation, May 1987, pp. 2-4.

127 C. Hani, "25 Years of Armed Struggle", *Sechaba*, December 1986, p. 12.

128 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 66,4, MCHO1-66: Update: Briefing on the Internal Situation, November 1987, p. 4.

From the above, it becomes evident that the ANC was seeking support from everybody, irrespective of party affiliation, to join forces with the mass democratic movement in order to revive mass action against the regime. This means that the ANC was already popularising itself inside the country as a liberation movement that was very active.

Although there can be no doubt that, in the light of the above evaluation, the ANC and Umkhonto were experiencing problems internally as a result of the state of emergency of 1986, it is not true that the ANC's mood changed to "gloom", as asserted by Morgan Norval.[129] Even though the state of emergency was a setback, the ANC was still determined to continue with the armed struggle. For this reason, the ANC wanted to gain the active support of the oppressed masses in the People's War. The way the movement analysed the situation inside the country and came up with alternative strategies, actually indicated that it was far from giving up the struggle.

After the ANC had identified the need to revive the civics and turned them into organs of people's power, it then proceeded with the identification of the following urgent tasks for the organs of people's power:

- All activists and organised structures of the youth, students, women, workers and others should revive immobilised people's committees and strengthen those that had been weakened by the regime.
- People's power should be spread to other areas of the country through mass action and ungovernability, especially to coloured and Indian areas.
- Rural mobilisation and organisation should be increased. At the same time, homeland and other apartheid structures should be destroyed. For example, Kwa-Ndebele people should be encouraged to resist independence.
- The oppressed should come up with a systematic strategy to deal with the vigilante gangs. At the same time, the regime should not be given the social base from which it could recruit.
- Efforts of the regime to re-establish its former networks should be thwarted.
- National co-ordination should be ensured and areas which were hard-hit by the

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129 M. Norval, *Inside the ANC: The Evolution of a Terrorist Organisation*, p. 156.

regime should be supported.

- Civic organisations should be strengthened in all areas and should be co-ordinated nationally.
- All democrats and patriots should ensure that the mass democratic movement grew from strength to strength and that a non-racial and democratic South Africa is created.[130]

With the above suggestions in mind, the ANC hoped that it would be able to see the resurgence of mass action and violence that was experienced inside South Africa before the state of emergency was declared in 1986. It was against this background that, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the ANC on 8th January 1987, President Tambo delivered a speech in Lusaka in which he said that the "determination and the ability of our people to fight on until victory cannot be questioned".[131] To achieve this aim, the ANC decided to call 1987 the "Year of Advance to People's Power".[132] At this stage, the ANC wanted to form a broad front that would include the youth, students, civic, women, labour and other groups which were anti-apartheid.

The idea of forming such a front for the purpose of challenging the regime saw the resurgence of mass activity throughout the country, despite the fact that the state of emergency was still in force. The most striking feature was the completely new level of militancy amongst organised workers. Especially workers in the Post Office and the South African Transport Services embarked on rolling mass action by combining their legal trade union struggle with widespread illegal activity. At the same time COSATU and the UDF decided to formalise their fighting alliance in the Campaign for National United Action.[133] As a result of the alliance, the locus of mass action seemed to shift from streets to industries. Huge national strikes like those of 5 and 6 May 1987 made

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130 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 66,4, MCHO1-66: Update, Briefing on the Internal Situation, November 1987, pp. 4-5.

131 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Address of the President of the ANC, Comrade Oliver Tambo, at the 75th Anniversary Meeting of the ANC, Lusaka, Zambia, 8 January 1987, p. 1.

132 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 66,3: Notes on Current Situation, May 1987, p. 9.

133 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 66,3: Notes on Current Situation, May 1987, p. 5.

COSATU the leading force in black resistance politics.[134]

Be that as it may, the resistance which COSATU and the UDF tried to organise against the regime was dealt a heavy blow when the regime crushed all the strikes after 1987. The banning of 17 organisations, including the UDF, in February 1988 showed that the regime was determined to eliminate all opposition. This action of the regime seemed to be aimed at regaining control and instilling fear and helplessness amongst the oppressed. This was despite the fact that the ANC had declared 1988 as the "Year of Forward to United Action for People's Power".[135] In other words, it was the year during which the ANC would emphasise the tightening of its control on the democratic and anti-apartheid forces in South Africa in such a way that they could be able to launch an even more powerful challenge to the regime.

Even more ominously for the regime was the fact that the revolt was gaining a new momentum in 1989. The latter year was declared the "Year of Mass Action for People's Power".[136] Organised under the banner of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), anti-apartheid forces sympathetic to the ANC mobilised for a boycott campaign against the 1988 municipal elections. In fact, MDM was the disguised name used by the UDF and its allies after their restrictions in 1988. Their opposition to the regime led to a new explosion of mass resistance in early 1989, which turned into another Defiance Campaign. Although the Defiance Campaign was launched as a national action by the MDM, the Western Cape became the most active area in South Africa. Protestors in Cape Town were arrested in March of 1989, but the activities of defying apartheid laws increased tremendously and reached a climax on 2 September 1989 when thousands of protestors marched to parliament.[137] The protestors were also angered by the "whites only" elections, which would be held on 6 September 1989. In these mass actions, the democratic forces, like the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO) emerged as the alternative power in the country. The importance of their actions was to wrest control from the regime and to begin introducing alternative structures of "People's Power".

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134 *The Citizen*, 7 May 1987; *The Star*, 7 May 1987.

135 O.R. Tambo, "Advance to People's Power", *Sechaba*, February, 1987, p. 2.

136 O.R. Tambo, "Forward to United Action for People's Power", *Sechaba*, May 1988, p. 26.

137 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 3, chapter 5, October 1998, p. 427.

In order to project his image as a reformist, reasonable and moderate leader, President F.W. de Klerk was prepared to deal with the negative publicity regarding the regime's approach to political protests. For this reason, he allowed the protest march of 13 September 1989 to go on in Cape Town from St. George's Cathedral to the City Hall, where a mass rally was held. This protest march of the MDM was led by, amongst others, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Reverend Allan Boesak. During this march anti-apartheid posters, flags of the ANC and the SACP were displayed by the marchers. The police kept a low profile and the march ended peacefully.[138] This peaceful march indicated that the political landscape in South Africa was becoming better.

One factor that had tremendous influence on the developments of the ANC's armed struggle against South Africa was the issue of negotiations versus the armed struggle. Several developments combined after 1985, which forced the ANC into the early phases of negotiations with the regime. Even though the ANC was considering the possibility of negotiating with the regime, it still felt the need to continue with the armed struggle. This ambivalent attitude of the ANC was confirmed by the fact that, despite the possibilities of negotiations with the regime, they still wanted to build a strong internal underground network, which would organise an insurrection whose aim would be to seize power. For this reason, the ANC planned to infiltrate its cadres into South Africa to give direction to the uprising. In what came to be called "Operation Vula" or "Operation Vulindlela" ("Open the Road" in Zulu), the infiltrators were to join the internal leadership of the ANC and co-ordinate the activities of various underground political and military structures.[139] Operation Vula was planned in 1986 by the National Executive Committee of the ANC and was run as a special project by President Oliver Tambo, who was assisted by Joe Slovo (principal planner), Mac Maharaj (recruiter in South Africa), Siphiwe Nyanda (MK Deputy Commander), Ivan Pillay (administrator and project co-ordinator) and two other

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138 See reports on this protest march in *The Sowetan*, 14 September 1989; *The Citizen*, 14 September 1989; *The Cape Times*, 14 September 1989. For a more detailed discussion see J.A. du Pisani et al., "Protest Marches in South Africa", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 28, no. 4, December 1990, pp. 586-602.

139 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 7, p. 666. See also A. Spark, *Tomorrow is Another Country: The Inside Story of South Africa's Negotiated Revolution*, p. 62; H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 69.

members, Ronnie Kasrils and Alfred Nzo. Besides this leadership, the existence of the operation was restricted to a few MK leaders and other operatives.

It was against this background that from July 1988, four Vula operatives were infiltrated into South Africa to establish an underground "Overall Leadership Committee" in Durban under Jabu Sithole and a "Political Mobilisation and Military Operations Committee". Foreign operatives rented safe houses and helped with logistical arrangements. The same operation was set up in Johannesburg. Ronnie Kasrils entered South Africa towards the end of 1989 to come and help those who were already in the country. The Vula network expanded when Mo Shaik became the head of the Vula internal intelligence structure.[140] As a result of the presence of these men in South Africa, there was now direct and regular contact between the ANC exile headquarters in Lusaka and the underground movement inside the country.

However, the existence of operation Vula was discovered by the Security police when two operatives, Charles Ndaba and Mbuso Shabalala, were arrested on 6 July 1990 in Durban. Police seized documents and disks which revealed sensitive information that Vula operatives had rented houses in Johannesburg and Durban and that weapons were to be smuggled into South Africa from 23 to 24 September 1989.[141] Nevertheless, the weapons were removed from those places where the police could discover them. Despite these developments, the presence of the Vula men in the country resulted in the stepping up of mounted attacks from 1988. Barrel wrote that the majority of 281 revolutionary armed activities on the police and army were associated with MK.[142] Moreover, he suggests that the presence of these MK operatives could have also contributed to the resurgence of mass action in the late 1980s.

Another important development, which took place in the 1980s, was the secret talks that were conducted by Nelson Mandela and the regime. At the height of the uprising in 1984, Mandela took up the initiative in trying to open a dialogue with the government that

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140 South Africa, (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC of South Africa, vol.2 , chapter 7, p. 667. See also A. Sparks, *Tomorrow is Another Country*, pp. 61-67; H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 69.

141 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 7, p. 667.

142 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 66.

might lead to negotiations. His separation from other fellow comrades provided him with a splendid opportunity to take the first step in that direction. He said: "But my solitude gave me a certain liberty, and I resolved to use it to do something I had been pondering for a while: begin discussions with the government. I had concluded that the time had come when the struggle could best be pushed forward through negotiations. If we did not start a dialogue soon, both sides would soon be plunged into a dark night of oppression, violence and war."[143]

As a person who started Umkhonto we Sizwe, Mandela showed that he was a clever tactician and used masterful diplomacy when he started talks with the regime. According to him, violence was used against the government in order to force it to negotiate with the ANC. He seemed to be riding on a high moral ground when he explained the futility of the on-going violence in South Africa: "We had been fighting against the minority rule for three-quarters of a century. We had been engaged in the armed struggle for more than two decades. Many people on both sides had already died. The enemy was strong and resolute. Yet even with all their bombers and tanks, they must have sensed they were on the wrong side of history. We had right on our side, but not yet might. It was clear to me that a military victory was a distant if not impossible dream. It simply did not make sense for both sides to lose thousands if not millions of lives in a conflict that was unnecessary. They must have known this as well. It was time to talk."[144]

However, the mere talk of negotiation at this time was a difficult thing. Conservative elements from both sides would regard talks and negotiations as a sign of weakness and betrayal. Mandela was suspected by his comrades in the prison that he was selling out to the regime. P.W. Botha had already indicated his willingness in January 1986 to initiate a national statutory council on which blacks and whites would work together.[145] Besides discussing matters of mutual concern, the council would also advise the government on a new constitutional dispensation. These developments resulted in the

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143 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*, p.513.

144 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 513.

145 South Africa (Republic), House of Assembly Debates, Third Session, Eigth Parliament, vol. 7, 31 January 1986, col. 15.

passing of a new bill by parliament, called the Promotion of Constitutional Development Act of 1988, which made provision for a council of 60 members, half of which would be blacks.[146] Although the bill was approved by parliament, blacks refused to serve on the council as long as Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners were still imprisoned. These developments indicated that the reform process was well under way during Botha's presidency, even though there were stumbling-blocks to negotiations.

Nevertheless, clandestine meetings continued to take place between Mandela and the representatives of the regime, like the Minister of Justice, Kobie Coetzee, the head of the National Intelligence Service, Niel Barnard, his Deputy, Mike Louw, Commissioner Willemse and the Director-General of the Prisons Department, Fanus van der Merwe.[147] In this way, the foundations of the new South Africa were secretly being laid even before the rest of the world was faintly aware about negotiations between the regime and the ANC.

Even within the exiled ANC leadership there were conflicting viewpoints with regard to the question of the armed struggle against South Africa. There were those who believed that MK was unable to bring about a quick transfer of power to the oppressed. As a result they were in favour of a political settlement to the problems of South Africa. This group was among the moderates, such as Thabo Mbeki and Oliver Tambo, who were aware of the secret talks between Mandela and the regime. On the other hand, there were hardliners who believed in violence and a military solution to the problems of South Africa. This group consisted of leaders such as Chris Hani, Joe Slovo, Ronnie Kasrils and Steve Tshwete. The controversy surrounding the need to take the war in South Africa into white areas and not to distinguish between "hard" and "soft" targets was associated with them.[148] As a result, the stepping up of attacks on soft targets, especially in 1987 and 1988, was not only linked to them, but was also regarded as an open challenge to the more conservative elements of the ANC-SACP alliance, which favoured negotiations.

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146 South Africa (Republic), House of Assembly Debates, Sixth Session, Eighth Parliament, 23 June 1988, col. 14.

147 A. Sparks, *Tomorrow is Another Country*, p. 36.

148 S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, pp. 180-181.

Another important development, which had a bearing on the negotiation versus armed struggle debate, was the foreign policy pursued by the Soviet Union after 1987. As a staunch supporter of the ANC and MK since the early 1960s, the Soviet Union made an about turn, when it now believed that the conflict in Angola, Namibia and South Africa could be solved through peaceful negotiations. This line of thinking was driven by the new Soviet Union leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, since 1985.[149] His improved relations with the USA affected the political developments in Southern Africa.

The ANC's armed struggle suffered a setback in 1988, when a formal agreement was signed by South Africa and Cuba, which led to the independence of South West Africa (Namibia). Known as the New York Accord, the treaty forced the ANC to dismantle its bases in Angola, where it had concentrated its armed forces since the latter half of the 1970s. It had to evacuate its armed forces from Angola and move them to sympathetic countries like Zambia, Uganda and Tanzania.[150] This meant that the cadres of the ANC were now further from South Africa. Obviously, this move impacted negatively on the ANC's armed struggle, as the cadres were now forced to travel long distances before reaching South Africa. Nevertheless, the ANC and MK were still pursuing the armed struggle in South Africa, although it was unable to accelerate it.

By the end of 1989 it was abundantly clear that the Soviet Union had abandoned its active support for the ANC-SACP alliance through the signing of the New York Accord, although it continued to express its moral support for the organisation. Perhaps the visit of the ANC delegation, consisting of the President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, the Secretary -General, Alfred Nzo, the General Secretary of the South African Congress of Trade Unions, John Nkadimeng, the Secretary-General of the South African Communist Party, Joe Slovo, and Mkhonto's Commander, Joe Modise, to Moscow in March 1989 indicated the precarious position in which the movement found itself. At the press conference in Moscow, Oliver Tambo pointed out that the visit was of a routine nature between the ANC and the Soviet Union, which had become an established practice. Despite this statement, it was clear that the ANC-SACP alliance wanted to get an

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149 S. Ellis and T Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, pp. 181-190.

150 S. Ellis, and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 191.

assurance from the Soviet Union that it would support them to intensify the armed struggle against the South African regime. Hence Oliver Tambo said: "We believe the Soviet Union has an important part to play in this struggle by continuing to extend all-round support to us as it has done in the past and remaining firm in its positions."[151] These developments indicated that the ANC's liberation struggle in South Africa had become part of the East-West struggle and the Cold War. However, with the changes taking place in the Soviet Union, the Cold War was now coming to an end and it was not quite clear yet how this would influence the relationship between the Soviet Union and the ANC.

Perhaps the most significant development in the ANC's liberation struggle was when the movement in 1989 released its five minimal pre-conditions vital for negotiations. The conditions the ANC announced included the unconditional release of all political prisoners and detainees; an end to all political trials and executions; the repeal of all politically repressive legislation; the lifting of the state of emergency; as well as the unbanning of all organisations and individuals.[152] These conditions became part and parcel of the negotiating document known as the Harare Declaration. The declaration actually indicated that the ANC claimed the high moral ground, as it showed its willingness to enter into genuine negotiations with the regime. However, the ANC did not envisage suspending MK activities and reducing its armed activities by late 1989 as an indication of good faith. This attitude of the ANC might have been motivated by an element of lack of trust of the regime.

As would be expected, MK cadres abroad were also suspicious of moves towards a negotiated settlement. They feared that the armed struggle could be suspended prematurely in favour of negotiations, even before the country was transformed into a united and non-racial democracy. However, "Operation Vula" which began in 1987, was regarded as a surety by the ANC in case things went wrong with the negotiations with the regime.[153]

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151 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 18: Statement of the President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, at the Press Conference in Moscow on 10 March 1989, p. 1.

152 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 68.

153 H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 69.

Of particular importance was the fact that the ANC announced, after a meeting with the regime on 6 August 1990, that there would be no further military attacks by MK.[154] In spite of this concession, the ANC did not completely abandon the armed struggle as yet, although the process of negotiation was under way. It still did not trust the government. There was always the possibility of the resumption of the armed struggle if the negotiation process could go wrong. The decision to suspend the armed struggle seemed to have been a tactical compromise on the side of the ANC to speed up the process of negotiations. However, this means that, internally, the ANC had to rely heavily on mass mobilisation of the oppressed as its strongest weapon against the regime.

By the end of the 1980s it had become patently clear that the ANC had benefited greatly from the internal situation. This is largely due to the fact that the movement itself decided to use opportunities, which presented themselves in the country during the disturbances of the mid-1980s. It was not only able to popularise its ideas and policies, but it also presented itself as the defender of the rights of the oppressed. Even though it could not match the regime militarily by the end of the 1980s, its popularity and prestige had demonstrated that it had become an important role player in South African politics, which could not be ignored by the regime.

6.4 THE ROLE OF THE PAC AND THE AZANIAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY (APLA)

6.4.1 Phase one: 1980-1985

As already noted in the previous chapter, the situation in the PAC in general and APLA in particular was chaotic between 1978 and 1981. This situation prevailed because the militarily-trained cadres continued to reject the leadership and authority of the PAC Central Committee. Cadres who supported Leballo did not accept the new leadership of the Presidential Council consisting of Vusi Make, David Sibeko and Elias Ntloedibe.

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154 J. Barber, *South Africa in the Twentieth Century: A Political History- In Search of a Nation State*, p. 285. See also H. Barrel, *MK*, p. 69.

According to the deposed PAC leader, Potlako Leballo, "the vast majority of our members and the entire military wing - the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA/POQO) - have never accepted a Vus Make clique of power hungry puppet conspirators being illegally and unconstitutionally imposed on the Party as leaders by foreign powers which include the enemy of the Azanian Revolution."[155] The rejection of the new leadership by the army explained why the PAC military programme was immobilised in the early 1980s. The PAC was unable to infiltrate its freedom fighters into South Africa at the time when the ANC was making some incursions in South Africa.

Another problem, which affected the capacity of the PAC to infiltrate its trained cadres into South Africa, was due to the ban imposed on the movement by the Tanzanian government not to recruit any more cadres. This caused serious problems of discipline for the PAC in its camps in Tanzania. The anarchic situation which existed in the PAC camps like Chunya and Ithumbi led to the intervention of the Tanzanian troops, who restored law and order by using force. The subjugation of the cadres and the restoration of law and order once more prompted Leballo to accuse Vusi Make and the OAU Liberation Committee: "The troops were sent as a result of collusion between the OAU Liberation Committee Executive Secretary and the Vus Make clique in an attempt to force our fighters of the Azanian People's Liberation Army to accept the Vus Make puppet leadership and reject the armed struggle."[156] This situation in the army did not only lead to low morale and disunity, but also led to disloyalty to Make's leadership.

It was, therefore, hardly surprising when one section of the army, which was concerned about the prevailing situation within APLA and the PAC, decided to write a memorandum to the Central Committee and make some recommendations. Their main concern was the rebuilding of the army. Amongst their recommendations, there was one dealing specifically with the rebuilding of the army: "We also feel that since the PAC has no army, the Secretary of Defence should select a few men and under his direction immediately embark upon reconstruction of the army. All avenues should be explored to

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155 ANC, UFH, ANC Zimbabwe, PAC File, Box 2: Press Release/Press Statement by Potlako Leballo, 25 August 1982, p. 3.

156 ANC, UFH, ANC Zimbabwe, PAC File, Box 2: Press Release/Press Statement by Potlako Leballo, 25 August 1982, p. 4.

ensure that the army meets the basic military and ideological requirements."[157] The recommendation of this group concerning the rebuilding of the army gives an idea about the state of affairs within APLA.

Even after the accession to power by John Nyati Pokela in January 1981, the military trained cadres at the Ithumbi camp continued to reject and ignore the authority of the PAC Central Committee. It was against this background that the APLA Task Force was charged with the responsibility of reorganising the PAC military wing. The Task Force replaced the concept of the Military High Command. The idea of using Task Forces was popular during the Poqo rebellion of the early 1960s. This Task Force proposed to the Central Committee the idea of using cadres loyal to the leadership to re-occupy the camp at Ithumbi. With the help of this army, political authority was restored to the camp without any bloodshed.[158]

By virtue of his position as chairman of the PAC, Pokela also became Commander-in-Chief of APLA. In order to accomplish his mission of rebuilding the army, he recruited new cadres into the Task Force of APLA. They were Sabelo Phama, who became the Secretary for Defence and Commander of APLA, Enoch Zulu, Chief of Operations, Morgan Gxekwa, Chief of Staff, and Dan Mofokeng as Chief of Political Commissar.[159] In addition, they were also members of the Military Committee, which was in charge of the PAC's overall military strategy.

During Pokela's period in office between 1981 and 1985, much attention was focused on reorganising the structures of APLA and making them ready for intensifying the struggle in South Africa. According to Pokela, the masses of the oppressed people in South Africa were important to the revolution. Their active support of the liberation struggle was crucial and decisive. For this reason, he came up with the slogan of "Back to the People". He was not happy with the situation, where people outside the country had "drifted away from the taproot - the people inside occupied Azania - they moved away

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157 Archives of the PAC (PAC), UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 1: Memorandum to the Central Committee of the PAC of Azania from the Army Cadres, n.d., p. 2.

158 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC: A Struggle within a Struggle*, p. 285.

159 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Research Department, TRC Report on PAC/Poqo/APLA Human Rights Abuses (1963-1993), p. 18.

from the home-situation." For this reason, he supported the "Home-Going Programme" wholeheartedly, as he believed that direct involvement of the liberation movement in the "local and national politics" of the oppressed people would ensure the success of the revolution.[160] This means that Pokela, as it was in the case of the ANC, also believed in mass mobilisation of the oppressed.

The most important questions to ask at this stage are: Did the PAC increase and speed up the home-going programme during the term of office of Nyati Pokela as chairman? If yes, to what extent was it implemented? If no, what were the reasons for this failure? According to Pokela, the PAC from its beginnings had always made it clear that its aim was not to reform the apartheid system, "but its total and unconditional elimination". He believed that this aim could be achieved only by "waging a resolute struggle, with the armed struggle based on the masses, being the principal form."[161] Despite his goal of seeing many trained cadres being infiltrated into South Africa and intensifying the armed struggle, Pokela's implementation of the home-going programme was unsuccessful. The main reason for the failure of his programme was due to internal tensions, which continued to wreak havoc within the PAC and APLA. Firstly, militarily-trained cadres were sent in October 1982 from Dar-es-Salaam to Lesotho to "sort out" Naphthallie Sidzamba and other "PAC dissidents" who opposed Elliot Mfaxa. In other words, the army was used in a dispute, which could have been solved through negotiations. Secondly, there was tension in Tanzania between the supporters of Ntantala and Pokela. Ntantala's Azanian People's Revolutionary Party (APRP) supporters were accused of being a "fifth column within the PAC."[162] In other words, they were suspected of promoting a different agenda by following "their home-going programme", which was not the official programme of the PAC.[163]

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160 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Opening Address to the Central Committee Meeting by the Chairman, Comrade J.N Pokela, Dar-es-Salaam - February 22-26, 1984, pp. 7, 8.

161 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Speech Delivered by the Chairman of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, Comrade John Nyati Pokela on the Occasion of the 22nd Anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre, Dar-es-Salaam, March 21, 1982, p. 3.

162 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 300.

163 "PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/79/18: Letter from Bunga Glen Mpukane to Joe Mkwanazi, 1983", in K.M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of Azanian Revolution: The Exile History of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa): 1960-1990*, p. 308.

The in-fighting resulted in deaths and serious assaults. For example, the death of a cadre known as "Mahoyi", who was killed in Tanzania on charges of being loyal to the APRP and thereby "destabilising" the PAC, was reported to the TRC in the late 1990s as a serious violation of human rights.[164] The mutual suspicion, which resulted from this tension, delayed military activity in South Africa. The unexpected death of Pokela himself in June1985 robbed him of the opportunity of implementing his home-going programme. The presence of APLA cadres in South Africa manifested itself towards the end of the 1980s, as will be explained in the next section of this chapter.

It is very important to note that there was a resurgence of political activity in South Africa from 1980, which reached a climax between 1984 and 1986. While the ANC benefited greatly by exploiting the situation inside South Africa to its advantage, thereby increasing its image and legitimacy amongst the oppressed masses in the early and mid-1980s, the PAC was unable to respond to the situation effectively. The ANC's popularity was achieved by "armed propaganda attacks", supporting organisations, which operated legally in the country, such as the UDF and COSAS, launching campaigns such as the promotion of the Freedom Charter and later also the release of Nelson Mandela and other prisoners.

For the PAC, there was little indication of its obvious presence in South Africa or of its internal visibility. The internal quarrels and frequent tensions could have played a major role in the PAC's lack of visibility inside the country. This was despite the fact that its leaders spoke of its being present in the country and mobilising the masses. For example, Pokela spoke about the PAC as a national liberation movement which "is rooted in the masses and enjoys their support precisely because it genuinely reflects the true aspirations of the people of Azania."[165] The administrative Secretary of the PAC, Joe Mkwanazi, said " ... the year 1984 marked the intensive consolidation in the work of the PAC in the last four years both internally and externally; further it was a year of

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164 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 4, p. 374.

165 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Speech Delivered by the Chairman of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, Comrade John Nyati Pokela on the Occasion of the 22nd Anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre, Dar-es-Salaam, March 21, 1982, p. 3.

significant restructuring and programming of the people in line with our multifrontal programme that involves the political, economic, social and military. By the end of March 1984 every aspect had been concretised."[166] The utterances of these leaders not only indicated wishful thinking, but also the camouflage of their embarrassment for failing to exploit the situation inside South Africa. The exaggeration of what the PAC "was also doing in South Africa" by way of mobilising and politicising the masses was summarised pessimistically by Joe Mkwanazi, when he said: "The events starting from September 3, 1984 to March 20, 1985 are well known and what was done was the collective efforts of all patriots. It would be silly for any one to claim the credit."[167] The conclusion reached here is that the Central Committee of the PAC failed dismally to analyse the situation in the country properly and ended being unable to provide its much-needed guidance and leadership to the rising mass action by the oppressed.

Whatever the PAC claimed to have done militarily, was actually outclassed and eclipsed by the escalating ANC guerrilla attacks inside the country from 1978 onwards. However, some of the activities of the PAC from the early 1980s up to 1985 were actually revealed in the courts of law and reported by G. Moss in 1987. According to him, six young PAC cadres, who had been trained in Tanzania, China, Yugoslavia and Guinea, were arrested by the police in early 1985. After meeting in Zimbabwe and travelling to Botswana, the cadres split into two groups and entered South Africa. One group was arrested in Johannesburg, whereas the other group was apprehended in Mafikeng. Another case was that of a young Gugulethu man, Andile Gusha, who was convicted of terrorism and furthering the aims of the PAC. He had joined AZANYU in 1983. He took part in the clashes between AZANYU and the UDF in Mbekweni, near Paarl. He travelled to the Transkei, where he attended the funeral of a PAC member, Stanford Maliwa. He was arrested on his return to Cape Town.[168]

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166 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 6: Joe Mkwanazi, The Liberation Struggle in Light of Recent Developments in Southern Africa, International Conference on Peace and Security in Southern Africa, Arusha, Tanzania, May 24-31, 1985, p. 13.

167 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 6: The Liberation Struggle in Light of Recent Developments in Southern Africa, by Joe Mkwanazi at the International Conference on Peace and Developments in Southern Africa, Arusha, Tanzania, May 24-31,1985, p. 14.

168 G. Moss, "Alleged Guerrilla Activities in Court", *Work in Progress*, no.15, April 1987, p. 17.

Whereas the PAC's military activities and operations were negatively affected by in-fighting and serious leadership struggles towards the end of the 1970s, the advent of the 1980s showed that the organisation was gaining some measure of respectability in South African politics. Despite problems, the revival of the PAC in general seemed to have gained some ground during the chairmanship of Nyati Pokela between 1981 and 1985. As APLA Commander-in-Chief, Pokela embarked on a massive military and political programme to re-organise APLA and re-train members. However, the stabilisation of the APLA leadership in particular appeared to have gained fresh impetus under the PAC's leadership of Johnson Mlambo, who succeeded Pokela.

6.4.2 Phase two: 1985 to 1990.

As the new chairman of the PAC and APLA Commander-in-Chief between 1985 and 1990, Johnson Mlambo streamlined the military operations under the High Command. The organisational structure of APLA still recognised the Military Committee as the supreme policy making body and the Chairman of the PAC, Johnson Mlambo, as the head. Other members of the Military Committee were Sabelo Phama (APLA Commander), Morgan Gxekwa (Chief of Staff), Dan Mofokeng (Chief Political Commissar), Joe Mkwanazi (PAC Administrative Secretary) and Thobile Goba (PAC Chief Representative in East Africa).[169]

As a result of the processes of streamlining and strengthening the army, the Military High Command had the following Heads of Departments: Operations (Letlapa Mphahlele); Training and Manpower (Willie Nkonyeni); Military Intelligence (Raymond Fihla); Ordinance and Supply (Boy-Boy Mbethe); Finance and Logistics (S. Kungwane); Personnel (A. Ntabeni); Health (T. Gumede); Ideological Training and Culture (Temba Ncaphayi); Mass Work (Rufus Zonyani); Information and Research (Wilberforce Zweni).[170] The restructuring process saw civilian members occupying certain positions in the Military Committee. For example, Joe Mkwanazi became a member of the Military

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169 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report on PAC/Poqo/APLA, p. 18.

170 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report on PAC/Poqo/APLA, 1999, p. 18.

Committee. Some of the departments were headed by civilians. For example, the Information and Research Department was headed by Wilberforce Zweni. This change could have been introduced in order to ensure that the political arm of the PAC knew about the military activities of APLA.

During the term of office of Johnson Mlambo as the Chairman of the PAC, the movement was still committed to waging an armed struggle in order to realise the total and genuine liberation of the oppressed in South Africa. The PAC believed that the oppressed, exploited and dispossessed people had shown their capacity to mobilise, sacrifice and challenge the regime. What was required in the 1980s was to intensify the struggle on a higher level, by arming the people and providing them with revolutionary leadership. It was not surprising, therefore, when the PAC labelled the 1980s as the "Decade of the Azanian Revolution", because the struggles of the youth, workers and other patriots indicated that the "Decade of the Common Man" had arrived.[171]

According to Dr Evan Mantzaris, a research officer with the University of Durban-Westville's Department of Sociology, who did a study on APLA and the PAC, the movement's military strategy was planned to follow three dialectically related phases:

- Guerrilla warfare, which included armed propaganda and the destruction of military installations inside the country and the creation of "liberated zones";
- Mobile warfare, according to which large-scale mobile military operations inside South Africa would be launched from "liberated zones";
- Final offensive or full scale war.[172]

Viewed against the background of what APLA actually achieved during the latter half of the 1980s, these strategic plans remained largely on paper or at least in theory. This was because the PAC did not infiltrate its cadres in big numbers into the country. Those who were inside the country lacked the capacity to mobilise the people to the extent that they could create the "liberated zones" as envisaged in the plan of the PAC. As a result,

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171 J. Mlambo, "PAC Chairman's New Year Message", *Azania Combat*, no.4, vol.22, 1986, p. 6.

172 E. Mantzaris, "APLA Can Only Become Stronger", *Azania Commando*, 1991, p. 9.

no full-scale offensive could be expected from APLA when no thorough preparations were being made. This was in spite of the fact that the PAC was engaged in a war against the formidable army of the South African regime.

However, the PAC firmly believed that the South African regime could not be defeated by merely attacking installations and other inanimate objects, as the ANC was doing. This was because the PAC realised that the regime was well-protected and well-maintained in power by the army and the police. The army and the police were regarded as an integral part of the regime's repressive machine and were at the forefront of intimidating the African people. In order to crush the regime, the PAC argued that these two pillars of the apartheid state should be vigorously and systematically attacked. According to Johnson Mlambo's New Year's message of 1986, APLA should "destroy root and branch the tree of white domination", by striking "the main blow at white soldiers and police who are the mainstay and pillars of white domination".[173] The PAC hoped that the armed struggle would force the racist whites to change their minds and stop supporting the regime.

During this period disagreements and confusion took place, when there was uncertainty within APLA about the target of military attacks. The problem of the PAC was that its political leadership normally did not comment on the specific operations of APLA. Their argument was that the High Command was able to handle specific matters related to military operations. The differences and disagreements were between those who were highly politicised and even more cautious within APLA and the rank and file of APLA cadres, the majority of whom were not well-educated.[174] The problem of defining APLA's target was pointed out in the TRC report – there was a dispute concerning the political wisdom of targeting the farmers and civilians as against the basic plan of striking at the police, security forces and the army.[175] Moreover, the highly politicised within APLA argued that the "enemy" could not be defined in terms of race, but it had to be explained according to a functional relationship to the apartheid order, as in the police

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173 J. Mlambo, "PAC Chairman's New Year Message", *Azania Combat*, no.4, vol.22, 1986, p. 6.

174 "Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Umtata, 21 June 1985", in K.M. Kondlo, *The Exile History of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa): 1960-1990*, p. 309.

175 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report on PAC/Poqo/APLA, p. 23.

and army.

The opposing view was supported by the militants and hardliners within APLA, who wanted that farmers should be attacked. Their first argument, according to a former APLA operative in the Transkei, Vuma Ntikinca, was that they wanted to open up rural areas, which would serve as extended rear-bases from which they could attack the cities, in keeping with Maoist strategy of "encircling the cities from the countryside". Secondly, their contention was that targeting farmers was in line with the PAC's basic struggle of "repossessing land". Thirdly, in their view, farmers were no longer ordinary and innocent civilians, as they had become part of a very well armed white civilian detachment of the South African Defence Force.[176]

This unresolved tension would, unavoidably, manifest itself in the 1990s, when APLA stepped up its attacks in South Africa. It caused a great deal of confusion and embarrassment, as the political leadership seemed to be unaware of the activities of its military wing. In one case Johnny Majosi, APLA Chief Information Officer from the military headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam, had to come to the rescue of Benny Alexander, the PAC General Secretary in the early 1990s, when he was uncertain about statements made by Carl Zimbiri on the spate of APLA's attacks on the security forces. In his comment on one of the attacks, Benny Alexander could only say: "I do not seek to distance myself from the killings nor can I at this stage confirm that those involved are with the PAC. I can neither condemn nor condone it (the attack). I can only confirm that APLA is the official military wing of the PAC, and we are affiliated in that way." In defending him, Majosi said: "Cde. Alexander, as a political leader, is doing political work while we, the guerrilla fighters, are doing our work."[177]

Despite this problem, the PAC succeeded in infiltrating a number of APLA insurgents into South Africa from late 1985. Their progress and successes could be traced in court trials, like those reported by G. Moss or PAC documents such as *Azania News, Azania*

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176 "Interview conducted by Mxolisi Mgxashe with Vuma Ntikinca, Umtata, May 1997", in K.M. Kondlo, *The Exile History of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa): 1960-1990*, p. 309.

177 P. Sherren, "PAC leaders are not uncertain over Zimbiri", *Azania Commando*, 1991, p. 4.

Combat or *Azania Commando*. As would be expected, the PAC claimed responsibility for some of these attacks in 1986 in order to show that it was involved in the disturbances that were taking place in South Africa at that time. Moss reported cases of PAC members like Mabata Enoch Zulu, Siyabulela Ndoda Gcancga, Vincent Alson Mathunjwa, Sestiba Paul Mohlolo and Daniel Saul Nkopodi, who were charged with undergoing military training in several countries, such as Egypt, Yugoslavia, Zimbabwe and Tanzania. They were also charged with contacting members of the Islamic organisation called Qibla, which operated in the Western Cape under the banner of the PAC. It was alleged that they contacted Qibla members, like Achmad Cassiem and Yusuf Patel, and discussed possible links between the PAC and Qibla as well as the revival of the PAC internally.[178] It was also alleged that Patel and Cassiem met PAC leaders, including the Administrative Secretary, Joe Mkwanazi, and that Qibla distributed pamphlets on behalf of the PAC.[179]

According to Tom Lodge, the PAC link with Qibla was not the first encounter between the movement and the coloured constituency. The PAC recognised the coloureds as authentic Africans from the beginning, even though they did not join the movement in big numbers. In 1966 prominent coloured leaders from the Coloured People's Congress, like Barney Desai and Cardiff Marney, joined the PAC after their offer of joining the ANC had been turned down by the movement.[180] Towards the end of the 1960s, other coloureds joined, including the Imam Haroun, who was killed in prison in 1969. Lodge contends that these developments might have increased the standing of the PAC within the coloured community in the 1980s.[181] Benny Alexander and Patricia de Lille represented this Africanist trend within the coloured community in the 1980s and 1990s.

As regards the intensification of its armed struggle, the PAC maintained that the struggle should be based inside South Africa. Like the ANC, they believed that the classical method used in Africa of waging the armed struggle from neighbouring countries could

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178 G. Moss, "Alleged Guerrillas and Activists in Court", *Work in Progress*, no. 47, April 1987, pp. 17-18.

179 "PAC men facing 24 terror charges", *Azania Commando*, 1987, p. 2.

180 R. Gibson, *African Liberation Movements*, p. 97.

181 T. Lodge, "The Pan Africanist Congress, 1959-1990", in I. Liebenberg et al., *The Long March*, p. 122.

not be relied upon. Moreover, they were aware of the regime's strategy of isolating the guerrilla fighters from the people and deliberately creating the impression that the cadres were foreign inspired. According to Nyati Pokela, "only mass mobilisation and participation can counter this enemy strategy."[182] This means that there were similarities at this time between the strategic conceptions of the ANC and the PAC. Both of them firmly believed that they could successfully frustrate the South African regime's strategy by firstly building a strong network inside the country and then launching attacks from within. They realised that mass action by the oppressed constituted the vehicle for genuine change. However, the difference between them lay in the fact that the PAC, unlike the ANC, failed to capitalise on the disturbances of the mid-1980s to involve the oppressed maximally in its attempts to mobilise and politicise them. This means that the PAC was only paying lip-service to mass mobilisation and politicisation of the oppressed.

With the benefit of hindsight, Johnson Mlambo was able to admit that the PAC had blundered by emphasising the armed struggle at the expense of other forms of the struggle. According to him, "when we decided on armed struggle, we tended to become one-sided. We neglected the mass struggles of our people - surrendered them to the Charterists. We gave them the free hand to mislead and abuse the masses."[183] In other words, Mlambo criticised the PAC for failing to become involved in the struggles of people, like rent and consumer boycotts, including workers' strikes. These were the tactics that were used maximally by the ANC to mobilise and politicise the oppressed. In Mlambo's view, these were the "small, seemingly insignificant reforms that improve the life of the people, and therefore increase the self-confidence of the masses in themselves and in the PAC ... They are the training ground for the bigger, more decisive battles. They steel and temper both the masses and their leadership in collective struggle. They are compulsory exercises before the marathon, before such higher forms of struggle as the armed struggle."[184]

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182 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Pokela Speaks to the OAU: PAC is Set for Action, n.d., p. 3.

183 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 106: Towards a Youthful and Dynamic PAC - Johnson P. Mlambo, 3 August 1991, p. 1.

184 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 106: Towards a Youthful and Dynamic PAC - Johnson P. Mlambo, 3 August 1991, p. 3.

In spite of this weakness, APLA managed to intensify its armed struggle against the regime from 1986. In his 1987 New Year message, Mlambo said that APLA would intensify its military programme of arming and training people to strike harder at the police and army. For this reason, he designated 1987 as the "Year of Arming the People."[185] His call was confirmed by Sabelo Phama, the PAC Secretary for Defence, who said: "We are succeeding in our armed activities and we have not only armed and trained scores of ordinary African masses inside the country, but have enabled them to engage the enemy."[186] The PAC's strategy of a protracted people's war, which involved the infiltration of guerrillas into rural areas, resulted in numerous armed confrontations and skirmishes with the police and the security forces. Some of these APLA attacks on security forces were reported to the TRC towards the end of the 1990s. Amongst others, they included four actions attributed to the Alexandra township's "Scorpion Gang" between December 1986 and February 1987, in which two soldiers and two policemen were wounded and a café owner was shot dead during a robbery. The three APLA cadres involved were killed in a grenade and gun battle with the security forces in Bramley, Johannesburg. Mandla Mihael Yende shot eleven SADF soldiers with "scorpion" machine pistols in Alexandra in January 1987. Themba Jack Phikwane claimed to have killed twenty-five SADF members in Alexandra. Louie Nkululeko Dlova injured an SAP member with a hand-grenade during the "Lichtenburg Battle".[187] Other attacks included an APLA grenade attack on two municipal police platoons at the Soweto Police Training College in 1987 and a clash in 1988 between APLA cadres and the police, which ended in the death of four APLA members and severe injuries to twelve policemen.[188] These incidents indicate that APLA also engaged the regime security forces in battles inside South Africa.

The same military operations of APLA, indicated above, were also mentioned by the

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185 J. Mlambo, "1987 is Year of Arming the People", *Azania Combat*, issue no. 3, 1987, p. 3.

186 W. Mazambane, "PAC marks Sharpeville with a war cry to arms", *Azania Commando*, 1987, p. 3.

187 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 4, p. 372.

188 J. Mlambo, "Policemen face people's wrath - PAC Chairman", *Azania Combat*, issue no. 3, 1987, p. 9.

PAC in one of its 1989 *Azania Combat* publications.[189] They used information from an article by Gary van Staden to justify the movement's revival in the 1980s. As a post-graduate student at Witwatersrand University, Van Staden investigated the growth in the military activities and the diplomatic relations of the PAC. He came to the conclusion that the significant gains made by the PAC militarily in South Africa and in its diplomatic penetration worldwide in the 1980s were largely due to the quality of the movement's leadership. The PAC capitalised on this information to indicate how extensively they were involved in South Africa militarily and even isolating the regime internationally. However, the movement was exaggerating the conclusions of Van Staden regarding the extent and scope of its involvement in South Africa and its expansion in the diplomatic field, especially in comparison with the achievements of the ANC at the same time. With regard to APLA's insurgency, Gary van Staden concluded: "At this point, it would be appropriate to inject a note of caution. While the events described above as well as those which indicate that the PAC is indeed in the process of its most significant revival since the early 1960s, both the scale and intensity of the revival remain relatively low. The novelty value of renewed PAC activity has tended to portray the revival of the organisation as far more spectacular than it actually is." Regarding diplomatic development, Van Staden wrote: "Despite the considerable advances of recent years, the PAC - as was the case with its revived insurgency campaign - remain very much in the diplomatic shadow of the ANC and, more importantly, trails behind the latter as far as financial support is concerned."[190] This means that Van Staden was recognising the potential for improvement in the PAC, especially after its stormy and turbulent period in the 1960s and 1970s.

In recognising the potential growth of the PAC, Van Staden suggested the following necessary conditions for improvement and revival:

- The movement should have high quality leadership, which would inspire confidence in the organisation and give direction to the strategies of the PAC. This leadership should also suggest to the international community that the PAC should be taken

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189 M. Dimpho, "Catalogue of Admissions", *Azania Combat*, issue 9, 1989, p. 6.

190 G. Van Staden, "Return of the Prodigal Son: Prospects for a Revival of the Pan Africanist Congress", *International Affairs Bulletin*, vol. 12, no. 1, 1988, pp. 44-47.

seriously. More importantly, organisational skills would be required to plan and execute insurgency campaigns and raise funds;

- The growth of Africanism within South Africa should be encouraged by the movement. It should demonstrate as visibly as possible that it was challenging the South African regime. The quality and quantity of its insurgency should be improved. It should capitalise on the failure of the ANC to radicalise the oppressed;
- Increased international support was necessary to isolate the regime and seek material and financial support;
- An increase in insurgency and insurrection was needed. The movement should exploit the apparent failure of the ANC to consolidate its position or make any significant impact on the regime during the widespread insurrections between 1984 and 1986;
- A reasonably high level of state repression in the townships called for the exiled movements to support the oppressed. The prevailing situation in the townships met the necessary conditions for further PAC growth;
- Increased radicalisation of the black youth was taking place and should be utilised;
- There was a perception that the ANC could not end white minority rule;
- Increased radicalisation in white reactionary politics should be heeded;
- There was a perception of the failure of negotiation politics.[191]

From the above it is clear that the prospects for change in the fortunes of the PAC as a liberation movement relied heavily on the quality of its leadership. Moreover, it is also clear that if the perceptions of the oppressed that the ANC was moderate could persist, it would then mean that the PAC was in a better position to capitalise on the blunders of its rival. However, the key to the revival of the movement remained the type and quality of its leadership.

As reflected in the TRC report, APLA members were also involved in armed robberies towards the end of the 1980s and early 1990s. A "robbery unit" was formed in order to fund the external and internal wings of APLA. They solved their economic problems by targeting butcheries, grocery shops and so on. Guerrillas engaged in these activities

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191 G. Van Staden, "Return of the Prodigal Son: Prospects for a Revival of the Pan Africanist Congress", *International Affairs Bulletin*, vol. 12, no. 1, 1988, pp. 50-58.

were named "repossession units" and their actions were defended by the PAC on the ground that they were politically-motivated, as these cadres were part of a strategy to repossess land taken by the settlers.[192] The leadership of the PAC and APLA was condemned for violating human rights of those who were killed and affected by their cruel actions. This was a clear indication that the movement had failed to use diplomatic and other legal channels to raise funds. While it also indicated that the PAC was not concerned about its image to its supporters and sympathisers internationally and locally, it also raised suspicions about the integrity and visionary leadership of the movement which condoned such horrible actions.

In carrying out its military operations towards the end of the 1980s, APLA developed its unique style of guerrilla warfare. In spite of the fact that it believed in the Maoist strategy of encircling the cities from the countryside, it realised that it was also important to base its cadres in the urban areas, especially in the townships amongst the oppressed masses. Letlaka Mphahlele illustrated this shift, when he indicated the existence of underground units he was supposed to contact: "Mabopane became my base as I visited APLA underground units in the Pretoria, Witwatersrand and Vaal areas."[193] This was not a change in strategy of attacking from the countryside. However, it shows that the PAC was operating in both the urban and rural areas. In addition, APLA became associated with the usage of "Scorpion" guns and "hand grenades" in its operations. The frequency of grenade attacks on policemen by guerrillas became so high to the extent that the expression "the grenade warfare" became common.[194]

As has already been mentioned in this chapter, the PAC had the longstanding policy of not claiming responsibility for attacks launched in South Africa or announcing arrests of their cadres by the regime's forces. According to Mlambo, they often left it to the fighters who carried out the attacks to announce them. As he put it: "I would not want to go out and tabulate that there had been this or that action by APLA. And generally, we don't claim this or that action...we leave it to the fighters involved for them to say they have

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192 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 4, October 1999, pp. 372-373.

193 L. Mphahlele, *Child of this Soil: My Life as a Freedom Fighter*, pp. 141-142.

194 M. Dimpho, "APLA Operational File", *Azania Combat*, issue no. 9, 1989, p. 3.

done it."[195]

This contrasted sharply with the policy of the ANC, where responsibility for any attack would often be claimed officially by the spokesperson of the ANC, who would either be the President or any other high-ranking official of the movement. This was important for the ANC, when it was using the strategy of "armed propaganda". By announcing its attacks or arrests, the ANC was able to endear itself to the masses as a liberation movement, which was doing something to challenge the regime.

On the other hand, the PAC regarded the action of the ANC as trying to gain cheap publicity and popularity. According to its Chief Information Officer, Johnny Majosi, the PAC "just don't like making our fighters arrest statistics by plunging them into ill-planned and publicity-geared type of operations just to prove that we are fighting or are 'doing something'."[196] In other words, he gave the impression that the PAC was not worried about the announcement of the numbers, which were used as a yardstick for determining the level of its military activity in South Africa. For this reason, it was always suspicious of the way the regime or liberal press reported statistics concerning the military activities of APLA and MK. For example, the PAC questioned the statistics of the regime's minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok, when he announced that the security forces had killed 94 PAC and ANC insurgents between 1988 and 1989. According to the PAC, Vlok was supposed to have indicated the statistics of each movement separately. Their suspicion that the ANC was favoured by the regime was indicated by this comment: "His failure, if he was not avoiding to be specific on the membership or affiliation of the 94 is significant, considering that Pretoria had in previous years made it such a habit to be specific about ANC attacks or casualties that the ANC was portrayed as South Africa's 'main guerrilla group', while the PAC was supposed to be doing 'little or no fighting'."[197]

This means that the PAC was actually concerned about how its involvement in the

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195 P. Domingos, "From the Commander-in Chief's Desk", *Azania Combat*, issue no. 9, 1989, p. 9.

196 Muriel Dimpho, "APLA Operational File", *Azania Combat*, issue no. 9, 1989, p. 3.

197 Sol Dumezweni, "Vlok chooses to be general on attacks involving APLA", *Azania Combat*, issue no.10, 1990, p. 6.

liberation struggle inside South Africa was perceived in comparison with the ANC. This tendency of wanting to justify its involvement in the struggle inside South Africa at all costs contributed towards its bad relations and competition with the ANC.

F.W. de Klerk's National Party government unbanned all the liberation movements on 2 February 1990. This was an important milestone in the history of the ANC and the PAC, which had been banned since 1960. Shortly thereafter the ANC and the regime began with their exploratory talks, which would pave the way for the establishment of the new South Africa. As indicated in the section of the ANC in this chapter, the movement decided to suspend its armed struggle even though it distrusted the regime.

It is of crucial importance to mention at this stage the initial attitude of the PAC towards negotiations with the regime and the reasons why the movement continued with the armed struggle. The PAC was sceptical about negotiations with the regime from the beginning. According to them, negotiations could only "take place between equals or, in the context of South Africa, when the regime would have been pushed into a tight corner, having received telling military and political blows." Consequently, the movement was determined to "remain on the battlefield", by continuing to attack the regime's security forces until the time was ripe for them to "negotiate from a position of strength.[198] At the same time, the PAC asked this debatable and thought-provoking question: "Logically would it not be fair and just for those war materials to be equally administered by those vying for power in order to ensure that no particular force could claim superiority over others during the transitional period"?[199] This problem actually affected all the liberation movements. It was one of the key issues that made negotiations extremely important.

For the PAC, this seemed to be its period of showing how radical it was in order to gain support of the oppressed, so that when time for voting or reaching a political settlement came, it should also be a political factor in South African politics. It was not surprising, therefore, that the PAC's military wing, APLA, became involved in intensified military activities, that were responsible for the movement's violation of the human rights that

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198 Editorial, "Negotiations out for now", *Azania Combat,* issue no. 9, 1989, p. 2.

199 Editorial, "Who should cease hostility?", *Azania Combat,* issue no. 15, 1992, p. 2.

was pointed out to them by the TRC. As reflected in the TRC report, APLA targeted white farmers and seized weapons. It also attacked public places in urban areas usually visited by whites.[200] Although the 1990s fall outside the scope of this research, it is important to note that APLA attacks increased tremendously in 1993, after its commander Sabelo Phama had designated 1993 "The Year of the Great Storm". The movement secured bases in the Transkei, from where they conducted attacks on civilians between 1992 and 1994. However, the PAC decided to suspend its armed struggle on 16 January 1994.[201] By that time the negotiation process had almost been completed and the birth of the new South Africa was fast approaching as the date for the elections was set for 27 April 1994.

From the above analysis of the involvement of APLA in the disturbances of the 1980s in South Africa, it is apparent that the PAC and its military wing did not properly analyse the situation in South Africa. The fact that the PAC failed to capitalise on the disturbances of the mid-1980s to mobilise the oppressed masses for support, indicates that APLA did not fulfil the requirements of being a people' army. The limited amount of APLA-related armed operations could be ascribed to the fact that it received limited popular support inside the country. It is therefore clear that the PAC's lack of visibility inside South Africa contributed to the failure of the movement to re-establish itself as a revolutionary party in the country. However, its military operations towards the end of the 1980s and early 1990s indicated that it was capable of waging a military struggle, which could pose security problems for the regime. The qualified statement can thus be made that the PAC's military wing, APLA, also contributed in a limited way to the liberation struggle of the oppressed in South Africa.

6.5 CONCLUSION

Compared to the PAC, the ANC emerged as a more visible and successful liberation movement towards the end of the 1980s concerning infiltration of trained cadres inside

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200 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 7, October 1998, p. 685.

201 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 4, October 1998, p. 376.

South Africa and carrying out military operations against the regime. It was also apparent that both the ANC and the PAC could not pose a serious national security threat to the regime through their military operations. The armed struggle had to be supplemented by other strategies in order to take the liberation struggle forward. Both the ANC and the PAC claimed that the racial policies of the regime were a threat to world peace and security. Against this background, it is important to determine how and to what extent both of them tried to mobilise world opinion in order to isolate the regime. The next chapter will focus on this increasingly important component of the struggle.

CHAPTER 7

MOBILISATION OF SUPPORT BY THE ANC AND PAC IN THE 1980S

In the 1980s, the ANC and the PAC continued to mobilise support to isolate the South African regime by turning public opinion against it. They portrayed the regime as an illegal and unjust government, which was a threat to international peace and security. They claimed that the South African regime and its policies of racial segregation and apartheid were a threat to world peace and stability. It is against this background that this chapter will examine how the ANC and the PAC mobilised support to force the South African regime to the negotiation table and to what extent their relationships were affected in the process.

7.1 MOBILISING SUPPORT BY THE ANC

In the 1980s, the ANC probed the international pillar of its struggle to be the most successful part of its strategy. During this period, the movement had succeeded to establish itself as an independent and accomplished international actor. Its credibility was growing very fast, to the extent that some of the governments regarded it as the government-in-waiting. The most important question at this stage is: How did this situation come about?

There are several reasons for the ANC's growing prestige, both inside and outside South Africa. One of the reasons was that the ANC was able to exploit the international situation to its advantage, whenever the opportune moment presented itself. A case in point was the signing of the Geneva Conventions on the humanitarian conduct of war in 1980. Previously, the conventions covered only wars between countries and only governments were signatories. However, the conventions were extended by a separate protocol agreement, extending the concept of internal armed conflict to cover wars of national liberation movements. Although the South African government was a signatory to the Geneva Conventions, it did not sign the addition known as Protocol One. On the other hand, the ANC made history by becoming the first liberation movement to sign the

protocol.[1] In signing the protocol, the ANC pledged not to attack "soft civilian targets". In essence, it meant that the ANC's violent struggle would be aimed at military, strategic and economic targets, such as soldiers, police, army camps and vehicles, police stations, electric power stations and fuel stations. As already noted in this chapter, the ANC was sensitive to the killing of civilians in conducting its military operations against the regime. This sensitivity to the killing of ordinary people enabled the movement to gain the higher moral ground as compared to the PAC, which did not show the same sympathy.

Against this background, it could be argued that in subscribing to the Geneva Conventions, the ANC was reflecting its traditional humanitarian outlook and at the same time making cover ups for its weaknesses of attacking civilians in some instances. More importantly, the ANC gained for itself favourable publicity as a humane and concerned movement. In this manner, the act of signing an international protocol enabled the ANC to retain a broad international acceptability and greater degree of world standing and respectability.

The credibility of the ANC as a viable resistance movement increased when key figures in the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), such as Tenjiwe Mtintso, Barney Pityana and many others, joined the ANC in the early 1980s.[2] Given the fact that the natural home of these important figures of the BCM should have been the PAC because of their emphasis on African nationalism, the symbolic significance of their joining the ANC should not be underestimated. Although other reasons, such as jockeying for leadership positions, personal influences and operations by the exiled ANC could have played roles, the main reason for preferring the ANC rather than the PAC could be sought in the decline of the PAC towards the end of the 1970s. Whereas the ANC had generous sources of funds and relatively stable leadership, the PAC had financial problems, was riddled with internal divisions and suffered from a lack of decisive leadership.[3] In other words, the internal problems of the PAC dealt a severe blow to the organisation's

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1 *The Rand Daily Mail*, 10 January 1981. See also *The Star*, 28 November 1980.

2 *The Star*, 14 October 1980.

3 A.W. Marx, *Lessons of the Struggle*, pp. 99-100. See also *The Cape Times*, 10 January 1981.

international reputation.

The ANC's growing prestige inside South Africa was enhanced by opinions of influential individual whites, such as Dr Van Zyl Slabbert of the Progressive Federal Party (PFP) and Ton Vosloo, the editor of *Beeld* newspaper in the early 1980s, who wanted the government to negotiate with the ANC. In his political column of the Afrikaans daily *Beeld*, which was regarded as the Transvaal mouthpiece of the governing National Party, Ton Vosloo conceded that the ANC was the "mother body of black organised politics in South Africa", whose influence was strongest among urban blacks.[4] His brave statement seemed to have been directed at the conservative and non-reformist faction of the National Party to produce visible evidence that their system was better than the one offered by the ANC. Given the fact that the regime was still repressive and failing to accommodate the aspirations of the oppressed at that time, this warning was actually a wake-up call to whites in general and the regime in particular to offer a viable alternative to the ANC's policies.[5] This means that the views of Ton Vosloo reinforced the growing perception that the ANC was enjoying a growing popularity amongst exiled movements.

There were also signs that the ANC was taken more seriously than the PAC internationally. For example, the visit by Oliver Tambo to the PAC's ally, communist China, in 1983 was interpreted as further isolating the movement from its main supporter. More importantly, the visit appeared to confirm speculations in Southern African political and diplomatic circles that China was reconsidering and reassessing its traditional support for the PAC. The latter view was strengthened, when China's Assistant Foreign Minister responsible for African affairs, Gong Defei, indicated that blacks in South Africa should unite with progressive whites to change South Africa's political system.[6] Even though China maintained good relations with both the ANC and PAC at this time, Gong's views were interpreted as a rejection of the PAC's policy that only blacks should be involved in the process of change in South Africa. This means that Gong actually supported the inclusive nationalism of the ANC. It could also be argued that China did not understand and support the narrow nationalism of the PAC.

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4 Beeld, 9 January 1981. See also *The Cape Times*, 10 January 1981.

5 *The Cape Times*, 15 January 1981.

6 *The Star*, 1 June 1983.

The ANC also adeptly manipulated the apartheid theme and the injustices associated with it to sway international opinion and support in its favour. The United Nations Organisation (UN) continued to offer the ANC a platform from which it could expose the apartheid policies of the South African regime. Through the UN, the ANC succeeded to build a network of contacts, who helped her to actively oppose the apartheid regime and to unite world opinion in opposition to the system of apartheid. The General Assembly of the UN adopted resolutions condemning the apartheid regime. The Special Committee Against Apartheid in the General Assembly appealed to member states, specialised agencies, churches and trade unions to offer their assistance to the ANC. In this way, a strong united front of anti-apartheid forces was built internationally. It was not surprising when Oliver Tambo took advantage of the platform offered by the UN to convey the appreciation of the ANC to the "world community and to the United Nations for this surely unprecedented campaign for solidarity."[7]

The ANC also took initiatives to organise its own successful international conferences against the regime. For example, the ANC organised an international conference in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1987, to expose the "unspeakable plight" of the black children in South Africa. In condemning the atrocities of the South African regime, like keeping young children in prisons, killing them in riot situations or leaving them orphaned by killing their parents, Oliver Tambo said that the apartheid regime survived because "humanity, and principally ourselves, has not yet said that an extra day of apartheid is an extra day too long. It thrives because it can include within its body count the lives of children who it describes as opponents that it has vanquished."[8] Tambo was appealing for more pressure against the regime.

In another case, the ANC organised a successful conference labelled "The World United

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7 Archives of the ANC (ANC), University of Fort Hare (UFH), Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Statement of the African National Congress, by Oliver Tambo, to the UN General Assembly on the Question of Apartheid, New York, November 1982, p. 1.

8 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Statement by the President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo at the International Conference on Children, Repression and the Law in Apartheid South Africa, Harare, September 24-27, 1987, p. 2.

Against Apartheid" in Arusha, Tanzania in December 1987. Delegates from a wide range of countries, liberation movements and non-governmental organisations attended. Supporters of the ANC, which included the World Peace Council, the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations and its agencies, Amnesty International, the Socialist International AAPSO, attended this Arusha Conference. At the end of this conference Oliver Tambo said: " ...we leave as emissaries of a common cause, committed to energise all humanity everywhere to act against apartheid, for a democratic South Africa."[9] Tambo was appealing to the participants of the conference to help the ANC to end the evils of the apartheid system and replacing them with a democratic government.

Furthermore , the Organisation of African Unity and the Non-Aligned Movement were important components of the united front against South Africa internationally. The apartheid system was identified as a "crime against humanity" by these bodies. Its victims extended beyond the borders of South Africa. For this reason, the ANC described apartheid in the platforms of the OAU and the Non-Aligned Movement as "a mixture, indeed a compound of colonialism, brutal oppression, ferocious exploitation, rabid racism or fascism, Zionism and neo-nazism of expansion and imperialism."[10] Thus, the destabilising efforts of the South African regime were used by the OAU, the

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9 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Statement of the President of the African National Congress, Oliver Tambo, at the Closing Session of the International Conference Against Apartheid for a Democratic South Africa, Arusha, Tanzania, 1-4 December 1987, p. 1.

10 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Speech by Comrade President O.R. Tambo to the Non-Aligned Summit of Heads of State and Governments Held in New Delhi, India, 7-11 March 1983, p. 4. See also the following documents which indicate how the ANC sought support and condemned South Africa and the western countries in the OAU meetings: ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Statement of the President of the ANC, at the 25th Anniversary of OAU Summit Meeting of Heads of State and Government, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, May 25, 1988, pp. 1-8; ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Statement of the President of the ANC, Comrade Oliver Tambo, to the OAU Liberation Committee, Arusha, Tanzania, February 10, 1983, pp. 1-11; ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements , Box 17: Statement of the President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, at the 50th Session of the OAU Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa - Harare, Zimbabwe, 13 May 1988, pp. 1-5.

Non-Aligned Movement and the ANC to justify the reason why the system had to be completely destroyed.

The most phenomenal development of the united front in the international arena was indicated by the non-governmental organisational level. Many of these organisations assisted the ANC in its attempt to form an internationally based united front. Leading amongst them, was the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) in the United Kingdom. A discussion of this movement and its sister movements in the other countries can be a research topic on its own, which cannot be covered by this thesis. It is, however, important to note that the British Anti-Apartheid Movement worked tirelessly and systematically from the 1960s to mobilise the British people against apartheid. It also encouraged the mushrooming of other groups in different parts of the world. For many years, it remained the focal point of mobilisation of solidarity with the people of South Africa. For example, the well-known positive action campaigns in the 1980s against the debasing system of apartheid were the demonstrations against P.W. Botha's visit to Britain and the epic celebration of Nelson Mandela's 70th birthday anniversary, which ended in the Wembley concert in 1989.[11] The Wembley Concert called for the release of Nelson Mandela and was attended by artists from all over the world. The public support the AAM received was thus an indication of the extent to which the ANC was successful in Britain in forming a united front against South Africa.

Similar pro-ANC Anti-Apartheid Movements existed in other countries like Holland, Ireland, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, the Scandinavian countries and Canada. Together with some of the non-governmental organisations, such as the Association of West European Parliamentarians for Action Against Apartheid (AWEPAA), the World Council of Churches (WCC), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the International Teachers for Peace Council (ITPC), the World Peace Council (WPC) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), their common objective was to delegitimise the South African government and rally support for the ANC. In this way, the ANC was able to isolate and maintain a high moral ground stance against the racist South African regime.

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[11] ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 18: The Measure of Your Victory – on the 30th Anniversary of the British A.A.M., 1990, p. 3.

Another important theme that the ANC used as a tactic to isolate South Africa internationally and as a tool to end apartheid was the imposition of sanctions against South Africa. The UN General Assembly proclaimed 1982 the International Year of Mobilisation for Sanctions against South Africa, with its main objectives, as indicated in the UN Programme of Action for 1982, the following:

- "To publicise the Paris Declaration on Sanctions against South Africa and mobilise public opinion in support of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against South Africa;
- To promote all appropriate steps to facilitate the imposition of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against South Africa by the Security Council under Chapter vii of the Charter of the United Nations;
- To encourage action by states, individually and collectively in the light of the Paris Declaration;
- To encourage action by local authorities, mass media, trade unions, religious bodies, co-operative and other non-governmental organisations as well as men and women of conscience in accordance with the Paris Declaration;
- To promote concerted action by all governments and organisations committed to freedom and human dignity in an international campaign for the isolation of the apartheid regime of South Africa, as well as to extend all appropriate assistance to the oppressed people of South Africa and their national liberation movements."[12]

The proclamation of 1982 as the Year of Mobilisation for Sanctions against South Africa was supported by the OAU, Non-Aligned Movement countries, AAPSO, WPC, anti-apartheid movements, various international, governmental and non-governmental organisations and individual governments. As a result, 1982 saw the holding of a number of conferences, seminars, demonstrations at local, regional and international levels organised by the Special Committee, organisations and governments under the theme of mobilisation for sanctions against South Africa. One such conference was organised by the British AAM in close co-operation with the UN Special Committee

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12 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Department of International Affairs Report, Box 43: ANC Missions Report, March 1982, p. 3.

Against Apartheid in London under the theme of "South Africa - the time to choose", from 11 to 13 March 1982. The declaration of the conference questioned the role of Britain in the liberation struggle of the oppressed South Africans: "Conference was intended to consider ... the responsibility of Britain in relation to the grave situation in Southern Africa resulting from escalating repression and aggression launched by the apartheid regime of SA, the ominous implications of nuclear plans, as well as the advance of the struggle of the oppressed people, including armed struggle for liberation"[13] All these steps indicate that there were efforts internationally to support the ANC to isolate the regime.

However, the ANC was not happy with the Western countries, that undermined campaigns to isolate South Africa internationally. The main culprits in this regard were the USA, Britain, West Germany and France. These advocates of dialogue with South Africa believed that economic sanctions would harm black people. They believed that sanctions would harden the attitude of whites.[14] On the other hand, the supporters of sanctions believed that nothing was to be lost by applying economic sanctions against South Africa. They claimed that it was the only effective way of forcing the regime to change its policies. As one of the staunchest supporters of disinvestments in South Africa, Bishop Desmond Tutu repudiated the claims of the Western countries as hypocritical talk and "moral humbug". He said that black people were already suffering under apartheid.[15] Tutu constantly pressed for the intensification of sanctions against South Africa. He was aware that economic sanctions would not only harm the blacks. Whites would also be affected and their suffering would force the regime to introduce changes, that would meet the aspirations of liberation movements like the ANC and the PAC. He remarked that "when the ladder is falling over, surely it's those at the top who will get hurt the most, not those at the bottom."[16]

There was another dimension to the sanction issue, which affected the relationship between Britain and the United States on the one hand and the ANC on the other hand.

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13 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Department of International Affairs Report, Box 43, ANC Missions Report, March 1982, p. 4.

14 M. Attwell, *South Africa: Background to the Crisis*, p. 205.

15 N. Makgetla, "Why We Call for Sanctions", *Sechaba*, September 1985, p. 13.

16 G. Leach, *South Africa: No Easy Way to Peace*, p. 284.

It seemed that both the USA and Britain were reluctant to help the ANC. They saw the movement as a terrorist organisation with strong links with the Soviet Union. Its commitment to nationalisation threatened their economic interests in South Africa. Their attitude was confirmed by the fact that they had good relationships with Chief Buthelezi of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), because of his pro-capitalist and anti-sanctions stance.[17] This shows that Western countries such as the USA and Britain tended to ignore the ANC and were not enthusiastic about helping it, because they perceived it to be radical.

Despite Britain's lukewarm attitude towards the ANC, many of its people supported the liberation struggle in South Africa. There was an expatriate community of South Africans living in Britain and contact between left-wing and liberal British politicians and South African counterparts. The London office of the ANC was the strongest and most active mission abroad. It served as centre for co-ordinating the propaganda campaign against the South African regime. As an eminent supporter and mainstay of international campaigns for the freedom struggle of the oppressed South Africans, the British Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) frequently organised massive demonstrations in support of the ANC. The AAM designated 1987 as the Year of People's Sanctions against South Africa. The campaign reached its zenith in 1988, when the AAM organised a mass demonstration against P.W. Botha in Trafalgar Square and the nationwide celebrations marking Nelson Mandela's 70th birthday with demands for his release.[18] As would be expected, the ANC benefited greatly from these activities of the AAM. Besides increasing the profile of the ANC, this show of support actually indicated a strong political statement by a powerful section of the British people to their government. In other words, it signalled to the Thatcher government that its continued support and collaboration with the apartheid regime of South Africa was unacceptable to them.

In America, however, the South African issue enjoyed only limited success. This was because the anti-apartheid movement was small and ineffectual compared to that in Britain. Nevertheless, the move to support South Africa in America was triggered by the

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17 P. Frankel et al., *State Resistance and Change in South Africa*, p. 242.

18 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 18: The Measure of Your Victory – on the 30th Anniversary of the British A.A.M., 1990, p. 1.

victory of Ronald Reagan in the 1984 elections. Reagan formulated a policy of "constructive engagement" towards South Africa, which actually encouraged the regime to reform apartheid and stop making contacts with radical groups like the ANC.[19] Afro-Americans who supported the Democratic Party condemned Reagan's policy of "constructive engagement" towards South Africa. His policy was seen as a tacit support to South Africa's apartheid policy and destabilisation of its neighbours. According to the ANC, they expected "nothing from the South African racists except increased aggressiveness while a government as powerful as that of the United States of America stands four-square behind the apartheid regime."[20] As a result, demonstrations began late in 1984 against Reagan's re-election. Organised by Randall Robinson, the executive director of Trans-Africa, a black lobbying organisation, these demonstrations took place in front of the South African embassy in Washington and spread to other cities with South African consular offices. Matters came to a head in early 1985, when the American singer, Stevie Wonder, dedicated his Oscar award for the music in the film "The Woman in Red" to Nelson Mandela. The South African Broadcasting Corporation showed its partiality by banning Stevie Wonder's song, "I Just Called to Say I Love You", from the airwaves.[21] In this way, the regime showed its animosity towards the promotion of the ANC.

Towards the end of 1985, however, American public opinion had been aroused to the extent that Reagan decided to avoid more vigorous action by Congress by issuing an executive order imposing limited sanctions against South Africa. Nevertheless, the protests continued unabated. Fearing that they might be outvoted by the Democrats on the South African question, the Republican Party of Reagan was forced to support the sanctions issue against its will. In 1986, Reagan was forced by Congress to adopt a more punitive stand against South Africa through the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act.[22] The Act included a ban on all new American investments and bank loans, ending

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19 L. Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, p.232. See also B. Bunting, "United States Strategy in Southern Africa", *Sechaba*, April 1985, pp. 1-13.

20 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Papers, Box 17: Statement of the President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, to the OAU Summit Meeting of the Heads of State and Government, Addis Ababa, 12-15 November 1984, p. 6.

21 G. Leach, *No Easy Way to Peace*, p. 206.

22 L. Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, p. 234.

South African air links with the United States, prohibiting a range of South African imports like uranium, coal, textiles, steel and agricultural products. This means that the US government, which initially had an indifferent attitude towards the ANC, was forced to support sanctions which targeted South Africa.

At the same time, American companies started to disinvest and reduced their operations in South Africa. Those that decided to withdraw from South Africa included General Electric, Coca Cola, General Motors, Warner Communications and IBM.[23] Many of them withdrew from South Africa, because of the country's worsening economic situation. The pull-out from South Africa by these companies indicated that mounting progress towards international sanctions was gathering speed.

In the same vein, the ANC also launched campaigns against specific companies to disinvest from South Africa, like the one against the Royal Dutch Shell Group. Moreover, the ANC encouraged trade unions, churches, individuals and local authorities and pension funds to withdraw investments from Shell and to boycott its products. At the same time, the ANC rejected the implementation of selected or conditional sanctions and called for comprehensive sanctions.[24] It also noticed the importance of financial sanctions and campaigned for banks to reschedule the regime's loans. As a result, they campaigned banks, reserve banks, governments, national parliaments and the European Parliament to intensify pressure on the South African government.[25]

The ANC also realised that, despite the growing anti-apartheid movement, some nations and regions of East Asia were drastically improving their economic ties with South Africa. Taiwan, Korea and Hong-Kong were becoming powerful partners of the regime. To reinforce economic sanctions and step up its activities against the regime in East Asia, the ANC opened its office in May 1988 in Tokyo. Moreover, the Japan Anti-Apartheid Committee (JAAC) held the first Anti-Apartheid Asia-Oceania Regional

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23 G. Leach, *No Easy Way to Peace*, pp. 271-272.

24 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Address of the ANC Comrade President Oliver Tambo at the 75th Anniversary, January 8th, 1987 Meeting of the ANC, Lusaka, Zambia, p. 4. See also "ANC International", *Sechaba*, July 1986, p. 14.

25 J. Makatini, "Intensify Britain's Isolation", *Sechaba,* September 1986, p. 30.

Workshop (AAAOW) in Tokyo in August 1988 with the help of the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid.[26] As a result, the ANC was able to enhance its credibility internationally as an active movement doing something to pressurise the South African regime to change.

Calls for the intensification of punitive measures against South Africa were made at a conference of Commonwealth heads of government, held in the Bahamas in October 1985. The Commonwealth members drew up a declaration, calling upon the South African regime to end apartheid, free Nelson Mandela, unban the ANC and start to negotiate with black nationalists. In addition, the Commonwealth expressed its firm commitment to continue with existing sanctions against South Africa until it changed its policies.[27]

The sanctions theme was given more impetus after the South African President, P.W. Botha, had made the famous Rubicon speech in Durban in 1985, in which he told the international community that his regime would not be prescribed to by the outside world.[28] The intransigent and hard-line attitude adopted by Botha strengthened the ANC's position internationally.

A meeting between the officials of the ANC in exile and the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group (EPG) took place early in 1986. Under the chairmanship of Malcolm Fraser, a former Australian Prime Minister, and General Olusegun Obasanjo, the former military ruler of Nigeria, the EPG visited South Africa and met the government and several black persons and organisations, including Nelson Mandela at Pollsmoor

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26 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Box 44: Kusuhara, Akira (Japan Anti-Apartheid Committee). Apartheid and East Asia: An Outline on South African Economic Relations with Taiwan, Hong-Kong and South Korea, Paper, Sydney, Australia, 15-17 September 1989, pp.1-4.

27 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Box 44: Prime Ministerial (Malcolm Fraser of Australia and General Obasanjo of Nigeria) Statement on South Africa, pp. 1-2. See also A. Sparks, *Tomorrow is Another Country: The Inside Story of South Africa's Negotiated Revolution*, p. 33.

28 *The Citizen*, 16 August 1985; *The Star*, 16 August 1985.

prison.[29] Encouraged by the positive spirit that prevailed on both sides of the political spectrum, the group drew up a plan for the possible start of all-party negotiations.

However, when the group was due to meet with a special cabinet constitutional committee, the South African Defence Force (SADF) under General Malan conducted simultaneous raids on supposed ANC bases in Zambia, Botswana and Zimbabwe on 19 May 1986, as part of what was known as Operation Leo.[30] Later, at the TRC, the SADF claimed that the attacks were launched in response to attacks by MK on Sasol II at Secunda. An alternative view was that it was likely that the attacks were meant to disrupt the meeting between the cabinet and the EPG delegation. There was suspicion that the attacks were meant to sabotage the planned meeting. Pik Botha, the foreign minister at the time, indicated at the TRC that the raids "were not discussed at any meeting where I was present". P.W. Botha's response showed contempt for the EPG mission. He said: "I was not aware of their programme. I was not aware of what they were doing here. I never met them and I was only concerned with the onslaught against South Africa."[31]

At the same time, P.W. Botha tightened security measures, by imposing a nation-wide state of emergency. Shocked and angered by these developments, the EPG decided to leave South Africa immediately. As the delegation report indicated, the EPG was left with no alternative but to conclude that "the Government of South Africa at the end made it impossible for us to proceed any further."[32]

There was an international outcry over the deliberate abortion of the EPG's negotiating initiatives. The Western world began to act on this vital international issue. The United States Senate voted 84 against 14 in favour of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, which introduced comprehensive economic sanctions against South Africa, as previously

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29 A. Spark, *Tomorrow is Another Country*, pp. 33-34.

30 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 2, p. 150.

31 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 2, pp.151-152.

32 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Box 44: Prime Ministerial Statement on South Africa, p. 3.

indicated in this section. The act encouraged European countries to impose economic sanctions against South Africa. Although these developments were major victories in the ANC's attempts to isolate South Africa internationally after 1986, the exception was Britain under the premiership of Margaret Thatcher, who steadfastly refused to apply economic sanctions against South Africa.[33]

Support for the ANC and its cause also manifested itself in other forms. Scandinavian aid was largely directed at the ANC's educational projects and for humanitarian purposes. Although the money was not to be used for buying arms, the Swedish government did not control how it was spent. In the course of 1985 the ANC received about R12 million from Norway and Sweden.[34] The ANC did not only receive support from the World Council of Churches, but also financial aid to the tune of R178,000 in 1986 to help with the problems of political exiles. In June 1986 the Dutch Anti-Apartheid Movement was actively campaigning on behalf of the ANC from its Amsterdam office.[35] This means that the ANC was receiving more financial and moral aid from many of the Western countries.

The important breakthrough in the ANC's diplomatic work was boosted by the beginning of a new phase of formal contacts with South African groups. From September 1985 the Lusaka and Harare missions of the ANC received important delegations from various sectors of society and politics in South Africa. They included an Anglo-American delegation led by Gavin Reddy, representatives of the Progressive Federal Party, the Soweto Parents' Crisis Committee, the Federated Chamber of Industries, the National

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33 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 81: The Measure of Your Victory - On the 30th Anniversary of the British Anti-Apartheid Movement, 1990, p. 2.

34 P. Frankel et al., *State, Resistance and Change in South Africa*, pp. 238-239. The Nordic Africa Institute has published a series of books on the Scandinavian contributions to the liberation struggles in Southern Africa, including M.C. Morgenstierne, *Denmark and National Liberation in Southern Africa. A Flexible Response*; T. Sellström, *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa*; T.L. Eriksen (ed.), *Norway and National Liberation in Southern Africa*; T. Sellström (ed.), *Liberation in Southern Africa - Regional and Swedish Voices*; I. Soiri and P. Peltola, *Finland and National Liberation in Southern Africa*.

35 *The Daily News*, 23 July 1986.

Convention Movement, the Roman Catholic Church, the Kangwane Inyanda Movement, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the National African Federated Chambers of Commerce and the University of Cape Town.[36] Some of their concerns centred around key issues like negotiations, sanctions, violence, constitutional models, education and the role of whites in the changing society. It could be said that they were actually discussing the foundations of the new democratic dispensation of the envisaged new South Africa.

The most clear-cut statement on the need for talks with the ANC came from a prominent white businessman, Tony Bloom, the winner of the Witwatersrand Business School 1984 award for management excellence. He noted publicly that he and many of his colleagues were of the opinion that South Africa's "wheels have begun to fall off", and it was essential to consult credible black leaders such as Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo. His statement evoked criticisms from homeland leaders like Chief Buthelezi, who accused Bloom of siding with the propaganda of revolutionary leaders that were committed to violence. However, Bloom's view about the "historic inevitability" of talks with the ANC was given more impetus by the declaration of other white establishments, like the Reformatory Movement of South Africa (REMSA), an enlightened movement of Afrikaner intellectuals, which stated emphatically that "eventually there will be official talks with the ANC".[37] These developments benefited the ANC greatly, as it was able to widen its contacts with different elements in South Africa, such as business leaders, educationists and Afrikaner dissidents, some of whom were traditionally not part of the movement's oppressed constituency. This means that the ANC was gradually building a broad alliance of supporters, who were important for the movement, particularly in adding more pressure on the regime to agree to negotiations.

It was not surprising when Dr Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, head of the Institute for Democratic Alternatives for South Africa (IDASA), organised a big delegation, consisting

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36 J. Barber, *South Africa in the Twentieth Century: A Political History – In Search of a Nation State*, pp. 261-262. See also S. M. Davis, *Apartheid's Rebels: Inside South Africa's Hidden War*, p. 97; *The Star*, 1 September 1985; "South Africa After Botha", *Africa Confidential*, vol. 26, no. 19, 18 September 1985, pp. 1-2.

37 P. Frankel et al., *State, Resistance and Change in South Africa*, p. 244. See also S.M. Davis, *Apartheid's Rebels*, pp. 97-98.

of Afrikaners, academics, clergy, businessmen, politicians and journalists to meet an ANC delegation led by Thabo Mbeki at Dakar in Senegal in July 1987.[38] The key points of discussion centred around negotiations, the release of political prisoners, the unbanning of the ANC, how to end apartheid and violence. However, P.W. Botha objected to the attention the ANC was receiving as cheap propaganda. He raised this objection seemingly to allay the fears of the hardliners in the white constituency. This objection could have been a decoy to distract the attention of these conservative whites, because he was also aware of the secret negotiations that were taking place in England between a delegation led by Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma and Niel Barnard, who was his Head of the National Intelligence Service. One of the Afrikaners who helped Niel Barnard was Professor Willem Esterhuyse, an academic.[39]

What these contacts amounted to was that the ANC was being de-demonised and given a high profile as compared to other organisations. Even the South African regime was aware that leading businessmen, members of the Broederbond, Afrikaner intellectuals and academics as well as other groups visited Lusaka, Harare and other places to have discussions with the ANC. Moreover, it should be noted that some of the visits took place at the height of the state of emergency. It was not surprising, therefore, that *The Citizen*, in its editorial comment, indicated that an official in Washington had said that "the state of emergency is virtually lifted on a *de facto* basis" and "the ANC has been virtually legalised."[40] The contacts between the ANC and these groups encouraged a section of white opinion to side with it. For example, an Afrikaner delegate and Port Elizabeth councillor, Flip Potgieter, remarked that the government propaganda campaign depicted the ANC as part of the problem rather than part of the solution. His visit to Lusaka had changed his mind completely, as "I now realise that no permanent solution can be achieved for South Africa without the ANC and that they, with their non-racial policy are indeed part of the solution and not part of the problem."[41] This means that Potgieter was actually endorsing the ideology of the ANC, which was based on inclusive nationalism. These contacts not only augmented the international profile of the ANC, but

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38 J. Barber, *South Africa in the Twentieth Century: A Political History-In Search of a Nation State*, p. 262. See also *The Citizen*, 10 July 1987.

39 A. Sparks, *Tomorrow is Another Country*, p. 82.

40 *The Citizen*, 23 November 1989.

41 *The Star*, 22 November 1989.

they also helped to confirm its support and visibility in the South African politics of all races. They also emphasised the point that the ANC could not be overlooked in any political settlement in the country in the future.

The ANC also used the theme of the release of political detainees or prisoners to discredit the regime and enhance its international image. Amongst its political prisoners were the well-known Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada and many others. The campaign for the release of these ANC leaders had been sustained throughout the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

In Nelson Mandela, the ANC had a leader whose continued incarceration had made him a symbol of endurance and resistance. As a result of the continuous and unrelenting campaigning by the supporters of the ANC in South Africa and internationally, Nelson Mandela became well-known and well-respected by people and organisations of varying and different political outlook all over the world. Actions aimed at his release included demonstrations, the collection of signatures for petitions, the adoption of resolutions and declarations at conferences, nominating him for various international awards, putting up his name for chancellorship of some universities and naming places after him. For example, the Free Mandela Campaign, which was initiated by the *Sunday Post* in South Africa, ended in 1980 with the presentation of a declaration calling for the release of Mandela to the House of Commons in Britain by many people. Moreover, he was also awarded the freedom of the city of Glasgow.[42] Furthermore, there were also honorary doctorates, like the one awarded by the Karl Marx University in 1987 in Leipzig, the Simon Bolivar Prize of 1983, and greetings on his 70th birthday in 1988 by the World Peace Council.[43] The Release Mandela Campaign reached a climax during his 70th

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42 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Box 43: Department of International Affairs Report: ANC Missions Report, March 1982, p. 12.

43 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Statement of Acceptance by Oliver Tambo, President of the ANC on the Occasion of the Presentation to Nelson Mandela of the Simon Bolivar Prize, Caracas, 24 July 1983. See also ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 17: Speech by Comrade Oliver Tambo, President of the ANC on the Occasion of the Award of an Honorary Doctorate to Nelson Mandela by the Karl Marx University of the GDR, Leipzig, 11 November 1987; Mayibuye Archives (MA), University of the Western Cape (UWC), ANC

birthday in 1988, when an internationally televised rock music concert was watched by millions of people world-wide. Consequently, Mandela's stature as the most celebrated prisoner of the 20th century, not only gained for the ANC sympathy and international respectability, but also indicated that he was destined to play the most important role in shaping the future of South Africa.

As if appointed by fate, Mandela decided in late 1984 to take the initiative in trying to open a dialogue with the government that might lead to negotiations. Details of these secret talks with the government are not necessary for our analysis. However, contact between Mandela and government representatives could be described as exploratory talks. The continuing secret talks between Mandela and cabinet ministers, such as Kobie Coetzee and Gerrit Viljoen, were watched closely by the ANC. The exiled ANC leaders made it clear that there was no possibility of Mandela acting on his own and agreeing to government moves without the consent of the movement's external leadership. The stance of the ANC was confirmed by Mandela, when he received a note from Oliver Tambo, while he was still negotiating secretly with the regime in prison: "I received a note from Oliver Tambo that was smuggled to me by one of my lawyers. He heard reports that I was having secret discussions with the government and he was concerned. He said he knew I had been separated from my colleagues. He must have been wondering: What is going on with Mandela? ... What he wanted to know was, what *I* was discussing with the government?"[44] *This means that the ANC doubted the* intentions of Botha and his colleagues to engage in any genuine and meaningful talks. They believed that the regime raised the issue of negotiations in order to defuse the struggle inside South Africa and to defeat the continuing campaign for comprehensive and mandatory sanctions by the various Western powers. As result, the ANC's standpoint in 1987 was that it was opposed to any negotiations with the regime and it would continue with the armed struggle.[45]

London Office, Box 63, File 63, 1: Press Release on the Greetings to Nelson Mandela on His 70th Birthday, 18 July 1988.

44 N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*, p. 524.

45 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 43: Statement of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress on the Question of Negotiations, 9th October 1987, pp. 1-3.

Although the ANC issued a statement in 1987 on its position with regard to negotiations, the issue continued to come up fairly regularly. The regime was prepared to negotiate once the ANC would renounce its violence and the armed struggle. However, the ANC re-affirmed the centrality of the armed struggle in the liberation of the oppressed and the need to intensify armed actions against the regime in order to end apartheid and white domination.[46] As a result, the ANC ensured that there was a significant increase in the number of its armed activities in the second half of the 1980s. In this way, the movement was confronted with the problem of choosing between negotiations and the armed struggle.

In the midst of this difficult situation, the ANC decided to release a document in 1988 that had a bearing on the debate over negotiations and the armed struggle. This document was entitled "Constitutional Guidelines and Negotiations for Political Settlement in South Africa", and explained the ANC's vision for a future South Africa based on the principles of the Freedom Charter.[47] For the ANC, the release of the document was an excellent strategy of creating the impression that the ANC was now willing to negotiate with the regime. Although the document did not indicate any definite suggestion as to how a transfer of power in South Africa would be achieved, it nevertheless created the impression that the ANC would be prepared to adopt a more reconciliatory attitude towards the regime. This attitude of compromising was shown by the ANC, despite the fact that its armed struggle remained the only viable and effective manner of destroying the apartheid regime.

Another development that helped to advance the issue of negotiations, was the willingness to negotiate shown by the ANC once certain preconditions could be met. For this reason, the movement prepared a document, setting out for the first time its proposals on how to move towards a negotiated settlement. Even though the ANC indicated its commitment to intensify the armed struggle and the isolation of the regime in the document, it was now ready to start negotiations. Known as the Harare

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46 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 63, File 63,5: Statement of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress, Lusaka, Zambia, 17th August 1988, p. 1.

47 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers and the Department of International Affairs, Box 43: Memorandum on the London Support Group Propaganda Material, 10 August 1989, p. 4.

Declaration, the document set out the following preconditions, which were adopted by the Organisation of African Unity on 21 August 1988 and endorsed by the United Nations:

- The unconditional release of all political prisoners;
- The lifting of the state of emergency;
- The unbanning of all restricted organisations, including the ANC;
- The removal of all soldiers from the townships;
- Stopping of all political trials and executions.[48]

In this way, the ANC re-affirmed its position of being eager to enter into genuine negotiations, provided that certain stumbling blocks were removed by the regime. In other words, it would be a strong hint that the regime was ready to end apartheid once it could create the necessary climate.

On the other hand, the regime showed also that it was ready to clear the way for negotiations, albeit with caution and some misgivings. The most important positive sign was the release of political prisoners of the ANC. To test the waters, Govan Mbeki was released from prison. It was apparent that the government viewed the release of Govan Mbeki as a test case, that could determine the fate of Mandela and others. For this reason, the other Rivonia prisoners, who included Walter Sisulu, Wilton Mkwayi, Elias Motsoaledi, Ahmed Kathrada and Andrew Mlangeni, were also released in 1989. The release of Nelson Mandela became a question of "when" rather than "if". It was also clear that the release of other political prisoners had already resulted into a "*de facto* unbanning of the ANC."[49] As a result of these developments, it became also patently clear that the release of Mandela would push the process of negotiations forward.

The constant problem of the government seemed to be to release Nelson Mandela without losing any face. His continued incarceration increased his fame internationally as he became the symbol of endurance against what was regarded as an oppressive

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48 *The Sunday Times*, 26 November 1989. See also A. Sparks, *Tomorrow is Another Country*, p. 87.

49 *The Sunday Times*, 26 November 1989.

system. The disclosure in late 1984 that Mandela had undergone an operation for the removal of the prostrate gland raised the regime's concern on the issue of his release. There was a realisation that there would be serious problems if he should die in prison. Consequently, matters came to a head when the British member of Parliament, Lord Bethell, called upon the South African regime to release Mandela in a British newspaper.[50] These developments prompted P.W. Botha to announce for the first time the offer to release Mandela if he could renounce violence. This was a big challenge to Mandela. Had he acceded to this offer, the South African government would have succeeded to score some political points internationally at a time when its racial policies were under attack from the Western countries.

However, Mandela showed his political acumen by turning down the offer. He did not want to lose credibility within the ANC, because he would have been released into more or less the same oppressive conditions that he fought before he had been imprisoned. As a result, Mandela's formal reply to the government was announced by his daughter, Zindzi, on 10 February 1985 at a gathering of UDF supporters. According to the contents of the letter from Mandela, which was read at the gathering by Zindzi, "only free men can negotiate" and " prisoners cannot enter into contracts ...I cannot and will not give any undertaking at a time when I and you, the people, are not free. Your freedom and mine cannot be separated. I will return."[51] The significance of Mandela's reply to Botha's offer lay in the fact that the question of his release remained the regime's problem. He succeeded to turn the tables against Botha. His commitment to the struggle not only enhanced the prestige of the ANC, but also increased his personal status for refusing to accept conditional freedom after being imprisoned for such a long time. Moreover, his rejection of conditional release established clearly that the initiative for peace had to come from the regime. This actually meant that the regime had to end apartheid and come up with substantial reforms for peace to reign in South Africa. Mandela's turning down of Botha's offer of conditional release indicated that both the government and the ANC would dominate any future discussions on the shaping of the new South Africa and Mandela himself would play a prominent role.

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50 G. Leach, *No Easy Way to Peace*, p. 131.

51 Mandela's reply to Botha, "Your Freedom and Mine Cannot Be Separated. I Will Return", *Sechaba*, April 1985, p. 2.

Meanwhile events in South Africa moved very fast and favoured the ANC. Firstly, the leadership crisis within the government developed and ended with the resignation of Botha as the president of South Africa in August 1989. The details of this leadership crisis within the regime is not important for our analysis. However, what needs to be emphasised is that the crisis seemed to have revolved around the direction the National Party and the government should be taking in order to bring changes in South Africa. Botha failed to normalise the developing political situation in the country. This difficult and arduous task had to be executed by his successor, F.W. de Klerk. The new president realised that the old-style apartheid rule was no longer feasible. The country had to be ruled in a new way. Even the normally conservative Minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok, realised these new developments when he said "everybody, including the police, the government and the country, realises that the status quo cannot continue".[52]

Secondly, the situation favoured the ANC, which had in the meantime created the broadest possible unity of the anti-government social forces to isolate the regime inside the country and make it even more unpopular amongst the majority of South Africans of all races. This trend gained momentum in 1987, when the ANC introduced its tactic of holding talks with certain social forces in the broad democratic alliances. Among the organisations with which the ANC engaged in talks were Afrikaner intellectuals, the National African Congress of Trade Unions (NACTU), the National Soccer League (NSL), the South African Rugby Union (SARU), the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), the National Democratic Movement (NDM), the National Federated Chamber of Commerce (NAFCOC) and the Institute for a Democratic Alternative in South Africa (IDASA). The main point of their discussions centred around the formation of an "anti-NP and anti-apartheid front" and the need for a democratic future for South Africa.[53]

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52 C. Louw, "Die SAP en die Pyn van Oorgang", *Die Suid Afrikaan*, 24 December 1989, p. 19.

53 MA, UWC, ANC London Office, Box 66, File MCHOI-66: Update: Briefing on the Internal Situation, November 1987, p. 2.

In addition, it was also of crucial importance to note that the ANC had formed a broad democratic alliance with groups and organisations inside South Africa that were openly sympathetic to its course. These included, amongst others, the United Democratic Front (UDF), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC), the South African Council of Churches (SACC), the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO) and the Congress of South African Students (COSAS). The existence of this alliance was aimed at the overthrow of the South African regime and its replacement by a new democratic government.

More importantly, the ANC seemed to be achieving a spontaneous internal unity against the regime when the proposed Anti-Apartheid Conference was due to take place in September 1988. Democratic organisations, which included black and white people, decided to hold this conference in order to discuss ways to achieve the ideal of a non-racial and democratic South Africa.[54] Invited organisations included the Democratic People's Party (DPP) of Transkei, the Progressive People's Party (PPP), the Natal Indian Congress (NIC), the Seoposengwe Party of Bophuthatswana (SPB), Five Freedom's Forum (FFF), the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), the Black Sash, the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (NAFCOC), the Institute for a Democratic Alternative in South Africa (IDASA), the National Democratic Movement (NDM), the Progressive Federal Party (PFP) and the Inyandza Movement of Kangwane. Although the planned conference was banned, it nevertheless achieved the vision of a great united front, that caught the imagination of the people.

With such an array of forces united against the regime, events from early 1989 indicated that the ANC wanted to merge its operations with those of the broad alliance inside South Africa. In February 1989 the UDF made an alliance with COSATU, which developed into the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM).[55] The formation of the MDM led to a new explosion of mass resistance in the early 1989 Defiance Campaign, reminiscent of that of the 1950s. This campaign of civil disobedience was aimed at

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54 ANC, UFH, Oliver Tambo Papers, Speeches and Statements, Box 18: Statement of the African National Congress President, Oliver Tambo, at the Socialist International Conference of Southern Africa, Harare, 15th February 1989, p. 5.

55 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 3, chapter 5, p. 427. See also *The Financial Mail*, 4 August 1989.

challenging segregated and government institutions, such as hospitals and schools. Moreover, it was also aimed at discrediting the whites-only elections scheduled for 6 September 1989.[56] On the other hand, the ANC called for the intensification of the Defiance Campaign and mass mobilisation of its supporters. The call seemed to be made in response to De Klerk's insistence on the elevation of group rights above the rights of the individual. The ANC interpreted the regime's move as the desire to maintain the fundamental features of apartheid.[57]

On the whole the Defiance Campaign of the MDM appeared to be successful. This campaign not only captured massive international media attention, but also seemed to be softening the hard-line stance of the government towards protest marches and demonstrations. Moreover, the regime did not take any action against the MDM when it held a conference for a Democratic Future (CDF) in December 1989.[58] This conference was allowed in spite of the fact that the emergency regulations prohibiting such meetings were still in force. The CDF decided to continue with the campaigns of mass defiance. As a result, mass demonstrations became regular features of protest actions.[59] What became clear also was that the government was no longer clamping down on these demonstrations. This indicated that the frequent mass demonstrations of the oppressed actually pressurised the regime into legalising such actions so as not to lose credibility further.

As explained previously in this chapter, the struggle between the ANC and the regime featured prominently in the West-East rivalry of the Cold War. Towards the second half of the 1980s, there was a shift in the thinking of the Soviet Union towards Africa in

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56 *City Press*, 27 August 1989. See also South Africa (Republic) Department of Justice, TRC Report of South Africa, vol. 3, chapter 5, p. 427.

57 ANC, UFH, ANC Tanzania Mission, Box 58: ANC Supplementary Political Report to the 52nd Ordinary Session of the OAU Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa, held in Arusha, Tanzania, 5th -12th July 1989, p. 3.

58 *Die Vrye Weekblad*, 14 February 1994.

59 *The Star*, 14 September 1989; *The Weekend Argus*, 16 September 1989; *Rapport*, 17 September 1989; *Sunday Times*, 17 September 1989. See also J.A. du Pisani et al., "Protest marches in South Africa", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 28, no. 4, December 1990, p. 593.

general and Southern Africa in particular. It no longer wanted to incur any more costs of having to support third world countries, which were supporters of communism. This meant that the Soviet Union actually wanted to withdraw its financial and material support from these countries. Its change in its thinking and policies resulted in warmer relations with the USA. The two superpowers facilitated the end of war in Angola and the political settlement in Namibia with the signing of the New York Accord in December 1988.[60]

With the signing of this accord, the ANC had to close down its bases in Angola, where it had stationed its army since the late 1970s. They were now forced to operate from the bases in Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia. As a result of this new situation, the ANC was now disadvantaged militarily, as its army had to operate further from South Africa. This development was followed by the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communism in 1990. As would be expected, the fall of communism removed the fear of "total onslaught", which might weaken the ANC, as the Soviet Union would no longer back them as in the past.[61] As a result, De Klerk decided to take the initiative to start negotiations while the ANC was still coming to terms with the new developments.

It was against this background that De Klerk took a critical step when he opened parliament on 2 February 1990 with his famous speech, which signified the beginning of a new era. He announced the end of the thirty-years ban on the ANC and other organisations, which included the PAC. The legalising of the formerly banned organisations was followed by the release of Nelson Mandela on 11 February 1990. With these announcements in parliament, the road to a negotiated settlement was opened.

What emerges from the above is that the international united front of the ANC developed into a formidable political force. Undoubtedly, it succeeded to a large extent to isolate South Africa politically, economically and even socially. The use of the anti-apartheid

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60 D.R. Kempton, "New Thinking and Soviet Policy Towards South Africa", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 28, no. 4, December 1990, pp. 561-563. See also S. Ellis and T. Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid*, p. 190.

61 J. Barber, *South Africa in the Twentieth Century*, p. 274.

theme, together with others like sanctions and the imprisonment of children, became an effective strategy to isolate and dent the image of the South African regime. At the same time, the ANC was able to exert direct influence on the internal situation. By influencing public opinion through the formation of front organisations, the ANC succeeded to delegitimise and denigrate the regime and rallied support for itself. More importantly, the ANC was able to force the regime to a negotiating table through constant pressure internationally and internally. As a result, there was no doubt that the ANC would be one of the key players in the negotiations about the future of South Africa.

7.2 MOBILISING SUPPORT BY THE PAC

While the ANC 's profile and stature was growing inside South Africa and internationally during the 1980s, the PAC experienced mixed fortunes. The main reasons for this could be sought in the decline of the PAC, which reached its peak towards the end of the 1970s, and its resurgence towards the middle of the 1980s.

The internecine strife and internal divisions of the PAC in the 1970s caused the PAC to suffer from a lack of decisive leadership. In particular, the leadership of Potlako Leballo, who was finally ousted from power after a damaging struggle within the PAC in 1978, had been criticised. In addition, the murder of the PAC external secretary, David Sibeko, dealt a severe blow to the international reputation of the organisation. This state of affairs necessitated a serious introspection in the PAC so as to salvage the movement and restore confidence as well as credibility.

Despite years of disorganisation, the PAC seemed to be emerging out of the shadows of its archrival, the ANC, which in the eyes of many foreign governments appeared to be the "alternative government" in South Africa. The man credited with raising the level of performance and revitalisation of the PAC in general was John Nyathi Pokela. The chairman of the PAC, Vusumzi Make, decided to step down at the end of 1981 in favour of Pokela. At the beginning of February 1982, Pokela became the new PAC leader until his death in 1985. He took over at a time when the movement was in disarray, following the weak leadership of Vusumzi Make. He managed to draw most of the old strands of the PAC together. One of his important aims was to work together with other liberation movements, such as the ANC and the BCM. Speaking against disunity on the occasion

of the 22nd anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre, Pokela said that to "work to divide the people or to promote sectarian interests is to work against the fundamental interests of the Azanian masses and their inalienable rights".[62] In other words, he believed that South Africa's black nationalist groups would defeat the regime only if they could unite.

However, these good intentions and aims were subsequently undermined and damaged by reports, which rocked the PAC once more. Henry Isaacs, the PAC's Director of Foreign Affairs, resigned from the movement in disgust in 1982 and exposed the weaknesses of the PAC in the media. His revelations of the personal and political struggles within the PAC caused a great deal of harm, which seriously impaired the image of the PAC internationally. Firstly, he said that Nyathi Pokela was surrounded by "all sorts of elements" from the Central Committee and among the ordinary cadres, who were "jockeying for positions of influence" upon his accession to power.[63] As a result, Pokela was given wrong advice, which was mostly offered in pursuit of personal interests and certain favours. According to Isaacs, no reference was made to previous discussions or established relations, as the new catchword was: "We are starting from scratch."[64]

Secondly, Isaacs was of the opinion that the ill-advice that Pokela received manifested itself in diplomatic bungles. When he became the new chairman of the PAC, Pokela was advised to approach the Zambian government and ask the ruling party of Kenneth Kaunda, the United National Independence Party (UNIP) to lift the ban on the PAC, which had been in place since 1968. The discussions, which had taken place in the past, were ignored. As a result, the Zambian response was terse and negative. Together with other member states at the OAU Council of Ministers meeting held in Nairobi in June 1981, the Zambian reply was that it was high time the PAC solved its

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62 Archives of the PAC (PAC), UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Speech Delivered by the Chairman of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, Comrade John Nyathi Pokela on the Occasion of the 22nd Anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre, Dar-es-Salaam, March 21, 1982, pp. 4-5.

63 H. Isaacs, Memo to All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC: Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, 17 February 1982, p. 7. Obtained from Thami ka Plaatje, in possession of author.

64 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 278.

"internal problems and got on with the job".[65]

Pokela visited several countries to introduce himself and mobilise support for the PAC. One such visit was undertaken in June 1981 to Iraq. During this visit, Pokela openly expressed support for Iraq in the war with Iran. This was a diplomatic blunder, as the official standpoint of the PAC was one of neutrality between these two member states of the Non-Aligned-Movement. When the war between the two countries started, the Iraqi ambassador requested a statement of solidarity from the PAC in return for financial assistance, which the movement's delegation requested in 1980. As a result, the movement found itself in a quandary. From the financial point of view, the PAC was in dire need of money to finance its various projects and operations. On the other side, Henry Isaacs as the Director of Foreign Affairs and Erret Radebe as the Director of Finance, advised the movement not to bind itself to a position, which might harm and disadvantage the long-term interests of the PAC.[66] Moreover, Iran supported the liberation movements of South Africa, which included the PAC. At the same time, many exiled liberation movements were against the war between Iraq and Iran, because they felt that it was not in the interests of the people of both countries. According to Isaacs, the position of supporting Iraq was "pure opportunism" and was prompted by prospects of "financial considerations".[67] As would be expected, the diplomatic visit of Pokela to Iraq caused tensions and dissensions within the PAC. This particular incident indicated that policies and rules of the movement could be violated and manipulated by individuals, depending on circumstances or personal interests.

It was not surprising, therefore, when the long-term diplomatic relations of the PAC suffered some setbacks. As a result of Pokela's visit to Iraq, the participation of the PAC in the OAU Summit of Heads of State and Government was harmed in June 1981. Pokela arrived late at the Summit in Nairobi , Kenya. The Presidents of other liberation movements, like Oliver Tambo of the ANC and Sam Nujoma of SWAPO, were received with the Heads of State when they arrived in Nairobi. As he was unknown in Africa at

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65 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 279.

66 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 279.

67 H. Isaacs, Memo to All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC: Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, 17 February 1982, p. 8.

that time, Pokela could have exploited this opportunity to meet the Heads of State and Government of the African countries. As a result of his late arrival, his presence failed to make any significant impact, as he was only at the summit for two days. From the point of view of expanding foreign relations, Pokela should have regarded the summit as being more important than visiting Iraq for momentary financial gains.[68]

Besides failing to participate fully in the summit, the move of the PAC estranged the movement from some of its longstanding supporters, like Libya.[69] Libya and Syria backed Iran in the war against Iraq. Supporting Iraq meant that the PAC was also opposing them. After this incident, it became extremely difficult to restore normal relation between the PAC and Libya. What emerges from the above is that the PAC had not yet developed a clear strategy on how to conduct diplomatic relations. It seemed as if established relations with some countries, especially in the Middle East, were based only on political expediency and exploiting financial gains that existed and not on long-term political strategy.

Despite facing formidable problems, Pokela tried to rebuild and unify the PAC. Even though there were serious problems, he reinstated the Ntantala group within the PAC. Some members of the Central Committee and ordinary cadres of the movement expressed fears that these members might claim their positions back or compete with them for leadership positions. Even though the Ntantala followers were integrated into the PAC, they were still distrusted and became victims of the so-called "internal enemy syndrome". The situation worsened, when there were rumours that the former members of the Azanian People's Revolutionary Party (APRP) of Ntantala wanted to seize "strategic leadership" positions within the PAC.[70] Some members of the Central Committee even said that a document outlining such a strategy of the APRP had been found. However, the truth was that the former chairperson of the APRP was found reading a document explaining the movement's "tactics and operations within the PAC

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68 H. Isaacs, *On the PAC*, p. 279.

69 H. Isaacs, Memo to All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC: Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, 17 February 1982, p. 8.

70 H. Isaacs, Memo to All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC: Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, 17 February 1982, p. 14.

divided into two groups in this meeting. One section of the Central Committee was led by Henry Isaacs as Director of Foreign Affairs and Mike Muendane as the former Chief Representative of the PAC in the United Kingdom. This group challenged the decisions of the previous Central Committee meeting, especially on the restructuring of the movement. In particular, they challenged the decision of the Central Committee that all the Heads of Departments should be based at the headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam, because "consultation and communication would be facilitated. Their contention was that there was no validity in the assumption that the Central Committee would be more effective if all the Heads of Departments could be in one place in Dar-es-Salaam. Isaacs even said that only he, as the Director of Foreign Affairs, and Mike Muendane, as the Director of Labour and Social Affairs, were not at the headquarters, "yet pandemonium and chaos have reigned supreme at External Headquarters while all the others have been there, with the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing, lack of proper administration, lack of planning and co-ordination." On the other hand, Pokela as the Chairman of the PAC, replied by saying that the decision had already been taken by the Central Committee and he was only mentioning it at the meeting. After this meeting, Isaacs resigned as Director of Foreign Affairs, Representative of the PAC to the UN and as a member of the Central Committee.[74]

The resignation of Isaacs did not surprise many people within the PAC. He was apparently unhappy because he was going to be removed from the position of Director of Foreign Affairs, which was usually coupled with that one of PAC Representative to the UN. He was going to be replaced by Gorah Ebrahim. The position of Director of Foreign Affairs was influential and gave its incumbent higher status and dignity. This was because the incumbent was able to raise funds and other material support from meetings with heads of states or representatives of various countries. As a result, many people aspired to occupy this position. Isaacs could have been bitter when he heard that Ebrahim would succeed him in this position. Joe Mkwanazi, who was Pokela's loyalist, said that Henry Isaacs had the habit of threatening to resign "whenever people expressed a different opinion".[75] His lack of sympathy for Isaacs was echoed by another

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74 H. Isaacs, Memo to All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC: Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, 17 February 1982, pp. 23, 24.

75 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the PAC Central

and their home-going programme".[71] This led to the harassment of the APRP members.

Once more Ntantala and a few members of his group resigned. One cadre, Mahoyi, was even killed in Tanzania on charges that he was loyal to the APRP, which was "destabilising" the PAC.[72] However, Pokela resolved the problem of unity again with Ntantala's group. Ntantala was welcomed back and appointed PAC Chief Representative in Uganda.

Besides trying to unify the PAC, Pokela also attempted to step up the PAC's home-going programme, in order to improve the visibility of the movement and achieve the aims of the liberation struggle. His "Back to the People" slogan was aimed at encouraging trained PAC cadres to actively support and guide the oppressed people inside South Africa.[73] As discussed in the previous section of this chapter, the PAC did not infiltrate many cadres into South Africa during the first half of the 1980s. For this reason, it was overshadowed by the ANC during the corresponding period, when the ANC infiltrated many cadres, whose presence in the country was shown by military operations like those at Sasol and Voortrekkerhoogte. The PAC was not visible inside South Africa when it came to military operations or mass mobilisation of people. However, what needs to be noted here is that the revival in PAC insurgency actively took place towards the end of the second half of the 1980s.

Constant conflicts and clashes within the PAC gave the movement a bad image, which robbed it of opportunities of winning political support and restoring its confidence internationally. Although the ANC also experienced problems, they were managed in such a way that the image of the movement would not be dented internationally. However, the PAC experienced dissent and conflict even during the chairmanship of Pokela. This became clear from the discussions at the plenary session of the Central Committee meeting in Dar-es-Salaam in December 1982. The Central Committee was

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71 APRP, "T.M. Ntantala is Gone; But His Ideals Will Conquer", in K.M. Kondlo, *The Exile History of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa), 1960-1970*, p. 211.

72 South Africa (Republic), Department of Justice, TRC of South Africa, vol. 2, chapter 4, p. 374.

73 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Opening Address to the Central Committee Meeting by the Chairman, Comrade J.N. Pokela, Dar-es-Salaam, 22-26 February 1984, p. 7.

Pokela loyalist, Enoch Zulu, who said that it was not new in the PAC to see a person resigning when he was removed from one task to another. According to him, the interests of the party and the revolution should be above those of the people.[76]

The volatile situation within the Central Committee continued when Mike Muendane also resigned. He was not happy when Hamilton Keke replaced him as the Chief Representative of the PAC in the United Kingdom. This position was considered to be comfortable, as the incumbent was based in the vibrant city of London. As a result, there was always jealousy or rivalry at the leadership level for this position. Muendane was also not happy with his new position of Director of Labour and Social Development. However, his resignation was not accepted by the Central Committee. The viewpoint of the Central Committee was that the PAC leaders should not complain when they were not deployed to the places of their own choice. As a result of frustration and anger, Muendane started making stinging attacks, which questioned the integrity of Pokela. As the new Director of Labour and Social Development, Muendane complained that Pokela failed to follow the leadership "protocol" of the movement.[77] For example, Muendane referred to Pokela's address of a trade union congress in Canada and arrangements made concerning follow-up visits without consulting the Director of Labour and Social Development. He also accused Pokela of having a clique with which he planned and organised the activities of the movement. His condemnation of Pokela actually supported what Henry Isaacs wrote in his memo, when he said: " ... there are those who seek power and know how to play the power game. They know how to curry favour and how to say the right things at the right time as well as mouth the right slogans. They know how to make the relevant twists and turns that keep them in power and always to make sure that they curry favour with the right person or persons. At the present time there are many of such elements in the Organisation, particularly at the level of leadership; others have been rewarded with positions in the leadership precisely because of their opportunism and belly-crawling."[78]

Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1-7, 1981, p. 22.

76 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the PAC Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1-7, 1981, p. 23.

77 K.M. Kondlo, *The Exiled History of The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa): (1960-1990)*, p. 204.

78 H. Isaacs, Memo to All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC: Guidelines for

The significance of the above is that it shows the quality of leadership that the movement had. Even though Pokela wanted to unify and rebuild the PAC, it was difficult for him to realise his aims, because the majority of the leaders who surrounded him were either disgruntled or had been involved in corruption during the days of Leballo. There were no new leaders with fresh ideas or those who could not be associated with the conflicts of the movement in the past. Divisions, suspicions and sabotages, which had existed during the times of Leballo, could still be experienced during the time of Pokela, even though it was on a reduced scale. For this reason, Isaacs spoke of "factionalism and cliquism, plotting and intrigue," that existed at the level of leadership and these anomalies filtered down to the "lower echelons of the Organisation."[79]

The frequent internal clashes of the PAC confused and confounded the supporters of the movement internationally. They sought explanations by asking questions like: "What is happening in the PAC - one month Pokela talks of unity and progress, the next month a top PAC leader makes a press statement and talks of disarray in PAC and resigns."[80] These events indicated that internal wrangles, which had been bedevilling the PAC since the 1960s, still existed and continued to plague the movement in the 1980s.

Even though the PAC wanted to gain political ascendancy inside South Africa and improve its international posture, it could not match the ANC. In his report as Chief Representative of the PAC in America, Ike Mafole explained how difficult it was to get support for the movement from solidarity groups, community groups and political groups, such as the National Black United Front (NBUF), the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP) the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP) and the Urban League, because of the popularity of the ANC. Moreover, he said that the potential donors questioned the credibility of the PAC over its past and current events, including its seeming inactivity and non-existence in South

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the Department of Foreign Affairs, 17 February 1982, pp. 20-21.

79 H. Isaacs, Memo to All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC: Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, 17 February 1982, p. 7.

80 PAC, UFH, Foreign Affairs Mission Reports File: Report of the Canada Mission of the PAC, 1982, p. 1.

Africa.[81] A PAC representative in Canada, Dan Mdluli, expressed his frustration over the film projects of the UN, which supported the ANC. According to him, support groups in Canada saw many pro-ANC films made with UN money, like the Mandela Film, "Women Against Apartheid" and neutral films like "Generation of Resistance". His utter frustration was indicated by the question: "How come PAC can't seize UN opportunities?"[82] As a result, the conclusion could therefore be reached that, although the PAC was making significant progress and breakthroughs internally, it could not match the ANC and repair its dented image completely.

Another serious problem experienced by the PAC was the attempt by the ANC and its allies to push for sole recognition and support from political formations in other countries. For this reason, the PAC suspected that there was an intense international campaign to isolate her and to divide the national liberation movement. An example of this campaign was the frantic efforts made by the frontline states, like Zambia and Mozambique, which tried to secure the de-recognition of the PAC by the OAU. Moreover, this campaign was noticeable at forums, where it took the form of sectarian "solidarity or support" in favour of the "struggle of the people of South Africa led by the ANC."[83] A classical example was the protest lodged by the PAC Director of Finance, L.T. Mgweba, at the meeting of the All African Council of Churches (AACC) in Nairobi on 9 August 1981. He accused the sister organisation of the AACC, the World Council of Churches (WCC), of practicing discrimination by supporting only the ANC materially, even though the PAC qualified as a liberation movement to get financial backing.[84]

The intense rivalry between the ANC and the PAC was even displayed at the United Nations. Although their rivalry was not confrontational, it was embarrassing, especially to the African states. According to Thami Mazwai, the former editor of the *Sowetan*

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81 PAC, UFH, Foreign Affairs Missions Reports File: Report on the State of the Pan Africanist Congress in the United States, April 11-July 11,1982, p. 4.

82 PAC, UFH, Foreign Affairs Missions Reports File: Report of the Canada Mission of the PAC, 1982, p. 3.

83 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: The Current Political Situation in Southern Africa, n.d., p. 4.

84 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: The All African Council of Churches (AACC) Conference - Nairobi, 9 August 1981, p. 1.

newspaper, the two organisations pretended that the other did not exist, although each worked secretly to maintain an edge over the other. He witnessed a disturbing situation during his visit to the UN, when a resolution had to be adopted by the United Nations Committee Against Apartheid. Serious differences of opinion took place, when representatives of the two movements were arguing over the full stops, commas and words to be used in the resolution condemning apartheid and calling on the world to take action against the regime.[85] As a black South African, he found the rivalry and the relationship between the two liberation movements contributing little to the advancement of the struggle for freedom. In other words, their competition internationally was not only embarrassing, but it was also weakening the liberation struggle.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the PAC experienced an acute shortage of resources. The fact that the PAC had fewer international missions compared to the ANC could be ascribed to its lack of resources. In his report about the PAC's state of affairs in Lesotho, the secretary, P. Mponduntwana, painted a bleak picture about the financial position of the movement. He said that good projects, like the production of peas and publication of the movement's magazine, "News and Views", came to a standstill because of financial problems. He further explained the seriousness of the situation by saying that "even if a few rands arrive for projects, they are taken for other pressing administrative needs, especially on the welfare side because of a considerable number of comrades who do not get even R40 from the UNHCR."[86] This problem was confirmed by Dan Mdluli from the Canada mission, when he said that the "mission was founded with absolutely no resources, just bare determination and will."[87] As a result, it was run on part-time basis, because it could not afford a full time representative. The extent of the problem was reconfirmed by the chairman of the PAC after the death of Pokela, Johnson Mlambo, who appealed for more financial assistance in a letter directed to the head of the International Liaison Department of the People's Republic of China, Zhu Liang: "We are appealing for a definite annual or quarterly allocation, however modest,

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85 *The Sowetan*, 1 April 1985.

86 PAC, UFH, Foreign Affairs Mission Reports File: A Brief Report to the Headquarters from Lesotho, 1 July 1983, p. 2.

87 PAC, UFH, Foreign Affairs Mission Reports File: Report of the Canada Mission of the PAC, 1982, p. 1.

to enable us to continue our just struggle in a planned way."[88] Even the Chief Representative to Botswana, Trevor Kola Mketi, complained of lack of financial support, which paralysed him to the extent that he was unable to feed new recruits. The problem was so serious that Joe Mkwanazi, another PAC representative in Botswana, had at one stage to be called by the security police and requested very strongly to help Mketi financially so as to feed the recruits.[89] The existence of the problem of financial resources could be attributed to the failure of the PAC to solicit enough funds through diplomatic channels. Donors could have been reluctant to support financially the movement, which seemed to squander funds and to have internal problems.

As regards the visibility of the PAC inside South Africa, the movement seemed to have failed to exploit the opportunities presented by the revolutionary climate, which engulfed South Africa from the end of September 1984. Although the PAC's rival, the ANC, also failed to take full advantage of the favourable revolutionary conditions, which existed in South Africa, especially from late 1984 to mid-1986, it was nevertheless successful in mobilising support through front organisations like the UDF. In this way, it became visible to the people. However, the PAC failed to provide leadership and direction to the escalating mass resistance in the country. This is despite the fact that the PAC claimed to be involved in the revolution at that time. For example, the movement claimed that the "Second Sharpeville" took place in September 1984, when rent boycotts started in their so-called traditional strongholds like Sharpeville, Sebokeng, Bophelong, Thabong and so on. According to the PAC, the Sharpeville Student National Resistance Movement under the leadership of Mandla Mahlangu was involved in the riots, which targeted rent increases, Bantu Education and other grievances of the African people.[90] This student movement decided to join the Africanist-inclined National Forum Committee rather than the UDF, which was ideologically dominated by Indians and whites. This means that they actually avoided the inclusive ideology of the ANC. However, the PAC

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88 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 9: Letter from PAC Chairman, Johnson Mlambo, Addressed to Comrade Zhu Liang, Head of the International Liaison Department of the People's Republic of China, 3 May 1988, p. 1.

89 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 27: Report of the Botswana Office, 29 November 1990, p. 1.

90 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 40: David Dube, The South Africa, Mandela-ANC "Dialogue" Euphoria, p. 3.

seemed to claim this student movement for propaganda purposes in order to justify its "active involvement" in the struggle.

In addition, the PAC, unlike the ANC, failed to create a united front of organisations or alliances inside South Africa that could have been tactical or strategic in nature. This was despite the fact that Mlambo described the aim of the front as to strengthen and co-ordinate the political activities of the mass organisation, in order to increase the fighting capacity of the oppressed and dispossessed majority "ideologically, organisationally and militarily" in order to explore areas of principled unity with organisations and individuals who have a contradiction with the enemy and to programme those who identified themselves with the just aspirations of the oppressed majority.[91] Thus, the PAC claimed that it contributed positively towards the formation of mass and vocational organisations, which were actively involved in the mobilisation and politicisation of the oppressed. These included, amongst others, the Azanian National Youth Unity (AZANYU), the African Women's Organisation (AWO), The National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU), the Pan African Students Organisation (PASO) and the Pan Africanist Movement (PAM).[92] In 1988 the PAC reported to the Liberation Committee that there was a significant visible rise inside South Africa of the Africanist tendency. To substantiate their view, the PAC said that the Africanist tendency had emerged strongly inside South Africa since the formation of NACTU. They claimed that they encouraged principled co-operation and co-ordination between NACTU and COSATU, which resulted in an unprecedented strike between 6 and 8 June 1988. Again, the PAC claimed that NACTU and other Africanist organisations observed the 25th anniversary of the OAU in Soweto, despite the fact that the state of emergency was still in force. They referred to reports in *The Star* by Patrick Lawrence and the *Weekly Mail* by Tom Lodge, which referred to the movement's significant revival in its political fortunes.[93]

However, political conditions and realities in South Africa indicated that the PAC's claims

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91 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Chairman's Message for March 21, n.d., p. 2.

92 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Gora Ebrahim, Statement of the Pan Africanist Congress on the Situation in Azania, 1990, p. 1.

93 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Progress Report Submitted by the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, May-December 1988, pp. 1-2. See also *The Star*, 9 July 1988; *The Weekly Mail*, 5-11 August 1988.

of having created successful front organisations like the ANC, were mere academic and theoretical exercises only. There was little practical evidence to support the view that the PAC had consciously built a strong united front inside South Africa. Instead, what appeared to be taking place was that the PAC seemed to be hijacking political formations, like the National Forum and the labour federation NACTU and used them to facilitate the creation of a powerful force, which would destabilise the regime. This means that the PAC leadership was trying to use ideological affinity with some of the internally-based organisations, in order to justify its involvement in the struggle inside South Africa. The conclusion could be made, therefore, that the PAC was unable to create a powerful united front, which could pose a threat to the regime.

In addition, the PAC's confusing policy towards whites robbed them of people who could have helped them to weaken the regime's power. They always repudiated claims that whites who were against apartheid would surely make a difference if they could support the oppressed. Their steadfast aim and determination was to destroy white domination. They defended this assertion by saying that "the liquidation of white domination is not synonymous with the liquidation of white people as a whole."[94] However, the utterances of PAC leaders and supporters were perceived as being anti-white. For example, the slogan "One Settler, One Bullet", which became popular towards the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, was regarded by many whites as being directed to them as legitimate targets in the view of the PAC.[95] Their fear was understandable, because the PAC had stepped up its armed struggle in South Africa and whites were generally being attacked. Moreover, the PAC did not believe that there was a "serious, progressive and enlightened element in the white population that would support a democratic solution based on individual rights, non-racialism and a unitary state of Azania."[96] It was not surprising, therefore, that the PAC distrusted the role played by

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94 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Johnson Phillip Mlambo, Opening Address to PAC Central Committee Plenary, 10-20 August 1987, p. 4.

95 W. Mazambane, "PAC Organising Chief Defends APLA and Bullet for a Settler", *Azania Combat*, issue no. 15, 1992, p. 8.

96 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Address by Comrade John Mlambo, Chairman of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, to the Special Session of the Special Committee Against Apartheid on the Occasion of the 12th Anniversary of June 16th , 1976 Soweto Uprising, at United Nations, New York, September 1988, p. 3.

whites such as Joe Slovo, Ronnie Kasrils and others in the ANC. According to them, white people or groups in South Africa would not support any method that would weaken the regime. For this reason, the PAC maintained that the oppressed should be their own liberators.

As regards diplomatic developments, the position of the PAC strengthened somewhat in the 1980s as opposed to the situation in the 1960s and 1970s, when it seemed chaotic. However, since the accession to power by Pokela and his successor Mlambo, there seemed to be a realisation that the diplomatic front was also important to pressurise the South African regime. The ANC was dominating in this front, to the extent that towards the end of the 1980s it was regarded as the "government in waiting" by many Western countries. Nevertheless, the PAC still enjoyed official recognition in world bodies such as the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and the United Nations Organisation (UN). The PAC, like the ANC, was also able to obtain moral support and gain sympathy as well as material support from these world bodies. Especially in the UN occasions to commemorate historical events of South Africa, like the Sharpeville massacre or the Soweto riots, kept the revolutionary spirit alive. Attention was also paid to the violation of rights. For example, Gora Ebrahim, the representative of the PAC at the UN, was given a chance by the Special Committee Against Apartheid to expose the brutalities of the South African regime on women and children in 1984.[97] This means that the respect accorded to the PAC by the world body gave recognition to its legitimate struggle.

During the 1980s the PAC intensified its diplomatic initiatives in the frontline states, the whole of Africa and abroad. Johnson Mlambo, like his predecessor Nyathi Pokela, started his term of office from 1985 by consolidating relations with those countries that had supported the PAC with financial and material resources in the past. Immediately after his appointment he visited China from the 22nd September to the 4th October 1985. Thereafter, he attended a UN conference in Paris and then moved to Belgrade to attend

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97 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Address by Ahmed Gora Ebrahim, Permanent Observer Representative of the PAC of Azania at UN at the Conference on Women and Children, New York, 1984, pp. 1-5.

the Party Congress of the League of Yugoslav Communists.[98] Chairman Mlambo visited Zimbabwe in 1986, at the invitation of Prime Minister Robert Mugabe. The PAC continued to maintain cordial relations with neighbouring countries like Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. However, the PAC made frantic efforts to establish better relations with Mozambique and Zambia, which had cool relations with the movement. Besides maintaining good relations with many African states, Mlambo also visited Lagos and Tripoli to meet heads of state. Moreover, he led delegations to Iran and Yugoslavia, where he continued to brief the governments on the situation in Southern Africa and seek for material and financial help. Support groups also invited him to Germany, Switzerland, Holland and Belgium.[99] By 1988 the PAC had diplomatic relations on a regular basis with countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, France and the Soviet Union. The list excludes those countries which supported the PAC with training bases and finances, like Libya, Yugoslavia, mainland China, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Czechoslovakia, Iraq, Tanzania and bodies like the Liberation Committee of the OAU and the World Council of Churches.[100] These diplomatic penetrations indicated the remarkable growth of the PAC in the field of international affairs and the realisation within the movement that the diplomatic front was also important to isolate and put pressure on South Africa. However, these significant developments of the PAC on the diplomatic front could not match those of the ANC in the late 1980s.

Internationally, the PAC, like the ANC, was able to use the apartheid theme effectively against South Africa. In intensity and rhetoric, the tone of the PAC seemed to surpass that of the ANC in its condemnation of South Africa's apartheid policies. According to Gora Ebrahim, who delivered a speech during the Conference on Women and Children Under Apartheid at the UN in 1984, apartheid meant the history of dispossession to the oppressed, that is "the exploited, discriminated against and dispossessed in Azania."[101]

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98 PAC/Tan/1/85/1: Letter from Johnson Mlambo to Mengistu Haile Mariam, 1987, in K.M. Kondlo, *The Exile History of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (1960-1990)*, p. 221.

99 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 58: Report of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania to the 46th Ordinary Session of the OAU Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa, Arusha, Tanzania, 11-16 July, 1986, p. 10.

100 G. van Staden, "Return of the Prodigal Son: Prospects for a Revival of the Pan Africanist Congress", *International Affairs Bulletin*, vol. 12, 1988, p. 46.

101 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Address by Ahmed Gora Ebrahim, Permanent

He believed that the PAC was not merely involved in the struggle for civil rights activities, but for national liberation and self-determination. Ike Mafole, the Education Administrator of the PAC, in 1985 agreed with Gora Ebrahim by saying that apartheid "is the rule of a settler minority and by its nature anti-democratic: it is an illegal rule for it represents the will and interests of the minority." He also added another dimension, when he said that "apartheid is justification on a white supremacist ideology which postulates the superiority of the white race over the black human race."[102] Moreover, the PAC referred to apartheid as an "obnoxious system", which should be eradicated from South Africa. The attitude of many PAC leaders was that the inhuman and abominable system of apartheid "cannot be reformed", but should be totally eliminated by overthrowing the regime and replacing it with the new democratic government.[103] In this way, the PAC was able to paint the atrocities and flaws of apartheid in the world forums offered by the UN, NAM and the OAU.

Closely related to the theme of apartheid was the one of sanctions, which the PAC used effectively against the regime. While the PAC did not enjoy wide support in the world like the ANC, it nevertheless used the forums provided by the UN, OAU, and NAM as well as other bodies like the Commonwealth to its advantage to push the issue of sanctions against South Africa. Through these world bodies, the PAC was not only able to highlight the plight and conditions of the oppressed in South Africa, but it also called for harsh economic sanctions against the regime. The PAC regarded it as a serious indictment against the UN, that some of its members could successfully block the imposition of sanctions against the regime.[104] These Western powers, which supported

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Observer Representative of PAC of Azania at UN at the Conference on Women and Children, New York, 1984, p. 2.

102 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 6: Ike Mafole (Education Administrator), Statement of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania to the Twenty-Third Session of the UNESCO General Assembly, 17 October 1985, p. 2.

103 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 6: Statement by John Mlambo Presented to the 40th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, New York, 28 October 1985, p. 6.

104 Interview with Dr Peter Molotsi, Kroonstad, 15 April 2000. See also PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Speech Delivered by Chairman of the PAC of Azania, Comrade John Pokela, on the Occasion of the Anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre, Dar-es-Salaam,

the regime, were the United States, Britain, France and the Federal Republic of Germany. The PAC accused them of overtly and covertly supporting South Africa through such disguised policies as "constructive engagement" and "separate economics from politics".[105] They believed that such connivance had the effect of encouraging the regime to intensify its oppression internally and aggression externally. In other words, these countries encouraged the perpetuation of apartheid and the prolonging of the suffering of the oppressed people. To deny South Africa the moral, political and economic sustenance and encouragement to continue with oppression and apartheid, the PAC urged the international community to impose mandatory economic sanctions, which included arms and oil embargoes, and sports, cultural and academic boycotts against the regime. In their view, this concerted international action might help the internal forces and the exiled movements to speed up changes in South Africa, which would prevent further bloodshed, suffering and loss of life.[106] In this manner, the PAC used the sanction issue to put pressure on the regime.

Another important issue that the PAC used to discredit the regime internationally was that of political prisoners. The movement always drew the attention of the international community to the plight of political prisoners in the country. For example, Mlambo referred to an unfortunate incident on Robben Island, where he claimed that he had been "buried alive" up to his neck.[107] The exposure of such treatment in the world bodies like the UNO, OAU and NAM led to slight improvement in the conditions of the prisoners in South Africa. Specifically, the PAC accused the South African regime of treating their own members unfairly. The movement claimed that these members, who included Samuel Chibane, Dimake Malepe, Jafta Masemola, John Nkosi, Philemon Tefu

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21 March 1982, p. 3; PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 6: Molefe Ike Mafole, Statement of the PAC of Azania to the Twenty-Third Session of the UNESCO General Conference, 17 October 1985, p. 2.

105 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 6: Nyathi Pokela, Speech Presented to the Special Session of the UN on the 25th Anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre, New York, 22 March 1985, p. 6.

106 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 6: Ike Mafole, Statement of the PAC of Azania to the Twenty-Third Session of the UNESCO General Conference, 17 October 1985, p. 8.

107 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 6: Statement by Johnson Mlambo Presented to the 40th Session of the General Assembly of the UN, New York, 28 October 1985, p. 7.

and Isaac Mthimunye, were the longest serving prisoners on Robben Island in 1985, despite the fact that they were denied proper legal representation in their teens, when they were arrested.[108] They had been brought to Robben Island before the ANC's famous Rivonia prisoners.

This means that the media gave more coverage to the ANC prisoners and less attention to those of the PAC. In the 1980s this disparity became clear, when the PAC's Jafta Masemola and the ANC's stalwart, Walter Sisulu and his comrades were released. According to the PAC, the major Western news monopolies, including the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), deliberately hid the fact that Masemola was a member of the PAC.[109] In addition, the discrepancy in the treatment of Nelson Mandela's health and that of Zeph Mothopeng, who was the PAC's president, was also questioned by the movement. The PAC believed that the government's concern over Mandela's health was simply motivated by fear of international repercussions, should he die in prison.[110] In this way, the perception of the PAC that the regime treated the ANC more leniently compared to them actually emphasised their rivalry with that movement. It could also be argued that the PAC regarded itself as being more radical than the ANC - hence the harsh treatment by the state.

The real threat to the image of the PAC was the lack of a strong leadership, which could match that of the ANC. In fact, most problems of the PAC were often attributed to poor leadership. The legacy of its exiled history was that it was a movement whose image was dented by internal strife and turmoil. The only leader that the PAC members themselves seemed to have respected and hero-worshipped was Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe. Peter Raboroko, as one of the founder members of the PAC with Sobukwe, not only idolised him, but he also described him as "sea green incorruptible" and the "defier of the undefiable" after the anti-pass campaign of 1960.[111] Sobukwe's name and

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108 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Address by John Pokela, Chairman of the PAC of Azania to the 39th Session of the General Assembly of the UN, New York, 20 November 1984, p. 7.

109 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 6: Statement of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania on the Release of Political Prisoners, 25 October 1986, p. 1.

110 *Financial Mail*, vol. 110, no. 6, 11 November 1986, pp. 53-55.

111 Interview with Peter Raboroko, 17 February 2000. See also Peter Raboroko, "The Defier

stature were often juxtaposed with those of Nelson Mandela, especially after the Sharpeville incident. He was described by the PAC as "a freedom fighter of great intellect and organisational ability", like Nelson Mandela.[112] However, his talents were available to his comrades for a short time only, as he was incarcerated and unable to communicate with them or supporters. When he was released from Robben Island in May 1969, he could not take part in politics, as he was mostly confined to his home in Kimberley until his death in February 1978.[113] On the other hand, Nelson Mandela remained within the ANC and seemed to have enjoyed relative freedom to communicate with the outside world from prison, especially from the mid-1980s until he was freed on 11 February1990.

However, the existence and growth of the ANC internationally depended on the strong and committed leaders, such as Oliver Tambo, Thomas Nkobi, Joe Slovo and Alfred Nzo. Others who formed the next layer of leaders, who would play the most important role after the unbanning of the liberation movements in 1990 included, amongst others, people like Jacob Zuma, Thabo Mbeki, Steve Tshwete, Mac Maharaj, Ronnie Kasrils and Chris Hani. The list includes leaders from the ANC-SACP alliance.[114] Most of these leaders enabled the ANC to survive the harsh realities of exiled life. Even though the ANC also experienced internal problems, effective and responsible leadership by Tambo and those who assisted him enabled the movement to avoid dissensions, which might have immobilised it.

On the other hand, the real question which confronted the PAC was the lack of a united and dynamic leadership required to direct the national liberation struggle of the oppressed. In the absence of effective leaders, the viability of the PAC as a liberation

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of the Undefiable", n.d., pp. 1-13. Obtained from Raboroko, in possession of author.

112 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 6: Citation for the Posthumous Award of Honorary Degree of Doctor of Law to Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, 1924-1978, on 16 February 1985, p. 4.

113 B. Pogrund, *Sobukwe and Apartheid*, p. 368.

114 C.J.B. le Roux, "The ANC-SACP's Political Military Council: a brief profile of its origin and leadership", *Journal for Contemporary History*, vol.19, no.1, June 1994, pp.148-149. For more details of the ANC's leadership structures, see T. Lodge, *All Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s*, pp. 174-190.

organisation was questionable. When he became the PAC President after the imprisonment of Sobukwe, Leballo caused crises which bedevilled the organisation until he was ousted in 1980 as indicated in the previous chapter. By the time he was removed from his leadership position, the movement had been weakened to the point of disintegration. It was difficult for leaders who came after him, like Vusi Maake, Nyathi Pokela and Johnson Mlambo, to repair the damage he had caused. This state of affairs in the PAC was described by Henry Isaacs, when he said: "Factionalism and cliquism at the level of leadership in turn are breeding a great deal of opportunism among the cadres, some of whom believe that in order to secure positions within the Organisation, they have to align with one or other faction or clique within the leadership. Where belly-crawling and bootlicking, plotting and intrigue and opportunism are rife, then mediocrity flourishes since merit and ability, political and ideological clarity are downgraded."[115] In this situation, it stands to reason that it was very difficult to prepare the next layer of leaders. As a result, it could be concluded that calibre and experience of political leadership were deep-seated problems within the PAC.

This lack of visionary leadership with experience in practical politics became evident when the PAC positioned itself disastrously within the negotiation process, which started unfolding in South Africa towards the end of the 1980s. The PAC leadership failed to analyse properly the political developments in Southern Africa and internationally towards the end of the 1980s. After steadfastly refusing to negotiate with the regime, the ANC got a wake-up call when events like the Cuito Cuanavale victory of the Cuban forces against South Africa in Angola, the independence of Namibia and the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Southern Africa paved the way for the process of negotiations. By reading the situation properly, the ANC under the leadership of Oliver Tambo started preparing for negotiations. Even Nelson Mandela with his secret talks with the regime, displayed political acumen as has already been explained earlier in this chapter. This visionary leadership of the ANC came up with the Harare Declaration, which mapped out the broad outlines of an acceptable transition. In the end, this tactical move of the ANC prevented the regime from dominating the negotiation process of the early 1990s.

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115 H. Isaacs, Memo to All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC, 17 February 1982, p. 3.

What about the PAC and the negotiation process? The crucial point to note was that the PAC adopted a hard-line stand initially. While the ANC showed readiness to seek a negotiated settlement to end apartheid, the attitude adopted by the PAC was that it would have nothing to do with negotiations, especially while they were in the preliminary or pre-bargaining stage. Regarding itself as the custodian of the interests of the oppressed, the PAC indicated that it did not stop any movement from negotiating with the regime, if they chose to do so. This was an obvious reference to the ANC by the PAC President, Zeph Mothopeng, who addressed a press conference in 1989 in Johannesburg following his return from a five month trip abroad. As he put it at the press conference in Johannesburg: "Go and negotiate, if you want to."[116] The standpoint of the PAC was also clarified at a three-day consultative conference in November 1989 with other Africanist organisations such as AZANYU, NACTU, AWO, PASO and PAM. The PAC and its fellow Africanists took a hard-line stand by saying that "as of now, there exists no basis for genuine negotiations."[117] This means that the PAC took a firm position by rejecting exploratory talks with the regime out of hand. This attitude of the PAC seemed to be motivated by its distrust of the South African regime and the ANC for possibly "selling out" the oppressed majority. As a result, before it could plunge itself into the negotiation process, the PAC raised an unambiguous and forthright question: "Who, at this critical stage of our liberation struggle wants to negotiate with who about what?"[118]

From this important question, a number of issues emerged, which showed that the PAC distrusted the regime. Firstly, the PAC claimed that it was not against talks with the regime as such, but it rejected them because of its failure to meet the five pre-conditions laid down in the Harare Declaration and the resolution unanimously adopted by the Special Session of the UN General Assembly. According to them, the regime met one of the pre-conditions, namely the unbanning of the ANC, PAC and other organisations. The other pre-conditions, like the unconditional release of all political prisoners, the lifting of the state of emergency, unconditional amnesty for all political prisoners and exiles, and the withdrawal of racist troops from African townships had not yet been met by the

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116 "Negotiations out for now", *Azania Combat*, issue no.9, 1989, p. 2.

117 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: A Communiqué on the First Consultative Meeting of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania in Harare, 28-30 November 1989, p. 1.

118 'Negotiations out for now", *Azania Combat*, issue no.9, 1989, p. 2.

regime.[119] The PAC argued that the regime was trying to turn these pre-conditions into negotiating issues and believed that such attempts would weaken the national liberation movements.

Secondly, the PAC used the issue of pre-conditions to justify its complaint that the current balance of forces in South Africa favoured the regime. As a result, the movement rejected the idea of negotiations, because they held the view that negotiations could only take place between equals or when the regime would have been pushed into a tight corner through the armed struggle.[120] In other words the PAC raised its long-standing concern of the late 1950s concerning equality between blacks and whites. According to them, the only meaningful negotiations that would take place would be the sole purpose of transferring power from the white regime to the indigenous oppressed Africans. In this way, the PAC hardened its attitude and indicated its radical stand towards negotiations with the regime.

More significantly, the PAC believed that the regime was now employing new tactics to salvage itself from problems such as internal resistance, which included armed resistance. Their view was that the regime pretended to be a "messiah of peace", by saying that it wanted to negotiate whilst keeping apartheid intact.[121] According to the PAC the reformist posture of De Klerk was aimed at masterfully manipulating the local and international media in order to gain favourable publicity.[122] His duplicity manifested itself when he suddenly received red-carpet treatment in Europe, the USA and some of the African states, where he sought the lifting of sanctions and political isolation.

To avoid being involved and entangled in the pre-negotiations, which were going on between the regime and the ANC, the PAC also argued that the regime had not addressed the following pillars of apartheid, which they described as non-negotiable:

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119 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81:PAC Statement to OAU Monitoring Group, n.d., p. 1.

120 "Negotiations out for now", *Azania Combat*, Issue no. 9, 1989, p. 2.

121 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 40: Media Briefing by the PAC on its Proposals for Negotiations, 30 June 1990, p. 1.

122 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Statement of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania Delivered by President Clarence Makwetu to the Frontline Heads of State Summit in Zimbabwe, 1991, p. 2.

- The Population Registration Act;
- The Land Acts of 1913 and 1936, on which the Group Areas Act was based;
- The Bantu Education Act;
- The Tri-cameral Parliament;
- The Bantustans.[123]

In addition to the hard-line stand taken towards negotiations, the PAC indicated that it would refuse to unilaterally suspend or renounce the armed struggle. As explained previously in this chapter, the movement believed that it would only enter into mutual cessation of hostilities once the regime had unconditionally complied with the pre-conditions.[124] In the meantime, the PAC said APLA would remain on the battlefield and continued to attack the regime's security forces, while preserving and building up their own forces so that when the time was ripe they could negotiate from a position of strength.[125] For this reason, the PAC criticised the ANC for no longer using the armed struggle. Their view seemed to be that one could not speak of cessation of hostilities without considering the issue of political power. In other words, the question of who was in control of the government and exercised power was of paramount importance to the PAC.

Such control would bring into issue the question of ensuring that no particular force could claim superiority over others during the negotiation period. This vying for political power meant that the PAC was sceptical of the emerging relationship between the government and the ANC, since they had started talking to each other. According to them, the ANC and the government were becoming "a *de facto* coalition government", as they were both influencing important policy matters. Consequently, the movement indicated that it was not going to be "a political priest to solemnise the marriage of

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123 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: Solidarity Message to ZANU (PF) People's National Congress, 18-22 December 1989, p. 5. See also PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: A Communiqué on the First Consultative Meeting of the PAC of Azania in Harare, 28-30 November 1989, p. 1; *The Star*, 26 November 1989.

124 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: PAC Statement to the OAU Monitoring Group, n.d., p. 3.

125 "Negotiations out for now", *Azania Combat*, Issue no. 9, 1989, p. 2.

convenience between the ANC and the racist regime."[126] However, despite its suspicions and hardening of attitudes towards negotiations, the PAC feared that it might lose support if it should ignore the negotiation process indefinitely. As a result of this anxiety, the PAC shifted its goalposts and indicated its willingness to discuss the post liberation constitution, which would address the following issues:

- Genuine non-racialism as opposed to racism and multi-racialism;
- Genuine democracy as opposed to entrenched group privileges;
- Redress the injustices and confiscation of the land as opposed to protecting the present status quo.[127]

Signs that the PAC was shifting its position slightly on negotiations became apparent, when the organisation was forced to hold a consultative meeting in Harare between 21-23 September 1990. The meeting deliberated on the regime's letter of 17 August 1990, which invited the movement to join the process of negotiations. In considering the invitation, the PAC came up with the following guiding principles, which would assist it to reach an informed judgement and decision on the invitations:

- "that peaceful methods of resolution of the conflict in South Africa should be pursued whenever possible provided that such peaceful methods do not weaken the capacity and efforts of the oppressed to attain national liberation struggle;
- the peaceful resolution of such conflict could occur only through a democratically-elected constituent assembly based on the principle of one person one vote on a common voter's roll in a unified and non-aligned country;
- that the PAC was prepared to enter into serious and constructive negotiations to discuss the modalities of creating the constitutional assembly including the date, age of voters, voters roll and supervision. Talks should occur at a neutral venue and be facilitated by a neutral chairperson;

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126 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 27: A Report on the Meeting Between PAC Chairman Comrade J.P. Mlambo and His Excellency, the Ugandan High Commissioner to Tanzania, Held on 1st October 1990, p. 1.

127 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 40: Media Briefing by the PAC on its Proposals for Negotiations, 30 June 1990, p. 2.

- that the PAC was still committed to the policy of equitably redressing the problem of land and other resources to the African masses;
- that the PAC remained committed to continue the struggle for liberation on all fronts including the armed struggle. Moreover, the movement did not subscribe to the practice of unilateral suspension or cessation of the armed struggle."[128]

Although the PAC reiterated some of its earlier policies, it became also clear that it was softening its stance somehow by indicating the conditions under which it was prepared to negotiate with the regime. While it remained adamant that time was not yet ripe to talk to the government, it did not rule out the possibility in the future. However, when the exploratory talks between the ANC and the regime gained momentum towards the end of 1990, it became increasingly clear that the PAC's stance could put it in danger of being marginalised. There was also a subtle pressure put on the PAC by the international community, including the Frontline States and the OAU, which goaded the movement into action to start thinking seriously about the negotiation process.[129] This means that the PAC could no longer procrastinate and prevaricate over whether to take part in the negotiations or not. In fact, the hesitancy and indecision of the PAC leadership on whether or not to take part in negotiations would put it at a disadvantage later on. By the time the movement decided to join the negotiations seriously at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park in the early 1990s, it had already lost much ground to its arch-rival, the ANC, and other rivals.

7.3 THE FORMATION OF A PATRIOTIC FRONT

A point which indicated clearly that the PAC's stance towards the process of negotiations was changing was when the question of forming a patriotic front with the ANC was raised towards the end of 1990. The idea of a Patriotic Front, involving the

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128 PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 40: PAC Guiding Position on Negotiations: Document of Consensus Resulting from the PAC Consultative Conference Held in Harare on 21-23 September 1990, p. 1. See also J. Tlholoe, "No negotiations and not many bullets either", *Work in Progress*, no.72, January 1991, p. 15; PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: PAC Statement to OAU Monitoring Group, p. 3.

129 *The Argus*, 20 April 1990. See also PAC, UFH, PAC Tanzania, Box 81: PAC Statement to the OAU Monitoring Group, p. 1.

ANC and the PAC, was not new. Since the banning of the political movements, there had been several attempts aimed at forming such a front. There was a united front between the ANC and the PAC abroad in the early 1960s after the Sharpeville massacre. However, the united front failed because of divergent policies held by these movements. The OAU also tried to persuade them to form a front similar to that of ZANU and ZAPU in Zimbabwe. However, repeated attempts to forge such a front did not succeed, because of these differences:

- The ANC continued to see itself as the sole and authentic representative voice of the oppressed people of South Africa. On the other hand, the PAC criticised this status of the ANC, especially as the OAU was nearly persuaded to withdraw its recognition of the PAC;
- The ANC saw no need to form an alliance with a movement whose record of the armed struggle and serious politicking was suspect;
- The PAC doubted an alliance with a movement whose charter mentioned that "South Africa belongs to all who belong to it";
- The possible alliance was also affected by the Sino-Soviet politics. From the 1960s, the ANC received most of its support from the Soviet Union, while the PAC received support from China. This material support tended to divide them along the line of their supporters.[130]

In spite of these earlier differences that kept the ANC and the PAC apart for almost thirty years, a feeling started just after their unbanning that it was time to set aside their enmity and stand together. For this reason, the ANC Deputy President, Nelson Mandela, and the PAC president, Clarence Makwetu, paved the way by arranging a meeting to work on the modalities of setting up the Patriotic Front. However, the decision by the liberation movements to decide to join forces against the regime raise important questions like: Why did the liberation movements decide to explore the possibility of forming a united front after their unbanning? Could such a front succeed? What were the challenges confronting such a front?

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130 S. Chonco, "Patriotic Front. Will it Succeed?", *South*, 21-27 February 1991, p. 25. See also *The Argus*, 20 April 1991.

Despite their differences, there were several reasons why the formation of such a front became imperative:

- The regime was exploring an alliance with homeland leaders like Mangosuthu Buthelezi of the Inkatha Freedom Party. If the alliance could be successful, it would pose a serious threat to the liberation movements. As a result, a united opposition to the regime stood a far better chance of success than when they acted separately against the regime;
- There was pressure from the Frontline States, which wanted to see the negotiated settlement succeeding;
- The possibility of the UNITA and RENAMO type of violence, which had taken place in Angola and Mozambique respectively might occur in a post-apartheid South Africa. The formation of a united front might prevent this possibility. The spiral of violence in Natal and the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging areas forced the ANC to enter into alliance politics with other black organisations;
- Both Mandela and Makwetu called explicitly for a constituent assembly. Moreover, both the ANC and the PAC believed in majority rule and defined Africans as the most oppressed group in South Africa even though the ANC still believed in its broad nationalism, which included other races.[131]

The possible formation of a Patriotic Front between the ANC and the PAC meant that forces, which were opposed to apartheid, could strengthen their position at the negotiation table if they agreed on a common strategy before the process. It also meant that sharp differences, like who owned what and who waged the armed struggle better than others were becoming unimportant. The success of these liberation movements would now be tested by their ability to work within the South African political arena with other organisations. As a result, the conclusion could be reached that the opportunity of the organisations forming a Patriotic Front, like the one between ZANU and ZAPU in Zimbabwe, looked promising.

However, in spite of the new-found amity between the ANC and the PAC, there were still

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131 S. Chonco, "Patriotic Front. Will it Succeed?", *South*, 21-27 February 1991, p. 25. See also *The Argus*, 20 April 1991.

major differences between them, which could render the front ineffectual and threaten its survival. In other words, the prospects for survival of such an alliance could be disturbed by the following:

- Even though the liberation movements agreed on the issue of the demand for a constituent assembly, they still disagreed on the strategy of achieving it. Whereas the PAC wanted the process of establishing the constituent assembly should occur at a neutral venue and be facilitated by a neutral chairperson, the ANC wanted the process to be internally driven with no outside mediation or supervision;
- The PAC was strongly against the alliance with the SACP and this caused a major split in 1959. The ANC's alliance with the SACP was very strong and it was not possible for the ANC to desert them;
- There were also fundamental differences on economic policy. Despite its rhetoric, the ANC was about to agree to the lifting of sanctions and not the PAC in 1990. Moreover, the ANC was now silent on nationalisation whereas the PAC was firmly committed to such a principle. The ANC advocated a mixed economy and the PAC committed itself to rigid socialism;
- The PAC was not party to the violence in the townships, but still advocated the use of armed struggle against white domination. On the other hand, the ANC's image was dented by the senseless killing and it was even prepared to stop its armed struggle;
- The PAC took a hard-line attitude towards negotiations, especially pre-negotiations. It was also talking more of the need to transfer power while the ANC had all along been in favour of negotiations although with some doubts;
- The alliance was also endangered by the PAC's decision to outbid the ANC in the vibrancy of township politics. This hard-line stance of the PAC appealed to township militant youths and the ANC was accused of being weak by choosing peace.[132]

This means that even though the possibility of forming a ZANU-ZAPU style get-together existed, some of the differences, which had split the ANC and the PAC three decades

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132 *The Star*, 21 April 1991. See also *The Argus*, 18 April 1991.

before were still there. More importantly, as the negotiation process gained momentum, new differences were cropping up. However, these differences were to be sorted out at their proposed congress of 1991. The conference would actually determine whether the possibility of forming a united front between the ANC and the PAC would this time succeed or still fail as it had been the case in the past.

7.4 THE BIRTH OF A NEW SOUTH AFRICA

This subject will not be explored in details in this research, as it falls outside the scope of the period covered in this study. However, what is crucial to note is that the negotiations which took place immediately after the unbanning of the liberation movements on 2 February 1990 actually laid down the foundation for the birth of a new South Africa. What was also of crucial importance was to determine which liberation movement enjoyed popular support from mostly the oppressed masses. But the only true test of this popular support was at the polls, where all South Africans of all races would be given the opportunity to democratically choose their own representatives. This important day of determining who would rule the new democratic and non-racial South Africa was 27 April 1994.

7.5 SUMMARY

It is evident from the afore-mentioned analysis that the advent of the 1980s introduced opportunities inside South Africa, which made it possible for the liberation movements to be able to advance their liberation struggle. The resurgence of political activities presented the ANC and the PAC with challenges of overthrowing the regime and replacing it with a democratic and non-racial government. At the same time, the way the ANC and the PAC enlisted the help of the international community was also important in advancing the aims of the struggle for liberation. However, the state of readiness of the liberation movements and the attempts they made actually determined how they reacted to the internal developments in South Africa and the extent to which they received international support.

In order to determine the success of the ANC and the PAC in exploiting the internal situation in South Africa in the 1980s, an analysis and comparison of their military

operations and involvement in mass mobilisation of the oppressed were done. As far as the armed struggle was concerned, both the ANC and the PAC could not defeat the regime militarily or in a conventional warfare. For this reason, they resorted to guerrilla warfare, which manifested itself as a protracted people's war. However, the ANC announced its military presence in the country by launching a series of spectacular military operations against certain targets and military personnel, including the police. These were supported by encouraging the creation of organisations that supported the ANC like the UDF, COSAS, COSATU and MDM. Furthermore, the ANC encouraged the mass struggles and mass mobilisation of the oppressed, which manifested themselves in rent boycotts and demands for wage increases. In this way, the ANC was able to enhance its image and legitimacy amongst the oppressed people as the movement that was seen to be fighting the enemy of the oppressed.

On the other hand, the PAC was not visible enough during the upheavals in South Africa during the mid-1980s. This lack of visibility can be attributed to the fact that the PAC experienced internal wrangles and conflicts, which almost immobilised and distracted the movement from focusing fully on the aims of the liberation struggle and revolution. The movement failed to register its military presence and popularise its political programme during the early and mid-1980s. Very little was done to mobilise people in South Africa. What became apparent was that the PAC continued to pay lip-service to the mobilisation of the masses and the formation of a united front against the regime. It was only towards the end of the 1980s that the PAC indicated that it was capable of waging the struggle when it started attacking the police and the farmers on the eve of the birth of the new South Africa. The radical posture that it adopted at this time was aimed at winning the support of the radical elements, who feared that the ANC was selling out the oppressed by negotiating with the regime. However, the military operations of the movement failed to make any significant impact, as the timing was inappropriate because the attention of the majority of people was on the outcome of the negotiations that were taking place.

It is also apparent from the comparative analysis of mobilising for support that both the ANC and the PAC viewed this revolutionary strategy as of crucial importance in isolating the regime internationally and obtaining foreign help. However, the strategy of mobilising support in the international field indicated that the ANC was successful in its

attempt to isolate the South African regime. It did not only receive support from many organisations and international bodies, but it also received material and moral support from many countries in the world. The movement was successful to the extent that it became known as the "government in waiting" towards the end of the 1980s. On the other hand, the PAC was not as successful as the ANC in the international arena. This was the case, despite the fact that there were attempts by the PAC to try to improve its image internationally by forging links with groups and countries that were regarded as extremely radical. The conclusion could therefore be drawn that the PAC was not successful like the ANC in establishing itself internationally as a viable liberation organisation.

An additional factor that affected the relationship between the ANC and the PAC was the issue of negotiations. The ANC's readiness to seek a negotiated settlement to end apartheid enabled it to become a leading actor alongside the regime. On the other hand, the attitude of the PAC was that it would have nothing to do with negotiations, while they remained in the preliminary or pre-bargaining phase. However, the issue of negotiations was fraught with risks for both liberation movements. For the ANC, the ever-present possibility of the failure of negotiations might harden the attitude of the oppressed blacks and drive them to support the armed struggle of the PAC. On the other hand, the PAC's stance towards negotiations could put it in danger of being ignored or relegated to an insignificant status. However, the fact that the PAC had failed to take part during the pre-bargaining stage of the negotiation process, actually meant that the movement had put itself at a disadvantage compared to its rivals like the ANC and the regime when real negotiations commenced.

On the positive side, the fact that the regime had agreed to negotiate with its former enemies was a clear sign that the political situation in South Africa was on the brink of experiencing the much-needed peace and success. This means that the 1980s was the decade and period of preparing for freedom and the birth of the new democratic and non-racial South Africa based on the will of the people.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

In the introduction of this study it was stated that the objective of the study was to describe and analyse the relationship between the ANC and PAC in order to establish why the ANC emerged as a more powerful force in South African politics than the PAC by the end of the liberation period. To break the overall objective into smaller units a few specific research aims were identified: To investigate the differences and similarities in terms of ideologies and strategies between the ANC and PAC; to show how the ANC and PAC used diplomacy to obtain international help and recognition; to investigate how their competition for local and international recognition and support influenced their relationship; to research the role played by the armed struggle of the two liberation movements in the fight for freedom and its impact on their relations; and to determine the reasons why the attempts to form a united front failed. At the conclusion of the study it is necessary to reflect upon these issues and in how far the original research objective and aims have been realised in the course of the study.

In order to bring all the threads of the study together, the conclusions of the study will be discussed under the following headings:

- Ideological differences
- Quality of leadership
- Organisational capacity
- Strategy and tactics
- Failure to form a united front.

IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES

On the basis of the findings in this study it is possible to conclude that ideological differences were of crucial significance, both in terms of the relationship between the ANC and the PAC and in terms of the capacity of the two movements to get national and international support.

The basic conflict between the ANC and the PAC, as discussed in chapter 2, revolved on the national question and the way the struggle should be conducted by the oppressed.[1] Their different views concerning the way the struggle should unfold largely determined the relationship between them. In a real sense, the ideological dispute between the two liberation movements could be likened to a family quarrel.

Ideological tensions within the ANC began when the ANC Youth League was dissatisfied with the petition politics of the old reformist leadership. After removing this leadership, the Youth Leaguers embarked on the Programme of Action based on African nationalism, which was more confrontational in nature.[2] Africans were inspired by the desire to achieve national liberation, that is freedom from white domination and the attainment of a voice in the political processes of the country for the oppressed black majority.

However, Africans failed to agree on the possibility of a compromise, by which they could admit and accommodate whites in South Africa as partners in the liberation struggle. Differences arose between Africanists, who eventually broke away to form the PAC in 1959, and those who remained in the ANC and believed in the preamble of the Freedom Charter, which stated that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it , black and white."

With its attitude of "Africa for the Africans", the PAC saw the situation in racial terms. It was opposed to the involvement of whites in the liberation struggle, which they regarded as the exclusive domain of the oppressed blacks. Hence, the PAC advocated a narrow African nationalism.

On the other hand, the ANC's attitude was that while the blacks were the most oppressed group, the help of other groups, like whites and Indians, was needed in order to achieve liberation. Therefore the ANC was in favour of a broad African nationalism.

As a result of these contradictory viewpoints, two steams of African nationalism emerged

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1 See chapter 2, section 2.2, pp. 58-59.

2 See chapter 2, section 2.5, pp. 74-78.

- the broad or inclusive nationalism of the ANC and the narrow or exclusive nationalism of the PAC.[3]

This ideological difference had two very important implications for the liberation movements. Firstly, it made the possibilies for cooperation in a united front extremely slender. Throughout the period covered by this study neither of the two organisations was willing to budge one inch on their ideological stance and, in stead of moving closer together, they actually drifted further apart. Secondly, the narrow and exclusive nationalism of the PAC restricted its potential support base, both in South Africa and internationally, compared to that of the much broader-based ANC. Both these implications received attention in this study and will be discussed in more detail below.

QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership constitutes the backbone of any organisation or movement. The quality of leadership can either make the organisation to fail or succeed in carrying out its aims and responsibilities. In this regard the fortunes of the PAC and the ANC differed considerably.

The PAC in particular, was affected by leadership crises. Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, under whose leadership the PAC broke away from the ANC, was the only leader who was glorified and regarded as a hero by all sections of the PAC. Apart from Sobukwe the PAC seriously lacked depth of leadership. The failure of effectively handling internal problems was a manifestation of the leadership crisis in the movement. Instead of attending to the most important issues of the national liberation struggle or revolution, the leadership of the PAC was continuously engaged in sabotages, intrigue, subterfuge, mud-slinging and other internal wrangles and conflicts. These negative actions, which have been extensively documented in this study, rendered the PAC ineffective and at times completely paralysed the movement.[4] Potlako Leballo was the main culprit. His leadership style lacked vision and proper organisation. His attempts to strengthen his own position by pitting sections of the PAC against each other, divided rather than

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3 See chapter 2, section 2.3, pp. 60-71.

4 See chapter 7, section 7.2, pp. 453-461.

unified the organisation. The consequent chaos that reigned supreme during his term of office made it difficult for his successors to repair the damage. But Leballo alone should not be blamed for the failures and problems of the PAC. Other PAC leaders were not only corrupt, but they also lacked vision. There was no conscious effort to prepare other people for leadership positions in the PAC. In stead of combining their efforts to build up the PAC and openly discussing their differences, several PAC leaders seemed to be forever engaged in trying to discredit other leaders and factions, and in the process much harm was done to the public image of the organisation.[5] Poor leadership seemed to have been one of the major contributing factors to the PAC's poor performance in the freedom struggle in South Africa.

On the other hand, the ANC seemed to have been blessed with astute and quality leaders. Despite the fact that Mandela and many other senior ANC leaders spent the greater part of the liberation struggle in gaol, the exiled leadership of the ANC coped particularly well with the challenges facing the movement. Oliver Tambo fully earns all the praises that he has received for his role in the struggle. He was a visionary leader and hard worker, who succeeded to hold the movement together in spite of the serious problems that it faced during its exiled period. It was much more than just a holding operation. During this period, Tambo and his team of co-leaders and advisors did not only attempt to weld together disparate elements within the ANC-SACP alliance, but the movement seemed to have risen from strength to strength as it gained wide publicity in South Africa itself and throughout the world. He was assisted by other leaders such as Alfred Nzo and Joe Slovo, a particularly astute strategist, and the younger generation, including Thabo Mbeki and Chris Hani. Although they were excluded from a direct role in the liberation struggle, the leaders held on Robben Island proved to be a huge asset to the ANC. Nelson Mandela and his colleagues were known worldwide. Mandela became the most famous prisoner of the 20th century, which enhanced the image of the ANC internationally.[6] It was not surprising, therefore, that with such an array of leaders, the ANC was dubbed the "government in waiting".

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5 See chapter 4, sections 4.4.2 and 4.4.3, pp. 225-237.

6 See chapter 7, section 7.1, pp. 444-445.

ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

Closely linked to the quality of leadership, was the organisational capacities of the ANC and the PAC. Whereas the ANC, under its unified leadership, strove after strengthening its organisational structures on all levels, those of the PAC seemed to be on the brink of falling apart most of the time. As the number of ANC missions abroad progressively increased and they functioned smoothly, the PAC missions were mainly restricted to the African continent and suffered from instability, as was illustrated in this study.

One field in which the differences between the two organisations were very obvious, was in the manner in which they managed the area of publicity and information. The PAC seemed to have failed dismally in this area. Its Department of Information and Publicity was disorganised and dysfunctional. The struggle for control of this department was part of the continuing leadership struggles in the PAC. As a result, the PAC failed to market itself effectively internationally. This development damaged the PAC internationally and internally as the people became conditioned into accepting the existence of the ANC, whose propaganda machine was getting more and more sophisticated, as the leading movement in the national liberation struggle.

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

All the factors mentioned thus far, i.e. ideology, quality of leadership and organisational capacity, contributed to give the ANC the edge over the PAC in terms of deploying its strategies and tactics. The ANC was much more pragmatic and flexible in its strategic approach, and could therefore, after being almost devastated in the 1960s, more effectively adapt to changing circumstances in the 1970s and 1980s to gradually strengthen its position as the leading South African liberation movement.

The armed struggle, as a key pin in the strategies of both the ANC and the PAC, was discussed at length in this study.[7] It was shown that, although the armed struggle had much propaganda value, neither the ANC nor the PAC was able to build a military capacity that posed a serious threat to the South African regime.

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[7] See chapters 3, 5 and 6.

In terms of the armed struggle the ANC performed slightly better than the PAC, because there was a more clearly defined military strategy and better liaison in the ANC between the political and military leadership. The PAC experienced problems with regard to the relationship between the army and the political leadership. There seemed to be a dichotomy of opinions about the military strategy of the PAC as shown by the clashes between Leballo and the APLA High Command.[8] What surfaced during these clashes was that the members of the army saw themselves as distinctly separate from the civilian members of the movement and they did not display the same loyalty to the political leaders as to the military leaders. This problem of unity between the army and political leadership existed until the liberation movements were unbanned in 1990. Unlike the situation in the PAC, there was in the ANC no divided loyalty between the political and military leaders, which rendered the movement ineffective. Although MK had its own military leaders, the political leadership of the ANC generally controlled the military leadership without exerting undue pressure or strains on internal organisational relationships. There were no major frictions on the question of military strategies.

Towards the end of the 1970s and up to the second half of the 1980s the ANC stepped up its military presence in South Africa. In combination with the other tactics used by the ANC, the armed struggle certainly made a contribution towards the changing political climate in the country in this period. Although the PAC armed struggle also picked up towards the end of the 1980s, it was not enough to threaten the regime, despite the fact that the PAC regarded the armed struggle as its principal means of overthrowing the South African regime. The PAC's strong preference for the armed struggle was matched by an equally strong dislike for other forms of struggle, which were dismissed as insignificant. This one-sidedness and failure to use all forms of struggle led to the ineffectiveness of the PAC.

Another important part of the strategy of the ANC in particular was the international solidairy campaign. The PAC did not pay as much attention to this aspect of the struggle, and consequently could never match the ANC in terms of broad-based international support and the establishment of anti-apartheid networks in different

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[8] See chapter 5, section 5.6.2, pp. 299-300.

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Both the ANC and PAC had a socialist ideological orientation. Since 1950 the ANC had been in alliance with the South African Communist Party, which had connections with Moscow. As a result, when the ANC was banned in South Africa, it was able to receive financial and material support from the Soviet Union. In the same way as other liberation movements, such as ZANU, SWAPO, the MPLA and FRELIMO, the ANC presented itself as part of the liberation struggles in the world, which opposed colonialism and imperialism within the framework of socialism and Marxism. For this reason, the apartheid regime waged its war against the ANC with the full knowledge that it had links with communism. Between 1960 and 1994 all opposition to the regime was labelled as "communist". Its obsession with rooting out communism at all costs in the country had the effect of enhancing the status of the ANC. On the other hand, the PAC claimed that it was anti-communist and placed a high premium on its independence, as it regarded its independence as the basis of its non-aligned commitments. Nevertheless, the PAC did get the backing of China. At the height of the anti-apartheid struggle in the 1970s and 1980s, Soviet backing was probably a bigger asset to the ANC than Chinese backing of the PAC.

However, what gave the ANC a huge advantage over the PAC, was that, despite its communist links, the ANC managed to gradually increase its support base in the West. Western backing was more crucial, because it was the West, through economic and other links, that could really put pressure on the Pretoria regime. To the West the ANC's idea of non-racialism, that is a more inclusive struggle, was certainly more palatable than the PAC's Africanism, which was more exclusivist. The ANC's ideology, compared to that of the PAC, was more closely akin to the Western concept of liberal democracy, as it linked up with ideas about human rights and freedom. Therefore, it was easier for the ANC to market itself in the West. For this reason, the ANC managed to get much more moral and financial support than the PAC in the West. It managed to tap into private funds from churches and non-governmental organisations, as explained in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 of this thesis. The PAC did not have nearly the same level of financial support and one of the reasons was that its ideology was somewhat alien to Western thinking. Towards the end of the 1980s the ANC received much more material and moral support from the West than the PAC and even had diplomatic ties with many countries in the

world, to the extent that it was generally labelled the "government in waiting" of South Africa.

Another aspect where the ANC performed much better than the PAC was in terms of building mass-based internal support in South Africa. This, in the end, proved to be the most important pillar of the liberation struggle and in the ANC's political successes after the end of apartheid. It was in this respect where the ANC used and the PAC missed their opportunities to build their constituencies. In terms of politically mobilising the masses of the black population the ANC made a much larger contribution to the successful conclusion of the liberation struggle than the PAC and reaped the rewards in the 1994 election.

After reviewing the roles the ANC and PAC played in the freedom struggle in South Africa in this thesis, it can be postulated that the two liberation movements did indeed contribute in their own ways to the collapse of the South African regime and even speeded up the ushering in of the democratic government. Just before and after the Sharpeville massacre of March 1960 the PAC occupied a central position in resistance politics, which showed much promise for the future. However, from its establishment in the late 1950s the PAC could never match the ANC in terms of popular support. This study has traced the fortunes of the two liberation movements in this regard.

It has been indicated that both movements faced an uphill battle after their banning in the 1960s and that it took some time for them to recover of the intitial setbacks, because of the incapacitation of their senior leadership. The failure of the PAC to take advantage of the rise of the black consciousness movement in the 1970s, closely akin to its ideology, has been discussed.[9] Although the ANC was also not ready to take full advantage of the situation in South Africa at the time of the Soweto revolts in 1976 and 1977, it was slowly but surely building its support networks.

When the time was ripe for revolution, with the township disturbances in the mid-eighties, the PAC was still embroiled in leadership struggles and it was the ANC that seized the opportunity to build links with mass-based movements inside South Africa,

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[9] See chapter 5, section 5.6.2, p. 296.

first the United Democratic Front and later the Mass Democratic Movement.

Towards the end of the 1980s the PAC was not completely out of contention. At that time it outflanked the ANC at the level of radical posture and rhetoric. The movement seemed to be commanding greater influence than at any time since the Sharpeville massacre. Its position was strengthened by the fact that some of the oppressed people feared that the ANC was selling out, because it was negotiating with the regime. Although the PAC had a latent force in South Africa, it was now at an advantageous position, because it was emphasising the armed struggle, black leadership of the freedom struggle, defined whites as settlers and made demands for the return of land to blacks. These emotional appeals could not be underestimated, especially when there was a possibility that polarisation between blacks and whites could be worsened by the slow pace of reforms and changes. In that case, it was not unthinkable and impossible that the PAC could emerge with a big support from the oppressed African majority in South Africa. This possibility was supported by the fact that it was difficult to believe that the oppressed would readily accept the multiracial vision of South Africa as proposed by the ANC. Oppression and racial discrimination were still common. This meant that the PAC had great potential as the revolutionary party of the blacks to increase its influence.

However, in the 1980s the PAC failed to realise its potential and to mobilise widespread support amongst the oppressed blacks, which negatively affected its visibility. When progressive whites were increasingly questioning the wisdom of continuing with the apartheid policies, the PAC was once again restricted by its narrow nationalist ideology. It failed to reach out to those whites who were disenchanted with the ruling system. The PAC regarded them as a worried and insignificant group, who had been thrown into total disarray by the rapid changes which were taking place in South Africa. Therefore, the PAC regarded it as counterproductive and a waste of time to make contact with progressive whites, sticking to the old attitude that whites engaged in the struggle of the oppressed only to dilute it. In this way the PAC's approach ignored the practical realities of the South African situation of racial diversity.

In contrast to the PAC the ANC was able to exploit the situation in such a manner that its image and prestige were enhanced among the masses. Its legitimacy amongst the oppressed was increased by the infiltration of literature, the provision of monetary help to

certain organisations inside South Africa that operated legally, the promotion of campaigns like the one for the release of Nelson Mandela and the spread of the ideas of the Freedom Charter.[10] The movement advanced its struggle using mass mobilisation effectively in actions such as consumer and rent boycotts, stay-aways and workers' strikes. These mechanisms of mass resistance were used as methods by means of which the regime was confronted in a non-military way in order to provoke further brutal measures by government, which could unite the masses even more. These activities were reinforced by the "armed propaganda" attacks which were conducted by MK. Towards the end of the 1980s the ANC captured the centre stage, when its dominance could be seen in huge crowds which turned out for protest marches.

In this way, misinterpretation of non-violence, as if the regime could not be opposed through other means, was actually a serious error of judgement by the PAC, because the movement lost to the ANC which used non-violent tactics effectively. As a result, the ANC appeared to have both the organisational machinery and skills to involve the masses in local, regional and national campaigns that welded them into a formidable and irresistible force. Because the ANC was an omnibus and all-inclusive movement as far as race was concerned, it had many supporters across the social and racial divide. Unlike the PAC it was ready to exploit the contradictions among the ruling class to lead not only the African masses, but also those elements within the ruling class who were vacillating. Consequently, the ANC's attempts to embrace white progressive elements became evident from the contacts it had with these groups since 1986. Increasingly the ANC represented a broadly based centrist group, which was gaining ground towards the end of the 1980s.

The consequence of the failure of the PAC manifested itself in the unfolding events during the negotiation process in South Africa, which indicated that inclusive nationalism, as advocated by the ANC, was popular in South Africa. The non-racialism of the ANC became more acceptable and relevant for the formation of a new South Africa as compared to the narrow nationalism of the PAC.

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[10] See chapter 6, section 6.3.1, p. 366.

FAILURE TO FORM A UNITED FRONT

From the formation of the PAC in 1959, there was a strong vying for support among blacks between the ANC and PAC. This rivalry actually developed into hostility, which characterised the relationship between the two liberation movements for a period of about thirty years.

At several points after their banning in 1960 there was talk of the possibility of a united front between the ANC and the PAC, but this never materialised, because neither of the movements was really serious about it. The unity movement collapsed because of suspicions and recriminations between the two movements.

As the stronger of the two movements there was no need for the ANC to take the initiative and approach the PAC for the formation of a united front. Because of their stronger international backing and broad-based grassroots support, the ANC was not under pressure to unite with the PAC and always seemed to be a step ahead of the PAC in terms of the implementation of its strategies. Its attitude was to portray itself as if it was the only authentic liberation movement in South Africa. It tended to ignore the PAC and treat it as if it did not exist. Because of its long tradition and its world-wide connections, the ANC did not feel obliged to condescend to the PAC. The ANC leaders were not tolerant towards the PAC's views.

The PAC, which in the first place broke away from the ANC because its supporters favoured a more hard line Africanist approach, regarded itself as ideologically more "pure" than the ANC. It would be a humiliation for the hardliners to return to the ANC, which would be on the terms of the ANC as the stronger movement. The PAC liked criticising the policies and strategies of the ANC. It always presented itself as an alternative to the ANC. Furthermore, it often sought to present its break from the ANC as a split of militants and radicals, who were dissatisfied with the moderateness of the ANC under the influence of whites. Thus the PAC concentrated on competing with the ANC, instead of focusing wholly on waging the struggle against the regime. In this way, the conduct of the PAC contributed to the hardening of attitudes and bad relations with the ANC.

The division between the ANC and PAC ran counter to African aspirations to foster the spirit of unity amongst themselves. It could easily play into the hands of the regime and its divide-and-rule approach. This lack of unity could constitute a major weakness of black politics in South Africa. The danger always existed that the regime could exploit this disunity amongst the oppressed. There was a fear amongst the oppressed that the regime might astutely win over the favour of a section of the oppressed and cause further divisions. More significantly, the possibility existed that the regime might use one section of the oppressed to destabilise whatever new government of the blacks took over, as it happened in Angola with UNITA and Mozambique with RENAMO. In this way, the aims of the revolution would be defeated. It should be noted, however, that the differences between the ANC and the PAC was of an ideological nature, whereas divisions between liberation movements in other southern African states (e.g. Rhodesia, Angola and Mozambique) often had an ethnic basis. In the end, the failure to form a united front did not seriously affect the South African liberation struggle.

EVALUATION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

At the outset in this study a comparative analysis is done of the origins of the ANC and the PAC as the two internationally recognised liberation movements of South Africa. This historical analysis is of crucial importance in that it facilitates a better understanding of the reasons for the existence of rival liberation movements, the relations between them, the way in which they used their opportunities to advance the liberation struggle, and the extent to which they succeeded in liberating the oppressed. Even though both movements were established to fight and end white domination, they represented two variants of African nationalism, which caused constant friction between them. The research has demonstrated the origin and development of this conflict between 1959 and 1990. Against the background of the events which are covered by this study, the conflicts which have taken place between the ANC and the PAC since 1990 could be understood.

In addition the research has also attempted to shed more light on the internal political developments of the ANC and the PAC during their period of exile. The crucial point to note here lies in the different manner in which the collective leadership of the two organisations were able to deal with internal crises and problems. While in trying times

the ANC members rallied in support of their leadership, mutual suspicion was rife in the PAC and its members were divided in their loyalties. This internal weakness rendered the PAC ineffective as compared to the ANC.

It is also demonstrated how the ANC and the PAC attempted to exploit international relations to their advantage and how their leaders mobilised support internationally. In this respect the ANC built up a huge advantage over the PAC, because of the broader acceptance of their more inclusive ideology of African nationalism and their much better organised networking campaign. Attention was focussed only on the kind of relations which were established and how pressure was put on the South African regime. It was not the aim to cover the field of international relations extensively and there is scope for future research in this regard.

The primary research done for this study corroborates the views of Gerhart (*Black Politics in South Africa: The Evolution of an Ideology*) and Lodge (*Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*) on the origin and development of African nationalism in South Africa. Both of these authors concentrate on the conflict between the Africanists and the ANC. However, the current study goes further by investigating the conflict surrounding the interpretation of African nationalism up to 1990, where its dominant trend of inclusive nationalism, as advocated by the ANC, became part of the mainstream political developments which would lead to the birth of the "new" South Africa in 1994.

This study supports the favourable account of the history of the ANC, compared to that of the PAC, given in the series of document publications compiled by Karis and Carter and Karis and Gerhart (*From Protest to Challenge*, volumes 1-5). Whereas the histories of the ANC and the PAC are discussed separately in these publications without much attention to a comparative perspective, the current study attempts through a comparative analysis to determine more precisely why the ANC, in the period under consideration, managed to emerge as the dominant liberation movement to such an extent that it was able to occupy an unassailable position in post-apartheid South African politics.

In the final analysis, the conclusion could be reached that the ANC dominated the liberation struggle of the oppressed in South Africa. The PAC was also a significant component of the freedom struggle of the oppressed masses in South Africa, as it also

contributed to put pressure on the South African regime, despite the fact that it was a relatively small liberation movement as compared to the ANC. Even though the ANC appeared to be acquiring political ascendancy and hegemony in the politics of the oppressed in South Africa towards the end of the 1980s, the only true test of popular support would be determined by the polls. During the period of their banning the real grassroots support of the two liberation movements among the oppressed masses in South Africa could not be determined with any measure of accuracy and there was much uncertainty as to their relative strength in the run-up to the 1994 election. In the election the ANC emerged as a clear victor, whereas the PAC was largely rejected. Another chapter in South Africa's history was concluded.

To conclude this study, three general points can be stated without any doubt:

- The relationship between the ANC and the PAC was characterised by rivalry, recriminations and enmity.
- The ANC regarded itself as the sole liberation movement, whereas the PAC saw itself as the alternative to the ANC.
- The ANC was more successful in dominating the liberation struggle in South Africa than the PAC.

Without the crucial role played by the ANC to exploit the opportunities which presented themselves to mobilise, initiate and co-ordinate resistance and protests, particularly in the 1980s, the birth of the new South Africa would not have happened in 1994.

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