

**SPIRITUALITY  
IN THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS  
STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION  
IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**1912 - 1996**

**BY:**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis traces the influence of Spirituality on the African National Congress (ANC) struggle for liberation in South Africa (1912 - 1996). It therefore demonstrates how God has been operating in the South African conflict situation.

Stories about Che Guevara's involvement in the struggle for freedom in Cuba and Bolivia and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's participation in the war against Nazism in Germany have been included in this work in order to expose the universality of spirituality. The main focus of this work is the practice of the ANC struggle for liberation between 1912 and 1996. When the history is read and synthesized from a Christian perspective it relates well to the biblical story about the liberation of the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage.

The main source of information has been both primary and secondary documents. Content analysis as a research method has been mainly used in order to identify Christian traits such as selflessness, brotherly love, mercy, ability to forgive, gratuity and compassion as signs of the presence and influence of spirituality in the behaviour of the leadership of the ANC in this struggle for South Africa.

Another preoccupation of this thesis is the ANC's need for national reconciliation and reconstruction of people's lives after the war of liberation in 1994.

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# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER ONE: PRELIMINARIES

### Part I: Introduction

1.1	Title	1
1.2	Keywords	1
1.3	Focal Problem	1
1.4	Rationale (scope)	1
1.5	Interest (importance)	2
1.6	Chapter Outline	2

### Part II: Analysis of Key Words

2.1	Liberation	4
2.2	The Struggle	6
2.2.1	Two Basic Forms of the Struggle	8
	(a) Non-Violent Resistance	8
	(b) Violent Resistance	9
2.3	Reconciliation	9
2.4	The Spirituality	10
2.4.1	The Holy Spirit	10
2.4.2	What is Spirituality?	12

### Part III: The Holy Spirit in Action

3.1	The Role of Spirituality in the Life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer	13
3.1.1	Bonhoeffer's Background and Views about Life	13
3.1.2	Circumstances Responsible for the Rise of Bonhoeffer's Spirituality	14
3.1.3	Bonhoeffer's Participation in the Struggle Against Nazism	15
3.2	The Role of Spirituality in the Life of Ernesto Che Guevara	16
3.2.1	Che Guevara's Background and Views About Life	16
3.2.2	Circumstances Responsible for the Rise of Guevara's Spirituality	17
3.2.3	Guevara's Participation in the Struggle for Human Liberation	18
3.3	Conclusion	19

## CHAPTER TWO: SPIRITUALITY AND AFRICAN NATIONALISM

Part I:	The Influence of Spirituality on African Nationalism	20
Part II:	The Process of the ANC Struggle for Liberation in South Africa	27
2.1	The Struggle and Its Leadership	27
2.2	Circumstances Responsible for the Rise of Spirituality of the ANC Struggle	28
2.3	The Role of Spirituality in the Life Activities of the ANC Leadership (1912 - 1996)	30
2.3.1	Background for the ANC leadership	30

2.3.2	The ANC Presidents	31
	(i) Dr J L Dube (1912 - 1917)	31
	(ii) S M Makgatho (1917 - 1924)	32
	(iii) Z R Mahabane (1924 - 1927)	32
	(iv) J T Gumede (1927 - 1930)	33
	(v) Dr P I Seme (1930 - 1936)	34
	(vi) Z R Mahabane 1937 - 1940 second term)	35
	(vii) Dr A M Xuma (1940 - 1949)	36
	(viii) Dr J S Moroka (1949 - 1952)	37
	(ix) Chief A Luthuli (1952 - 1967)	38
	(x) O R Tambo (1967 - 1991)	39
	(xi) N R Mandela (1991 - )	41
2.4	Conclusion	56

### CHAPTER THREE: SPIRITUALITY AND NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

Part I:	Botha`s Policy of White Reconciliation (1910 - 1919)	57
Part II:	Apartheid Regime and National Reconciliation	58
Part III:	New Democratic South Africa and National Reconciliation (1994 - 1996)	60
3.1	Mandela`s Government of National Unity	60
Part IV:	Conclusion	64
	Bibliography	65

# INTRODUCTION

## CHAPTER ONE: PRELIMINARIES

### PART I

#### 1.1 TITLE

Spirituality in the African National Congress Struggle for Liberation in South Africa, 1912 - 1996.

#### 1.1.2 KEYWORDS

- 1.2.1 Liberation
- 1.2.2 The Struggle
- 1.2.3 Reconciliation
- 1.2.4 Spirituality

#### 1.1.3 FOCAL PROBLEM

The objective of this study is to explore the influence and significance of Christian Spirituality in the ANC struggle for Liberation in South Africa.

#### 1.1.4 RATIONALE (SCOPE)

It can be easily assumed that the Christian Church has a useful role to play in the struggle for Liberation, but how she can effectively do so may not be clear. I therefore hold that it is the Christian Spirituality that empowers and animates the Church to work for human Liberation from injustice. Christian Spirituality is therefore understood in this work to operate through human life to liberate the oppressed. Hence the main concern in this work is to explore the activities of the Christian Spirituality in the practice of the ANC struggle for Liberation in South Africa between 1912 and 1996.

### 1.1.5 INTEREST (IMPORTANCE)

This work attempts to explore the significance and influence of the Christian Religion in the ANC struggle for freedom in South Africa. Its priority, however, is to explore ways in which the Christian faith has been operating in the ANC struggle. It is therefore necessary to explore how the Christian faith works through human life. This work also attempts to expose the impact or weakness of Christianity in South Africa. It is also necessary to expose the attitude of the leadership of the struggle towards the Christian religion.

### 1.1.6 OUTLINE

This work consists of three chapters. Chapter One which consists of three parts deals with preliminaries. The first part in this chapter deals with the introduction. The second part deals with the analysis of key words. An attempt will be made in part three which deals with the Holy Spirit in action to clarify the relationship between spirituality and the practice of the struggle against Nazism in Germany and for Liberation in Latin America with special reference to Cuba and Bolivia. This attempt also helps to expose the relationship between spirituality and nationalism. My discussion on this point concentrates on Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Che Guevara whose behaviour demonstrates how spirituality works in human activities. In the history of the Old Testament certain prophets who were deeply involved in the struggle were also understood to be under the control of the Spirit of God (cf. Jeremiah 1: 4 - 9; Exodus 10). Nolan (1986: 13) is therefore right when he says that in the Old Testament prophecy is strongly associated with the Holy Spirit. The prophets were indeed the persons who, more than any others, were moved and motivated by the Holy Spirit.

Chapter two explores the relationship between spirituality and African Nationalism. The first part in this Chapter explores the influence of Spirituality on African Nationalism. The second part dwells on the process of the ANC struggle for liberation in South Africa. It is here in this part where the leadership of the struggle is singled out to demonstrate by its behaviour the role of spirituality. The leadership of the black struggle would, in this study, mean the ANC leadership since the ANC is considered to be the oldest national liberation movement in South Africa (Meli, 1989). The ANC leadership is understood to be a team

effort. The ANC president is not supposed to act or make decisions alone. The president acts within the collective and speaks on behalf of the ANC. Decisions are arrived at collectively. The leadership is therefore vested in a National Executive Committee (NEC). But interestingly enough, from a biblical point of view leadership is vested in God himself. It is God, through the Holy Spirit, who chooses and empowers a person to lead the people. This is exactly the case with Micah (3:8) and Moses (Exodus 3: 9 - 12). It is in this sense that the following ANC Presidents have been singled out to demonstrate by their behaviour what spirituality can do for the struggle through them. These leadership personalities are:

Dr J.L. Dube (1912 - 1917), S.M. Makgatho (1917 - 1924), Z.R. Mahabane (1924 - 1927), J.T. Gumede (1927 - 1930), Dr P.I. Scme (1930 - 1937), Z.R. Mahabane (1937 - 1940 second term), Dr Z.M. Xuma (1940 - 1949), Dr J.S. Moroka (1949 - 1952), Chief A.J. Luthuli (1952 - 1967), O.R. Tambo (1967 - 1991), N.R. Mandela (1991 - ).

Traits such as self-sacrifice, discipleship, brotherly love, mercy, peace-making, ability to forgive and gratuity and compassion have been considered to be signs of spirituality in human activities. The contributions made by the ANC leadership will therefore be looked at from the perspective of Jesus' text in Luke 4: 18 - 19 which says:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom of the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's-favour."

Chapter Three deals with spirituality and national reconciliation. The first part in this Chapter looks at General Botha's policy of White Conciliation (1910 - 1919). Part two deals with Apartheid regimes and national reconciliation. Part three looks at a new democratic South Africa and National Reconciliation (1994 - 1996). It is in this part where the main focus will be on Mandela's government of National Unity, his call for Truth and Reconciliation Commission, his public gesture for national reconciliation and his Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). This part will then be followed by a conclusion.

# ANALYSIS OF KEY WORDS

## PART II

It is necessary to analyse the key-words in order to understand both their meanings and implications.

### 2.1 LIBERATION

In this work 'liberation' will mean salvation of human beings from sin which is understood to mean the transgression of justice. In fact in:

Liberation approach sin is not considered as an individual, private or merely inferior reality-asserted just enough to necessitate a "Spiritual" redemption which does not challenge the order in which we live. Sin is regarded as a social, historical fact, the absence of brotherhood and love in relationships among human beings ..... (Gutierrez, 1974: 175).

In this work to "liberate" will therefore mean to save, deliver, free, redeem, emancipate the oppressed Black people from the White people's sin, namely apartheid. It is their liberation from sufferings engendered by the apartheid policies. This is so in the sense that:

In practice the content that is given to the word "salvation" by different people depends upon their circumstances and their perceptions. It depends upon what they experience as their need for salvation and what they perceive to be wrong or sinful in their situation. Thus some will feel the need for justice to put right what is wrong in society, and others will want liberation from oppression (Nolan, 1988:108).

From the above to liberate could still mean to rescue, to save someone from troubles in all spheres of human life (cf Psalm 143:9,11). Apartheid, as it is a source of injustice for Black masses, is rightly understood to be heresy.

It is immoral in the sense that:

It claims that what makes a person qualify for privilege and political power is that biological irrelevance, the colour of a person's skin and his ethnic antecedents. Apartheid says those are what makes a person matter (Tutu, 1988:72).

Apartheid was a sin because, among others, it legalised the grossly unfair distribution of land between blacks and whites. It legalised an unequal expenditure on white and black education. In essence apartheid should be seen as a new form of Colonialism. It is against this background that on the question of political rights of black South Africans, Cecil Rhodes could still say:

My idea is that the Natives should be kept in the Native reserves and not mixed with the white people at all ... I prefer to call a spade a spade. Let us boldly say: In the past we have made mistakes about Native Representation. We intend to change all that ... We are going to be Lords of this people and keep them in subject position. They should not have the franchise because we do not want them on an equality with us. We must adopt a system of despotism, such as works in India, in our relation with the barbarians of South Africa (Ndiokwere, 1981:17).

Both colonialism and apartheid are unchristian. The oppressed Africans are struggling to liberate themselves from these evils. Their cry for Liberation should therefore be understood within this context. Their cry is for salvation from White racism despite their own guilt (cf Psalm 142:6; 143:11-12). The Hebrew slaves too had to be saved from the sins of Pharaoh despite their own guilt (Nolan, 1988:108).

For the Blacks, Liberation also means that they must have the franchise in the land of their birth. Above all things in life, Blacks want to share equal political rights with Whites because without those rights, their slavery will be permanent (Mandela, 1965:188).

## 2.2 THE STRUGGLE

The struggle is a process of human resistance against any form of human injustice. The Bible knows only two basic forms of the struggle, namely non-violent resistance and violent resistance. These two forms have subsequently become the most visible and most characteristic manifestation of the struggle. The story about the liberation of the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage gives a clear picture of what the struggle is all about. According to this story the leadership of the struggle is chosen by God himself since the struggle for human liberation comes from Him (cf Exodus 3:7-10). God chose Moses and Aaron to lead the Israelites from Egypt.

The struggle for human liberation progresses via the Cross. One cannot therefore separate human sufferings from the struggle. Suffering is part and parcel of the struggle. Jesus suffered the pains of death not for his own sake but for the salvation of all human beings. Thus redemptive suffering is the suffering of the struggle. In the struggle there is always the risk that one may be detained, banned, interrogated, tortured and killed (cf Luke 22:63-65, John 15:20-21). Detention and banning orders equally have a terrible effect on detainees and fugitives respectively. For instance detained or banned breadwinners will undoubtedly worry about how their families are surviving. It is therefore not just the detainees' life which is disrupted and disorganised but his or her family's as well. Bannings violate human rights.

The first banning orders during the struggle against white oppression were issued in 1951 to make political office bearers of the liberation movement inoperative. The banned persons were not legally permitted to defend themselves against the evidence on which their orders were made. There was no way that they could challenge the orders because there was no hearing and no appeal. The state did all this in the name of Suppression of Communism Act (1950) - renamed the Internal Security Act.

Reporting his experience on torture and interrogation in the hands of the South African police Father Mkhathshwa explains that:

I was left standing on the same spot for at least 30 hours - with blindfold and handcuffs always on. My genitals and buttocks were left exposed for at least 29 hours. A watery substance was smeared on my legs and thighs - this together with the cold air caused much discomfort. A creepy creature or instrument was fed into my backside. From there it would crawl up and down my legs, thighs and invariably ended up biting my genitals. When I cried with pain they would laugh. Twice during the interrogation shots were fired from behind and just above the back of my head.

(Chidester, 1992: 76)

Steve Biko was also tortured and killed in 1977 by the Apartheid Security police. In fact, thousands and thousands of people have also suffered and died in the long struggle for freedom inside and outside South Africa. For example, in his notebook Rich Mkhondo (1993: 50-52), a journalist in South Africa for Reuters, the world's largest news and information service, has two stories which explain how the apartheid security forces silence political activists in the townships:

#### In Sebokeng

In Sebokeng, I watched hundreds of residents gather on the township's main street to march to the nearby Vereeniging town in protest against local councils and high rentals. They never made the 10 kilometer (6 mile) march. Sitting in my car a few metres away from the marchers, I heard no warning. Police opened fire with pistols and shotguns loaded with birdshot and also used teargas. After the volley of shots a burst of laughter came from the heavily armed police ... people fell like flies being sprayed with insecticide. Some were hit in the head and hip. Bodies covered with blood splayed on the road. Afterwards I counted 16 bodies.

#### "Mourning into mourning"

Tears had hardly dried when angry mobs rampaged through Sebokeng revenging another slaughter. Eye-witnesses said that at about 2am. they saw a minibus

drive slowly past a house where a vigil was being held for an activist. The mourners, fearful of an attack, quickly erected barricades in the street. Another witness said he saw the minibus return and stop. Five men, all dressed in white t-shirts, trousers and berets, alighted from the vehicle and advanced on the tent with rifles in their hands. The mourners in the tent, as they sang hymns and prayed, never saw their assailants. The gunmen ran forward and opened fire with AK-47 rifles. Two grenades were lobbed into the tent. At least 37 mourners were killed instantly. Five others died in hospital.

### 2.2.1 Two Basic Forms of the Struggle

#### a) **NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE**

Speaking out against human injustice was the most effective form of non-violent struggle in the Old Testament. It was God who spoke out through the leadership of the struggle against human injustice (cf Exodus 4:10-12, John 15:26-27, I Corinthians 2:13-16).

Prophets were also considered to have been empowered by the Spirit of God to stand up and speak out against the unjust System (cf Micah 3:8-9). The contents of their speeches were coming from God himself (cf Samuel 23:1-2).

Speaking out against human injustice is considered today to be a powerful tool of the struggle. Hence those who speak out against oppression are either detained or assassinated as it also happened to Tshifhiwa Muofhe (A.N.C. Activist) in Venda. Oscar Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, who was also known as the voice of the downtrodden, died too from an assassin's Bullet ... While he was celebrating Mass (Martin-Baro, 1985:1). Winnie Mandela, wife of the internationally renown political prisoner, Nelson Mandela, was also banned and detained many a time for speaking out against the apartheid system. Chris Hani, a member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC and Chief Commander of Umkhonto we Siswe, the military wing of the ANC was assassinated in front of his house in 1993. Martin Luther King (jr) was also assassinated for speaking out against racial oppression in the United States of America. Books, films and newspapers that speak out against the injustice of the apartheid regime were immediately banned.

Although speaking out against the oppressive system was still considered to be a powerful tool of the struggle other tools such as boycotts, stay-aways, protests and strikes were also considered to be non-violent and effective in the struggle for freedom.

## **b) VIOLENT RESISTANCE**

Violent resistance is the second basic form of the struggle. Those who resort to Violent resistance usually do so after non-violent resistance has failed. The story about the liberation of the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage is also very clear on this point. When Moses's negotiation with Pharaoh collapsed he began performing miracles in order to frighten the king but the Pharaoh still refused to release the Israelites (Exodus, 8:10). It was only by the blood of the Egyptian first born sons that the Israelites were saved from the Egyptian oppression (Exodus, 12:29-33).

Violent resistance against oppression is undoubtedly a second popular tool of the struggle. For instance it was the armed struggle that conquered Hitler's German Nazism in the Second World War (1939-1945). It was "Chamurenga" (armed struggle) that liberated Zimbabwe in 1980. The Zimbabwean nation was therefore born from the sacrifice and suffering of thousands of men and women who fought. It was also the armed struggle that liberated Cuba and South West Africa (Namibia).

## **2.3 RECONCILIATION**

Whereas the Old Testament was calling for "an eye for an eye, and tooth for tooth" (Matthew 5:38) the New Testament felt the need for people to repair their differences and live in peace with one another. In first Thessalonians 5:15 Paul emphasises that "... nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always tries to be kind to each other and to everyone else". Reconciliation is a process that dictates to former enemies to put their conflict aside and forgive one another. But it is only fair for forgiveness to involve restitution or reparation. In this way the offended party would feel the need for reconciliation necessary and genuine. Above all reconciliation process should include truth. Former enemies must be prepared to confess evil deeds that they committed against one another. This attempt helps to build

mutual trust which helps former enemies to accept and live with each other.

A story about the Afrikaners and the British trying to make peace with one another after their war in 1902 can help to illustrate my point about reconciliation. There was a war between republicanism and Imperialism. Britain's insatiable desire was to take control of the rich gold fields and other natural resources of the country whereas the Afrikaners would only be satisfied to secure their independence in order to freely appropriate the same resources. It was this sheer greediness which led them to the battlefields which saw the British burning down Boer farms, slaughtering their cattle and taking their women and children to concentration camps where they were left to starve. Afrikaner republics were also destroyed.

After the war the British tried through their indirect rule policy to reconcile themselves to the Afrikaners. They gave pro-British Afrikaner leadership the responsibility to govern the country. Hence General Louis Botha became the first Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa. Through his policy of Conciliation Botha persuaded the Afrikaners to forgive the British and forget all the sufferings inflicted upon them. But some bitter Afrikaners under the leadership of J.B.M. Hertzog would only accept Botha's policy as long as both parties would be treated equally in all spheres of life, without the interference of Britain. But unfortunately Botha would only want to see the prosperity of Afrikaners within the British Empire. It was therefore Botha's pro-British attitude which encouraged Hertzog to form his own party. Hence an attempt to reconcile the two parties namely the Afrikaner and the British collapsed.

## 2.4 THE SPIRITUALITY

### 2.4.1 The Holy Spirit

When one looks at the notion of "Spirit" in both Old Testament and New Testament, the dominant impression that one gains is of 'Spirit' as a source of power. For instance, Samson is said to have been overpowered by the 'Spirit' when he was still very young (Judge 13:25). He was enabled by the Spirit to become an extraordinary person (Judge 14:6, 15: 14-16). God's activities through Samson also give one an impression that even

the political leadership of a nation is directed by the power of God especially in times of the struggle against human injustice (Schweizer, 1978:13). In fact any political leadership whose priority is to defend the rights of the poor and oppressed is said to be under the control of the Holy Spirit (cf Isaiah 11:2-5).

The word-image for the 'spirit' is the "wind" and the Hebrew word used in the Old Testament, ruach, which is developed from the notion of "wind", has come to mean a manifestation of God's activity and presence (cf Psalms 51:11). The New Testament word pneuma stands likewise for the dynamic activity of God at work in the lives of men and women (Brown, 1952: 72). "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:18).

In the account of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, "the apostles heard a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:2).

The manifestation of God's presence as a strong wind blowing indicates that the Holy Spirit cannot be described as a person but as the power of God (cf Genesis 1:2, Luke 24:49). This power could hardly be seen by human eyes. Burge (1987:22) describes it as a mysterious divine power which is embodied in certain outstanding community leaders. It is not something like electric power but a dynamic life-giving power which is able to inspire both believers and non-believers to do God's work (cf Exodus 11:9-10, Ezekiel 2:, Micah 3:8, Nehemiah 9:30). This power of God is poured into a person's conscience by God himself (cf Luke 4:18-19, Ezekiel 2:2). For instance Joseph was said to have the Spirit of God in him (Genesis 41:38). Through the Spirit, God "lives" in the consciences of men and women moving and inspiring them, calling them to action which brings about justice in the world. It is the Spirit of God which gives a person a sense of justice and the courage to speak out against those who perpetuate injustice (Micah 3:8).

When the power of God is upon you, it immediately takes control of your life. It takes control of what you think, say and do (cf I Samuel 10:4-7), Isaiah 11:2, Ezekiel 36:27, Numbers 24:2). It may even use dictatorial powers to achieve its goal. For instance it often sweeps a prophet away against his will (cf I Kings 18:12, 2 Kings 2:16, Ezekiel 3:12-

14). It is through the power of God that you are able to love your neighbours the way you love yourself. Hence the good Samaritan should be seen as an agent of the Spirit (Luke 10:25-37). It is the power of God that prepares a community leader to struggle for the improvement of the living conditions of his community (cf John 15:13). It is the Spirit which enriches human life with traits such as self-denial and brotherly love.

#### 2.4.2 What is Spirituality?

Against the background given, Spirituality should be understood as the actualisation of the Spirit of Jesus in our own times and situations (Sobrino, 1989:x). Spirituality is a shape in which the Holy Spirit has moulded itself into one's life (Mananzan and Park, 1989:77).

The holistic nature of Spirituality has been well explicated by Gustavo Gutierrez who, according to Mananzan and Park (1989:78), points out that "When one is concerned with one's own stomach, it is materialism but when one is concerned with other people's stomachs, it is spirituality". This notion of spirituality is "unconsciously" strongly supported by Bonhoeffer who believed that "when persons become and exist in relation to one another they do so through the power of God, the Holy Spirit makes the other become a Thou for me and I for him" (Day, 1975:13). It is this notion of spirituality which Africans call Ubuntu and "the cardinal belief of Ubuntu is that a man can only be a man through others" (Mbigi and Maree, 1995:2). Ubuntu is an African word describing group solidarity, compassion, respect and human dignity. It is a spirit of caring and sharing.

This notion of spirituality is well expressed in the redemptive suffering of Christ. Christ suffered the pains of death, not for his own personal gains, but for the salvation of all human beings. This notion of spirituality is what Mazamisa (1987: 145) calls "Comradeship to humanity". By the power of the Lord, the good Samaritan expresses in action Ubuntu (unconscious Christianity). It is precisely about a person's willingness, unconsciously or consciously, to give up his life so that others may have it to the full (cf John 10: 10).

# THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ACTION

## PART III

The common base of rationality of the discussion that follows is the activities of Moses and Aaron in Egypt under the control of the power of God. I hold that Moses and Aaron should be seen as the forerunners of those women and men who are strongly committed to the struggle for justice today. Personalities such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Che' Guevara, should also be seen as the 'comrades' of Jesus today. In fact their behaviour exposes the influence of the Christian faith in their lives.

### 3.1 THE ROLE OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE LIFE OF DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

#### 3.1.1 Bonhoeffer's Background and Views About Life

Although his well educated family members were church going people, they would not go to Church regularly due to their perception that "the church was an extension of bourgeois culture, closed to intellectual challenge and incapable of addressing the urgent issues facing society" (De Gruchy, 1987: 2). But one would expect to see them acting as the church's agents of social change and not waiting for others to do it for them. It is within this environment of the church that Bonhoeffer was brought up. Although his decision to pursue theology as his career had nothing to do with the influence of his family members it was a choice that changed his life completely.

At school Bonhoeffer did extremely well until he graduated as a doctor of Theology. His views about life were strongly influenced by the Christian faith. His works, namely Sanctorum Communio: A Dogmatic Inquiry into the Sociology of the Church, London, Collins, 1963, and The Cost of Discipleship, London, SCM, 1959, are some of the books wherein his invaluable views about life are recorded. In Sanctorum Communio he unconsciously articulates the African Christian understanding of Ubuntu. He strongly believes that "man is never alone but always in community. The individual becomes a person through the others. My real relation to the other man is orientated upon my religion to God" (Godsey, 1960: 27-28). It is equally in the spirit of Ubuntu that an individual

should submerge him or herself in communal solidarity. Hence it is through what a person does for the community that he / she is recognised as a human being. Bonhoeffer could therefore say that Christ encounters you in what you do to your friends and enemies. Your attitude towards your friends and enemies reveals the absence or presence of the power of God in your life. For him "Christ reveals himself where man shares his life with another..." (De Gruchy, 1984: 22). Bonhoeffer was strongly convinced that "when persons become and exist in relation to one another they do so through the power of God, the Holy Spirit makes the other become a Thou for me and I for him" (Day, 1975: 13). This point is well supported by what the good Samaritan did for the man who fell into the hands of robbers (Luke 10: 25-37).

Bonhoeffer's other book, 'The Cost of Discipleship', is a masterpiece. The title of the book itself speaks volumes. It actually encompasses what spirituality is all about. Discipleship is costly because it involves redemptive suffering. It is precisely about one's willingness to give up one's life so that others may have it to the full (John 10:10). Bonhoeffer's participation in the Church struggle against Nazism in Germany explicitly demonstrates that he dearly valued human life.

### 3.1.2 Circumstances Responsible for the Rise of Bonhoeffer's Spirituality

How did Bonhoeffer actualize his Christian faith? To answer this question one must first explain the situation in Germany before the outbreak of the Second World War.

When Hitler came to power in Germany the whole country was groaning under the Diktat Treaty of Versailles. Germany was shamefully divided as a punishment for 'causing' the First World War. The German people felt robbed of their human dignity and self-respect. Hence Hitler saw Germany's need to break all the "Shackles" of Versailles and unite all German speaking people.

Although Hitler's drive to restore self-respect of the German nation strained the international situation, it was warmly welcomed by the German nationalists. To achieve her goals Germany needed a German Christian Spirituality that would inspire the Germans to stand together and fight for the unification of all their territories that had been forcefully

taken away by the Allied Powers. German religious nationalists needed the kind of Spirituality that awakened the political conscientiousness of individuals such as Moses and Aaron in Egypt (cf Exodus 2:11-13). This is the kind of spirituality that would sustain the 'soul' of German nationalism. Unfortunately Hitler's political ambition was to rebuild the German nation on the belief of racial superiority. He believed that the Aryan race was the most Superior race in the entire world.

As he had become an autocratic leader he introduced press censorship and prevented freedom of speech. Strikes were banned and all trade unions were abolished. Those who opposed him were immediately arrested and sent to concentration camps for torture and execution. Pastor Martin Niemöller was also arrested and sent to Dachau Concentration Camp for speaking out and warning the people of the excesses of Nazism.

Hitler wanted to have a national German church that would support Nazism. Hence he could not tolerate any opposition from the clergy. But it was not only the clergy that was opposing his notorious government. When members of his own Military Intelligence Service realised that the Nazi activities would ultimately lead to the destruction of the economy and millions of innocent lives by the Second World War, they began plotting to assassinate him. They believed that it was morally good for them to get rid of the Führer. Their conviction was strongly supported by Bonhoeffer who believed that they were actually acting out of what he calls "unconscious Christianity" (De Gruchy, 1987: 269-272). It was therefore his strong Christian faith that inspired him to join the conspiracy against Hitler.

### **3.1.3 Bonhoeffer's Participation in the Struggle Against Nazism**

His life as a disciple is characterised by his selflessness and brotherly love. He actually believed that Christians should actualize their love for one another through self sacrifice and intercessory prayer (Godsey, 1960:43)).

Bonhoeffer was one of those people who were very concerned about the persecution of the Jews by Hitler's totalitarian regime. The Jews were being accused of having contributed to Germany's defeat in the First World War. Hence they were ordered to leave Germany

immediately. Their deportations became Bonhoeffer's great concern. Hence he secretly participated in an attempt to assist them to escape from the Nazis.

His faith was tested again when Hitler ordered pastors to take an oath of allegiance to him. Those pastors who refused to obey his commands were persecuted. Bonhoeffer felt that taking an oath of allegiance to Hitler would be blasphemous (cf Exodus 20:1-6). It is against this background that he immediately called the Church "to be a confessing church and not to succumb to the attacks being made upon it. Christ alone is Lord of the Church" (De Gruchy, 1987:20). He described the confessing Synod's agreement to the Oath taking as a "fearful defeat" (Bethge, 1979:27). Through his commitment to the Church struggle the Pastor's Emergency league was forced to assist ministers affected by the Nazi persecutions.

His active participation in the protest against the Nazi activities demonstrates the seriousness of his concern about the imminent Second World War. He could have feared that Hitler's success in the war would erode the Christian Civilization in the world. He could also have been concerned about innocent lives that would be lost in the war. These could have been the reasons why he never stopped praying for the defeat of Hitler (De Gruchy, 1987:37). Ultimately, he took a strong decision to participate in the conspiracy against him. The conspiracy was unsuccessful and the conspirators were arrested, tortured and killed by the Gestapo (De Gruchy, 1984:28). Thus, Bonhoeffer's death could be considered as the cost of his own discipleship.

## **3.2 THE ROLE OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE LIFE OF ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA**

### **3.2.1 Che Guevara's Background and Views About Life**

In his early life Guevara was baptised and brought up in a religious atmosphere and the impact of the Christian faith upon his upbringing is visibly noticed in his life activities. Guevara's faith is actually gauged in this work by the way he defended God's cause.

Marshall (1987:46) explains that Guevara was born in 1928 into a privileged family of Spanish and Irish descent. They were a Catholic family, but not practicing Catholics (Carlos, 1986: 24). He was a brilliant student who, despite suffering from deadly asthma attacks, quickly graduated as medical doctor. Human life was very invaluable to him. Today Cuban Christians still strongly feel that Guevara was "an image of a new Christ who gave his life to save the oppressed of the earth" (Marshall, 1987:227). His willingness to suffer the pains of the struggle for human liberation is what makes him close to Christ who wills justice. His effort to ameliorate society is an effort that God wants. It is also an effort for which Mandela (1965:189) was also prepared to die in the Black struggle for freedom in South Africa. In fact being prepared to die for the cause of liberation signalled an essentially religious commitment to what the Psychologist Jay Lifton called "revolutionary immortality" (Chidester 1991:112).

### **3.2.2 Circumstances Responsible For the Rise of Guevara's Spirituality**

Injustice is a common factor, in the world Community, which is mainly responsible for the rise of Spirituality of liberation. In his own words Che Guevara describes the horrible conditions which compelled him to participate in the struggle against human injustice.

He wrote:

I came into close contact with the poverty, hunger and disease. I discovered that I was unable to cure sick children through lack of means, and I saw the degradation of the under-nourishment and constant repression. In this way I began to realise that there was another thing which was as important as being a famous researcher or making a great contribution to medical science: and that was to help these people (Roberts, 1953:87).

Che Guevara had a strong sense of compassion which is in line with the Christian teaching: "love your neighbour" (John 13:34-35). In fact he personally believed that the true revolutionary is guided by strong feelings of love since revolutions are made of passions (Matthews, 1975:244).

### 3.2.3 Guevara's Participation in the Struggle for Human Liberation

Che Guevara's discipleship is firmly rooted in his compassion. He was selfless. As he was suffering from a deadly asthma one would have thought he was going to stop participating in the struggle and concentrate on his sickness. Surprisingly enough he did not want his sickness to interfere with his struggle for human justice (Matthews, 1975:244).

In 1965 he left his wife and five young children whom he loved very much to go and fight in the Bolivian struggle for liberation. Indeed his action was in line with the Christian teachings: in Mark 10:29 - 30: "And I tell you that anyone who leaves home and brothers or sisters or mother or fields for me will receive eternal life".

While he was in the thick of the struggle in Bolivia he was killed on the 9th of October 1967. By the orders of the CIA "his hands were cut off to get fingerprints in order to prove the dead rebel was indeed, Ernesto Che Guevara" (Matthews, 1975:275).

Before his death Che Guevara used to teach his children "to always feel deeply any injustice perpetrated against any person in any part of the world..."(Matthews, 1975:272). His point is that an injury to one is an injury to all (cf 1 Corinthians 12:24-26). He urged them not to be indifferent to what happens anywhere in the world for a victory by any Country over imperialism is their victory; just as any country's defeat is also theirs (Guevara, 1967:107). It is against this background that he was regarded as an internationalist. He was the universal Man at heart, not Cuban or Argentine. On racial oppression in South Africa Guevara could boldly say to the UN General Assembly:

Once again we must speak out to put the world on guard against what is happening in South Africa ....The peoples of Africa are compelled to endure the fact that on the African Continent the Superiority of one race over another remains official policy, and that in the name of this racial superiority murder is committed with impunity (Horizon, 1991:43).

It is also said that "Guevara's analysis of the Cuban Revolution was like a Bible to the Leaders of Umkhonto We Sizwe", the military wing of the ANC (Grobler, 1988: 130).

### 3.3 CONCLUSION

There are many ways of helping the needy. There are those who are hungry who need food. The naked ones need to be given clothes. Those who live in shacks need to have decent houses. There are also those who cry for their divine right to live a normal life. Those who oppress them do not want to enjoy justice and peace with them. What all these suffering people need is someone to help them.

One can only qualify to be Christ's disciple if one helps the needy. Spirituality is about one's preparedness and willingness to help others. One must have compassion. Che Guevara and Dietrich Bonhoeffer have shown by their behaviour what it means to be disciples of Jesus. Like him they have shown their greatest love for the oppressed by dying in the struggle to save their lives (cf John 15:12-14).

The following chapter explores the relationship between Spirituality and African nationalism. An attempt has been made to examine the influence of Spirituality on African nationalism in South Africa. Certain African religious nationalists have been singled out to demonstrate by their behaviour what spirituality can do for the Black struggle for freedom in South Africa. My understanding is that the Holy Spirit always works through human life (cf Micah 3:8).

# **SPIRITUALITY AND AFRICAN NATIONALISM**

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **PART I: THE INFLUENCE OF SPIRITUALITY ON AFRICAN NATIONALISM**

Spirituality of African nationalism should be understood as the essence of the relationship between the practice of the Christian faith and Africanism. This relationship should be rightly understood as the marriage between the Christian religion and politics. Chidester (1991:150) calls this marriage "religious nationalism". "Religious nationalism" is however, not something new. Israel's sacred history provides a clear cut example of the marriage of religion and politics. The Israelite's flight from Egypt was religiously inspired, its leaders Moses and Aaron were acting as religious office bearers (Kotze, 1981:177). In the same sense ideals of Christianity have been invoked as the moral ground of Africanism in South Africa. For instance John Dube, the first President of African National Congress (ANC), felt the need in the 1920's to urge the Congress toward Christian civilization. Likewise, Dr A B Xuma, the ANC President in the 1940's felt the urgency of formulating the initial aims of the Congress as an effort to promote the "Ideals of Christianity, human decency and democracy" (Chidester, 1991:117). It is clear from above that 'religious nationalism' has engendered its own political leadership of the Black Struggle for freedom in South Africa. In fact in every national Liberation movement political leadership is necessarily required to channel grievances of the oppressed masses. The political leadership is also responsible for directing the entire liberation movement, setting priorities and evaluating and approving political strategies. It is expected to present itself as a decision - making body. In this way it finds itself in a position of power that enables it to function as true representative of the oppressed masses. Hence its character is very significant. The African National Anthem: 'Nkosi Sikelele' I Afrika explicates well the character of the African struggle and its leadership. It further indicates that the leadership of the struggle has been steering the oppressed Black masses in the direction of accepting God as their Liberator.

It is against this background that one can understand what Chief Albert Luthuli, the 9th President of the ANC, was saying in the 1950's. He said:

For myself, I am in Congress precisely because I am a Christian. My Christian belief about human society must find expression here and now, and Congress is the Spearhead of the struggle. ... My own urge, because I am a Christian, is to get into the thick of the struggle with other Christians, taking my Christianity with me and praying that it may be used to influence for good the character of the resistance (Luthuli, 1962:138).

Nkosi Sikelele' IAfrika invokes the blessing of God on the interests of the African nation and Africa as a whole. It was composed in 1897 by a devout Christian Enoch Mankayi Sontonga. But it was only during the days of the Anglo-Boer war (1899) when it was publicly sung for the first time at the ordination of Rev. M Mboweni, a Methodist Priest. After his death in 1904 African Patriots such as J L Dube (later ANC President), R T Caluza and S E K Mghayi committed themselves to popularizing the song. Consequently it was sung on 8 January 1912 when the ANC adopted it as its national anthem (Meli, 1988:32).

Nkosi Sikelele' IAfrika goes as follows:

#### **NATIONAL ANTHEM/VOLKSLIED**

#### **NKOSI SIKELELE' IAFRIKA**

Nkosi' sikelele' iafrica  
 Maluphakamiso phondo lwayo  
 Yiva nemithandazo yethu  
 Nkosi sikelela, thina lusaphalwayo. (X2)

Yiza moya sikelela nkosi sikelela  
 Yiza moya sikelela nkosi sikelela  
 Yiza moya oyingwela  
 Nkosi sikelela, thina lusaphalwayo

Morena boluka sechaba saHesu  
Ofedise dintwa lematswenycho.(X2)

Osiboluke Osiboluke  
Osiboluke morena siboluke  
Sechaba saHesu  
Sechaba saAfrika.(X2)

Lord bless Africa  
May her horn rise like a ship's mast  
So also hear our prayers  
Lord Bless us  
We, the families of Africa.

Come Spirit.....bless us Lord, bless us  
Come Spirit.....bless us Lord, bless us  
Come Holy Spirit  
And bless our families

Lord take care of our nation  
Stop the struggle and frustrations  
Save it, save it  
Save it, save it  
Our nation Our Africa  
Save it God  
Save it Save our Nation, Save it  
Our nation  
Our Africa.

In the entire national anthem God is recognised as the only source of power that can save individuals and nation. The Power of the Spirit is therefore strongly emphasised:

Yiza moya Sikelela Nkosi Sikelela  
 ...Ofedise dintwa Lemantswenyeho

The above stanza is all about a plea of the oppressed African masses to the Holy Spirit to stop their sufferings. 'Moya' which literally means 'wind' is understood as the divine power which will, as it did in the struggle of the Israelites in Egypt, sustain the process of the struggle for freedom. Although it operates through human life, its place of abode is in Heaven. It can only be sent from Heaven to the world by God. In the account of its descent at Pentecost, "the Apostles heard a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:2: cf Matthew 12:18).

Nkosi Sikelele' IAfrika is a good explanation of the marriage between politics and religion. It should be rightly understood as a national prayer for the national deliverance from racial oppression. It is a prayer for protection and help. It is a prayer of the oppressed nation which needs a defender, a saviour (cf Psalm 57:3). The Spirit of Nkosi Sikelele' IAfrika shows trust and hope of the oppressed African masses in God who wills justice, who protects and saves. This encounter between the oppressed African masses and God in the struggle is what Shorter (1978:7) calls 'African Christian Spirituality' which is also understood as a Spirituality of African nationalism or Ubuntu. It is a dynamic force which operates in the struggle through human life. It is revolutionary in the sense that it revolts against what Kayoya (1978:51) calls "Shallow religiosity" which is understood to be a superficial religious faith in the sense that it is strongly concerned with the salvation of the soul and not the body.

The ties between the Christian faith and politics are even more stronger at nationalistic gatherings where prayers are offered and songs are sung. For instance at the opening of the meeting which was called for the establishment of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), which later became known as the African National Congress (ANC) Tiyo Soga's Song:

Lizalise Dinga Dingalako  
 Tixo we nyaniso.

"Fulfil thy promise  
God of Truth"

was sung (Walshe, 1987:35).

The concern of the oppressed African masses about God's delay in liberating them from the White domination is well expressed in their freedom songs which also disclose the degree of their frustrations. A good example is a song called SENZENINA which goes as follows:

Senzenina? (X8)  
Wat het ons gedoen? (X8)  
Sonosethu bubumnyama? (X8)  
Our only sin is the colour of our skin (X8)

This song explicitly expresses the despair of the oppressed African masses who tirelessly request to know from God why the colour of their skin has become the source of their unending sufferings. Like Job (3:1) they seem to curse the day on which they had been born. It is against this background that one can understand why Luthuli (1962:138) felt that "to remain neutral in a situation where laws of the land virtually criticised God for having created men of colour was the sort of thing he could not as a Christian and patriot tolerate".

In a moving prayer delivered at the opening of the Annual Conference of the ANC Youth League in 1940 Rev I C Duma felt the need to pray:

1. For the guidance of the Holy Spirit:-

Our heavenly Father,.... pour into our hearts Thine Holy Spirit, so that by Him we may be wisely guided in our deliberations, and through Him we may be bound together in fellowship and brotherly love.

2. For the leaders of African thought:-

Eternal father..... endue the leaders of African thought and opinion with the power of the Holy Spirit, so that they may boldly interpret Thy will for this land, and that they may so direct the deliberations of these sessions as to give wise judgements; but above all, that in them, Christ may be manifested.

3. For our Land:-

Father of mankind, help us to make the supreme Sacrifices towards the redemption of our fair land.

4. For the African race as a whole:-

...We ask Thee to so guide us that we may be of service to the African race, that the decisions we may arrive at here, may be for the good of the race....(Karis, 1973:336).

Duma's prayer further expresses the strong ties between spirituality and African nationalism. For instance the first petition asks for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This request clearly expresses trust and confidence of the Black struggle in the Holy Spirit. The second petition requests the Holy Spirit to give the leadership of the struggle power and vision. This is significant since without the power of God the leadership of the struggle may not understand fundamental goal of the struggle.

The third petition expresses the fact that without the help of the power of God the leadership of the struggle will lack sense of compassion. Compassion is actually the root of strong leadership of "our Land". Redemption as the goal of the struggle is compatible with such words as Liberation, Salvation and Freedom. These words are considered to be synonymous in this study. They are basically religious in the sense that they have something to do with God who saves individuals and nations. African nationalism is also basically associated with the aforementioned words since it is in essence about the national struggle for freedom in South Africa. Lembede is therefore right to argue that one of the cardinal principles on which Africanism is based is national freedom as the divine destiny of the African people (Leatt et al,1986:94). Redemption comes from God. The philosophy of African nationalism is therefore basically rooted in the premise that the land belongs to God.

Hence African nationalists could declare in the ANC "Bill of Rights" 1923 that "all Africans have as the sons of this soil the God-given right to unrestricted ownership of land in this, the land of their birth" (Leatt et al, 1986:91).

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## **PART II THE PROCESS OF THE ANC STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The process of the struggle is divided and explored here according to the life activities of the leadership of the ANC.

### **2.1 THE STRUGGLE AND ITS LEADERSHIP**

The struggle can only degenerate in the absence of its leadership which in turn will also degenerate without the power of God. The leadership of the struggle is chosen and directed by God. When Moses and Aaron were chosen to lead the struggle of the Israelites against the Egyptians God said:

I have seen how cruelly my people are being treated in Egypt; I have heard them cry out to be rescued from their slave drivers. I know all about their sufferings, and so I have come down to rescue them from the Egyptians.... Now I am sending you to the king of Egypt so that you can lead my people out of his country (Exodus 3:7-10).

Moses and Aaron as the chosen leadership of the Hebrews were told not to worry about their incapacities. God would empower them to lead the struggle.

The power of the people that is manifested in the struggle is indeed the power of God. There are individuals who sometimes misuse this power and imitate their oppressors but whenever this happens we should see it as a betrayal of the spirit of the struggle. People's power like the power of God is invincible. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the power of people who are willing to suffer and die for the liberation of others. It is therefore correct to say that the power of the leadership of the struggle is actually the power of God. This power is explicitly perceptible when the leadership is willing to suffer and die for the liberation of others. It is against this background that one can appreciate an African Christian understanding of spirituality over against a Western Christian definition. As Bonhoeffer says "when persons become and exist in relation to one another they do so through the power of God, the Holy Spirit makes the other become a Thou for me and I for

him” (Day, 1975 : 13). The power of God enables one to be of Service to other people. It was the power of God that enabled David to triumph over Goliath. It was the power of God that triumphed over Pharaohs riders to save the Hebrews (Nolan, 1988 : 111). It is therefore noticeable whether the leadership of the struggle has faith in God or not because; faith is not primarily a way of thinking, it is a way of living. We talk about the practice of our Faith, but in every important sense this practice is our Faith. It implies certain convictions or beliefs. What people really believe cannot be ascertained, with any degree of certainty, by listening to what they profess to believe. You can see without doubt what they really believe by observing what they do in practice. You judge a tree by its fruit (Nolan, 1988 : 177).

## 2.2 CIRCUMSTANCES RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RISE OF SPIRITUALITY OF THE ANC STRUGGLE

The Black struggle against White domination in South Africa came into being as a result of the sufferings inflicted on the African Masses by the white Colonialists.

For instance the oppressed African masses suffered when they were dispossessed of their most fertile land by the successive white regimes. This land robbery was one of the sources of much sufferings of the Africans since they were dependent on land for their living. It is against this background that a protest song Thina Sizwe was often heard sung at protest meetings. It goes as follows:

Thina Sizwe

Thina Sizwe

Thina sizwe esimnyama

Sikhalala

Sikhalala izwe Lethu

Elathathwa

Elathathwa ngamabhulu

Sithi

Mabawuyeka

Mabawuyek' Umhlaba Wethu

Abantwana  
 Abantwana bc-Afrika  
 Bakhalela  
 Bakhalela izwe labo  
 Elathathwa Elathathwa  
 Ngamabhulu  
 Mabawuyeke  
 Mabawuyeke Umhlaba Wethu

Thina Sizwe

We the nation  
 We the Black nation  
 We are crying for our Land which was taken from us by the Boers.  
 We say they must bring it back.  
 They must bring back our land.

The children  
 The children of Africa aare  
 Crying for their land which  
 Was taken by the Boers.  
 They must bring it, they must bring  
 Back our land.

Another source of their sufferings has been the denial of their citizenship in the land of their birth. Hence the Black struggle against white domination was intensified as early as the 19th century. Their fierce wars against the Voortrekkers at Vegkop (1836) and at Ncome River (Blood River) (1838) were for the repossession of their land. The War of the Axe (1846) between the Xhosas and the British was another struggle over land. In the midst of these struggles the Whites also fought among themselves for land (i.e. the Anglo -Boer war 1880 and also 1899-1902).

In order to succeed in the struggle the oppressed African masses realised that speaking with many voices would not help them. Hence they thought of establishing a strong Liberation movement which would act as their mouthpiece. The Formation of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) in 1912 (which later in 1923 became known as the ANC) was therefore an act of national salvation, a continuation, under new historical conditions of the anti-colonial struggle of the Africans which began with Colonialism itself (Meli, 1988:40).

The ANC leadership's drive to restore self-respect and human dignity and freedom of the oppressed African masses should therefore be seen as the work of the power of God. This power of God is the same kind of Spirituality that awakened the political consciousness of individuals such as Moses and Aaron in Egypt (cf Exodus 2:11-13), Dr Martin Luther King Junior in the USA, Ernesto Che Guevara in Cuba, Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Germany, Dr Nyerere in Tanzania, Camillo Torres in Columbia, etc, etc.

## **2.3 THE ROLE OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE LIFE ACTIVITIES OF THE ANC LEADERSHIP 1912 - 1996**

This part of the work explores the political activities of the leadership of Dr J L Dube (1912 - 1917), S M Makgatho (1917 - 1924), ZR Mahabane (1924 - 1927), J T Gumede (1927 - 1930), Dr P I Seme (1930 - 1937), Z R Mahabane (1937 - 1940), Dr A M Xuma (1940 - 1949), Dr J S Moroka (1949 - 1952), Chief A J Luthuli (1952 - 1967), O R Tambo (1967 - 1991) and R N Mandela (1991 - ).

### **2.3.1 Background Of the ANC Leadership**

The background of the ANC leadership is strongly nourished with the Christian faith. This is so because most of African Nationalist leaders were educated and nurtured by mission schools. In fact "virtually every significant black political leader in Africa South of the Sahara was educated in Christian or mission schools partly because such schools were the only schools in those regions until about 1950-1960 (Kotze, 1981:76-77). In mission schools pupils were taught among other things Christian virtues, such as Universal brotherhood of man (humanity to mankind), Justice and Love. These Christian virtues were

basically stimuli in the formation of the political views of the ANC leadership. However, whether those schools were the only schools or not the fact of the matter is that those who were in those schools had a choice to accept or reject the Christian virtues. It is actually the Christian faith (spirituality) that one cannot have the freedom to choose since it is a dynamic power that works according to the Will of God. Ultimately one has no choice but to do God's will. For instance during Old Testament times prophets were often commanded to do God's will even if it was against their will (cf 2 Kings 2:16, 1 Kings 18:12, Ezekiel 3:12-24).

### 2.3.2 The ANC Presidents

#### i) Dr J L DUBE (1912 - 1917)

Rev J.L. Dube, Minister of the Congregational Church, served as the first President of the ANC from 1912 until 1917. He was a profoundly religious man who strongly supported non-violent means as a tool to fight against the oppression of the Africans.

In his attempt to speak out against the evils of the oppressive white government, he founded and edited a newspaper called *Ilanga Lase Natal* in 1903. The newspaper was used as the voice of the oppressed to express their political aspirations and grievances. Dube also made it his duty to alert the oppressed of the danger of the White Union of South Africa in a series of long editorials in Zulu and English (Odendaal, 1984:119). For its role in awakening the political consciousness of the oppressed Africans, *Ilanga Lase Natal* was branded as dangerous, libellous, seditious and treasonable by the pro-government newspaper the *Natal Witness*. Consequently Rev. Dube was summoned and severely reprimanded by the Governor, Sir Henry McCallum (Odendaal, 1984:70). However this threat did not intimidate *Ilanga* which continued boldly to lead in opposing the draft of South African Act (Odendaal, 1984:167). Rev Dube continued boldly to speak out against the repressive laws such as the Native Land Act of 1913 which was introduced to strip the oppressed of their right to own or lease land in "White" areas. This Land Act also saw the eviction of African families from "White" farms.

The ANC's reaction to the eviction of the oppressed African families was moderate. A petition was sent to the Prime Minister, General Louis Botha, protesting against the Native Land Act but again it was not successful. Dube resigned in 1917 and was replaced by Mr S M Makgatho.

ii) S M MAKGATHO (1917-1924)

Like so many of his contemporaries Makgatho was also a committed Christian. His activities in the struggle explicitly expressed his views about the relevance of the Christian faith to socio-economic and political issues. He was a Minister in the Wesleyan Methodist Church (Walshe, 1987:227).

His participation in the struggle did not actually begin in 1917 when he became the ANC President. He participated in the founding of the ANC in 1912. He was also the main force behind the amalgamation of the three Transvaal organisations namely Transvaal Basuto Committee under W. Letselaba, Transvaal Native Congress under Kaiyana and Transvaal Native Organisation led by Makgatho himself to form the Transvaal Congress and affiliate to the National Congress in 1912. He served the struggle as president of the Transvaal Congress from 1912 until 1933. He spoke out strongly against racial oppression and, his political views put him squarely in the moderate camp of the A.N.C. (Walshe, 1987 : 227-228). As President-General of the Congress he served the struggle from 1917 until 1924. He was succeeded by Rev. Z.R. Mahabane.

iii) Rev Z R MAHABANE (1924-1927)

Like his predecessors Mahabane was a committed Christian who continued to live and think in committed Christian terms. He was a methodist minister (Karis, 1973: 82) who never saw any wrong in mixing Christianity with politics.

By 1919 he was deeply involved in the struggle as the President of the Cape Province branch of the Congress. His Christian faith was strong enough to mould and shape his political views. He rightly saw the solution to racial segregation as dependent largely on the evangelism of both Blacks and Whites. He strongly believed that the Holy spirit would

lead men and women to the truth of the common brotherhood of humankind irrespective of race, colour or creed (Walshe, 1987:159). His non-racial beliefs brought him to a head-on collision with General J B M Hertzog, the third Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, who fanatically believed in a "policy of complete territorial, economic and political segregation between Whites and Africans" (Grobbler, 1988:60). Consequently all his efforts to bring about a non-racial society in South Africa were deliberately ignored. Mahabane's first term as the ANC President General expired in 1927 when Josiah T Gumede was elected to succeed him (Grobbler, 1988:61).

#### iv) J T GUMEDE (1927-1930)

Before being elected as President of the National Congress Josiah Gumede was President of the Natal Congress. The Communist Party of South Africa had just been formed in 1921 and Garvey's ideas had also begun circulating in South Africa. Garveyism became a radical African nationalism which preached the slogan : Africa for the Africans; For African nationalists this meant the demand for African independence from Colonial rule (Walshe, 1987:168). Communism and Garveyism remained influential amongst the supporters and members of the ANC so much that the Congress was seen divided into two Camps of radicals (supporters of communism) and moderates (supporters of Christianity). The moderate group was a small but influential group of political leaders which continued to live and think in committed Christian terms, looking upon their faith as a social cohesive which transcended tribalism and offered an ultimate goal of inter-racial harmony based on the brotherhood of man" (Walshe, 1987:158). Hence the conservative congressmen resisted the penetration of Communist influence in the liberation movement. Whereas the moderate camp of the Congress supported the evangelisation of both Europeans and Africans to bring about racial harmony, the Christian message had the power to arouse a more widespread claim to non-racial social justice even amongst those who were not necessarily regular church goers. "The most common form of protest consequently remained a moral assertion of human dignity with its roots in the Christian ethic" (Walshe, 1987:159). In committed Christian terms they attacked racial policies pursued by General Barry Hertzog's government.

Moscow preferred Communists in South Africa to work through an African front organisation such as the ANC. Communists sought to turn the Congress struggle into a non-racial class struggle against Capitalism and imperialism. They saw the Congress' call for 'Africa for Africans' as dangerous racialism. While he was on tour in Russia Gumede was exposed to life without racial discrimination. Hence he embraced the Communist influence with ease. He was then prepared to "accept the Communist Party as intimate ally in the struggles of Congress" (Walshe, 1987:174). On his arrival from Russia Gumede's radical line clearly convinced the ANC national executive that he was under the influence of Communism. The Council of Chiefs, supported by Seme, immediately distanced itself from him. Afraid of being sidelined Gumede immediately became calm and moderate and was lucky to be elected President General after Mahabane's term expired. Inevitably Gumede's leadership led the Congress to a head-on collision with communism. The League of African Rights with Gumede as its President annoyed the ANC by claiming to be the voice of the oppressed (Walshe, 1987:178). The moderates protested that no other organisation except the Congress alone should be the central coordinating body for national expression. They further argued that "freedom" which meant equality of opportunity and not African domination as the predominant political power in a Native republic, was to be achieved by consultation and the growth of a more enlightened public opinion rather than by African political assertion and mass action" (Walshe, 1987:178). For its moderate views the Congress was accused by the Communist Party of being doped by 'Skokiaan-branded religion'. Ultimately when Gumede was defeated in the 1929 Congress election the Communist Party, saw his defeat as the 'victory for Government Agents, Priests and Chamber of Mines'. "Pixley Seme's election in Gumede's place heralded a reunion to caution in the African Congress" (Davenport, 1987:302).

v) DR P I SEME (1930-1937)

Although Dr Pixley ka Izaka Seme only became a President General of the Congress in 1930 he was actively involved in the struggle as early as 1911 when he was the initiator and convener of the Conference that formed the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) on the 8-01-1912. He believed that Christian religion should play a leading role in the struggle. Hence he strongly supported peaceful protests and passive actions as means of fight against white domination. He exhorted the oppressed to pursue modest

aspirations. But his mistake was that he was unable to resuscitate life into the degenerating Congress. Hence he was accused of "culpable inertia", his crime being that he had failed for two years to convene the annual general congress of the Organisation" (Grobbler, 1989:70).

vi) Rev Z.R.MAHABANE (1937 - 1940 SECOND TERM)

When the Second World War broke out in 1939 the Afrikaners and the British still expected the Africans to assist them but the ANC refused to encourage the Africans to participate in the war as long as they were still denied "full democratic rights and citizenship rights" (Karis, 1973: 84). Mahabane was greatly assisted by Rev. James Calata the National Secretary General. As one of the adherents of racial reconciliation Calata began to wonder whether white pastors were preaching the same gospel about brotherly love, compassion and mercy as he was doing to his own people. Mahabane too was deeply "concerned about the lack of Christian example in the personal lives of Europeans" (Walshe, 1987: 162). The resistance of the whites to make peace with the Africans clearly indicated that whites were prepared to attend a church service only if the minister would preach about salvation of individual souls.

Mahabane's great task in his second term of office was to revive the degenerating spirit of the ANC. He spoke strongly against Hertzog's colour bar policy which was making African's living conditions very unbearable. He warned the government that there would be no peace and prosperity in the country as long as Africans had no say in the running of the country.

As a moderate he was not popular amongst communists who were in favour of protest activities such as mass actions and strikes. He put much of his faith on deputations which were ignored by the government. So his re-election as President still did not help to rebuild the organisation's fighting spirit. He was succeeded by Dr Xuma in 1940.

vii) DR A B XUMA (1940-1949)

His term was crucial since it lasted through much of the World War II and into the post-war period. By that time Smuts government was less concerned with the grievances of the Congress. Its attention was focused on the war. Xuma found the Congress degenerating. The younger men assured him of their support in order to rebuild the Congress and consequently the ANC Youth League was formed. Xuma's leadership was seen as a solution to the Congresses' problems. Luthuli (1962, :88-89) reports that :

In the Xuma era (1940-1949) Congress gradually began to take on a new character. It began to formulate its aims and policy for more clearly than hitherto. Inspired by the Atlantic Charter, and by a war for human freedom, it drew up a precise document called "Africa Claims". The Congress Youth League injected a new determination and vitality into the organisation. A new constitution was devised, one far more appropriate to the efficient working of a liberatory organisation. The machinery was overhauled and altered in ways which turned a rather vague and shapeless body into something whose working its members could grasp, and a drive was launched to establish branches throughout the Country and it must be said that Dr Xuma had much to do with this improvement.

Xuma was determined to streamline the entire organisation of the ANC. It was necessary for him "to centralise the authority of the organisation in a five members executive Committee" (Maylam, 1986:183). He also fostered links between the Congress and other opposition movements. "Xuma was both an Africanist, calling for African unity and self reliance, and a multiracialist, welcoming cooperation from whites of goodwill..." (Maylam, 1986:183). After aligning the Congress to an antipass campaign that had been initiated by the Communist Party, he aligned himself with G.M. Naicker and Yusuf Dadoo, two leaders in the South African Indian Congress to sign a 'Joint Declaration of Cooperation' (Maylam, 1986:184). The Xuma era also saw the formation of the ANC women's league in 1948. In 1949 the Congress called for non-cooperation with the institutions of the regime and also for strikes, boycotts and civil disobedience (Motlhabi, 1986:26-27). Xuma made constant use of an appeal to both democracy and Christianity, being at pains to point out that the congress was not anti white but working for the good of South Africa and to

'promote the ideals of Christianity, human decency and democracy' (Walshe, 1987:341).

viii) DR J S MOROKA (1949-1952)

The confrontation between Xuma and the Youth Leaguers was over the Programme of Action initiated by the Youth League after realising that the struggle through petitions and deportations was fruitless. The Youth League sought to organise black resistance through a Programme of Action which demanded "the right of Africans to self-determination; it urged the use of boycotts, strikes, civil disobedience and non-cooperation as the weapons of the future (Davenport, 1987: 367).

Xuma's strategy was that increased membership and further improvement in branch and provincial organisation should precede the militant call for mass action and passive resistance. The Youth Leaguers argued that it was not premature for the Congress to establish a timetable and a detailed programme of action which would also generate mass support in the very process of launching mass protests and passive resistance.

Disappointed by Xuma's persistent refusal of accepting the Programme of Action the Youth Leaguers persuaded Dr Moroka to stand for presidential election. Dr Moroka's willingness to implement the entire Programme of Action delighted the voters who elected him in place of Dr Xuma as president general in December 1949. The Programme of Action was immediately endorsed by the Congress before the end of the Conference.

"As a militant group within Congress and scornful of past moderation, members of the Youth League were far less inclined than their elders to argue from an assumption of Christian morality. Several leading personalities nevertheless retained their Christian faith as a source of continued respect for the human rights of all individuals and as quite compatible with their form of nationalism. This respect for religion was also encouraged by the League's initial and deep distrust of communism" (Walshe, 1987: 342)

Congress was more than fortunate in the quality of the men who were the moving spirits in the Youth League led by Anton Muziwakhe Lembede. Lembede was a practising Roman Catholic who participated regularly at mass and was widely recognised as a committed

Christian. (Walshe, 1987: 340). With him was a group of men such as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Yengwa. Mda, Dr Conco and Oliver Tambo. The call for a Programme of Action was made by this group of men and although they do not appear to have argued explicitly from their Christianity to a radical form of society they retained a deep respect for the dignity and individual rights for all human beings. Oliver Tambo was an Anglican whereas Mandela, the Secretary of the League was a Methodist. Mda was a practising Roman Catholic. Robert Sobukwe was also a devout Christian.

The Programme of Action reflected a fundamental change of policy and method of the Congress. It culminated in the Defiance Campaign of all discriminatory laws in 1952. Thousands of people were arrested and imprisoned. But the Campaign was a great success in the sense that it focused world attention on the volatile situation in South Africa. And for the first time the question of race conflict in South Africa became one of the issues discussed at the United Nations General Assembly (Grobler, 1988: 101). In 1952 Dr Moroka was succeeded by Chief Albert Luthuli who was also a committed Christian.

#### ix) CHIEF A LUTHULI (1952-1967)

Spirituality continued to be a formative influence in arousing Luthuli's political consciousness. It was the Christian faith that motivated him to get involved in the struggle. He declared that:

For myself, I am in Congress precisely because I am a Christian. My Christian belief about human society must find expression here and now, and Congress is the spearhead of the real struggle .... My own urge, because I am a Christian, is to get into the thick of the struggle with other Christians, taking my Christianity with me and praying that it may be used to influence for good the character of the resistance (Luthuli, 1962:138)

During his term the influence of his Christian faith continued to be felt in the ANC's support for peaceful protests against the apartheid regime. He was imprisoned and banned several times for his participation in the struggle. His term saw the adoption of the Freedom Charter which explicitly expresses the true Christian character of the struggle of

South Africa.

His support for non-violent resistance against apartheid brought an international recognition and honour to the struggle when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1961.

However, he also suffered much pains when his close comrades, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Dennis Goldberg, Raymond Mhlaba, Elias Mlangeni were all sentenced to life imprisonment. Being a Christian himself he however knew that: The Road to freedom is via the cross. It is inevitable that in working for freedom some individuals must take the lead and suffer (Luthuli, 1962: 211). He died in 1967 and was succeeded by his deputy-president, Oliver Reginald Tambo who among his friends was known as "The Christian".

x) O R TAMBO (1967-1991)

Like his predecessors Tambo was a product of the Christian church. It was the Anglican Church which took full responsibility for paying for his schooling since his parents were very poor. Because of his commitment to the Christian religion he was known among his friends as "The Christian". In fact, he had earlier intended to become an Anglican priest and in 1956 Bishop Ambrose Reeves had accepted him as one of the candidates for ordination but due to high treason trial he abandoned the hope (Benson, 1986: 74). High treason carried life or death sentence.

He strongly believed that people should learn to help one another. Hence, altruism became the most important Christian teaching in his life. It was basically the spirit of Ubuntu which enriches human life with traits such as self-denial, brotherly love and compassion which motivated and inspired him to participate in the struggle. He declared:

..... where men cannot help themselves, they must be helped by others who are able. I want to help lead the struggle for African Liberation ... (Holland, 1989:59).

Like his predecessors Tambo was altruistic. Helping others was the main mission of his life. Although leading the struggle involves a lot of self-sacrifices he was determined to share the sufferings with the oppressed. In the struggle a risk is always there that a participant may be imprisoned, tortured and executed. Tambo did not only want to participate but to actually lead the struggle itself.

His leadership in the struggle began as early as 1940's when he cofounded the ANC Youth League. At the age of 32 he became a member of the National Executive, a decision making body, of the ANC.

He was banned, in the name of Suppression of Communism Act, from attending all gatherings for two years. His movements were also restricted to the magisterial districts of Benoni and Johannesburg for the same period. All this was done to sabotage his political activities.

In 1956, together with Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela and others, he was charged with high treason which carried death sentence. But later in August 1958 the charges against Tambo, Luthuli and 59 others were withdrawn.

He held his position as the Secretary-General until 1958 when he was elected Deputy President General (Reddy, 1992: 12).

It became impossible for him to entertain the idea of becoming a Priest because in 1960 he was ordered to leave the country in order to mobilise international support and action since political activities of the ANC were heavily restricted. Within a short space of time he managed to organise a secret conference of leaders of the ANC and its allies in Bechuanaland to discuss the direction and strategy of the struggle. It was also resolved to heed Mandela's call for the intensification of the armed struggle.

While he was in exile he became the main source of information about the oppression of the oppressed in South Africa. In essence he was an ambassador of the struggle. In 1967 Chief Luthuli was mysteriously killed by a train and Tambo replaced him as an Acting

President until 1977 when he assumed the full title of President.

Tambo continued to call for economic sanctions against South Africa. He was also responsible for the training and well-being of the ANC soldiers to such an extent that a revolutionary song about him was composed:

Tambo Yena, Ubaba Wethu,  
Aayii Aayii!  
(This Tambo is our father)

In the absence of the ANC leadership that was serving life imprisonment on Robben Island everybody in exile looked to him for both material and moral support. Tambo never failed to do his duties until he suffered a stroke himself which seriously damaged his speech and left him partly paralysed. He was then succeeded by his close friend and comrade Nelson Mandela who was only released from prison in 1990.

xi) N R MANDELA (1991 - )

"Nelson Mandela, Akunaye  
ofane naye" they chant  
"Nelson Mandela, there  
is no other like you"

This is a freedom song composed after a song about Jesus Christ that goes as follows:

"Jesus Christ, Akunaye ofane  
naye". "Jesus Christ, there  
is no other like you"

Mandela's lack of racial bitterness after spending 27 years in prison astonished both whites and blacks. In religious circles people saw his self denial image as that of Jesus Christ. In fact Jesus' life and deeds for humankind have had a strong influence on the character of the practice of the ANC struggle for freedom in South Africa. One has to look at what the

ANC leadership has said and done for the struggle in order to see spirituality in action. The character of the ANC Leadership had shown that it was, in a way, anointed to set the oppressed people of South Africa free (cf. Luke 4: 16-21).

In Nelson Mandela I see the culmination of the work of the spirit in the struggle of South Africa. This is so because he has been acting like an engineer of the struggle ever since he got involved while he was only 26 years old. His friend Oliver Tambo was only 27 years old when he got involved in the struggle. It is amazing because Jesus too began his work while he was about 30 years old (Luke 3:23). For one, therefore, to perfectly understand Mandela's crucial leadership of the struggle one must understand the mission and the character of the Lord's Servant according to Isaiah:

Then I heard the Lord say, "Whom shall I send?

Who will be our messenger?" I answered "I will go! Send Me!" (Is 6:8)

The Lord says, "Here is my servant, whom I strengthen - the One I have chosen, with whom I am pleased. I have filled him with my spirit, and he will bring justice to every nation. (Is 42:1)

He will not lose hope or courage

(Is 42:4)

I have called you and given you powers to see that justice is done on earth.

Through you I will make a covenant with all peoples;

(Is 42:6)

The powers behind Mandela's determination and political will to lead the struggle could be identified as early as 1940's when he got expelled from the University of Fort Hare for his political activities.

From then on until a non-racial democratic South Africa was born in April 1994 Mandela's priority of his entire life has been his dedication to the cause of the oppressed. He never expected that anyone should do for him what he himself could do for the struggle. He was

personally involved. He used to appear first whenever strategic planning was required by the struggle. He did that because he felt he should be an example to his people. As a leader of the struggle he had to give as practical a demonstration of his convictions and willingness to live up to the demands of the cause as he expected of his people.

He was a key figure in thinking, planning and devising new tactics and formulating new strategies of the struggle. After analysing and identifying the weakness of the moderate position of the ANC he co-founded in 1944 the ANC Youth League whose main aim was to give the struggle a new militant direction. From then on the Youth League became a "think tank" of the ANC.

Mandela participated in the drawing up of a Programme of Action of the ANC in 1949. The Programme of Action was significant for guiding the struggle. As a National Secretary of the Youth League Mandela was responsible for the organisation of the political activities. And because of his outstanding leadership qualities he was elected National President of the Youth League in 1950. The government tried to sabotage his work by serving him with a banning order prohibiting him from attending gatherings and from leaving the Johannesburg Magisterial district. From then on the banning orders were renewed time after time for almost a decade.

In 1952 Chief Luthuli was elected National President of the ANC and Mandela was elected as his deputy President. Here was a strong combination of characters strongly influenced by the Christian faith. Hence they were both deeply moved by the Indian Community's passive resistance against the apartheid laws.

Mandela initiated a Defiance Campaign and was appointed National Volunteer in Chief. His duty was to persuade volunteers to break apartheid laws.

His willingness to volunteer to work as God's servant is in the spirit of Isaiah 6:8:

Then I heard the Lord say,  
 "Whom shall I send? Who  
 will be our messenger?"  
 I answered "I will go!  
 Send Me!"

As a key figure in thinking, planning and devising new tactics Mandela drafted the "M" plan. "a simple common sense plan for organisation on a street basis, so that Congress Volunteers would be in daily touch with the people, alert to their needs and able to mobilise them" (Reddy, 1987: 40).

As a servant of God he was indeed everywhere where the struggle required him to be. For example in December 1956 he was among 156 comrades who were arrested and charged with high treason which carried death sentence.

But the Lord says:

"Here is my servant, whom  
 I strengthen - the one I  
 have chosen, with whom I am  
 pleased. I have filled him  
 with my spirit, and he will  
 bring justice to every nation."  
 (Is. 42:1)

Mandela found himself playing a leading role in the Treason Trial. Together with his comrade Duma Nokwe, he successfully conducted the defence and four years later the accused were found not guilty.

On 21st March 1960 the apartheid security forces massacred 69 Africans who were peacefully protesting in a National Anti-Pass Campaign. The ANC reacted by calling a national strike and the mass burning of passes.

The government responded to the national strikes by declaring a State of Emergency and banning both the ANC and the PAC. "After discussions in the outlawed ANC, a small group under the leadership of Nelson Mandela was given the task of forming Umkhonto We Sizwe (MK) (Spear of the Nation), a multiracial military wing of the ANC (Benson, 1986: 106).

Mandela became MK's first Commander-in-Chief and was the first person to undergo guerilla training in Algeria in 1962. As it was reported earlier on Mandela was always prepared to be first in all areas of the struggle. He explained that the ANC was forced by the apartheid violence to take up violent resistance against the government. He said:

"The time comes in the life of any nation, when there remains only two choices - submit or fight. That time has now come in South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all means within our power in defence of our people, our future and our freedom" (Reddy, 1987: 19).

In Christian terms Mandela (1994 : 508-509) said: "he was a Christian and had always been a Christian. Even Christ, when he was left with no alternative, used force to expel the moneylenders from the temple. He was not a man of violence, but had no choice but to use force against evil".

Mandela further explained that Umkhonto's violent resistance was not about killing people but it was directed at the government buildings.

His decision to take up violent resistance was actually no different from Bonhoeffer's decision to fight Nazism in Germany.

As the ANC was banned, he continued to organise the struggle while he was underground:

In May 1961 the African people called a general strike to oppose the declaration of South Africa as a Republic. The strike was called in the name of Nelson Mandela. Mandela left his home, his office, his wife and children to live the life of a political outlaw. He lived in hiding, meeting only his closest political associates, travelling round the country in disguise, popping up here to lead and advise, disappearing again when the hunt got too hot. (Reddy, 1987: 41.)

It is against this kind of background that I think Rev Jesse Jackson was right when he said that Nelson Mandela "was a Christ-like figure" (Chidester, 1992:113).

His symbol of suffering and sacrifice has been in line with Jesus teaching in Luke 9:23:

"If anyone wants to come with me, he must forget self, take up his cross everyday and follow me".

Mandela was arrested and he appeared in Court for his leadership of the 1961 National Strike and also for leaving the country illegally. And before the sentence was imposed upon him he was asked if he had anything to say. He boldly replied that:

"Whatever sentence Your Worship sees fit to impose upon me for the crime for which I have been convicted before this court, May it rest assured that when my sentence has been completed I will still be moved, as men are always moved by their consciences; I will still be moved to dislike the race discrimination against my people ... to take up again as best I can, the struggle for the removal of these injustices until they are finally abolished once and for all" (Holland, 1989:142).

It is the power of God that controls people's consciences. In the Old Testament prophets used to be swept away against their will by the power of God (cf 2 Kings 2:16; Ezekiel 3: 12-14).

While Mandela was serving his sentence in prison the underground headquarters of Umkonto We Sizwe at Lilliesleaf Farm in Rivonia were raided and the conspirators; Walter Sisulu, Raymond Mhlaba, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Denis Goldberg, Lionel Bernstein and others were arrested. Mandela was brought from prison to join his comrades who were facing a Treason Trial. The case was called: "The State Against Nelson Mandela and Others". (Mandela, 1994:361). Mandela became accused Number One. Walter Sisulu and Govan Mbeki were accused number two and three respectively.

It was actually a blessing in disguise for Mandela to be accused number one since he was the Chief Commander of Umkhonto We Sizwe. He had also done extremely well when he saved his comrades in the First Treason Trial. Here he was given another opportunity to defend the struggle of the oppressed Africans.

Indeed his position was precisely that of the chosen servant of God:

"I have called you and given you power to see that justice is done on earth ... (Is 42:6).

On defence Mandela boldly conceded that he was instrumental in the formation of Umkhonto We Sizwe and he was behind all its activities. He told the court that he was not planning sabotage in a spirit of recklessness, nor because he was a violent man but because it was the only option left to the oppressed for their fight against oppression. He further explained that the ANC struggle is a truly national one:

It is a struggle of the African people, inspired by our own suffering and our experience. It is a struggle for the right to live. I have dedicated my life to this struggle .... I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and see realised. But my Lord, if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die (Mandela, 1965: 189).

He was honest to the Court of Law when he said that he was prepared to die for the struggle for already during his lifetime he had to separate himself from his family, from his

mother and sisters, to live as an outlaw in his own land. He had had to close his business, to abandon his profession and live in poverty and misery (Mandela, 1965:109).

On the 12th June of 1964 Mandela and the other accused appeared in Court without any signs of remorse while the judge imposed life imprisonment upon them. They instead turned to the public galleries and smiled. "Mandela gave the ANC thumbs-up Afrika! Salute before descending to the cells for the last time" (Benson, 1987:163).

Already a day before the sentence was to be imposed upon them Mandela had told his comrades and defence counsel that he would not appeal if death sentence was imposed upon him. Walter Sisulu and Govan Mbeki felt the same (Benson, 1987:162).

It is in this respect that I hold that their decision about the sentence invoked the spirit of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who said to Nebuchadnezzar:

"Your Majesty, we will not try to defend ourselves. If the God whom we serve is able to save us from the blazing furnace and from your power, then he will. But even if he doesn't, Your Majesty may be sure that we will not bow down to the gold statue that you have set up" (Daniel 3: 16-18).

They were given life imprisonment and sent to Robben Island where Mandela continued to play a leading role as a spokesperson of the prisoners.

He regarded his role in prison as not just the ANC leader, but as a promoter of unity, an honest broker, a peacemaker ... bringing about reconciliation among the different political organisations with special reference to the PAC and ANC (Mandela, 1994:474). Whenever there were disputes Warders would always request him to resolve them because they were impressed by his unselfish concern for everybody in prison.

Mandela never lost hope that he would be a free person one day. Hence he patiently continued writing letters to all leaders of the National Party-led-Governments requesting to meet with them to discuss national reconciliation. His plea for peace, unity and reconciliation was only listened to by the then State President P.W. Botha in 1985, 23 years

later after his imprisonment. Mandela's plea was not for his release from prison but for the talks between the ANC and the government. But instead of responding to what Mandela was asking for, P.W. Botha publicly offered all political prisoners freedom if they unconditionally rejected violence as a political instrument. Mandela rejected the conditions for the release of political prisoners - and urged the government to open negotiation with the ANC. His internationally acclaimed response was read by his daughter at the rally in Johannesburg. He said:

.... I am surprised at the conditions that the government wants to impose on me. I am not a violent man ... it was only then, when all other forms of resistance were no longer open to us, that we turned to armed struggle. Let Botha show that he is different to Malan, Strijdom and Verwoerd. Let him renounce violence. Let him say that he will dismantle apartheid ... Let him free all who have been imprisoned, banished or exiled for their opposition to apartheid. Let him guarantee free political activity so that people may decide who will govern them.

I cherish my own freedom dearly, but I care even more for your freedom. Too many have died since I went to prison. Too many have suffered for the love of freedom, I owe it to their widows, to their orphans, to their mothers and to their fathers who have grieved and wept for them. Not only I have suffered during these long, lonely, wasted years. I am not less life-loving than you are. But I cannot sell my birthright, nor am I prepared to sell the birthright of the people to be free.

What freedom am I being offered while the organisation of the people remains unbanned? What freedom am I being offered when I may be arrested on a pass offence? What freedom am I being offered to live my life as a family with my dear wife who remains in banishment in Brandfort? What freedom am I being offered when I ask for permission to live in an urban area? What freedom am I being offered when my very South African citizenship is not respected?

Only free men can negotiate. 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 (Mandela, 1994: 510-511).

Not long after he was discharged from hospital he wrote to the Minister of Justice - Kobie Coetsee to propose talks about talks.

Things were visibly changing at a fast pace within the government circles since he could be allowed to talk to government officials whenever he wanted to. In fact, Kobie Coetsee officially informed him that the government would like to appoint a Committee of Senior Government officials to conduct private discussions with him (Mandela, 1994: 522). Mandela saw government's willingness to talk with him as a great victory for the struggle. He also took this opportunity to assess the seriousness of their commitment to change by urging them to release his fellow political prisoners. He also reemphasized all that he said while he was addressing the State President - P.W. Botha on his offer of conditional release of political prisoners in 1985.

The Government Committee was under the leadership of Kobie Coetsee. His colleagues were General Willemse - the Commissioner of Prisons, Fanie van der Merwe - the Director - General of the Prisons Department and Dr Niel Barnard - Head of the National Intelligence Service. Mandela was alone. It was a Committee of 4 persons against one person. The Committee seemed therefore to regard Mandela as a divine embodiment of the struggle. Their attitude seemed to be "if they talk to him then the rest of his colleagues will follow him". And if this was the case then they had a correct assessment of his political experience. Mandela did not seem to worry about the absence of his comrades in the meetings since he felt he wanted to use the opportunity to explore what he thought would be good for the ANC and the whole country. Hence he rightly felt "there are times when a leader must move out ahead of the flock, go off in a new direction, confident that he is leading his people the right way" (Mandela, 1994: 514). It is in this sense that one could notice his role to be precisely that of the chosen servant of God (cf Is 42:6).

The discussions got off the ground and Mandela was satisfied with the progress so much that he saw the need to consult with his comrades before the talks got too far. But the government would only allow him to see his comrades one at a time. Mandela's fellow comrades agreed that he should go ahead with the talks with the government (Mandela, 1994: 514). Mandela also successfully managed to smuggle out a note to Oliver Tambo to let him know about what he was doing. He further sent a memorandum to the State President P.W. Botha - laying out his views and those of the ANC on the vital issues of the country. For him the memorandum was necessary to create talking points for any future negotiations between the government and the ANC.

Vital issues of their discussions with him concerned:

- the armed struggle of the ANC
- the ANC's alliance with the Communist Party
- the white fears about black majority rule and racial reconciliation.

The discussions relived his 1960's Treason Trial in the sense that the government's attitude towards the ANC was still the same. They demanded, for example, that the ANC should renounce violence and give up the armed struggle before the government would permit him to meet with the State President. Mandela's response was equally not different from what he said while he was charged for Treason. He boldly informed them that the ANC was always prepared to suspend the armed struggle provided that the government would first dismantle apartheid and stop its violence against the oppressed people. At point blank he said to them "if the oppressor uses violence, the oppressed have no alternative but to respond violently (Mandela, 1994: 526). This was in fact in line with his public response to P.W. Botha's offer of conditional release of political prisoners in 1985. In an equal manner he militantly dealt with the rest of the issues on the agenda to such an extent that the Committee resolved that it would be better for the State President to meet and discuss the issues with him personally.

In the meantime Mandela got attacked by tuberculosis and was taken to Tygerberg Hospital where he spent six weeks recuperating and receiving treatment. From the hospital he was taken to the Constantiaberg Clinic, a luxurious facility which was racially excluded for

whites only (Mandela, 1994: 530). Such facilities could not enable them to tame him on the vital issues of the struggle. He agreed to use their luxurious facilities with humility. From the Clinic he was moved to another luxurious facility, a house this time, on the grounds of Victor Verster Prison located in a small old Cape Dutch town of Paarl. The government's explanation for keeping him alone in a decent house was that they wanted to have discussions with him in privacy and comfort (Mandela, 1994: 553).

In his meeting with Mandela, P.W. Botha was impressed by his sharp reasoning and preparedness to address racial reconciliation and white fears about majority rule in a new democratic South Africa. Unfortunately this was their last meeting since P.W. Botha was then succeeded by F.W. De Klerk after he was attacked by a stroke. F.W. De Klerk appeared to be more determined to talk to the ANC. After noticing his attitude towards change Mandela invited him to have a meeting with him to discuss the problems of the country.

The government positively showed its commitment to the discussions with Mandela by releasing his fellow prisoners, Walter Sisulu, Raymond Mhlaba, Ahmed Kathrada, Andrew Mlangeni, Elias Motsoaledi, Jeff Masemola, Wilton Mkwayi and Oscar Mphetha, on the 15th of October 1989. This gesture became a positive signal to the ANC that real political changes were imminent.

In all its meetings with him the government was highly astonished and impressed by his lack of bitterness against whites. It was his readiness to forgive them and to reconcile and unite blacks with whites which encouraged and inspired them to commit themselves to negotiations. They also saw and learnt that he was a man of compromise, compassion and hope, ready to lead the country into a brighter future (Mkhondo, 1993: 2).

After several meetings with Mandela the State President made a public announcement that his commitment to political changes was irreversible. On 2 February 1990 he astonished the world by unbanning the ANC and all other political organisations. Mandela welcomed De Klerk's bold announcement but appeared unmoved and undisturbed when he was informed on the day of his release (11 February 1990) that the Commissioner of Prisons - General Willemse was informed by the National Intelligence Services that there was a plot

to assassinate him. He calmly told his Warder Mr James Gregory that arrangements for his release should not be unnecessarily delayed (Gregory, 1995: 366-367).

It might not have been a sheer coincidence that he was released on Sunday - the day of the Lord. More than 90 000 people gathered in Cape Town at the Grand Parade to see and wish him well. As the crowd was singing and toyi-toying another group of supporters arrived excitedly chanting:

"Ku phuma inkosi, The king is released"

It is in this sense that people began to see Mandela as their political saviour, their king, their 'Jesus Christ'.

It is therefore against this background that one could understand why they composed the song:

"Nelson Mandela, Akunaye  
Ofane naye"

"Nelson Mandela, there is  
no other like you"

These songs have far-reaching implications on one's personality. When addressing the crowd Mandela felt the need to correct the misconception that he was a "divine person". He politely said to them:

I stand here before you not as a prophet, but as a humble  
servant of you, the people.

(Chidester, 1991: 112)

"In his first public addresses, he signalled a tough stance towards the government by reaffirming the ANC's commitment to armed struggle which had earned him a life sentence in jail in 1964 for plotting against apartheid rule" (Mkhondo, 1993: 27). This was good

ANC had to take up arms against the racist white regimes.

It was miraculous that there was no other person than Mandela who would play a role of an honest broker, a reconciler, a facilitator between the government and the ANC. Mandela perfectly understood the aspirations of the ANC as well as the fears of the government. It was therefore his integrity that could cement mutual trust between the ANC and the government. Hence it was not surprising for him to be appointed a deputy President of the ANC immediately after his release from prison.

It could only be he who should head the ANC delegation to hold talks with the government for he had had several meetings with senior government officials while he was still in prison. It was he who actually initiated dialogue between the government and the ANC. Both parties sought the talks to take place through him because they could not trust each other. Hence after the government and the ANC'S first meeting in April 1990 Thabo Mbeki joked with relief that no one had horns amongst them. (Mandela, 1991: 570).

The negotiations therefore took off the ground in his spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness. Of course difficulties were encountered but when he suspended the talks with the government because of the Sebokeng massacre no person or political party was bold enough to question his decision. He even went further to warn the State President about his unwillingness to prevent loss of lives of black people in the hands of apartheid third force.

In order to strengthen the talks with the government he continued calling for more sanctions against the country although the State President had repeatedly begged him not to do so.

Together with Joe Slovo he successfully persuaded the ANC to initiate the suspension of the armed struggle. This was done to tame the government on its demands. In its first annual conference inside the country in 30 years Mandela was unanimously elected President of the ANC. This became a positive signal to the government and the whole country that Mandela's drive for a negotiated settlement was greatly appreciated by his supporters. Mandela went further to insist that the Negotiation Forum should accommodate all political organisations of the country and not only the powerful ones namely the Pan African Congress (PAC), The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the ANC.

He also recommended that international organisations should be present as observers in all Forum meetings. Hence the observers from the United Nations (UN), the Commonwealth, the European Community and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) were invited to attend the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) in December 1991.

During the course of negotiation process the NP began demanding that there should be constitutional guarantees for minorities in a new South Africa. The demand annoyed the ANC and it eventually led to the suspension of negotiations but it was through Mandela's skilful leadership that the negotiation was resuscitated.

Mandela calmly told the State President that:

The whole of South Africa and the world is looking at you and me. Let us save the peace process. Let us reach some kind of agreement. Let us at least fix a date for the next round of talks (Mandela, 1994: 594).

Mandela's plea for the continuation of the negotiation was strong enough to influence the NP to withdraw its demand for the Constitutional guarantees of minorities. He also played a crucial role when a group of hardliners in the ANC demanded, after 46 people were killed at Boipatong, that he should cancel negotiations with the government and that Umkhonto We Sizwe must take up arms again. Although he was sympathetic to their demands he would not allow their emotions to lead the ANC. He calmly persuaded them to be extra careful about the last kicks of a dying apartheid horse. After consultation with his comrades he again suspended negotiations with the government. The ANC continued its call for more sanctions against the country. It also organised mass action, strikes and stay aways in order to expose government's double standard mission of trying to negotiate while killing the people at the same time. The government planned all this in order to weaken the commitment of the ANC leadership to peaceful negotiation process.

The ANC's demands were met and the talks were resumed on 26 September 1992. Having seen that the NP was unwilling to negotiate itself out of power Mandela agreed with his comrade Joe Slovo's proposal that reconciliation might be gained through power sharing with the NP in the first five years after general elections. The NP was pleased with the idea

behind the formation of a Government of National Unity but unfortunately another setback which was set to derail the peace process occurred when one of the white right-wingers assassinated Chris Hani, the Chief Commander of Umkhonto We Sizwe, on 10 April 1993. The assassination shocked the whole country and it was Mandela and not the State President who, on radio and television calmly persuaded both blacks and whites to mourn peacefully and refuse to avenge because that would derail negotiations. The nation's response was wonderful and the NP surrendered by agreeing that general elections should take place on 27 April 1994.

Mandela's peace initiative was rewarded and internationally appreciated when it was announced that he jointly won the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize with F.W. De Klerk. This was a great triumph for the struggle since it was its third time to receive such a prestigious award. Chief Luthuli and Archbishop Desmond Tutu had been earlier honoured by the same award on behalf of the struggle. Mandela continued the struggle for a peaceful transition by persuading dissenting homeland governments of Ciskei, Kwazulu, and Boputatswana to participate in the general elections. The elections were miraculously peaceful and successful and the ANC won in almost all the provinces except in Kwazulu and Western Cape. Without any opposition Mandela was elected to become the first State President of a new democratic South Africa.

### 2.3.3 Conclusion

Although much praises have been given to the leadership of the struggle for the hard work that they have done and sacrifices that they have made, great honour should be given to the ordinary people of South Africa who lost homes and lives of their beloved ones for the sake of the struggle. The role played by the Church too should be highly appreciated for without it the leadership would have been poor of a sense of justice, perseverance, tolerance, courage and hope. Mandela distinguished himself as a prophet sent by God to fight for the oppressed. His servanthood was clearly visible in 1975 when all but three political prisoners on Robben Island fell ill and were too weak to get up. It was he who helped to feed them. He also went from cell to cell, every morning emptying and washing each cell's toilet bucket (Mkhondo, 1993: 25).

# **SPIRITUALITY AND NATIONAL RECONCILIATION**

## **CHAPTER THREE**

An opportunity for national reconciliation in South Africa was missed earlier on by both the Afrikaners and the British after their war in 1902. They instead, preferred to promote white conciliation at the expense of the majority of people namely Africans. The Union of South Africa was formed mainly to reconcile the defeated Afrikaners.

### **PART I: GENERAL LOUIS BOTHA'S POLICY OF WHITE RECONCILIATION (1910 - 1919)**

The main focus of Botha's policy was the unity between the Afrikaners and the British. This was his attempt to persuade his people to forgive their former enemies who destroyed their republics, burnt down their farms and killed their women and children. Although the Afrikaners under the leadership of General J.B.M. Hertzog were prepared to forgive their former enemies they were seriously concerned about Botha's pro-British attitudes and his disregard for the Afrikaner's spirit of republicanism. They still strongly felt that the Union of South Africa should be independent of Britain.

Botha's policy of Conciliation towards Africans was a shame in the sense that it discriminated against them. It lacked the truth in the sense that Botha didn't see any need for the whites to make peace with the Africans. Instead his government was responsible for the Native Land Act of 1913 which limited the African's right to own land. The African National Congress sent a delegation to Britain to protest against this Act but the British refused to withdraw the Act because it was promoting their reconciliation with the Boers. The Anglo-Boer discrimination against Africans created enmity between Africans and whites. Botha died in 1919 and was succeeded by his great friend General Smuts who was later defeated in 1924 by a fanatic racist Afrikaner General Hertzog.

## **PART II: APARTHEID REGIMES AND NATIONAL RECONCILIATION**

### **2.1 GENERAL BARRY HERTZOG'S GOVERNMENT (1924 - 1938)**

General Hertzog had nothing to do with both the British and the Africans. He also had nothing to do with Botha's conciliation policy. His wish was to secure Afrikaner Independence from Britain. This was his struggle until he was defeated by Smuts in 1938 when the outbreak of the Second World War was imminent. His term of office saw the passing of laws which discouraged the British ties with the Union of South Africa. Discriminatory laws were made against the Africans. For instance, Hertzog's Native Bills were passed in 1936 to remove the Africans from the common voter's roll.

### **2.2 D.F. MALAN'S GOVERNMENT (1948 - 1954)**

Malan and his supporters called themselves 'purified' nationalists as they distanced themselves from anything that had to do with the Africans and the British. His government saw Africans as 'Swartgevaar'. He abolished British Citizenship for citizens of the Union of South Africa. Apartheid became an official policy of Malan's purely Afrikaner government. Inter-racial integration was outlawed. The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949 and Immorality Act prohibited whites from falling in love with Africans. All these laws were creating racial barriers between Whites and Africans. The Afrikaner's government preferred to see Whites and Africans fighting rather than reconciling.

### **2.3 APARTHEID REGIME (1954 - 1989)**

Like their predecessors the governments of J.G. Strijdom (1954 - 1958), H.F. Verwoed (1958 - 1961), B.J. Vorster (1961 - 1978) and P.W. Botha (1978 - 1989) were determined to fight the African resistance in an attempt to protect the white economic interests. They created homelands for the African ethnic groups in order to keep them away from the White South Africa. Ethnic groups were encouraged to live differently and independently from

each other. Africans were made to feel that they were not part of White South Africa since they were encouraged to carry travel documents and pass books and they would not enter White South Africa without them.

#### **2.4 F.W. DE KLERK (1989 - 1994)**

Government actions of his predecessors against African resistance hardened and encouraged the Africans to continue fighting. Land mines and bombs were used by the liberation movement to fight the White rule. International communities were called to apply economic sanctions against the country. When de Klerk took over from P.W. Botha the situation in the country was very chaotic. His colleagues could only encourage him to make peace with the Africans. Hence he began the process of National Reconciliation by unbanning all liberation movements. He announced that political prisoners would be released. When Nelson Mandela was released on 11 February 1990 Africans welcomed De Klerk's efforts to reconcile and make peace with them.

Negotiations about a new South Africa were held between the government and all major political parties in the country. Major differences were resolved and in the spirit of National Reconciliation a new Transitional Government was formed to run the general elections which were won by the ANC on 27 April 1994.

Mandela became the State President and the Government of National Unity was formed and on the ANC's election victory De Klerk said:

"Mr Mandela deserves the congratulations, good wishes and prayers of all South Africans. I look forward to working with him constructively within the government of National Unity in our common effort to promote the well being of all our people"(The Argus, May 3, 1994, p 12).

De Klerk's public statements about the need for national reconciliation were commended and highly appreciated.

### **PART III: MANDELA'S GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY**

De Klerk's National Party, Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party and Mandela's African National Congress are the key players in the government of National Unity (G.N.U.) which is a unifying force in a country deeply divided by apartheid. These three political groupings had been enemies during the struggle for South Africa. Negotiations brought them together and in the spirit of national reconciliation it was resolved to form a coalition government which is the present Government of National Unity to govern the country during her early stage of democratic development. It is fascinating to imagine what could have happened if this kind of Government could have been formed by both whites and blacks instead of the Union of White South Africa in 1910.

De Klerk's comment on the ANC's election victory seems to raise the same concern when he said:

"Just as we could not rule South Africa effectively without the support of the ANC and its supporters, no government will be able to rule South Africa effectively without the support of the people and Institutions that I represent. I enthusiastically pledge that support in the interest of working for national reconciliation and reconstruction".

(The Argus, May 3, 1994, p 12)

De Klerk's concern indicates that Whites and Africans desperately need each other to build South Africa. The non-racial identity of the ANC demonstrates what they have been looking for in a New South Africa. In fact its Freedom Charter has been preaching that South Africa belongs to all those who live in it which means that Mandela's Government of National Unity is therefore an answer to the concerns of minority White parties which seem to fear that they will be dominated by the ANC and its alliance.

Although the role of the G.N.U. is highly appreciated current political tensions within the government are regrettable.

The National Party, for instance, is not happy with the investigations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. For de Klerk it would be good to just close the books of the past and start looking at the future. But this cannot be accepted. Victims of apartheid violence would only be able to forgive those who hurt them if only they could come forward and confess. In other words truth must be

known for forgiveness to take place. The following story is just one of the testimonies given by the victims at one of the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and this is what De Klerk hates to hear:

## 12 years on, bomb victims' family still awaits apology

When a freelance photojournalist dashed to the scene of a bomb blast in Durban to capture the carnage after a huge TNT explosion, he was unaware that his brother and pregnant sister-in-law were victims.

The couple had not stood a chance. The car bomb exploded metres from where they were walking hand in hand down Victoria Embankment in Durban. Gary Govindsamy told the truth commission this week that it took a long time for him to identify his brother Anamalai's body.

Three people died and 22 were injured when a massive charge of TNT and plastic explosives packed in the boot of a stolen car exploded in April 1984.

Govindsamy said the deaths of Anamalai and his wife, Leelavathi, destroyed an entire family. The couple's son Terrance, who was six at the time, was orphaned. Six months after the blast, Anamalai's father died of a stroke. His mother cried for her dead child every day until she too died of a stroke.

Today, 12 years later, the family is still waiting for someone to come forward and say sorry.

"We want to know the person who planted this bomb. He must tell us why he did so. He must tell us why he did not warn bystanders to flee the area. He knew the bomb was lethal. He must apologise for what he has done."

Govindsamy is angry that the ANC has never contacted him or any members of his family.

"I have no doubt that the ANC planted the bomb that killed my brother and sister-in-law. It has a duty to accept responsibility.

"One accepted the political arena of the time, but the perpetrators weren't blowing up bridges or army barracks - innocent people were being killed."

He is equally angry with the National Party government of the time. He said that if it had talked instead of driving people underground and into exile, bomb blasts might never have occurred.

Govindsamy adopted Terrance, but he said he could not afford to send the boy to university or college and that angered him.

"Had his parents been around he could have gone to varsity; now he is doing a menial job."

Govindsamy said Terrance was at first reluctant to testify before the truth commission because he was not sure he could forgive.

"He said to me he wanted to kill the people who had killed his parents, but I told him to go away and think about it and when he came back he said he was ready to forgive."

Terrance said he hoped the commission would encourage the perpetrators to come forward and apologise so that he could forgive them. All he wanted for himself and his family was a memorial to his parents.

Perhaps, he asked Archbishop Tutu, money raised through the commission could be given to a previous witness. She was poor and needed it, he said.

De Klerk's concern for National Reconciliation is now questionable in the sense that he also supports the idea that Afrikaners must have separate schools. How will he explain this to his potential black supporters amongst the youth that they and Afrikaner pupils must be in separate schools? Does this separation of schools promote national reconciliation? Not at all. It seems De Klerk is still nostalgic about his apartheid privileges. When his party pulled out of the G.N.U. his own senior colleagues disagreed with him. Pik Botha and Leon Wessels went to an extent of resigning from politics. Commenting on the adoption of the new constitution President Mandela saw the need to address white fears and he said: "we are one people with one destiny ... we want men and women who can rise above their ethnic groups and think about South Africa as a whole" (The Sunday Independent, May 12, 1996, p 5). De Klerk should not see reconciliation as a witch-hunt to seek revenge but the only way of healing the victims. In fact, the healing process is as necessary for the victims as it is for the perpetrators of the terror.

When addressing hundreds of students at the University of Potchefstroom, Mandela gave a public invitation to all South Africans to stand behind him in his nation building and reconciliation drive. The students were thrilled to hear him say he was prepared to stand by the truth even if some people were against him. As if he was feeling his death coming he appealed to his audience to commit themselves to nation building. He said:

"I am writing my own testament because I am nearing my end. I want to be able to sleep till eternity with a broad smile on my face knowing that the youth, opinion makers and everybody is stretching across the divide, trying to unite the nation".

(The Argus, February 20, 1996)

Mandela's effort to unite the nation is also strongly felt in sports. He supported the decision to allow rugby to continue using the Springbok emblem and millions of South Africans stood behind him even though 99% of the players are white. In his number 6 jersey Mandela congratulated the Springbok team for their victory in the World Cup. Such a gesture is unforgettable. When South African's cricket team was about to participate in the World Cup Quarter Final Match against West Indies in Karachi, on 11 March 1996, Mandela phoned the Captain and the manager to wish them good luck, telling them that the team had the support of all South Africans. It is said that the team was very thrilled with the call.

Again when the National Soccer team was participating in the finals of the African Champs tournament President Mandela was seen wearing the team's jersey and thousands of fans stood up to appreciate his support. This was his 'magic' way of trying to promote national reconciliation. Mandela continued promoting reconciliation by visiting Mrs Elize Botha, wife of P.W. Botha, former President of South Africa, and Mrs Betsie Verwoerd, widow of apartheid architect Hendrick Verwoerd, to have tea with them. The Cape Times' headline about Mandela's public gesture for reconciliation with these elderly Afrikaner women was TEA WITH THE ENEMY which well reminds the Christians about Jesus's visits to his 'enemies'.

The government's Reconstruction and Development Programme is serving as a restitution for the victims of white injustice. Houses are built and electrified for the low income disadvantaged communities. Primary school children are also receiving meals daily. And pregnant women and children up to six are receiving free health care as early benefits of democracy.

## PART IV: CONCLUSION

Signs of Ubuntu in the words and deeds of the ANC Leadership have been clearly visible throughout the entire struggle of South Africa. The commitment of their entire lives to the cause of the oppressed South Africans visibly demonstrated how much selfless they were. It has also indicated their commitment to brotherly love as it is taught in the Bible. Their many sacrifices including years in prison and exile would have taught them enough reasons to seek vengeance on the whites but to everybody's disbelief they came back from prison and exile without any complaint or racial bitterness and their ability to forgive their enemies is unbelievable. Looking at Mandela's period in office one is bound to comment that although the country's crime rate is still high, achievements made within the given short period are quite remarkable in the sense that the government literally created a new country, with new opportunities and a dynamic new spirit of national reconciliation.

Controversial public holidays like December 16 which the apartheid government preferred to call The Day of the Vow since it was on this day in 1838 when the Afrikaners defeated the Zulus at Blood River War. So it was called the Day of the Vow because they felt that it was through God's mercy that they were conquerors. Mandela's government felt that this should be a Day of Reconciliation to promote peace and not racial conflicts.

Sharpeville Day on 21st of March was renamed Human Rights Day for the same good reasons. 69 Africans who were peacefully protesting against passes were killed by the Apartheid Police on this day. The Soweto uprisings of 16 June 1976 had been renamed Youth Day and this is wonderful way of promoting peace and national reconciliation.

It was also Mandela's leadership which defused the possibility of a military right-wing coup. Through him the country has been accepted back in the world of sport, diplomacy and business. Former segregated provinces, churches, schools, towns and cities are all now well integrated. South Africans are now proud of their political rights and human dignity. Above all Mandela's government has outlawed the death penalty. All these achievements are not only good for the country but for God too who wills justice. "Christianity had been a formative influence in arousing African political consciousness" (Walshe, 1987: 162).

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