TEACHERS' LEAGUE OF SOUTH AFRICA 1913 - 40

by

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ABSTRACT

Besides examining the history of the Teachers' League of South Africa, a specifically coloured teachers' association, during its conservative phase from 1913 to 1940, this thesis in addition attempts to investigate the nature and development of this organization in the context of the wider social dynamic of which it was both part and product. The League is thus not only studied as a professional association but also as a specific constituent of the broader social categories of the coloured elite, the coloured people and South African society.

The origins of the T.L.S.A. was rooted in the subordination of peoples of colour in Cape settler society and the development through the 19th century of a segregated education system at the Cape. More immediately, as a result of the social and political consequences of the mineral revolution intensifying racial discrimination against blacks, one of the responses of the coloured elite was the establishment of the League, through the mediation of the African Political Organisation, to protect coloured educational interests, regarded to be crucial to their advancement.

The League was a typical embodiment of the assimilationist aspirations and accommodationist strategies that resulted from coloured elite marginality. This is evident in the growth and maturity of the League being largely in response to the progressive and systematic enforcement of segregation against coloureds over this period. More significantly the League fully accepted white middle class values and codes of behaviour and its organizational life was dominated by the striving to conform to these norms. The League also displayed the essential powerlessness of the coloured elite as its representative in the tripartite contest with the Education Department and churches to influence the direction of coloured education. The interstitial position of the coloured elite in South African society was manifested by the League contradicting its basic principle of non-racism by the qualified acceptance of coloured inferiority and trying to use its closer assimilation to Western culture to claim a position of relative privilege for coloureds vis-a-vis Africans.

It is apparent that at all levels of its existence the League was captive to its coloured identity and status.

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

A.M.E.	African Methodist Episcopal (Church).
A.P.O.	African Political Organization; after 1919 African Peoples Organization.
C.A.C.	Coloured Advisory Council.
C.A.D.	Coloured Affairs Department.
E.J.	Educational Journal.
I.C.S.	Institute of Commonwealth Studies Collected Seminar Papers.
M.E.C.	Member of the Executive Council (of the Provincial Council).
M.P.	Member of Parliament.
M.P.C.	Member of the Provincial Council.
S.A.I.R.R.	South African Institute of Race Relations.
S.A.T.A.	South African Teachers' Association.
T.L.S.A.	Teachers' League of South Africa.
U.C.T.	University of Cape Town.
Z/S.A.O.U.	Zuid/Suid Afrikaanse Onderwysers Unie.

PREFACE

The Teachers' League of South Africa evolved through the clearly defined stages of conservative consensus between 1913 and 1940, the transitional period of the development of a radical movement within the organization from the late 1930s until the withdrawal of the moderates in 1944 and the ensuing radical phase until state repression in the 1960's rendered the organization defunct except for the publication of the Educational Journal. This thesis derives its organic unity from the examination of the conservative phase of the League during which it had a fixed social and organizational character. Although the moderates retained constitutional control of the League until their departure in 1944, the thesis is restricted to the period up to the 1940 Annual Conference when the first radicals entered the Executive, a development that had a dramatic impact on the nature of the organization.

Throughout its life the T.L.S.A. was a relatively small and unimportant body within the skein of 20th century South African history. But as an object of historical enquiry it has an importance beyond the size of its membership and its impact on the wider society. The League gains much of its significance from its ability to provide historical insight into the social life of the coloured elite.[1] Not only was the League the most enduring coloured elite organization but

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1 I have followed Dr. G. Lewis' usage of the term "coloured elite" since the alternative, the coloured "petty bourgeoisie", is potentially more problematic.

it has also bequeathed a possibly unique legacy of historical evidence to posterity. Besides its activity as a professional association, the League is important as an embodiment of the values, aspirations and social life of the coloured elite despite much of this being refracted through its specific professional interests. These observations are particularly applicable to the conservative phase of the T.L.S.A. because of the paucity of direct testimony from this social category during the earlier decades of the 20th century.

The Educational Journal has by far been the main source for this study. This has of necessity been the case since the organizational documents of the T.L.S.A. appear not to have survived. Notwithstanding this important hiatus in the evidence the Journal has provided ample evidence for the most pertinent questions that need to be asked of the conservative League. The Journal being the League's primary means for the dissemination of information to its far flung and often isolated membership was very informative about organizational matters. Reports of branch meetings, lengthy accounts of conference proceedings and the minutes of executive meetings were regular features of the Journal. In addition the literary endeavours and the social commentary contained within the Journal provides ample evidence of the social character of the League and thus of the coloured elite. The pervasive obliqueness of the League's dealings with the Education Department and churches and in commenting on potentially controversial issues does not pose insurmountable problems. Familiarity with the coloured

elite's social consciousness together with repeated critical readings of the Journal makes possible an understanding of League discourse and the understatements, the alternative meanings, the hidden motives and the covert strategies become apparent. Thus what is lost through the absence of the organizational documents is detail and colour but certainly not the nature of the organization.

Also, wherever possible, other sources have been used as a means of evaluating evidence from the Journal. The newspapers, particularly the Sun and the Cape Standard which provided extensive coverage of League activity, were extremely useful in this respect. I have also had the privilege of conducting two extended interviews with David van der Ross, the single most active member in the conservative years of the T.L.S.A. Mr. van der Ross has not only been an extremely reliable and informative source but has made an important contribution to this study by providing the sort of information and verification that would not otherwise have been available.

The significance of the League and the value of the Journal become apparent when compared to the contemporaneous African Political Organization which was in all respects a more important organization and more broadly representative of the coloured elite. However, since the records of the A.P.O. also do not appear to have survived and its newspaper the A.P.O. was only published for a fraction of the period of its existence, a study of the A.P.O. is largely dependent on fragmentary sources, much of it second-hand. The main value

of the Journal is that it permits an intensive and systematic investigation of a relatively representative section of the coloured elite over a period of decades and is probably unique in this respect.

The League's identity as coloured was by far its most significant feature since virtually every facet of its life was subordinate to it. The fundamental social reality for the League's members was that they were first and foremost coloured and only secondarily teachers, South African citizens or human beings. However, the question of what precisely the concept of coloured entailed has always been a problematic one. It has not only caused confusion amongst legislators and bureaucrats but has also caused a great deal of anger, anxiety and anguish amongst generations of coloureds themselves. The Population Registration Act of 1950 has provided satisfaction only to segregationists by allowing the superficial, but for their purposes, effective solution of identifying coloureds as those people classified as such. The frequency with which the epithet "so-called" prefaces the use of the term coloured, especially by people thus classified, is symptomatic of the problems inherent in the concept.

One of the major problems relating to colouredness is that it is essentially a residual category, one into which those

people who do not fit into either the white or African[2] categories are cast. This is evident in the way that legislation usually defines coloureds by this process of elimination. There are also several sub-groups such as the Malays, Asians, Griquas and Basters whose standing in relation to the coloured group has been unclear, sometimes being included and at other times excluded from it.

The second source of difficulty with categorizing people as coloured derives from the usual means of racial classification, by physical stereotyping, not being applicable to a significant proportion of coloureds. Individuals within the coloured grouping spanned the entire spectrum between the Caucasoid and Negroid physical types. This allowed for a fair degree of individual mobility between white and coloured, and African and coloured. It has even been possible for individuals to be white for some aspects of their lives (for example in school or at work) and coloured for others (for example in their home and family lives).

A third source of confusion comes from the coloured identity generally being recognized as consisting of undesirable characteristics. Thus people either tried to escape the categorization and even those who came to identify themselves as coloured did so unwillingly. For a substantial

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2 The term "African" is used to refer to the indigenous Bantu-speaking peoples of South Africa. The terms "black" and "non-white" are used interchangeably to refer to the unity of African, coloured and Indian. All terms relating to race, colour or ethnicity are treated as ordinary parts of speech and hence are only capitalized when derived from proper nouns.

sector of South African society the coloured status could not be avoided since it was on the whole ascriptive. The dilemma of what should be done about their coloured identity and status was the fundamental problem facing the coloured elite. The League's response to this predicament is the cardinal theme of this thesis and is the exclusive focus of the final chapter. This culminating chapter draws together most of the main arguments and findings of the thesis in an exploration of the League's racial identity.

I need to thank Dr. Saunders for some useful comment on chapter 1. I am indebted to Milton Shain for reading and commenting on parts of the text. The intellectual stimulation that he has provided over innumerable cups of coffee and tea has made a substantive contribution to this piece of work. I am deeply grateful to my supervisor Richard Mendelsohn not only for his support and guidance but also because his supervision went well beyond the bounds of duty since the bulk of it was done during his sabbatical. I also wish to thank Gillian Mitchell who had the unenviable task of transforming the handwritten manuscript into typescript. Special thanks are due to Libbi Downes and Elizabeth Rollo for their generous help, good humour and wizardry with the word processor. Financial aid from the Human Sciences Research Council and the University of Cape Town is also gratefully acknowledged.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE ORIGIN AND FOUNDING OF THE T.L.S.A.

The Teachers' League of South Africa was founded at a public meeting on the evening of Monday, 23 June 1913 at the College Hall of the Training Institute in Queen Victoria Street, Cape Town, as a teachers' association expressly for coloureds[1].

The immediate sequence of events that led to the formation of the Teachers' League originated from the publication of an anonymous letter in the A.P.O., the newspaper of the African Political Organization, of 13 July 1912. The writer who signed himself "A Coloured Teacher", proposed the establishment of a coloured teachers' association for the alleviation of the "burdensome lot" of the coloured mission school teacher. In the following issue Dr. Abdurahman, President of the A.P.O., enthusiastically welcomed the idea and pointed to the dire need for a specialist organization to deal with matters affecting coloured education.[2] The feasibility of establishing such an organization was further discussed in the columns of the next few issues of the A.P.O., with a view to creating publicity for, and arousing interest in, the idea.[3]

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1 A.P.O., 28/6/1913; Cape Times, 24/6/1913; S.A.News, 24/6/1913.
2 A.P.O., 27/7/1912.
3 A.P.O., 10/8/1912 - 7/9/1912.

The months of informal discussion and preliminary preparation[4] resulted in a preparatory meeting by about 50 people on 22 March 1913 at the Albertus Street School Hall in Cape Town.[5] The focus of the meeting was a discussion of the aims of the proposed association and its potential for initiating reform in coloured education. A committee of seven of the leading coloured teachers in Cape Town was elected to implement the resolutions accepted by the meeting and to organize the formal inauguration of the association.[6] By the end of May 1913, the provisional executive committee had decided upon the date and venue of the inaugural conference as well as a name and draft constitution to be submitted for alteration and approval by the inaugural conference to be held on 23-25 June.[7]

The main question that arises is why the need for a separate and racially defined teachers' organization was perceived at that time. The answer is located very much in the nature of the society that had developed at the Cape during the previous two and a half centuries and more particularly within the fundamental changes to which southern Africa was subjected as a result of the discovery of minerals in the Cape hinterland. The gathering momentum of capitalist development, the Anglo-Boer War and the resultant unification of South Africa, in radically reshaping southern

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4 A.P.O.,22/3/1913; Sun, 28/6/1940;Educational Journal, August, 1940.

5 Cape Argus, 22/3/1913; Cape Times, 24/3/1913.

6 The committee consisted of Mrs. M. Wooding, Miss N. Wyngaard, Messrs. H. Cressy, H. Gordon, F. Hendricks, W. Hendrickse and E. Pfeiffer.

7 A.P.O., 31/5/1913.

African society, put considerable pressure upon the coloured elite. The formation of a separate coloured teachers' association was one of the complex of reactions and adaptations by the upper stratum of the Cape Town coloured community to these pressures.

The section of Cape society that by the turn of the century had come to be designated "coloured", occupied the lower strata of the society as a result of their heritage of slavery, conquest and racial discrimination. It is evident from the debate surrounding the origins of racism in South Africa that the subjugation of persons of colour and their assimilation virtually only in positions of social subordination was a process that had started from the very early stages of Dutch settlement at the Cape[8]. Under Company rule a rigid racial order developed at the Cape due to a combination of the social and cultural background of the colonists and material and demographic conditions at the Cape.[9] Elphick and Giliomee note that racial prejudice and

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8 The main lines of this debate can be traced through I.D. MacCrone, Race Attitudes in South Africa, (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 1957); S. Patterson, " Some speculations on the status and role of free people of colour in the Western Cape" in M. Fortes and S. Patterson, Studies in African Social Anthropology, (London, Academic Press, 1975); W.M. Freund,"Race in the social structure of South Africa, 1652-1836", Race and Class, XVIII,(1976); M. Legassick, "The frontier tradition in South African historiography" in S. Marks and A. Atmore, Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa, (London, Longman, 1980); R.Elphick and H. Giliomee, "The structure of European domination at the Cape, 1652-1820", in R.Elphick and H. Giliomee, The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1820, (Cape Town, Longman Penguin, 1979).

9 Elphick and Giliomee, pp. 359-390; Legassick, pp.44-79; J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937, (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 1939), chapter 1.

official discrimination against non-whites intensified during the 18th century.[10] "Passing for white" had by then already become one of the options for social mobility open to individuals of racially mixed ancestry.[11]

During the 19th century, the British Administration, despite being concerned to eliminate the legal inequality of non-Europeans, buttressed the racial order far more effectively than the Dutch East India Company was ever able to.[12] The British Administration had a greater determination and capacity for enforcing the law[13], particularly in the field of labour relations since one of its most important initial aims was to sustain the accelerated economic growth experienced by the Cape from the 1780's onwards.[14]

Trapido correctly rejects the "conventional wisdom that assumes that liberalism was imposed in some prefabricated way" upon the Cape by the British government.[15] The overriding concerns of the Colonial Office regarding the Cape were the security of this strategic colony and to foster its economic development that increasingly became dependent upon wine and wool production.[16] The imposition of

10 Elphick and Giliomee, p.383.
11 Ibid. p.305.
12 G. Lewis, The reaction of the Cape coloureds to segregation, (Ph.D., Queens University, 1984), p.11.
13 A. Sachs, "Enter the British legal machine : Law and administration at the Cape, 1806-1910", Institute of Commonwealth Studies Collected Seminar Papers, (1969-70), p.10.
14 Elphick and Giliomee, p.386; Marks and Atmore, pp. 20 - 1.
15 S. Trapido, "'The friends of the natives': Merchants, peasants and the political and ideological structure of liberalism in the Cape", Marks and Atmore, p.253.
16 S.Trapido, "Liberalism at the Cape in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries", I.C.S., (1972-73), p.54; Trapido, (1980), p.249.

liberal policies at the Cape, being born of political expedience, was often transparently hypocritical and made to yield to local prejudices and social rigidities.

Yet through the 19th century coloureds did experience an improvement in their legal and political status, and in the case of a small minority in their social and economic condition as well.[17] Legislative milestones in this process were the Ordinance 50 of 1828 that repealed the vagrancy laws which had virtually enserfed the Khoisan and the emancipation of the slaves in 1834. Liberal political practices were reinforced by the lack of explicit colour bars in the elective municipal boards of 1836, the road boards of 1843 and the divisional councils of 1855, and most significantly, by the low franchise accompanying the grant of Constitutional Government in 1853 and Responsible Government in 1872. It was especially during the later decades of the 19th century that the expansion of the southern African urban economy provided sufficient opportunity for the growth, by the time of Union, of a nascent coloured petty bourgeoisie consisting of petty enterpreneurs, artisans, white collar workers and professionals.[18]

After 1872 when control of the Executive was vested in the Cape Parliament, local prejudice came to find more direct political expression. The 1877 Parliamentary Registration

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17 The fortunes of the Abdurahman family as described by H.J. and R.E. Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850 - 1950, (International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, 1983), p.117 being a case in point.

18 Lewis, pp. 32 - 35.

Act struck thousands of non-whites from the voters' rolls and the Franchise and Ballot Act of 1892 raised the franchise qualifications sufficiently for politicized coloureds to form the Coloured Peoples Association of South Africa to protest against the Act.[19] Although these measures were aimed largely at the "blanket vote" there was considerable antipathy towards the urban coloured voter, even amongst liberal politicians.[20] This was amply illustrated when the Cape Parliament in 1894 went to great lengths to prevent the election of Ahmed Effendi to that body.[21] Such blatant political discrimination against non-whites helped to erode coloured confidence in the political establishment.

Virtually the entire local white population believed in the intrinsic superiority of Western culture and that the inferiority of non-whites was innate, even ordained by God. Coloureds were still very much associated with the degradation of slavery and the primitiveness of Khoisan society.[22] The harsh paternalism that characterized master-servant relationships was rationalized with the argument that the purpose of the non-white was to serve the white man who in turn had the duty of judiciously bestowing on him the fruits of civilization and religion. Despite individual

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19 Lewis, pp. 29 - 30.

20 Trapido, (1980), p.266.

21 S.Trapido, White conflict and non-white participation in the politics of the Cape of Good Hope 1853-1910, (Ph.D., University of London, 1970), p.113; R.E. van der Ross, A political and social history of the Cape coloured people, 1880--1970, (Unpublished manuscript, U.C.T. Manuscripts and Archives Division, 1973), pp.13-14; Lewis, p.31.

22 P. Lewsen, "The Cape liberal tradition ; Myth or reality?", I.C.S., (1969-70), pp.77-79.

examples of genuine concern for and considerable sacrifice in the interests of coloured welfare, the assumption of white superiority was virtually universal, generally being shared by coloureds themselves.

There developed at the Cape in the latter half of the 19th century an increasingly complex and segregated education system. The Evangelical revival in Europe had led to an influx of missionaries into the Cape in the early decades of the 19th century. One of their more important activities was the provision of elementary education for the poorest section of the community, both black and white. The missionaries regarded education as a necessary part of proselytization because it not only facilitated the teaching of the scriptures but was regarded to be the main means for the transmission of European civilization, held to have divine sanction and to be indispensible for salvation.[23] From 1841 onwards, mission schools became eligible for grants from the Education Department to cover two thirds of the cost of teachers' salaries. Money for the rest of the teachers' salaries, buildings, equipment and other costs had to be raised by the mission establishments themselves. Since the missions received limitedgovernment aid and the communities they served were poor, mission education, both in terms of available resources and the content of

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23 M.J.Ashley, "The features of modernity; Missionaries and education in South Africa, 1850 - 1900", Unpublished seminar paper, (1979), Institute of Social and Economic Research, Rhodes University, pp. 2, 8-10.

education, was inherently and vastly inferior to the system of public education.[24]

Through the 19th century the more affluent whites were able to secure a superior education for their children through a combination of political control of education policy and the erection of economic and class related barriers. In true Cape liberal fashion, whilst there was a steadfast refusal by the British Administration to introduce explicit colour bars in education in the face of strong local agitation for segregation, compromises were made to allow discrimination in practice.[25] The levying of school fees in private and public schools and the financing of public education that required a 50 per cent contribution towards the costs of education by the parents, made it almost totally inaccessible to coloureds and poorer whites during the 19th century.[26] Furthermore, the Education Department's stipulation that "regularity of attendance, propriety of conduct and habits of cleanliness with regard to both person and attire be observed" provided another avenue for the expression of local race prejudice.[27]

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24 E.L. Maurice, The development of policy in regard to the education of coloured pupils at the Cape, 1880-1940, (Ph.D., U.C.T., 1966), especially chapters 1 and 2; A.L. Behr, Three centuries of coloured education in South Africa, (Ph.D., Potchefstroom University, 1952), pp.186-190.

25 Marais, p.270; M. Horrell, The Education of the Coloured Community in South Africa, 1652-1970, (Johannesburg, S.A.I.R.R., 1970), p.10.

26 Behr, p.183; Horrell, p.11.

27 E.L. Maurice, The history and administration of the education of the Coloured peoples of the Cape 1652-1910, (B.Ed., U.C.T., 1946), p.228; Horrell, p.14. See also Education Commission Report, 1863, (G.24-1863),Appendix V, p.75; Lewis, p.78.

Thus, despite the absence of a legal colour bar, the public schools were almost exclusively attended by whites. And those few non-whites who managed to gain entrance to public schools caused much resentment.[28] Where segregated education facilities were not available many of the poorer white parents raised strong objections and some even preferred to leave their children illiterate than allow them to attend a racially mixed mission school.[29] Even several mission schools were segregated either by the reservation of the school for one group only or by conducting separate classes for white and black in the same school.[30]

Towards the end of the 19th century the Education Department in consonance with the tendency toward racially based forms of social control throughout southern Africa increasingly came to espouse an openly racist education policy. And in the closing years of the century a concerted effort was made to implement statutory segregation in education and to extend the vastly superior public education system to all whites.

The Education Commission Report, 1879-80 expressed the opinion that because of cultural and economic factors, an education that might be appropriate for Europeans might be wholly unsuitable for non-Europeans.[31] This notion was not derived from an enlightened attitude toward education in a

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28 Education Commission Report, 1863, pp.122-125; 152-153; Behr, p.186; Horrell, p.10, 14.

29 See for example Education Commission Report, 1879-80, (G.75-1880), Appendix I, p.31; Education Commission Report, 1891, (G.9-1891), pp.21-2, 27, 118; Maurice, (1966), pp.74-77.

30 Maurice, (1966), pp.69-70, 76, 306-310.

31 Education Commission Report, 1879-80, p.2.

culturally diverse society but was little more than a crude justification for racial oppression because in the same report Langham-Dale the Superintentant General of Education considered it to be the duty of the government to see to it that the highest standard of education be reserved for Europeans, so as to preserve their leadership and prestige.[32] A decade later the Department's attitude towards the education of coloureds was again unequivocally expressed by Langham-Dale:

> The first duty of the government has been assumed to be to recognize the position of the European colonists as holding the paramount influence, social and political; and to see that the sons and daughters of the colonists... should have at least such education as their peers in Europe enjoy, with such local modifications as will fit them to maintain their unquestioned superiority and supremacy in this land.[33]

The Education Department in general based its policy decisions on the assumption that the education of non-whites beyond what was necessary to perform manual labour effectively, would be wasted.[34] Langham-Dale felt that compulsory education for coloureds would empty half the houses of domestic servants, a most undesirable consequence under the prevailing conditions of labour scarcity. He felt that coloured children could be more profitably employed than remaining at school, a diversion they would welcome since they were work-shy.[35]

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32 Ibid., Minutes of evidence by Langham-Dale, p.85.
33 S.G.E. Special Report, 1890, (G.6A-1890), p.2.
34 S.G.E. Report, 1882, p.13.
35 Education Commission Report, 1879-80, Minutes of evidence by Langham-Dale, p.29.

It is clear that the formulators of education policy at the Cape consciously tried to use education as a means for ensuring not only white political supremacy but also their tight control and effective exploitation of black labour. Such intentions are very clearly articulated in Langham-Dale's Special Report which warned that:

> If the European race is to hold its supremacy the school instruction of its children must not only be the best and most advanced, but must be followed by a systematic training of the young colonist in directive intelligence to be brought to bear on all the industrial arts. As the future employers of labour they need themselves to have practical experience in the productive interests as well as in the mechanical arts, which, if supplemented by a good commercial education will enable them to take their places as superintendents, foremen and ultimately as masters in trade, agriculture, manufactures and the constructive branches of the arts.[36]

Thomas Muir, appointed S.G.E. in 1892, vigorously set about implementing a policy of removing the poorer whites from the mission schools and providing them with compulsory public education[37] under the control of school boards a course increasingly recommended as the solution to the colony's educational problems.[38] Thus, for the first time, separate statistics for whites and non-whites were compiled from 1894 so as to determine more accurately and provide for the needs of white pupils.[39] In terms of Proclamation 388 of 1893 "white" mission schools became eligible for the larger grants paid to Third Class Public Schools.[40] The School Boards Bill of 1896, the School Board and Attendance Bill of

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36 S.G.E. Special Report 1890, p.3.
37 Maurice, (1966), p.97.
38 Education Commission Report, 1879-80; S.G.E. Special Report, 1890.
39 S.G.E. Report, 1893, p.5.
40 Maurice, (1966), p.98.

1898 and the School Attendance Bill of 1899 were attempts to give effect to the above-mentioned aims of segregated and compulsory education for whites.[41]

Although the position of coloured children caused some debate and was not finally decided, the general intention was however to exclude them from these provisions.[42] There was some concern about the practical difficulties of excluding coloureds and more particularly the effect it would have on "respectable" coloureds.[43] But considerations were dominated by the need for whites to maintain their superiority, the need to lift poor whites from their degradation and anxiety at the trend towards increasing non-white education.[44] Muir was satisfied that mission schools that generally only went as far as Std. IV were sufficient for the needs of coloureds.[45]

Education Department policies were consonant with white public opinion which harboured a deep-seated antagonism toward the "over-education" of non-whites.[46] This hostility emanated from the employers of labour and associated

41 Maurice, (1966), chapter 3.
42 Ibid., pp.131-147.
43 Report of Select Committee on Three Education Bills, House of Assembly, 1896, pp. 79-86; Maurice, (1966), p.122.
44 Cape Parliamentary Debates, 1893, pp.287-9, 373-374; 1895, pp.393-4, 401; 1896, pp.329-337, 398-406.
45 Select Committee on Education, 1896, p.18.
46 Marais p.270; Horrell, p.10; Maurice, (1966), p.104; Education Commission Report, 1912, (C.P.6 - 1912), pp.211-212; T.G.Renkewitz, "Mission Schools; Their problems and how to overcome them", (Genadendal, 1896), p.3; For evidence that this was the case up to the founding of the League see S.G.E. Report, 1911, p.3; A.P.O., 21/10/1911; E. Joubert, The Rise and Progress of the South African Teachers' Association, 1862-1931, (Cape Town, Maskew Miller, n.d.), p.47.

interests who had a stake in the maintenance of a pool of cheap labour as well as from the political leadership that envisaged a future of white supremacy for South Africa. Renkewitz noted the prevalence of the attitude amongst whites that education would spoil blacks for labour as articulated in the maxim "Raw kaffirs make better servants than educated kaffirs."[47] But there were also fears that Western education would have a dangerous effect on the primitive minds of blacks and that whites in time would be confronted by "dense masses who will have abandoned the assegai and the knob-kerrie in favour of the Mauser."[48] Even the Fremantle Commission Report of 1912 considered there to be some truth in the belief that education "corrupts the coloured man by quickening his vices".[49] Also, both within the ruling groups as well as amongst poorer whites there were fears that improved education for non-whites would threaten the social status of and reduce the economic opportunities open to poor whites. Coloureds, although a notch higher on the social scale than Africans were by no means exempt from such attitudes. Large areas of the Cape, especially the Western half, were almost entirely dependent on coloured labour.

The Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) that interrupted the drive towards the imposition of an explicit colour bar in education at the Cape ultimately reinforced it. In the post-war period non-white political rights and social welfare throughout southern Africa became even more expendable in

47 Renkewitz, p.3.
48 A.E. Griffiths, "Some Objectives in South African Education", (Cape Town, 1911), p.7.
49 Education Commission Report, 1912, pp. 211-212.

the face of the need to effect a Brit-Boer reconciliation to unite the ex-Boer republics and the two British colonies into a single state. There was thus a noticeable increase in both official and customary discrimination against coloureds in all four polities during the post-war period.[50]

The move towards a statutory colour bar in education culminated in the 1905 School Board Act, the discriminatory intentions of which were upheld by the judiciary in 1911.[51] This Act made it the duty of the state rather than the parents to educate all white children up to Std. IV or the age of 14. It implemented a definite administrative programme of providing all white children with a nondenominational system of public schooling within a few years. Although school fees were to be levied, poverty was no longer to be a barrier to education for whites since the state undertook to finance any shortfalls and to subsidize those unable to pay.

The provisions within the School Board Act allowing coloureds to set up public schools were little more than a sop to coloured objections and a placatory gesture towards the Cape liberal conscience. The costs and the red tape involved ensured that public schooling for coloureds would for the foreseeable future remain extremely limited.[52] The indifference or even obstructionism of the school boards and

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50 T.R.H. Davenport, South Africa; A modern history, (Johannesburg, McMillan, 1978), pp. 152 ff.; Lewis, chapter 2; Marais, pp. 275 - 9.

51 Moller vs Keimoes School Committee and Another, S.A. Law Reports, Appellate Division, (1911), pp.639-657.

52 Maurice, (1966), pp.185-192.

the Education Department further stifled the growth of coloured public schooling.[53]

The effect of the School Board Act was quite dramatic. The number of public schools for whites at the Cape had increased from approximately 1600 to 2600 between 1905 and 1912.[54] The estimated 5000 to 6000 white children in mission schools in the late 19th century had declined to 175 by 1912.[55] The differential between the average annual state expenditure per pupil in a mission school, as opposed to a public school, had increased from a ratio of 1 in 3 in 1890 to 1 in 9 in 1915.[56]

This concern with education policy in the Cape Colony in the period straddling the turn of the century was clearly a result of the economic impact of the discovery of minerals in the southern African interior. The diamond mines were within the Cape Colony itself, whilst the goldfields, being located in the land-locked Transvaal promised to have enormous consequences for the future economic development of the Cape. The mineral revolution and the attendant industrial and commercial expansion created an escalating demand for literate and skilled workers. The inadequacy of the Cape's education system to meet this, and anticipated future demand, was increasingly apparent and the need for the modernization of the Cape education system had become a

53 A.P.O., 19/6/1909; 26/6/1915; E.J., December, 1915.
54 Compare figures given in the Statistical Appendices to the S.G.E. Reports of 1905, p.5b and 1912, p.3a.
55 Report of Inspector General of Education, 1883, (G.12-1882), p.11; Education Commission, 1892, Third Report, (G.3-1892), pp.4-5; S.G.E. Report, 1912, p.10.
56 Compare figures in S.G.E.Report 1891, p.5 with S.G.E. Report, 1915, p.9.

priority by the turn of the century. That policy-makers at the Cape looked to Britain, the leading industrial power at the time, for its standards and norms not only emphasized this need but provided a precedent for it to follow.[57]

It was still perceived that the urban economy would require a sizeable unskilled workforce whose relative illiteracy would be a useful means of social control. There was a clear congruence between the ideals of white supremacy and the educational needs of the rapidly developing capitalist economy. Thus the system of public education that was implemented at the Cape from the first decade of the 20th century onwards was very deliberately extended to all whites and only on a very limited and selective basis to non-whites.

The intentional use of education policy as a means of racial domination and labour exploitation was reinforced by a host of other historically determined conditions of inferior and largely segregated housing, higher population growth, a greater dependency ratio, a higher incidence of malnutrition and disease, a greater ratio of female employment and relatively higher costs of living.[58] These conditions reproduced a situation that trapped by far the largest section of the coloured population within the ranks of the labouring poor. Even the small section of the coloured elite

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57 Horrell, p.9, 13; A.L. Behr and R.G. MacMillan, Education in South Africa, (Pretoria, van Schaik, 1966), p.4; chapters 2 and 5 especially.

58 See P. Hugo, (ed.), Quislings or Realists? (Johannesburg, Raven, 1978), pp.13ff. for an analysis of the manner in which such factors operated to reproduce the inferior social, economic and political status of coloureds.

that was able to meet the standards of respectability generally accepted by whites were not able to escape the stigma attached to colour, unless of course, they were able to "pass for white".[59]

At the turn of the century, although still very much a downtrodden group and in practice suffering many more disabilities than a review of the legislation might suggest, the coloured elite on the whole put their faith in the growth and spread of the liberal tradition.They looked to the future with some optimism that the coloureds as a group would advance politically, socially and economically to the stage where educated, "cultured" and "respectable" coloureds would be accepted on a par with whites.

The A.P.O., founded in 1902, was the only coloured political organization of any importance until the 1920's and was only seriously challenged in the 1930's. It represented the upper stratum of the coloured community which was in essence a mixture of petty bourgeois and upper working class elements consisting mostly of skilled artisans, retail traders, clerks, clerics, teachers and a handful of professionals, and many of whom were small property owners. This was a Cape Town centred group since 90 per cent of the coloured

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59 See A.P.O., 24/5/1909; 5/6/1909; 8/4/1911; 12/8/1911; 26/8/1911; 9/9/1911; 18/11/1911; E.J., January, 1921; February, 1921; Marais, p.282; G. Watson, Passing for White; A study of racial assimilation in a South African school, (London, Tavistock, 1970), pp.17 ff;E. Roux, Time Longer than Rope; The black man's struggle for freedom in South Africa, (London, University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), p.28; A. Watson, "The process of passing for white in South Africa; A study in cumulative ad-hocery", Canadian Journal of Sociology and Anthropology, Vol. 4, No. 3, (1967).

population was located in the Western Cape and fully 30 per cent within the metropolitan area of Cape Town itself.[60] Politically, socially and economically the coloured elite was an appendage of white society, on the whole sharing its mores, social practices, religion and languages. Despite some rhetoric to the contrary and some evidence of the influence of W.E.B. Du Bois'[61] ideas of black assertiveness,[62] the aspirations of this group were almost entirely assimilationist. At this stage the coloured elite was virtually unaffected by ideas of socialism and except for the abolition of institutionalized racism - in many cases racism against coloureds only - they did not wish to effect any fundamental changes to society. They wanted to have coloureds assimilated as part and parcel of its structures of inequality, yearned for social acceptance by whites and to be judged individually on their merits.[63]

Coloured assimilationist aspirations were heightened by the Jameson Raid which polarized white political opinion and

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60 A handy summary of the spatial distribution of the population from 1911 - 70 is provided by J. Nattrass, The South African Economy; Its growth and change, (Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1981), p.15, table 1.7.

61 William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1868-1963) was a noted American Negro scholar, journalist and intellectual. His central life's concern was to organize Negroes for collective action against the social injustices they suffered. The dominant theme of his philosophy, which up to the 1930's was strongly assimilationist, was the need for black people to take pride in their racial and cultural distinctiveness and not to adopt the white man's negative image of themselves. See for example, M. Weinberg , (ed.), W.E.B. Du Bois; A reader, (New York, Harper and Row, 1970), pp.xi-xvii; A. Meier, Negro Thought in America, (Ann Arbor, Michigan University Press, 1966), chapter XI.

62 See A.P.O., 8/10/1910; 18/1/1911, for example.

63 See Lewis, chapter 1 especially pp.70ff.

made the black vote a decisive factor in the electoral balance between the English and Afrikaner camps. The competition for African and coloured votes and the possibility of the war spreading to the Cape Colony resulted in a temporary halt on the attack on the non-white political status.[64] Milner further excited coloured assimilationist aspirations by making the championship of coloured political rights one of the reasons for British intervention in the Transvaal.[65]

However, this interlude did not last very long and the first decade of the 20th century became a period of rapidly increasing discrimination against persons of colour. This volte face frustrated coloured assimilationist aspirations and was viewed with alarm by politicized coloureds. Being unable to influence government policy because of their relative political and economic powerlessness, coloureds, particularly the upper strata, were hard pressed to adapt to an increasingly hostile environment.[66] The establishment of the A.P.O. in 1902, ostensibly for the protection of coloured peoples' political rights in the ex-Boer Republics, was the most conspicuous form that the defence of the interests of the coloured elite took. The generous peace granted to the Boers by the Treaty of Vereeniging in 1902, especially the promise not to consider the enfranchisement of non-whites till after self-government had been introduced was the first in a series of major setbacks that coloured ambitions for assimilation was to receive.

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64 Trapido, (1980), p.256; Lewis pp. 27-9.
65 Marais, p.275; Lewis, p.40.
66 See Lewis, pp.163-4.

The coloured political leadership, especially the A.P.O., was ambivalent in its reaction to white racism. They espoused a non-racial ethic that aspired to the acquisition of Western bourgeois culture and the emulation of whites. Yet no matter what degree of "respectability" or personal accomplishment that was achieved, their darker skins or frizzy hair automatically branded them with inferiority and they had to suffer the humiliation of discrimination. Having the coloured status and the negative associations that went with it thrust upon them, the coloured political leadership had little option but to mobilize its political resources on an ethnic basis by making an appeal to people's identity as coloureds. Trapido has pointed out that from the beginnings of local governmental institutions at the Cape, many non-whites had been acutely aware of the value of exercising their political rights. During the latter part of the 19th century there had developed a coloured political identity through the involvement of coloureds in municipal and parliamentary politics and the attempt to mobilize political opposition to discriminatory measures.[67]

The A.P.O. leadership vacillated between accepting and rejecting this separate identity because the demands of moral principle and political expediency were contradictory. This contradiction came to be clearly embodied in the A.P.O. which in principle adhered to a non-racist and assimilationist philosophy. The A.P.O. stood for the

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67 S. Trapido, "The origin and development of the African Political Organization", I.C.S., Vol.1, (1969-70), p.89. See also van der Ross, (1973), pp.9ff.

creation of a non-racial society, in which talent, "civilization" and belonging to the British Empire or having South African citizenship were to be the main criteria for judging the individual's capacity for exercising political rights.[68] Yet the A.P.O. was an explicitly coloured body with its over-all aim being the advancement of the coloured people.[69] The A.P.O. reconciled this contradiction by adopting a stance greatly influenced by the ideology of Booker T. Washington[70] who preached a philosophy of accommodation with whites.[71]

The A.P.O. in 1909 endorsed the opinion that the best way to gain "full political freedom and privileges" was "...to better ourselves, improve our education, mode of living and environment, seek to become proficient in our calling and trades".[72] Writing soon after Union, when there was a need for a fundamental reconsideration of the organization's aims and strategies, the A.P.O. stressed that coloureds were

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68 See A.P.O., 24/5/1909; 18/12/1909 for example.

69 Trapido, (1970), p.245.

70 See A.P.O.,31/7/1909; 12/2/1910; 13/9/1910; 22/10/1910; 5/11/1910, for a few examples.

71 Booker Taliaferro Washington (1856-1915) was born in slavery but rose to become an eminent educationist and the most prominent American Negro leader of his day. The basic tenet of his teaching was that Negroes should temporarily accept discrimination and instead of an aggressive pursuit of social equality should endeavour to elevate themselves through hard work, educational improvement and strict observance of moral standards to achieve economic self-sufficiency and become model citizens. They would thus win the respect of whites who through their economic self-interest and sense of social justice would accord Negroes full civil rights. See for example L. Harlan, Booker T. Washington; The making of a black leader, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1972), especially chapter 11; A. Taylor, Travail and Triumph; Black life and culture in the South since the Civil War, (Westport, Greenwood Press, 1976), pp.54-5; Meier, chapter 7.

72 A.P.O., 31/7/1909.

entering a critical decade in their history, "in which especially we shall be required to prove that we are worthy of these political and other rights which we claim as loyal British subjects".[73]

The A.P.O. as an organization placed undue importance on education as a means of achieving its over-all aim of the general advancement of the coloured people. Educational improvement ranked second in the A.P.O.'s list of five aims,[74] its newspaper regularly devoted a great deal of space to matters relating to coloured education, it was one of the most popular topics of discussion at branch meetings and agitation for educational reform became one of the most important foci of A.P.O. activity in the aftermath of Union.[75]

Dr. Abdurahman, who completely dominated the A.P.O. for the entire 35 years of his presidency, not only endorsed the idea that educational improvement was a key factor in the social and political upliftment of coloureds, but greatly helped to entrench the idea. Both to himself and the rest of the coloured community he was a living example of the power of education to uplift the coloureds. He had risen above the obscurity of his birth in Wellington in 1872 and his descent

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73 A.P.O., 3/12/1910.

74 The A.P.O.'s five aims were: (i) to promote unity amongst coloureds; (ii) to obtain better education for coloureds; (iii) to protect coloured social, political and civil rights; (iv) to have all those coloureds who met the franchise qualifications registered as voters; (v) the general advancement of the coloured people of South Africa. For the original text see South African News, 1/10/1902; 25/2/1903.

75 See for example A.P.O., 6/11/1909; 1/1/1910; 15/1/1910; 26/8/1910.

from grandparents who were manumitted slaves to a position of social eminence.[76] His qualification as a medical doctor in Glasgow in 1898 and subsequent election to the City Council in 1904 and the Presidency of the A.P.O. in 1905 were directly attributable to the secondary education he had received at Marist Brothers and the South African College School in Cape Town.[77] Abdurahman ceaselessly agitated for educational reform both as President of the A.P.O. and as a member of the City and Provincial Councils. He spearheaded the protest against the discriminatory School Board Act[78] and played a leading role in the founding of several educational institutions such as Trafalgar High School in 1911, the first school for Moslems in Aspeling Street in 1913 and Livingstone High School in Claremont in 1934.[79]

Abdurahman and the A.P.O. in general considered the simultaneous improvement of their education and the eradication of social evils such as alcoholism and crime to be the most practical means of improving the social and political status of the coloured people.[80] Education was accorded a particularly important role in the upliftment of coloureds since improved education was regarded as the basic solution to the social problems afflicting the coloured community. It was also argued that it was the lack of educational facilities that left children free to roam the

76 Simons and Simons, pp. 117 - 120.

77 J.W. de Kock, et al, (eds.), Dictionary of South African Biography, Vol.1, (Cape Town, Tafelberg, 1976), pp.1-2; E.L. Maurice, (1966), Appendix E.

78 Cape Argus, 25/2/1905; S.A. News, 25/2/1905; 8/3/1905; The Owl, 17/3/1905.

79 Maurice, (1966), p.425; Sun, 8/3/1940; van der Ross, (1973), p.523.

80 A.P.O. 4/6/1910; 3/10/1910; 21/12/1912; Sun, 8/3/1940; Trapido, (1969-70), p.97; Trapido, (1970), p.425.

streets, acquire vicious habits and become a menace to society.[81] Furthermore, educational improvement would have won for coloureds a greater say in the political affairs of the country since it would have helped them to meet both the literacy and economic requirements of the franchise qualifications. An A.P.O. editorial proclaimed that, "Knowledge is power, no matter what may be the nature of it...It [education] is the greatest uplifting power in the world, and by means of it more will be accomplished than by any other means at our disposal".[82] Abdurahman constantly reiterated the A.P.O.'s standpoint that "it is not race or colour but civilization which is the test of man's capacity for political rights".[83] The teachers who were to take the lead in the T.L.S.A. strongly supported these ideas.[84]

As a consequence teachers were allocated a particularly important role in society and the social elevation of coloureds. An A.P.O. editorial said of the teacher that "...his work is of the highest calling. The influence he wields in shaping the minds of those under his care, and in largely making their characters what they are forever to be is seldom recognized".[85] This was certainly a point of view shared by the influential group of politicized teachers attached to the A.P.O. and was endorsed at the inauguration of the T.L.S.A. and on countless occasions after that.[86]

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81 A.P.O., 1/7/1912.
82 A.P.O., 2/7/1910.
83 A.P.O., 18/12/1909; van der Ross, (1973), p.484; South African Dictionary of Biography, Vol 1, p.2.
84 Educational Journal, August, 1915; December, 1920.
85 A.P.O., 2/7/1910.
86 M. Adhikari, "The origin and founding of the Teachers' League of South Africa", (B.A. (Hons.), U.C.T., 1981), pp.43-5, 75 ff.

Teachers formed a very important part of the coloured elite of the time and were very conscious of their professional status because the coloured group had no other substantial professional class. Van der Ross points out that the teaching profession held high prestige because teachers "were literate, relatively learned, eloquent on occasion, well dressed, approved by...the white authorities".[87] The leading teachers were extremely self-conscious of their elevated status within the coloured community. They tended to appropriate for themselves the primary role in the upliftment of coloureds from their degradation, in leading them forward and upwards to civilization, to equality and acceptance by the white society which at the moment treated them as social outcasts in their homeland.[88]

As his Presidential Address to A.P.O. conferences and articles in the A.P.O. attest, Abdurahman was under no illusions about the deficiencies and exploitative nature of the segregated education system that had developed and was being deliberately maintained for coloureds. He was of the opinion that the differential education systems were the result of whites trying to restrict non-white access to education so as to retain them as "agricultural drudges and labourers" and to continue using coloureds "as a means of ministering to their ease and pleasure, as a source of rendering themselves more comfortable".[89] The blame was squarely placed on the shoulders of the "government" for

87 van der Ross, (1973), p.702.
88 See chapter 5.
89 A. Abdurahman, The Education Bill, (Cape Town, S.A. Newspaper Co., 23/2/1905); A.P.O., 28/1/1911.

being indifferent whether coloured children became "black perils, hooligans, vagrants and criminals" and being "more anxious to have illiterate, ignorant and criminal Coloured men and women than an educated, industrious and upright black population".[90] He was also severely critical of the racist attitudes of the white public in general and particularly of school board members.

> "With them it [education] is not the drawing out of the faculties of the child. It simply means filling his mind with those facts which may be of service to him in fulfilling the work he may be called upon to perform; and the filling-in process of the coloured child's mind is to be carried on in a different building from that in which the white youngster's mind is operated on...Any education that would give a being a thought beyond his station in life is accursed in their eyes. The black people are the descendants of Ham according to their ideas. They were meant to be the hewers of wood and drawers of water through all eternity".[91]

Furthermore, Abdurahman was personally affected by the trend towards increasing educational segregation. Despite representations to the S.G.E. in 1907, his daughters, Zainunissa and Waradia, were not allowed to attend white public schools,[92] as he had done, even though no facilities for the separate secondary schooling of coloureds existed.

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90 A.P.O., 15/7/1912.

91 A.P.O., 19/6/1909;See T.D. Moodie, The rise of Afrikanerdom; Power Apartheid and the Afrikaner civil religion, (Berkeley, California University Press, 1975), p.245 and R. van der Ross, Myths and Attitudes; An inside look at the coloured people, (Cape Town, Tafelberg, 1979), p.2 for the significance of this Biblical reference.

92 Letter dated 25/10/1907 from Dept. of Education to Mrs. H. Abdurahman, Abdurahman Family Papers, U.C.T. Manuscripts and Archives Division; Abdurahman, (1905), p.1; Maurice, (1966), p.168.

Although Harold Cressy has generally been hailed as the founder of the T.L.S.A.,[93] it is clear that Dr. Abdurahman was the key figure in the establishment of the League. The leading teachers in Cape Town, particularly those active in organizing the League's inauguration, looked to the A.P.O. for leadership and Abdurahman was the oracle they consulted.

Both Harold Cressy and H.J. Gordon, the teachers who took the initiative in establishing the T.L.S.A., were members of the A.P.O. Harold Cressy first attracted Abdurahman's attention as a bright young prospect when he was unable to take up a teaching bursary granted to him by the Education Department in 1909 because the South African, Rhodes and Victoria Colleges refused him entry on grounds of colour. Cressy became Abdurahman's protege after Abdurahman and Morris Alexander used their leverage as City Councillors to gain him entry to the South African College in Cape Town.[94] Cressy was also intimately connected with the A.P.O. hierarchy in Cape Town. He served as the Assistant Secretary of the Cape Town branch, delivered lectures at A.P.O. branch meetings, was given much exposure by the A.P.O. after gaining the distinction of being the first coloured B.A. graduate and married a Miss Hartogh, sister of the general treasurer of the A.P.O.[95] H.J. Gordon was a teacher of very high standing in the coloured community with many years of teaching experience. Prior to the establishment of the League he had gained the signal achievement for a coloured

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93 See for example E.J., July - September, 1926; October - November, 1970.

94 A.P.O., 11/2/1911; Sun, 18/5/1934.

95 A.P.O., 11/2/1911; 15/7/1911; 27/7/1911; 12/8/1911; 18/11/1911; 21/9/1912; 5/10/1912; 8/2/1913.

teacher of having served on the Executive Committee of the Cape Division Branch of the South African Teachers' Association of which he had been a member for 20 years.[96]

Abdurahman and the A.P.O. stood to gain much from the proposed teachers' association. There was the strong possibility that the coloured teaching profession as a whole, which had hitherto remained politically dormant, could be drawn into close alliance with the A.P.O. Abdurahman was also acutely aware of the wide range of educational problems with which such an organization could grapple. The prospect of having an organized and officially recognized body of coloured teachers to take care of the more mundane and specialized aspects of the crucial issue of coloured educational improvement whilst supporting him politically must have been attractive. That such an organization would have taken a considerable burden off the shoulders of the A.P.O was attested to by Abdurahman:

> "The A.P.O. is the wide-awake watchdog of the Coloured man's interests. But these interests are multifarious and the work of the organization, educational and political, has become somewhat excessive, and it is time that our teachers performed a share and discharged the much-needed and specialized function of the wide-awake watchdog of the Coloured child's education".[97]

It is apparent that at an informal level, the T.L.S.A. was founded by Abdurahman and a coterie of teachers under his influence. Twenty-one years after the official inauguration Abdurahman admitted that "the League was formed in my own house".[98] This is confirmed by J.H. Reynard who wrote a

96 A.P.O., 24/8/1912.
97 A.P.O., 27/7/1912.
98 Sun, 29/6/1934.

series of 16 biographical articles on Abdurahman based partly on their long-standing friendship.[99]

There is no indication of when this meeting was held relative to the publication of the anonymous letter in the A.P.O. of 13 July 1912, but in all likelihood preceded it. This letter was probably a ploy used by Abdurahman and his close allies to test public opinion and publicize the attempt to form a coloured teachers' association.[100] It was also clear at the preparatory meeting of 22 March 1913 dominated by Cressy and Gordon, that the crucial decisions regarding the proposed association had already been made,[101] were being presented for public approval and had Abdurahman's full support.[102]

This initial connection of the T.L.S.A. with the A.P.O. is of significance for a variety of reasons. Abdurahman was a man of immense standing amongst coloureds and he had control of valuable organizational resources. His approval and cooperation were important to getting the association launched, especially if it was to be independent of the church authorities and the Education Department. At this stage, the coloured teaching profession was relatively indigent, geographically dislocated and denominationally fragmented. Previous attempts at forming a coloured teachers' association had failed largely due to a lack of organizational resources.[103] Abdurahman through his control

99 Sun, 1/3/1940-14/6/1940.
100 See Adhikari, p.15 for further details.
101 Cape Argus, 22/3/1913; Cape Times, 24/3/1913.
102 A.P.O., 22/3/1913.
103 Adhikari, pp. 1-3 for details.

of the A.P.O. was able to provide this attempt with some financial and organizational assistance in its initial stages. Importantly, the regular public meetings, the well-developed branch system and the A.P.O.'s newspaper could give the founding the publicity, and later, the association the support that was needed. But most importantly, the A.P.O. provided the T.L.S.A. at the outset with a basic philosophy and strategy that was to set its tone for the following three decades.

There were however sound practical reasons for suppressing this link between the two organizations in the public eye. Care was taken that no direct connection between the two could be made.The church authorities on the whole were antagonistic toward the A.P.O. and the Education Department strongly disapproved of teachers being involved in politics.[104] The Teachers' League would be in a much better position to gain official recognition and to negotiate with school managers and the Education Department if it were free from the taint of being politically motivated.

With such great importance attached to the role of education in the advancement of coloureds, the state of coloured education was indeed a cause for great concern to the A.P.O. and the coloured elite in general. The government had virtually abdicated responsibility for coloured education, having shunted it upon the mission establishments who did not have the resources to meet the material demands made upon them. The churches were utterly unable to provide

104 A.P.O., 29/7/1911; 27/7/1912; Interview with D. van der Ross, 29/6/1981.

adequate accommodation because they received no state aid for the erection and maintenance of school buildings and because the congregations they served were poor.

The accommodation offered was invariably unsuitable, usually being makeshift or intended for religious services. Many schools had no playground and some even did not have toilets on the premises. Classrooms in general were crowded, poorly ventilated and inadequately lit. Furniture and equipment were often of an unsatisfactory nature, as a rule in scant supply and at times completely lacking. There were many instances especially in the rural areas of up to four classes sharing one room which might be partitioned by curtains and pupils having to sit on the floor or in pews. Large numbers of scholars were unable to afford bare necessities such as books, slates and pencils. Indeed, many were inadequately dressed and suffered from malnutrition.[105] At the T.L.S.A. inaugural conference, Dr. A.H. Gool estimated that well over 80 per cent of coloured school children suffered from either tooth decay or infestation with lice whilst up to 30% might have suffered from more serious afflictions such as defective eyesight and hearing, malnutrition, anaemia, consumption and "mental deficiencies".[106] It was also abundantly clear that the mission education system had an exceedingly unbalanced structure. In 1913 65 per cent of all pupils in non-white

105 See Maurice, (1966), pp. 23ff.; Education Gazette, 5/10/1911; 14/10/1915; M. Friedling, The Jeanes Plan and its application to coloured education, (B.Ed., U.C.T., 1940); F.P. Joshua, An analysis of the social, economic and educational background of coloured school children in the Cape Peninsula, (B.Ed., U.C.T., 1943).

106 A.P.O., 12/7/1913. See E.J., October, 1916 for the League being in basic agreement with these figures.

mission schools were in the sub-standards and 99 per cent in standard V or below.[107]

Even the few coloured public schools were in a poor condition. The A.P.O. described the most prestigious coloured public school in the following manner, "The equipment of the Trafalgar Public School is unsatisfactory and its building is a disgrace to the School Board and a monument to the selfishness and neglect of the authorities."[108]

There was considerable animosity between the A.P.O. and the church authorities over the issue of the control of coloured education. The A.P.O. saw the fundamental step in the solution to the problems of coloured education to be the transfer of the responsibility for coloured education from the churches to the state. Although prepared to acknowledge the debt that coloured education owed the missions, Abdurahman and the A.P.O. in general did not mince words about the detriment suffered by coloureds as a result of continued mission responsibility for their education.[109] Mission education, it was argued, had outlived its usefulness and now only served to handicap coloureds. Even if they wanted to, the churches through a sheer lack of resources were unable to provide coloureds with an adequate education. They could not provide proper accommodation and equipment, pay teachers an adequate salary, implement a system of compulsory education nor provide secondary

107 S.G.E. Report, 1913, Statistical Index, p.43a.
108 A.P.O., 25/1/1913; 22/2/1914; 19/4/1913.
109 A.P.O., 5/4/1913; 29/7/1911.

education on any scale. The A.P.O. and Abdurahman on more than one occasion made stinging attacks upon the mission establishment for trying to strengthen their hold on coloured education.[110] The realization that coloureds were subsidizing white education by paying for part of the costs of mission education yet being fully liable for all rates and taxes, reinforced A.P.O. opposition to mission education.[111] The A.P.O. constantly agitated for the transfer of the control of coloured education to school boards and for more public schools to be established.

The missions in general, however, tended to see the solution to the problems of coloured education to be increased state aid. They wanted greater subsidies for teachers' salaries, grants for new buildings and equipment and the payment of rent for buildings used for educational purposes. It was denied that mission education was inferior to public education. They argued that it was the greater efficiency of the mission school that allowed it to operate on a smaller budget than the public school.[112] Besides being averse to having one of their major areas of influence on the congregations undermined, the missions laid great stress on the importance of the spiritual benefits mission education bestowed upon coloureds. A typical example is the Church Chronicle's endorsement of this view;

> Education is worthy of its name only when it deliberately sets before itself as its purpose, however it may be hampered in realizing it, that its office is not merely to sharpen the wits or impart information or cultivate faculties, but to insure, as far as possible,

110 A.P.O., 29/7/1911; 21/10/1911; 8/4/1914.
111 A.P.O., 7/10/1911.
112 Church Chronicle, 3/4/1913.

> that when children pass into men they shall recognize their Eternal Father; they shall know Who died to save them; they shall feel from whose hand they came and what they were made for; their eyes shall be opened to the high calling of duty now, to that unspeakable future of holiness and love and rest which is the goal of our running.[113]

In reply to an A.P.O. attack on the detrimental effects of continued mission education on coloureds, the Church Chronicle, the organ of the Anglican Church of the Province of South Africa, retorted that "education without religion was a very imperfect blessing" and that they would continue to oppose the establishment of undenominational schools but, not slacken in their efforts to secure for coloureds a "better, more suitable and complete education".[114] Many coloureds themselves were convinced of the superiority of mission education because of the spiritual benefits it offered. Indeed, some even went so far as considering literacy primarily as a skill to be used for reading the scriptures.[115]

Friction between the A.P.O. and the churches was more deeply rooted than the problem of the control of coloured education. The basic reason for antagonism was that the two were to a significant extent in competition for support from coloured individuals.

At the turn of the century the churches had considerable influence on the opinions, attitudes and daily life of the coloured community, particularly amongst the upper strata.

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113 Church Chronicle, 13/6/1912.
114 Church Chronicle, 17/4/1913.
115 van der Ross, (1973), p.660.

Being largely concerned with inculcating the Christian virtues of piety and industry, the church on the whole disapproved of members of their congregation being involved in politics. They often took active steps to prevent such involvement even though they were prepared to admit that coloureds were unjustly treated. The attitudes of white clergymen towards coloureds tended to be paternalistic and they regarded themselves as the protectors and spokesmen of their congregations.[116] Noted exceptions to these attitudes were the African Methodist Episcopal Church and a handful of "liberal, progressive" clergymen that tended to come from the upper echelons of the Anglican Church in South Africa.

A common attitude to matters educational was that of the Teachers' Review, a journal for coloured teachers produced by the Moravian Mission at Genadendal that aimed to be "a welcome friend and ready helper to the lonely teacher", to give him friendly advice, to help overcome his isolation and to bring the higher aims of the true teacher before his mind. But one qualification made was that, "...there is actually one subject we don't want to deal with at all, and that is 'politics'. We must move on strictly professional lines and refrain entirely from political or race questions, which serve only to stir up and hurt other peoples' feelings".[117]

The A.P.O. on the other hand was a secular organisation that appealed for support on a basis that tended to undermine the influence of the churches upon their congregations. In

116 Marais, chapter 12; A.P.O., 27/7/1912.
117 Teachers' Review, March, 1907.

trying to mobilize political support by appealing to peoples' identity and interests as coloureds, the A.P.O. undermined both the wider identity of Christianity and importantly the narrower identity of denominationalism, the bases upon which the churches mobilized support. The churches were further alienated from the A.P.O. by the fact that its leader was Moslem.[118]

The Education Department and Provincial Council avidly supported the missions' point of view largely because they got coloured education on the cheap and the system helped to ensure the perpetuation of white supremacy. In their public utterances and in reply to deputations, Muir, the S.G.E., and Sir Frederick de Waal, the Administrator of the Cape, harped on the great debt that coloureds owed the missions and on the salutary effects of mission education on the coloured community.

Probably the most immediate impulse for the formation of the T.L.S.A. were the professionally degrading and socially humiliating conditions[119] under which coloured teachers served. The A.P.O. recognized that the coloured teacher was unappreciated, ill-paid, badly trained, overworked and lacked "self-assertiveness and push and insistence on his social and economic worth".[120]

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118 D. van der Ross, interviewed 29/6/1981; see S.A. News 18/2/1913 for even some Christian coloureds criticizing the A.P.O. for this reason.

119 A.P.O., 29/3/1911; 29/7/1911; 24/8/1912; 22/2/1913.

120 A.P.O., 2/7/1910.

The main complaint of coloured teachers at the time was the extremely low salary that they received. The state paid maximum grants-in-aid of L75 and L45 annually toward the salaries of principal and assistant teachers respectively, provided a local contribution of half the grant was made. This would bring the assistant's maximum salary to L67.10s. and the principal's to L107.10s. per annum. However, coloured teachers' salaries were considerably lower than the maxima indicated.

In his Presidential address to the 1922 Annual Conference of the T.L.S.A. van der Ross estimated the average salaries of assistant and principal teachers to have been about L40 and 160 respectively in 1913.[121] The A.P.O. claimed that many qualified female teachers received as little as L24 per annum and highlighted the case of a particular coloured teacher, probably Harold Cressy, who with "the most excellent professional and university qualifications" earned L30 per annum from which a monthly train ticket of 17/6d had to be bought.[122] In its very first issue, the Educational Journal gave publicity to an advertisement for a mission school teacher for the sum of L18 p.a.[123] The salaries of mission school posts advertised in the Education Gazette in the year prior to the establishment of the T.L.S.A., in general, ranged between L30 p.a. and L60 p.a. with offers as low as L19 plus board being made. White teachers' salaries ranged between L60 p.a. and L120 p.a. with that of the principals reaching up to L400 p.a.[124] That salaries

121 E.J., August, 1922.
122 A.P.O., 27/9/1911.
123 E.J., May, 1915.
124 Education Gazette, 1912-13.

were at times paid quarterly caused inconvenience and further disgruntlement.[125] The A.P.O. was thus justified in its complaint that "The pay of our mission school teachers is indeed a disgrace and it is difficult to see how a civilized government can tolerate such a state of affairs."[126] L100 per annum was recommended as a reasonable minimum salary.[127]

The A.P.O. compared these figures to the L150-500 that it claimed white teachers in public schools, and the L300-500 school managers, earned.[128] Furthermore, the A.P.O. contrasted coloured teachers' salaries with the L70 per annum it claimed street sweepers to be earning[129] and the Educational Journal with the L110 that dirt-cart drivers of the Cape Town Municipality were supposed to be earning.[130] Although these figures would appear to be exaggerated, they nevertheless indicate a painful awareness amongst teachers that their salaries were not commensurate with their social status. An anonymous supporter of the proposal to form a coloured teachers' association was motivated by the fear that "a time will come when the professional men will have to satisfy themselves with such low salaries as that of a common labourer".[131]

Schools that did not want to accept government assistance paid their teachers whatever they could manage. Also, since

125 E.J., October, 1920.
126 A.P.O., 22/2/1913.
127 A.P.O., 29/7/1911.
128 A.P.O., 29/7/1911; 15/6/1912; 22/2/1913; Cape Times, 25/6/1913.
129 A.P.O., 29/7/1911; 29/3/1911.
130 E.J.,April, 1921.
131 A.P.O., 24/8/1912.

the Education Department regarded boarding and lodging or use of land as part of the local contribution, many teachers were forced to accept such payments in kind at probably inflated estimates. They often did not need, and at times did not even receive these services but nevertheless acquiesced in order to allow the school to qualify for a government grant towards their salary.[132] In addition, the teacher was often expected to perform a considerable amount of extramural work in order to help raise money by means of bazaars, concerts, fetes and the like, for that part of the local contribution that could not be collected as school fees. Many teachers found it necessary to supplement their income with subsidiary activities such as collecting insurance money, or doing part-time work as a salesman or bookkeeper.[133]

There were also no set salary scales or system of regular increments. Coloured teachers thus often worked for years, even decades, without an increase in salary. A sore point with the older teachers that came to form the vanguard of the Teachers' League, was the complete absence of a proper pension scheme for mission school teachers. Coloured teachers could only look forward to an insecure and bleak existence after retirement.[134]

In view of the substantial school holidays enjoyed by teachers, the absence of any right to furlough was regarded

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132 Education Gazette, 31/10/1912; 25/6/1914. See also E.J. October, 1920; July - December, 1927.

133 E.J., March, 1921; January - March, 1925; October - December, 1925.

134 E.J. March, 1921; May, 1922; August, 1923.

to be of minor consequence compared to the other disabilities they suffered. Far more serious was the absence of sick leave arrangements. If a teacher was too ill to teach, the only recourse he had was to find a replacement at a lower salary and to draw the difference. With the teachers already grossly underpaid and the churches not being prepared to finance a sick teacher's leave, this provision was of little comfort. This resulted in much suffering, both with sick teachers continuing to teach and more so with the teacher who was seriously ill having to forfeit his salary.[135]

An important grievance of the coloured mission school teacher was the great power wielded over him by the school manager who in virtually all cases was a white priest. Coloured teachers, especially those who took pride in their professional qualifications, bitterly complained that the school manager who had de facto control of appointments to posts, discriminated on denominational grounds and that the applicants' willingness to be a Sunday-school teacher, catechist, evangelist, organist and to do other church-oriented work counted far more than his educational qualifications.[136]

Managers were also accused of racism in that many not only preferred to appoint white staff but often advertised expressly for whites, who tended to occupy the better posts. The white teachers in mission schools were often accused of

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135 E.J. June, 1916; May, 1922; January, 1923; August, 1923.

136 A.P.O., 27/7/1911.

being racist, of not having the interests of their pupils at heart and only consenting to teach in mission schools because they could not for some reason or other find employment in public schools. Renkewitz pithily noted that "white teachers prefer higher salaries and white pupils".[137]

White female principals at mission schools were singled out for special comment.[138] Many of these ladies owed their appointment to their evangelical zeal and although often competent, qualified and not without sympathy for coloureds, their presence in mission schools caused much resentment because of the constraints this unfair competition put on job opportunities for coloured teachers.[139] Both the A.P.O. and later the T.L.S.A. were to campaign ceaselessly for the acceptance in practice of the principle of employing coloured teachers in coloured schools and that the Department take responsibility for appointments.[140] The mission school teacher had no security of tenure and was extremely vulnerable to victimization and dismissal by the school manager, particularly for offences such as agitating for better working conditions, refusing to do church work or for supporting the A.P.O., and later, the T.L.S.A.[141]

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137 Renkewitz, p.2.

138 Cape Times, 25/6/1913; E.J., February, 1921.

139 In 1923 when statistics for coloured education first became available 19 % of the total of 1134 teachers in coloured schools were white, S.G.E. Report, 1923-4, Statistical Appendix, pp.190, 192; see also A.P.O., 22/4/1911; 9/9/1911; E.J., May, 1915; July, 1917.

140 A.P.O.,9/9/1911. See Cape Argus and S.A. News, 24/6/1913 for endorsement of this view at the inaugural conference.

141 A.P.O.,29/7/1911; 7/9/1912; 27/7/1913; Interview with D van der Ross, 29/6/1981.

A significant complaint amongst coloured teachers revolved around the question of training and qualifications. There was a serious lack of teacher training facilities for coloureds. By far the largest number of coloured teachers had been trained by either the invidious monitor or the inadequate pupil-teacher systems. With the monitor system, one of the senior pupils at the school, usually a student with a Std.IV education, was put in charge of one of the sub-standards and after several years of service would gain recognition as a teacher. The pupil-teacher system was also in the nature of an apprenticeship but was more strictly controlled. During school hours the pupil-teacher would teach and afterwards was supposed to receive at least one hour of instruction from the master or mistress in preparation for the yearly examination they were required to write. The candidate would usually be compelled to spend a year at a training institution before being accepted as fully qualified by the Education Department.[142] The abuse of pupil-teachers as "teaching mules" was sufficiently serious for Muir to institute a system of inspection to curb the malpractice.[143]

The only colleges training appreciable numbers of coloured teachers by the time of Union were the Zonnebloem College in Cape Town, and the Hankey mission station in the Eastern Cape. Genadendal was also producing a few teachers

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142 C.G.L. Pieterse, The training of coloured teachers at the Cape since 1865, (B.Ed. thesis, U.C.T., 1952), pp.14-23; S.V. Jacobs, The development of post-primary education for the coloured child in the Cape Province since 1900, (B.Ed., U.C.T., 1946), pp. 5-6.

143 S.G.E. Report, 1893, p.23.

annually.[144] The shortage of teacher training facilities was compounded not only by the sheer lack of economic resources of most coloureds to gain the requisite Std. VI education but also because few mission schools went beyond Std. IV. Furthermore the lack of control of appointments to posts by the Education Department, resulted in a relatively large and motley assortment of unqualified teachers at mission schools. There was some anxiety within the A.P.O. about the competence of these teachers and the small group of influential and qualified teachers attached to the A.P.O. was concerned to uphold and increase the prestige of their profession.[145]

The Teachers' League came into existence after a decade of rapidly increasing discrimination against persons of colour. Politicized coloureds had good reason to be perturbed by the terms of the Treaty of Vereeniging and their denial of the municipal franchise in 1903 by the British Administrations in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony.[146] The A.P.O.'s failure to have the provisions of the School Board Act extended to coloureds was a severe setback to the coloured elite's social aspirations. This was soon followed by the failure of the A.P.O. delegation to the British Government in June 1906 to prevent a highly discriminatory franchise being granted to both the Transvaal in 1906 and the O.F.S. in 1907 upon their attainment of Responsible Government. However, a greater shock came in 1909 when the negotiations for Union had been finalized and incorporated

144 S.G.E.Report, 1911, p.17.
145 A.P.O., 2/7/1910; 29/7/1911; 27/7/1912.
146 Marais, p.277.

into the South Africa Act. A second A.P.O. delegation to the British Government failed to have any influence on the Cape Parliament's agreement to the maintenance of the colour bar in the franchise in the rest of the Union and its forfeiting of the rights of non-whites to be elected to Parliament. The A.P.O. had not misjudged the situation when it adopted a resolution at its 1910 Conference "that the day of the inaugurating of the Union of South Africa be observed as a day of mourning by the Coloured people of South Africa".[147]

South African blacks, especially the elite groups, were alarmed at the erosion of their social and political status as discriminatory measures on all fronts followed thick and fast after Union. Africans were severely affected by the 1911 Mines and Works Act and the 1913 Land Act whilst Indians embarked on a passive resistance campaign under the leadership of Gandhi in protest against infringements of their civil rights.[148]

Coloureds had severe inroads made into their political rights at parliamentary level, were barred from graded posts in the civil service, had the segregatory intentions of the School Board Act confirmed by the judiciary in the notorious Keimoes Case, were barred from active service in the armed forces by the Defence Act No. 13 of 1912 and were subjected to renewed efforts to segregate the Dutch Reformed Church.

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147 A.P.O., 7/5/1910. See also A.P.O., 4/6/1910; 31/5/1913.

148 T.R.H. Davenport, pp. 177-183; P. Walshe, The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, The African National Congress, 1912 - 82, (London, C. Hurst, 1970), chapter 2; Simons and Simons, especially chapter 6.

Although coloureds retained the franchise, they lost the right to be elected to Parliament and coloureds outside the Cape were not enfranchised. Moreover, their political influence was diluted by the union of the Cape with the northern colonies which were considered to be much more rabidly racist. Customary discrimination also increased noticeably after Union[149]

After the utter failure of the A.P.O. to have the Draft South Africa Act changed and protesting against the unfairness of the terms of Union had become futile, the A.P.O. turned to the more modest and pragmatic strategy of pursuing smaller-scale but more immediately attainable goals for the upliftment of the coloured people. Accordingly, from 1911 onwards, agitation for better educational facilities for coloureds became a major concern of the A.P.O. In the years immediately after Union, there were several controversies concerning coloured education that could only have highlighted the need for a coloured teachers' association.

Soon after Union, the attention of the coloured elite was gripped by the Keimoes Case in which the A.P.O. and Abdurahman gave their full backing to Eugene Moller's unsuccessful attempt to challenge the discriminatory intentions of the School Board Act in court. Moller was a white man, who had married a coloured woman and was trying to enforce the right of his children to attend the local

149 A.P.O., 8/4/1911; 12/8/1911; 24/8/1912; 5/4/1913; Davenport pp.167-9; Van der Ross (1973) p.468; Lewis, pp. 166-8; Marais, p.134.

public school. There is a very strong possibility that the Keimoes Case was a covert A.P.O. strategem to test the degree to which the School Board Act could be enforced because Moller was one of the more active members of the Keimoes Branch of the A.P.O. [150] For more than six months the A.P.O. gave the case an extraordinary amount of publicity, at times devoting an excessive amount of space to it.[151] It also launched a Keimoes Appeal Fund that collected over L60 to help Moller to meet legal costs.[152] What was particularly galling about the Keimoes judgement was that even though the court found that there was no reliable means of distinguishing between light-skinned coloureds and whites it nevertheless stipulated the criterion for determining whiteness to be 100 per cent European descent. Free rein was given to local customs and prejudices by allowing the right of admission to rest with the local school board.[153]

In 1911 the Education Department announced that coloured pupil teachers were to be barred from the Training Institute in Queen Victoria Street, Cape Town.[154] This must have been a severe blow to several aspirant coloured teachers, especially amongst the elite. At this stage, the facilities for training coloured teachers were exceedingly deficient and the Training Institute appears to have been the only avenue by which coloureds had access to teacher training

150 A.P.O., 7/10/1911; See Keimoes branch reports in A.P.O. for example. A.P.O., 8/3/1913.
151 A.P.O., 26/8/1911 - 23/3/1912.
152 This estimate only takes account of donations acknowledged in the A.P.O. It is quite possible that Moller received financial assistance from private sources, especially Abdurahman.
153 A.P.O., 26/8/1911.
154 Education Gazette, 2/2/1911; S.G.E. Report, 1912, p.37.

facilities and qualifications of the standard available to whites. This development was the sequel to the racial differentiation of teacher training that had been implemented from 1909 onwards. Before this, teacher training had theoretically been the same for all candidates. However, after 1909 white teacher trainees were required to attain an entrance standard of Std. VII as opposed to the Std. VI for coloureds, the contents of the courses differed, they were to write different examinations and the old T.3 Certificate reserved for coloureds was to be designated "Junior" whilst that open to whites, "Senior".[155] Thus, not only was it the explicit policy of the Education Department to give coloured teachers an inferior training but they were placed at a further disadvantage in competition with whites for mission school posts.

In the following year Abdurahman again found good reason to sharply criticize the education authorities. He castigated the Cape School Board for spending its entire L60 000 grant on white schools while the coloured public schools under its jurisdiction were in a bad state of repair.[156]

Later in 1912 the A.P.O. was involved in an embarrassing public dispute over the discriminatory practices of the Witwatersrand Central School Board. This incident helped to further focus A.P.O. attention on education and reinforce the need for a specialist body to represent the educational interests of coloureds. The Board was alleged to have sanctioned the appointment of whites to the better posts in

155 Maurice, (1966), pp. 365-6.
156 A.P.O., 1/6/1912.

coloured schools and even to have transferred coloured teachers holding such posts to the rural areas in order to provide employment for whites. A group of this School Board's white teachers who were employed at coloured schools protested against its apparent subsequent acceptance of a coloured delegation's request that the principle of employing coloured teachers in coloured schools be observed. The protesting white teachers claimed that it was dangerous to educate coloured children under "Ethiopian doctrines', that coloured competition with whites in education should be eliminated and that they objected to "the obnoxiousness of an unrepresentative A.P.O. sponsoring the alleged demands of Coloured parents generally". They denied that coloureds could ever become adequate teachers and they pointed to the importance of the employment of trained white teachers in directing the minds of growing coloured children. It was claimed that "the immorality of the Coloured children was shocking", that "the white girl had a surprising influence over Coloured children" and that it was due to the white teachers' influence that coloured schools were conducted "on a basis approximating morality".[157]

An important incentive for the more secularly oriented elements within the A.P.O. to establish a teachers' association was that in 1912-13 the churches embarked on a concerted drive to try and improve coloured education facilities. Had this attempt been successful, the result would have been the further entrenchment of church control of coloured education. As a result of the 1912 Education

157 A.P.O., 18/5/1912; 19/10/1912; 30/11/1912.

Commission, the Archbishop of Cape Town took the initiative to call an interdenominational conference to discuss the problems of mission education. The result of this conference at which the Anglican, Dutch Reformed, Presbyterian, Methodist, Roman Catholic and Baptist Churches were represented was that petitions were presented to the Administrator of the Cape and to Parliament by H.E.S. Fremantle, the chairman of the 1912 Education Commission, requesting greater state aid for mission education.[158]

The A.P.O. was upstaged by this move for it had never gone as far as petitioning Parliament for educational reform. Although Abdurahman and the A.P.O. on the whole would have welcomed any improvement in coloured education, they were in principle opposed to any further entrenchment of mission education. The A.P.O. thus gave the church petition qualified support but used the publicity given to the petition to point to the inherent deficiencies of mission education and the need for the state to administer coloured education.[159] The A.P.O.'s reputation as the champion of the coloured man's rights would have been compromised had the church petition succeeded.

In 1913 there was further need for concern about discrimination against coloureds in education. Both the measures of differentiated teacher training and the exclusion of coloureds from the Training Institute, as announced in 1909 and 1911 respectively, were rigidly

158 Church Chronicle, 3/4/1913.
159 A.P.O., 5/4/1913.

implemented from that year onwards.[160] Coloureds were now completely excluded from the T.3 Senior Course.

An incident in early 1913 to which Abdurahman reacted with anger was the spending of L20 000 to build a white school "within twenty yards" of the Trafalgar Public School, the only coloured school in Cape Town to offer a secondary education. The school building in Abdurahman's own words was "inferior to many mission schools" and was a "miserable hovel...some years ago found to be unfit for a white third class school". The A.P.O. noted that all requests to the School Board for an improvement of facilities were met with the excuse of a lack of funds, yet funds were "readily found for building colossal palaces for European slum children"[161].

In the years immediately after Union the closure of the coloured elites limited access to better educational facilities, the irritation of blatant official discrimination and such virulent expressions of white racism could only have stimulated the desire within the A.P.O. hierarchy for an allied and officially recognized teachers' association to deal with the all important issues relating to coloured educational improvement.

Over the previous decade the rising tide of segregation by provoking a sense of deprivation within the coloured elite and by making coloured education and therefore coloured teachers more clearly identifiable categories, provided the

160 S.G.E. Report, 1913, pp.17-21; Pieterse, p.20.
161 A.P.O.,22/2/1913; 19/4/1913.

main impetus to the establishment of a coloured teachers' association. The first known suggestion for the establishment of a non-white teachers' association apparently came from Muir at a vacation training course for coloured and African teachers at Grahamstown "soon after the turn of the century". The proposal was received with enthusiasm and although the teachers present got as far as drawing up a draft constitution no further progress was made after they had dispersed.[162] Then in 1905 as a result of the wrangle over the School Board Act, Francis Brutus, a highly respected coloured teacher from Ceres took the initiative in circulating a memorandum proposing the establishment of a coloured teachers' society. But the serious deficiency of organizational resources available to the coloured teaching profession resulted in the failure of Brutus' endeavour.[163] A third abortive attempt was made in 1911 at an in-service winter refresher course for coloured teachers. Once again, there was considerable enthusiasm for the idea amongst the 150 teachers present but nothing came of the preliminary arrangements that were made.[164]

There was an increasing tendency amongst the coloured elite towards the adoption of a more assertive coloured identity in the decade after the Anglo-Boer War as hopes for a rapprochement between black and white faded.[165] Whilst Abdurahman and the A..P.O. as a whole did not abandon the pragmatic approach advocated by Booker T. Washington, there was an influential swing of opinion toward the more

162 A.P.O., 10/8/1912; Horrell, p.47.
163 A.P.O., 24/8/1912; 30/10/1915; Maurice, (1966), p.371.
164 Sun, 28/6/1940.
165 Trapido, (1980), p.257; A.P.O., 18/12/1913.

confident and morally acceptable ideology of W.E.B. Du Bois that provided an alternative to the conventional strategy that had thus far had little success. Increasingly colouredness began to be rejected as a label of derogation and to be asserted as a positive and desirable quality. The exhortation for coloureds to develop race pride became more frequent and the A.P.O. took a keen interest in the apparent rapid progress made by blacks the world over.[166]

In a lecture to the Cape Town branch of the A.P.O. entitled "On the rise of the American Negro as a landholder" Harold Cressy very clearly manifested the influence of Du Bois;

> "In America, no people make a greater study of the Negro than the Negro himself. The same cannot be said of the Coloured and Native races of South Africa ... They have so little race pride or national feeling. Consequently they have taken little or no interest in questions that affect their welfare as a race".[167]

At the preliminary meeting of 22 March 1913, Cressy envisaged one of the functions of the proposed association to be the fostering of race pride by for example correcting the impression created by the present history syllabus and text books that coloureds played little or no part in the history and development of the country.[168]

Although the coloured elite generally identified Africans as fellow sufferers under an unjust racial order and had sympathy for the ideals of African political organization

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166 See A.P.O., 26/3/1910; 7/5/1910; 24/9/1910; 17/6/1911; 23/9/1911; 13/1/1912; 9/3/1912; 6/4/1912; 20/4/1912; 1/6/1912.

167 A.P.O., 25/3/1911.

168 Cape Argus, 22/3/1913; Cape Times, 22/3/1913.

they at no stage seriously considered close cooperation between coloured and African. This would have been diametrically opposed to Coloured assimilationist aspirations because it would have further alienated whites.

It was a matter of basic political tactics for the A.P.O. to keep its distance from African organizations. It was in this spirit that the A.P.O. vainly argued that the terms relating to the non-white franchise in the Transvaal and O.F.S. after the grant of Responsible Government applied to Africans and not coloureds, and that again, in 1909, it preferred to send a separate delegation to England to plead the coloured cause.[169] At the inaugural conference Cressy made it clear that he regarded Africans to be a group distinct from coloureds and that they should minister to their own group interest. That a motion by Cressy calling for the separation of coloured and African educational statistics was unanimously accepted indicated tacit agreement that Africans be excluded from the T.L.S.A.[170] Ironically De Zuid Afrikaan in its report on the inaugural conference referred to the T.L.S.A. as a "Genootschap van Naturellen Onderwysers".[171]

Separatist tendencies amongst coloured teachers were further encouraged by the total inadequacy of existing teachers' associations as a vehicle for gaining even moderate reform in coloured education. The Zuid Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie founded in 1905 debarred non-whites from membership. It was

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169 Lewis, pp.149-50; Marais, pp. 257, 278-9. The A.P.O. was even split over Abdurahman favouring limited cooperation with African organizations.

170 Cape Times, 25/6/1913.

171 De Zuid Afrikaan, 26/6/1913.

almost completely preoccupied with the educational aspects of Afrikaner nationalism, especially the issue of gaining parity between English and Dutch in the Cape education system and had no time for the problems of coloured education.

Although the South African Teachers' Association allowed coloureds to join, it practised a more covert form of racism. Following the precedent of the School Board Act, S.A.T.A. in 1906 passed the bye-law, "That any district may, where desirable, have separate branches for European and non-European teachers".[172] Although there was a small group of liberals within S.A.T.A. that had some sympathy for the problems of coloured teachers, it would not be unreasonable to assume that the racism that was so prevalent at the Cape extended to the rank and file membership of S.A.T.A. A critic of Cressy and Gordon's obsequious attitude towards S.A.T.A. pointed out that S.A.T.A. would not be sorry to be rid of its coloured members.[173] Moreover, S.A.T.A. was almost exclusively concerned with matters relating to white public education. Cressy tactfully justified the formation of the League with the argument that the differences of interests between white and coloured education were too great to be fostered in a single association. What was needed were two separate associations "working not in opposition but on parallel friendly lines".[174] Coloured

172 Joubert, p.9.
173 Cape Argus, 22/3/1913.
174 A.P.O.,10/8/1912.

teachers in general had demonstrated their discontent with S.A.T.A. by not joining it in appreciable numbers.[175]

S.A.T.A. acted as a spur to the formation of the T.L.S.A. by providing an example of the benefits that might be reaped from being organized for collective action. By 1913 S.A.T.A. had grown to a seemingly formidable organisation with 1 500 members and had successfully agitated for concessions regarding furlough and pensions. In addition, it had gained its members special terms with an insurance company and had instituted a Legal Defence Fund because teachers were vulnerable to litigation by parents. The founders of the T.L.S.A. were also probably further encouraged by the sustained campaign by S.A.T.A. and Z.A.O.U. for higher salaries that promised to bear fruit in the 1913 Financial Relations Act.[176]

To most of the founder members and the A.P.O the establishment of the T.L.S.A. was a means of defending the interests of the coloured people whose inferior status they had reluctantly come to accept. However to Cressy and a significant section of politicized coloureds, asserting their ethnic identity and consciously cultivating race pride was a form of affirmative action. In retrospect it is apparent that the founding of the League was the consequence of the increasingly rigorous educational segregation of coloured from white, especially over the previous decade.

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175 A.P.O., 21/10/1911; 24/8/1912; Sun, 28/6/1940; The formation of T.L.S.A. had no noticeable impact on S.A.T.A. membership figures. See Educational News, 1912-1914.

176 Joubert, p.26; Educational News, July, 1914.

Both the long term and the more immediate reasons for the establishment of the T.L.S.A. were directly the result of racial discrimination against coloureds.

CHAPTER 2

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE T.L.S.A.,1913-1940

Despite setbacks since the turn of the century, especially the exclusion of coloureds from Parliament by the South Africa Act, the post-Union era, especially the first two decades, remained a period of optimism amongst the coloured elite. Despite some misgivings[1] they had a progressionist view of history and these reverses were seen to be temporary, a situation that could be remedied by positive action on the part of coloureds themselves. This was one of the premises upon which the A.P.O.'s post-Union strategy was predicated and the basic reason for the establishment of the T.L.S.A. It was regarded to be a matter of time before the liberalism of the Cape diffused northward and that coloureds would resume their social and political advancement and South Africa its evolution toward a meritocratic society.[2]

This feeling of optimism was most marked in the period straddling the end of World War I because of the expectation that the post-War period would witness the dawning of a new era in the progress of "backward" and subject peoples the world over. This was taken to be a natural consequence of the world having to take stock of its situation and the need to reconstitute its social and international life to ensure

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1 See for example A.P.O.,8/4/1911; 6/12/1913.

2 E.J., December, 1917; November, 1920; August, 1922; J.H. Rhoda, A contribution toward the study of education among the Cape coloured people, (B.Ed., U.C.T.,1929), pp. 2ff., 59; van der Ross, (1979), p.75.

peace and stability for the future. It was hoped that the patriotism and contribution of the coloureds to the war effort would be recognized and suitably rewarded with a greater integration into all levels of national life and a gradual elimination of racial barriers. These false expectations were sustained by continued faith in British liberalism and a constant awareness that coloureds had remained loyal to the Empire whilst a section of the white population had revolted.[3]

Hence the coloured elite and the League's enthusiastic support for the Allied powers and their ostentatious display of loyalty to the Empire, patriotism for South Africa and honour for the King.[4] A concise illustration of these sentiments is provided by the Journal's report of Justice Gardiner's speech at the memorial service for Cape Corps men who fell in the East African campaign. The Journal reported that Gardiner praised the coloureds for "nobly" answering the call to enlist which "must have shamed some of the young white men" and that they had fought "to free the world of slavery ... for the cause of humanity and civilization and ... the claim of Coloured people to be civilized."[5]

Since this was prior to the legislative onslaught on the coloured economic position and their political rights of the 1920's and 1930's there was some justification for these

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3 See for example van der Ross, (1979), p.76; Lewis, pp. 208 ff. J.D. Shingler, Education and the political order in South Africa, (Ph.D., Yale, 1976).

4 E.J., May, 1915; August, 1915; April, 1916; August, 1916; May, 1917; June, 1917; July, 1917; June, 1918; September, 1918.

5 E.J., December, 1917.

views. At this stage the coloured vote had the potential of becoming a powerful force in national politics as increasing numbers of coloureds became politicized and able to meet the franchise qualifications. The non-white vote had grown from 15 per cent of the electorate at the time of Union to 21 per cent by 1921 whilst the coloured share of the electorate had grown from 9,5 per cent to 14 per cent over the same period.[6] By 1915 the coloured vote had already been estimated to form 26 per cent of the electorate in nine Peninsula and 44 per cent of the Woodstock constituencies.[7] The coloured elite was growing numerically and was also developing a more solid coloured political identity.

Some solace was drawn from the prospect that Afrikaner opposition to Union as for example expressed in the 1914 rebellion and the 1922 strike provided coloureds with an excellent foil for demonstrating their patriotism and worthiness of full political rights. This partly explains the coloured elite's enthusiastic support for the Allied war effort. Also the League's oblique anti-Bolshevik references in the early 1920s were not meant to be comments on international affairs but to confirm their support of lawfully constituted authority and their rejection of the lawlessness and aggression of the white trade union movement.[8] On one occasion the Journal tried to drive home

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6 Union Year Book, No. 23, 1946, (G.P. - 53895 - 1947), chapter II, pp. 46 - 7; L.M. Thompson, The Cape Coloured Franchise, (Johannesburg, S.A.I.R.R., 1949), p.55.

7 Cape Times, 19/10/1915; T.Shifrin, New deal for coloured people; A study of National Party policies toward the coloured people, 1924-1929, (B.A. (Hons.), U.C.T., 1962).

8 E.J., July, 1921; February, 1922; December, 1923.

the point by ridiculing the extremism and lack of education of the typical "striker" during the Rand Rebellion thereby inviting a direct comparison with the unfairness with which "civilized" and "respectable" coloureds were treated.[9]

It was in this climate of optimism tempered by recent setbacks that the League was born as a very small organization of no more than about 50 members at its inauguration.[10] The weakness of the League was reflected in its founders not only being obliged to virtually seek the Education Departments' permission for the League's establishment but even being prepared to follow Departmental dictates regarding its future direction. The 1910's was a period of very slow growth for the League, of relative inactivity and agitation for reform being kept at a low key. After a year the League had only 65 members[11] and although by 1916 it had established branches at Paarl, Stellenbosch, Genadendal and Kimberley it had no more than about 80 members.[12] The publication of the League's own organ, the Educational Journal from 1915 onwards was its main achievement of this period.

During these early years the League was still experimenting with strategy, struggling to establish a firm base in the

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9 E.J., April, 1922.

10 Cape Times, 25/6/1913; A.P.O., 28/6/1913; Cape Standard, 28/6/1938.

11 E.J., August, 1928.

12 E.J., August, 1916. This estimate was obtained through indirect means because it was not until the late 1920's, when the League's membership reached the respectable figure approaching 500 that it began to publicize the size of its membership. The League for obvious reasons was not wont to broadcast its lack of representativeness.

Peninsula and Western Cape and was wrestling with several serious organizational problems. Initially there was also an essential complacence within the League about the future of coloured education. It was expected that the mere existence of the League and its recognition by the Education Department would in time lead to the successful negotiation for the piecemeal reform of coloured education. There was thus no great urgency in the drive to expand the organization.

Probably the most serious inhibition to League growth at this time was the inefficient functioning of the Executive Committee. The non performance of duties, poor attendance or the absence of key officers at meetings disrupted the functioning of the Executive and resulted in deferments or issues being dropped entirely. The postponement of meetings disaffected members from outlying areas since they needed to make special arrangements for transport and accommodation. Matters came to a head in 1918 when both the President I.B. Oppelt and the Editor S.G. Maurice resigned their offices in protest at the lack of discipline and commitment of some of their colleagues. Although these problems were far from completely resolved, the shock of these resignations was sufficient to motivate the T.L.S.A. leadership to greater cooperation and dedication to League ideals.[13] It was not until the early 1940's that conflict within the Executive became sufficiently serious to disrupt the functioning of the organization.

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13 E.J., April, 1918. See also E.J., January, 1917; March, 1917; April, 1917; May, 1917; July, 1917; Interviews with D. van der Ross 29/6/1981; 26/8/1983.

It was during this period of relative inactivity that the League gave a great deal of emphasis to social problems afflicting coloureds and that the Educational Journal was padded with literary contributions of dubious quality such as poems, short stories, anecdotes, jokes, accounts of teachers' bicycle excursions during vacations and other matters irrelevant to the immediate organizational goals of the League but fully relevant to their social aspirations.

However the 1920's saw two periods of revitalization of the League, of rapid growth and vigour. In both cases the new dynamism was a response to the possibility of reform in coloured education and in each instance the League successively came to focus more narrowly on educational and professional issues.[14] The conservative T.L.S.A. consistently responded very eagerly to any possibility of reform, especially in education. It led to a feeling of optimism that the League was at last playing its intended role and that its methods were about to be vindicated. Protests and requests for reform were made more frequently and with renewed vigour whilst the urge to increase membership and establish new branches was more likely to be translated into action. With reform apparently imminent, it must have seemed to the League, being the only officially recognized body representing coloured teachers, that an increase in membership and an extension of its organization could pay immediate dividends. The League also took

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14 This trend can be observed by successively comparing the Educational Journal, before September, 1918 with that after September 1920, January - March 1925 and during the latter half of the 1930's.

advantage of the probability that at such times League membership might appear more attractive to coloured teachers outside the League and wherever it was plausible the League even claimed part responsibility for the possibility of reform.[15]

The first spurt of expansion came in 1921-22 a period which saw significant changes in coloured education, measures that the T.L.S.A. interpreted in a positive light.[16] In 1920 mission school teachers received a small increase in salaries with a promise of more to come. In 1921 it became known that non-white education statistics were to be differentiated into coloured and native categories. The passage of the Consolidated Education Ordinance of 1921 resulted in a significant increase in government responsibility for coloured education by undertaking to pay the full amount of teachers' salaries and by the abolition of school fees payable by students. 1922 also saw the publication of a separate draft syllabus for coloured schools. This the T.L.S.A. leadership generally considered to be progressive because it accepted the Education Department's view that the new syllabus would cater for the special needs of coloured children who tended to come from socio-economically depressed backgrounds and received instruction in an environment less conducive to academic study than that of white children. For most of 1922 expectations were also kept high by the possibility of a

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15 E.J., January, 1921; August, 1922; July-September, 1926; July-December, 1927.

16 See for example E.J., October, 1920; February, 1921; October, 1922.

provincial commission of enquiry into coloured education until it was postponed in September of that year.[17]

With this promise of reform and heightening of expectations the League entered a two-year phase of rapid growth. The Journal which had lapsed and had not been published for fourteen months was resurrected in September 1920 and was noticeably more vigorous, assertive and concerned with professional issues.[18] New branches were formed at Worcester and Oudtshoorn in 1921, at Caledon and Graaff-Reinet in 1922 whilst the Kimberley branch which had lapsed by 1917 was revived. This revitalization did not go unnoticed in the Education Department for the Education Gazette encouraged this new spirit and healthy atmosphere as proof that "the coloured people are waking up to the importance of their childrens education".[19]

Very importantly, during the long vacation at the end of 1922 the T.L.S.A. made a critical breakthrough with the establishment of the Eastern Province and Midlands Branch.[20] It was centred on Port Elizabeth and was intended to serve the entire Eastern Cape. This was a most impractical arrangement[21] and in 1925 it was supposedly split to form several local branches. For many years however, the Port Elizabeth Branch remained the only League representative in the Eastern Cape, the Graaff-Reinet Branch having lapsed by

17 E.J., September, 1922; October, 1922.
18 E.J., September, 1920, and subsequent issues.
19 Education Gazette, 3/11/1921.
20 E.J., January, 1923; February, 1923.
21 E.J., December, 1923.

the mid-20's. However, by 1943 League strength in the Eastern Cape had grown to well over 10 separate branches.[22]

Between 1923 and 1925 the T.L.S.A. suffered a dangerous lapse. The organizational and financial problems experienced by the League were sufficiently serious for the Educational Journal to cease publication for the whole of 1924. There was also an alarming collapse of many of its branches. By the end of 1924 the Genadendal, Kimberley, Stellenbosch, Worcester, Graaff-Reinet and probably also the Caledon branches had become dormant. This temporary relapse by the League was probably due to the organization having overreached its capabilities with its rapid growth in the early 1920's as well as the temporary lack of sufficient stimulus from either educational or political developments to encourage the maintanace of a high level of activity. It appears that the League leadership was lulled into a false sense of security by the abatement of post-War inflation and the apparent thoroughgoing reform of coloured education that was in the process of being implemented in the early 1920's. This was a period in which coloured teachers not only gained salary increases and greater occupational security but the years 1921 - 1923 experienced deflation of about 30 per cent.[23]

The second period of rapid growth of the League came in the latter half of the 1920's. This was manifested in the reappearance of the Journal in 1925, the establishment of

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22 See E.J., June 1943 for a full list of the League's 36 branches.

23 R. McGregor, Investors' Handbook, (McGregor, Purdey January, 1986), p.777.

the Montague-Robertson and Piquetberg Branches in 1925, the Wellington, Saron-Tulbagh, Claremont, Malmesbury and Elsies River branches in 1926, the Bellville and Wynberg branches in 1927, the George and Maitland branches in 1929 and the resuscitation of the Kimberley, Oudtshoorn and Worcester branches in 1926. By 1927 League membership stood at 415 and by 1930 was approaching 500.[24] Other indicators of League vitality during this period were the restructuring in 1928 of the Journal management to consist of an Editor-in-Chief and an Editorial Board[25] and the creation in 1931 of the post of Assistant Secretary to help with the extra secretarial work generated by the growth of the League and the expansion of its activities.[26] From the mid-1920's onwards the Executive came to function more efficiently with fewer absentees at meetings and a greater spirit of cooperation prevailing.[27]

1926 appears to have been the key year in the revitalization of the League, the year in which expectations about the Report of the Cape Provincial Commission of Enquiry into Coloured Education ran high.[28] The T.L.S.A. was very pleased with the generous recommendatons of the Report[29] and regarded it to have great potential for initiating

24 See E.J., July-December, 1927; January, 1931.
25 E.J.,August, 1928; October, 1931.
26 E.J., October, 1931.
27 E.J., April - June, 1926; July - December, 1927.
28 Report of the Commission on Coloured Education, 1925-26, (C.P.1 - 1927).
29 The Coloured Education Commission Report, pp. 7-11 amongst other things recommended increased state responsibility for coloured education, the phasing-in of compulsory education for coloureds, expanded educational facilities at secondary level and in rural areas and, very importantly for the League, higher salaries, annual as opposed to quinquennial increments and a viable pension scheme.

reform in coloured education.[30] However, the League's hopes for substantial reforms were not to be. The legislation derived from the Commission Report, the Education Amendment Ordinance of 1928 passed over the consequential recommendations with the predictable excuse of a lack of finance.

Besides the anticipation of educational reform acting as a stimulus to League activity, a further important impetus to this second period of rapid growth was the attack launched by both the Smuts and Hertzog governments during the 1920's upon the economic position of coloureds. This sustained offensive against the economic status of the coloured elite took the form of increasing state intervention in the labour market, an area in which coloureds already suffered considerable customary discrimination. This interference was committed not only in the public sectors of the economy but also through the manipulation of conditions of employment in private enterprise in favour of whites.

The Smuts government promulgated the Juvenile Affairs Act in 1921 and the Apprenticeship Act in 1922, both being concerned to usher more white youths into skilled trades. Both laws were enacted in an atmosphere of concern over the small number of white youths entering the skilled trades and the implications that this had for the debasement of poor whites and the relative economic and social advancement of non-whites. Although these Acts did not make overt racial distinctions, they were as deviously racist as the infamous

30 E.J., January - June, 1927; July - December, 1927; Cape Times, 28/7/1927.

"grandfather" clauses of the American South[31] and greatly discriminated in favour of the white youth gaining better employment than his coloured peer.

The Juvenile Affairs Act was only applicable to those subject to compulsory education regulations. Since only whites were subject to these regulations, the Juvenile Affairs Board that was created by the Act was exclusively concerned with placing white youths into suitable employment. Whilst whites were served by a statutory body of significant authority, coloureds unsuccessfully tried to make do with the sop of a separate and ineffective Juvenile Advisory Board staffed by voluntary workers. The League was initially very optimistic about the potential of the Board for serving coloured interests.[32] Several League membersserved on the Board and thus came to gain first hand experience of the futility of combating white racism and bureaucratic obstructionism with such a meagre resource.[33]

The Apprenticeship Act discriminated against coloureds by setting the unnecessarily high minimum educational requirement of Std VI for entrance into the skilled occupations. Passing Std VI was by this time a minimum condition for complying with the compulsory education regulations.[34] Most white youths with their access to vastly

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31 By means of which several Southern legislatures in the 1890's effectively disfranchised Negroes by erecting high franchise qualifications but exempting those whose ancestors had had the vote before 1860 and thereby not depriving poor whites of the franchise.

32 E.J., October, 1922; April, 1923; April - June, 1925.

33 E.J., August, 1938; Cape Times, 2/9/1927.

34 In 1917 the School Board Act was amended to extend compulsory education for whites to the age of 15 or Std V and in 1919 to 16 or Std VI.

superior and heavily subsidized educational facilities would acquire the Std VI certificate as a matter of course. On the other hand very few coloureds had the economic resources to gain more than a smattering of the three R's and few mission schools went beyond Std.IV.

The educational requirement was largely irrelevent to the objective occupational requirements of the trade because in many cases the acquisition of the necessary skills was dependent on on-the-job training with skills being passed on from tradesman to apprentice[35] which in the case of coloureds tended to be from father to son. Rhoda mentions the alarm created by the Apprenticeship Act amongst skilled but poorly educated coloured tradesman that their children would be unable to follow in their footsteps.[36]

The disingenuous use of the segregated education system to foster segregation in other fields was obvious to the League. It did not raise vehement objection at the time since it had, not completely unfounded, hopes of reform in coloured education making the attainment of Std. VI by coloured students a common achievement and that the coloured Juvenile Advisory Board could be turned to the advantage of coloureds. It was only by the late 1920's when these

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35 M. Haralambos with R. Heald, Sociology; Themes and perspectives, (London, University Tutorial Press, 1980), pp.177-8 and R. Collins, "Functional and conflict theories of educational stratification", American Sociological Review, Vol. 36, (1971), raise the issue of this characteristic of modern society being a means for the protection of privilege by dominant groups within society or those with vested interests in maintaining the exclusivity of particular occupations.

36 Rhoda, p.47.

measures started imposing marked restrictions on coloured occupational mobility and it was much more obvious that substantial reform of coloured education was not in the offing, that the League started its intermittent but bitter protests against these laws.[37]

The onslaught against the economic position of the coloured elite was intensified with the implementation of the Pact government's civilized labour policy. This was very clearly a policy of white labour preference and certainly did not mean that coloureds upon attaining or displaying the requisite level of "civilization" would be accorded parity with whites.[38] This policy was little more than a rationalization for implementing the racist demands of the electorate that had put the Nationalist-Labour coalition into power and for the implementation of Afrikaner nationalist ideology in the field of labour relations. The Pact government pandered to the demands of the militant and self-consciously white trade union movement that regarded the employment of blacks in all fields except the most menial tasks or "kaffir work", to be a threat to the interests of white labour.[39] The Rand Rebellion of 1922 amply illustrated the resolution with which the privileges of white workers were defended against intrusion by blacks.

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37 E.J., July - September, 1926; October, 1928; June, 1930; January, 1931; August, 1937; August, 1939.

38 Report of the Commission of Enquiry Regarding the Cape Coloured Population of the Union, 1937, (U.G. 54 - '37), p.40 confirmed that coloureds were not intended to be classified as "civilized" in terms of this policy; Cape Times, 17/9/1924; 19/9/1924; Davenport, pp.361-2.

39 Cape Coloured Commission, pp. 40-46; Dunbar Moodie, pp. 89 - 91; Marais, p.261.

The 1925 Wage Act by stipulating minimum wages in several key industries robbed coloured labour in these industries of its one significant advantage, the ability to undercut white wage demands. This Act ensured that the interests of white supremacy would be subordinated to the private sector's drive for the maximization of profits. The Wage Act not only reinforced customary discrimination in employment but firms were also offered financial inducements for employing whites. For example, import permits and customs tariffs were dependent upon the ratio of white to non-white employees in the firm.[40]

With the advance of statutory discrimination in the economic sphere in the 1920's, coloureds particularly the elite, were put under increasing economic pressure. This was the period in which the influx of unskilled rural Afrikaners into the urban areas caused the problem of poor whiteism to be at its worst and white trade unionism to be at its most militant. With a white skin being a better recommendation for a job than skill, the poor whites soaked up all the better skilled and semi-skilled employment. The coloureds' share of employment in private industry in the Western Cape declined from 56 per cent to 48 per cent and in governmental and local governmental industrial undertakings from 44 per cent to 30 per cent between 1924 and 1932,[41] despite the high growth rate of the coloured population.[42] The Juvenile

40 Cape Coloured Commission, p.38; Lewis pp. 369-70; S. Patterson, Colour and Culture in South Africa; A study of the status of Cape coloured people of the Union of South Africa, (London, Routledge and Paul, 1953), pp. 71-2.

41 Cape Coloured Commission, pp. 62-64; Lewis, p.346; Davenport, p.362.

42 Cape Coloured Commission, pp. 11-12.

Affairs, Apprenticeship and Wage Acts together with the civilized labour policy effected a rapid acceleration in the displacement of coloured artisans in the skilled trades, a trend that had started in the latter part of the 19th century with the immigration of skilled labourers from Britain. The rapid closure of skilled and better paid occupational avenues, some traditionally regarded to be the preserve of coloureds, resulted in the by now panic-stricken coloured elite facing a serious crisis from the late 1920's onwards.[43] This was a situation over which it had little influence and a challenge it was powerless to meet.

The teaching profession was affected in two ways by these developments. Firstly, teachers would have been particularly sensitive to the closure of these employment opportunities to coloureds because, forming such a significant section of the coloured elite, it was their family, friends and most promising pupils who were being deprived.[44] Secondly, it meant that increasing numbers of youths were channelled into the teaching profession.[45]

Although the T.L.S.A. did not dare say so, it drew very little comfort, if any at all, from Hertzog's espousal of a more inclusive brand of Afrikaner nationalism that envisaged the co-opting of coloureds as junior partners in the

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43 See for example E.J., June 1928; September, 1928; June, 1930; January, 1931; April, 1935; August, 1938; Sun, 9/9/1932; 16/9/1932; Cape Standard, 1/1/1937; Cape Times, 16/12/1930; 6/2/1932; 19/6/1937; 30/6/1938; 1/7/38; 20/3/39; Marais, p. 261-5.

44 E.J., June, 1928; January, 1931; August, 1933; August, 1938.

45 See E.J., August, 1937; August, 1938 for the League's awareness of this trend.

exercise of white supremacy over Africans. In the latter half of the 1920's Hertzog made it known that unlike his plans for Africans, coloureds were not to be politically and economically segregated from whites and that their political and economic but not social status eventually be raised on a par with that of whites.[46]

Although this was precisely what they wanted the T.L.S.A. and the coloured elite generally could have little confidence in Hertzog's espousal of these sentiments because it was obvious to them that the actions of the Nationalist-Labour coalition were diametrically opposed to Hertzog's generous proposals. The National Party was generally recognized to be racially more chauvinistic than the South African Party and Hertzog drew strong opposition within the Party for these liberal views.[47]

The infamous "New Deal" offered by Hertzog to coloureds in the late 1920's was little more than a temporary political expedient to try and win coloured electoral support for the National Party.[48] It should be borne in mind that at this stage the National Party had control of the government by means of an uneasy coalition with the Labour Party and that the coloured vote was still a significant factor in the balance of power between the major political parties. Hertzog did manage to muster significant coloured support through the Afrikaner Nasionale Bond and the Cape Malay Association for his plans of further segregating Africans by

46 Lewis, p.288.
47 Shifrin, p.19 ff.
48 Lewis, p.331; Shifrin p.73.

exploiting the coloured electorate's preference for a firm alliance with whites than solidarity with Africans.[49] As a result of the National Party gaining a parliamentary majority in the 1929 election and no longer needing to woo coloured voters,[50] Hertzog moved to a much more effective strategy of limiting coloured political influence.

In the early 1930's, the Hertzog government effected a massive erosion of coloured political power. The Women's Enfranchisement Act of 1930 nearly halved the value of the coloured vote by enfranchising white women only. Similarly the Franchise Laws Amendment Act of 1931 brought the Cape's white male franchise in line with the rest of the Union by giving the vote to all European males over 21 but retained property and educational qualifications for non-whites. Furthermore the Electoral Laws Amendment Act of 1931 made it possible to challenge the franchise qualifications of coloureds in a magistrates court. It put the responsibility of proving his qualification upon the defendant under pain of being struck from the voters roll. This law was apparently often abused by the National Party to intimidate and remove qualified voters from the roll.[51]

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49 Lewis, pp. 212 - 3, 283 - 7, 292; Shifrin, p. 24.

50 Lewis, p.329; Shifrin, p.20-23.

51 Sun, 27/10/1933; Patterson, p.86; Shifrin, p.58. For example of the 67 new coloured voters placed on the roll at Paarl during the 1932 registration, objections were raised to 57 out of which only 22 retained the franchise. In 1933 of the 394 new registrations at Paarl 278 were removed by this ploy and in Tulbagh in 1938 117 of the 120 newly registered coloured voters were removed by Nationalist objections. See Lewis, pp. 336-7, 406-7.

The result was that the value of the coloured vote declined from 12,3 per cent of the electorate in 1929 to 6,7 per cent in 1931 and 5,9 per cent in 1935.[52] The significance of the coloured vote was severely eroded and its character was changed from one with potential for dynamic growth in importance in national politics in the foreseeable future to one that, even after the initial massive deterioration, was likely to decline in significance. The immediate impact of these changes were brought home when Stephen Reagon, coloured M.P.C. for Maitland and Vice-President of the A.P.O., probably correctly attributed the loss of his seat in the 1933 provincial elections to the enfranchisement of white women.[53]

This devaluation of the coloured vote had the important effect of invalidating the Abdurahmanist strategy of promising the bulk of the coloured vote to the political party most likely to serve coloured interests.[54] The value of the coloured vote had depreciated to the extent where it was no longer an important factor in national politics, was unlikely to increase its share of the electorate and could easily be ignored or sacrificed for a larger share of the white vote. The attack on the economic and political rights of coloureds was compounded by the economic depression of the early 1930's.

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52 Shifrin, p. 58; Thompson, p.55.

53 Sun, 25/8/1933; van der Ross, (1973), p.158.

54 This strategy was already seriously compromised in 1920 when the South African and Unionist Parties merged and became worthless after Fusion in 1934 which robbed them of the opportunity of exploiting rifts between the political parties. See Lewis, p.280; van der Ross, (1973), pp. 161-2.

This period also saw the start of a significant shift away from the accommodationism that had dominated coloured political activity thus far, with the emergence of a much more strident and assertive radicalism amongst certain sections of the coloured elite. Perhaps the most significant harbinger of the new era in coloured politics was Cissie Gool's dramatic entrance into politics with the protests against the enfranchisement of white women only.[55] But it was only in the latter part of the 1930's that this new radicalism came to be expressed in organizational form and to seriously challenge A.P.O. dominance of coloured politics.

It was in this context of the tightening of segregatory measures against coloureds and of a considerable diminution of their economic and political rights that the T.L.S.A. managed to maintain the momentum of the strong revival of the late 1920's into the first half of the 1930's. These were years of modest growth in terms of membership which increased from over 450 in 1930[56] to a number approaching 600 in 1935.[57] But very importantly this was a period of consolidation and stabilization of the League's organizational structure which became more efficient and came to concentrate more narrowly on the attainment of educational and professional goals.[58]

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55 Cape Times, 28/4/1931; Lewis, pp. 413-14; Everett, p.8.

56 E.J., January, 1931.

57 E.J., August, 1935.

58 This trend is certainly noticeable through the 1920's. See also Maurice, (1966), p. 380.

This was the time during which Fred Hendricks, David van der Ross and Harriet Beukman eased themselves into the executive positions of Editor, Secretary and Treasurer respectively. The continuity of their presence and their accretion of skill related to their specialized tasks gave the functioning of the Executive greater smoothness and efficiency. By 1933 the somewhat erratic Journal had also settled down to a regular issuing schedule of 5 copies per annum.

Also, as the League grew in size through the 1930's and spread over a wider geographical area, the smallness of the Executive and its overwhelming Western Cape orientation were recognized to be increasingly inefficient.[59] In response to this problem the League in 1936 effected a crucially important change to the structure of the Executive Committee. The composition of the non-officer section of the Executive was changed from the twelve elected members to each branch, depending on its size, being represented by between one and three members.[60]. This restructuring improved the efficiency of the League and widened the scope of its activities. The immediate increase in the size of the Executive and its possibilities for future growth as the League expanded, greatly enhanced its capacity for work and relieved the considerable burden on the small band of regular administrators.[61] This also allowed the delegation of specific functions to sub-committees of the Executive.

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59 E.J., August, 1935; June, 1936.

60 E.J., August, 1936.

61 The Executive was immediatley enlarged from 18 members to 26 in 1936 and subsequently grew to 49 by 1940. See E.J., August, 1935; August, 1936; August, 1940.

The overall organizational structure and communications system of the League was significantly improved since each branch was now represented on the central administrative body.

By the mid-'30's the League had only about a quarter of the total number of the teachers in coloured schools within its ranks. Expressed as a fraction this 25 per cent might at first appear to be a rather small proportion of the total and proof that the League had largely failed to rally coloured teachers under its banner.[62] The T.L.S.A. had in fact recruited a much higher percentage if account is taken of the teachers that it aimed to recruit and that could reasonably be considered to be recruitable. Firstly, by 1935 14 per cent of all teachers in coloured schools were white and 3 per cent were African.[63] Very few whites or Africans joined the League which, on the whole preferred to limit its membership to coloureds. Secondly, there was a considerable body of teachers who through their physical isolation on farms, mission stations and villages in the remoter parts of the Cape did not join the League because of the sheer impracticality of exercising such membership and even their possible ignorance of the existence of the League.[64] Then there was also the hidden influence of school managers who did not wish the teachers under their control to become politicized and thus used their considerable power over teachers to restrain them from joining the League. This

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62 Cape Standard, 7/6/1938.

63 S.G.E. Report, 1936, pp. 85 - 6.

64 The League was well aware of the problem of the isolation of teachers. See E.J., January, 1921; September, 1923; October, 1936.

appears to have been a factor of substantial importance in the early life of the League and although its significance decreased in the urban areas over the decades, managerial disapproval remained a disincentive to joining the League in the rural areas.[65]

It should also be borne in mind that the League's membership figures reflected its fully paid up membership and that there were a number of teachers who actively supported the League yet were not officially members. There were those whose membership had lapsed because they had neglected to pay their annual dues, those who did not renew their membership because of the lapsing of a local branch and inevitably, a number of freeloaders who acted as bona fide members yet dodged paying membership fees. One need also take into account the significant factor of apathy to League ideals amongst teachers, especially the younger ones. It would thus not be unfair to estimate that the T.L.S.A. had by the mid-1930's recruited at least 50 per cent of the teachers it was aiming to recruit and that were realistically within its reach.

Despite Abdurahman's seminal role in the founding of the T.L.S.A. neither he nor the A.P.O. subsequently appears to have interfered in League affairs. After the untimely death of Harold Cressy in 1916 Abdurahman did not have any close confidant within the Executive capable of influencing League policy. Abdurahman's duties on the City and Provincial Councils, as A.P.O. President, and numerous social

65 E.J., October, 1928; August, 1933; August, 1934; D. van der Ross interviewed 29/6/81; 26/8/83.

obligations as the most prominent coloured man, left little time for involvement with the League. The T.L.S.A. being even more conservative and circumspect than the A.P.O. was at no stage a threat to A.P.O. objectives. It was only after Abdurahman's death on 20 February 1940 when the A.P.O. itself was embattled, that the League started to move in a direction of which he would have disapproved. In the earlier years of its existence the League and most probably the A.P.O. leadership would have avoided any direct link between the two organizations being made. Any such indication of being "politically motivated" would have discredited the League in the eyes of those it wanted to impress most, the Education Department, church authorities and the white teaching profession.

However, a cordial and cooperative relationship was maintained between Abdurahman and the T.L.S.A. as is evidenced by his regular appearance on League public platforms and the numerous eulogistic tributes in the Journal upon his death.[66] Abdurahman continued to support demands for coloured educational improvement both on the City and Provincial Councils[67] since it became an even more important objective of the African Peoples Organization than it had been with the African Political Organization.[68] Thus for example twenty four of the approximately one hundred resolutions dealt with by the 1928 A.P.O., conference were

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66 See for example E.J., April, 1923; June, 1930; October, 1931; February, 1940; August. 1940.

67 E.J., January, 1931; Cape Times, 11/10/1923; 15/5/1925; 14/11/1925.

68 The name was changed in 1919 to reflect the A.P.O.'s greater concern with social rather than political issues.

concerned with education.[69] On the other hand Abdurahman was politically supported by the T.L.S.A. leadership in their personal capacities. For example, a hand bill publicizing Abdurahman's forthcoming meetings in his campaign for the 1932 City Council elections claimed the pledged support of no less than three T.L.S.A. luminaries.[70] Mrs H. Roman and Pat Heneke were ex-Presidents of the League and Abe Desmore was a Leaguer with one of the highest public profiles. The elite social circle revolving around Abdurahman's personage continued to contain several leading T.L.S.A. members. Many of them were for example invited to a private function at Abdurahman's house to meet the American philanthropist Phelps Stokes who was offering a scholarship to a coloured student to go to America to study Negro Education [71]

The T.L.S.A.'s independence of A.P.O. control was best demonstrated by the League's dealings with organizations disapproved of by Abdurahman. Thus the League was prepared to court the Afrikaner Nasionale Bond, the A.P.O.'s main political rival of the late 1920's.[72] Similarly, the T.L.S.A. in 1934 decided to participate formally in the Joint Coloured European Council Conferences and League stalwarts such as Ned Doman, Abe Desmore, George Golding, Harriet Beukman and H. Roman participated in the Joint

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69 Cape Times, 11/4/1928; Abdurahman Family Papers, University of Chicago.

70 Abdurahman Family Papers, University of Chicago.

71 Sun, 16/3/1934. Abe Desmore got the scholarship. See also Simons & Simons, p. 122. E. Everett, Zainunissa (Cissie) Gool, 1897 - 1963; A biography, (B.A.(Hons.), U.C.T., 1978), pp. 1-3.

72 E.J., July-December, 1927; June, 1929; September, 1929.

Council Movement.[73] Also when Abdurahman in response to the Hertzog Bills moved the A.P.O. to closer cooperation with African political organizations by organizing the 4 Non-European Conferences between 1927 and 1934,[74] the League did not follow suit.

It was in the latter half of the 1930's and the early 1940's that the League experienced its most rapid and sustained growth. Within this 5 year period the membership of the League nearly doubled to over 1 000.[75] Also, whereas the League had twenty branches in 1935 it had added seventeen new branches by 1942 and had revived another six branches that had lapsed.

This unprecedented growth was partly due to internal developments. The stabilization and increased efficiency of the League's organizational apparatus during the previous years provided the means for it to cope with this virtual doubling of size. Rapid growth to an extent helped to solve some of the Leagues most pressing problems in that it made more money and manpower available and generated optimism and enthusiasm regarding the the T.L.S.A.'s organizational goals.

A new strategy that paid handsome dividends was that of aiming concerted recruitment drives at the training colleges. Potential members were enrolled en masse as associate members whilst still in training. They were thus

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73 E.J., June, 1933; October, 1934; Cape Times, 27/2/1933; 21/6/1933; 28/6/1933; Lewis, pp. 357 - 8..

74 Lewis, pp. 397 ff.

75 E.J., August, 1935; August, 1940.

much more likely to join the League as full members upon qualifying than if they were later on recruited individually or expected to seek membership of their own initiative. An added advantage of this strategy was that some such recruits upon qualifying would be dispersed throughout the Cape and would help to strengthen ailing branches or even start new branches. Thus it is significant that by 1937 the T.L.S.A. had enrolled 233 teacher trainees as associate members.[76] The League also gained a fair measure of success with its Propaganda Committee set up in 1938 with the object of recruiting as many of the coloured teachers outside of its ranks as possible.[77]

However, the external stimuli to growth were far more important. This period witnessed a significant increase in white hostility toward coloureds and a stronger resolution by the white political leadership to tighten statutory segregatory measures.[78] The coloured elite became alarmed at the inexorable advance of segregation into areas hitherto considered safe and very dear to their sense of social status and prestige.

After 1936 when the question of African political representation had been settled and the principle of racial segregation had been further strengthened, attention started to shift toward applying similar measures to coloureds. At the time D.F. Malan even proposed the simultaneous segregation of coloured and African political

76 E.J., February, 1937. See also E.J., October , 1936; October, 1938.
77 E.J., August, 1938; October, 1938; August, 1940.
78 See for example Dunbar Moodie, chapter 9.

representation.[79] The stricter segregation of the coloureds became feasible by the mid-1930's because the diminution of coloured political power had made the coloured vote much more expendable and after Coalition in 1933 and Fusion in 1934 concerted action by the two major political groupings on an issue of mutual agreement was made much easier. It appears that a proto-apartheid system was being evolved for coloureds from the late 1930's onwards. But with the outbreak of World War II attention was diverted away from it for a few years partly because it made the immediate alienation of coloureds inexpedient. However by 1943 when it became clear that the Allies would prevail the pursuit of an unambiguously segregatory policy towards coloureds was resumed with the announcement of the creation of a separate Department of Coloured Affairs and the Coloured Advisory Council.

By the mid-1930's coloureds had become inured to racism and had come to expect to be discriminated against. However the latter half of the 1930's introduced a qualitative change in white-coloured relations that amply justified the coloured elite's increasing sense of anxiety turning to panic. The thrust of coloured segregatory policy had shifted its emphasis from the indirect methods of increasing white powers and privileges to one of directly restricting the rights of coloureds. Segregation was rapidly becoming much more prevalent, systematic and stringent. It came to intrude with ever-increasing force on new facets of their daily

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79 D.W. Kruger, (ed.), South African Parties and Politics, (Cape Town, Human and Rousseau, 1960), pp. 315-21.

lives, areas they had hitherto thought to be immune to attack.

Customary discrimination was more harshly and pervasively applied. Coloureds were increasingly faced with situations where they were denied access to lifts in buildings, cloakroom or public transport facilities that they had been able to use before.[80] Suddenly public amenities such as the Sea Point swimming pool and the Claremont public library were closed to coloureds and the Stellenbosch post office introduced separate counters for whites and non-whites.[81]

These measures were usually the result of individual officials or local committees trying to enforce segregation in their own spheres of authority. There was much friction with coloureds, especially the elite trying to assert their rights and maintain their dignity in the face of discourteous treatment.[82] A very disturbing development of the late 1930's was the upsurge in racially motivated mob violence to which coloureds were subjected, often indiscriminately.[83] There was also a very strong awareness within the coloured elite of an international deterioration of racial tolerance, proven in their eyes by the rise of Nazism and Fascism in Europe.[84] There were even occasions

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80 Sun, 3/6/1938; 6/5/1938; 14/10/1938; Cape Standard, 26/7/1937; 22/4/1941; E Everett, pp.50-51.

81 Cape Standard, 30/4/1940; E.J.,August, 1940; Abdurahman Family Papers, University of Chicago

82 See for example Sun, 7/7/1939; Cape Standard, 17/11/1939; 14/3/1939.

83 Sun, 4/9/1936; 9/10/1936; 25/6/1937; Cape Standard 18/1/1937; 21/3/1939; 28/3/1939.

84 Sun, 22/2/1935; 4/9/1936; Cape Standard, 18/1/1937; The Sun as early as 28/4/1933 commented on Nazi anti-Semitism.

when coloureds came into direct confrontation with the Greyshirts, the local fascist movement.[85]

To complement this trend there was a strong movement towards the official implementation of a variety of segregatory measures. The state continued its erosion of the coloureds' economic position by subjecting more industries to the provisions of the Apprenticeship Act, by the Juvenile Affairs Board pushing white females into accepting factory employment, a field hitherto dominated by coloureds, and encouraging the immigration of skilled European workers.[86] In the summer of 1938-9 the segregation of beaches under the Seashore Act and the stipulation under the 1941 Factory Act of racially segregated facilities for factory workers were issues that evoked loud protest.[87]

The good intentions of the alliance of white liberals and coloured leaders whose efforts resulted in the appointment of the Cape Coloured Commission were subverted to the cause of segregation by the United Party government.[88] The nett result of the Commission was the strengthening of the idea of coloureds as a distinct group with its own needs and problems meriting special and separate treatment. This only encouraged opinions such as that of the 1939 Report of the Mixed Marriages Commission which recommended the prohibition of mixed marriages, severe penalties for sex across the colour line, the separation of sexes at the place of work

85 See for example Sun, 4/2/1938; 17/2/1939; 14/7/1939.
86 Sun, 1/1/1937; 12/3/1937; Cape Standard, 8/6/1936. For example in 1938 the motor industry was brought under the terms of the Apprenticeship Act.
87 Cape Standard, 9/4/1941; Lewis, p.450; Everett, p.6.
88 Lewis, pp. 378, 389-92.

and residential segregation as a solution to the bogey of white-coloured marriages.[89] Indeed the United Party government in 1943 used the Coloured Commission Report as a justification for introducing the C.A.D. and C.A.C.[90]

But by far the most menacing feature of the relentless advancement of segregation in the late 1930's was Smuts' announcement on 15 March 1938 of the governments intention of implementing residential segregation for coloureds. He claimed that L15m had already been set aside for the project and envisaged the completion of the project in ten to twelve years. Moving swiftly, J. H. Conradie, the Administrator of the Cape on 8 April published a draft ordinance allowing local authorities to implement residential segregation as well as the segregation of public places of recreation and entertainment and on public conveyances.[91]

One of the responses of the urbanized and better educated coloured elite to the trauma of their failure to achieve the steady progress toward full civil equality and instead experiencing a massive erosion of their civil rights was the emergence of radical political organizations. The most important of these were the National Liberation League formed in 1935, the Non-European United Front in 1938 and the Non European Unity Movement in 1943.[92] The new radicalism introduced an alternative framework for

89 Report on the Commission on Mixed Marriages in South Africa, 1939, (U.G.30-1939). Only 0.4 per cent of South African marriages were across the colour line at the time.

90 Lewis, p.465.

91 Lewis, pp.426ff.; van der Ross, (1973), pp. 190 ff.

92 For further details of these organizations and the relationship between them consult Lewis, pp. 409 ff.

radicalism introduced an alternative framework for understanding white racism and non-European oppression. Concepts of socialism, imperialism, capitalist exploitation, non-European unity and non-collaboration embodied an antithetical set of values to that hitherto accepted in coloured politics and implied new strategies and radically different solutions to problems. It introduced an exciting style of politics, that of mass meetings, fiery rhetoric, disruption of opponents' electoral meetings and dramatic gestures such as torch-light meetings and marches to Parliament. With it came a plethora of small debating and discussion groups such as the Lenin Club, the October Club, the Anti-Fascist League, the New Era Fellowship and the Friends of the Soviet Union Society with the purpose of politicizing and radicalizing public opinion. Previously apolitical community organizations from debating societies to soccer clubs were drawn into the movement.[93]

The significance of these developments for League growth was that they enhanced coloured political awareness and encouraged coloureds to join the various organizations which they perceived would offer some protection to their rights, the League included. Teachers were particularly sensitive to these developments because they formed such an integral part of the coloured elite. Also the pressures of segregation were strongly felt in education and had an important

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93 See for example Lewis, chapters 7 and 8; Everett, chapters 2-4; F. Khan, The origins of the N.E.U.M., (B.A. (Hons.), U.C.T., 1976). Newspapers such as the Sun, Cape Standard and the Liberator provide vivid evidence of this process.

influence on the teaching profession. There were three major issues in coloured education at the time that were likely to foster indignation and a sense of grievance within the coloured teaching fraternity.

At the close of the decade there was a series of purges and witch hunts that attempted to rid white schools of coloureds who had managed to infiltrate them.[94] Attending a white school not only had great prestige for a coloured pupil but gaining access to a white school was a crucial step in a family's attempt to "pass for white".[95] Secondly the coloured education subsidy had remained unchanged since the mid-1920's and was blocking all significant progress in coloured education including the improvement of teacher service conditions.[96] But the most important issue in this case was that as a result of the restriction of occupational opportunities for educated coloureds, improved scholastic attainment amongst coloureds, high pupil-teacher ratios and the relatively slow growth of coloured educational facilities, the teaching profession by the mid 1930's was faced with a serious crisis. There was an apparent shortage of posts and the growing number of newly qualified teachers who could not find suitable posts, gave vociferous vent to their frustrations.[97]

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94 See for example Sun, 1/3/1940; Cape Standard, 9/1/1940; Education Gazette, 23/5/1940; Watson, pp. 35 - 6.

95 Watson, pp. 29 - 31.

96 See for example Sun, 26/1/1940; S.G.E. Report 1939, p.6; E.J., October, 1939; April, 1940; August, 1940.

97 See for example various issues of Sun, 26/1/1934 - 10/5/1935; for example Cape Standard, 7/6/1937 - 26/7/1937; S.G.E.Report, 1936, p.35; E.J., April, 1935; August, 1937.

It was during this period of dynamic growth that the T.L.S.A. started feeling the pressures of the new radical tone that had entered coloured politics.[98] Increasingly the T.L.S.A. was criticized for its conservatism, its fawning attitude toward the authorities and of favouring the vested interests of the Executive which was representative of the teaching elite.[99] This pressure came not only from without, through the press and the various radical political and cultural organizations but also from within its own ranks. It was at the 1938 Annual Conference in Cape Town that the presence of the radicals were first felt within the League.[100] But it was at the 1940 conference that the radicals in the persons of B.M. Kies, A. Fataar and W.P. van Schoor first entered the Executive. The League was never to be the same again, as ideological differences rapidly moved it towards a schism that by 1944 appeared to be unavoidable.

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98 See for example E.J. August, 1936; August, 1937.
99 See for example Sun, 14/2/1934; 12/4/1935; 10/7/1936; Cape Standard, 8/11/1937, 7/6/1938; 21/11/1939.
100 Sun, 1/7/1938; 22/7/1938; E.J., August, 1938.

CHAPTER 3

THE T.L.S.A AS AN ORGANIZATION

Since the concept of organization, at its most basic meaning entails a corporate social entity seeking to realize specific goals,[1] a comprehension of these goals is a prerequisite to an understanding of the functioning of any organization. In the case of the T.L.S.A. it is possible to distinguish two distinct sets of aims, the official and the unofficial but tacitly accepted aims of the organization.

Throughout the period under consideration the official aims of the T.L.S.A. were "(a) The improvement of education, particularly of the Cape Coloured population throughout South Africa by the study and discussion on matters bearing on the theory and practice of education. (b) The promotion of union and friendly intercourse among teachers and the improvement of their status."[2] The League supplemented these aims by the adoption of the motto "Let us live for our children" at the 1918 Annual Conference.[3] These openly declared objectives are much more instructive for their omissions than their actual content for these were not by

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1 Haralambos, p.278; J. Gibson, et al, Organizations; Behaviour, structure, process, (PLANO, Business Publications, 1982), pp. 3ff.

2 The Abdurahman Family Papers, University of Chicago contains a 1913 edition of the "Rules and Bye-Laws of the T.L.S.A." The South African Public Library in Cape Town has a copy of the 1916 edition and the Journal published updated versions in E.J. June, 1931; June, 1933; February, 1936.

3 E.J., June, 1918.

any means the most important organizational goals of the T.L.S.A.

There was a second set of unofficial goals tacitly accepted within the League. By far the most important of the League's aims, if not its raison d'etre was the improvement of coloured teachers' service conditions. This might appear to be too obvious a characteristic of a professional organization of this nature to deserve explanation. But what makes the question pertinent in the case of the T.L.S.A. is that the primacy of such intentions were strenuously denied and other objectives were pushed to the fore as being much more important. In the official statement of the T.L.S.A.'s aims the only cognizance given to what was by far its most important focus of activity was a brief and ambiguous reference to the "improvement of their status" tacked on at the end. The public image most assiduously cultivated by the League was that it worked for the improvement of coloured education for the sake of the coloured child and for the general social upliftment of the coloured people. This tactic of not openly proclaiming their intentions and indeed at times even denying them, was a reflection of the weakness of the League and their fear of alienating the Education Department, the church authorities and white public opinion in general. Indeed, Muir, suspecting the covert objective for the establishment of the T.L.S.A. warned the inaugural gathering that the League should not be used as a trade union.[4]

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4 Cape Argus, 24/6/1913; Cape Times, 24/6/1913.

The other important unofficial aim of the T.L.S.A. was the social upliftment of the coloured masses, an ideal that went much further than merely educational reform. There was a strong ethos of social responsibility within the upper echelons of the coloured teaching profession. These sentiments were even more intense amongst the League leadership who had a completely unrealistic perception of the importance of education and attached an aura of sanctity to teaching, supposedly the noblest of professions.These sentiments were well expressed by A. Fransman's claims in his 1917 Presidential address that " . we do not love the profession because of a munificent salary, but solely because it grieves us to see so many souls, destined for a better purpose go to ruin."[5] The League was careful to understate its commitment to obtaining social reform for fear of incurring the disapproval of the Education Department but often used its sense of social responsibility to justify its involvement in issues recognized to be beyond the compass of League concerns.

The vast mass of coloureds in both the urban and rural areas were manual labourers and materially much worse off than teachers. There was thus also a strong moral motivation behind the de-emphasis of the League's more mercenary objectives. In addition, the T.L.S.A. fully subscribed to white middle class values. This was the set of norms it defined as 'civilized', consciously aspired to and in terms of which they deemed the aggressive pursuit of selfish interests by teachers to be inappropriate.The T.L.S.A. thus

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5 E.J., July, 1917. See also E.J., March, 1921.

never unequivocally admitted to its primary organizational goals. Leading T.L.S.A. members at times found it necessary to censure the League for not living up to its motto and the Journal found it necessary to continually reiterate the altruistic motives behind the League's existence.[6].

In addition the League at all times strove to uphold and increase the prestige of the coloured teaching profession and the League. This is a goal common to virtually all professional organizations especially teachers' associations since the teaching profession has commonly been the Cinderella of the professional world, commanding both relatively low remuneration and social status. Within the League this was never articulated as a specific aim but was so unquestioningly accepted as desirable, was so integral to sustaining its values, hopes and other conscious aims that it was undeniably an objective of the League.

This continuous concern with the prestige of the League and the teaching profession was the result of the role conflict experienced by the coloured elite. Coloured teachers especially those who were more representative of the upper section of the profession found themselves in an anomalous position. On the one hand they considered themselves to be the natural leaders of the coloured people and were generally accorded positions of respect and social eminence within the coloured community. On the other hand, however, they were forced into a distinctly subordinate social role in the wider South African society. They were branded with

6 See for example E.J., March, 1917; September, 1920; April - June, 1926; October, 1931; April, 1935.

racial inferiority, "the taint of the tar brush", and had to suffer inferior remuneration, service conditions and professional status. The T.L.S.A. thus constantly strove to assert the claims of its membership to the leadership of and social eminence within the coloured community on the one hand whilst on the other were continuously concerned to demonstrate their "culture" and high level of "civilization" in order to dispel claims of their racial inferiority and to prove their worthiness of full social acceptance by whites.[7]

A critical factor that pervaded every facet of the T.L.S.A.'s existence was its perception of the importance of education and the role of the teacher in society. It is self-evident that the League's relationship with the society at large and its interaction with particular organizations and interest groups was mediated through its broad philosophy of education and the individual and collective teaching experiences of its members. In addition the fairly stereotyped images of the duties and suitable behaviour by teachers that were prevalent, especially within the Education Department and amongst mission school managers were important in shaping the League's perceptions because of its earnest desire to conform to white middle class norms.

The T.L.S.A. from its inception not only shared the A.P.O.'s exaggerated view of the importance of education but rapidly carried these ideas to increasing extremes. For the first

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7 See for example E.J., June, 1916; September, 1918; March, 1922; January, 1923; January, 1934 for supporting evidence.

decade or more of its existence, hardly an issue of the Journal was published without some reference to the importance of education, and the duties of the teacher in the upliftment of the coloured people. It was to be expected that the T.L.S.A. would take the A.P.O.'s lead in regarding education as "the necessary medium for the improvement of our people". Indeed, teaching was regarded to be more than merely a profession, it was a "calling" or "vocation". They were wont to refer to the practice of teaching as "labours" and "service to the nation".[8] The teacher was regarded to be committed to almost sacred duties toward his pupils, the wider community and future of the coloured people.[9] It was their close ties to the church, their self-consciousness as an elite, a qualified acceptance of coloured inferiority as well as their perception of the nature of the teaching profession that resulted in the T.L.S.A. leadership's self-imposed burden that it was upliftment, charity and self-sacrifice that was required of them.

In the earlier years of its existence the T.L.S.A. was quite prepared to concede important roles in the elevation of coloureds to the home and to the "whole enlightened section of the race".[10] But by the early 1920's the T.L.S.A.'s inflated opinion of the importance of the teaching profession to society and its historic role in the upliftment of coloureds reached extravagant proportions. The T.L.S.A. did not allow modesty to temper its claims that it

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8 See for example E.J., June, 1916; November, 1921; April, 1922; October - December, 1925; October, 1931; August, 1937; February, 1938; Cape Times, 24/6/1936.

9 See also E.J., October, 1932; April, 1939.

10 E.J., April, 1917; August, 1917; November, 1917.

was part of the profession that held the key to the future of humanity. By 1923 the Educational Journal could unabashedly proclaim that "... there is no surer cure for this disease [of chaos and disorder in the world] than education. ... People's eyes are anxiously being turned to the teachers for the ultimate solving of the difficult problems now confronting the world. What a glorious privilege to be a teacher now and to feel conscious that the last hope lies with us for the redemption of society.[11]

Of the large number of examples that could be drawn upon to illustrate the League's unwarranted exaggeration of the importance of education none are better than a Journal editorial's declamation that:

> Legislators may make the laws, wise or otherwise; lawyers may administer them; social reformers may plead for a better order of society; but the men and women who mould the hearts and inspire the thoughts of all these are the teachers, and on them ultimately depends the good or folly of humanity. Whether a community is to advance in happiness; whether a country of many races is to become one of harmony, tolerance and understanding, whether the thousand races of the world will ultimately attain to some plain of equal happiness by beneficent schemes, inventions and discoveries of mankind is dependent on the teachers.[12]

Education was regarded to be the crucial means for the future advancement of coloureds for as a Journal editorial put it, the League regarded the "properly educated man [to be] the most powerful civilizing factor, and the strongest aid to the observance of law and order"[13] and attributed the "disease" of disorder, rebelliousness and strikes to the

11 E.J., May, 1923.
12 E.J., December, 1922.
13 E.J., December, 1920.

failure of educators of the past to meet their commitments to their pupils.[14] The teacher was thus regarded to have definite and very special duties to his pupils, particularly in the case of coloureds. J. Abrahamse, twice President of the League, reasoned that, "Ons [the teachers] is die leiers van ons volk" not because they particularly wanted it that way but because of their objective position of being the most "civilized" and "culturally developed" section of the coloured population and of being in a constant and closely preceptive contact with both parents and children.[15]

It thus followed that the coloured teacher, "... of necessity, exercise every good quality, so that he may be held in the highest regard and respect by all around him". He needed to be "a concrete example by which everybody else can be influenced, and up to which they can endeavour to live".[16] Besides teaching by example the teacher was urged to study the character of his pupils, minister to their moral and social needs and instil virtues such as truth, honesty, method, neatness, order, good manners, obedience, moderation, respect of authority and self control.[17] A Journal editorial outlined the basic task of the teacher as turning "children into worthy citizens of South Africa, into men and women who fear God and honour the King and by honest labour help to increase the wealth of the state and do their duty by their fellow citizens".[18] In its perception of the

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14 E.J., May, 1923.
15 E.J., January, 1933; Cape Times, 2/7/1928.
16 E.J., April, 1932. See also for example E.J., April, 1917; July - September, 1926.
17 See for example E.J., April, 1917; March, 1922; July - September, 1926; August, 1934; April, 1939.
18 E.J., November, 1917.

role of the teacher the League never lost its Bookertean[19] outlook as embodied in van der Ross' reminder to his colleagues in his 1922 Presidential Address that "... the highest aim of the teacher should surely be to guide the rising generation to that point where they will command the respect of all the remaining races to whom South Africa is home."[20]

There were several subtle inducements for the T.L.S.A. to hyperbolize the importance of education and the teacher to society. An important, though not always a consciously held, motive was the pursuit of social and professional prestige, particularly within the coloured community. More deliberately, the T.L.S.A. saw a need to paint a positive picture of itself in order to gain the approval of the general public, endorsement from other possibly supportive bodies and attract a wider membership. There was a tacit assumption that a demonstration of the value of the teaching profession to society in general would legitimate the T.L.S.A.'s campaign for better service conditions and helped the T.L.S.A. to reconcile the apparent contradiction of their principle of selfless social service and their quest for material gain.[21] This misjudgement was most marked in the years of optimism after World War I with the delusion that education was to be the main means whereby "backward" and subject peoples would advance and through which positive

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19 I have taken the liberty of inventing this term to refer to the ideas and philosophy of Booker T. Washington. "Washingtonian" might be misleading and the alternatives are clumsy.

20 E.J.,September, 1922.

21 See for example E.J., June, 1917; June, 1922; July, 1923; June, 1928.

values could be inculcated into society to ensure a stable and prosperous future. The apparent thorough-going reform of coloured education in the early 1920's helped to nourish the myth and heightened the League's lyrical expositions on the subject.

It was not at all surprising that the coloured teaching profession did not live up to these naive expectations. Initially this failure led to admonitions, guilty self-recriminations and urgings to coloured teachers to improve themselves in order to dispel their present deficiencies.[22] As the years passed and the expectations of reform did not materialize this self-aggrandizement became increasingly hollow. And by the mid-1930's, probably as a result of the general deterioration of the position of the coloureds there was a greater predisposition to admit that coloured teachers had shirked their duty and failed to fulfil the leadership role which "should without gainsay be theirs" and "becomes the noble profession they pursue."[23] Even when admitting failure the T.L.S.A. clung to the idea of teachers as the leaders of the coloured people.

Throughout the period under discussion the overall organizational structure of the T.L.S.A. remained poorly developed and loosely defined despite significant improvements made over the years, especially during the 1930's. However the most salient feature of the League's

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22 E.J., March, 1917; September, 1920; April - June, 1926.

23 E.J., October, 1933.

organizational structure was that virtually all power and initiative was vested in the Executive Committee.

Besides the powers derived from its constitutionally defined functions, the domination of League affairs by the Executive Committee was further buttressed by the lack of effective checks or balances on its authority. The individual members were at all times scattered, isolated and only got together once a year at the annual conference. The only way that an individual member or a branch had of challenging the policies and decisions of the Executive was to raise the matter at conference. But the conference was organized, conducted and dominated by the executive members who had such standing within the League that they as a body virtually controlled voting patterns. Under these circumstances it was impossible to successfully challenge Executive policy unless the leadership was split on the issue or the Executive was prepared to concede the point. Like the individual member, the branches were also in no position to challenge the Executive. The larger, more powerful urban branches were the stamping grounds of the League leadership whilst the rural branches were small insular bodies consumed with the struggle of merely remaining active.

But there can be no doubt that the real basis of Executive dominance was the unusual degree of consensus within the League. Until about 1940 there were no serious cleavages within the T.L.S.A. The most substantive lines of cleavage were not sufficient to precipitate serious conflict because

the vast majority of the League membership shared the values and approved the actions and strategy of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee elected annually at the conference included the officers of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor and from 1931 onwards, an Assistant Secretary. Up to 1936 the Executive Committee included twelve non-officers, each of whom served for three years with four retiring annually. The President held office for one year and was automatically followed by the Vice-President who had already to be a member of the Executive Committee. These two offices were in reality ones of prestige and of recognition of services rendered[24] rather than ones of supreme power because the position was only held for a year and the League employed a simple majoritarianism in its voting procedures.

Real power in directing League affairs lay in the individual's ability to be repeatedly elected to the Executive. Personal attributes such as organizational ability, the preparedness to sacrifice time and the image projected[25] were important. Other factors such as the size of a member's home branch, the distance from Cape Town, his access to transport facilities and a sympathetic manager could be decisive. The individual could exert considerable

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24 Incumbents were even presented with certificates, to mark their tenure of the office. See E.J., October, 1936.

25 For example as a champion of the country teachers in the case of Oppelt and Freddie Abrahamse or as a cultured and articulate person who could negotiate with the authorities with confidence as with Hendricks and Gordon.

influence within the League over a lengthy period of time as exemplified by the services of Oppelt, Maurice, Scholtz, Joorst and others. Even greater influence could be wielded by the individual time and again being elected to one of the offices as in the case of Hendricks' control of the Journal, Beukman's repeated re-election as Treasurer, van der Ross as Secretary and Sonny Abdurahman as Assistant Secretary through the 1930's and early 1940's.

League affairs, especially the elections, were run on a strictly democratic basis. There were minor constitutional irregularities such as non-bona fide members voting at conference, procedural rules for the tabling of motions not being followed to the letter or on very rare occasions objections being raised to the Executive making decisions without proper consultation with the membership.[26] But not one instance of intentional or significant undemocratic behaviour has surfaced in the evidence.

However, it is clear from the composition of the Executive, the proceedings at meetings and conferences as reported in the Educational Journal and various newspapers that the League up to 1940 was dominated by an oligarchy of about thirty individuals.[27] This exclusive set can be narrowed even further to a group of five individuals who had the most formative influence on the League, who were active in the League for almost the entire period of conservative

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26 E.J., April-June, 1925; April, 1921; August, 1934.

27 See Appendix III. The 33 people who served on the Executive for at least 5 of the 23 years analysed, held 83,8% of all Executive vacancies and the 14 people who served for more than 10 years, 52%.

dominance and were recognized as its pre-eminent leaders. There was no greater praise for a Leaguer than to be hailed a "pillar of the League" and Fred Hendricks, David van der Ross, I.B. Oppelt, Sydney Maurice and Harriet Beukman more than any deserved that accolade. There were others such as Harold Cressy, Philip Scholtz, Susan Wooding, Ned Doman, E.C. Roberts, George Golding, Sonny Abdurahman to name but a few who were also important but due to death, retirement or late entry did not have a continued influence on League affairs.

Control of the League was increasingly centralized in fewer hands over the years especially from the late 1920's when the key offices were rotated within a small clique and the early 1930's when particular individuals came to dominate specific offices. Fred Hendricks was continuously Editor-In-Chief from 1931 to 1943, David van der Ross, Secretary from 1931 to 1943 and Harriet Beukman, Treasurer from 1932 to 1943. That all three came to their respective offices at more or less the same time and lived and taught in close proximity to each other seems to be too much of a coincidence.[28] This was most likely the result of an informal agreement within the League hierarchy that for the sake of efficiency it was expedient to have the cardinal administrators located within a convenient distance of each other. That this was a working arrangement rather than a conspiratorial restriction of League power to a small clique is not only confirmed by van der Ross[29] but also by this

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28 Van der Ross and Hendricks both taught at Battswood in Wynberg and Beukman lived in Salt River and was principal of the Albertus Street School.

29 D. van der Ross, interviewed 26/8/1983.

particular configuration of Executive officials not corresponding with the closest personal associations within the upper echelons of the League.[30]

The conservative T.L.S.A. was dominated by an oligarchy that gained and exercised its control through democratic means and whose composition was largely determined by a talent for organizational work and more importantly a preparedness for self-sacrifice. This was especially true of those outside of Cape Town who suffered considerable inconvenience in order to participate fully in the Cape Town centred activities of the League. The extent to which the League leadership used its control of the organizational structure and the communication network of the League to perpetuate its dominance and manipulate opinion in its favour was of little significance because the degree of consensus within the League made this unnecessary. This is clearly illustrated by the virtual lack of Executive constraint upon editorial policy,[31] until the arrival of the young radicals on the Executive in 1940 resulted in a scramble by the conservatives to gain proper control of editorial policy.[32]

There was also a distinct geographical bias to the distribution of authority within the T.L.S.A. The organizational life of the League was at all levels focussed on Cape Town and its suburbs.[33] This was very much a

30 For example van der Ross was much closer to Oppelt than to Hendricks and would have preferred Doman to Abdurahman as his Assistant Secretary.

31 D. van der Ross, interviewed 26/8/1983.

32 See E.J., August, 1940; October, 1940; October, 1941; April, 1942 for example. D. van der Ross, interviewed 26/8/1983.

33 See Appendix III.

function of the concentration of the coloured population and hence of coloured teachers and League membership. The location of the Education Department's offices in Cape Town reinforced these centripetal tendencies. Thus Cape Town had by far the largest share of the annual conferences, executive meetings and was the venue of nearly all of the Leagues important extra-mural activities. Of the 28 annual conferences held over this period 19 were in Cape Town, 4 in Port Elizabeth, 3 in Kimberley and 2 in Paarl with many of those held outside of Cape Town being at the instigation of the Peninsula based leadership. A far greater proportion of the executive meetings and other activities such as concerts, bazaars and choir and sports competitions were held in Cape Town.

The larger towns of the Western Cape such as Malmesbury, Paarl and Stellenbosch as well as the other large urban centres of Kimberley and Port Elizabeth constituted a secondary tier of organizational power within the League. In these towns where and when branches were active, the League activities in Cape Town were replicated on a smaller scale.

Executive members from outlying towns if conscientious, were able to have as much influence on the Executive as their Cape Town colleagues but at the cost of considerably greater inconvenience, especially in the earlier period when transport posed greater difficulties.[34] The more remote from Cape Town and the smaller the branch, the more tenuous was the branch's and individual members' influence on the League

34 E.J., August, 1915; November, 1920; December, 1921; March, 1922; July, 1922.

likely to be. The size of the branch and its distance from the conference venue were important factors for influence on the Executive because an aspirant executive member depended heavily upon the support from his home branch at the election. Branch loyalty was also significant when it came to taking sides over controversial issues. The example of Miss L.V. Gomes of Kimberley who was elected to the executive at the 1922 conference is instructive. Her election to the Executive was mere tokenism and a burden to her colleagues because she was unable to attend any executive meetings or participate in any meaningful way in League activity at the executive level.[35]

After the restructuring of the Executive in 1936 the problem of poor attendance by the more remote Executive members was partially countered by the League paying for the travelling costs of representatives beyond an 80 miles radius of the venue from that year onwards.[36] This change had little substantive impact on the geographical distribution of power within the League because the sheer weight of numbers and better access to decision making processes ensured the continued domination of the Peninsula and the Western Cape branches. What the change meant was that the more distant branches were better integrated into Cape Town centred activities.

A fundamental problem facing the T.L.S.A. right from the outset until the latter part of the 1930's was its failure to attract a sufficiently large proportion of coloured

35 E.J., May, 1923.
36 E.J., August, 1936.

teachers.[37] The initial expectations that "75 percent of the teachers would rush to the League"[38] was completely unfounded. In addition, the League for years struggled to get an adequate proportion of its membership to attend its branch meetings regularly, even in Cape Town where its organization was most efficient. Five years after the founding of the League the Journal admitted that of the 259 mission school teachers in the Cape [Town] Division only 30-40 were members of the local T.L.S.A. branch. The attendance at Cape Town branch meetings during 1916 ranged between 15 and 23 and averaged 18 for 1917.[39] The expedient of "lowering the dignity of branch meetings to the level of mere social hours" clearly failed to encourage a more regular attendance or to attract many new members.[40] The implication of this situation, which was not lost on either the League or the Education Department, was that the T.L.S.A. was in a statistical sense not adequately representative of coloured teachers and did not have the necessary mandate to make demands on their behalf.

The T.L.S.A.'s explanation for this apathy covered a wide range of factors including the "dry-as-dust routine" of administrative and financial matters that of necessity had to be dealt with at branch meetings and financial demands such as having to pay subscription fees, being obliged to contribute to charities or to purchase tickets for some

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37 See E.J., May, 1915; August, 1916; July, 1917; April, 1922; September, 1923.

38 E.J., November, 1917.

39 E.J., April, 1918. See also E.J. May, 1915; October, 1916; April, 1917.

40 E.J., June, 1916. See also April, 1917; August, 1923;Sun, 17/8/1934 for example.

function or other. It was also alleged that younger teachers were intimidated by the high seriousness and imposing manner of their more experienced colleagues. But most important was the indifference of those contenting "themselves with merely looking on and with criticizing" as well as the frivolous and mercenary attitudes of others, expecially younger teachers who put sport and pleasure before duty and service.[41] There were other reasons related to organizational deficiencies, a lack of adequate incentive for joining the League and risks such as disapproval by managers that limited the size of the League.

The problem of the indifference of a large proportion of its rank and file membership who could not be drawn into League activity[42] was only slowly and haltingly overcome by the 1930's. Even as late as 1934 J.H. Reynard estimated that about three quarters of the League membership was "parasitic".[43] A Journal article entitled "Let George Do It" typifies not only the problems faced in this regard but also the frustration of the leadership and their self-conscious sense of personal sacrifice;

> "Don't come to the meetings. If you do come, come late. If the weather doesn't suit you, don't think of coming. If you do attend a meeting find fault with the work of the....officials. Never accept office. Nevertheless get sore if you are not appointed on a committee. If you should be appointed do not attend the committee meetings. If asked...to give your opinion...have nothing to say. After the meeting tell everyone how things ought to be done. Do nothing more than is absolutely necessary, but when other members roll up their sleeves and willingly and unselfishly use their ability to help matters along howl that the society is

41 See E.J., July, 1917; August, 1923; April-June, 1926; May, 1934.
42 E.J., May, 1915; August, 1917; October, 1922.
43 Sun, 13/7/1934.

> run by a clique. Hold back your subscription as long as possible or better still don't pay at all. Don't bother about getting new members. Let George do it."[44]

Administrative problems were exacerbated as the League grew in size and were particularly apparent at the annual conference which had become an unwieldy affair by the 1930's especially with regard to the establishment of the credentials of voters. The League itself was still too small and its organizational structure too undeveloped to change the open format of conference to one conducted by delegate.[45] The League experienced problems with those people whose membership had been suspended through the non-payment of annual dues but who nevertheless continued exercising membership rights, attended meetings and conference, voicing opinions and even voting.[46] Perhaps a distinction should be drawn between lapsed members and the "camp followers" who acted as bona fide members whenever it suited them but deliberately refrained from joining the League.[47] These people made no financial contribution to the upkeep of the League and were essentially removed beyond its control. Although it was at one stage suggested that high subscription fees kept many teachers out of the League,[48] this was clearly not the case. Subscription fees were low,

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44 E.J., October, 1922. See also E.J., April, 1921; April-June, 1926.

45 See E.J., June, 1933 for details of specific problems. See also E.J., June, 1928; May, 1930; June, 1932; August, 1935.

46 E.J., February, 1921; April-June, 1925; October-December, 1925.

47 Compare for example E.J., February, 1921 with July-December, 1927.

48 E.J., August, 1934.

graduated to match salary scales and absolutely necessary to the proper functioning of the League.[49]

The T.L.S.A. was for most of its life on a sound financial footing because membership fees together with intermittent fund-raising efforts provided sufficient income for the day to day running of the League. Besides the costs of publishing the Journal and staging the annual conference the T.L.S.A.'s needs were small.[50] The Journal was the most serious drain on League resources but if necessary, as in 1919 and 1924 the publication of the Journal could be temporarily suspended. Indeed the financial strength of the League was demonstrated by its ability to continue publishing the Journal through the difficult times of World War I when the organization itself was at its weakest. More significantly, the League did not find it necessary to raise its membership fees during the steep inflation between 1916 and 1920.[51] Subscription fees were for the first time raised in 1931 but were then lowered in 1936 and even more substantially in 1939 as the growing membership increased revenues whilst lowering unit costs.

The League had a continual problem collecting all the revenue that was due to it especially membership fees and

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49 See Appendix I.

50 From 1925 onwards the Journal for most years published a comprehensive annual financial statement detailing the T.L.S.A.'s income and expenditure. It is apparent from these documents that the League needed no more than about L200 annually to cover costs and when its income substantially exceeded this sum it would lower subscription rates. Refer to Appendix II.

51 Appendix I; McGregor, p.777.

Journal subscriptions.[52] The League also had a problem raising extra funds for special projects. Thus it took the League 8 years to raise sufficient money for a memorial plaque and headstone for Harold Cressy[53] and the drive launched in 1934 by the Executive to raise the L49 of its Education Fund to over L100 within three years failed.[54] Inefficient organization and the relative poverty of coloured teachers were at the root of the difficulty of raising money.[55]

The production of the Educational Journal was a continual struggle that often taxed the Executive to the limit of its organizational ability and the League to its financial capacity. To the Executive the publication of the Journal was worth the strenuous exertion because it was vital to their perceived interests, the smooth functioning and, in the longer run, probably the very existence of the League. The Journal was the single most important means of communication between the Executive and the individual members who became increasingly far flung and a substantial proportion of whom were quite isolated. Outside of conference which was held but once a year and was sparsely attended by members from rural areas, it was the most important link between members. The Journal served as a crucially important organizational tool to inform members of activities, arrangments, new developments, changes and

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52 E.J., July, 1917; July 1923; April-June, 1925; January-March, 1926; September, 1929; August, 1937.
53 E.J , July-September, 1926; August, 1934.
54 E.J., February, 1935; February, 1938.
55 E.J., February, 1936.

decisions by the Executive. This was particularly the case with the organization of the annual conference.[56]

Very importantly the Educational Journal was a means by which the League could legitimately express its aspirations and air grievances in public and make them known to the church and educational authorities. Furthermore the Journal was a status symbol, a source of pride and an emblem of their level of "civilization". It gave the League an opportunity to match white teacher organizations and to dazzle the coloured public.

Right from the outset the Journal found itself in financial difficulties for, besides considerable organizational problems faced by the League in its early years, the scarcity and inflated prices of materials during World War I added to the considerable burden of producing the Journal.[57] The Educational Journal operated at an increasing financial loss and the League was continually pressurized by the publisher, Maskew Miller, to raise subscription rates, generate more revenue from advertising and expand its circulation.[58] Despite the considerable effort of recruiting 300 new subscribers during 1916-17[59] the League was nevertheless forced to raise Journal subscriptions rates twice from 2/- to 2/6 to 3/-[60] partly because it failed to attract much new advertising.

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56 Consult any E.J. issue (usually May) just prior to the annual conference.

57 McGregor, p.777.

58 E.J., June, 1916; July, 1917.

59 See E.J., August, 1916. This was no mean feat since the membership of the League was no more than about 80 at the time.

60 E.J., August, 1916; July, 1917; August, 1917.

Although the Educational Journal had immediate justification for congratulating itself on continuing publication, these felicitations were clearly premature.[61] The measures mentioned above were mere palliatives and did little to dispel the basic problems of inefficiency and the membership of the League being too small and poor to sustain the Journal. The problems of finance especially the non-payment of subscriptions and the high cost of printing as well as gaining sufficient and suitable literary contributions culminated in the Journal ceasing publication for 14 months from June 1919.[62] Despite brave resolutions upon the resurrection of the Journal in September 1920 the afore-mentioned problems persisted.[63] With the slump in League activity during the early 1920's the Educational Journal was once more forced out of publication for the whole of 1924. The League blamed the high cost of printing and the non-payment of subscriptions to be the main reasons for the Journal becoming too great a drain on League resources.[64] However, the basic problem was that the membership of the League was still too small to sustain the publication.

When the Journal resumed publication in 1925 it was never to go out of print except for a few months during the trauma of the split of 1943-4. The successful management of the Journal after the mid-1920's was due to the growth in memberhsip increasing the League's disposable income and the

61 E.J.,July, 1917.
62 E.J., September, 1920.
63 See E.J., November, 1920; May, 1921; June, 1921; July, 1922; July, 1923.
64 E.J., June, 1922; December, 1923; January - March, 1925.

successive elimination of organizational weaknesses relating to the production of the Journal. Monthly publication was realized to be too ambitious, arduous and expensive. After experimenting with various issuing schedules, the successful formula of five issues per annum was evolved by 1933 and the subscription rate was immediately cut by two thirds. Four issues were timed to appear during mid-term and one a few weeks before conference. A key weakness identified was that the burden of producing the Journal had almost wholly been carried by the Cape Town branch and by the editor in particular.[65] Although only partially successful future attempts to spread the burden of finance, administration and obtaining literary contributions were very important to the progresive stabilization of the Journal. The most significant development in this regard came during the 1928 Annual Conference when the Editor was replaced by an Editorial Board with an Editor-in-Chief in charge and with the appointment of 19 regional representatives to write and collect articles and forward information of interest.[66] Problems relating to the production of the Journal were only gradually relieved as the League grew in size and stabilized as an organization. These problems were never entirely eliminated and publication of the Journal remained a struggle.[67]

The organizational problems experienced by the League in general were duplicated at branch level and the special

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65 See E.J.,January - March, 1925.

66 E.J., August, 1928.

67 See for example E.J., October - December, 1925; April - June, 1926; January - June, 1927; December, 1928; September, 1929; August, 1937; April, 1940.

problems of the rural branches made them particularly vulnerable to quietly fading from existence. Isolation, distance and poor transport facilities made for a lack of communication with the Executive and involvement in League affairs which were centred on Cape Town. There were many occasions when the Executive itself was not sure whether a particular branch was still functioning or had lapsed.[68] Sydney Maurice's teasing description of the League's branches in 1930 as "some have died and been reborn, others have been leading a pale, sickly existence, others are awaiting rebirth, others are tottering to their doom, whilst one or two rejoice in vigorous life"[69] is accurate for the entire life of the League except perhaps for the late 1930's.

Until 1936 when representation on the Executive Committee was changed the relationship between the Executive and the various branches was tenuous and conducted on an ad hoc basis. Branches were local institutions that outside of the annual conference in effect functioned independently of the League and its Executive. There were no definite or regular channels of communication between the Executive and the branches or between branches except for the annual conference where participation was conducted on an individual basis. Members could and usually did cooperate informally as a branch at the conference and the main form this took was in support of certain motions or particular candidates in elections. Although the formation of a branch

68 E.J., September, 1918; October - December, 1925; July - December, 1927; January, 1933.

69 E.J., June, 1930.

required the permission of and entailed prior collaboration with the Executive, branches were on the whole neither formed nor maintained by the League or its Executive. In most cases the formation of the branch was dependant upon local initiative, often of a single individual. A reasonable concentration of League members in a particular area was certainly no guarantee that a local branch would be established. The usual pattern was for the enterprising local teacher or independent League member to recruit a large body of new members to the League by forming a branch. Towns like Kimberley and Stellenbosch with more than their share of independent League members at times went without a local branch for years.

In the rural areas coloured teachers were thinly spread and distance was only overcome with considerable effort. The Caledon Branch formed in 1922 drew members from Houw Hoek, Struisbaai, Greyton, Hawston, Hartebeesterivier, Bredasdorp, Middleton and Elim.[70] The Worcester branch operated as far afield as Ceres, Wolseley and Tulbagh[71] whilst the Piquetberg branch which covered Morreesburg, Porterville, Clanwilliam, Goedverwacht and Witwater had the particular problem of the mountainous terrain making travelling even short distances difficult.[72] This problem even persisted as late as the 1940's as illustrated by the Uniondale branch formed in 1939. This branch drew its members from Uniondale, Avontuur, De Hoop, Haarlem, Kunzu, Misgund, Lentewater,

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70 E.J., January, 1922; August, 1922.
71 E.J., January, 1922.
72 E.J., January - March, 1925; August, 1933.

Krakeelrivier, Joubertina and Twee Rivieren yet had only 20 members, an average of two per settlement.[73]

With schools in rural areas being widely scattered and at times being quite isolated branch meetings were difficult to arrange and might only be held once a quarter or biannually. Meetings required much organization to arrange transport and accomodation and could only be held over weekends, or during vacations.[74] Even in the larger urban centres, at a time when few teachers owned motor-cars considerations relating to the inconvenience of using public transport or the weather might be sufficient to deter members from attending branch meetings.[75]

In the rural areas there was a limited number of teachers to draw upon. Some branches would start off with as little as 8 to 12 members and not attract many more. In its initial enthusiasm such a small branch could quite easily exhaust itself by meeting too frequently and by too rapidly depleting the field of discussion and activity. With the same people meeting time after time to do and discuss the same old things, with the same few individuals dominating proceedings whilst the effort to organize and attend the meeting was likely to become ever more arduous, it is not surprising that T.L.S.A branches especially the smaller rural ones regularly failed or might remain inactive for several years. Some branches such as the Oudtshoorn, Genadendal and even the Kimberley branch in its early years

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73 E.J., June, 1940.
74 See E.J., August, 1922; December, 1923.
75 For example E.J., October, 1922.

went through the cycle of failure and revival every few years.

Outside of its professionally oriented activities it is clear that the T.L.S.A. was a leader in the social life of the coloured elite. The T.L.S.A. from its inception had a high degree of social prestige within the coloured community and was one of the more important, active and enduring elements in the nexus of institutions, clubs and activities that was the basis of the social life of the coloured elite, especially in Cape Town. The T.L.S.A. was an important constituent of the coloured elites social life not only for its own social activities but also because of the involvement of its members, in their personal capacites, in other organizations and activities. This ensured that there was an interchange of ideas between the League and the coloured elite as a whole and thus a consolidation of social values and elite self-perception.

To a very large degree the T.L.S.A. functioned as a social club to its members. This was particularly the case at branch level since most of the serious business of the League was dealt with at the quarterly executive meetings and annual conferences. Although branch meetings had their serious and formal aspects their main consequence was that they allowed members to socialize. Branch meetings were relaxed, sociable events particularly in the rural areas where any invigoration of the torpid social life was welcomed and during the earlier years in urban areas when the branches were still small and relationships more

intimate. At the larger urban branches, meetings became more formal as the branches grew in size from the latter part of the 1920's onwards.

Besides the official business and formal discussion relating to branch administrative matters, internal League politics and local educational issues that one would expect at a meeting of this sort, there were also a number of informal social activities. Meetings might start off and were likely to end off with a prayer and often also the singing of the national anthem.[76] In the earlier years time would be set aside for musical and literary self-entertainment. The singing of popular ballads conforming to middle class respectability, spirituals and the recitation of conventional classics of English poetry were popular.[77] A favoured entertainment was the debate in which topical and educational issues relating to coloureds were discussed.[78] The presentation and discussion of papers on similar topics was another staple activity of branch meetings.[79]

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76 E.J., June, 1916; April, 1917; June, 1921; July, 1922; September, 1928.

77 E.J., August, 1916; November, 1916; June, 1917; November, 1917.

78 See for example E.J., December, 1916; June, 1917; April, 1918 for typical examples of topics of debate; respectively whether control of coloured education should be transferred from the churches to the state, whether towns produce better pupils than the country and whether the school manager or the teacher was the better judge of pupils.

79 Papers on "Free education in elementary schools, E.J., August, 1916; "Charles Reade, an appreciation", E.J., November, 1916; "The pro's and cons of total prohibition", E.J., May, 1917; "Causes of present-day unrest", E.J., October, 1920 provide a representative sample of the topics covered. The nature of the topics documented in footnotes 78 and 79 did not change during the conservative phase of the League. For later examples refer to the branch reports in the conference editions of the Journal, usually July or August.

There was also the serving of refreshments presumably accompanied by informal conversation and unstructured social interaction. This interaction was important in that it was at this level of small scale interpersonal contact that there must have been a good deal of the cementing of professional solidarity on issues such as the need for public as opposed to mission schooling. It probably has contributed to the shaping and consolidation of elite consciousness in areas such as the social responsibilities of the coloured teacher, the progressively secularized outlook of the coloured elite and their perception of the historical trajectory of the development of the coloured people. Indeed from quite early on in its life through into the 1930's a conscious effort was made to make branch meetings more entertaining in the hope of improving attendance and attracting new recruits.[80]

League activities made a significant contribution to the social life of the coloured elite. The League's annual conference was one of the highlights of the social calendar. Much time, energy and money was spent on the arrangement of the social activities at the conference. To many the climax of the conference was not the Presidential Address of the first day or the elections and the investiture of the new President and Executive on the last, but the dance afterwards. At times it was even found necessary to publicly rebuke the more frivolous members for being more attentive to the social pleasures than the proceedings of the

80 E.J., June, 1916; April, 1917; August, 1923; Sun, 17/8/1934.

conference.[81] Although unfair and exaggerated, jibes that the T.L.S.A. was an "entertainment association" or should be renamed the "Social League" or the "Dancing League of South Africa" had some justification.[82]

The League also conducted the Ash Shield competition, an annual school choir contest inaugurated in 1923 as a result of Mr.H.B. Ash, a City Councillor, presenting a shield to the League for the purpose of encouraging the study of music in schools.[83]. Despite a modest start the Ash Shield Competition in time became a very successful venture that brought the League much prestige and sizeable revenues.[84] By the mid-'30's the Ash Shield Competition began to draw sufficient entries to enforce elimination competitions and the removal of the event to ever larger venues, until in 1939 it was held in the City Hall.[85] The competition was incorporated into the entertainment schedule of the annual conferences and came to be a premier event of the coloured elite's annual social calendar, important enough to attract the patronage of such dignitaries as the mayor and the S.G.E.

From 1938 onwards the League also conducted the du Toit Shield Competition, an annual inter-school physical culture competition inaugurated as a result of R.J. du Toit, M.P. for the Cape Flats donating a shield to the League for the

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81 E.J., July, 1917; August, 1923; April - July, 1926; May, 1934.
82 Sun, 12/4/1935; 1/5/1936.
83 E.J., November, 1922; October, 1923.
84 E.J., August, 1933; August, 1934; August, 1937; June, 1940.
85 E.J., May, 1934; April, 1938; October, 1939.

purpose of promoting physical culture at coloured schools. The maiden competition at which 42 schools entered over 2000 competitiors was such a success that J.W. Mushet, M.P. for Maitland donated another shield for girls.[86] It is thus apparent that the League was not only an important contributor to the social life of the coloured elite but had gained considerable credibility with white liberal politicians in the Western Cape.

The T.L.S.A. or individual branches would intermittently arrange bazaars, fetes, fairs and concerts to raise funds not only to cover its general administrative expenses[87] but also for charitable purposes such as to provide relief to drought and poverty stricken Namaqualand coloureds or for its longer term projects such as the Education Fund to provide scholars with bursaries, the abortive attempt to establish its own reading room, or the laborious effort of raising enough funds to erect a memorial to Harold Cressy.[88] There were also occasions when the League or a branch organized a community based activity such as when the Paarl Branch in 1928 arranged a ceremony for the local coloured population to mark the inauguration of the Union flag[89] or the Claremont Branch held a "social day".[90]

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86 E.J., August, 1937; October, 1937; June, 1938; October, 1938; February, 1939; October, 1939; April, 1940.

87 See for example E.J., April, 1917; March, 1922; October, 1923; April - June, 1926; February, 1939.

88 E.J., June, 1916; October, 1916; March, 1917; December, 1923; July - December, 1926; January, 1931; August, 1934; October, 1939.

89 E.J., August, 1928.

90 E.J., August, 1937.

It is quite clear that the League membership and especially the leadership came from the elite of coloured society.[91] The organization generally expressed and propagated these elitist values at all levels of its existence. The clearest testimony to this was the T.L.S.A.'s complete identification with white middle class values, its stress on "respectability", veneration of "civilization" and pursuit of "culture".[92]

The elitist character of the League was demonstrated by a wide variety of indicators such as its overwhelming preference for English, the language of the urbanized coloured elite, despite the majority of coloureds being Afrikaans-speaking. The League membership had a penchant for social activities with connotations of social prestige such as welfare work, joining literary, debating and musical societies and playing tennis.[93] All League activities became studied attempts at dignity and propriety. It was especially the League's public functions that exuded the airs and graces of the coloured elite's social pretentions. The

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91 That Pat Heneke and A.B.E. Desmore were amongst the notables whose goodwill messages were printed in the first edition of the Sun and that 5 of the 8 original nominees to the C.A.C. were League officials demonstrates that the League leadership came from the very elite of coloured society.

92 This was also a prominent feature of middle class blacks in both Brazil and the United States. See for example C. Degler, Neither Black nor White; Slavery and race relations in Brazil and the united States, (New York, MacMillan, 1978) p.118. See also F. Fanon, Black Skins, White Masks, (New York, Grove Press, 1967).

93 The Peninsula Literary and Debating Society formed in 1916 and the Cape Literary and Debating society active during the 1930's drew many teachers and League members. Both Ned Doman and George Golding were Western Province coloured singles tennis champions during the 1930's. See EJ, June, 1916; Sun, 26/8/1932;

presence of some august white personage such as the mayor, the S.G.E., or some prominent cleric, official or politician underscored the social standing of the League and boosted its prestige.[94] Leaguers were keenly conscious of the hallmarks of "civilization" and were anxious not only to develop their "culture" but also to display it.

The League's class prejudice was demonstrated in a myriad of ways ranging from the Journal poking fun at the notes that semi-literate parents were alleged to have written to teachers[95] or the publication of the witticism that "A collar stud in time saves crime"[96] to the fear that "an undesirable class will creep into the [teaching] profession"[97] or the bland comparison of workers as "ordinary" and "ignorant" compared to teachers in a statement intended to be complimentary to workers.[98] The League was also on the whole critical if not hostile to what may be regarded as typical working class values such as present-minded consumerism rather than saving for the future or preferring their children to become economically

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94 See for example E.J., June, 1921; January - June, 1927; June, 1931; April, 1934; August, 1938. The day that J.X. Merriman appeared on a League platform must have been one of the proudest in its history. Morris Alexander, Dr Abdurahman and the Reverends Lavis, van Niekerk, and Smart were on the same platform, E.J. August, 1916.

95 E.J., December, 1915; April, 1916; June, 1917; May, 1922.

96 E.J., June, 1917.

97 E.J., October, 1916; July - December, 1927; Rhoda, p.43.

98 E.J., March, 1922.

productive as early as possible rather than improving their education.[99]

However the most classic statement of the League's chauvinism towards and disdain of the lower class coloureds was made by D.J. Sampson in his 1916 Presidential Address in which he attempted a "class analysis" of the coloureds' position.[100] Sampson's pronouncements are important because it is the most coherent, complete and frank delineation of the assumptions and prejudices that were implicit in League thinking and attitudes towards lower class coloureds. These were the assumptions and prejudices that underpinned the League's civilizing mission and underlay oft-articulated fears that the coloured people were "rapidly sinking to a level far below that of a civilized race"[101] or the assertion that coloureds were a "drink-sodden race of bestial degenerates."[102]

Sampson identified three classes constituting the coloured people, the sunken, the sinking and the uprising classes. Of the sunken class he commented, "What an accumulation of filth, vice, dissipation and crime! Such an accumulation seems to defy all the influences of human healing. 'Past social redemption' we exclaim." The sinking class was characterized as containing neither the "openly vicious" nor the "hardened criminal" but was a class indifferent to its

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99 E.J., November, 1917. See also for example Friedling, pp. 71, 84; Blume, The education of the coloured children in the urban area of Kimberley, (B.Ed., U.C.T., 1942), pp. 112, 114; Joshua, pp. 111, 117-8.

100 E.J., August, 1916; September, 1916; October, 1916.

101 E.J., August, 1938.

102 E.J., March, 1917.

own advancement and with its faculties susceptible to corruption. Their "indispensible needs are not prison accomodation, reformatories or police officers, but schools and teachers, or in other words, education." The uprising class was defined as embracing "those who, being concerned about their advancement in life, zealously watch over the moral and intellectual training of their offspring." Sampson went on to explain that the League was formed on the assumption that there was a brotherhood of man and was inspired by the belief that each man was his brothers' keeper. It was thus the League's duty "to elevate morally, as well as intellectually, the masses of the coloured population."[103]

Noting the "deplorable condition" of the coloured masses, the natural question that arose was "Whence are the hooligans who throng our streets and fill our goals, by whom were they created?" The answer provided by Sampson was that "the benevolence of a creator intended them to be human, but the passivity of the state, with its mistaken economy is largely responsible for their degradation which brings them almost to the level of the brute."[104]

The basic logic employed by the League's agitation for the improvement of coloured educational facililties was that hooliganism, crime, immorality and social degradation were the result of ignorance. This ignorance could only be effectively remedied by education.[105] Proponents of the idea

103 E.J., September, 1916; October, 1916.
104 E.J., August, 1916; May, 1923; January, 1931.
105 E.J., October, 1916.

that coloureds needed missionary education tended to see this deficiency as partly spiritual as for example the ignorance was taken to imply a lack of knowledge of "man's interest in virtue."[106] Education was one of the chief weapons in the fight against "the forces of evil and ignorance".[107] Important secondary benefits of education was that it kept children off the streets and out of mischief for a large part of the day which was productively spent and during which the teacher helped to instil certain virtues and commendable habits into the children.[108] The state was largely blamed for the moral degradation of the coloured masses by its refusal to provide them with proper educational facilities. A favourite theme of the League's agitation for the improvement of educational facilities was that it was false economy to prefer the financially expensive and socially ruinous policy of spending increasingly large amounts of money on goals, reformatories and the police force rather than the preventative policy of providing better educational facilities which would in the the long run reduce the costs of enforcement.[109]

A Journal editorial drawing attention to "the large number of poverty-stricken children ... growing up in an atmosphere of vice and ignorance" in the slums of the larger towns summarized the League's conception of the typical process whereby the coloured youth become corrupted;

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106 E.J., October, 1916.
107 E.J., January, 1923.
108 See for example E.J., September, 1916; October, 1920; January, 1931.
109 See for example E.J., July, 1917; March, 1922; July, 1923; January - March, 1925; October, 1931.

> "There are bands of children of tender years roaming the streets who have no homes, there are others who have homes of sorts, but who have to shift for themselves, and there are others, a considerable number, whose parents continue to scrape together sufficient to prolong their school lives to Standard II to enable them at twelve to enter a factory or domestic service. A child at twelve in a factory! What is the future of these children? Let there be no beating about the bush. The girls fall under the suggestive influences of the streets, weaken and take the easiest path,...The boys become addicted to smoking dagga, drinking, gambling and thieving.'[110]

The result it was claimed was hospitals and prisons full of people "who had but little care and money been expended upon them when children, might have been a credit to the state and a source of happiness to their fellow men."[111] It was sometimes darkly hinted that the inevitable outcome of such short-sighted policies of passing up the opportunity of procuring a well behaved and better skilled working class for the future, was social unrest.[112]

Although the arguments were distorted and opinions coloured for the purpose of lobbying for improved educational facilities and having to justify the extra expense that this would necessitate, the League was sincere in its expression of these beliefs, except perhaps for the warnings of social unrest. The coloured elite did not fear the coloured masses who were far too small, disorganized and powerless to pose much of a threat to the social order. The coloured elite had complete faith in the absolute correctness of white middle class values, except perhaps for racism. The League was confident that with proper education and a programme of

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110 E.J., October, 1917; January - June, 1927.
111 E.J., October, 1917.
112 E.J., January, 1917; March, 1921; July 1923; January - March, 1925; January - June 1927; Rhoda, pp. 51, 72.

social upliftment the coloured masses would become model citizens.

As in the case of the coloured elite generally T.L.S.A. members especially within the leadership had a strong sense of Christian duty and much of their extra-League activities were of a charitable, social welfare or missionary nature. Several League members were ordained priests or lay preachers. Many more were prominent in the communal lives of their churches and related activities such as choral training, fund raising , poor relief and the temperance movement. The League was thus not only interested in the general reform of coloured education but also in the general upliftment of the coloured people and the elimination of various social problems.

The main thrust of the League's active endeavour toward the upliftment of coloureds was to agitate for a better quality of education for coloureds. In pursuit of this objective the League petitioned the Education Department year in and year out for increased state responsibility for education, improved accomodation and teaching facilities, higher subsidies, medical inspection and compulsory education.[113]

But then it should also be recognized that the improvement of coloured teachers' service conditions was a much more consistent and persistently pursued objective than the

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113 E.J., June, 1916; October, 1917; June, 1918; September, 1920; February, 1921; October, 1928; May, 1930; August, 1932; May, 1934; February, 1935; April, 1936; October, 1936; February, 1938; February, 1939; February, 1940.

general reform of coloured education despite the regular denials and attempts to hide it. Indeed many of the demands for general reform of education would have benefitted teachers considerably and it might not be entirely unfair to posit this more specific goal to have been a powerful motivation behind the striving for wider educational reform. This was fairly obvious in the case of the frequent assertions of the need to improve coloured teacher qualifications.[114] But it is also clear that teachers expected substantial short term gains if the League's unending quest for complete state control of coloured education was realized. Also since teachers' salaries were the biggest item on the Education Department's budget, the frequent requests for a higher subsidy for coloured education could be expected to result in an increase in salaries for teachers.

The T.L.S.A. as a result of its self-conscious elitism considered itself to be not only the authority on coloured education but also relished the idea of acting in the capacity of spokesman for the coloured community. This confirmed their elite status and vindicated their claims that teachers were the natural leaders of the coloured people. Such considerations were important motivations behind the T.L.S.A.'s eagerness to participate in various conferences relating to coloured welfare, to testify before relevant commissions of enquiry.[115] and its pride at the invitation of Fred Hendricks to address Stellenbosch

114 See for example E.J., October, 1916; September, 1928; January, 1931.

115 E.J., January-March, 1926; April-June, 1926; October, 1929; June, 1933; October, 1934.

University students on the social aspects of coloured education.[116]

Considering the teaching profession to be one of the most important guardians of the coloured peoples morality, second perhaps only to the church, the League concerned itself with a wide range of social issues. Although the social upliftment of coloureds was a general concern of the League specific social problems were either of periodic or of passing concern. These phases were probably most strongly determined by the topicality of the subject in the wider community.

Thus for example in 1916-17 the pernicious influence of bioscopes and in 1917 and 1922 dagga smoking were issues. Recognizing that bioscopes had come to stay and did offer certain benefits, the League was much more apprehensive of the negative effects it might have on children. Their objections ranged from the banal, that homework would be neglected to the fear that the sensationalism, the taste for "morbid excitement" that was stimulated, the violence, the sexual suggestiveness and exposure to criminal ideas emanating from the screen would corrupt and warp the sense of values of the youth.[117]

The social problem that the T.L.S.A. was most consistently concerned with was that of alcoholism amongst the coloured lower classes. It was recognized to be the crucial factor in

116 E.J., August, 1934.
117 E.J., June, 1916; November, 1916; December, 1916; January, 1917.

coloured social degradation, their high incidence of criminal behaviour and to contribute significantly to the impairment of family life, disease and decreased worker efficiency. The tot system and vested interests in the liquor industry were blamed for the "drink curse" that hung over coloureds. Despite the vigorous involvement of several members, the T.L.S.A. as an organization was never directly involved in the temperance movement but lent its moral support to any attempts at reducing alcoholism, even the call for prohibition.[118]

A related concern was that of dagga smoking. Dagga appears to have been freely available particularly from chemists and that the only deterrent to its use was that it was labelled as poisonous.[119] There was concern about the spread of the habit from rural areas to the urban areas, from the lower classes to the better class coloureds and even to Europeans.[120] A Journal correspondent claimed that previously "the Hottentot alone fell victim to it".[121] Periodically the Journal would also come out against other social evils such as prostitution and gambling.[122]

On the whole the leading members of the T.L.S.A. were public spirited people genuinely concerned with the social problems experienced by coloured people. Many in their private capacities did much voluntary work of a charitable and

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118 E.J., February, 1917; March, 1917; October, 1917; November, 1917; February, 1922.
119 E.J.,December, 1917; July, 1922.
120 E.J., March, 1917; October, 1917; August, 1922; May, 1922; July, 1922.
121 E.J., October, 1917.
122 See for example E.J., July, 1917; February, 1923.

social welfare nature. Thus for example the Executive Committees of the somewhat obscure Coloured Welfare Organization and the Coloured Educational Improvement Association consisted almost entirely of T.L.S.A. members and their kin.[123] Leaguers played a pre-eminent role on the Juvenile Advisory Board for coloureds that was a voluntary body whose futile aim was to match the Juvenile Affairs Board, a statutory body for whites with the function of directing school leavers into suitable employment. The T.L.S.A. at one stage had seven members on the Board with Sydney Maurice resigning from the League to devote his full attention to his duties as Secretary of the Board and Abe Desmore following Lavis as Chairman.[124]

There was an element of self-interest in the League and its members' concern about the employment prospects for coloured youths because attention was focussed on the better paid jobs especially the skilled trades. Most T.L.S.A. members were likely to have children, family members or acquaintances either in the skilled trades or interested in entering them because this was one of the better paid forms of employment open to coloureds. It also saddened League members to watch many of their best educated and talented pupils enter occupations of manual labour for lack of alternative employment opportunities.[125] It was precisely the better paid jobs especially the skilled trades where the

123 Sun, 6/1/1933; 9/11/1934; E.J., November, 1929; August, 1932; August, 1937; Cape Times, 19/8/1930.

124 E.J., October, 1922; April, 1923; April - June, 1925; October - December, 1925.

125 E.J., June, 1917; June, 1926; January, 1931; August, 1933; August, 1938; Davids, p. 189; Rhoda, p.47; Jacobs, pp. 25-6, 46-54; Joshua, p.59; Blume, p. 114..

coloureds were losing ground with the discriminatory legislation and the Civilized Labour Policy of the 1920's.

Besides those already mentioned, the League's interest in social welfare issues was as diverse as their support for the Cape Corps Comforts Committee during World War I; an abortive attempt to establish a Coloured Childrens Union under the auspices of the T.L.S.A.; the provision of accommodation for orphans and homeless children living on the streets; the high infant mortality rate; the exploitation of child labour; providing Christmas treats for the newspaper vendors and waifs of Cape Town; promoting hygiene and being concerned to draw the connection between filth and disease; the shortage of housing and the consequences of overcrowding; the harmful effects of poor working conditions and the provision of recreational amenities for factory workers; the opening up of new avenues of employment such as nursing and midwifery for coloureds and several others.

The social issues with which the T.L.S.A. concerned itself covered a very wide spectrum and at one stage or another the League probably touched on all the major issues of coloured community life. Although there was much discussion, analysis of cause and strategy, complaint and passing of resolutions there was very little positive or sustained action by the League. Barring the welfare activities of members in their individual capacities or as members of other organizations, the League restricted itself to commenting upon social conditions or giving moral support to other groups active in

a particular field. The League's interest in these social welfare issues never went beyond discussion and deliberation and its interest in them tended to wane over the years as the organization grew and came increasingly to concentrate on professional problems. This is largely explained by the League not having the capacity for becoming much involved in issues beyond the immediate concerns of coloured education. Also the League's main, though unstated concern was the improvement of coloured teachers' service conditions and it was always wary of overstepping the bounds of propriety as defined by the Education Department.

There was some emphasis given to the need for self-help but nothing substantive was actually done by the T.L.S.A. When it or its members tackled a project such as their participation in the Juveniles Advisory Board or the Coloured Educational Advancement Association, it tended to favour the coloured elite. So much was said yet so little was done by the League itself that its interest in this field leaves one with little more than its attitudes toward the coloured labouring classes and its elitist self-perception.

There were several reasons for the League's concern with the social upliftment of the coloured masses. Their strong religious beliefs stressed charity as a virtue and their self-consciousness as an elite and their perception of the duties of their chosen profession reinforced the value of self-sacrifice. Also Maurice points to coloured teachers working under depressing conditions and daily coming into

contact with the consequences of deep impoverishment in the classroom as being significant in shaping this ethos.[126]

But there was an important element of self-interest attached to their motives for raising the social condition of coloureds. For once the coloured identity was accepted whether willingly or under duress, its negative attributes could not be escaped. These racially defined attributes such as drunkenness, criminality and irresponsibililty were sufficienty common amongst the coloured working classes to provide bigoted whites with ample ammunition to justify discrimination and to be acutely embarrassing to upper class coloureds.

Thus J. Abrahamse despairing of the moral redemption of the coloured people in his 1938 Presidential Address could exclaim, "We are knee-haltered because a large portion of our people drag us down into a mire of filth."[127] Ned Doman in his 1934 Presidential Address in vain deplored the tendency of white racists to "point with scorn and contempt at the lowest type of coloured person he can find ... as an example of the coloured man."[128] The coloured elite argued in vain that the coloured people should not be judged by the lower classes,[129] that the poor could not be held responsible for their position or that a race must be judged by its upper strata.[130] The coloured elite was resigned to

126 Maurice, (1966), p.388.
127 Cape Standard, 5/7/1938.
128 E.J., August, 1934.
129 E.J., March, 1929.
130 Rhoda, p. 44; Evidence of the Beaufort West coloured deputation before the Cape Coloured Commission, dated 13/5/1936, Abdurahman Family Papers, University of Chicago.

pursuing the naive Bookertean strategy of raising the social and economic status of coloureds to the point where there would be no justification for discrimination.

E. Moses, a prominent T.L.S.A. member, in setting out the reasons for the establishment of the Coloured Welfare Association, neatly encapsulated the logic and motivation behind the League's civilizing mission toward the coloured masses:

> The progressive development of any nation or people is retarded and its vitality sapped by dire attacks of immorality,... drunkenness, hooliganism, gambling and extravagance. ... the weaker brothers and sisters ... should be schooled in virtue ... by educational development. ... While the Coloured people of South Africa have an aristocracy of their own they also have a large mass of uneducated, undeveloped individuals without ambition, who far outnumber the handful who have been blessed and privileged to develop a taste for the better and higher things of this life ... for many more years to come the coloured people are to be judged according to the number of its weaker members, and that salvation lies only in the general uplift of the masses.[131]

The most remarkable feature regarding the conservative phase of the T.L.S.A. was the relative absence of conflict and the large degree of consensus on virtually all issues by its membership. Tempers seldom flared and serious rifts were hardly ever manifested within the League. When there was conflict, it was usually of short duration and of minor import. Even the 1918 incident was less serious than it might seem because Oppelt and Maurice resigned their executive positions but not from the T.L.S.A. They elicited much sympathy within the League and the rift was very

131 E.J., March, 1929.

quickly healed.[132] Both continued to play a leading role within the organization and were continuously on the Executive with Maurice subsequently gaining the presidency in 1920 and Oppelt in 1926 and 1934.

One basic reason for the degree of solidarity within the League was that firstly, entrance to the teaching profession and secondly membership of the League sifted together people of similar background and outlook. Because teaching required a relatively high level of education it tended to draw people from the more affluent and "respectable" families. There was an even greater likelihood that they would be the product of missionary education that stressed values such as humility, obedience, moderation and respect for elders and authority. Furthermore, from within this group the Teachers' League would have a greater attraction for those concerned with their professional status and with a sense of social responsibility.

But most importantly, League members faced very clearly defined common problems of such a fundamental and serious nature about which there was very little disagreement that it helped to foster a strong corporate identity. The most significant feature of this sense of solidarity was the professional identity of the League. There was unanimous agreement on the need for the improvement of coloured teacher service conditions, the inferiority of coloured education and the justness of their claims for general educational reform.

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132 D. van der Ross, interviewed 26/8/1983.

The other aspect of this sense of unity was the wider somewhat more diffuse, yet crucially important identity of colouredness. Despite the suppressed hope for and long term ideal of integration with white South African society the League in practice accepted the inferior status imposed upon people of colour by the dominant white group. Thus the mere act of joining the League was ipso facto an affirmation and in most cases an acceptance of the coloured status because the League identified itself as coloured and delineated the coloured people as its sphere of activity. Although the acceptance of the coloured identity had certain advantages that the League tried, and its very existence was an attempt to exploit, the penalties and disadvantages entailed were far more severe. Thus the coloured identity was accompanied by the intermittent and hesitant sense of pride in being coloured but an overwhelming sense of grievance at the emphasis on racial identity in South African society. It is the fundamental importance of the issues at stake and the severity of the problems involved in the self-image of the League that made for its cohesion.[133]

This would also explain the relative insignificance of alternative forms of identification possible within the League. Religious differences might have been expected to be one of the more obvious catalysts for factionalism within the T.L.S.A. since the majority of League members were deeply religious people and all the major denominations were represented in the organization.

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133 See chapter 5.

Yet not a single shred of evidence has surfaced to suggest that there was any religiously inspired conflict within the League. The League stood firm in its rejection of discrimination on denominational grounds within the profession. It, without any difficulty accommodated members with a secular outlook and this professional solidarity was extended to include their Moslem colleagues.[134] This is evidenced by the T.L.S.A.'s reaction to the controversy over the objections raised to the appointment of Sonny Abdurahman to the principalship of the Bokmakierie Primary School because he was Moslem[135] and by its support of teachers who had conscientious objections to involvement in religious instruction.[136] The League also unequivocally opposed religious discrimination in education generally, such as when the Simonstown mission school refused to accept Moslem pupils[137] or when the children whose parents had joined the newly-formed Volkskerk in Stellenbosch were expelled.[138] Denominationalism and religious differences were essentially irrelevant in determining groupings or identity within the League.

An important factor that tended to mute potential conflict was that the League was extremely careful of its behaviour and the public image it projected. The League in its self-styled role of leadership of the coloured community saw a need to set a proper example. The League regarded itself as

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134 See for example E.J., December, 1920; April - June 1925; January - June, 1927; June, 1936.
135 Cape Standard, 3/10/1939; 10/10/1939.
136 E.J., October, 1920;
137 E.J., November, 1922; November, 1923.
138 E.J., November, 1922; January, 1923.

an embodiment of the unfairness of racial discrimination and assumed that by fully measuring up to the moral and cultural norms set for itself by white society it would soften, if not completely dispel race prejudice. By putting itself on trial in this way the League was committed to demonstrating that its membership consisted of reasonable, refined and enlightened people fully the peers of their white counterparts.

This does not mean that there were not important differences of opinion or that there was no discord within the League but that, except for the 1918 incident, they were not important enough to result in open and sustained conflict. There were clashes from time to time over a variety of issues ranging from minor considerations such as the impropriety of Sydney Maurice temporarily holding two executive offices simultaneously,[139] through weightier issues such as the wasteful expenditure of League money[140] to fundamental questions such as the League's policy on the admission of non-coloureds to membership.[141] But these conflicts tended to take the form of sharp but short exchanges that were quickly resolved and contained within the League. Except for the 1918 incident such conflict did not disrupt the functioning of the League, was not perpetuated to cause permanent rifts and, considering the thorough consensus within the League, was not of much consequence.

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139 E.J.,September, 1922.
140 E.J., January, 1933.
141 Sun, 29/6/1934.

The Annual Conference itself was generally a pedestrian affair at which nearly everyone agreed nearly all the time on nearly all issues. The Journal editorial at times commented on the tameness of debate at conference.[142] There simply wasn't much scope for substantial differences on issues identified as important such as the need for higher salaries, better service conditions, compulsory education, state control of education or the elimination of racial discrimination. What often might have appeared to have been conflict was little more than empty bluster due to preference for a declamatory style of oratory or a good-humoured contest of one-upmanship between individuals. Such conflict was not serious and was recognized as such. The Journal made light of it and often poked gentle fun at the "pungent satirists" and the "fire-eaters".[143]

But there were more serious differences within the League that also did not result in open conflict but rather manifested themselves as tensions that could and often did influence voting patterns or the configurations of support over contentious issues.

Probably the most significant tension within the League was that related to social class between the more affluent and better qualified teachers who occuppied the more prestigious posts and their poorer and socially less refined colleagues. In the earlier decades of the 20th century teachers formed the largest professional group within the coloured elite and

142 E.J., September, 1920; July, 1923; April - June, 1925.
143 E.J., January, 1916; May, 1922; July, 1923; September, 1923; April - June, 1925 April, 1932.

were amongst its most socially eminent members. The League leadership was certainly very conscious of its social prominence. It is thus not surprising that there was a sizeable element within the profession that aspired to the attainment of white middle class status and "culture" and considered it below their dignity to associate with lower class coloureds.[144] Thus the S.G.E. de Vos Malan could with some justice publicly reprimand "Coloured teachers in the Province who form into cliques and do not mix with their people".[145] Teachers were often accused of being snobbish[146] and one Henrietta Veldsman censured those "teachers who do not wish to mix with funny-haired teachers."[147]

Such sentiments of disdain by some League members towards colleagues who were considered uncultured and socially inferior were clearly apparent within the League but were seldom publicly articulated in a direct and unambiguous form.[148] One of the main ways in which this social stratification and class prejudice came to be expressed in the League was as an antagonism between urban and rural teachers, the initiative for which came from within the urban group with its pretensions of belonging to a higher social class.

This urban-rural divide within the League was reflective of differences in social status within the profession because of a considerable degree of correspondence between the two.

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144 Blume, pp.98-100, noted a "white-mindedness" amongst many coloured teachers.
145 Sun, 13/12/1935.
146 Sun, 27/7/1934; 18/6/1937; January, 1933.
147 Sun, 20/12/1935.
148 D.van der Ross, intervewed 26/8/1983.

Virtually all of the highly qualified and socially refined teachers were to be found in the urban areas where the better paid and prestigious posts were located. On the other hand the majority of teachers in the country areas especially the rural back waters of the Cape were penurious, ill-educated and of a less sophisticated social disposition. That the Education Department shared these notions is indicated by it from 1931 onwards paying newly qualified teachers in urban areas higher salaries than their rural counterparts on the grounds that the cost of living was higher in the urban areas.[149]

It is quite clear that the blame for this antagonism lay with the group of socially pretentious teachers who looked down upon their rustic colleagues. This is demonstrated by the aversion of many urban teachers to teaching on the platteland even if this meant remaining unemployed[150] and the need for the Educational Journal to request members to make country teachers feel at home at the forthcoming annual conference.[151] Besides social ostracism or a deliberately detached and cool attitude elitist teachers might also express their antipathy in more concrete forms such as a refusal to be cooperative toward country members, or to provoke antagonism by for example complaining that rural members were not doing their share of League work.[152] The resignation of Maurice and Oppelt in 1918 were for example

149 Education Gazette, 13/11/30; 4/5/31; E.J., June, 1931; October, 1931.
150 E.J., October, 1931; April, 1937; October, 1938; Sun, 10/5/1935.
151 E.J.,January - June, 1927.
152 E.J., August, 1916; October, 1916; September, 1920; May, 1921.

partly the result of an extreme manifestation of this cleavage. Oppelt was the first President representative of the socially inferior rural wing of the profession and the inefficiency of the Executive was exacerbated by the reluctance of his elitist colleagues to cooperate under his leadership. Oppelt gave the "unpunctuality and irregularity of town members" as his main reason for resigning.[153]

The rare cases of rural aggression that did occur were retaliatory and a reaction to urban based arrogance as when F. B. Abrahamse in his 1931 Presidential Address reprimanded those teachers with an aversion for teaching in the platteland.[154] At the same Conference one of the League's smallest branches reported that "The members of the Saron branch deplore the lack of interest shown by the President and Executive in the far away branches."[155]

There was a significant degree of correspondence between the Cape Town centredness of the League and the urban-rural divide. But the pattern was repeated in the larger country towns such as Paarl, Stellenbosch, Malmesbury and Oudtshoorn and by the 1930's in Kimberley and Port Elizabeth which had emerged as important urban constituencies of the League. Although the League represented the interests of the coloured teaching profession as a whole and drew support from all sectors of the profession, the leadership consisted almost entirely of the urban elite especially from the Western Cape. This remained the case even after the League

153 E.J., April, 1918.
154 E.J., October, 1931.
155 E.J., October, 1931.

grew and spread its organization ever more deeply into the rural areas.

But there were factors that greatly helped to relieve this tension and preserve the unity of the League. As pointed out earlier solidarity was fostered through coloured teachers of whatever social status being subject to the humiliation of race prejudice in their day to day lives, and of being at a considerable professional disadvantage because of the segregated education system. Also the rejection of the snobbery of their colleagues by several leading League members did much to overcome these differences. Like David van der Ross, Philip Scholtz or Sydney Maurice, they could actively work to foster unity and circumvent the conceit of people like H.J. Gordon or Freddie Hendricks. Or like I.B.Oppelt and F.B. Abrahamse they adopted the stance of representing the interests of the country teacher.[156]

But as a Journal editorial noted, the urban-rural antagonism within the League had become considerably muted by the late 1930's.[157] The probable reason for this was that the tightening of segregatory measures against coloureds in the 1930's resulted in the emergence of a new alignment in coloured politics with the growth of a more activist and socialist inspired political movement within the coloured elite. Since this radicalism was almost entirely an urban phenomenon it tended to push urban and rural moderates into closer association.

156 D. van der Ross, interviewed 26/8/1983.
157 E.J., June, 1939.

Tensions relating to social class also surfaced in the debate over the language issue, especially the medium of instruction in schools. This was an emotive issue within the League because the two languages were associated with fairly clear cut sets of social values that broadly corresponded with the social divisions within the League and the wider coloured community.

English was regarded to be socially more prestigious because it was on the whole the language of the elite of white society at the Cape. It was an international language that was associated with the grandeur of the British Empire, with culture, civilization and progressiveness. These notions were distorted and intensified within the coloured elite because English was associated with the liberalism, fair-mindedness and colour-blindness of British rule at the Cape and across the globe. More importantly the ability to speak English was regarded to hold much better prospects for social and occupational advancement. On the other hand Afrikaans was derided as a kitchen language "a vulgar patois" without a grammar or significant literature. Prior to the 1920's many individuals in the anti-English lobby preferred Dutch to Afrikaans for this reason. Amongst the coloured elite Afrikaans was associated with the racism of the Afrikaner and the northern provinces as well as with the lower-classes amongst coloureds who spoke an Afrikaans dialect that was known as "kombuis Afrikaans".[158]

158 A.P.O., 13/8/1910; 8/4/1911; 10/8/1912; Maurice, (1966), pp.332-4; E.J., July, 1917; June, 1918; September, 1918; June, 1921; October, 1921; June, 1940.

But to the more egalitarian minded elements within the coloured elite the preference for and even insistence on the use of English had connotations of snobbery and class prejudice. Thus the complaint that there were no Afrikaans or Dutch articles in the Educational Journal[159] or Oppelt's arguments for the principle of home language instruction were implicit rebukes to elitist teachers.[160] This was especially the case regarding the medium of instruction because a long-standing problem in coloured schools was that teachers were drawn from the elite and tended to be English speaking whilst the majority of coloureds were Afrikaans speaking. Thus large numbers of Afrikaans speaking pupils were either taught by teachers with an inadequate command of the language or, even worse, they were given instruction through the medium of English which was virtually a foreign language to many children in the rural areas.[161] The problem was exacerbated through the 1930's because the oversupply of teachers forced many newly qualified English-speaking teachers to accept posts at small rural schools. The problem was compounded by the preference of the church authorities, which controlled coloured teacher training, for instruction in English.[162] Inspectors of education also noted the resistance of many coloured teachers in the rural areas to the implementation of home language instruction.[163]

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159 E.J., March, 1917.

160 See E.J., June, 1916; June, 1918; September, 1918; September, 1920; January, 1931.

161 J.J. Davids, The history and development of the education of coloureds in the George-Knysna area up to 1952, (B.Ed., U.C.T., 1960), pp.157-8; Coloured Education Commission Report, p.6; Sun 28/6/1935; E.J. August, 1916; April, 1922, August, 1935; June, 1940.

162 Maurice, (1966), p.338; E.J., August, 1935.

163 See for example Education Gazette, 3/9/1931, Inspector Luckhoff's Report; 9/8/1934, Inspector Aucamp's Report.

Thus it is not in the least surprising that a correspondent to the Journal pointed to the absurdity of Afrikaans-speaking teachers making fools of themselves by insisting on writing and conversing in English though they were hardly proficient in its use.[164] Indeed in the urban areas especially, one of the major obstacles to the total enforcement of home language instruction was the insistence of parents who had ambitions for their essentially Afrikaans-speaking children that they receive English medium instruction.[165]

The elite nature of the League was very clearly demonstrated by the rarity of Afrikaans articles in the Journal despite a regular request for articles written in Afrikaans, and by the prevalence of English during official proceedings at Conference even though a large proportion of the League membership was Afrikaans-speaking. This situation was very much a product of the dominance of the urban elite group of League affairs. However, with the formalization of Afrikaans as a language, the rise of Afrikaner political dominance and the fading of any hopes of British intercession on behalf of coloureds, Afrikaans became more acceptable to the coloured elite particularly when they sought to make a favourable impression upon the authorities.[166] Thus it was that by about 1930 the League leadership was more or less unanimous on the need for home language instruction[167] and that in

164 E.J., March, 1917.
165 E.J., March, 1917. S.G.E.Report, 1922, p.80; Coloured Education Commission, p.6; Maurice, (1966), p.341.
166 Refer to Dunbar Moodie, chapter 3 for a review of the language issues as it affected Afrikaners.
167 See for example E.J., May, 1930.

1932 the opening of Conference was for the first time conducted in Afrikaans.[168]

Age was another fairly constant axis of latent conflict within the League. Probably the basic cause of this generational disaffection was the patronizing attitude of the T.L.S.A. leadership toward their younger, less-experienced colleagues.[169] This condescension was neatly captured in a Journal editorial; "Younger teachers today join the League in order to learn; hence the responsibility which rests on the older section becomes very heavy indeed. Youthful impatience and impetuosity are healthy characteristics when under wise control but they become dangerous vices when misdirected by those who often mean well but lack direction."[170]

These sentiments were reinforced by perceptible age-based ideological differences within the League. Younger members tended to have more radical views than the established T.L.S.A. leadership. For example it was noted as early as 1920 that the desire for closer cooperation between coloured and African teacher organizations was increasingly prevalent amongst younger teachers.[171] Also the younger teachers were likely to be a shade too activist in their approach by accepted League standards which put a premium on moderation and discretion expecially in their relations with the authorities. It was the younger teachers who were likely to

168 E.J., August, 1932.
169 See for example E.J.,July, 1923; January - March, 1926; December, 1928; October, 1931.
170 E.J., August, 1934.
171 A.P.O., 30/10/1920; E.J., December, 1920.

see problems from a different perspective, to offer alternative approaches and even challenge accepted League doctrine.

Before 1940 this rivalry was never serious and was tolerated, even encouraged by the League hierarchy.[172] It was regarded to be a natural phase in the development of high-spirited younger members to display their inexperience through unwarranted optimism, passionate idealism and a reckless zeal to change the world overnight. This condescension was for example openly displayed in the gentle but arrogant mockery of the observation that "One basic difference [at conference] can always be seen, the young, hot and eager, full of hopes, petulent and impatient, the older men, sober, careful, circumspect, full of wise saws and rather apt to dampen too completely an ardent spirit ready to earn undying fame by setting Table Bay on fire."[173] Such sentiment might even be exaggerated to the extent that such generational differences were regarded to be physiologically based. As a Journal correspondent remarked after commenting on the impetuosity and impressionability of youth that "As we grew older and learn more, the higher part of our mentality develops and we ... acquire power and learn self-control".[174]

But there were however substantive grounds for animosity toward younger teachers. In contradistinction to the small group of youthful ardents there was a much larger group of

172 E.J., July, 1923.
173 E.J., May, 1922.
174 E.J., June, 1916.

frivolous and apathetic younger teachers who attracted some harsh criticism. They were sternly rebuked for their lack of social conscience and their mercenary attitudes in regarding the "noblest of professions" as merely a "job".[175] On another occasion J. H. Reynard censured the younger teachers at conference for being more interested in current fashions and socializing than the serious issues at stake at the conference.[176]

Furthermore the younger teachers in the long run, posed a threat to the more established element within the profession. From the mid-1910's and especially through the 1920's teacher trainees were receiving better training and higher qualifications than most of their older colleagues. An increasing proportion of initiates to the profession passed through training college as the pupil-teacher system was phased out.[177] Thus in the 1920's and '30's there was a fairly clear distinction between the older mission trained teachers and the younger training school products. This distinction, like the urban-rural and language differences to a significant degree coincided with the basic social cleavage within the profession. This is, for example, illustrated by Oppelt in his 1935 Presidential Address prefacing his criticism of the teaching profession with the observation that he could see, "... some of our respected pedagogues smiling at the idea of an ordinary Mission school teacher daring to criticize their work."[178]

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175 E.J., July, 1917; August, 1923; April - June, 1926; May, 1934.
176 Sun, 13/7/1934.
177 Maurice, (1966), p.368-9; Jacobs, pp. 5-6;
178 E.J., August, 1935.

Also the coloured presence at universities had grown from the vagarious appearance of a coloured student in the early 1920's to the continuous presence of a growing band of coloured students at U.C.T. and Fort Hare by the late 1930's, most of whom entered the teaching profession.[179] The penchant for members of this group towards socialist ideology, political activism and outspoken criticism of the authorities and political opponents greatly intensified the generational cleavage within the coloured teaching profession.

It was thus the younger generation of teachers that was likely to snap up the better posts as they became available especially after the Education Department in 1925 prohibited teachers from improving their qualifications through part-time study.[180] The Journal's reaction to the ban was to cry out at the injustice that, "The people who for years have been carrying on the war against ignorace and illiterates are being forsaken for the new arrivals".[181] With these distinctions developing within the profession many of the younger, better qualified teachers were smug and supercilious whilst many of the older teachers felt that they were not receiving the respect and recognition due to them. This was the context in which Mrs H. Roman in her 1929 Presidential Address reminded younger teachers how much they owed the older teachers who had fought for the privileges

179 H.W. van der Linde, Higher education amongst coloureds at the Cape, 1652-1963 (B.Ed., U.C.T., 1964), pp.89 ff; Cape Standard 11/5/1936; 22/2/1937; 5/7/1938; E.J., May, 1930; October, 1932; January, 1933.

180 S.G.E. Report, 1927 - 8, p.6;

181 E.J., January - March, 1925.

that they were now enjoying[182] and a Journal editorial lamented the tendency of younger teachers to "forget or belittle the struggling efforts of the pioneering days".[183] By the latter part of the 1930's it was the young radical grouping, the leadership of which tended to be university graduates that came to be identified as arrogant and disrespectful toward their older less educated colleagues.[184]

There is no evidence of gender-based conflict within the T.L.S.A. Despite their conservatism the male League leadership showed no marked attitudes of chauvinism toward their female colleagues and there was no sexually discriminatory provisions in the constitution. Male Leaguers had a surprisingly progressive attitude toward women within the organization. Many women were held in great esteem as colleagues. Several had served the League with distinction and some even achieved the highest office of President.[185]

Beside the reasons already mentioned for the strong cohesiveness of the League there were two reasons that encouraged a harmonious relationship between the sexes. In the coloured teaching profession, more so than in others, there was greater equality between male and female in the workplace. Also it was not uncommon to find females in positions of seniority in individual schools in spite of the Education Department having entrenched sexual discrimination

182 E.J., September, 1929.
183 E.J., August, 1934.
184 E.J., June, 1940.
185 Wooding in 1918, Roman in 1928 and Beukman in 1933. See also E.J., March, 1929; June, 1932.

in the profession. Secondly the League ladies were not iconoclasts and fully accepted the mores of white middle class society including its sexual stereotyping.[186] It was thus axiomatic to them that females of necessity played a different and generally inferior role to males in society.

Within the League females found a less inhibiting environment than without and were not wont to complain, make aggressive demands or challenge their male peers. Thus although females constituted roughly half of the League membership[187] they played a disproportionately minor role in the direction of the organization. Except for the 3 female presidents the influence of females on the Executive tended to diminish as the organization grew larger. But this was as much a result of the reticence of female members as the chauvinism of their male colleagues. The greater importance attached to racial and professional inequalities distracted attention from gender-based inequalities. Thus the League for example continually strove for higher salaries for all but never for equal remuneration of the sexes.

Thus despite several cleavages within its membership and the tensions that arose from them, a dominant feature of the conservative League was nevertheless the remarkable consensus within the organization. It was their professional grievances, the disabilities of the coloured status and an

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186 See for example E.J., October, 1917; April, 1921; November, 1922; April - June, 1925.

187 The League never divulged the proportion of male to female members but it appears from reports of branch meetings that at least half the membership was female. During this period females constituted approximatley 55 per cent of the teachers in coloured schools.

evangelically inspired concept of their role as leaders of the coloured people that cemented this solidarity.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE LEAGUE VERSUS CHURCH AND STATE IN COLOURED EDUCATION

The conduct and control of coloured education was vested in an extensive cooperation between the Education Department and the churches. Although the relationship between the state and the churches in coloured education was evolving toward increasing state control and responsibility, the essential character of the relationship did not change between 1910 and 1940.[1]

The Education Department was content to have coloured education under the control of the churches because it allowed the state to achieve coloured education cheaply. With mission education the congregation directly paid for a proportion of the cost of their children's education whilst subsidizing white education because they were subject to the same taxes as whites who received an educational service entirely paid for by the state. The churches' resources were limited and the congregations they served were poor. This ensured that coloureds would receive an inferior education wholly in keeping with the perceived interest of the state of maintaining white supremacy.

An added bonus was that the Education Department was relieved of some of the burdensome administrative work performed by the priests who acted as school managers. Much

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1 See for example Maurice (1966); Behr; Horrell.

of the criticism and dissatisfaction voiced against coloured education could also be deflected onto the churches. This was a convenient arrangement for the Education Department despite the irritation of manager inefficiency[2] because it had effective legislative control over coloured education should it ever have needed to exercise it. Besides the steady accumulation of statutory control over it through the first half of the 20th century,[3] mission education was dependent on the state for substantial funding, especially the payment of teachers' salaries. The extent to which this was due to the perceived inadequacies of mission education, pressures by reformists or the economic and political imperatives propelling the state toward tighter control and the improvement of coloured education, remains to be investigated.

The church viewpoint was based upon the axiom that an education not based upon religious principles was a menace to the stability of the state and welfare of society. The churches conceded that it was the duty of the state to educate its citizens. It was reasoned that since the state had not in any meaningful way provided public education for coloureds, it had in effect delegated this responsibility to the churches who had already since the early 19th century taken this task upon themselves. The churches did not at all

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2 Managers being neither full-time professionals nor receiving proper training for these duties often annoyed the Department by their negligent or unprofessional behaviour. See for example Education Gazette, 17/4/1924; 23/2/1928; 26/5/1928; 22/5/1930.

3 This process can be traced through the work of Maurice, (1966), Behr and Horrell, though they fail to treat the subject as a coherent theme. See also N. Mathie, Education in the Cape Province from 1929 to 1945, (B.Ed., U.C.T., 1953).

mind this neglect of duty by the state because it legitimated their involvement in coloured education. Indeed, they insisted on the preservation and further entrenchment of the churches' role as dispensers of coloured education and propounded a series of essentially racist justifications for their claims to the control of coloured education. These justifications were all variations of the basic theme that in some ways or other coloureds were different and inferior to whites, were less capable and had different moral and educational requirements for which mission education was far better suited than public education. The churches considered themselves to be rendering indispensable services to the state and that it was a grave injustice that they should be doing so at a level of financial aid less than its cost. Thus the thrust of the churches' lobbying for educational reform was to further entrench their position in coloured education and to extract greater state financing of teachers' salaries, equipment, new buildings as well as rents for accomodation already in use.[4]

The Education Department welcomed the establishment of the League because it expected to benefit from its existence. That Muir himself at an earlier date instigated an abortive

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[4] I have drawn on diverse and scattered sources for this synopsis of church attitudes toward coloured education, namely, various issues of the Church Chronicle, Educational Journal and the Education Gazette, newspaper reports and the writings of Maurice (1966); van der Ross (1973); J.R. Cochrane, The role of the English-speaking churches in South Africa: A critical historical analysis and theological evaluation with special reference to the Church of the Province of South Africa and the Methodist Church, 1903-1930, (Ph.D., U.C.T., 1982), pp.212ff.; A. Badham, St. Mary's Anglican Church as a window on turn-of-the-century Woodstock, (B.A. (Hons.), U.C.T., 1985), chapter 3.

attempt to found a coloured teachers' association confirms that the Education Department was eager to see the existence of such a body.[5]

Probably the main consideration for the Education Department was that the League could not possibly pose a threat to its aims or policies. Coloured teachers, even as an organized group would for the foreseeable future be ineffective against the power of the Education Department. The Education Department had taken the lead in establishing the potentially much more powerful S.A.T.A. of which the S.G.E. himself had been chairman between 1862-70.[6] With its experience of cordial relationships with and easy control of S.A.T.A. and Z.A.O.U. the Education Department had no qualms about its ability to control a coloured teachers association. Such a body would be smaller, more timid and would have less political influence.

In 1913 coloured teachers were almost exclusively employed in what technically were private schools not under the direct administration of the Education Department. The Department was thus under no obligation to recognize an association of mission school teachers. The prerogative for granting official recognition to the T.L.S.A. lay entirely with the Education Department that could therefore decide whether it wanted to deal with the League and on what terms it would do so. At worst the T.L.S.A. promised to be a nuisance with continuous agitation for improvements in service conditions and the quality of education. Hence

5 A.P.O., 10/8/1912; M. Horrell, p.47; Adhikari, p.1.
6 Joubert, p.4.

Muir's pre-emptive injunction that the League should not be used as a trade union. But this was not really a problem for such requests could quite easily be ignored or courteously evaded, as indeed they were.[7] The Education Department had good reason to be confident that it could control the T.L.S.A. and this view was vindicated by subsequent developments.

The Education Department was probably well aware that a considerable advantage of the existence of the League was that it would provide direct access to coloured teachers where it would otherwise be necessary to work through the mediation of the church authorities. The T.L.S.A. could act as a useful sounding board for coloured teacher opinion on a wide spectrum of issues ranging from reform in coloured education to dealing with individual cases of misconduct. This was likely to lessen the Education Department's dependence on the church establishment and would widen its options in controlling coloured education and directing it toward desired goals.

The T.L.S.A. was also in all probability seen as a useful means of legitimating and complementing the Education Department's segregatory practices. The very existence of the League was a recognition of the imposed racial categories and its pursuance of the exclusive interests of coloured teachers was a further strengthening of the

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7 The best illustration of this is the manner in which the Education Department over a period of 30 years parried the League's deputations. See for example E.J., June, 1916; October, 1917; September, 1921; October, 1928; May, 1930; August, 1932; February, 1935; February, 1938; February, 1940.

principle of segregation. The Education Department must also have found it extremely convenient to have the League endorse its racially discriminatory measures such as the introduction of separate syllabi for white and coloured and the virtual exclusion of coloureds from the Cape Town Technical College.[8] It was the League's voluntary coloured exclusivity together with its political marginality that made it completely acceptable to the Education Department. If the Department had any expectations of the existence of the League fostering segregation, they could barely have been more completely fulfilled. The League, in virtually all spheres of its organizational life from confining its membership to those teaching in coloured schools, through its agitation for the preferential appointment of coloured teachers in coloured schools,[9] to it in the 1920's proudly producing its own set of readers "especially for coloured schools",[10] further entrenched segregation in education.

The Education Department expressed its approval of the League by immediately granting it official recognition and by being readily available for consultation by the League. In 1928 it even strengthened the channel of communication by the constitution of a special sub-committee of the League Executive for the specific purpose of liaising with the Education Department.[11] The Education Department from time

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8 E.J., April, 1922; May, 1922; October, 1922;April - June, 1925; July - September, 1926.

9 E.J., October - December, 1925; July - September, 1926. Cape Times, 25/6/1936.

10 E.J., November, 1922; January - March, 1925.

11 Education Gazette, 10/5/1928; E.J., June, 1928.

to time, when it saw fit, consulted League opinion on matters relating to coloured education.[12]

But the Education Department also quite lightly dismissed League opinion where it was convenient to do so, even on issues where the League was able to provide a strong and morally justifiable argument in favour of its viewpoint. The League's protest against the Department's blanket proscription from 1925 onwards of teachers improving their qualifications through part-time or private study provides a good example. Teachers wishing to improve their qualifications were required to enroll as full-time students at a training college. Cogent League arguments that this measure was detrimental to the interests of coloured education where the teachers were particularly poorly qualified and too poor to relinquish their posts for full-time study, were to no avail.[13] The S.G.E. also had no compunction about rebuking the T.L.S.A. for concerning itself with matters beyond education and the League was careful about transgressing these bounds.[14] Thus despite the underlying aims of the T.L.S.A. being contrary to those of the Education Department, the League found acceptance with the Department because the practical effect of its existence favoured Departmental policy.

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12 E.J., June, 1916; June, 1928; April, 1932; Education Gazette, 10/5/1928; Coloured Education Commission Report, 1927; p.1.

13 E.J., January-March, 1925;

14 See for example E.J., January, 1921; July, 1923; January - June, 1927; D. van der Ross, interviewed 26/8/1983.

As explained in the previous chapter, despite initial debate on the issue, the T.L.S.A. in its turn for good reason regarded any further dependence on mission education to be retrogressive and identified its own professional and the coloured peoples educational interests to lie with increased state responsibility for coloured education. The League aimed at the eventual substitution of mission education by a system of public education similar to that available to whites.[15] The ideal of a unitary system of education was so remote as not to even elicit serious discussion.

The T.L.S.A. clearly recognized that the Department had ultimate control of coloured education and that if any substantial reform was to be effected it would have to come from and be effected through the state bureaucracy rather than the churches. Thus the thrust of the League's strategies and the force of its energy was directed at the Education Department and the Provincial Council. The T.L.S.A thus welcomed nearly every extension of governmental control over coloured education even in cases where it might normally have been considered against their interests or to have compromised their rights. This is well illustrated by the League warmly welcoming the Teachers Discipline Ordinance of 1916. The measure was interpreted as an indication of a trend towards greater governmental responsibility for coloured education and was expected to curb the power of the school manager over teachers.[16] In addition, the T.L.S.A.'s eagerness to please the Education

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15 See for example E.J., August, 1915; April, 1921; July-December, 1927; August, 1932; August, 1938.

16 E.J., June, 1916; May, 1917.

Department and demonstrate its moderation, willingness to cooperate and compatibility with white social values impelled it to accept the restrictions imposed by the Ordinance.

As pointed out earlier coloured teachers had very real grounds for grievance and most of the League's time and ever more of its energy was directed at obtaining improved service conditions for coloured teachers. To gain this as well as other reformist objectives the T.L.S.A. employed a wide compass of strategies ranging from delicate behind-the-scenes manoeuvering to dignified public protest, from discreet negotiation to humble pleading that often lapsed into undignified self-pity.

The first principle of T.L.S.A. strategy which remained unchanged for three decades was for it to be extremely cautious, patient, pragmatic and at all times respectful of authority, even to the point of a demeaning obsequiousness and a willingness to humiliate themselves in order to gain some minor concession or other. Even Dr. Abdurahman the arch-accomodationist characterized the League's modus operandi as "moderation in an almost extreme form."[17] The League was proud of its observance of "the time-honoured cautiously conservative spirit that marks the profession".[18]

In its bitter disappointment and despair at all the important recommendations of the 1927 Cape Coloured

17 Sun, 23/6/1933.
18 E.J., April, 1921. See also E.J., July, 1922.

Education Commission being ignored, the Journal editorial admitted to the League consciously employing this tactic;

> 'For the last few years, a great deal of restraint has been exercised by all public writers and speakers when discussing the claims of Coloured education and that for the express purpose of creating an atmosphere of moderation and earnest cooperation while the investigations and deliberations of the Coloured Education Commission were in progress." [19]

Despite the public display of lofty idealism the real motivation of the League was apparent at the outset as is evidenced by Muir's blunt warning to the founding conference that the T.L.S.A. should not be used as a trade union.[20] The T.L.S.A. leadership was well aware that its battle for material benefit for coloured teachers did not fully square up to its professed ideals of selfless public service. Thus the desire for improved service conditions was usually not expressed in the form of a demand or an assertion of rights but as requests that were usually made in a hesitant and apologetic tone.[21] This is not to deny that the other reasons for League timorousness and humility were its fear of Departmental power, members' awe at the social standing of figures of authority as well as this being a conscious strategy for coping with their relative weakness.

Coloured teachers in general and League members in particular had a deep sense of grievance at their poor service conditions as Philip Scholtz's lament in the 1923 Presidential Address illustrates, "When we consider the way

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19 E.J., June, 1928. See also E.J., October, 1920.
20 Cape Argus, 24/6/1913; Cape Times, 24/6/1913.
21 See E.J., June, 1916; April, 1921; October, 1928; May, 1935.

we are being treated - a body of men and women working under conditions, to say the least, deplorable; men and women rendering a valuable service to the State, to their country, to their race.. Will you blame us when we feel dissatisfied?"[22] These sentiments could degenerate into the abject self-pity of a Journal editorial that viewed their situation as "The evil of a body of men and women labouring, patiently for years, and begging for a living wage, a section of the public regarding the spectacle with pitying contempt and the remainder hurling sneers at what seems to them a perpetual demand for more money."[23] Even when they considered their claims for improved service conditions to be justified, the League felt it necessary to protest in the most restrained manner possible. Thus the following plea by Sydney Maurice during his 1922 Presidential Address displays typical T.L.S.A. circumspection, "This body is no mere trade union, whose ideal is the pecuniary benefit of its members, with its methods of direct action and the like. Certainly the attainment of a scale of remuneration in keeping with the value of the work rendered to the state is one of its aims."[24]

However there were times when the League ventured to be critical of the Education Department. This criticism was often indirect or implicit, usually mild in relation to the provocation and always tempered in some way. This criticism at times took the form of the whining self-pity of "The Education Department could have acted more sympathetically

22 E.J., July, 1923.
23 E.J.,September, 1923.
24 E.J., July, 1921. See also E.J., June, 1917; July, 1923; June, 1928.

in the matter... It is not often where such new Government departures are decided on that the doors are immediately banged and the screws tightened... The people who for years have been carrying on the war against ignorance and illiterates are being forsaken..." [25]

Another tactic for combining mollification with criticism was the one used by Philip Scholtz in his Presidential Address of offering profuse apologies and providing a humble justification for venturing into an area generally acknowledged to be taboo for comment by teachers.[26] Mrs. Roman's 1929 Presidential Address provided a variation on this theme when her comprehensive criticism of education policy and the state of coloured education was followed by a magnificent tribute to the recently deceased S.G.E., Dr. Viljoen.[27] Or, more subtly, the League might imply criticism through seemingly supportive statements. Thus, for example, the Journal's enthusiastic welcome of Viljoen's appointment as S.G.E. and its hopes that the significance of race and denomination would play a diminished role in Departmental policy were implied criticisms of Muir's policies.[28] Then, in turn, the Editorial's welcome of M.C. Botha as S.G.E. and the hopes for a new departure under his leadership implied criticism of Viljoen's tenure of office.[29]

There were rare occasions when the League, out of sheer frustration at its inability to gain elementary reform,

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25 E.J., January - March, 1925.
26 E.J., July, 1923.
27 E.J., September, 1929.
28 E.J., June, 1918.
29 E.J., November, 1929.

mustered sufficient courage to be openly critical of the education authorities.[30] There is a unique example where the League went on the offensive from what it thought to be a position of strength. The favourable 1927 Coloured Education Commission Report temporarily heartened the League to the extent that the Journal took the uncharacteristically bold step of unambiguously addressing racist whites, probably because for once the League felt that it had the weight of official opinion on its side. The Educational Journal actually dared to take a threatening stance, "Remember what you have got. Remember that the tree of knowledge is not planted for one race or for one colour. The thirst for knowledge actuates the Coloured man as well as the white. We ask for water and will not forever be contented with stone."[31]

Right from the outset the T.L.S.A. realized that its demands of necessity had to be small and that it could only aim at piece-meal improvement of coloured education because any large increases in expenditure on coloured education was sure to be vetoed by the Provincial Council.[32] Although the point could hardly have escaped the notice of the League, Sir Frederick de Waal, in his usual overbearing and tactless manner pressed it home by informing the 1915 T.L.S.A. Annual Conference that coloureds should not expect public education on a par with whites because of the huge costs involved, and should instead make the best of the mission schools that were available. The A.P.O. pointed to the irrationality of

30 See for example E.J., June, 1918; April, 1932.
31 E.J., January - June, 1927.
32 See E.J., October, 1920; June, 1928.

his argument that because the entire system could not be afforded there should not be incremental reform of the existing system.[33]

The T.L.S.A. certainly exploited the formal means of gaining reform to their fullest capacity. These were essentially what the state and the Education Department in particular, defined as the legitimate channels for the communication of grievances and the appropriate means of agitating for reform. Thus grievances were discussed at branch, executive and the annual general meetings. Especially the latter two types of meeting might result in the T.L.S.A. conveying its views to whom the particular matter was of concern. This was usually the S.G.E. and on occasion involved the relevant church authority or the Administrator of the Cape.

In the case of a direct communication, it might take the form of a letter particularly for minor issues or a deputation for more important ones. The latter form of communication was usually preferable to the T.L.S.A. for they had ready access to the authorities and it allowed a measure of negotiation.[34] It soon became standard practice for the T.L.S.A. to go through the ritual of annually sending a deputation of executive members to present the relevant conference resolutions to the S.G.E.[35]

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33 A.P.O., 26/6/1915; See also A.P.O., 7/3/1914; 29/5/1915; E.J., January, 1917.

34 See for example E.J., September, 1921; November, 1929; February, 1940.

35 See for example E.J., September, 1921; April - June, 1926; April, 1932; April, 1936.

A related function of the League was to intercede with the authorities as the legitimate representative of its members and the coloured teaching profession.[36] Few such intercessions were made public because of the League's reverence for discretion, the understandable reluctance to broadcast failures where their attempts were unsuccessful and because many such cases might involve confidential or professionally damaging information such as allegations of teacher misconduct. The League did intervene in and try to mediate disputes of a professional nature involving its members such as the intense and public conflict between the principal and manager of Palmeston Primary School[37] or the controversy that erupted in 1936 over the non-appointment of Jack Viljoen to the principalship of the Rhenish Training College in Worcester.[38] In such instances the League never lost the opportunity of propagating principles such as the need for full state responsibility for coloured education or that coloured teachers be given preference for appointment in coloured schools. The League would occasionally venture beyond the field of education such as the time it interceded on behalf of League stalwart, Mr. A. F. Petersen who was charged with illegally walking through a section of the Paarl Railway Station reserved for whites[39] or the complaint

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36 D. van der Ross, interviewed 26/8/1983. See also for example E.J., June, 1916; September, 1920; June, 1928.

37 E.J., August, 1933; October, 1933; October, 1935; February, 1940; April, 1940.

38 E.J., August, 1936; Sun, 3/7/1936; 10/7/1936; Cape Standard, 29/6/1936; 6/7/1936. The problem with the Viljoen appointment for both the Education Department and the Rhenish Church was that it would place a coloured principal in charge of a large body of profesionally-minded white teachers.

39 E.J., October, 1938; Sun, 14/10/1938.

to the Systems Managers of the South African Railway of the unfair segregatory treatment of its members on trains.[40]

Grievances and requests for reform might also be communicated through indirect means. Here the most effective and frequently used instrument available to the T.L.S.A. was the press. Most of the T.L.S.A. activities, especially the Annual Conference were covered by the major Cape Town newspapers especially the specifically coloured newspapers, the Sun published from 1932, and the Cape Standard from 1936 onwards. Both were particularly sympathetic to the cause of coloured education. Prominent coloured journalists such as George Gibbs and George Manuel supported the League and did much to publicize T.L.S.A. grievances and points of view. Indeed, Sydney Maurice himself was editor of the Sun in the 1940's.

But of course, the most important journalistic tool at the disposal of the League was the Educational Journal, a gratis copy of which was unfailingly sent to the Education Department and at times to other interested parties such as influential church officials and sympathetic members of the Provincial Council.[41] Besides using the Journal to express League opinion or to make requests and appeals, the League leadership during the earlier years published the views of other parties, usually sympathetic school managers, as a means of justifying their stance on potentially controversial issues or of indirectly criticizing

40 E.J., July - December, 1927.
41 E.J., December, 1923.

Departmental policy.[42] It is also suspected that the Journal used the device of the anonymous correspondent to voice opinions, too harsh and controversial to be made in the League's name.[43]

Another very much related means for the communication of League opinion was the agitation from public platforms. Although the League took advantage of every suitable opportunity that presented itself, the annual Presidential Address was the set piece for the use of this tactic. The Presidential Address had the advantage of being the aspect of the conference to gain widest press coverage and of usually being delivered in the presence of high ranking Education Department and church officials.[44] But the League's conception of the licit use of this instrument of agitation can hardly have been more accurately or succinctly expressed than in the words of Scholtz's 1923 Presidential Address; "Two things are required of me as a representative of the coloured teachers. In the first place my views whatever they are as regards the education questions of the day, must be moderately expressed, and in the second instance I must steer clear of politics."[45] Like Scholtz in this instance other League luminaries usually prefaced their criticism of education policy with apologies for straying from their legitimate field of comment. The League was at all times extremely cautious of not being considered to have

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42 See for example E.J., August, 1917.
43 See for example E.J., March, 1921; April - June, 1926.
44 The Presidential Addresses of Scholtz, Roman and Hendricks in E.J., July, 1923; September, 1929; January, 1931, respectively, are amongst the better examples of the deployment of this tactic.
45 E.J.,July, 1923.

political motives and at times the Journal and League officials went so far as to declare that the involvement of coloureds in politics was detrimental to their welfare and a misdirection of their efforts.

For example in 1927 the League was flushed with a sense of victory because the favourable recommendations of the Report of the Commission into Coloured Education appeared to justify their perseverance with an unassertive and compliant policy in their quest for the reform of coloured education. The Journal editorial as a result congratulated the League and reproved those favouring more direct forms of action for having wasted so much time and effort on politics. It was boasted that the coloured people would have benefited to a much greater extent had a quarter of the effort wasted on politics been spent furthering the cause of coloured education, as the League had done.[46] Even after the frustration of having the Commission's recommendations ignored, a League luminary could still admonish coloureds for being "too politically alert". "If half the political ingenuity were divided into channels for the uplift of the race, we should be further on the road to progress."[47] These statements were not the result of League disaffection with coloured political organizations but were attempts at vindicating League strategy and demonstrating to the authorities their honourable intentions.

This apparent aversion to politics was the T.L.S.A.'s reaction to the palpable observation that whites were in

46 E.J., January - June, 1927.
47 E.J., November, 1928.

general hostile to coloured participation in politics and that a more pragmatic and less conspicuous means of achieving the organization's objectives were necessary.[48] The T.L.S.A. instead hoped to gain gradual reform through discreet negotiation with the authorities, dignified and appropriate forms of protest and hoped to help the process along by the conduct of welfare work.

Whilst the League took every opportunity of restrained and what it considered to be constructive forms of protest, meetings for the specific purpose of protest were avoided. This was a stratagem very rarely used by the T.L.S.A. It was employed only under circumstances of extreme exigency such as to protest against what was considered to be the grossly unfair condition of the Coloured Educational Institution Ordinance of 1918. This Ordinance increased the state subsidy of mission school teachers' salaries from two thirds to three quarters with the proviso that the actual salaries were not increased.[49] The only other time that the League resorted to a protest meeting was with the "salary cuts" of 1932. As a result of the Great Depression a 7,5 per cent tax was imposed on teachers' salaries as an austerity measure. This was provocative because it came barely a year after coloured teachers were granted a substantial salary increase.[50] The protest meeting was avoided because it was embarrassingly undignified and smacked too much of political activism.

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48 See also E.J., March, 1923; October, 1932; August, 1939.

49 E.J., September, 1918.

50 E.J., April, 1932.

The T.L.S.A. also made use of a range of informal methods of gaining their objectives. For example League executive members discreetly cultivated cordial relationships with certain sympathetic clerks at the Education Department headquarters upon their frequent visits there. These clerks might then supply them with as yet confidential information, might suggest a propitious moment for making certain representations to higher officials or propose methods or channels for pursuing particular objectives.[51]

The most fruitful example of this sort of behind-the-scenes manoeuvring that has surfaced is the consultations that took place between David van der Ross and M.C. Botha after his accession to the post of S.G.E. Botha was acquainted with van der Ross by virtue of his being professor of Afrikaans and Nederlands at U.C.T. whilst van der Ross was studying toward his B.A. degree. Botha by Afrikaner nationalist standards of the time at least privately displayed an uncommon sympathy for the problems of coloured teachers. Botha thus called van der Ross to his office for informal discussion on League objectives and the manner and extent to which he might aid them in gaining these ends. According to van der Ross the most important gain to come from this set of negotiations was that mission school teachers received annual salary increments from 1931 onwards.[52]

An important strategy of the T.L.S.A. was to build up as broad a base of support as possible amongst sympathetic

51 D. van der Ross, interviewed 26/8/83.
52 D. van der Ross, interviewed 26/8/83; E.J., June, 1931.

An important strategy of the T.L.S.A. was to build up as broad a base of support as possible amongst sympathetic elements within influential circles at the Cape. Thus despite a fundamental conflict of interests the good offices of the clergy were assiduously cultivated because with the churches as the owners and clergymen the managers of schools they had much authority and de facto control of coloured education. Also, although largely rejected by S.A.T.A., the T.L.S.A. was only too eager to acknowledge murmurings of sympathy from liberal individuals within S.A.T.A. The T.L.S.A also sought to gain as much support as it could get from members of the Provincial Council because this was a body that had significant control over the financing of coloured education. The T.L.S.A. could automatically count on the support of coloured M.P.C.'s such as Abdurahman and Stephen Reagon respectively President and Vice-President of the A.P.O. There were a few other liberal individuals on the Provincial Council such as Morris Alexander, Bennie Hewat and Alexander Sinton on whom the T.L.S.A. could count for support.[53] But the Provincial Council and its supportive bureaucracy was almost wholly either indifferent or hostile to coloured interests.[54] The T.L.S.A. was even prepared to be friendly toward the Afrikanerbond and the Cape Malay Association, the A.P.O.'s main opponents during the latter half of the 1920's.[55]

As a result of their social values and their weakness but also very much as part of a conscious strategy of building

53 E.J., April, 1922; January, 1931.
54 E.J., November, 1929; April, 1932; August, 1937.
55 E.J., July - December, 1927; June, 1929; September, 1929.

up as broad a base of support as possible, the League took great care not to become involved in controversy or to offend possible allies. The T.L.S.A. leadership resisted retaliation even when sorely provoked or openly insulted by potential allies. Thus when Major G.B.van Zyl of the South African Party advised the 1934 T.L.S.A. Conference not to teach coloured children "to aspire to positions above their social stations in life" it was left to J.H. Reynard and Bishop Simms of the A.M.E. Church to reply.[56] There were repeated occasions such as the time when the S.G.E. de Vos Malan tactlessly commented to the Cape Literary and Debating Society on the "lack of originality" of the coloured child, that the T.L.S.A. considered it better to turn a deaf ear.[57]

But of course the Education Department was potentially the most fertile area for the cultivation of advantageous relationships because it controlled coloured education and was the only conceivable medium through which reform would be effected. Even before the T.L.S.A. was formally constituted the League's founders virtually requested Departmental permission to establish the League.[58] And throughout the conservative phase of its existence, the T.L.S.A. remained extremely conscious of its need to gain the acceptance and trust of the Education Department if it was to be at all effective. The T.L.S.A. thus did everything in its power to court the good offices of the Education Department and managed with a fair measure of success not to antagonize the Department and to retain its confidence.

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56 Sun, 6/7/1934.
57 Sun, 5/5/1933.
58 A.P.O., 22/3/1913 ; Cape Argus, 22/3/1913.

The League was usually calculatingly deliberate in its endeavour to play up to Departmental expectations. The League thus went to great pains to be courteous and even to try and impress Education Department officials, especially the S.G.E. The S.G.E.'s were thus normally lavishly praised in magnificent tributes upon their appointment, retirement, death or other suitable occassions and lionized whenever they consented to grace a T.L.S.A. function.[59] This readiness to laud important officials such as the S.G.E. and the Administrator was not simply part of a clever strategy but also partly due to a genuine reverence of and awe at the social eminence of the individual. But there was also a touch of irony to the hailing of these officials as friends of the coloured man, as having reforming zeal for coloured education and concern for the upliftment of coloureds because the exaggeration and falseness of these claims were apparent to the panegyrist, his audience and quite likely also to the person being praised.[60] Although such praise was patently undeserved it was not entirely the result of unadulterated sycophancy but was also intended to foster an atmosphere of goodwill and was intended to encourage more thoroughgoing measures for reform.

The League leadership certainly considered its accommodationist policies to have paid dividends. The T.L.S.A. did for example immediately gain official recognition, was allowed reasonably free access to the

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59 Cape Times, 24/6/1913; 26/10/1929; Cape Argus, 24/6/1913; E.J., May, 1915; June, 1918; October - December, 1925; September, 1929.

60 See for example E.J., August, 1915; October - December, 1925; September, 1929.

highest levels of the Departmental bureaucracy, were at times consulted on important issues affecting coloured education and minor requests and concessions that did not require extra finance or fly in the face of educational policy were often granted. This acceptance by the Education Department did give the T.L.S.A. much credibility within the profession and the coloured elite and was an important source of pride and prestige amongst League members.[61]

In their quest for reform the T.L.S.A. was eminently pragmatic and pursued goals that were or at least appeared to be practically within reach and were even prepared to sacrifice the moral principle of demanding full equality with whites. They were quite prepared to accept and at times even eagerly agitated not only for separate but also unequal facilities provided that this meant an improvement of existing conditions. Thus, for example, after coloureds had been barred from the Cape Town Technical College the League congratulated itself on the establishment of separate and decidedly inferior facilites for coloureds for which it boasted "the League had been the first to clamour."[62] The League was even prepared to accede to the demand of the Education Department and white society at large that coloured teachers accept an inferior professional status compared to that of white teachers. This was amply illustrated by its acceptance that coloured teachers be paid between 60 and 72 per cent of the equivalent white teachers' salary.[63]

61 Cape Times, 2/7/1928; E.J. June, 1916; December, 1928.
62 E.J.,July - September, 1926. See also E.J., April - June, 1925.
63 E.J., September, 1920; October, 1920.

between 60 and 72 per cent of the equivalent white teachers' salary.[63]

The League was quick to claim responsibility for educational reforms especially those relating to the improvement of teachers service conditions.[64] Characteristically, with the salary increases of 1920 the Journal declared that, "It is incumbent on every teacher to join the Teachers' League which... has consistently fought for teachers salaries for years past"[65] and the improved sick leave provisions of 1935 was ascribed to the "persistent, strenuous but dignified agitation on the part of the Teachers' League."[66]

But it is to be seriously doubted that the T.L.S.A. did play such a principal role in gaining these concessions. The League was so small and weak and its strategy so tame that it was unable to force the hand of the authorities. It is also to be doubted that the T.L.S.A.'s attempts to persuade the educational and other authorities of the need for reform were effective. Their appeals, requests and complaints, no matter how eloquent or justified, were ignored for years, and in many cases, decades on end. Their deputations, after a courteous, patient and apparently sympathetic reception found their requests and proposals civilly fended off by the same old cynical excuse of a lack of finance. This was usually prefaced by an expression of sympathy and sometimes

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63 E.J., September, 1920; October, 1920.

64 See for example E.J., August, 1922; July - September, 1926; July - December, 1927; January, 1931; August, 1934; February, 1940; Sun, 27/12/1935; Cape Times, 28/7/1927.

65 E.J., January, 1921

66 E.J.,October, 1935.

followed by a diplomatic reminder of the extent to which coloureds needed to be grateful to the churches and the state for the educational opportunitiees they were enjoying.[67]

It is apparent that the initiative for the reforms that were introduced into coloured education lay almost entirely with the state and cannot be attributed, except to a very limited degree, to the success of the T.L.S.A. as a pressure group. It is suggested that the changes in coloured education were due to much more fundamental social processes. This explanation would need to encompass analyses of the changing role of education in the social and economic development of South Africa, the part played by coloureds in general and the coloured elite in particular in these social processes, the changing nature of the coloured status and identity as well as the white ruling elites perceptions of and responses to the wide range of questions and problems thus raised, especially of the need for state control of coloured education.

But this does of course not mean that the persistent agitation of the League was completely ineffective because there were several ways in which the T.L.S.A. might have, and did influence education policy. By the expression of its opinion on educational matters through the various available channels ranging from the Journal to testifying before government commissions the League provided one of the inputs

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67 See for example E.J., June, 1916; June, 1918; September, 1921; October, 1928; May, 1930; May, 1935; October, 1936; February, 1939.

League was reinforced by it enjoying official recognition and acting as a consultative body at the discretion of the relevant authority.[68] A related consideration is that the League could also influence policy when it had the ear of a sympathetic official such as S.G.E., M.C. Botha or Alexander Sinton whilst M.E.C., who might promote their interests.[69]

However one can hardly escape the conviction that the changes and improvements in coloured education would have occurred anyway, at more or less the same time irrespective of whether the League existed or not. But it is likely that some improvements especially in coloured teachers' service conditions might have been introduced earlier or altered somewhat as a result of the League.

The League's endeavour over the decades to obtain better service conditions for coloured teachers provides an ideal case study of its strategy for gaining its objectives. This is so not only because it epitomized League values and methods but also because the struggle for better service conditions was central to the League's existence and absorbed so much of its energy. This struggle was also symbolic of the subordinate position of coloureds in South African society and accurately reflected the power relations between the T.L.S.A. and the Education Department. There can

68 E.J., June, 1916; June, 1928; April, 1932; Education Gazette, 10/5/1928; Coloured Education Commission Report, p.1.

69 David van der Ross tells an engaging anecdote of how Alexander Sinton whilst Inspector of Education was often called to account by S.G.E. de Vos Malan for his liberal attitudes toward coloured education. But once appointed to the Provincial Executive Council, Sinton then used his authority to call de Vos Malan to account.

be no clearer example of sustained League gradualism and is a typical embodiment of the articulation between moderate coloured political opinion and dominant white society of the period.

The League's anticipation that it could obtain salary increases early on merely as a result of it, the officially recognized coloured teachers association, asking for and being able to justify salary increases was to be sorely disappointed. In this sense the T.L.S.A. had a rather inauspicious beginning because the terms of reference of the Teachers' Salary Commission of 1913 did not include coloured teachers and the inaugural conference was cautioned by Muir not to regard the T.L.S.A. as a trade union for its members.

For many years after its founding the League's numerous respectfully worded requests and resolutions, appeals from a variety of public platforms and deputations on the subject were pointedly ignored or cheerfully side-stepped with the excuse of a lack of finance and a reminder of how grateful coloureds ought to be to the state and churches for existing educational facilities. The T.L.S.A. displayed monumental patience and perserverance in its canvassing of the Education Department, placing remarkable trust in the goodwill of the authorities. And thus, after four years of achieving nothing except for a small annual bonus as from 1 June 1916 whilst teachers' salaries were starting to be eroded by wartime inflation, the League President could still urge teachers to be patient and to "make the best of

still urge teachers to be patient and to "make the best of it a little while longer" whilst expressing sympathy for the authorities having to make do on stringent budgets.[70]

Despite the President's public display of empathy with the authorities, by mid-1917 the League's requests for a salary increase became noticeably more assertive but still remained extremely respectful.[71] This change in tone was due to the League feeling justified in making these requests because public school teachers had recently been granted an increase and because inflation accelerated dramatically from the latter half of 1916 onwards.[72] The League's expectations of improved salaries after the war were dashed by the Coloured Educational Institution Ordinance of 1918 which provided for an increase in the subsidy of mission school teachers' salaries on condition that actual salaries did not increase. The disappointment which was intense because a salary increase of up to 33.3 per cent was at stake, pushed the Journal into one of its rare ventures of a display of indignation at the "unworthy action of the Department in literally refusing to be party to the betterment of teachers salaries in Mission Schools" and "the notoriously pauperized state in which the Provincial exchequer finds itself whenever coloured education is the claimant."[73]

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70 E.J., July, 1917.

71 E.J., July, 1917; August, 1917; December, 1917. See especially E.J., October, 1917 for evidence of an awareness within the League that the excuses of a lack of finance were not really acceptable because of the increasing sums of money allocated to white education.

72 McGregor, p.777. The deflation of 2% of 1915 was transformed into an inflationary rate of 14% in 1916 and nearly 10% in 1917.

73 E.J., September, 1918.

By 1920 the T.L.S.A. had done all that could reasonably be expected of it and its seven years of endeavour had yielded no results except for the introduction of a very modest annual bonus which was counter-balanced to a degree by the withdrawal of pupil teacher grants-in-aid.[74] With the rampant wartime inflation more than halving the value of the fixed salaries of mission school teachers between 1916 and 1920,[75] the League leadership became quite desperate to gain a salary increase and resorted to humiliating obsequiousness to make some gain. The knowledge that some important legislation relating to coloured education, that eventually took the form of the Education Consolidation Act of 1921, was imminent further encouraged the League in the frequency and urgency of its requests.[76] The T.L.S.A. was even prepared to accept the Watermeyer Commission's finding that coloured teachers had no claims to equal salaries with white teachers and suggested 60-72 per cent to be an equitable ratio. The Journal dismissed the idealist who wanted equal pay for equal work and on 26 September 1920 the T.L.S.A. Executive endorsed the principle that coloured teachers receive 60-72 per cent of the salaries of their white counterparts.[77]

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74 See E.J., June, 1916; June, 1917.

75 McGregor, p.777. Inflation in 1918 ran at about 7% increasing to over 10% in 1919 and 24% in 1920. Teachers' salaries were supplemented by an annual payment known as the War Bonus but this was not sufficient to compensate for the decline in the purchasing power of their salaries.

76 E.J., September, 1920; November, 1920; April, 1921; July, 1923.

77 E.J., September, 1920; October, 1920. At this time coloured teachers were receiving approximately 50% of the equivalent white teachers' salaries.

In 1921 the Education Consolidaton Ordinance greatly pleased the T.L.S.A. by providing a modest salary increase and by making the state fully responsible for the salaries of mission school teachers. It was hoped that the latter provision would give coloured teachers greater security of tenure in their posts and provide greater protection against managers. Very importantly for the League the increased state responsibility brought with it a salary scale, regular increments and an improved pension scheme. In addition the stipulation of a minimum salary of L72 per annum eliminated the low salaries of between L20 and L50 that up to that point were still common. That the immediate increase in salary was small, the increments tiny and only applied at 5 yearly intervals and the pension payments inadequate, did cause disappointment. But what was important to the League was that the principles of a definite salary scale, regular increments and the need for a pension scheme were accepted by the Education Department.[78]

The main thrust of the League's campaign for improving coloured teachers' service conditions now became an intermittent request for higher salaries coupled with the agitation for particular service benefits.[79] The first success came in 1923 with the introduction of sick leave arrangements, a concession to which the Education Department and Provincial Council easily acceded because of the insignificant finance required. Mission school teachers were now allowed one month's sick leave at full pay, the second

78 E.J., April, 1921; July, 1921; D. van der Ross, interviewed 26/8/83.

79 E.J., March, 1921; May, 1922; August, 1923; October - December, 1925.

at three-quarter pay, the third at half pay and 9 months without pay.[80] The next advance came in 1926 with a small increase in salary that had been promised as early as October 1923 and the League was disappointed that its request for annual increments was not met.[81] This was only implemented in 1931 with the help of the sympathetic M.C. Botha. Another reform introduced simultaneously was that the teachers' qualifications were to be taken into account in determining their salary.[82]

This having been achieved the League then turned its attention to agitating for improved pensions which was partly met by the Education Department from 1934 introducing a scheme whereby mission school teachers received 60 per cent of the final salary as opposed to the 40 per cent they received under the old regulations. From 1935 mission school teachers also received sick leave privileges on a par with teachers in public schools. The League then directed its efforts at gaining furlough for mission school teachers.[83] The intermittent request for improved salaries continued, but in the meantime the seven and a half per cent "salary cuts" tax introduced in 1932 substantially reduced teachers' incomes. Although introduced as a necessary measure to be implemented for one year to deal with the exigencies of the Great Depression, it was only removed in 1936.[84]

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80 E.J., March, 1922; May, 1922; May, 1823; November, 1923.

81 E.J., January - March, 1926.

82 E.J., June, 1931; October, 1931; Education Gazette, 13/11/1930.

83 E.J., June, 1933; May, 1934; August, 1934; October, 1935.

84 E.J., April, 1932; August, 1933; October, 1933; August, 1936.

The T.L.S.A. membership and the leadership in particular, consisted on the whole of deeply religious people. Most of them came from family backgrounds in which Christian values were assiduously cultivated, virtually all had received an education and training as teachers deeply imbued with religious values, many voluntarily participated extensively in the wider social lives of their church and some were even ordained priests or were lay preachers. The League as a whole was very much concerned about the preservation of a high standard of religious instruction in schools whether mission or public and there is no doubt that virtually the entire League membership would sincerely have concurred with the sentiments expressed in the Journal that religion was "the driving force of life" and that the student without religion was "like a ship without a chart; eternal values do not figure on his horizon."[85] Some even considered spiritual benefit to be the primary motivation for education.[86]

Yet the relationship between the League and the church organizations was one of antagonism and that between teacher and manager one of acrimony that often spilt over into conflict. It is abundantly clear that the basis of this conflict was not religious but was firmly rooted in the secular issue of church involvement in coloured education.

The most fundamental issue in the antagonism between the League and the churches, was the question of control over

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85 E.J., June, 1933. See also for example E.J., January, 1917;

86 See for example E.J., June, 1916.

coloured education. Both sides perceived a tremendous amount to be at stake in the issue. To the churches education was an indispensable adjunct to their mission of saving souls and improving the social condition of their congregations.[87] The provision of education especially to coloureds and Africans was regarded as a traditional sphere of missionary activity, an area to which they had a right and which was sanctioned by custom, their God-given duty as well as the tacit agreement of the state. Furthermore, the churches regarded education to be one of the most important means of influence over their congregations and of recruiting new members to their particular denomination. Education thus became a site of keen interdenominational rivalry.

The context of the conflict between the League and churches over coloured education was the progressive secularization of coloured opinions and attitudes particularly amongst the elite. The tendency within the League of the separation of secular and religious issues and the demystification of moral and ethical opinion mirrored the general trend toward secularization within 20th century industrial society.[88] The most obvious manifestation of this trend within the League was the diminishing support for missionary education and the correspondingly more strident demand for a system of public education for coloureds.

During the earlier years of the League the superiority of mission over public education was very much an issue of debate. There was a tendency for the older more conservative

87 M.J Ashley, pp.2,8.
88 See Haralambos, p.473 ff.

teachers to articulate the case for missionary education, that the primary function of education was the religious instruction of the youth and that this could best be achieved in mission schools since its religious instruction was likely to suffer in public schools. The politicized and therefore more secularly minded teachers provided a much more convincing argument that it was the duty of the state to provide all citizens with education and that no matter how noble their intentions, the churches and their congregations did not have the resources to provide adequate educational facilities.[89] The pro-missionary argument within the League tended to fade with the passage of time and virtually disappeared by the 1930's when even the ordained priests within the T.L.S.A. firmly supported the call for state responsibility for coloured education.

The T.L.S.A. came to be unanimous in its judgement of mission education of necessity being inferior to public education. Transferring full responsiblity for coloured education to the state was regarded to be the fundamental step in the reform of coloured education and a basic requirement for the social advancement of the coloured people. For decades the League argued ineffectually that it was the duty of the state to provide all its citizens with adequate education and pointed in vain to the incontrovertible evidence of the inherent inferiority and blatant inadequacies of mission education.[90] Some coloured

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89 E.J., June, 1916; August, 1917; October, 1917; December, 1917; August, 1923; October - December, 1925.

90 E.J., June, 1916; October, 1920; October-December, 1925; August, 1935.

parents, however, even by the late 1930's continued to prefer mission schooling because of the spiritual benefits they thought their children would derive from it.[91]

There are several important reasons for this solidly secular outlook of the League regarding the control of coloured education in spite of strong personal religious convictions. Those who preferred mission education did so not as a result of rational appraisal of its value but rather from their adherence to a doctrine of faith, the inculcation of religious values and the mystical conviction that anything of a secular nature was of necessity more base than things spiritual. Within the League such assumptions were not only exposed to more secular doctrines but was likely to be successfully challenged because the disadvantages of mission education were so obvious as to be indefensible by logical argumentation.

Furthermore, it was apparent that public education catered adequately for the spiritual needs of white pupils and the minority of coloureds subject to it.[92] The secular attitude to coloured education was encouraged by the antagonism between teacher and manager as well as the realization that coloureds, by being liable to all ordinary rates and taxes and in addition partly financing a separate education system was in a sense subsidizing white education.[93] Very importantly, teachers stood to gain materially from the

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91 See for example E.J., June, 1936; February, 1938.
92 E.J., June, 1916,
93 E.J., October, 1917; March, 1921; January - March, 1926; August, 1934; August, 1938; Sun, 2/9/1932; Maurice, (1966), p.311.

transfer of the responsibilty for coloured education to the state because it was the state that had the ability to pay more acceptable salaries, improve service conditions and substantially reform coloured education. This was considered a precondition to the League's realization of its professional ambitions for coloured teachers as well as its social and political aspirations for the coloured people as a whole. The steady increase of state interference in coloured education helped to erode notions of the autonomy of mission education.

In addition, the continuous and often bitter inter-denominational rivalry in coloured education throughout the country was manifestly detrimental to the interests of coloureds. In this competition, educational facilities were used to attract adherents to a particular denomination. This led to the wasteful proliferation of a large number of small schools at which facilites were unnecessarily duplicated and scarce resources fragmented. It was often the case that three or four small, under-utilized schools would vie for the custom of a community where one larger school would have sufficed. The extreme inefficiency entailed in this duplication of the lower standards usually meant that classes beyond Std IV were unviable. By this stage there were usually too few pupils at the individual schools to justify the extra cost and effort of conducting senior classes. Except for very rare instances the individual denominations were not prepared to pool their resources to offer senior classes for fear of a rival benefiting at their

expense.[94] The Education Department was well aware of the problem but did little to combat it.[95] The T.L.S.A. thus eagerly acclaimed any attempt at inter-denominational cooperation for the rationalization of coloured educational facilities.[96]

The T.L.S.A. membership was also very conscious of the paternalism of the mission establishment toward coloureds. The churches were usually conservative, even by League standards, in their attitudes toward coloureds. They were extremely protective toward their congregations, considering themselves to be their custodians and spokesmen and jealously guarding their considerable influence over their following. They disapproved independent political action by their congregations and preferred the church to undertake protest and negotiation on behalf of coloureds. Except for the small minority of progressive clergymen, there was thus hostility toward organizations such as the A.P.O. and the T.L.S.A. and many teachers risked victimization by associating with them.[97] There was also a ubiquitous racism within the church ranging from the vitriolic prejudices of many school managers, especially in the rural areas, to the benign paternalism of the progressives who accepted racial categories as ordained and strove to foster the interests of

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94 E.J., May, 1917; January, 1922; March, 1923; July - December, 1927; August, 1934; S.G.E. Report, 1914, p.12; Education Gazette, 27/9/1941, Inspector Luckoff's Report.

95 S.G.E. Report, 1921, p.30; E.J.,October, 1922.

96 E.J., January, 1917; April, 1923; July - September, 1926; July - December, 1927; June, 1932.

97 D. van der Ross, interviewed 29/6/1981; 26/8/1983; Evidence of the coloured delegation from Beaufort West before the Cape Coloured Commission, Abdurahman Family Papers, University of Chicago dated 13/5/1936; E.J., October, 1928; August, 1933; August, 1934.

coloureds within the segregated structures of society. Although they resented the condescension, the League on the whole tolerated it because the churches were potentially valuable allies with whom cooperation might yield substantial short term gains. The Education Department recognized the paternalism of mission school managers toward coloured teachers but endorsed it as a desirable attribute, as an indication of the missions' commitment for which coloureds needed to be grateful.[98]

This resentment at the paternalism of the church establishment did surface from time to time. An illustration of this was the intermittent reminder that the term "mission school" was obsolete and that "church school" or "primary school" were more appropriate.[99] The former term struck at the coloured elite's sense of dignity because it implied that they were not fully Christian and it created the misleading impression that mission education was financed by the churches when it in fact was largely funded by a combination of government subsidies and money collected from the congregation.

The Journal, as early as 1921 hit out at this arrogance when it called upon the government to,

> '... sweep away the obsolete mission system...for there is not an atom of mission in it. Anyone acquainted with missions expects that they are supported by some society of Good Christians usually living in Europe or America, who have a deep love for the savages and their semi-barbarous teacher for whom

98 See S.G.E. Report, 1918 p.14.
99 E.J., October, 1921; October, 1928; October, 1931; August, 1939; Sun, 22/8/1938; Cape Times, 20/2/1924.

> they earnestly labour and contribute. The contrary is however the fact.[100]

A very important aspect of the antagonism between the churches and the League was that both were competing for the allegiance of the same constituency on bases that were essentially incompatible. The League sought to mobilize support on the basis of the coloured identity and to foster professional solidarity amongst coloured teachers specifically whereas the churches tried to foist artificial denominational divisions upon their congregations and the teachers under their control. Both were vying for recognition as the spokesmen, leaders and uplifters of the coloured people. Although the T.L.S.A. was at all times prepared to acknowledge a considerable debt that coloureds owed the churches especially in the field of education[101], the League reserved for itself a clearly distinct and superior role to that of the churches in the social upliftment of the coloured people. Thus already very early on in its existence the Journal challenged one of the official establishment's favourite homilies on the indispensability of mission education to coloureds and their need to be grateful to the churches. The Journal asserted that it was "by no means admitting the influence of the clergy in this direction to be the only or greatest of all ".[102]

In the coloured teaching profession, denominationalism manifested itself largely as an instrument used by managers

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100 E.J., March, 1921.
101 E.J., July, 1917; July - December, 1927; May, 1934.
102 E.J.,January, 1921.

to try and control the teachers under their authority. By strongly discouraging inter-denominational mixing the manager was able to isolate teachers from colleagues in other denominations and from ideas that had the potential of undermining managerial control. Up to the time of the establishment of the T.L.S.A. it was apparent that denominationalism had been successful in fragmenting the coloured teaching profession.[103] W.G. Hendrickse in his 1940 Presidential Address recalled that at a 1911 winter vacation course;

> "It was an unusual sight to see Wesleyans rub shoulders with Moravians and English churchmen with Dutch Reformed and Rhenish teachers. Such a thing had never happened before. Coloured teachers had always kept more or less, apart socially as well as professionally and when it was found that the other fellow, although he belonged to a different denomination, was as smart as oneself, if not better, and that socially he was very good company it was rather disturbing."[104]

But it is clear that the success of denominationalism as a divisive tool amongst coloured teachers was due to the economic power of the manager over teachers rather than its effectiveness as a means of ideological control. The T.L.S.A., like the A.P.O. was a supra-denominational body that appealed to the wider identity of colouredness and in which denominationalism and provincialism within the

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103 See for example Cressy's remarks at the preparatory meeting and the founding conference. Cape Argus 22/3/1913; 24/6/1913; Cape Times 24/3/1913; 25/6/1913.

104 E.J., August, 1940; confirmed by D. van der Ross , interviewed, 26/8/1983.

profession were easily overcome.[105] This is eloquently attested to by the absence of any denominationally based dispute throughout the history of the conservative League. The material interests of teachers cemented professional solidarity within the League and impressed upon them the idea that "teachers are all workers in one great vineyard."[106]

But the factor that had the most immediate and galvanizing influence on League attitudes toward the church authorities was that the relationship between the mission school teacher and the school manager was one that was fraught with conflict. But it needs to be taken into account that from the perspective of the League there were two basic categories of school manager.

On the one hand there was the small minority of progressive managers whose enlightenment was manifested by their interest in coloured welfare and progress. There was a small group of prominent clerics of liberal views who publicly promoted coloured interests. They were held in great esteem by the League, regularly appeared on T.L.S.A. public platforms, often attended conference and in some cases even

105 E.J., February, 1917; D. van der Ross, interviewed 26/8/83. The Journal of January, 1922 contains a vivid and instructive account by an "old teacher" of how the denominational antagonism between himself and a colleague was overcome once they met socially and came to realize that their professional interests far outweighed the significance of denominational considerations. See also V.E. February, Mind your Colour; The "coloured" stereotype in South African literature, (London, Kegan Paul, 1981), p.181.

106 E.J., January, 1917.

became associate members of the League.[107] These "true and tried friends of the League" included people such as the Reverends Robson, Lavis, Hogarth, Mason, Kretzen, Breedt and Pescod. There were other lesser figures who displayed similar sympathy for coloured welfare in their own more parochial spheres of activity as priests, teachers and school managers and strove for the spiritual and social welfare of their congregations.[108] Some managers such as the Reverends Breedt and Kretzen even went as far as to publicly support the call for compulsory public education for coloureds.[109] But this group was only a small minority that tended to be confined to the larger urban areas and the upper echelons of the local church organizations. However, like their less progressive colleagues they were paternalistic in their attitudes toward coloureds. They worked on the premise of the superiority of whiteness and Western culture and the upliftment of coloureds within the segregated structures of South African society.

The one exception was the African Methodist Episcopal Church which was of black American origin and fully subscribed to coloured assimilationist aspirations. Thus for example Bishop D.H. Simms of the A.M.E. Church was harshly critical of managers in general in his evidence before the Cape Coloured Commission when he accused them of lusting for

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107 For example, the Rev. Lavis had been an associate member since the founding of the League. See also E.J., June, 1918.

108 See for example E.J., 1915 and 1916 for the series of articles entitled "Men and women in education who matter" which was devoted to praising progressive managers. See also E.J., June, 1918; July-December, 1927; October, 1928; February, 1940.

109 Sun, 14/10/1932; E.J., October,1935; August, 1933.

power and conducting their schools in order to enhance their church programs and personal ambitions at the expense of the child and the community.[110]

To the League the majority of school managers were men of unprogressive views who were unsympathetic to coloureds and interested only in keeping them in tutelage. This League judgement was essentially sound because school managers were in no way exempt from the racism so deeply imbued in the social consciousness of South African whites. It was usual for the coloured teacher to have to co-exist and the League to have to deal with a manager like the Reverend C.R. Heywood an Anglican minister from Malmesbury who worked with the following stereotype of the coloured;

> "The violent emotional storms over trifling matters - the limited outlook - the personal jealousies to which the progress of the church, school, football club, everything is liable to be sacrificed at any moment - the immediate interest in all matters relating to sex - the lack of moral restraint in courtship - the habit of saying just what is calculated to please - the lack of stability of thought - the imitativeness of European habits and manners, indicate that a profound psychological change has to be brought about before the coloured people will be capable of taking their place in discharging with a full sense of responsibility their duties toward the country as a whole."[111]

He then went on to make the typical managerial justification for supporting public education for whites but mission education for coloureds.He asserted that Afrikaners, there of course being no doubt about the English speaking whites,

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110 Evidence of Bishop D.H. Simms before the Cape Coloured Commission, dated 24/11/1934, Abdurahman Family Papers, University of Chicago.

111 Evidence by C.R. Heywood before the Cape Coloured Commission, dated 18/10/1935, Abdurahman Family Papers, University of Chicago.

were able to cope with public education because their deep sense of religion ensured that they would not suffer spiritually. However, public education would be disastrous for coloureds with their lower moral threshold. He regretted having to employ coloured teachers because of the lack of "missionary-minded" teachers which he equated with white female teachers. A Roman Catholic school manager a certain Father Hender attested before the same Commission that he approved of the idea of coloured self-sufficiency but justified his employment of white staff only with the observation that "it would take about 200 years before the Coloured people are educated up to the standard of being able to help themselves."[112]

The implications of inherent coloured inferiority and remarks such as coloured imitativeness of whites hit hard at the coloured elite's sense of dignity. Besides this racism, the League was deeply antagonized by the assumptions of coloured teachers' professional deficiencies.

On the whole the relationship between the school manager and the coloured mission school teacher and hence the League, was one of antagonism that often broke into open conflict. This hostility was almost inherent in the context of interpersonal relationships at the level of the individual school. The school manager, who in almost all cases was a white priest, kept a firm grip on affairs at the school and tried to subordinate teachers to their own ends. This meant that the position of the teaching staff, especially the

112 Ibid., dated 14/5/1936.

principal and the profession-conscious teachers were compromised. The paternalism and blatant racism of managers was likely to alienate the coloured teacher particularly those of some social standing. Conflict between teacher and manager at times even became sufficiently intense as to lead to an exchange of blows.[113]

The issue that raised the most resentment within the T.L.S.A. toward school managers was the managers' de facto control of appointments to teaching posts and the unprofessional criteria they used in selecting staff. The Education Department had ultimate control of appointments which in theory was supposed to be made together by the Department and school manager. In practice however the school manager made the appointment which the Education Department invariably ratified without query. There were several specific appointment practices by school managers that were flagrant affronts to the most cherished of League principles.

The most bitter grievance against managers was that many of them preferred to appoint white teachers wherever possible and some even went as far as advertising for white applicants only.[114] Despite the apparent acceptance by the Education Department of the principle that coloured schools be staffed by coloured teachers, the number of whites in coloured schools remained considerable. In 1917 the Administrator of the Cape estimated that 25 per cent of the

113 Sun, 14/7/1933; E.J., August, 1941.
114 E.J., August, 1915; February, 1917; December, 1920; April - June, 1925; August, 1934; February, 1936; Cape Times, 26/6/1925.

staff of coloured schools were white.[115] In 1922 when statistics first became available 18 per cent of the teachers in coloured schools were classified white[116] and by 1935 the number had only declined to 14 per cent.[117] Managers were also often accused of nepotism, especially, it would appear, of employing their wives or daughters who might then be gainfully employed until they were married.[118]

Thus not only were the employment opportunities for coloured teachers severely restricted by the racial division of education but in addition to these constraints they suffered further from the customary discrimination of managers as well as unfair competition from whites. Besides the immediate advantage of colour the racially differentiated structure of teacher training ensured that the white applicant was likely to have better training and qualifications.

There were also the double standards of managers who, like the Reverend Clementson professed great sympathy for the problems of coloured education. Upon addressing the 1917 T.L.S.A. Annual Conference he justified the presence of white teachers in coloured schools on the grounds that it created "a bond of sympathy and understanding between the two races".[119] But of course there was no consideration of promoting racial harmony by employing coloured teachers in white schools.

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115 E.J., July, 1917.
116 S.G.E. Report, 1923-4, pp. 190-1.
117 S.G.E. Report, 1936, pp.85-6.
118 See for example Sun, 13/7/1934; 26/4/1935; 9/5/1939; Blume, pp.96 ff.
119 E.J., August, 1917.

There was very little that the League could do about a manager's preference for white teachers except to protest against the advertisement for white teachers specifically. This was clearly ineffective because protest was unlikely to change the offender's attitude and the Education Department condoned the practice by continuing to publish denominationally and racially discriminatory advertisements in the Education Gazette and declined to interfere in managerial appointments.

The actual advertisement for white teachers was merely an extreme manifestation of a widespread and often covert preference for whites. The T.L.S.A. never raised this particular issue because it was far too circumspect to make allegations of racism without concrete proof such as a racially prejudicial advertisement. But the issue was certainly raised outside of the League such as when Frederick Blume a prominent League member in his B.Ed. thesis, pointed to the example of the Perseverance Training Institute in Kimberley which published non-racial advertisements for staff but nevertheless only appointed whites,some of whom were not properly qualified.[120]

The T.L.S.A. was frustrated by the Education Departments adamant refusal to recognize the principle that since the Department paid teachers' salaries it should control appointments.[121] The S.G.E. insisted that as long as schools

120 F. Blume, pp.97-8.
121 See for example E.J.,October, 1920; December, 1928; August, 1936.

remained under church control the Department would not intervene in church affairs and the situation of the Department merely rubber-stamping managerial appointments would remain.[122] The S.G.E. even rejected the idea that appointments be made in consultation with the Department.[123] M.C. Botha himself deplored the prejudice and injustice of school managers who were unwilling to appoint coloureds even when a coloured man was the best qualified applicant for the post But the Department did nothing to curb the practice.[124]

Besides the preference for white teachers what particularly galled the T.L.S.A., especially since it was more representative of the upper echelon of the coloured teaching profession, was that most of the more senior, prestigious and better paid posts continued to be awarded to whites despite the availability of suitably qualified coloureds. This grievance became more acute through the 1930's as the number of university educated coloureds entering the profession increased. Thus the advertisement for applications from white candidates for the principalship of the Dower Memorial Training College in Uitenhage resulted in a deputation to the S.G.E. who quite predictably refused to interfere in the affairs of a church institution.[125] The League feared that the imminently vacant principalship of the Oudtshoorn and Beaufort West Training Colleges would in a similar manner be closed to coloureds.[126] The Secretary's

122 E.J., March, 1923; December, 1928, February, 1936; December, 1938.
123 E.J., September, 1929.
124 S.G.E. Report, 1932-3, pp.46-47.
125 E.J., August, 1936.
126 E.J., February, 1936.

Report to the 1936 Annual Conference expressed concern at the recent appointment of white principals to the Dower and Zonnebloem Training Colleges because it brought "into serious jeopardy the sound and just principle of coloured teachers for coloured schools."[127] The League's sense of grievance in this regard was heightened by the controversy in the same year over the appointment of J. Viljoen, a prominent T.L.S.A. member, to the principalship of the Worcester Rhenish Training School.[128]

Another long-standing grievance against managerial control of appointments was that religious, rather than professional considerations influenced their decisions. The League often alleged that it was the denominational affiliation of the teacher, his willingness to participate in extra-mural church activities and skills as an organist or lay-preacher rather than his professional qualifications and experience that were the critical considerations in the making of appointments.[129] Candidates would often agree to participate in these extra-mural activities in order to gain a post or a teacher once employed might find himself coerced into doing church work under threat of dismissal.[130] School managers

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127 E.J., August, 1936.

128 E.J., August, 1936; Sun, 3/7/1936; 10/7/1936; 17/12/1936; Cape Standard, 29/6/1936; 6/7/1936.

129 See for example E.J., December, 1920; July - December, 1927; September, 1929; April, 1939; June, 1940; Sun, 3/3/1933; Cape Times, 27/6/1934; 28/6/1940; Maurice, (1966), pp. 67-71; B.M. Kies, The policy of educational segregation and some of its effects upon the coloured pupils of the Cape, (B.Ed., U.C.T., 1939), p.64.

130 Evidence of coloured deputation from Beaufort West before the Cape Coloured Commission, dated 13/5/1936; Evidence of coloured deputation from Victoria West before the Cape Coloured Commission. dated 14/5/1936; E.J., October, 1928; August, 1934; June, 1940.

had a reputation for interfering in the religious beliefs of teachers under their control particularly if they were of a different denomination. Thus the Cape Standard was amused at the "ease with which young aspirants change their denominations to secure a post."[131] That teacher training was denominationally controlled gave the church authorities and managers further leverage over teachers. It is thus not surprising that the Roman Catholic Church which at this stage did not have its own training college had difficulty staffing its schools.[132] The problem of managerial interference in and manipulation of teachers' religious beliefs was sufficiently serious for the Education Department to warn against the abuse in the Education Gazette.[133]

Despite this deep-seated antagonism, in the early years of the League criticism of managers was muted and in keeping with the policy of not antagonizing anyone. They preferred to concentrate on the positive aspects of their relationship with the churches.The League was thus eager to acknowledge the deep debt that coloureds owed the churches, encouraged them in their endeavours on behalf of the coloured population and expressed sympathy for "the gigantic problem with which the Church is faced in saving from utter illiteracy the hundreds of thousands of non-European children".[134]

131 Cape Standard, 13/7/1936.
132 Maurice, (1966), p.383. The first Roman Catholic teachers' training college was only established in 1935 at Parow. See Jacobs, p.17.
133 Educational Gazette, 23/1/1919.
134 E.J., December, 1916.

Thus, instead of confronting the unprogressive managers they tried to administer an indirect rebuke by praising the progressive managers and by hoping for the extension of such sympathy for their problems to school managers in general.[135] The only issue that invited open censure was the express advertisement for white teachers for posts in coloured schools. Even in such cases the League in the early years was so careful not to alienate managerial opinion that it resorted to all manner of circumlocutions. For example, on one occasion the Editor tried to convey his protest by trying to joke about racially discriminatory adverts,[136] at other times the League requested Departmental protection against "unscrupulous persons" or that "objectional parts" be removed from advertisements in the Education Gazette[137] and once the Editor even refused to publish criticisms levelled at managers with whom he admitted to having every sympathy.[138] Also, when the issue of whether coloured teachers or school managers were the better judges of coloured educational needs was the topic of debate at the Cape Division Branch meeting of March 1918, it was a foregone conclusion that those arguing the case for the former would be voted the winners.[139]

By the late 1920's as a result of greater professional solidarity within the League and the disappointment of having the main recommendations of the 1927 Coloured Education Commission ignored, the League became much more

135 See for example E.J., June, 1916; May, 1917; July-December, 1927.
136 E.J., June, 1916.
137 E.J., October, 1920; October - December, 1925.
138 E.J., April, 1917.
139 E.J., April, 1918.

insistent on the disadvantages of mission schooling and was more forthright in its criticism of malpractices within the system.[140] And by the mid-1930's in its frustration at not gaining significant reform, the T.L.S.A. became quite outspoken in its criticism of unprogressive managers.[141] It was in the context of an embattled coloured elite being pressurized by an aggressive Afrikaner Nationalist movement and being unable to stem the rising tide of institutionalized racism, that the League abandoned the idea of courting unprogressive managers as potential allies. This tendency within the League was encouraged by the emergence in the 1930's of specifically coloured newspapers that threw their full weight behind the demand for public education for coloureds. As early as its second issue, the editorial of the Sun launched a scathing attack on the inadequacies of mission education.[142]

It was obvious to the T.L.S.A. that unsympathetic managers would remain intractable to League ideals and that the initiative for reform lay with the Education Department rather than the church authorities. Managerial abuse of their powers and grievances against managerial control were thus harnessed to serve the League's agitation for state control of schools. Thus the League, noting the exception of the minority of progressive managers, became ever more forthright in its criticism of managerial control. Thus by

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140 The League subsequently came to see the disregard of the 1927 Education Commission's recommendations as a turning-point in state policy toward coloured education. See E.J., August, 1932.

141 See for example E.J., August, 1932; April, 1935; August, 1937.

142 Sun, 2/9/1931.

1933 already the Executive did not mince words about the coloured teachers' need for protection.

> "Most of our teachers are exposed to the petty tyrannies of unreasonable managers who wield Nero-like power. Too much interference with a teachers lawful duty is being tolerated to the detriment of the school concerned. We are employed and paid by the Education Department to teach and look after the welfare of the children and no man has the right to interfere with this good work. Let us take up a firm stand on this burning issue now." [143]

The League's interest in the churches can be summarized as a genuine gratitude for services rendered in the past, a present concern for retaining the support of progressive managers whilst eliminating the abuses of the unprogressive ones and an anxious concern to limit their influence on coloured education in the future.

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143 E.J., June, 1933; See also E.J., October, 1920.

CHAPTER 5

RACE AND IDENTITY IN THE T.L.S.A.

At a cursory glance the conservative T.L.S.A. continually appeared to act in a contradictory manner. Within the coloured community the League demanded the respect and deference commensurate with its social status yet within the wider society it often meekly acquiesced in its own humiliation and the further degradation of coloureds. On the one hand there was a denial of the relevance of racial categories and opposition to racial discrimination yet on the other there was an acceptance of colouredness and its subordinate status. The T.L.S.A. stood for a broad South Africanism yet its most cherished ideal of assimilationism was not extended to include Africans. The League leadership had a strong sense of social duty toward and a genuine concern for the welfare of the coloured lower classes yet did not hide their contempt and repugnance for the coloured labouring poor.

The conflicting attitudes and actions were not the result of irrational or inadvertent behaviour. They reflected the various inconsistencies and tensions resulting from the interstitial position of the coloured elite within South African society. The apparently contradictory behaviour of the League had a rationality of its own given the particular circumstances and its underlying assumptions and motivations.

The coloured elite found itself in a truly unenviable position. They were powerless to the point of being a marginal group in South African society. The coloured elite fully subscribed to white middle class values, yearned for social acceptance and were sincerely patriotic. Yet no matter what degree of conformity to white standards or success achieved by the individual, coloureds were unceremoniously spurned as inferior beings and were rewarded with a second class citizenship. Despite their considerable social prestige within the coloured community the coloured elite had a subordinate and deteriorating position within the wider society. In the face of white racism the coloured elite had little option but to take a moral stand on the principle of non-racism. Yet in practice not only did they find the coloured status imposed from above impossible to avoid but also that there were potential rewards attached to the acceptance of colouredness.

It was in this context of a continuous emotional and ethical tug-o-war that the League and its members' racial attitudes and identities were formed and played out. Thus it is not surprising that the League as an organization did not develop a consistent outlook on matters related to race. The vacillation between accepting and rejecting the coloured status noted earlier remained part of the conservative League's racial identity throughout the period under consideration. Attitudes toward race and colouredness were not fixed but were extremely fluid and were moulded by immediate circumstances and what were considered to be the

individual's, the League's or the coloured people's interests. The League thus had a very pragmatic and opportunistic attitude toward race.

There were three distinct strands within the League's complex and highly plastic attitude toward race. Firstly, the League rejected racism and cosseted the ideal of full assimilation into a more or less meritocratic society regulated by white upper and middle class values, minus the racism. Secondly, in apparent contradiction to the above stance there was an acceptance of the coloured identity and its inferior status. The third aspect was its opportunistic and manipulative tendencies in that the League exploited every chance to try and trade acceptance of colouredness to further their perceived interests.

One of the fundamental presumptions of the League's social values was that of the theoretical equality of humankind and of the right of all South Africans to equal access to the privileges of citizenship. It was on this premise that the League held the long term goal for the distant and unforeseeable future of the full integration, on a footing of equality, of coloureds into the mainstream of South African society. But the League greatly compromised this principle by its acceptance of the subordinate coloured status. It was conceded that for the foreseeable future and in terms of the League's immediate policy the demand for full equality was a totally unrealistic aim and to try and attain it would be an exercise in futility. At the more mundane level of its day-to-day existence the League needed

to be more pragmatic and practical. It was generally accepted that more could be gained by adopting a compliant attitude toward white racism for the time being. Thus the League accepted the coloured identity and its inferior status. Indeed the very establishment of the League was an affirmation of this acceptance by the coloured elite at large. It was thus general League policy to play down the importance of race, to avoid controversy on the issue and to assiduously apply itself to the Bookertean strategy of inching toward equality with and acceptance by whites.

Although the rejection of race as a valid measure of human worth and the acceptance of the coloured status would at first glance appear to be mutually exclusive, they could be held simultaneously because they mirrored different levels of the League's existence. The former was a long term goal for the distant future, the latter an attempt to come to terms with the realities of everyday existence. The acceptance of coloured sub-ordination was squared with the non-racial ideal by the assumption that coloured inferiority was a temporary situation due to cultural and historical factors rather than being genetically determined or in any way innate.

Despite the utter compromise of the fundamental principle of non-racism, the underlying assumption of the theoretical equality of mankind and the desire for eventual assimilation continued to inform League thought and action. The clearest manifestation of this was the intermittent denial of the validity of arguments of the inherent inferiority of non

whites.[1] This was also apparent in T.L.S.A. members' reaction to the racism they encountered in their day-to-day living. Despite the narrow focus on educational matters and a conscious attempt to avoid controversy, the Journal from time to time commented on manifestations of racism and the implementation of segregation in such a way that the assumption that it was undersirable, unfair and immoral was clear.[2] This for example was the spirit in which the segregatory practices on public transport and the arrogance of white shop assistants toward coloured customers were treated.[3] Faced with the proposal for coloured residential segregation, a Journal correspondent's appeal for "social and economic standards and not colour" to determine the right to ownership of property and for merit to determine access to economic opportunity accurately reflected League ideals.[4] For as Maurice tried to argue in his 1920 Presidential Address "... it has not yet been conclusively proved that races of mixed blood are intellectually inferior to ... pure races ... The highest types of the former being by no means the lowest of the latter.[5]

Yet there was a very clear acceptance of coloured inferiority to whites. In its purview of humanity the T.L.S.A. had a definite idea of humankind consisting of races although the actual concept of race was vague and variable. It was accepted that some races or peoples were "advanced" and others "backward" with the basic division

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1 E.J., June, 1918; July, 1921; August, 1938.
2 E.J., April, 1917; April, 1922; November, 1928.
3 E.J., January, 1922; July - December, 1927.
4 E.J., April, 1939.
5 E.J., July, 1921.

between the two being that of colour.[6] Coloureds were accepted to be one of the "backward" races of the world.[7] Their progress was often taken to compare unfavourably with that of other "backward" races. The Journal could therefore worriedly observe that "even the uneducated Central African tribes have been setting us the example"[8] or be envious of the possible enactment of a special tax for educational purposes for Africans that "will make for marked progress amongst a section of the population whose rate is already wonderfully rapid."[9] The League, like the A.P.O., felt a basic sympathy for all subordinate non-white groups throughout the world and was pleased to note the apparent advances made by American Negroes, West Indians, Africans and Asians.[10]

The League tacitly accepted the overwhelming technological advancement and undisputed global domination of Western civilization as proof of the superiority of the white man. From their daily experience a comparison between the white and coloured communities the whites appeared unambiguously superior in all spheres.

To the League, the acceptance of coloured inferiority did not necessarily contradict their equalitarian principles because unlike racist ideologues they did not accept this

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6 E.J., June, 1916; August, 1932.

7 E.J., April, 1917; June, 1917; April, 1918; November, 1920; June, 1922; June, 1929; June, 1933; May, 1935; August, 1937.

8 E.J., November, 1920.

9 E.J., January, 1923. See also E.J. November, 1920; July, 1923.

10 See for example E.J., August, 1916; January, 1917; November, 1917; June, 1918; March, 1922.

inferiority to be inherent or permanent. The superiority of whites was not accepted as being innate but due to the historically favourable environment in which the European peoples developed. The implication was that any of the "backward" peoples would under the same circumstances have developed at a similar rate and to an equivalent level.[11] To the League coloured "backwardness" was a result of cultural deprivation which could be overcome through application. It regarded the eventual parity of the white and non-white races to be inevitable. For coloureds, the achievement of equality with whites was regarded to be largely a matter of education, imbibing sufficient Western culture and eradicating the social problems prevalent within the coloured community. The Journal editorial on one occasion did make clear its rejection of the "pathetic belief in the utter immutability of primitive nature".[12]

Thus, for example in its very first issue the Journal arguing in favour of the principle that coloured teachers be employed in coloured schools, rejected the notion that whites were better teachers because of their cultural superiority. They instead saw the appointment of coloured teachers as an opportunity for them to reach the advanced stage of whites. This is clearly an admission of coloured inferiority but with the reservation that it was not inherent or permanent.[13] On another occasion the Journal conceded that "We know the problem of the coloured

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11 E.J., June, 1918; August, 1938.

12 E.J., January, 1921. The League remained conscious of its "barbarous" (Khoisan) ancestry. See for example E.J., June, 1916; October,1917; August, 1932.

13 E.J., May, 1915.

population is a difficult one but there are forces and potentialities in it that are perhaps undreamt of at present."[14]

One of the reasons that music was so dear to the heart of the coloured elite was that it allowed them not only to assert their social stature vis-a-vis lower class coloureds but also to match whites at one of the most "civilized" of cultural activities. Thus the Journal could concur with the judgement that equated the playing of the piano with nobility of mind and character[15] and Mr. C. Dantu of the Spes Bona Club could be convinced that "if the Musical Society [of the Spes Bona Club] were able to present one of their programmes in the North, it would certainly do away with much of the prejudice now prevalent in that Province."[16] The Journal succinctly summarized the main issue at stake with the comment, that "... in this land of colour prejudice it is a relief to remember that our voices at least do not depend on the colour of our skins."[17]

The League interpreted apparent evidence of rapid progress made by non-whites the world over, especially the example of the Japanese as proof of this contention. It was from "the wonderful little Japs" who had "rapidly risen to one of the most exalted and powerful positions in the world" in which they could associate with Europeans on "a footing of exact equality" that a regular Journal contributor drew hope for the future of coloureds. "Some saw our future in a different

14 E.J., October, 1920.
15 E.J., November, 1916; March, 1923; January, 1925.
16 E.J.,September, 1918.
17 E.J., January, 1934.

light and now possibilities appeared on the horizon, for here we saw the members of a race not quite dissimilar from ours in variegation and origin and the circumstances that attended their progress in the civilized world."[18]

The T.L.S.A. assumed culture, institutions and forms of behaviour to be the measure of civilization and without reservation accepted white middle class norms and values. The Journal endorsed J.C. Beattie's opinion that "It was not merely by having a white skin that we should maintain a white aristocracy but by being white in mind and spirit and achievement."[19] They aspired to the acquisition of the necessary social attributes and practices because this would bear testimony to their level of civilization and would be a prerequisite to their acceptance on an equal footing with whites.

The League was thus extremely conscious of the negative image that whites had of coloureds - the perception that coloureds were "a backward, lazy, debased people for whom it was better to build strong jails"[20] or that coloureds "lack sincerity of purpose, are too easy-going, poor in determination and possessing no stamina".[21] The League reacted by stressing the need to inculcate the values of thrift, punctuality, honesty, cleanliness, temperance, moderation, dignity and respect into coloureds.[22] These were

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18 E.J., March, 1922.
19 E.J., December, 1917.
20 E.C. Roberts in his 1937 Presidential Address, E.J., August, 1937.
21 E.J., February, 1936.
22 E.J., April, 1917; March, 1922; July-September, 1926; September, 1928; August, 1934; February, 1938.

the very opposite of those characteristics that were taken to constitute the coloured stereotype and that the League itself regarded to mark the "savage races of man".[23] The League in the short term certainly seems to have accepted the maxim "the whiter the better" which was clearly manifested in their argument that the coloured man's cultural proximity to the whites merited him a privileged position relative to the African.

The other salient aspect of the League's racial identity was to try and use its acceptance of the coloured status to some advantage. Coloureds had very little choice in the matter of accepting the coloured status because it was imposed from above by a powerful state apparatus capable of inflicting severe sanctions against breaches of legally authorized discrimination. Also the concept and stereotypical ideas of colouredness were so firmly entrenched in the collective mind of South African society that a denial of the existence of coloureds would have been interpreted as fictional. The repudiation of the coloured status could only be a gesture of principle that would not have made much difference to the lives of coloured individuals and the wider community because on the whole the coloured status was ascriptive.[24]

Thus the reason that the League's non-racist and assimilationist ideals were compromised was that any strategy aimed at full equality or at assimilation would not only be futile for the foreseeable future but was likely to be counter-productive in the short term by incurring the

23 E.J., June, 1916; August, 1932.
24 See van der Ross, (1979), especially pp.26-29.

disaffection of possible allies, the resentment and even wrath of important interest groups and powerful sectors of society. Despite there being some incentive for doing so, the coloured elite was largely intimidated and coerced into adopting the coloured status. The League as a result of cirmcumstances beyond its control accepted that in the shorter term more could be gained from an accommodation with white racism than the assertion of demands based on basic human and citizenship rights.

The League thus accepted, often with enthusiasm and gratitude, segregated facilities and institutions provided these were seen to be of potential benefit to coloureds. The T.L.S.A. increasingly endorsed segregatory practices in particular where it resulted in new facilities or services such as the establishment of the Juvenile Advisory Board, where it was thought that coloureds would be given an opportunity to demonstrate their worth as with the Cape Corps or where the distinction between coloured and African was further entrenched as for example when the League welcomed the separate syllabi and differentiation between coloured and African in educational statistics from 1922 onwards.[25]

Thus it is clear that part of the reason for the League's acceptance of the coloured status was to bargain for concessions. The League preferred the pragmatic policy of manipulating the system even though it meant bowing and scraping for whatever crumbs were to be had than to fight

25 E.J., May, 1917; October, 1917; May, 1922; October, 1922; April, 1923.

for the morally justifiable but unattainable goal of full equality with whites. The League thus found it more expedient to accept that coloured teachers would have an inferior professional status to that of whites and were prepared to accept between 60 and 72 per cent of the equivalent white teachers' salaries.[26] Similarly Oppelt, after pointing to the huge discrepancy between the state subsidy for white and coloured pupils made it clear that he had "no quarrel with the state at differentiating. But that a difference out of all proportion be made...is unfair."[27].

With the tightening of segregation against coloureds through the 1920's and 1930's, the League increasingly seemed to resign itself to accepting segregatory measures. The League preferred to try and salvage whatever it could from the situation and to manoeuvre within the new constraints imposed than to assert their rights. This meek capitulation and even acquiescence in the imposition of segregation is very well displayed by the League's reaction to the closure of the Cape Town Technical College to coloured students in 1925. When the intention of excluding coloureds was first announced the League raised objections that quite predictably were ignored.[28] After the virtual exclusion of coloureds had been implemented the Journal reported that "... interviews with the College Council have been held and the matter discussed calmly and reasonably.... The League has recognized the spirit of the times as manifested in present-day ideals and prejudices and has made no

26 E.J., September, 1920; October, 1920.
27 E.J., July - December, 1927.
28 E.J., April, 1923.

pretentious attempt at trying to force the Council to open the doors to coloured students."[29] Yet the Editor considered that the League could "modestly congratulate itself" for having obtained separate classes in a few subjects for coloureds.[30]

However, it was in times of controversy or crisis that the strains of adopting non-racism in principle but acceptance of colouredness in practice was thrown into high relief. Thus with the introduction of a separate primary school curriculum for coloureds in 1922 the Journal editorial was relieved that there was not much difference with that of the white schools. The measure was greeted as a progressive step because it was felt to be more conducive to the special circumstances of coloured schooling and because it further distinguished coloured from African education.[31] However, the comment of a correspondent that the differentiation in syllabus was "a degrading mark of inferiority... similar to that detestable clause in the Act of Union" was probably a truer reflection of League feeling on the issue.[32]

This dualism in the League's racial identity was more spectacularly manifested during the crisis precipitated by the governments announcement of its intentions of introducing residential segregation for coloureds. J.G.

29 E.J., April - June, 1925.
30 E.J., April - June, 1925. See also E.J., July - September, 1926.
31 E.J., May, 1922.
32 E.J., April, 1922. Although the principle of racially differentiated syllabi was formally accepted as a positive development at the Executive Meeting of 13/5/1922 there was evidence of dissent on the issue within the League. See for example the response of the Cape Division Branch in E.J., May, 1922.

Beukes in his Presidential Message to the League proffered the well-worn response of the League to the inexorable advance of segregation by calling for racial tolerance and trying to portray the development of a separate coloured racial identity as a desirable quality:

> Let us remember that we who educate are also "race-builders". Let us instill racial pride into our pupils, make them love the members of their group. There need be no clash with other groups - no antagonism, as all the different groups in South Africa must be taught to be tolerant towards each other, with mutual understanding for the common good of the whole nation. As the five fingers make the one hand, so the different groups must needs comprise a happy and prosperous South African nation.[33]

But the extreme urgency of this particular issue was sufficient for the Editor to express a more genuine sentiment of the League leadership and in the process deliver a sharp censure of the President's reaction to the same issue. Fred Hendricks, the editor, rejected the argument that segregation was in any way beneficial in that it stimulated the supposedly "enviable quality of race pride." This was held to be a meaningless idea;

> For to be proud of one's race is to be proud of one's language, ancestors, customs and achievements. And the language of the coloured man is the language of the European; his forebears are Europeans; his mode of living is that of the European and what he has achieved thus far has been in collaboration with the European. Only idle fancy of a warped imagination can visualize for the coloured people of South Africa a set of qualities or ideals entirely distinct from those of the European."[34]

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33 E.J., April, 1939.

34 E.J., April, 1939. Hendrick's reaction was prompted by segregationists arguing that racial separation was in the interests of coloureds and pointing to the anomaly of coloureds themselves wanting to develop race pride yet resisting segregation. See for example Cape Argus, 29/6/1938.

Although not specifically directed at them, this was also as much of an attack on the radical movement in coloured politics that was advocating a broadly based non- European front to resist segregation.

The men and women who formulated League policy were clearly intelligent, articulate, relatively well educated and sensitive individuals and the implications that the acceptance of the coloured status had for the question of racial inferiority and their dignity as human beings could not have escaped them. But League members in their hearts and minds did not accept this inferiority as is evidenced by the intermittent assertions of at least a theoretical equality between human beings and the ideal of assimilation. But the temporary acceptance of an inferior status for the sake of practicality was a reflection of white-coloured power relations.

Coloureds were a marginal group within South African society without significant political or economic power. They had barely enough political clout to attract government attention let alone initiate or force through reform. The coloured leadership faced the age-old dilemma of marginal or colonized elite groups of having to weigh up the gains to be made from resistance or cooperation when faced with an oppressive ruling power. In the earlier decades of the 20th century the overwhelming majority of the coloured elite regarded cooperation as the only viable option.

At the occupational level, the objective position of the coloured teaching profession was one of complete subordination to the state. In addition the League's own subjective assumptions of the role and responsibilities of the teacher dictated that they cooperate with the authorities. That mission schools were theoretically private institutions gave coloured teachers no extra latitude for manoeuvre because the state had ultimate legislative authority over coloured education even though it chose not to exercise it fully. Even before 1921 when the state took full responsibility for teachers' salaries, the government subsidy of the teachers' salaries was indispensable to most coloured mission schools. Also, that Departmental control over the coloured teaching profession was mediated through the school managers helped to tighten supervision of the profession.

These power relations are clearly reflected in the League's relationship with the Education Department. The League was small and weak, brow-beaten, and was usually treated with condescension and even contempt. But the League regarded the Education Department as the likely source of reform and thus eagerly sought cooperation and an extension of Departmental control over coloured education even to the extent of acquiescing in the imposition of an inferior professional status upon coloured teachers.

The coloured elite and hence the T.L.S.A.'s acceptance of the coloured status must be seen as part of a conscious strategy by a marginal group to show up the inadequacies of

existing conditions even by the criteria set for the subordinates by the dominant group. To the League, even the closing of this gap, however distasteful its implications might be, was real progress.

One of the main motivations behind the acceptance of the coloured status was to emphasize the distinction between coloured and African and thus to claim a position of relative privilege for coloureds in South African society.[35] This gambit had, since its inception been a cornerstone of coloured elite political consciousness. South African society at large, particularly the dominant white group, accepted this tripartite racial differentiation which came to find expression in education policy through the ever more rigorously segregated education system. After the 1905 School Board Act had achieved the primary aim of segregating white from black and establishing a viable public education system for whites, the policy of differentiating between coloured and African was seriously tackled from about 1920 onwards.[36] In his very first Annual Report, the S.G.E. Viljoen drew attention to recent legislation , taking these racial distinctions into account and explained the logic of Departmental policy on the matter to be that "...the educational problems associated with the coloured people are wholly distinct from those of the Native races whether considered from a psychological, a social, or economic or linguistic point of view. ...separate systems of education

35 This is confirmed by Lewis, refer to the Abstract of his thesis. Degler, p.110 notes a similar phenomenon amongst mulattos in Brazil.

36 Maurice, (1966), p.6.

are necessary for the two main sections of the non-European population."[37]

The coloured elite and the League as a whole had mixed feelings toward Africans. On the one hand there was a genuine empathy with their problems and a recognition that they were fellow citizens who were also underprivileged and suffered even more severe racial oppression than coloureds.[38] But at the same time there was a much stronger feeling of superiority over the African because of the coloureds' closer assimilation to Western civilization.[39] Objectively coloureds were much closer to white South Africans than they were to Africans. There was a much closer correlation with whites in terms of language, religion, lifestyle, historical tradition, and geographical distribution, though increasingly less so. But to whites the main distintion was between white and non-white.[40]

The coloured elite was thus at pains to underscore coloured affinity to whites and to stress their differences with Africans. It was even argued from time to time that coloureds and whites shared a symbiotic relationship that could only be disrupted by further segregation.[41] For example the Journal on one occasion highlighted a quotation from the press that "the coloured population was now

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37 S.G.E. Report, 1918, p.15.

38 E.J., May, 1915; April, 1916; March, 1917; April, 1921; June, 1923.

39 Cape Coloured Commission pp. 14-15; Maurice, (1966); p. 328.

40 Cape Coloured Commission, pp. 14-15.

41 E.J., July, 1921; July - September, 1926; August, 1932; August, 1943; August, 1939; Cape Times, 11/4/1923; Sun, 5/5/1933..

interbred throughout our whole social life and the well-being of the white depended on the well-being of the coloured."[42]

Any identification of coloureds with Africans would have pushed their hopes of assimilation further into the realm of the impossible. Africans suffered much more virulent racism because of their numerical preponderance and the greater cultural gap. Thus both their social aspirations as well as their political objectives dictated that the coloured elite and the League assert that Africans were a group apart from coloureds and that they needed to minister to their own group interest. Thus sections of the coloured elite were prepared to express sympathy and goodwill toward Africans but were not prepared to undertake any substantial political or organizational cooperation. Even after the radicals in the 1930's attempted to organize opposition to segregation on the principle of non-European unity the greater part of the coloured elite still regarded the maintenance of the distinction between coloured and African to be imperative.

These were the basic assumptions of League attitudes and policy toward Africans. Although not explicitly debarred by the League's constitution it was very firmly League policy that African teachers were not allowed to join the organization. The Journal editorial reponded to a suggestion in the A.P.O. that coloured and African teachers join forces with the phlegmatic reply that "The view held by the League has always been that our body stand for the coloured teacher

42 E.J., July - September, 1926.

as distinct from the European and Native."[43] The one occasion when a group of African teachers volunteered to affiliate to the League as a separate branch, they were refused.[44] It was only in 1934 that the T.L.S.A. was prepared to accept whites and Africans as full members and then only those teaching in coloured schools. The necessary amendments to the League's constitution were made against the uncharacteristically sustained opposition of a minority section of the League led by Sydney Maurice.[45]

From the time of the founding conference when Harold Cressy pleaded for the separation of coloured and African educational statistics the League strove to maintain and encourage further distinctions between coloureds and Africans.[46] This was part of their strategy of accepting the coloured identity in return for the expectation of some form of reward whether in concrete material form such as higher salaries, the vaguer hope for reform that was possible on a wide front or the intangible gains to be had from being held in higher social esteem by whites. In terms of practical politics the coloured elite and the League was prepared to accept an intermediate position between whites and Africans and to use this position of relative privilege to agitate for concessions and reforms that would contribute to their longer term equalitarian ideals. More immediately the League called for fair treatment that their proximity to whites be recognized. It was with these considerations in mind that

43 E.J., December, 1920. See also Sun, 10/3/1935; 24/3/1933.
44 E.J., December, 1920; v.d. Ross interview 29/6/1981.
45 Sun, 29/6/1934; 6/7/1934; 13/7/1934.
46 Cape Times, 25/6/1913; E.J., August, 1915; August, 1917.

the Journal editorial and the League Executive passed a motion of thanks for Canon Lavis' evidence before the Provincial Finances Commission that;

> "It is a mistake to judge of the educational ability of coloured children as a whole by the lower class only and one which happens to aproximate more nearly to the Aboriginal. Colour is not one thing, but many, and in dealing with children who are perhaps 70 per cent European in blood, it should not be surprising to find that they have intellectual ability equal to that of European children, and expressing itself on European lines."[47]

Thus the League was very pleased by the new departure in education policy under Viljoen of the progressive segregation of coloured from African. The League welcomed every move that further distinguished coloured from African education such as the introduction of separate syllabi and the separation of coloured and African educational statistics from 1922 onwards.[48] The League was also, for example disturbed that the Draft Consolidation Education Ordinance of 1921 did not draw sufficient distinction between coloured and African education.[49] In addition the League periodically drew attention to the anomaly of the small overlaps between coloured and African education. The presence of African teachers in coloured schools caused some resentment especially since they substantially outnumbered the coloureds teaching in African schools.[50] In differentiating between coloured and African, the Department was guaranteed the satisfaction of League endorsement of its

47 E.J., September, 1923.
48 E.J., October, 1920; December, 1920; May, 1922; September, 1922; August, 1923.
49 E.J., October, 1920.
50 See for example E.J.,August, 1917; January, 1921; August, 1923; September, 1928; Sun, 12/4/1935; 4/10/1935.

segregationist practices and the League in its turn drew satisfaction from the apparent progress that was being made.

The segregation between coloured and African was unevenly applied and only haltingly implemented. For example although coloureds in Kimberley already in 1924 objected to the admission of African candidates to the Perseverance Training College the exclusion of Africans, it would appear, was only implemented from July 1935 onwards.[51] The unscrambling of mixed African and coloured schools only really became a Departmental concern from the late 1930's onwards.[52]

In its strategy of consciously using the coloured identity as a bargaining device the League was at pains to demonstrate that this was in no way a hostile or antagonistic move. This was the deliberate rationale behind the Journal editorial proclaiming that, "We are not of those that preach antipathy toward any race in this land. Our profession is one that makes for harmony amongst the various peoples and communities"[53] and van der Ross' assurance to the inaugural meeting of the Caledon Branch that "... the Teachers' League was not established to work in opposition to the Europeans but to make them their friends and in such a way improve their own race."[54]

The all too familiar pattern of race relations involving coloureds was to be observed in the League's relationship with its peer organizations. Although the failure existing

51 S.G.E.Report, 1934,p.94.
52 Education Gazette, 17/11/1938; 27/7/1939; 10/8/1939.
53 E.J.,November, 1920.
54 E.J., May, 1922; See also Rhoda, pp. 54-5.

teachers organizations to articulate coloured teacher aspirations was an important impetus to the formation of the T.L.S.A., the League nevertheless largely modelled itself on S.A.T.A. Not only was there a basic identity of professional interests between the two but the T.L.S.A. was also eager to conform to the standards embodied in S.A.T.A.

The T.L.S.A. was prepared to follow the lead of S.A.T.A. and at its inauguration appeared prepared to accept a status akin to being the unofficial coloured wing of S.A.T.A.[55] The League founders adopted an extremely obsequious attitude toward S.A.T.A. S.A.T.A. was approached for advice regarding the impending establishment of the League, it was hoped that there would be extensive cooperation between the two bodies and Cressy and Gordon were at pains to assure S.A.T.A. that the League was in no way antagonistic or in competition with it.[56] Furthermore the rules and bye-laws of the T.L.S.A. was an almost verbatim copy of the S.A.T.A. Cape Division Branch's bye-laws. In the foreword to the T.L.S.A.'s rules and bye-laws the committee acknowledged that in drawing up the document it was greatly indebted to S.A.T.A. for "they could not go far astray if they availed themselves of [their] experience and wisdom". They were thus "content to follow very largely the constitution of the S.A.T.A. introducing modifications here and there to suit the particular needs of coloured education and teachers."[57]

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55 At the preparatory meeting of 22/3/1913 Cressy raised the possibility of the T.L.S.A. being formed in association with S.A.T.A. See Cape Times, 22/3/1913.

56 Adhikari, pp.74-6; E.J., December, 1915..

57 "Rules and bye-laws of the T.L.S.A.", (1913), Abdurahman Family Papers, University of Chicago.

Despite the presence of the S.A.T.A. secretary on the League's inaugural platform and the exchange of telegrams of good wishes at conference time during the early years,[58] the T.L.S.A.'s overtures were generally disregarded. The S.A.T.A. and its journal the Educational News largely ignored the T.L.S.A. and the problems of coloured education except for the occasional reference. And this was usually only the case when matters relating to coloured education became topical such as during the investigations of the Coloured Education Commission and the Cape Coloured Commission.[59] That the League was deeply disappointed at the results of the Commissions whilst S.A.T.A. was well satisfied with their achievements is indicative of S.A.T.A.'s lack of empathy with League perspectives on the problems of coloured education.

In typical fashion an article in the Educational News calling for "Equal pay for equal work" made no mention of the lower salaries of coloured teachers but was exclusively concerned with sexual discrimination within the white teaching profession.[60] In an article entitled "Our Contemporaries'" the Educational News reviewed the organs of several white teacher associations as far afield as the O.F.S. and Transvaal but ignored the Educational Journal, on its doorstep. S.A.T.A.'s numerous attempts at cooperation with other teacher organizations was never extended to

58 Cape Times, 25/6/1913; Cape Argus, 24/6/1913; E.J., August, 1916.

59 Educational News, June, 1926; March, 1927; July, 1936; June - July, 1938.

60 Educational News, March, 1913; September, 1913.

include the T.L.S.A.[61] The essential racism of the S.A.T.A. was well expressed by Miss E.B. Hawkins in her 1936 Presidential Address. After drawing a distinction between the educational needs of whites, coloureds and Africans, she held that "...in a modern democratic state... each child should be given the opportunity to develop all his powers to their fullest extent as an individual, but as an individual seen in his place as part of the community of which he finds himself a member."[62] In 1926 the Educational News made the surprisingly frank admission that one of the reasons the S.A.T.A. failed to deal with the problems of coloured education was race prejudice.[63]

It is however only fair to point out that there was a small group of liberals within S.A.T.A., individuals like G.B. Kipps, Jean van der Poel and Bishop Lavis, who were sympathetic toward the problems of coloured education. Bishop Lavis for example admitted that a "difference in the tint of colour, often hardly noticeable, makes a difference between an open and shut door to education is rightly regarded as a great injustice."[64] But this, like other supportive statements coming from S.A.T.A. members were pleas for the upgrading of the coloured sector of the segregated education system.

The S.A.O.U. appeared to be largely oblivious of the League's existence. The only known instance of contact

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61 Educational News, October, 1916; September, 1919; January-February, 1923; September, 1932.
62 Educational News, July, 1936.
63 Educational News, June, 1926.
64 Educational News, June, 1926.

between the two were two inconclusive meetings held in 1931 to discuss the problems of coloured education on the basis of a S.A.O.U. resolution the crux of which was that "Volgens ons is dit [die doel van Kleurling opvoeding] om die kind bewus te maak van sy ras, sy taal, en sy plek in die samelewing."[65]

Despite the rebuffs the T.L.S.A. nevertheless continued to extensively model itself on the S.A.T.A. The acceptance of S.A.T.A. as the exemplar of a teachers' association and the holus bolus adoption of S.A.T.A rules and bye-laws, the organizational structure and procedures of the two organizations came to be very similar. The general tone and format of the Educational News was copied by the Educational Journal, a point not lost on the Education Department for the Education Gazette in its welcome of the Journal observed that "In size and outward appearance it closely resembles the Educational News."[66] The content of the Educational News inspired similar efforts in the Journal and from August 1932 the Journal even reproduced the quarterly tests published in the Educational News.[67] The League copied the S.A.T.A. practice of presenting the relevant conference resolutions to the S.G.E. and one of the main motivations behind the abortive attempt to establish a T.L.S.A. reading room was that "... it may boast like other bodies" of one.[68] Also, the desire to conduct conference by delegate was prompted as much by considerations of conforming to "modern"

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65 E.J., June, 1931.
66 Education Gazette, 10/6/1915.
67 From E.J., October, 1932 onwards.
68 E.J.,September, 1916.

and "civilized" standards than the practical considerations of promoting efficiency or eliminating certain abuses.[69]

The attitude of the League toward African teacher organizations was clearly to keep their distance and stress the distinctions between coloured and African. The League maintained a greater distance between itself and African teacher organizations than S.A.T.A. maintained between itself and the non-white teacher organizations. Whilst S.A.T.A. allowed non-whites to join as ordinary members and allowed Africans to affiliate in separate branches the League would have no such truck with African teachers. The only Africans that might have become members of the League did so on the technicality that the League was open to those who taught at coloured schools. Over a period of thirty years the evidence has produced only two apparently African names, a Mr. Nyombolo of the Athlone Branch and a Mr Myanda from Hutchinson.[70]

At no stage was colourdism an aggressive or dynamic force because it was largely recognized to consist of undesirable qualities and was forced on largely passive subjects who reluctantly acquiesced in their branding of inferiority. The intermittent calls for the cultivation of race pride and the assertion of colouredness as a positive value rang hollow. There was a strong element of fatalism in the League's acceptance of the social status of coloureds. Where the coloured status was voluntarily accepted, it was with an ulterior motive rather than as a positive expression

69 E.J., June, 1932; June, 1933.
70 April, 1921.

of ethnic identity. It is thus evident that the Bookertean strategy remained dominant throughout the conservative phase of the League.

CONCLUSION

If this thesis can be said to have reached a general conclusion, then it is that the Teachers' League of South Africa cannot be understood outside of its social environment. Although this statement is redundant in the sense that to varying degrees it is true of all organizations, it has special significance with regard to the League since its organizational and professional concerns were completely overshadowed by the social reality of coloured marginality in South African society. Indeed, it could be said that the League can only be understood in terms of this social reality.

The origin of the League was deeply rooted in the historic condition of the political and social subordination of non-whites at the Cape and the development through the 19th century of a distinct coloured identity. Education had from the start been effectively segregated and education policy was consciously used as a means of perpetuating white supremacy.[1] With the passage of the 1905 School Board Act a much more direct correlation between colour and quality of education emerged as mission education came to be institutionalized for exclusive non-white use. Coloured teachers thus became a more clearly defined and conspicuous

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1 Education has commonly been used as a conscious tool of social policy in modern society. See for example S. Bowles and H. Gintis, Schooling in Capitalist America; Educational reform and the contradictions of economic life, (London, Routledge Kegan Paul, 1976); J. Karabel and A. Halsey (eds.), Power and Ideology in Education, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1977).

category since the coloured elite actively sought to distance itself from Africans. The intensification of racial discrimination, the political interests of the A.P.O. and justifiable grievances within the coloured teaching profession provided the more immediate impetus for the establishment of the League.

The growth of the League was largely determined by its reaction to the possibility of reform and more importantly the mounting discrimination against coloureds through the 1920's and 1930's. This reveals the essentially passive and reflexive nature of the League in that it displayed very little initiative or creativity in tackling the problems with which it was faced. However, because of coloured powerlessness it is difficult to imagine such enterprise making a significant difference.

The organizational life of the League at all levels reflected coloured elite marginality. This was especially evident in its relationship with the Education Department and the churches. With the Education Department in particular, the League was reduced to begging where it should have been negotiating and to meek moral suasion where it had the right to demand. More significantly, the League fully accepted white middle class values and to an extent even came to internalize the negative view that whites had of coloureds. This underlay the League's eager pursuit of "culture" and "civilization" which it equated with white social practices. This is also demonstrated by the League's attitude toward lower class coloureds, its qualified

acceptance of coloured inferiority and its readiness to accept a secondary professional status.[1]

The conservative League was caught up in a situation and in contradictions it was powerless to influence significantly. The accommodationist strategies of the previous decades had demonstrably failed by the 1930's and was losing legitimacy especially within the younger and better educated sector of the coloured elite that in increasing numbers turned to socialist ideology for political alternatives. It was this group that was to plunge the T.L.S.A. into a 4 year long crisis by challenging the conservative oligarchy for the leadership of the League and thereby initiating a new era in the history of the organisation.

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APPENDIX I, 1

Subscription Fees 1913-1940

	1916	1931	1936	1939
Associate members, retired teachers	2/6	2/6	2/6	1/- retired teachers and student teachers
Teachers with salaries less than £45	2/-	*	*	
" " " £45 - £60	3/-	*	*	2/6 other associate members
" " " £60 - £100	5/-	6/-	4/-	
" " " £100 - £150	6/6	7/6	6/-	4/- female assistants
" " " £150 - £200	7/6	10/-	8/-	
" " " £200 - £250	10/-	12/6	10/-	6/- male assistants
" " " £250 - £300	10/-	15/-	12/6	
" " " £300 - £350	12/6	20/-	15/-	10/6 principals
" " " £350 - £400	12/6	20/-	17/6	
" " " of over £400	12/6	20/-	20/-	

* Not applicable after the salary increases of 1921.

APPENDIX II

SUMMARY OF AVAILABLE T.L.S.A. ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS*

	Total Income	Members' Subscriptions	Branch Donations	Income from Journal Adverts	Income[e] from Ash Shield Comp.	Conference Expenses	Journal Expenses	Secretarial Expenses	Exec. Meeting Expenses	Balance in the Bank
1924-5	110	42	6	-	-	17	11	15	18	5
1927-8	121	82	15	1	-	27	38	29	15	52
1928-9	126	86	40	1	-	47	55	20	11	36
1929-30	163	18[d]	55	-	-	33	31	20	13	29
1930-1	104	38[d]	45	-	-	53[f]	32	26	17	89
1931-2	191[a]	112	38	15	-	30	34	37	20	40
1932-3	137	89	25	-	17	60[g]	54	31	12	103
1933-4	265	141	32	9	27	51	80	34	15	32
1934-5	286	177	36	21	25	28	94	54	22	70
1936-7	230[b]	144	30	42	4	28	92	26	18	15
1937-8	207	116	3	47	14	33	81	33	15	24
1938-9	347	182	14	40	13	91[h]	99	34	26	16
1939-40	264[c]	177	29	45	26	32	93	38	40	3

a Subscription fees were increased in 1931.

b Subscription fees were decreased in 1936.

c Subscription fees were further decreased in 1939.

d These low figures cannot be accounted for. It is probable that the abnormally high branch donations included some of their members' subscription fees.

e This was the profit after all expenses including the travelling costs of contestants were deducted.

f Included a £30 subsidy of Executive members' travelling expenses to the 1930 Kimberley Conference.

g Included an expenditure of £37 on a special conference booklet.

h Included a sum of £58 spent on a dance and social at the 1938 Conference.

* All figures in Pounds sterling.

APPENDIX III

Name	Branch/Town/Suburb	No. of yrs. on Exec.*	Executive Offices Held
Miss H Beukman	Cape Town	23	President in 1923, Treasurer 1924-6, 1931-43.
F Hendricks	Cape Town/Wynberg	19	E.J. editor for most of the 1920's and the entire 1930's to 1943. President 1929.
I B Oppelt	Malmesbury	18	President 1916, 1926, 1934; retired in 1935.
D van der Ross	Cape Town/Wynberg	18	President 1921; continuously Secretary 1931-44; Editor 1918; Treasurer 1928; 1930.
Mrs. H Roman	Cape Town	16	President 1928.
A C Petersen	Paarl	15	President 1924, 1942.
S G Maurice	Cape Town	14	President 1920; Secretary 1922-4; Editor 1916-18.
Rev R D Rasmus	Cape Town/Maitland	13	Treasurer 1917-18.
J Abrahamse	Wellington	13	President 1927; 1937.
H J Gordon	Cape Town	11	President 1925; Secretary 1915-21
D J Sampson	Raithby	11	President 1915.
Mrs S Wooding	Cape Town	11	President 1918.
P Scholtz	Cape Town/Claremont	11	President 1922; Secretary 1925-31; died 1931.
R Joorst	Cape Town/Port Elizabeth	11	President 1931.
F B Abrahamse	Piquetberg/Malmesbury	9	President 1930.
E Doman	Cape Town/Athlone	9	President 1933.
J R Strydom	Cape Town/Salt River	8	
E C Roberts	Cape Town/Claremont	8	President 1936.
A Abdurahman	Cape Town/Claremont	8	Assistant Secretary 1934-43.
W G Hendrickse	Cape Town/Wynberg	8	President 1939; Treasurer 1915-16.
P Heneke	Cape Town	8	President 1935.
D B van Niekerk	Paarl	8	President 1919.
A S Weber	Maitland/Pinelands	6	
C White	Cape Town/Claremont	6	
G J Beukes	Cape Town/Salt River	6	President 1938
A Desmore	Cape Town	5	
A D Crotz	Worcester	5	
B Davey	Paarl	5	
S Redcliffe	Port Elizabeth	5	
S Oppelt	Beaufort West	5	
C J Viljoen	Paarl	5	
J Viljoen	Caledon	5	
E Gordon	Worcester	5	

* This analysis covers only 23 years of the League's existence since the composition of the Executive Committees for 1913, 1914, 1919 and 1927 are not readily available.