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**LAND AND LIBERTY ! : THE NON-EUROPEAN UNITY  
MOVEMENT AND THE LAND QUESTION, 1933 – 1976**

by

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## ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

This dissertation examines the political practice of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) in the South African countryside during the latter half of the Twentieth Century. It demonstrates that the NEUM was the only liberation movement in South Africa which maintained that the land question was one of the most fundamental questions confronting the liberatory struggle in South Africa. It shows how the NEUM acted on their belief that the acute land-hunger experienced by the majority of the population in South Africa would be the mobilising force for a revolutionary overthrow of the existing political, social and economic order in South Africa. This dissertation argues that the NEUM was the only liberation movement to consistently assign importance to the political organisation of what it termed the "landless peasantry" in the African reserves. Through a series of case studies this dissertation charts the trajectory of the NEUM's political work in the South African countryside from the early 1940s until the early 1970s. In so doing the dissertation also challenges the established historiography which maintains that the NEUM shied away from popular struggles and did not develop into an organisation rooted among the population.

The study commences with outlining the historical roots and ideological foundation of the NEUM. The bulk of the dissertation examines the practical implementation of the NEUM's political strategy in the countryside. It shows that between 1945 and the early 1960s the African reserves were seething with political ferment as rural dwellers resisted the implementation of numerous oppressive laws and regulations. Through supporting and attempting to provide direction to reserve dwellers in their struggles, the NEUM cadres gained a peasant following. By the early 1960s the NEUM laid claim to have captured the support of several numerically significant peasant organisations that emerged out of the struggles in the reserves.

The final chapters of the dissertation argue that South Africa entered a "pre-revolutionary phase" in the early 1960s. They suggest that had the NEUM succeeded in gaining the necessary support in Africa to launch an armed campaign, the outcome of the liberatory struggle in South Africa may well have been fundamentally different. These chapters examine the changes in political strategy adopted by the NEUM in the early 1960s and the rapid growth of the African Peoples' Democratic Union of Southern Africa (a new national political organisation launched by the NEUM in 1961) among rural dwellers and migrant workers.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAC	All-African Convention
ALC	African Liberation Committee
ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
APDU	African Peoples' Democratic Union
APDUSA	African Peoples' Democratic Union of Southern Africa
ASC	Anti-Segregation Council
Anti-CAD	Anti-Coloured Affairs Department Movement
BAD	Bantu Affairs Department
CATA	Cape African Teachers' Association
CLSA	Communist League of South Africa
CPSA	Communist Party of South Africa
FLN	National Liberation Front
ICU	Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union
NEF	New Era Fellowship
NAD	Native Affairs Department
NEUM	Non-European Unity Movement
NIC	Natal Indian Congress
NRC	Native Representative Council
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
PF	Progressive Forum
SAIC	South African Indian Congress
SOYA	Society of Young Africa
TAVA	Transkei African Voters Association
TOB	Transkei Organised Bodies
TLSA	Teachers' League of South Africa
UMSA	Unity Movement of South Africa
WPSA	Workers' Party of South Africa

## INTRODUCTION

Despite the central role which land dispossession played in the historical development of colonialism, apartheid and capitalism in South Africa, the land question was neglected by most organisations constituting the liberation movement in South Africa.<sup>1</sup> Liberation movements, such as the African National Congress (ANC), focussed their attention principally on the urban areas, failing to recognise “the theoretical and practical significance of political aspirations and social movements in the countryside.”<sup>2</sup> The Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) was, however, the one exception to this trend.

From the onset the NEUM recognised that in South Africa the demand for land and basic democratic rights formed the basis of the national liberation struggle in South Africa. Moreover, it contended that the land question could only be solved through a complete overturning of the capitalist system.<sup>3</sup> The NEUM maintained that no liberation struggle for bourgeois democratic rights could succeed in South Africa without the support of the “landless peasantry”, the numerically preponderant stratum within the oppressed black population.

The NEUM emerged as the only liberation movement to consistently assign importance to the political mobilisation of the peasantry. The NEUM’s approach to the national liberation struggle in South Africa, as well as the political work undertaken by its cadres in the South African countryside cannot simply be collapsed into current accounts of the liberatory struggle. The NEUM’s contribution has not been fully recognised, nor accurately and comprehensively discussed and analysed by academics. This dissertation seeks to fill an important gap in South African historiography. It aims to contribute to a more comprehensive and balanced understanding of the South African liberation struggle.

Only two academics, namely, Colin Bundy and Allison Drew, have drawn attention to the fact that the NEUM was the sole liberation movement to identify the land question as

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<sup>1</sup> A. Drew, ‘The Theory and Practice of the Agrarian Question in South African Socialism, 1928 – 1960’ in H. Bernstein (editor) *The Agrarian Question in South Africa*, London and Portland: Cass, 1997, p. 53. R. Levin and M. Neocosmos, ‘The Agrarian Question and Class Contradictions in South Africa: Some Theoretical Issues for Consideration’, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Volume 16, Number 2, January 1989, p. 62. R. Levin and D. Weiner, ‘The Politics of Land Reform in South Africa after Apartheid: Perspectives, Problems, Prospects’, in H. Bernstein (editor), *The Agrarian Question in South Africa*, p. 107. M. Neocosmos, *The Agrarian Question in Southern Africa and ‘Accumulation from Below’*, Research Report, Uppsala: Nordiska Afrika Institutet, 1993, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Drew, ‘The Theory and Practice of the Agrarian Question’, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup> University of Cape Town (UCT). Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa (UMSA) / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘The Agrarian Problem’, an address by I.B. Tabata to the Society of Young Africa, 1954.

central to the success of the liberation struggle in South Africa.<sup>4</sup> Their studies, however, are limited. The most obvious limitation of both studies is that the scholars restricted themselves to the period of the 1940s and 1950s. This is essentially because they maintain that by the end of the 1950s the NEUM went into decline, never again playing any meaningful role in the liberation struggle. Also, Bundy and Drew limited their work to the African reserves of the Eastern Cape, namely the Transkei and Ciskei. This dissertation shows that the NEUM's political activity in the reserves extended beyond the Eastern Cape. It argues that the NEUM was able to sustain its political activity in the reserves up until at least the mid-1960s, a period characterised by extreme government repression. In this period, the political activity of other liberation movements, such as the ANC and the Pan African Congress (PAC) was hardly evident in South Africa. Bundy and Drew provide descriptive overviews of the NEUM's activity in the countryside. They neglect to consider the particular political ideas the NEUM took to the peasantry, the significance of these ideas and the impact they had on the political consciousness of the peasantry.

This dissertation contests the common perception of the NEUM as a Western Cape phenomenon consisting of "Coloured teacher intellectuals" reluctant to engage in mass struggle.<sup>5</sup> It shows that the NEUM was a serious liberatory organisation that carried its political strategy to the masses. By focussing on the rural areas the dissertation demonstrates that the NEUM developed into a massed-based organisation representative of various classes and groups in South Africa.

The NEUM regarded tribalism and rural parochialism as the greatest obstacles to the political mobilisation of the peasantry. Thus besides demonstrating how the NEUM gradually built a mass support base among rural dwellers in the reserves, the study considers the extent to which the NEUM was able to shape the development of a national political consciousness among the South African peasantry. Mostly importantly, the NEUM aimed to demonstrate to rural dwellers the link between their demand for land and the broader national struggle for liberty. It sought to impress upon the peasantry that to solve their land hunger they needed to become part the national struggle for democratic rights.

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<sup>4</sup> Bundy, 'Land and Liberation', pp. 255, 256, 266 and 267. A. Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa, 1928 – 1960', Doctor of Philosophy dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1991, pp. 456 - 505. Drew, 'The Theory and Practice of the Agrarian Question', pp. 73 and 74.

<sup>5</sup> Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism', p. 432.

The dissertation also contests the view that the NEUM “showed itself increasingly unwilling to examine new approaches or to evaluate critically its own practice.”<sup>6</sup> It argues that within the political context of the early 1960s, the NEUM adopted a “new approach”, both organisationally and tactically, to the liberation struggle in South Africa.

This dissertation has set as its core objective the recovery and accurate recording of the NEUM’s political activity in the countryside. It is principally concerned with charting the NEUM’s practice rather than critically assessing the organisation’s political strategy and deconstructing its political discourse. In so doing, it utilises the NEUM’s concept of a “landless peasantry” to characterise the majority of people in the African reserves. The NEUM’s concept of “landless peasantry” included migrant workers, whom they believed ultimately depended on access to land for survival. The term peasant is used interchangeably with reserve dweller and rural dweller in this dissertation.

### **Research Methodology and Sources**

The principal research techniques utilised for this dissertation have been interviews, archival and library research. It has drawn on oral testimony, primary documents, newspapers and unpublished manuscripts. This has been complemented by secondary literature. In certain instances it has been necessary to rely heavily on oral testimony to construct written history. In such cases it has been endeavoured to use documentary evidence to establish the authenticity of the oral testimony.

Documenting the NEUM’s history particularly during the 1960s and 1970s has required the construction of written history from primary material. A concerted effort has been made to obtain the testimony of ageing peasants who were participants in the political events described in this dissertation. These interviews form a record of oral testimony that is unique, presenting a recording of voices of people who have been marginalised and silenced in South African historiography generally. The process and outcome of this study have been to give a voice to the South African peasantry and accord them their rightful place in the history of the South African liberation struggle.

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<sup>6</sup> Drew, ‘Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism’, p. 434.

### **Outline of chapters**

Chapter One serves as a backdrop to the study of the rural activity of the NEUM. It establishes the theoretical framework that underpinned the NEUM's political strategy towards the liberation struggle in South Africa. The chapter demonstrates that the NEUM's historical and ideological roots are traceable to the Workers' Party of South Africa (WPSA), a Marxist organisation founded in Cape Town in 1935. The chapter is brief and sets out the key developments leading to the formation of the NEUM and the ideological outlook of the organisation in relation to the national liberation struggle in South Africa.

Chapters Two to Five examine the practical political activity of NEUM cadres in the South African countryside between 1945 and 1960. During this period the African reserves became hotbeds of mass political ferment as reserve dwellers resisted the implementation of government laws and regulations that sought to render them landless and politically marginalised. Through a series of case studies these chapters will discuss and analyse the NEUM's contribution in providing political direction to reserve dwellers in their struggles against the Rehabilitation Scheme, the Bantu Authorities system and Bantu Education. These chapters examine the extent to which the NEUM was able to foster the development of a national political consciousness among the South African peasantry.

Chapter Six discusses the NEUM's political activity during the 1960s. Most scholars have assumed that by the end of the 1950s the organisation ceased to play any role in the South African liberation struggle. This chapter demonstrates that this was not the case and that particularly during the early to mid-1960s, the NEUM played a significant role in uniting town and country through organising workers and peasants. The chapter also discusses the NEUM's adoption of the armed struggle in the early 1960s.

Chapter Seven traces the NEUM's struggle in exile in obtaining assistance from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to launch its armed struggle. The chapter argues that this period represented a crucial stage in the unfolding of the liberation struggle in South Africa. It suggests that by refusing to grant the NEUM recognition the OAU and neo-colonial African states diverted a potentially revolutionary struggle in South Africa into a reformist struggle.

The study concludes with a summary of the key points established in each of the chapters.

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE HISTORICAL ROOTS AND IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF THE NEUM

**It was not an easy task to find who the real enemy was...It required a revolutionary Party which alone could lay bare the facts, expose the class nature behind the vicious race exploitation and violent economic and political oppression. It was when my younger brother Goolam and I, together with I.B. Tabata joined the revolutionary party that we learnt the true nature of imperialism, its modus operandi, in all the corners of the globe.<sup>1</sup>**

The years 1935 to 1945 were a “pivotal” period in the historical development of the liberation struggle in South Africa, as ideological forces that ultimately shaped the contemporary liberation movement emerged and converged.<sup>2</sup> During this period the impact of international developments, especially the Russian Revolution, the world-wide economic depression and anti-fascist struggles, combined with renewed onslaughts by the white South African government on the political and economic rights of the black population, led to the radicalisation of political thought in South Africa.<sup>3</sup> The mid-1930s saw new attempts at building African political organisations, notably the founding of the All-Africa Convention (AAC) in 1935. Equally important was the emergence of a new Marxist movement in South Africa in the early 1930s. The historical significance of this Marxist movement was that it had an important and lasting influence on the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM). This chapter will trace the historical roots and ideological foundation of the NEUM as the basis to understanding why it paid particular attention to the land question in its programme for liberation in South Africa.

#### **The formation of the Workers’ Party of South Africa**

The historical roots and ideological outlook of the NEUM are traceable to one of the Marxist organisations to emerge in South Africa during the mid-1930s, the Workers’ Party of South

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<sup>1</sup> *Southern African Political Economy Monthly*, ‘Looking back on Life’s Experiences’, by Jane Gool, December 1987/ January 1988, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> No Sizwe, *One Azania, One Nation: The National Question in South Africa*, London: Zed Press, 1979, pp. 53 and 54. A. Drew, ‘Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa, 1928 – 1960’, Doctor of Philosophy dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1991, p. 270.

<sup>3</sup> No Sizwe, *One Azania, One Nation*, p. 54.

Africa (WPSA). The WPSA sprung from a split within the Lenin Club, a radical discussion club that was launched in Cape Town in July 1933.<sup>4</sup>

The early 1930s witnessed a large-scale purge within the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), as members who opposed the “Native Republic” slogan and questioned Stalinist orthodoxy were expelled.<sup>5</sup> Expelled members of the CPSA, together with members from the Socialist wing of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) and new arrivals from Eastern Europe formed the core of the Lenin Club.<sup>6</sup> Among the key personalities to emerge within the Lenin Club were Yudel Burlak, a bookkeeper believed to have been a member of the Lithuanian Soviet, Clare Goodlatte, originally a nun who turned to radical politics by joining the ILP and Moshe Averbach, a grocery store owner in District Six who had been expelled from the *Gezerd*, a CPSA-aligned organisation.<sup>7</sup> The Lenin Club also attracted the attention of individuals from Cape Town’s black population, notably, Isaac Bangani Tabata, Dr Goolam Gool and his sister Jane (Janub) Gool. The “three musketeers”, as they were known, had developed an interest in radical politics, and after attending the lectures of several radical clubs that flourished in Cape Town during this period, they joined the Lenin Club.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> University of the Western Cape (UWC). Mayibuye Archives. Workers’ Party of South Africa (WPSA) Papers. Letter to N.J. Barclay from the WPSA, 21/2/1936. Interview conducted with I.B. Tabata and Jane Gool by S. Jeppie and E. Cairncross, Harare, Zimbabwe, 16 – 22 January 1989. B. Hirson, ‘The Trotskyist Groups in South Africa’, in *Searchlight South Africa*, Volume 3, Number 2, April 1993, p.75. A. Drew, ‘The Theory and practice of the Agrarian Question in South African Socialism, 1928 – 1960’, in H. Bernstein (editor), *The Agrarian Question in South Africa*, London and Portland: Cass, 1997, p. 63.

<sup>5</sup> For discussion on the purges within the CPSA, see E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope: the black man’s struggle for freedom in South Africa*, Wisconsin and London: Wisconsin University Press, 1978, p. 257. Drew, ‘Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa’, p. 186. Hirson, ‘The Trotskyist Groups in South Africa’, p. 73. A. Drew, *Discordant Comrades: Identities and Loyalties on the South African Left*, Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2002, pp. 137 and 138.

<sup>6</sup> UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Letter to N.J. Barclay from the WPSA, 21/2/1936. A. Southall, ‘Marxist Theory in South Africa until 1940’, Master of Arts dissertation, University of York, September 1978, p. 34. Hirson, ‘The Trotskyist. Groups in South Africa’, pp. 73 and 96. Drew, ‘Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa’, pp. 192 and 193. For a more detailed discussion on the Lenin Club see especially, Drew, *Discordant Comrades*, pp. 139 – 143.

<sup>7</sup> National Library of South African (NLSA), Cape Town. Clare Goodlatte Collection, MSB 618. Letter to J. Chapman from C.R. Goodlatte, 6/9/1934. A. Drew [editor], *South Africa’s Radical Tradition: A Documentary History*, Volume One, 1907 – 1950, Cape Town: Bunchu Books, Mayibuye Books and UCT Press, 1996, p. 191. B. Hirson, ‘Profiles of Some South African Trotskyists’, *Searchlight South Africa*, Volume 3, Number 2, April 1993, p. 110. Interview conducted with Jane Gool by L. Hasim, Durban, 21/11/1990. (Kindly provided to the author by Lyova Hassim). For a biographical essay on Goodlatte see, B. Hirson, ‘Spark and the Red Nun’, *Searchlight South Africa*, Volume 1, Number 2, February 1989, pp. 65 – 78. Drew, *Discordant Comrades*, pp. 140 – 141. The *Gezerd* or *Gezelschaft far Erd* (meaning “Go Back to the Land”), was a group within the CPSA consisting mainly of Yiddish speaking exiles who had fled from Eastern European due to rise of fascism. Hirson, ‘The Trotskyist Groups in South Africa’, p. 96.

<sup>8</sup> UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Minutes of the meeting of the WPSA, Cape Town Branch, held at 99 Hatfield St. on Monday, 18 May 1936, beginning at 6 p.m. Privately held by G. Wilcox, Cape Town. Jane Gool Papers. ‘Memoirs’ by Jane Gool, p. 5. Interview with Tabata and Jane Gool, 16 – 22 Jan. 1989. Drew, ‘Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa’, p.193. Drew, *Discordant Comrades*, p. 142.

The Lenin Club's political orientation was towards the International Left Opposition (the international socialist movement under the political guidance of Leon Trotsky) which opposed the policies and practices of the Third International under Stalin.<sup>9</sup> In May 1934 the Lenin Club called for the creation of "a new Revolutionary Workers' Party".<sup>10</sup> To carve out a programme for the proposed party, the Lenin Club established a committee to formulate a set of draft theses on the major political questions confronting revolutionaries in South Africa. Differences arose within the committee, especially over the thesis dealing with "Native Question". This resulted in the formulation of two sets of theses.<sup>11</sup>

The majority of members within the Lenin Club supported the thesis that placed the "Agrarian Question" at the centre of the South African revolution.<sup>12</sup> This thesis contended that South Africa was still an agrarian country, with as much as eighty-seven percent of the African population found on the land engaged in agriculture.<sup>13</sup> It characterised this section of the population as a "landless peasantry", emphasising that they experienced acute land deprivation, occupying merely ten million morgen of land, compared to the minority white population owning ninety-nine million morgen of land.<sup>14</sup> Given the extreme disparity in the ownership of land in South Africa, the thesis concluded that it was "impossible to talk of agrarian 'reforms'. Only the Revolution can solve this agrarian question, which is the axis, the alpha and omega of the Revolution".<sup>15</sup> The thesis held that land-hunger would be the driving-force of this revolution and put forward the slogans "Land to the Natives" and "Every man has the right to as much land as he can work".<sup>16</sup> The group that supported this thesis established themselves as

<sup>9</sup> In 1938 the International Left Opposition became the Fourth International.

<sup>10</sup> District Six Museum, Cape Town. 'Workers' of South Africa Awake!', pamphlet issued by the Lenin Club, May 1934. Privately held by G. Wilcox, Cape Town. Jane Gool Papers. 'Memoirs' by Jane Gool, p. 5. Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa', pp. 193 and 194.

<sup>11</sup> UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Letter to N.J. Barclay from the WPSA, 21/2/1936. UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Letter to L. Sapire from the WPSA, 8/2/1939. Privately held by G. Wilcox., Cape Town Jane Gool Papers. 'Memoirs' by Jane Gool, pp. 3 and 4. Interview (video taped) conducted with Tabata and Gool by Amina Hughes, Harare, 10/9/1989. Interview, Tabata and Gool, 16 – 22 January 1989.

<sup>12</sup> University of Cape Town (UCT). Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa (UMSA) / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Lenin Club, Draft Thesis: 'The Native Question [Majority]', 1934, p. 5. Privately held by G. Wilcox, Cape Town. Jane Gool Papers. 'Memoirs' by Jane Gool, pp. 3 and 4. For a discussion on the "Native Question" thesis of the minority group within the Lenin Club, see especially Drew, *Discordant Comrades*, pp. 146 – 148.

<sup>13</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Lenin Club, Draft Thesis: 'The Native Question (Majority)', 1934, pp. 2 and 5.

<sup>14</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Lenin Club, Draft Thesis: 'The Native Question (Majority)', 1934, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Lenin Club, Draft Thesis: 'The Native Question (Majority)', 1934, p. 5. See also, A. Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa', p. 200.

<sup>16</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Lenin Club, Draft Thesis: 'The Native Question [Majority]', 1934, p. 5.

the Workers' Party of South Africa (WPSA) within the Lenin Club, with Burlak and Goodlatte as its leading members.<sup>17</sup> Tabata and Jane Gool were foundation members of the WPSA and they were soon joined by Goolam Gool.<sup>18</sup> The minority section within the Lenin Club referred to themselves as the Communist League of South Africa (CLSA) which was led by Averbach.<sup>19</sup>

The WPSA submitted its theses to Leon Trotsky for consideration. Trotsky felt that a key weakness in the formulation of the theses was that it gave insufficient attention to the national question.<sup>20</sup> He pointed out that a national struggle would lead to the political awakening of the black population and held that the revolutionary movement should use the opportunity presented by the national struggle to present its programme to the population. In this regard he dealt specifically with the peasantry. Drawing on the experiences of the Russian Revolution, Trotsky pointed out that,

The Russian peasants during their struggle for land had for long put their faith in the Tsar and had stubbornly refused to draw political conclusions. From the revolutionary intelligentsia's traditional slogan, 'Land and Liberty', the peasants for a long time accepted only the first part. It required decades of agrarian unrest and the influence of town workers to enable the peasants to connect both slogans.<sup>21</sup>

Trotsky directed the attention of the WPSA to the importance of organising the peasantry through their demand for land and gradually, "on the basis of the experience of the struggle", bringing the peasantry to "the necessary political and national conclusions."<sup>22</sup>

Trotsky's comments had a profound impact on the WPSA. His remarks were accepted as an integral part of its theses and as its "*magna carta*", the basis for all its work.<sup>23</sup> The WPSA dropped its previous slogans and adopted the "revolutionary intelligentsia's" slogan, "Land and

<sup>17</sup> The group that established themselves as the WPSA initially called themselves the Communist League. But after it was pointed out that in most African languages there was no separate word for League as opposed to Party and that this could lead to confusion between them and the CPSA, the name Workers' Party was adopted instead. UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Letter to N.J. Barclay from the WPSA, 21/2/1936.

<sup>18</sup> *Southern African Political Economy Monthly*, 'Looking back on Life's Experiences', by Jane Gool, December 1987/ January 1988, p. 19. Privately held by G. Wilcox, Cape Town. Jane Gool Papers. 'Memoirs' by Jane Gool, pp. 3 and 4.

<sup>19</sup> UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Letter to N.J. Barclay from the WPSA, 21/2/1936.

<sup>20</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. L. Trotsky, 'Remarks on draft Theses', 20/4/1935, p. 4. Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa', p. 215.

<sup>21</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. L. Trotsky, 'Remarks on draft Theses', 20/4/1935, p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. L. Trotsky, 'Remarks on draft Theses', 20/4/1935, p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Letter to Comrade (Ralph) Lee from WPSA (Cape Town Branch) 2/4/1936. See also, UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Letter to N.J. Barclay from the WPSA, 21/2/1936. UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Letter to John Glenn from the WPSA, 18/1/1938. UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Letter to the International Secretariat from the WPSA, 8/2/1939.

Liberty”, hereby recognising the importance of both the agrarian question and the national question in the South African struggle.<sup>24</sup> The WPSA now held that the road to socialism in South Africa lay through the national struggle.<sup>25</sup>

In June 1935 the WPSA formally withdrew from the Lenin Club.<sup>26</sup> It established its own club, the Spartacus Club, as well as a regular bulletin, *The Spark*, named after the first newspaper produced by the Bolsheviks in Russia.<sup>27</sup> The Spartacus Club became an important recruiting ground for the WPSA and, through its various lectures and cultural evenings, attracted a number of individuals from the black population in Cape Town who were subsequently inducted into the WPSA. Notable among these were Sol Jayiya, Cadoc Kobus, Ben Kies and Halima Ahmed.<sup>28</sup> Dr J.G. Taylor, a lecturer in psychology at the University of Cape Town, and his wife, Dora Taylor, a litterateur, also joined the WPSA in the late 1930s. They made important contributions in fostering the political development of young people.<sup>29</sup>

### **The WPSA and the national struggle**

Since 1927, Hertzog, the South African Prime Minister and leader of the National Party, had been trying to complete the segregation of the African population through the enactment of three Bills. Known as the Hertzog Bills, these Bills sought to remove the limited franchise enjoyed by African voters in the Cape, finalise the land area occupied by Africans and control the influx of Africans into the urban areas.<sup>30</sup> In 1935, with the South African economy beginning to recover from economic depression, the government (strengthened by the fusion of

<sup>24</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘Bantu problems through the eyes of a bourgeois economist’, April, 1939, p. 16. Drew, ‘The Theory and practice of the Agrarian Question in South African Socialism, 1928 – 1960’, p. 67. Drew, ‘Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa’, pp. 220 and 221.

<sup>25</sup> NLSA, Cape Town. *The Spark*, ‘Thoughts before Convention’, Volume 2, Number 7 (16), July 1936, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup> At about the same time a branch of the WPSA was established in Johannesburg. Some of its leading members included, Ralph Lee, Max Sapire and C.B. I. Dladla. UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Letter to the International Secretariat for the Fourth International from the WPSA (Johannesburg Branch), no date. UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Minutes of WPSA meeting, Johannesburg Branch, 25/3/1936. Hirson, ‘The Trotskyist Groups in South Africa’, p. 85.

<sup>27</sup> The Spartacus Club was named after the club to which Rosa Luxemburg, the German Marxist belonged. UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Letter to N.J. Barclay from the WPSA, 21/2/1936. NLSA. Clare Goodlatte Collection, MSB 618. Letter to J. Chapman from C.R. Goodlatte, 2/9/1935. UWC. Mayibuye Archives. WPSA Papers. Letter to N.J. Barclay from the WPSA, 21/2/1936. Interview, Tabata and Gool, 16 –22 January 1989.

<sup>28</sup> Interview, Jane Gool, 21/11/1990. Interview conducted with Ali Fataar by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 2/9/1999. Interview conducted with R.O. Dudley by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 30/9/1999. Interview conducted with Amina (Minnie) Gool by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 27/8/1999. B. Hirson, ‘Profiles of some South African Trotskyists’, p. 111.

<sup>29</sup> Drew, *Discordant Comrades*, 141. Interview, Fataar, 2/9/1999. Interview, Dudley, 30/9/1999.

<sup>30</sup> B. Hirson, ‘A Short History of the Non-European Unity Movement: an insider’s view’, *Searchlight South Africa*, Volume 3, Number 4, 1994, p. 67.

the National Party and the South African Labour Party) began to reconsider the "Native Question". In May 1935 Hertzog's Bills were again presented to Parliament.<sup>31</sup>

Hertzog's Bills evoked strong condemnation from the African population throughout South Africa. By the early 1930s, however, African political organisations, such as the African National Congress (ANC) and the once powerful Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU) had reached the nadir of their influence.<sup>32</sup> To rally national support in opposition to the Bills, Pixely ka I. Seme, the President of the ANC and Professor D.D.T. Jabavu, an academic at the University College of Fort Hare, called a National Convention of all existing organisations of the people in Bloemfontein during December 1935.

The December 1935 National Convention opened up a new era in the political struggle of the African population in South Africa. It was the biggest and most representative gathering of African representatives hitherto held in South Africa, attended by approximately four hundred delegates, representing one hundred and fifty organisations.<sup>33</sup> A new organisation, the All-African Convention (AAC) emerged out of this gathering.

The WPSA saw the National Convention as its first opportunity to exercise some degree of influence on the national struggle, and three members from the Cape Town Branch, Tabata, Goolam Gool and Jane Gool, were present at the national gathering.<sup>34</sup> The WPSA hoped that the AAC could be established as a national political organisation, representative of the African section of the population in South Africa. At the Convention, Goolam Gool urged that the AAC "lay the foundations of a national liberation movement to fight against the repressive laws of South Africa."<sup>35</sup> Gool's proposal was defeated but delegates agreed that the AAC remain in existence.

The WPSA called upon the AAC to reject the Hertzog Bills, maintaining that they were aimed at completing the enslavement of the African population.<sup>36</sup> Developing this argument, the *Spark* pointed out that the Representation of Natives Bill would render the African

<sup>31</sup> T. Karis and G. Carter (editors), *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African politics in South Africa, 1882 – 1964*. Volume 2, *Hope and Challenge, 1935 – 1952*, California: Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1973, p. 3.

<sup>32</sup> T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983, pp. 9 and 10. W. Beinart, *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, Cape Town and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 125.

<sup>33</sup> Karis and Carter (editors), *From Protest to Challenge*. Volume 2, p. 6. Tabata claims that up to five hundred delegates attended the National Convention in 1935. See, I.B. Tabata, *The Awakening of a People*, Nottingham: Spokesman Books, 1974, p. 17.

<sup>34</sup> Hirson, 'The Trotskyist Groups in South Africa', p. 65. Privately held by G. Wilcox, Cape Town. Jane Gool Papers. 'Memoirs' by Jane Gool, no date, p. 6. Interview, Tabata and Jane Gool, 10/8/1989.

<sup>35</sup> Karis and Carter (editors), *From Protest to Challenge*. Volume 2, p. 7. See also, NLSA. *Spark*, Volume 2, Number 7, July 1936.

population voiceless in the decision making process in South Africa through, firstly, the creation of a Native Representative Council (NRC) which would have no real power, acting merely as an advisory body to the government. And secondly, through the election of three Members of Parliament, drawn exclusively from the white ruling class, to represent the African population in the Cape.<sup>37</sup> Dealing with the Native Land and Trust Bill, the WPSA pointed out that most of the land which the Bill proposed to add to the African reserves (land set aside for African occupation) was already occupied by the African population, and that the real intention of this Bill was to evict all Africans living on land outside of areas designated for them.<sup>38</sup> (See MAP 1, p. 19a). Moreover, the WPSA drew attention to the inter-connection of the Hertzog Bills. It argued that they needed to be seen as fitting into the larger plan of the ruling class which had as its key objective meeting the demands of “capitalism and imperialism”.<sup>39</sup>

The success or failure of these Bills, for the WPSA, ultimately depended on the acceptance or rejection of them by the African population, their acceptance by Parliament did not mean they should become law. Dealing specifically with the election of representatives to the NRC and Parliament, the WPSA pointed out that for the African population to participate in these elections was tantamount to co-operation in their own enslavement. The WPSA put forward the policy of non co-operation which it held could be applied through a boycott of the NRC and Parliamentary elections.<sup>40</sup>

In 1935 the AAC passed a resolution rejecting the Bills. An AAC delegation appointed to convey this resolution to the government in Cape Town, however, disregarded this decision and accepted a compromise offered by the government.<sup>41</sup> From this point there was a steady degeneration in the AAC. Its leaders rejected the boycott call, and argued that the new acts “be given a chance”.<sup>42</sup> In 1938 the AAC passed a resolution recognising members of the NRC as the “accepted mouthpiece of the AAC”.<sup>43</sup> The WPSA criticised the AAC for its weak

<sup>36</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘The wrong policy of the All-African Convention’, Volume 2, Number 11, November 1936, p. 6.

NLSA. *Spark*, ‘Boycott the elections’, Volume 3, Number 4, April 1937, p. 2.

<sup>37</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘Boycott the elections’, Volume 3, Number 4, April 1937, p. 2.

<sup>38</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘The Land Bill’, Volume 2, Number 6, June 1936, pp. 1 and 2. NLSA. *Spark*, ‘The Bantu and the General elections’, Volume 4, Number 7, July 1938, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘The Land Bill’, Volume 2, Number 6, June 1936, p. 6.

<sup>40</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘The wrong policy of the All-African Convention’, Volume 2, Number 11, November 1936, pp. 7 and 8. NLSA. *Spark*, ‘Thoughts before Convention’, Volume 2, Number 7, July 1936, p. 4. NLSA. *Spark*, ‘Boycott the elections’, Volume 3, Number 4, April 1937, pp. 1 and 2.

<sup>41</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘The wrong policy of the All-African Convention’, Volume 2, Number 11, November 1936, p. 7. Karis and Carter [editors], *From Protest to Challenge*. Volume 2, p. 8. Hirson, ‘The Trotskyist Groups in South Africa’, p. 68.

<sup>42</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘The wrong policy of the All-African Convention’, Volume 2, Number 11, November 1936, p. 8.

<sup>43</sup> Karis and Carter (editors), *From Protest to Challenge*. Volume 2, ‘Policy of the AAC.’, Statement issued by the Executive Committee of the AAC, December 1937, Document 14, pp. 63 and 64. NLSA. *Spark*, ‘Impressions of

leadership. It characterised the AAC leadership as “humble, slavish servants of the oppressing government.”<sup>44</sup> The WPSA called for a new generation of political leaders, who would “not be coaxed, nor bribed...into silence or inactivity by the government and its agents.”<sup>45</sup> It also decried the absence of a national liberatory movement representative of all oppressed sections in South Africa and called for the formation of a united front.<sup>46</sup> To have real substance and avoid the political vacillations of the past, the WPSA drew attention to the importance of establishing a common minimum basis, namely, the goal of national emancipation and complete equality as the political bedrock upon which this national political movement needed to be built and to which its leadership would be bound.<sup>47</sup> It maintained that the national liberatory movement needed to conduct an independent struggle free from the ideological influences of the ruling classes. The WPSA also warned against including those sections that were part of, and had ties with, the ruling class, maintaining that “no one who is linked up with the government can be an honest, outspoken leader of any emancipatory movement.”<sup>48</sup>

In the Cape, the WPSA remained a small organisation of about twenty members.<sup>49</sup> Its impact on the national liberation struggle was, however, out of proportion to its size. This impact was most profoundly effected in the early 1940s when a new generation of black political leaders trained in Marxism, notably Tabata, Goolam Gool, Jane Gool and Ben Kies, founded the NEUM in December 1943. The WPSA saw the NEUM, a united front, as the necessary first step to set the black population along a path leading to revolution in South Africa. Through the NEUM, the cadres of the WPSA took their political analyses and ideas to the black population and applied it to the national liberation struggle.

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AAC’, Volume 2, Number 2, February 1938, p. 9. Karis and Carter (editors), *From Protest to Challenge*. Volume 2, p. 11.

<sup>44</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘Representation and misrepresentation’, Volume 3, Number 11, November 1937, p. 7.

<sup>45</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘Representation and misrepresentation’, Volume 3, Number 11, November 1937, p. 7.

<sup>46</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘A Non-European United Front’, Volume 4, Number 3, March 1938, pp. 2 and 3.

<sup>47</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘A Non-European United Front’, Volume 4, Number 3, March 1938, p. 3.

<sup>48</sup> NLSA. *Spark*, ‘Representation and misrepresentation’, Volume 3, Number 11, November 1937, p. 8. See also, NLSA. *Spark*, ‘A Non-European United Front’, Volume 4, Number 3, March 1938, p. 4. NLSA. *Spark*, ‘Doomsday book for Natives’, Volume 4, Number 7, July 1938, p. 12. NLSA. *Spark*, ‘Our Native members of Parliament’, Volume 4, Number 11, November 1938, p. 16.

<sup>49</sup> Interview, Fataar, 2/9/1999.



Goolam Gool, 1937.  
(Photo: National Library of South Africa)



Isaac Bangani Tabata.  
(Photo: Courtesy of R. Britten).



Left. Clare Goodlatte, ('The Red Nun').  
(Photo: National Library of South Africa).



Jane Gool.  
(Photo: *Izwi Lesizwe*, October 1961).



Dora Taylor.  
[Photo: Nosipho Majeke (Dora Taylor),  
*The Role of the Missioneries in Conquest*,  
APDUSA (Natal), 1986].

### The formation of the NEUM

The NEUM was founded within the context of a general awakening of political consciousness among the black population in South Africa. The most important contributory factor was the Second World War. The war slogans of the Allied powers, such as "Fight for Freedom" and "War against Fascism" were intended to mobilise the world population against Hitler and his Axis allies. But the oppressed population throughout the world interpreted these slogans to mean a struggle towards the achievement of their own liberation.<sup>50</sup>

In South Africa the threat of a Japanese invasion prompted government ministers to make promises of a retreat from segregation to secure the support of the black population in its war effort. When, however, the tide turned against the Axis powers the government focussed its attention once more towards the introduction of oppressive legislation against the black population.<sup>51</sup> But as Tabata notes, the war "had a revolutionising effect on the established ideas and habits of and amongst the oppressed throughout the world. The Blacks in South Africa, too, were no longer prepared to accept the old [political] relationship."<sup>52</sup>

The key developments leading to the formation of the NEUM will be outlined briefly. By the early 1940s black members of the WPSA, such as Tabata, Jane Gool, Sol Jayiya and Goolam Gool, had established a stronghold for themselves within the AAC through the Western Province Committee of the AAC, of which Tabata was the Chairman. Through this Committee they were able to exert an increasing influence within the AAC.<sup>53</sup> In 1943 they succeeded in winning over the AAC executive to call a "unity conference" with the objective of launching a national political organisation of all "Non-Europeans".<sup>54</sup>

At the same time, these same members of the WPSA were instrumental in founding a political organisation of the Coloured population in the Cape. The immediate impetus giving rise to this organisation was the government's plan to create separate institutions to administer the affairs of the Coloured population, namely the Coloured Affairs Department (CAD) and the Cape Coloured Permanent Commission (CCPC). In February 1943, at a meeting called by the New Era Fellowship (NEF) to voice opposition to the introduction of these institutions, the

<sup>50</sup> Tabata, *The Awakening of a People*, pp. 46 and 47.

<sup>51</sup> Tabata, *The Awakening of a People*, p. 47. Mokone, *Majority Rule: Some Notes*, issued by the Teachers' League of South Africa, Cape Town, 1991, p. 19.

<sup>52</sup> Tabata, *The Awakening of a People*, p. 47.

<sup>53</sup> Karis and Carter (editors), *From Protest to Challenge*, Volume 2, p. 71. Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa', p. 318.

<sup>54</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'The Clarion Call – A Call to Unity', issued by the Executive of the AAC, August 1943. See also, Tabata, *The Awakening of a People* pp. 51 –56. Karis and Carter(editors), *From Protest to Challenge*, Volume 2, pp. 112 and 113. Hirson, 'A Short History of the Non-European Unity Movement', p. 72.

National Anti-CAD Committee (Anti-CAD) was founded.<sup>55</sup> At the head of the Anti-CAD stood members of the WPSA. Goolam Gool was elected Chairman, Halima Ahmed, Secretary and ordinary committee members included, Isaac Tabata, Jane Gool, Ben Kies and Alie Fataar. By May 1943 the Anti-CAD had mushroomed into a movement of eighty affiliated organisations.<sup>56</sup> At its December 1943 Conference the Anti-CAD accepted an invitation by the AAC to participate in a Preliminary Unity Conference “to explore channels through which unity” of all sections of the black population could be established.<sup>57</sup>

It was out of this Unity Conference that the NEUM emerged in December 1943. Its principle affiliates were the AAC and Anti-CAD. Later the Anti-Segregation Council (ASC), the radical wing of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) affiliated to the NEUM, bringing in the Indian section.<sup>58</sup> The Rev. Z.R. Mahabane, a former President of the ANC, was elected as the first Chairman of the NEUM, with Goolam Gool as his Vice-Chairman.

Ideologically, the NEUM was shaped by the WPSA. The NEUM recognised that South Africa had been integrated into the world capitalist economy and that the profit motive dictated the policies of the South African ruling class. In South Africa the NEUM identified the exploitation of black labour as the key factor around which profit maximisation hinged.<sup>59</sup> It maintained that this exploitation was effected principally through taking land from the African population and racial oppression, which it defined as the denial of basic democratic rights to the black population. Like the WPSA, the NEUM held that the land question and the national question were the two basic challenges confronting the liberatory movement in South Africa.<sup>60</sup> It therefore adopted the WPSA’s slogan “Land and Liberty”.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>55</sup> NLSA. *Cape Standard*, ‘Monster meeting rejects Coloured Affairs Department’, 16/2/1943. Mokone, *Majority Rule: Some Notes*, p. 23. G. Lewis, *Between the Wire and the Wall: A history of South African ‘Coloured’ politics*, Cape Town and Johannesburg: David Philip, p. 213. F. Khan, ‘The Origins of the Non-European Unity Movement’, B.A. Honours. Dissertation, University of Cape Town, 1976, p. 44. M. Simons, ‘Organised Coloured Political Movements’, in H. van der Merwe and C. Groenewalt, *Occupational and Social Change Among Coloured People in South Africa*, Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban: Juta, 1976, pp. 223 and 224. No Sizwe, *One Azania, One Nation*, p. 55. The New Era Fellowship was founded by Goolam Gool in 1937. It was a radical discussion and debating forum for black students at the University of Cape Town. Later it became the recruiting ground for the Workers’ Party of South Africa. See Drew, *South Africa’s Radical Tradition, Volume One*, p. 330.

<sup>56</sup> Mokone, *Majority Rule: Some Notes*, p. 25.

<sup>57</sup> Tabata, *The Awakening of a People*, p. 58. See also, Mokone, *Majority Rule: Some Notes*, p. 30 – 32. Karis and Carter (editors), *From Protest to Challenge, Volume 2*, pp. 112 and 113.

<sup>58</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Report of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Unity Conference held in Cape Town on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> January, 1945, p. 36. No Sizwe, *One Azania, One Nation*, p. 55. Drew, *Discordant Comrades*, p. 245.

<sup>59</sup> I.B. Tabata, *The Rehabilitation Scheme: A new fraud, 1945*, p. 1. Tabata, *The Awakening of a People*, p. 26.

<sup>60</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘Landless as a means of exploitation’ a lecture to the New Era Fellowship by I.B. Tabata, February 1951. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *A Declaration to the People of South Africa*, issued by the NEUM, 1951, p. 10. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925.

The NEUM maintained that the solution to the land question and national question could not be realised within the framework of capitalism; only a complete overturn of the existing economic, social and political order would solve these problems.<sup>62</sup> This vision posed the question of how it was to be achieved in South Africa.

Critically, the NEUM held that the vast majority of the oppressed black population in South Africa could be characterised as “landless peasants”.<sup>63</sup> It pointed out that the development of capitalism in South Africa had not transformed the bulk of the African peasantry into a permanent working class. Instead it created a particular type of labouring class, the migrant worker or peasant-worker which continually shuttled between town and country and from the NEUM’s perspective remained overwhelmingly tied to the land. While it recognised that a small section of the African population had been transformed into a permanent labouring class, it maintained that even these workers showed evidence of a peasant consciousness. Turning to the African reserves the NEUM noted that while most reserve dwellers had access to land this was insufficient to meet their needs. They too, were characterised as a “landless peasantry”.<sup>64</sup>

In the NEUM’s view, the “landless peasantry” would carry the main burden of the liberation struggle in South Africa, not only because they constituted the overwhelming majority of the population, but because in the given conditions of South Africa they were potentially the most revolutionary stratum. Accordingly, the NEUM maintained that no

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‘Trade Unions and the National Struggle for Liberation’, an address by Dr G.H. Gool at the NEUM Conference 1951. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘The Agrarian Problem’, an address to the Society of Young Africa by I.B. Tabata, 1954. Interview, Tabata and Gool, 15 and 17 December 1987. Interview, Tabata and Gool, 10/9/1989.

<sup>61</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Non-European Unity Movement Conference, 1951, p. 23. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. D. Taylor (editor), ‘The Dynamic of Revolution in South Africa’, a collection of speeches and writings by I.B. Tabata, England, 1969, pp. 20 and 30.

<sup>62</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘Landless as a means of exploitation’, a lecture to the New Era Fellowship by I.B. Tabata, February 1951. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘Bantustans and the Class Struggle in South Africa’, by I.B. Tabata, November 1975. Interview, Tabata and Gool, 15 and 17 December 1987. Drew, *Discordant Comrades*, p. 245.

<sup>63</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘Landless as a means of exploitation’, a lecture to the New Era Fellowship by I.B. Tabata, February 1951. Interview, Tabata and Gool, 15 and 17 December 1987. Drew, ‘Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism’, p. 464.

<sup>64</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘Landless as a means of exploitation’, a lecture to the New Era Fellowship by I.B. Tabata, February 1951. See also, UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *The Revolutionary Road For South Africa*, issued by Unity Movement of South Africa, Lusaka, Zambia, May 1969, p. 9.

meaningful struggle could begin in South Africa without the support of the “landless peasantry”.<sup>65</sup> Given the acute land hunger experienced by the “landless peasantry” the NEUM believed that they would respond to anyone who approached them about the land problem. A key point, however, from the NEUM’s perspective was not that the peasantry had no land and needed more land. Rather, while the support of the peasantry could be secured on the basis of their land hunger they also needed to be made politically conscious of the necessity of securing the revolutionary break up of the old order and their participation in breaking it up.<sup>66</sup> Tabata therefore insisted that the propaganda of the NEUM,

must first of all flow from the slogans of the agrarian question, in order that step by step, on the basis of the experiences of the struggle, the peasantry will be brought to the necessary political and national conclusions.<sup>67</sup>

A key task the NEUM therefore set itself was to bring a political consciousness into the peasant struggles and draw the peasantry into the national political movement.<sup>68</sup>

While the NEUM held that the peasantry would carry the main burden of the revolution, it was not suggesting that the peasantry would lead the revolution. The NEUM was emphatic that the working class was the only class capable of leading the revolutionary struggle in South Africa. The NEUM reached this conclusion by pointing out that that historically it fell on the national bourgeoisie to realise the ideals of bourgeois democracy, however, in South Africa there was no national bourgeoisie among the black population. In the given conditions of South Africa, the NEUM held, the historical task of achieving these goals fell on the working class, which needed to secure the support of the peasant majority to succeed in their revolutionary struggle.<sup>69</sup>

In the NEUM’s perspective, the demand for land and basic political rights were bourgeois democratic in character, hence the immediate struggle of the black population would

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<sup>65</sup> Interview, Tabata and Gool, 15/12/1987 and 17/12/1987. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *APDUSA*, Special Issue, ‘The National Situation’, an address by I.B. Tabata at the Unity Movement of South Africa Conference, London, April 1982, issued by the UMSA, Lusaka, 1982, p. 3.

<sup>66</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Notes for a speech on peasants by I.B. Tabata, 1941.

<sup>67</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘Landless as a means of exploitation’ a lecture to the New Era Fellowship by I.B. Tabata, February 1951. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Taylor, ‘The Dynamic of Revolution’, p. 20. See also, Drew, ‘Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism’, p. 464.

<sup>68</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Taylor, ‘The Dynamic of Revolution’, p. 30.

<sup>69</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘Notes on Social Revolution’ by I.B. Tabata. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *The Revolutionary Road for South Africa*, p. 9 UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘Bantustans and Class Struggle in South Africa’, by I.B. Tabata.

take the form of a bourgeois democratic revolution. Accordingly it formulated a political programme, the Ten Point Programme, as a bourgeois democratic programme of minimum demands.<sup>70</sup>

Point One, which demanded the franchise, and Point Seven, which dealt with the land question were the two most important demands contained within the Ten Point Programme. These Points brought together the two basic problems confronting the black population in South Africa, namely 'land and liberty'. In so doing, the Programme aimed to unite and mobilise the black population on the basis of their immediate demands and aspirations.

For the NEUM, the demand for the full franchise was nothing short of revolutionary within the specific conditions of South Africa at the time. As Tabata put it, once the black population achieved democratic rights, "we as the majority [of the population] would soon change the law and get the land...so they [the government] could not give us democratic rights and still have the land."<sup>71</sup>

Point Seven, which demanded the "revision of the land question", was historically the most significant demand of the Ten Point Programme. Point Seven was firstly a recognition of the "landless peasantry's" aspiration to acquire land and the NEUM's support in their quest for land. The immediate demands of Point Seven called for the abolition of serfdom and the Land Acts, as well as the abolition of all restrictions on acquiring land.<sup>72</sup> These were demands around which the NEUM intended to mobilise the peasantry during the immediate stage of the struggle. The key part of Point Seven stated that, "the first task of a democratic state and Parliament will be a new division of the land."<sup>73</sup> This was not an immediate demand. Instead it indicated the direction in which the NEUM would have to travel, and pointed to the future tasks, once bourgeois democracy had been achieved. The NEUM, therefore, maintained that only once the goal of full democratic rights for all in South Africa had been attained, could a democratically elected Parliament "be called upon to tackle the fundamental problem of land for the peasantry."<sup>74</sup> The NEUM's outlook was that without first achieving full political rights,

<sup>70</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Draft Declaration of Unity; The Ten Point Programme for Full Democratic Rights', adopted at the Preliminary Non-European Unity Conference, Bloemfontein, December 1943.

<sup>71</sup> Interview, Tabata and Gool, 10/9/1989.

Declaration of Unity; The Ten Point Programme for Full Democratic Rights', adopted at the Preliminary Non-European Unity Conference, Bloemfontein, December 1943.

<sup>73</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Draft Declaration of Unity'.

<sup>74</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. A Letter to the Teachers League of South Africa from I.B. Tabata, 15/11/1957. See also, UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *The SOYAN*, 'Revisionism in the Movement', issued by the Society of

no serious attempt could be made to solve the land problem in South Africa. However, the NEUM realised that the mere achievement of political rights would not be enough to solve the land question in South Africa. Thus, Point Seven was regarded by the NEUM as the crucial link between the bourgeois democratic stage and the socialist stage of the South Africa revolutionary process. It was formulated to orientate the population towards the attainment of the socialist goal. In this way the NEUM built into its programme Leon Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution.<sup>75</sup>

The NEUM's political strategy took on the policy of non-collaboration with the oppressor, derived from the WPSA. This policy was aimed at breaking down the 'slave mentality' of the black population, for the NEUM maintained that until people began to "see themselves as human-beings...[they cannot]...conduct a protracted struggle."<sup>76</sup> Secondly, the policy of non-collaboration introduced the concept of the class nature of the liberatory struggle. Ideologically, the NEUM sought to reveal to the black population that the interests of the ruling class were totally opposed to theirs. If they hoped to realise true liberation, it would be necessary to break away from the political tutelage of the ruling class and forge their own independent course of struggle.<sup>77</sup>

Like the AAC and Anti-Cad, the NEUM had a federal structure. It maintained that this type of structure was a necessity given the specific historical conditions prevalent in South Africa. The NEUM leadership held that people had so "imbibed the ideas of the ruling class...[that they]...were steeped in a segregatory outlook...[and still thought]...in terms of separate national groups."<sup>78</sup> They argued that this way of thinking could not be wiped away overnight through the creation of a unitary organisation. Rather, the various sections within the black population needed to be brought to a new level of political consciousness where they no longer thought in terms of racial groups. The federal form of organisation also presented the

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Young Africa, Durban, February 1959, pp. 6 – 8. Privately held by the author, 'Falsification of History', by Alie Fataar, March 1999, pp. 4 and 5. Interview, Tabata and Gool, 15 and 17 December 1987. Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism', pp. 496 and 497.

<sup>75</sup> L. Trotsky, 'The Permanent Revolution', (1930), in L. Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution and Results and Prospects*, London: New Park, 1982.

<sup>76</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. A Letter to Kwame Nkrumah from I.B. Tabata, 14/3/1964. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *The Revolutionary Road*, pp. 14 and 15.

<sup>77</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *APDUSA*, Special Issue, 'The National Situation', an address by I.B. Tabata to the UMSA Conference, London, April 1982, issued by UMSA, Lusaka, 1982, p. 4. Interview, Tabata and Gool, 15 and 17 December 1987. See also, N. Alexander, 'Non-collaboration in the Western Cape, 1943 – 1963', in W. James and M. Simons [Editors], *The Angry Divide: Social and Economic History of the Western Cape*, Cape Town and Johannesburg: David Philip, 1979, p. 182. 'No Sizwe, One Azania, One Nation', p. 55.

fastest means of building a mass-based national liberation movement. A substantial section of the black population was already organised within their various organisations, societies and committees. The objective of the NEUM was to transform these existing organisations through infusing them with its political ideas and drawing them into its fold.<sup>79</sup>

The formation of the NEUM ushered in a new era in the historical trajectory of the South African liberatory struggle. NEUM leaders based their agenda on a Marxist analysis of the objective conditions prevalent in South Africa at the time. They strove to conduct the liberation struggle on a programmatic, principled and independent basis. Consequently, a new outlook that focussed on political ideas, principles, independence of thought and independence of action was placed before the black population.

The NEUM's assessment of the major political challenges confronting the South African liberatory movement, as well as the formulation of its political strategy to meet these challenges has been subjected to academic scrutiny.<sup>80</sup> The crucial point for our purposes, however, is that the leadership of the NEUM believed that their political formulations were correct, and this laid the basis for their political work. From a historical perspective what is more important than assessing the correctness of the NEUM's political ideas, is determining the impact the NEUM had on shaping the trajectory of the liberation struggle through the application of its ideas. The rest of this dissertation is concerned with the NEUM's practical political activity in the countryside.

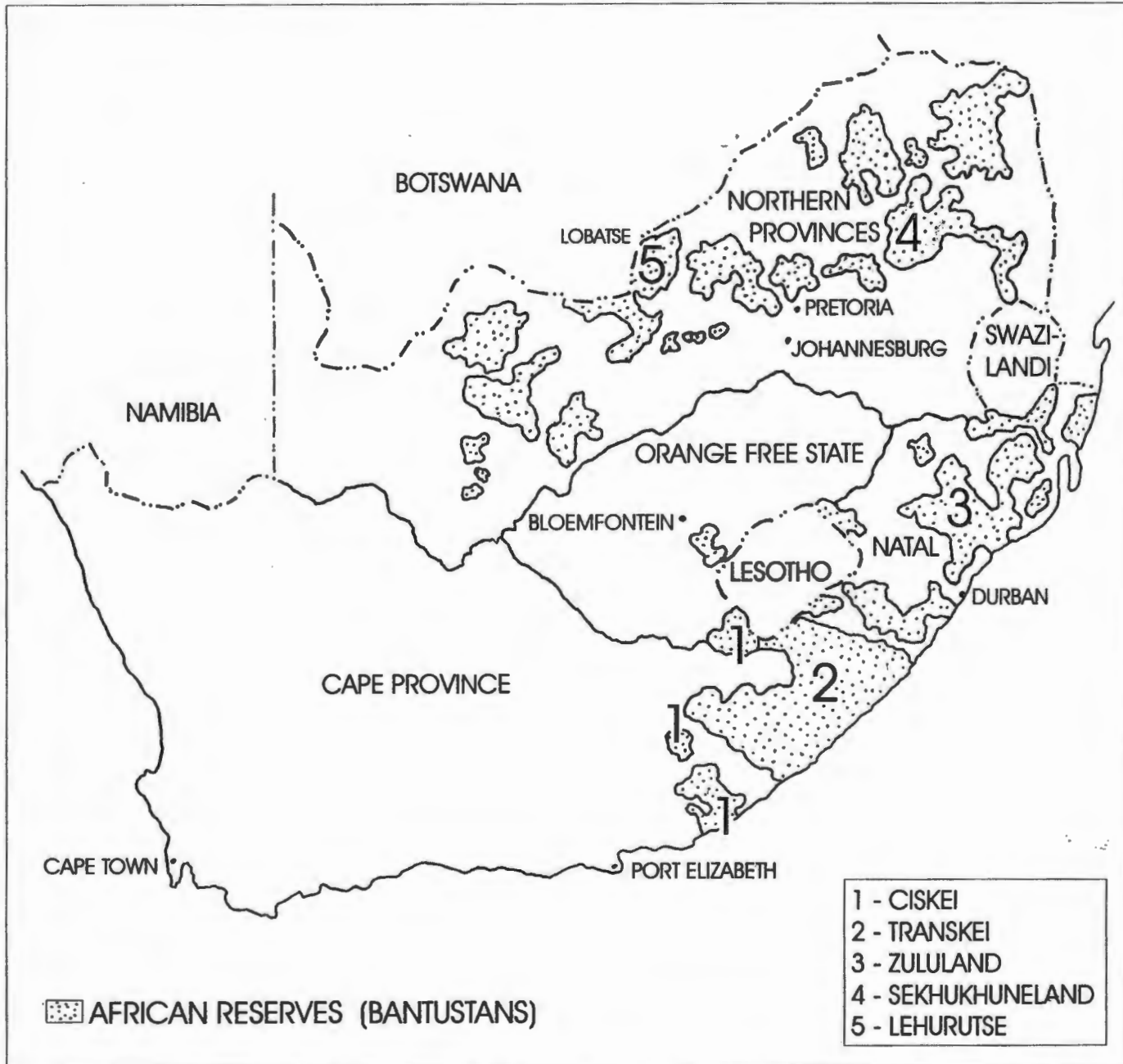
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<sup>78</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. I.B. Tabata, 'The Ten Point Programme in Practice'.

<sup>79</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. I.B. Tabata, 'The Building of Unity'. See also, interview, Tabata and Gool, 15 and 17 December 1987.

<sup>80</sup> See for example, R. Gentle, 'The NEUM in Perspective', Soc.Sc. Hons., University of Cape Town, 1978, pp. 69, 109 and 110. Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism', pp. 432 – 436. Alexander, 'Non-Collaboration in the Western Cape', pp. 185 and 186.

## MAP 1: AFRICAN RESERVES (BANTUSTANS)



Source: Atlas van die Verslag van die Kommissie van die Sosio-Ekonomiese Ontwikkeling van die Bantoegeblede binne die Unie van Suid-Afrika, 1951 - 1955, (Pretoria: Government Printer, 1955).

## CHAPTER TWO

**“LAND AND POLITICAL RIGHTS”: THE AAC AND RURAL ORGANISATION,  
1944 - 1950**

**We have to link up the agrarian aspirations with the national aspirations. We have to raise the peasantry throughout the country through their demand for land. In order to draw the landless peasantry into the movement we must unreservedly throw in our lot with them in their struggle for their right to the land. At the same time we must teach them that the national question, i.e., the political question is the key to the solution of their problems. In the given conditions of South Africa these two questions are inseparably bound together. For the landless peasantry are by and large the same people who are nationally oppressed without any political rights. The two problems must be solved together.<sup>1</sup>**

The NEUM was acutely aware of the difficulties it would encounter in attempting to organise the peasantry. At the 1945 NEUM Conference, Tabata pointed to some of these. He characterised the South African peasantry as “politically backward”, lacking a tradition of political struggle and only beginning to emerge from tribalism.<sup>2</sup> In the NEUM’s perspective, the main challenge confronting it in the countryside was how it could instil the peasantry with a political consciousness and draw them into the broader national political struggle for democratic rights.

From the mid-1940s peasant struggles in South Africa centred on the government’s Rehabilitation Scheme, which at various times was also known as the Betterment Scheme, Stabilisation Scheme and Reclamation Scheme. It was particularly when the AAC propagated against the Rehabilitation Scheme that it attracted the attention of the peasantry.<sup>3</sup>

**The Rehabilitation Scheme – the Second *Nongqause*.**

In 1932 the government appointed the Native Economic Commission to investigate socio-economic conditions in the African reserves. The Commission revealed extensive agrarian decay. This alarmed the South African ruling class as the reserves fulfilled a crucial function

<sup>1</sup> University of Cape Town (UCT). Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa [UMSA] /I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. I.B. Tabata, ‘The Agrarian Problem’, an address to the Society of Young Africa (SOYA), May 1954, p.10.

<sup>2</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, I.B. Tabata, ‘The Ten-Point Programme in Practice’, a speech delivered to the Fourth Non-European Unity Movement [NEUM] Conference, December 1945, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. A Letter to the President of the Teachers League of South Africa from I.B. Tabata, 15/11/1957. A. Drew, ‘Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa, 1928 – 1960’, Doctor of Philosophy dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1991, p.469.

within the South African capitalist economy, especially as reservoirs of cheap labour. From the late 1930s the government sought to arrest this agrarian decay.<sup>4</sup>

In 1931 the government introduced Proclamation 31.<sup>5</sup> Commonly known as the Betterment Proclamation, it aimed to control and improve livestock in the African reserves. From the perspective of the government, agrarian decay in the reserves was most vividly evident in the prevalence of excessive soil erosion which it maintained was caused by overstocking – the number of cattle and other livestock not commensurable with the carrying capacity of the land. Proclamation 31 aimed to drastically reduce the amount of livestock. To this end the Proclamation provided for the creation of livestock Betterment areas which could only be declared once the affected population had been consulted by the Native Affairs Department (NAD). Within these Betterment areas all stock deemed excessive to the carrying capacity of the land would be culled; a culled animal could either be slaughtered or removed.<sup>6</sup>

The comprehensive application of the Betterment Proclamation was curtailed by the outbreak of the Second World War.<sup>7</sup> But in many areas where it was introduced it provoked strong opposition from rural dwellers. For example, in 1941 a Committee appointed to investigate overstocking in the Transkei noted that, “at nearly every centre visited the voice of the native people was unanimous in its opposition to any suggestion of compulsory limitation...[in several places]...the attitude adopted was definitely hostile.”<sup>8</sup> Shortly before the end of the war, the government’s attention was again drawn to the deteriorating conditions in the African reserves. In 1945, at a Special Session of the Ciskeian General Council, the Secretary for Native Affairs, D.L. Smit, outlined the government’s newest “Scheme for the Rehabilitation of the Native Areas”, known as the Rehabilitation Scheme.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. Proceedings at Special Session of Ciskeian General Council 1945, King William’s Town: King Printing, 1945, p.1. W. Beinart, ‘Soil Erosion, Conservation and Ideas about Development: a Southern African Exploration, 1900–1960’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 11, Number 1, October 1984, pp. 74 – 77. W. Beinart and C. Bundy, ‘State Intervention and Rural Resistance: The Transkei, 1900 – 1965’, in M. Klein (editor), *Peasants in Africa: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, Beverly Hills and London: Sage, 1980, pp. 297 – 300. Drew, ‘Social Mobilization’, pp. 457– 458. For a discussion on shifting government strategy to ‘reclaim, stabilise and rehabilitate’ the African reserves between the late 1930s and mid-1960s, see F. Hendricks, ‘Loose Planning and Rapid Resettlement: The Politics of Conservation and Control in Transkei, South Africa, 1950– 1970’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 15, Number 2, January 1989, pp. 316 - 325.

<sup>5</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. Union of South Africa, Government Gazette, Proclamation No. 31 of 1939, ‘Control and Improvement of Livestock in Native Areas’, 1939.

<sup>6</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. Union of South Africa, Government Gazette, Proclamation No. 31 of 1939.

<sup>7</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. Proceedings at Special Session of Ciskeian General Council 1945, King William’s Town: King Printing, 1945. Beinart and Bundy, ‘State Intervention’, p. 298.

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in C. Bundy, ‘Land and Liberation: Popular Rural protest and the National Liberation Movements in South Africa, 1920 - 1960’ in S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds.), *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, London and New York: Longman, p. 269.

<sup>9</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. Proceedings at Special Session of Ciskeian General Council 1945, King William’s Town: King Printing, 1945. SAB. NTS, 9264, 42/371, *The Voice of the All-African Convention*, May – June 1945.

The Rehabilitation Scheme was the most comprehensive plan proposed by the government aimed at land reclamation, social engineering and stock reduction of the African reserves. To “make the best use of the available land”, the Scheme aimed to divide the land in each locality into residential, arable and grazing areas.<sup>10</sup> These areas were demarcated through the erection of fences. The dispersed homesteads that typified the Transkei and Ciskei would be concentrated into village settlements. Demarcated grazing land would be divided into camps to provide for rotational grazing and the recovery of denuded land. The Scheme proposed the establishment of new rural villages, for the families of those who were more permanently employed as wage labourers in the urban centres. These families were expected to survive on the remittances received from members employed as wage labourers. People in these villages stood to lose their arable land and livestock. The government held that these measures would be of no avail unless there was a drastic reduction in the numbers of livestock. In his outline to the Ciskeian General Council, Smit maintained that the Scheme would simply not be imposed from above on reserve dwellers, rather “full consultation and co-operation with the people” would characterise the application of the Rehabilitation Scheme.<sup>11</sup>

Because the Rehabilitation Scheme threatened their survival, it provoked intense resentment from the overwhelming majority of peasants in the reserves, becoming the focal point of often violent resistance throughout the South African countryside from the mid-1940s. The provision dealing with the culling of livestock was particularly bitterly opposed. W.M. Tsotsi, who in his capacity as President of the All-African Convention and a lawyer practising in the Transkei and Ciskei, was often called upon by reserve dwellers for advice on how they could resist the application of the Rehabilitation Scheme, has spelt out some of the reasons why livestock was so highly valued by the peasantry.<sup>12</sup> In discussing the plight of the inhabitants of the Xume Location in the Tsomo District of the Transkei, Tsotsi made the following observations,

Most families in the village had no land at all, and the rearing of stock was the only means of their livelihood. Stock was their bank, as they were fond of saying. They could hire the oxen out, apart from using them for domestic needs like drawing water and transporting poles and firewood from the plantations. They milked the cows as well as the ewes and she-goats; wool and mohair were profitable sources of revenue.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. Proceedings at Special Session of Ciskeian General Council 1945, King William's Town: King Printing, 1945.

<sup>11</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. Proceedings at Special Session of Ciskeian General Council 1945, King William's Town: King Printing, 1945.

<sup>12</sup> Tsotsi came from peasant stock and was born and grew up in the Tsomo District, Transkei.

<sup>13</sup> W.M. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court, the Memoirs of a Black Lawyer in Apartheid South Africa, 1950 – 1960', Unpublished Manuscript, no date, p.2. [kindly provided to me by the author]

Besides their economic value, cattle also played an important customary role in African society, especially in cases of marriage and death, and as a measure to determine the status of men.

Landless peasants dependent on livestock for their survival also faced the possibility of being deprived of grazing land under the provisions of the Rehabilitation Scheme. For rural dwellers without livestock, survival meant access to arable land. In 1941 as much as forty-four percent of the peasantry in the Transkei possessed no cattle.<sup>14</sup> Rehabilitation provisions dealing with the fencing of land into arable and grazing allotments and the demarcation of fallow areas threatened their survival. Inhabitants of the Transkei, Ciskei and Zululand were generally opposed to the establishment of rural villages, as they were accustomed to living in scattered formation.

The Rehabilitation Scheme also aroused the resentment of migrant workers, a major component of the peasantry. Due to government regulations migrant workers were prevented from settling in the urban centres and ultimately they depended on access to land and the retention of livestock in the reserves for their security. In 1951, the Native Commissioner of Tamache in the Ciskei observed the strong attachment the migrant workers retained to the countryside. He noted that opposition came mainly from “the industrial native...they do not beneficially occupy the land, but they are not prepared to lose their stake in the land.”<sup>15</sup>

It was against the background of rising peasant resistance to the Rehabilitation Scheme from the mid-1940s that the AAC began to conduct organisational and propagandistic work in the Transkei and Ciskei. In December 1945, the AAC published a booklet written by Tabata, *The Rehabilitation Scheme: A New Fraud* in which he critically analysed the government's Rehabilitation Scheme. Printed in English as well as Xhosa, this “little green book” was widely distributed by the AAC in the Transkei and Ciskei from early 1946.<sup>16</sup> Described by Bundy as a “powerful polemic”, the booklet contested the government's argument that overstocking was the cause of soil erosion in the reserves.<sup>17</sup> It pointed out that instead of possessing too much livestock, the reserve population owned too few cattle to provide for their sustenance. Soil erosion, the AAC argued, arose instead from the fact that there was a critical and deliberate shortage of land in the reserves. The booklet made the pertinent comment that,

One is amazed that with so little land for the Africans there is even a blade of grass left in the Reserves. That there is still some grass left is proof that, compared with their former state, the people have no cattle left. In fact, looking at the tiny strip of land into

<sup>14</sup> T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983, p. 264.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted in Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa*, p. 264.

<sup>16</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925, I.B. Tabata, *The Rehabilitation Scheme: A New Fraud*, Cape Town: All-African Convention (W. P.), 1945. A. Drew, ‘Social Mobilization’, pp. 468 and 469.

<sup>17</sup> Bundy, ‘Land and Liberation’, p. 269.

which people are concentrated and herded together, one would expect that the people alone, without stock, would have trampled the soil bare with their feet.<sup>18</sup>

The AAC held that the demand placed upon the reserve population to reduce their stock drastically in order to arrest soil erosion was tantamount to asking them to commit suicide. In its regular publication, *The Voice*, the AAC compared the government's solution of stock reduction to a modern version of the *Nongqause* incident, also known as the "National Suicide of the Ama-Xhosa" or the Cattle Killing Episode.<sup>19</sup> The *Nongqause* incident occurred in 1857, when a young Xhosa woman convinced the Xhosa population that through killing all their cattle and destroying their corn they would achieve liberation from white domination.<sup>20</sup> This resulted in the death of thousands of people from starvation, breaking the last remnants of Xhosa resistance to complete white domination. The AAC concluded that, "there can be no talk of Rehabilitation in the reserves while the land position remains as it is. No amount of juggling with words will alter the plain fact that the root of the problem is Land Hunger."<sup>21</sup>

Besides drawing attention to landlessness as the root cause of agrarian decay in the reserves, the AAC booklet also emphasised that the Rehabilitation Scheme had to be viewed as part of the overall plan of the South African ruling class, aimed at "the complete exploitation" of the black population.<sup>22</sup> The booklet pointed out that the concentration of village settlements, the culling of livestock and the division and fencing of land were means whereby the Rehabilitation Scheme sought to prevent the reserve population from making an independent livelihood. This would compel especially the able-bodied male population to seek work in the mines, industry and on the commercial farms as cheap, super-exploitable migrant wage labourers.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>18</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tabata, *The Rehabilitation Scheme*, p.6.

<sup>19</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archive Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. *The Voice of the All-African Convention*, May – June 1945. According to W.M. Tsotsi, peasants in the Transkei and Ciskei referred to the Rehabilitation Scheme as *Nongqause*, W.M. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p.144. See for example, University of Natal [Pietermaritzburg]. Alan Paton Centre. Kader Hassim Collection, PC116/1/3/1. AAC Conference Minutes, 1949, p. 19. Also, J. Peires, *The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-killing Movement of 1856 - 1857*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989.

<sup>20</sup> Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, pp. 78- 100.

<sup>21</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archive Department. UMSA Collection. Tabata, *The Rehabilitation Scheme*, p.6.

<sup>22</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tabata, *The Rehabilitation Scheme*, p.6.

<sup>23</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tabata, *The Rehabilitation Scheme*, pp. 1, 6 and 7.

## The AAC and the peasantry

I.B. Tabata made an important contribution in initiating and familiarising the rural dwellers with the political ideas of the AAC.<sup>24</sup> Tabata was born in Bailey, a small settlement situated a few kilometres from Queenstown in the Eastern Cape. He came from a rural middleclass background; his father was a landowner and farmer. In the early 1930s, after deciding to discontinue his studies at Fort Hare College, Tabata moved to Cape Town to find employment in order to support his family members in the Eastern Cape. In Cape Town he met Goolam Gool and his sister Jane Gool, with whom Tabata established a life-long personal and political partnership. Together they entered radical politics first through their membership of the Lenin Club, and then later as members of the Workers' Party of South Africa. Tabata was also a member of the Cape African Voters Association, and it was in his capacity as a delegate representing the Voters Association that he attended the first Conference of the AAC in 1935. Described as "a tireless organiser and powerful orator", Tabata established himself as one of the foremost political activists in the Cape by the early 1940s.<sup>25</sup> During that period he was an executive member of the AAC and the Chairman of the Western Cape Committee of the AAC.<sup>26</sup> Tabata, a dedicated student of Marxism, became one of the key theoreticians of the NEUM producing a series of seminal works.<sup>27</sup>

Tabata undertook extensive annual tours of the Transkei and Ciskei from about 1944 until the government banned him for five years in 1956.<sup>28</sup> The itinerary of his 1947 tour of the Transkei included visiting the districts of, Butterworth, Idutywa, Willowvale, Umtata, Tsolo, Mount Frere, Qumbu and Mount Ayliff. On the same tour, he touched on Fort Beaufort, Alice and Middledrift in the Ciskei.<sup>29</sup> (see Map 2, p. 28b). Tabata was not a paid organiser for the AAC but as he explained, "I am one of many who feel it their duty to go round the country and

<sup>24</sup> C. Bundy, 'Resistance in the Reserves: the AAC and the Transkei', *Africa Perspective*, Number 22, 1983, p 52. R. Kayser, 'The Struggle for Land and Liberty in South: the Revolutionary Path of the Non-European Unity Movement / Unity Movement of South Africa', Honours dissertation, UCT, 1997, pp. 52 and 53.

<sup>25</sup> 'A Tribute to I.B. Tabata', *APDUSA VIEWS*, Special Issue, published by APDUSA [Natal], October 1991, [in the author's possession], p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> 'I.B. Tabata', an obituary by the Central Executive Committee of APDUSA, October 1990, (in the author's possession). 'A Tribute to I.B. Tabata', *APDUSA VIEWS*, Special Issue, published by APDUSA [Natal], October 1991, [in the authors possession], p. 3. Interview conducted with I.B. Tabata and Jane Gool by A. Drew, Harare, 15 and 17 December 1987, [kindly provided to me by Allison Drew].

<sup>27</sup> Interview conducted with Jane Gool by Lyova Hassim, Durban, 1990, [kindly provided to me by L. Hassim]. C. Bundy, 'Resistance in the Reserves', p. 52. Tabata produced a number seminal works in the 1940s and 1950s, such as: *The Rehabilitation Scheme: A New Fraud*, 1945, *The Awakening of A People*, Johannesburg: Peoples Press, 1950, *The Boycott as a Weapon of Struggle*, 1952 and *Education for Barbarism*, South Africa: Prometheus Press, 1959.

<sup>28</sup> SAB. NTS, 9264, 42/371. Report to the District Commandant, South African Police, Middelburg (Cape) from the Office of the Central Intelligence Department, Middelburg Cape, 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1944 on a 'Meeting: All-African Convention: Ethiopian Church, Middelburg (Cape) Location: 21.8.44'. SAB. NTS, 9264, 42/371. Letter to The Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria from the Deputy Commissioner of South African Police Commanding Transkei Division, on the 'All-African Convention', 26 July 1945. Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism', p. 463. Bundy, 'Resistance in the Reserves', p. 55.

<sup>29</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925, List of places for tour by I.B. Tabata, 1947.

organise the people.”<sup>30</sup> Through his tours Tabata established contact with several existing organisations, such as the *Iliso Lomzi* or Vigilance Associations, the Teachers Associations, the Voter Associations, Farmers Associations, Social Study Clubs and the Organised Bodies.<sup>31</sup> Most of these organisations functioned at district level and were affiliated to a federal umbrella organisation in the Transkei known as the to the Transkei Organised Bodies (TOB). (See Chapter Three)

Through these tours Tabata also came into contact with a number of influential individuals in the Transkei and Ciskei who later played an important role in building the AAC in the countryside.<sup>32</sup> Among these were Nathaniel Honono, a teacher and an executive member of the Cape African Teachers’ Association (CATA) and the Transkei African Voters’ Association, and Wycliffe Tsotsi, who was initially a teacher in the Glen Grey District, where he helped establish the Glen Grey Teachers’ Association in 1943. In 1945 Tsotsi was forced to resign from teaching after accompanying Tabata on a political tour of the Transkei and Ciskei. He became a lawyer and set up a practice in Lady Frere, Glen Grey, in 1950. Other cadres were Cadoc Kobus, a teacher and later a lawyer, who was a member of the Workers’ Party of South Africa and the General Secretary of the AAC during the 1940s and 1950s, and Leo Sihlali, a teacher and member of CATA and Secretary of the Cape African Voters’ Association. Sihlali conducted most of his political activity from Queenstown, which is situated in close proximity to the Transkei and Ciskei. In Queenstown he was a key member of the Queenstown Vigilance Association. Another important member of this core group was Richard Sidney Canca, who was trained a teacher and lawyer. Other individuals who made invaluable contributions to the building of the AAC in the Transkei and Ciskei were A. Novukela, a teacher and CATA member from Mount Frere, A.K. Mzwai from Engcobo and Robert Tutshana from Mount Ayliff. An essential point to bear in mind about this group of individuals was the fact they grew up in the Transkei and Ciskei and were living among the reserve population. They were integrated with the population, and had an understanding of the suffering and needs of the people. As one AAC veteran who was politically active in the 1940s and 1950s emphasised to Bundy, “[w]e went into their huts. They knew us. We had grown up in the same conditions.”<sup>33</sup> By the late 1940s these individuals formed a cadre of highly influential AAC organisers.

Tabata’s tours were not only of significance in bringing the ideas of the AAC/ NEUM to the Transkei and Ciskei. Through his tours Tabata acted as an important link between town and country. The NEUM viewed unity between town and country as an essential pre-requisite

<sup>30</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925, Letter to A. Novukela from I.B. Tabata, 23 November 1946.

<sup>31</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925, I.B. Tabata’s 1946 tour.

<sup>32</sup> Interview conducted with W.M. Tsotsi by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 10/6/1998.

for effecting a revolutionary overturn of the existing political order. From its inception the NEUM recognised that in the South African context, the migratory labour system was the key link between town and country, which it had to utilise to its advantage. Firstly, the migratory labour system was useful as a means of channelling its political ideas from the towns to countryside and from county to town. Secondly, it could be used as a bridge to foster unity between workers in the towns and the peasantry in the countryside. Tabata conducted political work at both ends of the migratory labour system between the Eastern Cape reserves and Cape Town. From the mid-1930s, he, together with Sol Jayiya, a member of the WPSA and an executive member of AAC, conducted political work among the migrant workers in Langa, at that stage the only African location in Cape Town.<sup>34</sup> Most of these migrant workers were from the Transkei and Ciskei and the AAC approached and organised them principally through the problems that they were experiencing in the reserves, such as landlessness and the Rehabilitation Scheme.<sup>35</sup>

Tabata made a unique contribution in establishing the basis through which the peasantry was approached by the AAC. According to W.M. Tsotsi, who accompanied Tabata on many of his tours, Tabata possessed the unique ability to fathom the peasants' "thinking as well as their ways."<sup>36</sup> When he addressed rural dwellers, who generally had little formal education and were largely illiterate, Tabata often made use of tales and animal stories in "a tradition familiar to the peasant" to illustrate a point and convey political ideas.<sup>37</sup> Tabata has commented that "his audience would at first give an almost embarrassed laugh as they listened to his story, but then their eyes would gleam with something very different from laughter as the point came home."<sup>38</sup>

Tsotsi has noted that Tabata was very particular about the manner in which to approach the peasantry. Tabata insisted that "you have to speak to people in a language that they understand" and agitate on the basis of what people perceived to be their immediate needs.<sup>39</sup> When it came to the question of the land, Tsotsi recalled that Tabata was adamant that "you

<sup>33</sup> Bundy, 'Land and Liberty', p.273.

<sup>34</sup> University of the Western Cape. Mayibuye Centre Historical Papers Archives. Papers of the Workers' Party of South Africa, Minutes of a meeting of the Cape Town Branch of the Workers' Party of South Africa, 18 May 1936. Interview conducted with Ali Fataar by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 2/11/1998. Interview conducted with R.O. Dudley by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 30/9/1999.

<sup>35</sup> Interview conducted with A. K. Tom by R. Kayser, Ezibeleni, Queenstown, 30/4/1998. Interview, Fataar, 2/11/1998. Interview, Dudley, 30/9/1999. SANL. *Torch*, 'Land and political rights: Langa meeting discusses Rehabilitation fraud', 21/10/1958, p. 6.

<sup>36</sup> Interview, Tsotsi, 10/6/1998.

<sup>37</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925, 'The Dynamic of Revolution in South Africa', edited by Dora Taylor, unpublished manuscript, p. 69. Unfortunately very few of Tabata's stories have survived in the written word. Pages 70 -77 of 'The Dynamic of Revolution' contain three of Tabata's 'animal stories'.

<sup>38</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA Collection, BC 925, 'The Dynamic of Revolution', edited by Dora Taylor, unpublished manuscript, p. 69.

<sup>39</sup> Interview, Tsotsi 10/6/1998. See also, Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism', p. 469.

must not talk to peasants about division of the land because that was happening then...that they were being robbed of land by this process of re-division [under the Rehabilitation Scheme]."<sup>40</sup> Tabata also maintained that it would be erroneous to speak to the peasantry about the nationalisation of the land, for as he noted, as far as the peasantry were concerned the land was already nationalised. Land in the reserves could not be bought, it was merely entrusted to the reserve population by the government who owned the land.<sup>41</sup>

The method employed by Tabata and AAC organisers, such as Honono, Tsotsi and Sihlali was to focus on the land question and expose the fraudulence of the Rehabilitation Scheme.<sup>42</sup> A detailed report by a member of the South African Police, who was instructed to attend a meeting addressed by Tabata and Tsotsi at Idutywa in July 1945, provides some insight into the approach of AAC organisers.

[Tabata]...referred to the Reclamation work. He said the Government tried many things to get away from the fact that they must give the natives more land. This is one of them. It was very unsatisfactory because the Government said they had too much stock, which caused soil erosion. He remembered when he was young, most natives had about 30 cattle and 50 sheep. Very few had that now. How can the Government say that there was too much stock, when the feet of the Natives were sufficient to erode the little bit of ground into which the natives were squeezed.<sup>43</sup>

To fight for the land, Tabata pointed to the need for unity. To this end he urged his audience to organise and recruit people into organisations affiliated to the AAC.

Tabata and the AAC organisers stressed to the peasantry that the only way they could solve their land problem was through entering the national political arena and fight for direct representation in Parliament. They were encouraged to form their own independent organisations, peasants' committees, which would reflect their demands and aspirations and through which they could co-ordinate their resistance against various government measures, such as the Rehabilitation Scheme. The AAC organisers also urged the peasantry to link up their organisations with the broader unity that was being built by the AAC and NEUM, so that a co-ordinated and unified struggle for political rights could be waged.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Interview, Tsotsi, 10/6/1998.

<sup>41</sup> Interview, Tsotsi, 10/6/1998. Interview, Tabata and Gool, 15 and 17 December 1987. Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism', 469. A. Drew [Editor], *South Africa's Radical Tradition: A documentary history*, Volume Two, 1943 – 1964, Cape Town: Bunchu Books, Mayibuye Books and UCT Press, 1997, p. 31.

<sup>42</sup> W.M. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court' p.13. Interview, Tsotsi, 10/6/1998. Interview conducted with R.S. Canca by R. Kayser, Idutywa, 8/5/1998. Interview conducted with Pennie Fana Pita and Mr Sisusa (form Zingqutu and Nkonkobe locations respectively, Glen Grey District), interpreter, A.K. Tom, Ezibeleni, Queenstown, 27 May 1998.

<sup>43</sup> SAB. NTS, 9264, 42\371. Letter to The Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria from the Deputy Commissioner of South African Police Commanding Transkei Division, on the 'All-African Convention', 26 July 1945.

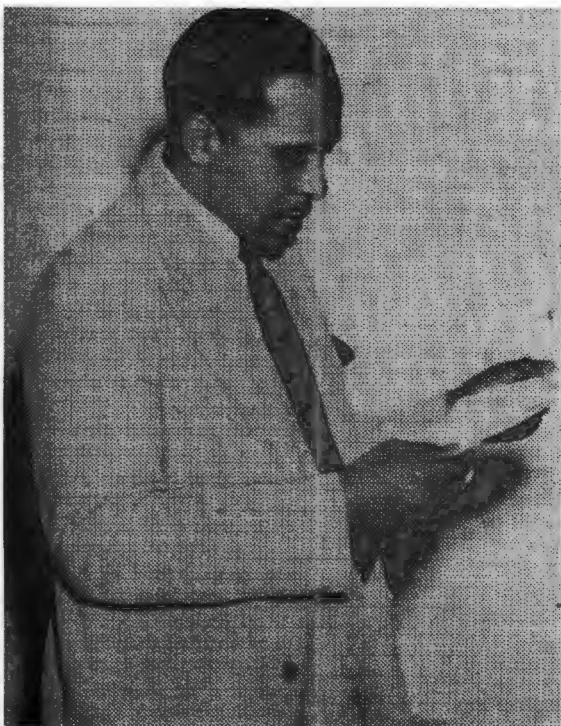
<sup>44</sup> Interview, Canca, 8/5/1998. Interview, Tsotsi, 10/6/1998. University of Natal [Pietermaritzburg]. Alan Paton Centre. Kader Hassim Collection, PC 116/1/3/1, AAC Conference Minutes 1949, p. 22. South African National



**Wycliffe Mlungisi Tsotsi**  
(Photo: *Drum*, February 1952).



**Nathaniel ('Tshutsha') Honono**, December 1964.  
(Photo: Courtesy of R. Britten).



**Cadoc Kobus**  
(Photo: *Drum*, February 1952).



**Leo Sihlali**  
(Photo: *Ikhwezi Lomso*, February 1959).

### MAP 2 : TRANSKEIAN AND CISKEIAN DISTRICTS



Source: Atlas van die Verdrag van die Kommissie van die Sosio-Ekonomiese Ontwikkeling van die Bantoegebiede binne die Unie van Suid-Afrika, 1951 - 1955 (Pretoria: Government Printer, 1955).

### **The Mount Ayliff peasants fight the Rehabilitation Scheme**

The Mount Ayliff District formed part of the East Griqualand region. It is situated in northern Transkei and borders the Eastern Pondoland region to the east and south. (See Map 2, p. 28b) People occupying the Mount Ayliff District were referred to as the *Amaxesibe*.

In Mount Ayliff struggles against the introduction of the Rehabilitation Scheme are significant for several reasons. Firstly, Mount Ayliff occupies an important place in the annals of the peasantry's resistance to the Rehabilitation Scheme. Mount Ayliff was the third district in the Transkei to be declared a Betterment area and the first area where the government encountered large-scale, confrontational opposition to its Scheme. This meant that Mount Ayliff developed into a test case for the future success or failure of the Rehabilitation Scheme in the African reserves. Secondly, an examination of the struggle against the Rehabilitation Scheme in Mount Ayliff reveals the unfolding of important historical processes, which can generally be applied to other reserve areas in South Africa during the late 1940s to the early 1950s.

Since 1942 the NAD had been trying to implement Betterment measures in the Mount Ayliff District. At a meeting held in 1942 by the chief of the District, Gaulibaso Kaiser Jojo, the local inhabitants strongly rejected the Betterment measures.<sup>45</sup> Since the Betterment Proclamation stated that the consent of the people had to be obtained before Betterment measures could be implemented, the NAD did not pursue the matter for a few years.

In 1946 Chief Jojo summoned residents in the district to a meeting at which he announced that the Rehabilitation Scheme had been accepted by all the locations. According to an article detailing this meeting in the NEUM's newspaper, *The Torch*, the people were astounded by Jojo's announcement. It was later revealed how the NAD obtained the "consent" of the local population. The Mount Ayliff District was divided into thirty-one locations, with a total population of thirty thousand inhabitants.<sup>46</sup> Meetings were held in each of the locations where the consent of the people in attendance was obtained. However, at each of these meetings an average of only about fifty people attended.<sup>47</sup> Approximately one thousand five

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Library [SANL]. *Torch*, "Address to Zenzele Conference: T.O.B. Secretary on need for co-ordinated struggle", 16/1/1950.

<sup>45</sup> SANL. *Torch*, "The AmaXesibe tribe speaks: tyranny of 'Rehabilitation Scheme'", 12/3/1948. SANL. *Torch*, 'How the AmaXesibe fought', 26/3/1948.

<sup>46</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. Rex versus Tabata, October 1948, Mount Ayliff. SANL. *Torch*, 'The Mount Ayliff trial', 21/3/1949. The 'colonialist' term 'location' is used in this dissertation to illustrate that people in the Transkei, Ciskei and Zululand did not live in clustered village settlements but in a scattered formation over a vast area, referred to by the authorities as 'locations'.

<sup>47</sup> Lodge has noted that often meetings held to obtain the consent of the people were not representative. Lodge, *Black Politics*, p. 264.

hundred people, therefore, gave their consent to implement the Rehabilitation Scheme on behalf of thirty thousand residents.<sup>48</sup>

Soon after the "consent" of the people had been obtained, the Secretary of Native Affairs urged that "active steps should be taken in the direction of stock limitation."<sup>49</sup> The Agricultural Officer proceeded to set up Planning Committees in each location, with the chief or headman acting as the chairman of each Location Planning Committee. In February 1947, the culling of livestock began in the Elubaleko Location; the Chairman of the Planning Committee in this location was Chief Jojo. Stockowners had their stock culled in accordance with the number of stock they possessed. A person owning four sheep or goats would lose none, while an owner of ten would lose two or three but an owner of fifty would have up to thirty-five sheep or goats culled. Ultimately, the Planning Committee aimed to reduce the number of sheep and goats in the Elubaleko Location by more than two-thirds, from one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one to five hundred.<sup>50</sup>

In March 1947, Brooksnek became the next location to be subjected to stock culling and stockowners were instructed to bring their sheep and goats to be counted. Having witnessed what had taken place at Elubaleko Location, not everyone complied. Those who brought their livestock had at least half earmarked for removal. They were told that they had two weeks within which to sell their earmarked stock which had to be sold outside the borders of the Transkei. The sale of earmarked stock was advertised but buyers held back. At the last moment European storekeepers appeared on the scene and bought the stock for half its market value. The *Torch* correspondent in the Transkei described the scene,

Then, as zero hour approached, European storekeepers appeared on the scene and snapped up the stock at half the normal price. The African people were at the mercy of the vultures, big and small. It was a tragic day. Widows and mothers cried a bitter cry as they saw their sheep and goats being driven away. For them it meant even harsher privation than before...<sup>51</sup>

Due to the refusal of some stockowners in Brooksnek to present their stock for culling the Magistrate of Mount Ayliff, V. Liebbrandt, summoned its inhabitants to a meeting in March 1947. This was attended by a large number of people who refused to give Liebbrandt any opportunity to address them. The meeting was eventually broken up, a criminal offence in terms of NAD legislation. Later Liebbrandt issued summonses against twenty-eight residents

<sup>48</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. Rex versus Tabata, October 1948, Mount Ayliff. SANL. *Torch*, 'The Mount Ayliff trial', 21/3/1949.

<sup>49</sup> KAB. CMT, 3/1480. Letter to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei from the Magistrate of Mount Ayliff, 24 April 1947.

<sup>50</sup> KAB. CMT, 3/1480. Letter to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei from the Magistrate of Mount Ayliff, 6 February 1947.

<sup>51</sup> SANL. *Torch*, 'How the AmaXesibe fought', 3/5/1948.

from the Papeni area in Brooksnek whom he regarded as the chief instigators for disrupting the meeting.<sup>52</sup>

Meanwhile, people in the District began holding meetings amongst themselves to discuss ways in which they could resist the culling of their stock.<sup>53</sup> These meetings were attended by large numbers of people and were held in several locations. Out of these meetings the people founded their own organisation, the *Kongo*, to fight the government's schemes.<sup>54</sup> The *Kongo* recognised the role being played by the chiefs and headmen in facilitating the imposition of laws and regulations that were not in their interest. They turned their back on the *Inkundla* or tribal court, the traditional forum where matters affecting the people were discussed, as they held that this institution was now under the authoritarian control of chiefs. They stated that, "[w]e have no [I]nkundla...so we meet in the mountains."<sup>55</sup> By June 1948 the *Kongo* had an estimated membership of five hundred. Members of the *Kongo* were levied with a subscription fee of five pence. A committee of eight people ran the organisation. The Chairman of the *Kongo* was Mpongo Jonase of the Dundee Location, Mount Ayliff, with Joseph Mangqoba as its first Secretary. Mangqoba was later replaced by Decide Nonjojo of the Mombeni Location. The Treasurer was Madiba who come from the Dundee Location.<sup>56</sup>

An individual who played an important role in the unfolding of the peoples' resistance to the Rehabilitation Scheme in the Mount Ayliff District was Ntlabati Jojo. Ntlabati was the younger brother of Chief Gaulubazi Jojo. In 1938 Ntlabati was one of the claimants to the local chieftainship. When there was indecision among the local population over the choice of a new chief, the government unilaterally appointed Gaulubazi.<sup>57</sup> With the emergence of opposition to the Rehabilitation Scheme, the *Kongo* demanded that Ntlabati replace Gaulubazi, who they maintained "sold them to the Europeans" by accepting the Rehabilitation Scheme.<sup>58</sup>

The *Kongo* advised that the summonses against the twenty-eight Pepeni residents who were held responsible for the disruption of the March meeting should be ignored. When warrants for the arrest of the twenty-eight Pepeni residents were issued and the police entered

<sup>52</sup> SAB. SAP 399. Letter to the Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria from the Divisional Headquarters of the South African Police, Umtata, 1 May 1947.

<sup>53</sup> SAB. SAP 399. Statement by Morrison Lock Buwa, Native Constable in the South African Police, stationed at Mount Ayliff District, 23/3/1947. SANL. *Torch*, 'How the AmaXesibe fought', 3/5/1948.

<sup>54</sup> It has not been possible to ascertain what *Kongo* meant or why that term was used by reserve dwellers of the Mount Ayliff District. In 1960 peasants who were engaged in the Pondoland revolt also used the term *Kongo*. Participants in the revolt maintain that they drew the name from the Congo in central Africa, where Patrice Lumumba was engaged in a freedom struggle against the Belgian occupiers at the time. See Chapter Five. SAB. SAP 399. Statement by Ben Mbizweni, Government Headman of Brooksnek Location. SANL. *Torch*, 'How the AmaXesibe fought', 3/5/1948. See also, Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa*, p. 283.

<sup>55</sup> SANL. *Torch*, 'How the AmaXesibe fought', 3/5/1948. KAB. CMT 3/1480. Statement by Elliot Mbata from the Mombeni Location, 26 April 1949.

<sup>56</sup> KAB. CMT 3/1480. Affidavit by Joseph Mangqoba from the Betshwana location, Mount Ayliff District, 15/6/1948.

<sup>57</sup> KAB. CMT 3/1480. Letter of the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei from the Magistrate of Mount Ayliff, 31 October 1949.

<sup>58</sup> KAB. CMT 3/1480. Affidavit by Palafini Mawongo, 23/4/1949.

Brooksnek to arrest them, women “set up a war cry” that was taken up for miles. Men armed with sticks and assegais started converging on the police to prevent them from making any arrests. Fearing that their lives were in danger, the police fired a shot at the crowd and fled the Location without effecting any arrests.<sup>59</sup> A police report of the incident warned that the inhabitants of Brooksnek “state that this is going to be the commencement of a ‘little war’ between them and the Europeans.”<sup>60</sup> News of the Brooksnek incident soon spread to surrounding areas. People from the rest of Mount Ayliff, as well as from other parts of the Transkei and Natal, such as, Bizana, Flagstaff, Tabankulu, Umzimkulu, Mount Frere, Matatiele and Harding began converging on the Location in support of the struggle of its residents. Eventually about eight thousand people armed with assegais congregated in Brooksnek.<sup>61</sup> Describing these developments the *Torch* noted that,

It was a mighty concourse of people that was gathering about Brook’s Nek and it filled the Chief and headmen with alarm. They beat an undignified retreat, their tails between their legs, and took refuge in town.<sup>62</sup>

The *Kongo* advised those who had come to assist them to return home, but on the understanding that if their help was needed they should return immediately. In early April 1947, the headman of the Brooksnek Location, Ben Mbizweni, assessed the situation that had emerged in Mount Ayliff in the following way,

I am positively sure that any move to bring these culprits to book as well as any further attempts at culling of stock will be forcibly opposed by the residents of the locations named and all other locations in Mount Ayliff District. It seems that even natives who were originally in favour of stock culling are now bitterly against it.<sup>63</sup>

Tensions were eventually eased when Ntlabati Jojo intervened. He obtained the peoples’ permission to bring those who had been served with warrants to the Magistrate’s court to stand trial. In April 1947, twenty-one of the twenty-eight stood trial. One was discharged and the rest were sentenced to ten pounds or three months hard labour, of which nine pounds or eleven weeks were suspended.<sup>64</sup>

In July 1947 Ntlabati and several representatives of the people who were in opposition to the implementation of the Rehabilitation Scheme, accompanied by eight hundred supporters met the new Magistrate of Mount Ayliff, Pieter van Aswegan to state their grievances and

<sup>59</sup> SAB. SAP 399. Letter to the District Commandant, South African police, Kokstad from the Office of the Station Commander, Mount Ayliff, 14/4/1947. KAB. CMT 3/1480. Minutes of a Meeting held at Magistrates Office, Mount Ayliff, 18 April 1947. SAB. SAP 399. Statement by Ntlabati Kwalukwalu Jojo from the Dundee Location, Mount Ayliff District, 15/4/1947. SAB. SAP 399. Letter to the Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria from the Divisional Headquarters of the South African Police, Umtata, 1 May 1947.

<sup>60</sup> SAB. SAP 399. Memorandum, 12/1/47 Volume 5 – 12/38/4 Volume 1.

<sup>61</sup> SAB. SAP 399. ‘Lieutenant Colonel Mentz, speaking from Mount Ayliff, reports...’, 18 April 1947.

<sup>62</sup> SANL. *Torch*, ‘How the AmaXesibe fought’, 3/5/1948.

<sup>63</sup> SAB. SAP 399. Statement by Ben Mbizweni, 9/4/1947.

<sup>64</sup> KAB. CMT 3/1480. Letter to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei from the Magistrate of Mount Ayliff, 22 February 1947.

demands. Among the peoples' representatives were leading members of the *Kongo*, notably, Jonase and Mangqoba. At this meeting the peoples' representatives expressed the strong opposition of the people to the implementation of the Rehabilitation Scheme. Mangqoba stated that the people were "altogether against the Rehabilitation Scheme. We will fight wars for our cattle." Jonase supported him, "[we] do not want any explanations of the scheme. We say – bring your rifles and shoot us and then you can rehabilitate the locations over our dead bodies."<sup>65</sup> The second complaint raised by the peoples' representatives concerned Chief Jojo. They maintained that the Chief had accepted the Rehabilitation Scheme on behalf of Mount Ayliff at the Bunga (Transkeian General Council) in Umtata, without consulting the people. They maintained that "Gaulibazo has thrown them into the mouth of the lion" and demanded that he be removed from the chieftainship.<sup>66</sup> In his report of the meeting to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei, M. Liefeldt, in Umtata, van Aswegan stated that,

Judging by the attitude displayed at the meeting today I am definitely of the opinion that it would be unwise to continue the Rehabilitation Scheme unless proper protection is afforded to the officials who have to work in the locations. I am also of the opinion that culling, fencing or any work in the locations will be bitterly opposed.<sup>67</sup>

In August 1947 Leifeldt addressed a meeting of approximately one thousand Mount Ayliff residents. He claimed that the government had followed the correct procedures in applying the Rehabilitation Scheme to the Mount Ayliff District. In support of his claim he pointed to the records of the various meetings held with the people by the Magistrate to explain the Scheme to them. Leifeldt declared that rehabilitation work would be proceeded with shortly in the District, starting once again with the Elubaleko Location. He dismissed the peoples' demand for the removal of Chief Jojo and warned Ntlabati that if it was found that he was behind the *Kongo* movement, he would be removed from the District. After completing his address, Leifeldt promptly closed the meeting. Most dissatisfied with his address as well as the high handed attitude he had adopted towards them, the crowd became angry and challenged the police to shoot them. However, no serious clashes occurred.<sup>68</sup>

Relating this incident to the Commissioner of the South African Police, the Deputy Commissioner commanding the Natal division of the South African Police expressed the complexity and implications of the situation that had unfolded in Mount Ayliff. He noted,

I think I can also say that all the Transkeian Natives will be following with interest the events in the Mount Ayliff District and that failure of the scheme there will be a failure

<sup>65</sup> SAB. SAP 399. Meeting between the Magistrate of Mount Ayliff and representatives of the people, at the Magistrate's Office, Mount Ayliff, 10 July 1947.

<sup>66</sup> SAB. SAP 399. Meeting between the Magistrate of Mount Ayliff and representatives of the people, at the Magistrate's Office, Mount Ayliff, 10 July 1947.

<sup>67</sup> SAB. SAP 399. A letter to the Chief Magistrate at Umtata from the Magistrate of Mount Ayliff, 10 July 1947.

<sup>68</sup> KAB. CMT 3/1480. Notes of Meeting held at the Native Commissioner's Office, Mount Ayliff, on the 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1947. SAB. SAP 399. Letter to the Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria from the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Commanding Transkei Division, 11 August 1947.

of the Government Rehabilitation policy; on the other hand enforcement of the scheme without adequate protection to the Officials concerned would precipitate a show-down, the result of which I cannot forecast.<sup>69</sup>

This statement indicated government recognition that the success or failure of the Rehabilitation Scheme in Mount Ayliff would set a precedent that would have great implications for the application of the Scheme in the rest of the Transkei, and probably even further afield.

Besides fighting the government's Rehabilitation Scheme through a show of unity and force, the people of Mount Ayliff also explored the possibility of fighting the Scheme through the courts. The *Kongo* took this decision in April 1947. By February the organisation had collected a sum of thirty-nine pounds and decided to send a delegation to Cape Town, with the purpose of engaging lawyers. The delegation was instructed to proceed to the Qumbu District in the Transkei, where an organisation with similar aims and objectives as the *Kongo* had emerged. The intention was to link up with representatives from the Qumbu organisation and together proceed to Cape Town. At Shawberry, Qumbu, a joint meeting that "was similar to those we of the '*Kongo*' organisation hold in Mount Ayliff", was held between the Qumbu organisation and the *Kongo* delegates.<sup>70</sup> At the meeting the *Kongo* delegates explained that they had been instructed to ask attorneys to fight stock culling, the fencing of locations and the removal of their homesteads. A *Kongo* delegate noted that "[t]he object of the Qumbu organisation was chiefly the fighting of the Rehabilitation Scheme."<sup>71</sup> The joint delegation proceeded to Cape Town and attorneys were engaged.<sup>72</sup>

During September 1948, while on his annual tour of the Transkei and Ciskei, Tabata entered the Mount Ayliff District. Ntlabati slaughtered a sheep to celebrate Tabata's arrival. This was not Tabata's first encounter with the people of Mount Ayliff. Tabata had visited the District in November 1947 with the intention of holding a public meeting. However, due to the volatile situation that had arisen in the District as a result of opposition to the Rehabilitation Scheme, he decided to cancel this meeting. Instead Tabata held a small meeting at the house of Robert Tutshana, a key AAC contact in the District. Tutshana was a teacher at Gillespie Higher Mission School in Dundee Location and a member of CATA, an organisation that was increasingly coming under the political influence of the AAC from the mid-1940s.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>69</sup> SAB. SAP, 399. Letter to the Commissioner of the South African Police from the Assistant Deputy Commissioner, South African Police, Commanding Transkei Division, 11 August 1947.

<sup>70</sup> KAB. CMT 3/1480. Statement by Joseph Mangqoba, 15/6/1948.

<sup>71</sup> KAB. CMT 3/1480. Statement by Joseph Mangqoba, 15/6/1948.

<sup>72</sup> Unfortunately there exists no further documentation of this development. KAB. CMT 3/1480. Statement by Joseph Mangqoba, 15/6/1948.

<sup>73</sup>UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. I.B. Tabata's 1947 tour and 1947 Diary of I.B. Tabata. KAB. CMT 3/1480. Letter to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei from the Divisional Headquarters of the South African Police, Umtata, 8 July 1948.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> September 1948, Tabata addressed a meeting of over one thousand people on the slopes of a mountain in the Dundee Location. Unbeknown to Tabata, two police spies were present at the meeting. Later that same day Tabata, was arrested and charged under the 1886 Penal Code of the Transkeian Territories. He was charged with holding an illegal assembly with more than five persons without the consent of the Magistrate, or alternatively with incitement, for saying to the assembly “you should not agree to the culling of your stock by the Europeans, or by the Magistrate, or by the Chief Magistrate, Umtata.”<sup>74</sup> Tabata’s advocate, Spilken who was assisted by W.M. Tsotsi, wanted to have the case dismissed on a legal technicality. Tabata, however, indicated that he wished to utilise this opportunity to demonstrate to the people that the Rehabilitation Scheme was not a law and that it could only be applied with the consent of the people. Tabata insisted that his case be tried in Xhosa so that the local people could follow proceedings.<sup>75</sup>

Spilken had little problem in discrediting the Crown’s case and proving the innocence of his client in relation to the charges brought against him. The Crown’s key witnesses, the two policemen who attended the meeting addressed by Tabata, contradicted each other in their evidence. They also alleged that Tabata used the word *unciphiso*, which means reduction of stock. Spilken pointed out that the Xhosa word for culling is *uhlaziyo* and that there was a fundamental difference between the culling of stock and the reduction of stock. In the culling of stock, Spilken argued, you remove the bad and leave the worse, you can even introduce more stock with culling.<sup>76</sup>

Of particular relevance in establishing his client’s innocence, as well as to the people of Mount Ayliff, was Spilken’s argument that as the Rehabilitation Scheme was not a law and that it was not an offence to tell people not to take part in the Scheme. Spilken also drew attention to the fact that the population had to give its consent before the Rehabilitation Scheme could be applied. Moreover, he noted out that it was in fact common practice for the NAD to consult the population a second time before applying the Scheme. He pointed out that if during this second consultation, the population refused to give their consent, even though they might have agreed earlier, the second consultation cancelled the first. Spilken argued that Tabata could not be guilty of an offence if he had advised the people at the meeting not to agree to the Rehabilitation Scheme when they were consulted a second time.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>74</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. Rex versus Tabata. SANL. *Torch*, ‘Spot Press: Mr I. B. Tabata arrested’, 20/9/1948. SANL. *Torch*, ‘The Re-habilitation Scheme: The Mount Ayliff trial’, 21/2/1949.

<sup>75</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Interview conducted with I.B. Tabata and Jane Gool by S. Jeppie and E. Cairncross, Harare, 16-22 January 1989.

<sup>76</sup> UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. Rex versus Tabata. SANL. *Torch*, ‘Police informers contradict each other: the Mount Ayliff trial – (iii)’, 7/3/1949. SANL. *Torch*, ‘The Mount Ayliff Trial (vi)’, 28/3/1949.

<sup>77</sup> SANL. *Torch*, ‘The Mount Ayliff trial’, 28/3/1949.

Tabata was found not guilty and acquitted. The people were in a jubilant mood following this legal victory. According to Tabata they went around saying that the Rehabilitation Scheme was not law and promptly left out that part which said "if the people don't accept it."<sup>78</sup> Writing to W.M. Tsotsi in April 1949 Robert Tutshana reflected on the impact of Tabata's case on the people of Mount Ayliff, "I wish to tell you that Smally [Tabata] and next to him, you are the heroes of the people here. They still talk of your actions in court. As for Mr Spilkin, he is Jupiter!"<sup>79</sup>

Due to the intense interest the struggle against the Rehabilitation Scheme in Mount Ayliff evoked among the peasantry from other parts of the Transkei, news of the outcome of Tabata's case spread quickly to areas beyond the boundaries of Mount Ayliff.<sup>80</sup> The Mount Ayliff incident went a long way towards enhancing the popularity of the AAC in the Transkei.<sup>81</sup> The AAC's links with the people of Mount Ayliff were formalised at the December 1948 Conference of the AAC in Bloemfontein. Ntlabati Jojo and Robert Tutshana attended this Conference as delegates representing the *Kongo*. At the Conference the *Kongo* affiliated to the AAC.<sup>82</sup>

The struggle of the Mount Ayliff people against the Rehabilitation Scheme did not end with Tabata's trial. The government was determined to implement the Scheme despite the strong opposition to it. In 1949, Rehabilitation work was proceeded with in Elubaleko. In April 1949, Tutshana related the unfolding of the latest trend of events to W.M. Tsotsi,

the land is fenced [and]...peoples' homes have been brought close together...All the 'good things' have been told to us but we hear nothing of the administration of these 'rehabilitated' areas, what is going to happen to those [who] have not been allotted land in these areas, nothing of more land being increased...Nothing is said about all these things but the masses are keenly aware of them.<sup>83</sup>

In December 1951 the government issued a deportation order against Ntlabati Jojo, in the hope that his removal would stem the tide of resistance.<sup>84</sup> Ntlabati Jojo spent the rest of the 1950s in banishment in the Northern Natal reserve of Nqutu. Throughout this period the

<sup>78</sup> Interview, Tabata and Gool, 16 – 22 January 1989.

<sup>79</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. A Letter to W.M. Tsotsi from Robert Tutshana, 18 April 1949. Tabata was nicknamed 'Smally' due to his short stature.

<sup>80</sup> Interview, Tabata and Gool, 16- 22 January 1989.

<sup>81</sup> Bundy, 'Land and Liberty', p. 273. Also, C. Bundy, 'Breaking the Midnight Slumber: Govan Mbeki in the Transkei, 1940 – 48', IHR and History Department Seminar: South African Contemporary History, University of the Western Cape, 28 September 1993, p. 31.

<sup>82</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. AAC Conference Minutes, 1948, pp. 1, 14 and 15. University of Natal [Pietermaritzburg]. Alan Paton Centre. Kader Hassim Collection, PC116/1/3/1, AAC Conference Minutes, 1949, p. 25. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA Collection. BC 925, Letter to W.M. Tsotsi from R. Tutshana, 18 April 1949.

<sup>83</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA Collection. BC 925, Letter to W.M. Tsotsi from R. Tutshana, 18 April 1949.

<sup>84</sup> SAB. URU 2934, 3367.

activities of the *Kongo* continued.<sup>85</sup> The success of the *Kongo* can be measured by the fact that the government was able to implement the Rehabilitation Scheme in only one of the locations in the entire Mount Ayliff District by the end of the 1950s.<sup>86</sup> In 1960 the *Kongo's* terrain of resistance was broadened to incorporate the struggle against the implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act and Bantu Education.<sup>87</sup> In this struggle the Mount Ayliff peasants linked-up with the peasants of Eastern Pondoland in what later became known as the Pondoland Revolt – the biggest revolt launched by the peasantry in South Africa. These struggles will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Resistance to the Rehabilitation Scheme played an important role in awakening a political consciousness among the South African peasantry. As the Mount Ayliff study revealed, a significant response by reserve dwellers in this struggle was the establishment of their own independent organisations through which they could co-ordinate their resistance to the Scheme. This was an important development for it meant that they were beginning to reject tribalism, as well as the authority of the government exercised in the Transkei and Ciskei in the 1940s through institutions like the Bunga. A fundamental weakness in peasant resistance, however, was that it was localised and could easily be crushed by the government. A key task that the AAC set itself was to unite the various peasant committees and organisations so that the peasantry could co-ordinate their struggles and fight on a regional and eventually national scale.

During the latter half of the 1940s Tabata made an important contribution in laying the basis for the AAC's political work in the countryside. Not only had he formulated a theoretical perspective through which the peasantry was approached by the AAC but he went to the countryside to organise reserve dwellers and test his ideas. By the late 1940s Tabata had succeeded in establishing a formidable group of AAC cadres in the Transkei and Ciskei. Consisting mainly of teachers and lawyers they were able to exert a significant influence over reserve dwellers. These cadres went on to play an important role in building upon Tabata's earlier work in the countryside. They were eventually instrumental in establishing a considerable organisational structure in Transkei and Ciskei through which the peasantry could be reached and their disparate struggles co-ordinated.

<sup>85</sup> KAB. CMT 3/1480. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Magistrate of Mount Ayliff, 13 May 1957.

<sup>86</sup> KAB. CMT 3/1480. Statement by Gaulibaso Jojo, 25 October 1960.

<sup>87</sup> KAB. CMT 3/1480. Letter to the Magistrate of Mount Ayliff from William Mzenzi and John Nyangeni, 11 November 1960. KAB. CMT 3/1480. Statement by E.V. Sipuka, Agricultural Demonstrator, Elubaleko Location, 10 November 1960. KAB. CMT, 3/1480. Report to the Magistrate of Mount Ayliff and the Security Police, Umtata from the Security Police, Kokstad, 22 May 1960.

**CHAPTER THREE**  
**“THE REHABILITATION SCHEME SCOURGE”: THE AAC AND RURAL ORGANISATION, 1944 – 1955**

**The “Rehabilitation Scheme” should be called the Scheme for Dehabilitation. It means to deprive the people of their right to more land and to rob them of their stock, which today is their sole investment. To fight against this, people’s committees should be established which elect representatives yearly to speak for them and so also lessen the chance of the authorities to convict and arrest whole villages. This will also be a training in democratic procedure.<sup>1</sup>**

From the late 1940s resistance to the implementation of the Rehabilitation Scheme, often similar to that described in Mount Ayliff, was evident throughout most of the Transkei and the Ciskei.<sup>2</sup> To guide and co-ordinate their struggles, rural dwellers spontaneously grouped themselves into committees and organisations. This development was recognised at the 1948 Conference of the NEUM, which noted that people “voluntarily formed Location Committees against their headmen and Bungas to assert their right to decide how they should own the land.”<sup>3</sup> Sometimes these organisations were formally established, such as in the districts of Idutywa, Tsomo and Glen Grey, where the Idutywa Peoples’ Working Committee, the Tsomo Peoples’ Association and the Glen Grey Peoples’ Association were founded.<sup>4</sup> In other instances, people simply transformed and re-directed the focus of organisations already in existence to fight the Rehabilitation Scheme. This was particularly true of the *Iliso Lomzi* or Vigilance Associations that existed throughout the Transkei, Ciskei and Border region. The *Iliso Lomzi* organisations of the Qumbu, Willowale, Kentani, Elliot, Goshen and Queenstown

<sup>1</sup> National Library of South Africa (NLSA). *Torch*, “Robbing a People of Investments: The ALL-African Convention discusses ‘Rehabilitation’”, 23/1/1951.

<sup>2</sup> For examples, see NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Rehabilitation moves at Mount Fletcher’, 27/2/1954. NLSA. *Torch*, ‘People’s rising indignation’, 14/8/1956. NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Firm stand in Peddie’, 16/10/1956. NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Man deported from Peddie’, 26/2/1957. NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Mount Fletcher resists rehabilitation’, 19/3/1957. See also, C. Bundy, ‘Land and Liberation: Popular Protest and Liberation Movements in South Africa, 1920 – 1960’, in S. Marks and S. Trapido [editors], *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, London and New York: Longman, p. 271 and 272.

<sup>3</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa [UMSA] / I.B. Tabata Collection. BC 925, NEUM Conference Minutes, March 1948, Resolutions, p. 9. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925, AAC Conference Minutes, 1948, pp. 15 and 16.

<sup>4</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Idutywa Peoples’ Working Committee’, 29/1/1952. NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Tsomo People will not suffer oppression’, 19/2/1952. University of Natal [Pietermaritzburg]. Alan Paton Centre. Kader Hassim Collection, PC116/1/3/1. AAC Conference Minutes, 1949, pp. 2 and 3. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. All African Convention Conference Minutes, 1953, p. 1. Tsotsi, *Out of Court*, p.15.

districts are illustrative of this development.<sup>5</sup> In numerous cases, however, rural dwellers opposed to the Rehabilitation Scheme simply united into informal, semi-secret groupings.<sup>6</sup>

The mounting ferment of peasant resistance to the Rehabilitation Scheme in the Transkei and Ciskei from the late 1940s was a vindication of the AAC's position that "for some time to come, the Rehabilitation Scheme will be the pivot around which the struggle of the people in the reserves will be centred."<sup>7</sup> Through his tours Tabata had achieved considerable success in propagating the political ideas of the AAC in the Transkei and Ciskei. He had also put the AAC in touch with several organisations in the Eastern Cape reserves. Located within these organisations were a number of individuals, notably, Honono, Tsotsi, Sihlali and Canca, who enthusiastically embraced the ideas of the AAC. An essential task undertaken by this group of AAC cadres was to transform existing organisations in the Transkei and Ciskei into bodies that reflected and fought for the interests of the people. In so doing they were instrumental in establishing an organisational structure through which the reserve population could be reached and their disparate struggles co-ordinated. One of the most significant organisations this cadre succeeded in radicalising was the Transkei Organised Bodies (TOB).

### **The AAC and the Transkei Organised Bodies**

The TOB was founded at a conference in Umtata during February 1943 as a federal organisation.<sup>8</sup> At this Conference over one hundred delegates, representing eleven organisations were in attendance. Some of the key organisations represented were, the Transkei African Voters' Association, the Chiefs and Peoples' Association, the Teachers' Association, Farmers' Associations, Vigilance Associations, the *Zenzele* Woman's Association, and the African Workers' Union.<sup>9</sup> The formation of the TOB was a significant development in Transkeian politics, because for the first time a diverse number of

<sup>5</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925, NEUM Conference Minutes, March 1948, p. 1. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. All African Convention Conference Minutes, 1953, p. 1. Interview conducted with R.S. Canca by R. Kayser, Idutywa, 7/5/1998. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Against supporting Location Advisory Board: Vigilance Association leads non-collaboration', 17/10/1949. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Willowvale District Vigilance Association meets', 19/2/1952.

<sup>6</sup> Bundy, 'Land and Liberation', pp. 274 and 284.

<sup>7</sup> University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg). Alan Paton Centre. Kader Hassim Collection, PC116/1/3/1. AAC Conference Minutes, C.M. Kobus, Secretarial Report, 1949, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> This conference was called as a result of a resolution by the Transkei African Voters Association [TAVA] at its 1942 Conference, which suggested that "a conference might consider present and future problems affecting Africans, and submit resolutions thereon to the proper authorities for consideration and action." NLSA. *Umthunywya*, 'Transkei African Conference', 13/3/1943.

<sup>9</sup> NLSA. *Umthunywya*, 'Transkei African Conference', 13/3/1943. C. Bundy, 'Resistance in the Reserves: the A.A.C. and the Transkei, *Africa Perspective*, Number 22, 1983, p. 54. Bundy, 'Land and Liberty', p. 270.

organisations were brought together through which people could articulate their grievances and aspirations.<sup>10</sup>

The leadership of the AAC was aware of the significance of the formation of the TOB. In a letter written immediately after the established of the TOB to Govan Mbeki, the first Secretary of the TOB, Tabata expressed the opinion that “this [TOB] Conference should go down in history as a land mark in the political development of the Transkei.”<sup>11</sup> Tabata proceeded to explain to Mbeki why he had reached this conclusion. He pointed out that certain resolutions passed at the Conference indicated that the Transkei was no longer merely pre-occupied with its own problems, but was beginning to appreciate the overall problems confronting people in South Africa. According to Tabata, this reflected a new approach on the part of the people in the Transkei – “a bursting out from the barriers between the Transkei and the rest of South Africa.”<sup>12</sup> The crucial questions Tabata posed to Mbeki were, “How is the Transkei going to effect its political unity with the rest of the country? What is the form of the organisation in which this unity is going to be consummated?”<sup>13</sup>

Tabata pointed out to Mbeki that the formation of the TOB – the creation of a federal body unifying the various organisations of the people – was in fact a response to the needs of the time. He maintained that “no single organisation could deal adequately with the problems of the day”, therefore different organisations,

created for different aspects of our struggles with different programmes have to be brought together under a federal organisation which will deal with all the aspects; thus bringing together the scattered little groups, conserving and uniting their efforts into one powerful whole.<sup>14</sup>

It was precisely this need, Tabata pointed out, that led to the formation of the AAC in 1935. Tabata impressed upon Mbeki that it was imperative that the various Transkeian organisations affiliate to AAC. He maintained that it would be a historical step backwards for people to join

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<sup>10</sup> The significance of the TOB’s formation was also recognised by the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei who noted, “In conclusion, it may be as well to call attention to the fact that so many Native organisations have participated in presenting the enclosed resolutions. So far as I am aware, this has never happened before in the history of these Territories. It would seem to indicate that the Natives as a race, and not merely as a class or section (e.g. industrial labourers), are realising the value of combination in order to focus attention upon their grievances, needs and aspirations.” SAB. NTS 7250, 238/326. Letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs from the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, 22 February 1943.

<sup>11</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. A letter to Govan Mbeki from I.B. Tabata, 28 February 1943.

<sup>12</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. A letter to Govan Mbeki from I.B. Tabata, 28 February 1943.

<sup>13</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. A letter to Govan Mbeki from I.B. Tabata, 28 February 1943.

<sup>14</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. A letter to Govan Mbeki from I.B. Tabata, 28 February 1943.

the ANC, which he believed did not see the importance of building a single national political movement embracing all the oppressed sections of the black population in South Africa.<sup>15</sup>

While the formation of the TOB represented a significant organisational development in the Transkei, the organisation was nonetheless controlled by chiefs and headmen, who were invariably members of the Bunga and Native Representative Council [NRC]. Key individuals included, Charles Sakwe who was President of the Transkei Chiefs Association and a member of the NRC, Saul Mabude, a member of the NRC, and Paramount Chiefs Victor Poto of Western Pondoland and Botha Sigcau from Eastern Pondoland, who were both members of the Bunga.<sup>16</sup> To the AAC these individuals represented the collaborationist stratum within the Transkei, for it maintained that the government worked through them to get its various oppressive laws and schemes implemented in the reserves.<sup>17</sup> Cadoc Kobus argued at the 1949 Conference of the AAC that this TOB leadership was not sympathetic to the struggles of the people, especially the peasants' struggle against the Rehabilitation Scheme.<sup>18</sup>

Virtually from its inception a struggle developed within the TOB between what the *Torch* characterised as the "old reactionary" leadership of the TOB and the "progressive militants" attached to the AAC.<sup>19</sup> The AAC "progressives" used the role of the NRC in the oppression of the people, as one of its main platforms to challenge and later oust the "reactionary" TOB leadership.

In 1944 the AAC executive called on the members of the NRC to resign.<sup>20</sup> AAC militants in the Transkei carried this position into the TOB. At its September 1946 Conference these militants achieved their first victory, when a resolution was passed by the TOB which rejected segregation and called "upon the members of the NRC forthwith to discontinue their services" in the NRC.<sup>21</sup> Members of the NRC within the TOB, however, refused to resign and instead they adjourned the NRC.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>15</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. A letter to Govan Mbeki from I.B. Tabata, 28 February 1943.

<sup>16</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Historic Transkei meeting: the parting of the ways', 3/2/1947, pp. 1 and 5. UCT. Government Publications Department. Proceedings of United Transkeian Territories General Council, 1945 and 1946.

<sup>17</sup> Under the leadership of people like Sakwe and Mabude the TOB's politics was accommodationist, with its conferences being characterised by the passing resolutions which it hoped would find "favourable consideration" from the NAD.

SAB. NTS 7250, 238/326. Letter to the Secretary of Native Affairs from G.A. Mbeki, General Secretary of the Transkei Organised Bodies, 1 March 1943. SAB. NTS 7250, 238/326. Letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs from the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, 22 February 1943.

<sup>18</sup> University of Natal [Pietermaritzburg]. Alan Paton Centre. Kader Hassim Collection, PC116/1/3/1. AAC Conference Minutes, 1949, p. 10.

<sup>19</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Transkei African Conference', 3/2/1947.

<sup>20</sup> SAB. NTS 9264, 42/371 and UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. 'Along the New Road', statement issued by the Executive of the AAC.

<sup>21</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. 'Boycott the Elections', pamphlet issued by the Executive Committee of the Transkei African Voters Association, 1947.

<sup>22</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. 'Boycott the Elections', pamphlet issued by the Executive Committee of the Transkei African Voters Association, 1947. NLSA. *Torch*

In January 1947, one of the biggest and most representative meetings ever held in the Transkei was held under the joint auspices of the TOB and Transkei Chiefs' Association in Umtata.<sup>23</sup> The meeting was called to allow members of the NRC to address the local population on the present plight of the NRC, as well as to consider what the next step of the TOB should be. This meeting developed into a show down between those who maintained that the decisions taken at the TOB Conference in 1946, which rejected segregation and called upon the members of the NRC to resign, was not a true reflection of the opinion in the Transkei; and those who held "that the Transkei had spoken through its organisations."<sup>24</sup> Initially the chiefs and members of the NRC dominated the deliberations. They attempted to turn the meeting into an ordinary meeting of the Chiefs' Association and indicated that they would not be bound by decisions taken at the meeting. When asked to explain why they had not resigned, but merely adjourned the NRC, Saul Mabude replied that the time was not ripe and they feared that their seats in the NRC would be taken over by other people. Sakwe expressed the intention of the NRC members to return to Pretoria.

Cadoc Kobus, the AAC "progressive militant", was the only member from the opposition allowed to address the meeting. In his address, Kobus maintained that the African people had reached a crossroads. Members of the NRC, he argued "had to decide whether they were with the people against the government, or with the government against the people."<sup>25</sup> He closed his address by pointing out that,

for nine years we had given the NRC a trial. But instead of more rights we received more oppression. Enough of these Councils! Let us stop collaborating with the government in our oppression.<sup>26</sup>

At this meeting a motion calling upon members of the NRC to resign immediately was carried by sixty votes to fifty-three. Upon losing the vote the NRC members, together with the chiefs abandoned the meeting. An article in the *Torch* reporting on this development noted,

in that moment was sharply revealed the conflict between the old reactionaries and the progressive militants; the yawning gap that existed between the old leadership and the chiefs on the one hand, and the people on the other.<sup>27</sup>

Those who remained behind elected a new chairman and secretary, and held their own meeting.<sup>28</sup>

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3/2/1947. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. 'The Parting of the Ways', draft article for *Torch*, 17/1/1947.

<sup>23</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Transkei African Conference', 3/2/1947. I.B. Tabata, *The Awakening of a People*, Nottingham: Spokesman Books, 1974, p. 71.

<sup>24</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Transkei African Conference', 3/2/1947.

<sup>25</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Transkei African Conference', 3/2/1947.

<sup>26</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Transkei African Conference', 3/2/1947.

<sup>27</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Transkei African Conference', 3/2/1947.

<sup>28</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Transkei African Conference', 3/2/1947.

After achieving this important victory within the TOB, the AAC militants now pushed political developments one step further. In May 1947 a meeting of the Transkei African Voters' Association (TAVA) was called in Umtata to discuss the proposed by-election in the Transkei, which had been caused as a result of the death of G.K. Hemming, the Transkei Native Representative in Parliament. This meeting was attended by about two hundred voters, who represented twenty-two out of the twenty-seven districts in the Transkei. All those present at the meeting rejected representation by members drawn from the white ruling class in Parliament and supported a proposal to boycott the by-election. However, a certain section of the representatives felt that the TAVA should vote in the coming by-election, so that the Transkei could be in line with other constituencies in South Africa that still had members representing them in Parliament. Accordingly, two motions were placed before the meeting, one that called on people to vote in the coming by-election, and another that called on people to boycott the by-election. Those who proposed the boycott pointed out that by calling on people to vote, the TAVA "would be violating a principal they had already accepted, namely, that they would not be party to the segregationist policy of the South African government."<sup>29</sup> When the vote was taken, the boycott resolution was carried by ninety-four votes to twenty-nine.<sup>30</sup>

These developments within the TOB and TAVA signalled the launching of the AAC's boycott movement in the Transkei. For the AAC leadership this development marked an important step forward in the political awakening of the oppressed black population. As the AAC argued in August 1947 in its organ, *The Voice*,

The most important point about the boycott is that the people realise clearly and fully that the Quislings are in the service of the white rulers and are thus enemies of the people...What matters is that the people demonstrate to the world that they reject the Native Representation Act and with it the whole policy of segregation and slavery, that they themselves know they have no representation and are voteless and voiceless.<sup>31</sup>

The boycott movement developed strong support within the African population. The ANC, which up to this point opposed this boycott movement eventually decided to support the boycott of all Parliamentary and NRC elections at its December 1946 Conference.<sup>32</sup> A year later, however, the ANC retreated from this position

<sup>29</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. 'The Transkei masses on the move', draft article for the *Torch* by C.M. Kobus, 1947. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Transkei masses on the move', 9/6/1947.

<sup>30</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. 'The Transkei masses on the move', draft article for the *Torch* by C.M. Kobus, 1947. *Torch*, 'Transkei masses on the move', 9/6/1947. Tabata, *The Awakening*, p. 71.

<sup>31</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. *The Voice*, Number 15, August 1947.

<sup>32</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. *The Voice*, Number 15, August 1947. I.B. Tabata, *The Awakening*, p. 71. C. Bundy, 'Breaking the Midnight Slumber: Govan Mbeki in the

and campaigned for the election of candidates on a pro-boycott ticket, coming forward with the election slogan, "Return the Boycott Candidates".<sup>33</sup> This retreat by the ANC was not surprising given the fact that several of its leading members were members of the NRC. In March 1948, at a joint TOB – TAVA meeting, a resolution was passed which expelled all TAVA and TOB members who were NRC members or who sought election to the NRC. Charles Sakwe and Saul Mabude were among those expelled from the TAVA.<sup>34</sup>

At this stage the TOB was still controlled by the "old reactionary" leadership. During September 1949 an important meeting of the Transkei Executive Committee of the AAC took place in Umtata. Among those present at the meeting were leading AAC militants in the Transkei, Kobus, Honono, Canca, Novukela, Mazwai, Mda Mda, Tutshana, as well as Ntlabati Jojo, representing the Kongo. The key issue discussed was how the AAC could guide and unite the people in the Transkei in their struggle against the Rehabilitation Scheme.

At this AAC executive meeting reports were given on the procedure followed by the government to enforce the Rehabilitation Scheme. In Idutywa, for example, it was revealed that in 1945 the Magistrate called a secret meeting in the Colosa Location to discuss the Rehabilitation Scheme. Only those people in the Location known to be favourably disposed towards the Scheme were invited. They obviously agreed to the application of the Scheme in their location. At a subsequent meeting held by the Magistrate with the Colosa residents, which was representative of the entire Location, the Magistrate thanked the people for having accepted the Scheme. The stunned people immediately raised their objection and demanded that a new vote be taken to test the true feeling of the people on this issue. The Magistrate refused to agree to this. Later, in 1949, Rehabilitation fencing commenced in Colosa. The people responded by cutting down the fence at night. A number of them were charged and fined one pound each. When they refused to pay the fine, the Magistrate issued an order to attach part of their livestock. Determined to prevent the implementation of the Scheme the Colosa people decided to fight the case in the courts of law. They engaged Spilken, at an exorbitant fee of two hundred and ten pounds to fight their case. Spilken challenged the validity of the Betterment Proclamation as far as its application to the Transkei was concerned. As Spilken had argued in Tabata's case (see Chapter Two), he pointed out that the Scheme was only binding if people gave their consent and that the people had a right to

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Transkei, 1940 – 48', IHR and History Department Seminar: South African Contemporary History, University of the Western Cape (?), 28 September 1993.', pp. 27 – 29..

<sup>33</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. *The Voice*, Number 17, February 1948. I.B. Tabata, *The Awakening*, p.109.

<sup>34</sup> *Inkundla*, 24/3/1948, quoted in Tabata, *The Awakening*, p. 73.

oppose the Scheme. The outcome of the case was that the conviction was set aside and the proceedings declared irregular.<sup>35</sup>

The AAC executive meeting felt that people should not rely on the courts of law to fight the Rehabilitation Scheme; the government made these laws and could easily amend them to close loopholes. It was argued that the only way people would succeed in their struggle was through united action which necessitated that the “isolated fights of the people should be co-ordinated and the scheme fought along the whole Transkei front.”<sup>36</sup> The meeting recognised that the only organisation in the Transkei capable of undertaking such a task was the TOB. The meeting was, however, aware that the present TOB leadership was not sympathetic to the peoples’ struggles. Honono noted that the TOB was composed of two opposing groups, on the one hand there were the chiefs, headmen and Bunga Councillors, many of whom were on the TOB executive; on the other hand, there were the people. The meeting felt that the time had come for the removal of this collaborationist leadership and its replacement with a “progressive” leadership. At the October 1949 Conference of the TOB, the “reactionary” leadership in the TOB was finally removed. The new TOB executive that was elected was composed entirely of members of the AAC, with Kobus as its new President.<sup>37</sup>

Govan Mbeki was caught up in the struggle by the AAC militants to turn the TOB and TAVA into organisations representing the people. Bundy has accorded Mbeki a leadership role in building the TOB and generally in attempting to make a case for ANC political activity in the Transkei.<sup>38</sup> The AAC militants recognised Mbeki as “a useful person” within the TOB, although they were aware that he was a member of the ANC and had links with the Communist Party of South Africa.<sup>39</sup> They supported his election to the position of General Secretary of the TOB, a position he held until the 1949 Conference of the TOB.<sup>40</sup> Mbeki was offered the position of Assistant Secretary of the AAC in 1943. Mbeki declined but worked closely with the AAC militants and assisted Tabata during his tours of the Transkei. To the disappointment of the AAC militants Mbeki entered

<sup>35</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. All African Convention Transkei Executive Committee Meeting, 9 September 1949.

<sup>36</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. All African Convention Transkei Executive Committee Meeting, 9 September 1949.

<sup>37</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. All African Convention Transkei Executive Committee Meeting, 9 September 1949. NLSA. *Torch*, September 1949. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. Letter to I.B. Tabata from C.M. Kobus, 27 September 1949, BC 925. University of Natal [Pietermaritzburg]. Alan Paton Centre. Kader Hassim Collection, PC116/1/3/1. AAC Conference Minutes, 1949, p. 12.

<sup>38</sup> C. Bundy, ‘Land and Liberation’, pp. 270 and 271. Bundy, ‘Breaking the Midnight Slumber’. See also Bundy’s introduction to G. Mbeki, *Learning From Robben Island: the prison Writings of Govan Mbeki*, London: J. Currey, Ohio: Ohio University Press and Cape Town: D. Philip, 1991, p. xv.

<sup>39</sup> Interview conducted with Jane Gool by Lyova Hassim, Durban, 21/11/1990. [kindly provided to me by L. Hassim].

<sup>40</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Interview conducted with I.B. Tabata and Jane Gool by S. Jeppie and E. Caircross, Harare, 16 – 22 January 1989. Interview, Gool, 21/11/1990.

the Bunga in 1946, despite the fact that he had campaigned against it for many years. In 1948 he allowed his name to be put forward for nomination to the NRC. According to Tabata, through these actions Mbeki discredited himself among the people of the Transkei. In 1949 he was removed from the position of General Secretary of the TOB and his position was filled by the AAC militant R.S. Canca. Mbeki subsequently left the Transkei.<sup>41</sup>

Bundy has asserted that up to 1948 the TOB was informally aligned to the ANC through Mbeki.<sup>42</sup> However, as Bundy himself demonstrates, the ANC national leadership during the 1940s had little enthusiasm for rural mobilisation.<sup>43</sup> Mbeki's constant appeals to A.B. Xuma, the President-General of the ANC at the time, for a political lead did not receive any notable response. As an ANC member in the Transkei, Mbeki was effectively isolated and to play a progressive role Mbeki had little choice but to work with AAC members, such as Tsotsi, Honono, Tabata and Kobus.<sup>44</sup> Constrained within these conditions Mbeki could hardly have aligned the TOB with the ANC, which in any case was a unitary organisation.<sup>45</sup> In 1948, Tabata summed up his view of the role of Mbeki in the following way,

What explanation did Mbeki give for allowing his name to come forward for nomination to the N.R.C.? That incident certainly did not enhance his prestige in political circles outside the Transkei. It recalled to mind his whole political career, past and present – how he condemned the Bunga for many years and then went into it...It also recalls to mind the fact that during all this period of leadership in the T.O.B. he never did anything to encourage the Transkei people to come out of their isolation and meet the rest of the African people of the Union of South Africa in the All African Convention.<sup>46</sup>

To forge a closer link with the people of the Transkei and to transform the TOB into a body that fought for the interests of the people, the 1949 TOB Conference decided that the struggle against the Rehabilitation Scheme in the Transkei should be fought through the TOB. To demonstrate their solidarity with the people, the TOB leadership immediately addressed

<sup>41</sup> Interview conducted with I.B. Tabata and Jane Gool by A. Drew, Harare, 15 and 17 December 1987. [kindly provided to me by Allison Drew]. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. A Letter to Mbeki from I.B. Tabata, 28 February 1943. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. A Letter to G. Matanzima from I.B. Tabata, 13 March 1948. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. Dairy of I.B. Tabata, 1947. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. *Voice*, Number 17, February 1948. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. A Letter to I.B. Tabata from C.M. Kobus, 27 September 1949. University of Natal [Pietermaritzburg]. Alan Paton Centre. Kader Hassim Collection, PC116/1/3/1. AAC Conference Minutes, 1949, p. 10.

<sup>42</sup> Bundy has come up with the suggestion that the TOB was formed "partly as an attempt to create a unified base in opposition to the AAC." Bundy, 'Breaking the Midnight Slumber', p.30.

<sup>43</sup> Bundy, 'Land and Liberation', pp. 270 and 271. Bundy, 'Breaking the Midnight Slumber', p. 28.

<sup>44</sup> Bundy does not mention a single ANC member who assisted Mbeki in his political work in the Transkei. Bundy, 'Breaking the Midnight Slumber'.

<sup>45</sup> Bundy has himself brought evidence to the fore that prominent leaders of the TOB, like Sakwe, were hostile to the ANC. Bundy, *Prison Writings*, p. 8.

<sup>46</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. A Letter to G. Matanzima from I.B. Tabata, 13 March 1948.

meetings in areas where disturbances against the Rehabilitation Scheme had emerged. Kobus addressed a meeting in October 1949 at Mhala Location in the Idutywa District, attended by approximately five hundred people, representing twenty-one locations. At the meeting Kobus demonstrated the link between the Rehabilitation Scheme and the exploitation of the African population. He pointed out to the Idutywa people that they were not the only ones afflicted by the Scheme, and urged them to "make common cause with other oppressed in the All-African Convention."<sup>47</sup> Kobus advised them not to fight the Rehabilitation Scheme through the courts of law. It was absurd, he noted, to pay two hundred and ten pounds to defend an action, when the fine was ten pounds. Rather, he maintained, people should rely on their own strength. As a result of the TOB taking up the struggle of the Idutywa people, they sent three representatives to the December 1949 Conference of the AAC in Bloemfontein. Their organisation, the Idutywa Peoples' Working Committee, promptly affiliated to the AAC at this conference.<sup>48</sup>

In April 1950 the TOB held its biggest meeting in Umtata. Approximately one hundred and twenty delegates represented several districts in the Transkei. Also present at this meeting were Ntlabati Jojo and delegates from the *Kongo* in Mount Ayliff. Here it was unanimously agreed that the TOB would affiliate to the AAC. Furthermore, the TOB declared itself against the Rehabilitation Scheme and called on all districts in the Transkei to boycott the Bunga.<sup>49</sup> By its March 1952 Conference the TOB had grown tremendously in the Transkei. At this conference two thousand people were in attendance. It was also the first time that a TOB Conference had been held outside the town of Umtata and in the countryside, in the Baziya Location, Umtata District.<sup>50</sup>

This overview of the historical development of the TOB shows that in a relatively short period of time AAC militants took over the leadership of TOB and moved it away from the control of chiefs and headmen, to an organisation rooted among the population. Moreover, the AAC militants had set resistance politics in the Transkei along a new road through placing important political ideas and concepts, such as the policy of non-collaboration, the boycott weapon and unity of the oppressed black population before the people. During the 1950s the TOB would gain further ground among reserve dwellers in the Transkei when it took up the struggle against Bantu Education and the Bantu Authorities Act.

<sup>47</sup> University of Natal [Pietermaritzburg]. Alan Paton Centre. Kader Hassim Collection, PC116/1/3/1. AAC Conference Minutes, 1949, pp. 10 and 11.

<sup>48</sup> University of Natal [Pietermaritzburg]. Alan Paton Centre. Kader Hassim Collection, PC116/1/3/1. AAC Conference Minutes, 1949, pp. 10 and 11.

<sup>49</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. Letter to I.B. Tabata from C.M. Kobus, 9 April 1950. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Transkei boycotts Bunga: T.O.B. joins AAC', 1/5/1950.

<sup>50</sup> *Torch*, '2, 000 people at T.O.B. Conference: Transkei Organised Bodies at Baziya', 8/4/1952, pp. 1 and 6.

### The AAC and the Cape African Teachers' Association

The Cape African Teachers' Association (CATA), an organisation that had branches in virtually every district of the Transkei and Ciskei, was another key organisation AAC militants radicalised in the late 1940s.<sup>51</sup> From 1942 to the late 1940s a conservative leadership controlled CATA. This conservative leadership maintained that the teachers' association should not engage in politics. The CATA resolutions passed during this period were characterised by "respectful requests" to the Cape Education Department to improve the service conditions for African teachers. However, from 1943, a "progressive tendency" began to emerge within CATA. This "progressive tendency" was centred around teachers who had come under the political influence of the AAC. Foremost amongst these were teachers like W.M. Tsotsi, Leo Sihlali, Nathaniel Honono, C.M. Kobus, R.S. Canca, J.L. Mkentane, A. Novukela and Robert Tutshana. W.M. Tsotsi has explained the ideological perspective these "progressive" teachers began articulating within CATA,

The progressive teachers realised that discrimination against the African teachers was part and parcel of the discrimination against the black population as a whole in every field of endeavour. The success of the teachers' demands depended on the success of the general struggle of the blacks for equality with whites. The teachers' associations, if they were serious, had no choice but to join forces with other organisations of the oppressed fighting for political equality.<sup>52</sup>

In 1943 the Glen Grey Branch of CATA, of which Tsotsi was an executive member, affiliated to the AAC. At the 1944 CATA Conference, the Glen Grey Branch tried to persuade the other branches of CATA, as well as CATA as a whole, to follow its example and affiliate to the AAC. Although a motion to this effect was defeated, several CATA branches subsequently followed the example of the Glen Grey Branch and affiliated to the AAC. From this point on, as Tsotsi has noted, "the necessity for the whole association to do so became a hardy annual at CATA conferences."<sup>53</sup>

At the June 1948 CATA Conference in Queenstown, attended by over two hundred delegates, representing one thousand five hundred teachers, the "progressives" within CATA

<sup>51</sup> In 1921 African teachers in the Cape Province founded CATA. The various teachers associations in the Transkei, such as the Transkei Teachers' Association (TTA), however, remained outside of CATA. Eventually, in December 1942 CATA and the United Transkei African Teachers' Association unified and founded the United Cape African Teachers' Association (UCATA). In 1921 African teachers in the Cape Province founded CATA. In the course of the late 1940s, when the UCATA and North Western Districts Teachers' Union amalgamated, the name CATA was used once more. NLSA. *Teachers' Vision*, Volume VIII, Number 3, June 1942. NLSA. *Teachers' Vision*, Volume IX, Number 3, 1943.

<sup>52</sup> W.M. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court, the Memoirs of a Black Lawyer in Apartheid South Africa, 1950 – 1960', unpublished manuscript, no date, p. 208. [Kindly provided to me by the author]

<sup>53</sup> Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p. 209. UCT. See also, NLSA. *Teachers' Vision*, Volume IX, Number 4, June 1943. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. 'CATA Conference decides to join All-African Convention', July 1948.

succeeded in securing decisive support for its ideological outlook.<sup>54</sup> At the Conference, this ideological outlook was incorporated into a Policy Document entitled, “The Policy of the Cape African Teachers’ Association”. CATA commissioned this document which was drafted by a committee convened by A.C. Jordan, a member of the AAC Executive Committee, who was also an academic at the University of Cape Town.<sup>55</sup> The Policy Document of the Jordan Committee was severely critical of the African teachers’ associations for remaining aloof from the general struggles of the black population. It maintained that the struggle of the African teachers was “inextricably bound up with” the general struggle of the African population for democratic rights.<sup>56</sup>

The CATA Policy Document was the key item discussed at the 1948 CATA Conference. Although in the minority at that conference, the “progressives” were able to sway the majority of the delegates to adopt the new CATA policy. Furthermore, they finally succeeded in getting CATA to affiliate to the AAC.<sup>57</sup> Though the conservative leadership was still at the helm of CATA, with Honono being the only “progressive” to win a place on the CATA executive, as editor of the CATA’s organ, *The Teachers’ Vision*, the 1948 Conference represented an important victory for the AAC militants. In a letter to Leo Sihlali soon after the 1948 Conference, Tabata outlined the significance of the AAC victory within CATA,

The Teachers’ Branches can now proceed to form local committees with the organisations of the people. These committees can be used as a rallying point for the peoples’ struggles. In this way the teachers can identify themselves dynamically with the struggles of the people. The teachers then, as a body will for the first time fulfil their responsibilities as the enlightened section of the population.<sup>58</sup>

The affiliation of CATA to the AAC strengthened the grassroots support base of the AAC in both the Transkei and the Ciskei. In the Transkei, for example, *The Teachers’ Vision*, shows that for the period July 1949 to July 1950, CATA had paid up branches in twenty-two of the twenty-six districts that made up the Transkei. During this period CATA’s membership also increased from approximately one thousand five hundred teachers to two thousand teachers.<sup>59</sup> By 1952 approximately fifty percent of African teachers in the Cape were CATA

<sup>54</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. ‘CATA Conference decides to join All African Convention’, 20/6/1948 – 3/7/1948.

<sup>55</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. ‘CATA Conference decides to join All African Convention’, 20/6/1948 – 3/7/1948.

<sup>56</sup> *Teachers’ Vision*, Volume XIV, Number 4, June 1948. Part of ‘The Policy of the Cape African Teachers’ Association’ is quoted in I.B. Tabata, *The Awakening*, p. 74.

<sup>57</sup> NLSA. *Teachers’ Vision*, Volume XVI, Number 4, June 1951. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. ‘CATA Conference decides to join All-African Convention’, July 1948. Tabata, *The Awakening*, pp. 74 and 75. J. Hyslop, *The Classroom Struggle: Policy and Resistance in South Africa, 1940 – 1990*, Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1999, p. 39.

<sup>58</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. Letter to Leo Sihlali from I.B. Tabata, 19 July 1948.

<sup>59</sup> NLSA. *Teachers’ Vision*, Volume XVI, Number 1, September 1950.

members.<sup>60</sup> This has prompted Hyslop to comment that “this spectacular growth [by CATA] indicates a receptivity on the part of a substantial section of the teachers to CATA’s new approach.”<sup>61</sup>

By 1951 AAC militants were firmly in control of CATA. Leo Sihlali was the new CATA President, J.L. Mkentane the Vice-President, Robert Tutshana the Assistant Secretary and R.S. Canca was the Editor of *The Teachers’ Vision*.<sup>62</sup> CATA teachers went on to play an important role in the struggles in the Transkei and Ciskei against the Rehabilitation Scheme, the Bantu Authorities Act and Bantu Education. Alongside the peasantry, the CATA teachers bore the brunt of state repression against political activists in the Transkei and Ciskei from the mid-1950s.<sup>63</sup>

### **The ANC Youth League and the Ciskei**

Anne Mager, though centrally concerned with the way in which gender informed the responses of rural dwellers in the Ciskei towards the Rehabilitation Scheme, has attempted to make a case for ANC involvement in rural struggles in the Ciskei Reserve.<sup>64</sup> Though Mager notes that the ANC as late as the early 1950s had not as yet “adopted a policy of opposition to the Rehabilitation Scheme” and that its “energies remained largely directed at urban issues”, she argues that during the ANC’s 1952 Defiance Campaign the ANC’s Youth League (ANCYL) branches in East London, Port Elizabeth and at the University of Fort Hare, “attempted to influence” the struggles of Ciskeian reserve dwellers against the Rehabilitation Scheme.<sup>65</sup> According to Mager, the Defiance Campaign in the Ciskei took the form of opposition to various Rehabilitation Scheme measures, in particular the dipping of cattle and the fencing of land. Evidence of ANCYL activity in the Ciskei is provided for in the districts of Peddie, King Williams Town and Middledrift. Mager concedes though that the Glen Grey District was firmly under the control of the AAC which had “a considerable following” in the Victoria East District at the University of Fort Hare.<sup>66</sup> The influence of W.M. Tsotsi, who as a lawyer practising in the Ciskei who was also able to propagate the ideas of the AAC, is also recognised by Mager.

<sup>60</sup> According to Hyslop by July 1952 CATA membership had increased to three thousand, Hyslop, *The Classroom Struggle*, p. 40.

<sup>61</sup> Hyslop, *The Classroom Struggle*, p. 40

<sup>62</sup> NLSA. *Teachers’ Vision*, Volume XVIII, Number 1, September 1951.

<sup>63</sup> These developments will be discussed in Chapter Four.

<sup>64</sup> A. Mager, *Gender and the Making of a South African Bantustan, A Social History of the Ciskei, 1945 – 1959*, Portsmouth, Oxford, Cape Town: , 1999, pp. 80 – 87. Also, “The people get fenced: Gender, Rehabilitation and African Nationalism in the Ciskei and Border region, 1945 – 1955.”, in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 16, Number 4, December 1992, pp. 761 – 782.

<sup>65</sup> A. Mager, *Gender and the Making*, p. 80.

<sup>66</sup> A. Mager, *Gender and the Making*, p. 85.

The organisational strength of the AAC in the Ciskei, however, went far beyond what Mager has conceded. As in the Transkei, CATA had branches in virtually every district of the Ciskei.<sup>67</sup> The Organised Bodies in the Transkei also extended its sphere of influence through incorporating organisations in the Ciskei and border region into a regional organisational structure, the Eastern Cape Organised Bodies.<sup>68</sup> In addition the founding of the Society of Young Africa<sup>69</sup> [SOYA] in 1951, a national non-racial organisation catering especially for the youth and migrant workers that affiliated to the AAC, increased the AAC's presence in the Ciskei as several branches of SOYA were established in the area.<sup>70</sup> Besides a strong emphasis on political education, SOYA members engaged in practical organisational work. It was SOYA's policy that members working and studying in the urban centres engage in political activity on their return to the countryside.<sup>71</sup> At the 1953 Conference of the AAC, the Victoria East Branch of SOYA could proudly claim to have assisted in the formation of a peoples' committee in the district.<sup>72</sup> Also, individuals like Tabata, Tsotsi and Sihlali regularly toured the Ciskei and Border region, taking the ideas of the AAC to the people there.<sup>73</sup> Through the *Iliso Lomzi* network, CATA, the National Council of Women, as well as SOYA, the AAC established a permanent presence in the Ciskei and Border region and was able to influence events.<sup>74</sup>

While ANCYL activity in the three Ciskeian Districts is not being challenged, what is being questioned is the nature this particular form of activity took, and whether the Youth Leaguers made a positive contribution towards the peasants' struggles in the Ciskei, as Mager implies. If the message and ideas taken to the peasantry by the ANCYL is examined, then the activity of the Youth Leaguers was irresponsible and to the detriment of those sections of the rural dwellers who were prepared to support them. By publicly calling on people to openly cut fences and disobey orders to take their livestock for dipping (which were offences that carried a heavy fine or imprisonment), the ANCYL exposed them to unnecessary criminal

<sup>67</sup> NLSA. *Teachers' Vision*, Volume XVI, Number 1, September 1950.

<sup>68</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Eastern Cape Organised Bodies Conference', 13/11/1950. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p. 41.

<sup>69</sup> The emphasis of the Society of Young Africa [SOYA] was on a sound political and historical education to expose the superficialities of the ANCYL. It attained a large measure of success in combating the chauvinism of the ANCYL at the Fort Hare College. In the Western Cape SOYA was meant to be a political home for specially the migrant workers, who would be introduced to the ideas of the NEUM in an elementary fashion.

<sup>70</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. AAC Conference Minutes, 1953, p. 18. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925 1954. AAC Conference Minutes, 1954, pp. 36 – 39.

<sup>71</sup> Interview conducted with A.K. Tom by R. Kayser, Ezibeleni, Queenstown, 30/4/1998.

<sup>72</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. AAC Conference Minutes, 1953, p. 18.

<sup>73</sup> Interview conducted with Siphon Makalima by R. Kayser, Alice, Victoria East District, Ciskei, 2/6/1998. Also, NLSA. *Torch*, 'A.A.C. Tour of Ciskei: Mr Tsotsi and Mr Tabata open tour at Grahamstown', 17/10/1949. NLSA. *Torch*, 'In the Ciskei Now, A.A.C. Tour', 24/10/1949, pp. 1 and 6. NLSA. *Torch*, 4/8/1953.

<sup>74</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. Letter to I.B. Tabata from Leo Sihlali, 5/4/1950. L. Switzer, *The Ciskei Xhosa and the Making of South Africa*, Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1993, pp. 206 – 207.

prosecution. Also, the particular brand of African nationalism introduced to the population in the Ciskeian districts by the ANCYL bordered on racialism. It is very questionable whether “the antiwhite sentiment” espoused in the “African nationalist discourse” of the ANCYL and shouts of “the slogan *iAfrika Mayibuye* chanted at meetings deep in the countryside”, made any positive contribution towards the advancement of a political consciousness among the peasantry.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, ANCYL activity in the three Ciskeian Districts was episodic - it centred on the Defiance Campaign and came to an end by early 1953. There was no sustained contact between the ANCYL and reserve dwellers, and the ANCYL failed to establish an organisational structure among the peasantry of the Ciskei. The approach of the ANCYL stands in stark contrast to that of the AAC which sought to forge a permanent link with the peasantry and aimed to draw them into the broader national political struggle.

### **The NEUM and the peasantry of Northern Natal.**

The last section of this chapter will examine the organisational work of the NEUM in the African reserves of Natal, collectively known as Zululand. In particular the focus will be on the Nqutu reserve, situated in Northern Natal. A brief overview of the entry of the NEUM into Natal will firstly be outlined.

During the period from the mid-1940s to the early 1950s, there were two phases during which the NEUM and its political ideas entered Natal. The first phase was during the early to mid-1940s, when NEUM militants in Cape Town established contact with the radical wing of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC). In the early 1940s the radical wing of the NIC was trying to overthrow the “merchant class conservative wing” led by the Kagee-Pather group which controlled the organisation. In 1943 the radical wing of the NIC formed their own organisation, the Anti-Segregation Council (ASC), as a temporary body through which they could fight the conservative leadership of the NIC. People like Dr G.M. Naicker and Cassiem Amra led the ASC. The ASC, like the NIC was affiliated to the South African Indian Congress. In 1943, on an invitation from the ASC, Dr Goolam Gool, who at that stage was President of the Anti-CAD Movement and Vice-President of the NEUM, toured all the main centres of Natal, as well as the small rural towns. The main political ideas expounded by Dr Gool during his tour were that of non-collaboration with the ruling class, unity of all the oppressed and a programmatic struggle. This was the first time that the Natal population at large was exposed to the political ideas of the NEUM. The ASC subsequently affiliated to the

<sup>75</sup> A. Mager, *Gender and the Making*, pp. 82 & 86.

NEUM in January 1945 at the Third Unity Conference of the NEUM. At this stage it claimed to represent twenty-five organisations in Natal.<sup>76</sup>

In 1945 the Naicker group of the ASC defeated the Kagee-Pather group and took control of the NIC. However, soon after taking control, they rejected the political principles of the NEUM.<sup>77</sup> The leadership resuscitated the Gandhian concept of passive resistance that sought to elicit a change of heart on the part of the oppressor, and in 1946 launched a passive resistance campaign. This campaign was directed against the recent passing of the Pegging Act, which maintained the *status quo* regarding Indian ownership of land in white areas. The NIC's campaign was an Indian only campaign; it appealed to and solicited support only from members of the Indian community. This was a negation of the NEUM's concept of unity of all the oppressed black sections and from the NEUM point of view marked a return to the "reactionary" Indian Congress days of seeking concessions from the government. The NIC consequently broke all links with the NEUM and instead Naicker and Dr Yusuf Dadoo [who had taken control of the Transvaal Indian Congress] entered into the "Doctors' Pact" with Xuma of the ANC in March 1947.<sup>78</sup>

During the early 1950s, the ideas of the NEUM once more entered Natal. This time its influence came from the Transvaal. In Johannesburg, at the University of the Witwatersrand, a number of young radical intellectuals established an organisation known as the Progressive Forum (PF). Among the leading members of this organisation were people like Seymour Papert, Karrim Essack, A.I. Limbada, Enver Hassim and Andrew Lukhele. The PF came under the influence of the NEUM, and in 1948 it affiliated to the AAC. Limbada and Essack were both from Dundee in Northern Natal, and it was here that the NEUM once again made its appearance in the Natal Province.<sup>79</sup>

After completing his medical studies, Limbada set up a medical practice in Dundee and began to play a pivotal role in building the NEUM in Dundee, as well as in several of the small towns that dotted the Northern Natal countryside. In Dundee the NEUM operated within the NIC, as it was felt that it would be best to work through an existing organisation rather than to establish a new organisation that would end up competing with the NIC. But

<sup>76</sup> Interview conducted with Kader Hassim by R. Kayser, Pietermaritzburg, 28 and 29 April 1999. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. NEUM Conference Minutes, January 1945, p. 36.

<sup>77</sup> Interview, Hassim, 28 and 29 April 1999.

<sup>78</sup> E. Roux, *Time Longer Than Rope*, London and Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964, pp. 359, 360 & 365. J. Simons and R. Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850 – 1950*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1969, pp. 542, 551 & 552. Interview, Hassim, 28 and 29 April 1999. A Drew, *Discordant Comrades: Identities and Loyalties on the South African Left*, Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2000, p. 245.

<sup>79</sup> Interview conducted with Norman Traub by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 16/2/2000. Interview, Hassim, 28 and 29 April 1999. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. AAC Conference Minutes, 1948, p. 1. B. Hirson, *Revolutions in My Life*, Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1995, pp. 229, 230, 256 – 263. A Drew [editor], *South Africa's Radical Tradition: a documentary history*, Volume Two, 1954 – 1960, Cape Town: Bunchu Books, Mayibuye Books and UCT Press, 1997, p. 341.

where it was necessary to do things outside the ambit of the NIC, the ASC was revived. In 1952 the officers of the NIC / ASC in Dundee were, V.G. Naidoo President, A.I. Limbada and Chota Patel, Joint Secretaries and Frank Maharaj, Treasurer. To capture the youth and workers of both Indian and African background in Northern Natal, and provide them with sound political training in the ideological outlook of the NEUM, a branch of the Progressive Forum and the Society of Young Africa was established in Dundee.<sup>80</sup> Besides building the NEUM in the small towns of Northern Natal, Limbada was also instrumental in forging close ties between the NEUM and the peasantry of Northern Natal, especially in the Nqutu Reserve and Msinga Reserve of Zululand.<sup>81</sup>

There were two things that counted in Limbada's favour when it came to conducting political work among the reserve population of Zululand. Firstly, Limbada had grown up in the rural areas of Natal and was a fluent speaker of the Zulu language. As Kader Hassim, originally from Dundee and the brother of Karrim Essack recalled,

His [Limbada's] knowledge of the language was not bookish, it was spoken Zulu. And when he spoke Zulu to Zulu speaking Africans, they regarded him as one of them because the language he spoke was theirs, with all its idioms and terms. And immediately he was able to communicate.<sup>82</sup>

Secondly, the fact that Limbada was a medical doctor assisted him greatly in gaining access to the reserve population. Limbada was in constant contact with the reserve dwellers through his medical practice in Dundee (to which the people especially from the adjoining Nqutu and Msinga reserves came for medical care), as well as through the various clinics he attended to in the reserves. As a medical practitioner, Limbada did not require a permit for permission to enter the reserves. Furthermore, as Kader Hassim has noted, during the early 1950s there were few medical doctors among the oppressed and the few that there were, were able to exercise great influence. These circumstances Limbada utilised to the fullest in spreading the ideas of the NEUM among the reserve dwellers of Northern Natal.

Limbada forged a formidable team of organisers and young enthusiastic cadres to assist him in political work in the reserves of Northern Natal. Posselt Gcabashe, a teacher from Dannhausser in Northern Natal, was one of Limbada's foremost organisers. Among the youthful cadres who played an important role in especially ferrying people to and from meetings were Cassiem Kikia, Manikum Pillay and Yunus Hattia.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>80</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection. BC 925. AAC Conference Minutes, December 1953, p. 18.

<sup>81</sup> Interview, Hassim, 28 and 29 April 1999. Interview conducted with Cassiem Kikia by R. Kayser, Serowe, Botswana, October 1998. Interview conducted with Yunus Hattia by R. Kayser, Pomeroy, Northern Natal, 6/5/1999. SAB. NTS, 9524, 138/400/49. Copy of Letter to the District Commandant, South African Police, Dundee from the Criminal Investigation Department, South African Police, Dundee, 28 November 1952.

<sup>82</sup> Interview, Hassim, 28 and 29 April 1999.

<sup>83</sup> Interview, Hattia, 6/5/1999. Interview, Kikia, October 1998.



Dr Ahmed Ishmail Limbada, 1964.  
(Photo: Courtesy: R. Britten).



A meeting which was to be addressed by Alan Paton, leader of the Liberal Party is disrupted by members of the ASC / NIC in Dundee.  
(Photo: Alan Paton Centre, University of Natal).

**MASS MEETING!**  
OF ALL NON-EUROPEANS  
will be held at  
**Millsite Theatre**  
**ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1952**  
AT 2:30 P.M. SHARP

Subjects: 1. The Policy of the Anti-Segregation Council  
2. Defiance Campaign

"A People, desiring to free themselves must first understand the nature of their oppression"

**SPEAKERS—**  
Dr. Wilford Muzak (African Convention)  
Dr. M. M. Maseko (Anti-Segregation Council, R.M. Burg)  
Dr. Omar Masiveo (Anti-Segregation Council, P.M. Burg)  
Mr. V. G. Naidoo (President, N.I.C., Dundee)  
Mr. Isiah Luvumiso (Society of Young Africa)  
Dr. A. I. Limbada and local speakers

**SPEAKERS FROM HEADQUARTERS HAVE BEEN INVITED**  
Our Aim is— **FULL DEMOCRACY**  
Our Strength is— **NON-EUROPEAN UNITY**  
Our Weapon is— **NON-COLLABORATION**

**UNITE FOR FREEDOM!**  
**Build Congress For Freedom !!**

Issued by the N.I.C., Dundee Branch; President: V. G. NAIDOO;  
Joint Secretaries: DR. A. I. LIMBADA & ISMAIL PATEL

A leaflet announcing a mass meeting convened by the ASC.  
(Source: National Archival Depot).

**Inggungqutmela Yomelanganó**  
Usaku : **NGOMHLAKA 27 KULENYANGA (Sept.)**  
Indawo : **E BAYISIKOBO KAMAMANE (MILLSITE THEATRE)**  
Isikhathi : **NGO 2 NTAMBAMA**

"Abantu abantisele Ngokuzikhulula kufanele bazi indlela abacindezela Ngayo kuqala."

Benazi ukuthi izingonyo ezina zomhlaba kulizwe ngezabamhlophe?  
Benazi ukuthi ingonye leyo eyodwa okwakhe abantu kuyona ngeka-Hulumeni, ibizwa ngokuthi "Izabelo namalokishi"?  
Benazi ukuthi yonke impucuzeko yakuleli ikhona ngathi abangemhlope?  
Benazi ukuthi yonke imithetho yobudlova ePalamende ingokuhombisa ubuthakathaka kunoqina lwebabusi?  
Benazi ukuthi u Chief Isaac Molefe wase Nquthu ushushumbisiwe walahlwa e majukujukwini eshiya izingane zakhe nabantu bakhe ngoba engavunayo ukuba "yiphoysa-akosi"? Lohlu kungenzeka nakurwa. Ngolohlu umqondo wethu upanele ulusitshela ukuthi kufanele siqonde indlela encindezela ngayo ukuba silwazi ukufuna isikhathi esingcono sithabane ngaso.

**INTO OKUFANELE UYENZE—Yiza kulomhlangani uzozizwela ngokugamile ngecindezelo nangobuthakathaka bababusi.**

**ABAKHULUNI ABAZIWAYO BAYANOLA INKULUNO:**  
1. Mnu. V. G. Naidoo, Umphathisi-Isi-Isi so N.I.C.  
2. Mnu. Viljoen, umhlangano yamatshatshi i Anto.C.A.D.  
3. Mnu. Josiah Khumalo, we S.O.Y.A ye All-African Convention.  
4. Dr. Z. S. Christopher, Anti-Segregation Council.  
5. Mnu. G. N. Singh, we Anti-Segregation Council.  
6. Mnu. Arjun Sengal, we Anti-Segregation Council.  
7. Mnu. S. S. Tembani Ngati, we S.O.Y.A.

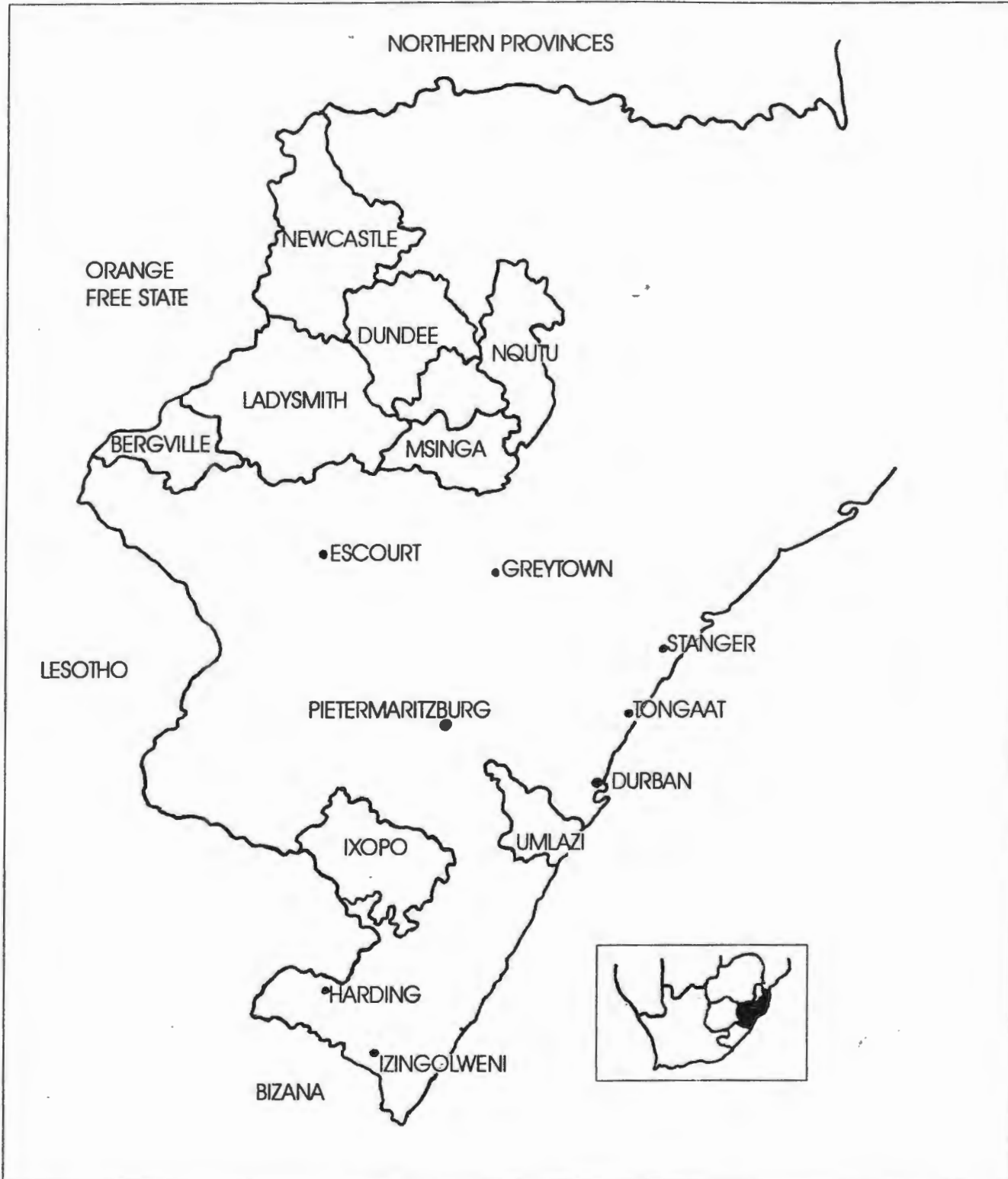
**Bonke Abasebenzi Kufanele Beze—Umhlangano Wenu Loyo**

**Hlanganani ukuze Nikhululeke**  
ISIKHALA SETHU: UKUNGELEKELELI UHULUMENI UKUBA ASICINDEZELE INJONGO YETHU: UMBUSO OPHILEKE KUBOBONKE ABANTU AMANDLA ETHU: INHLANGANO YABANGEMHLOPE

ISSUED BY THE SOCIETY OF YOUNG AFRICA, Dundee, Natal

A pamphlet advertising a meeting called by the Dundee Branch of the Society of Young Africa to protest against the banishment of Chief Isaac Molefe.  
(Source: National Archival Depot).

## MAP 3 : NATAL



Source: Atlas van die verslag van die Kommissie vir die Sosio - Ekonomiese Ontwikkeling van die Bantoegebiede binne die Unie van Suid-Afrika 1951 - 1955 (Pretoria: Government Printer, 1955).

### The Nqutu peasants fight the Rehabilitation Scheme

In the early 1950s, Zululand covered an area of about seven million morgen, which was occupied by approximately half a million people. These figures might suggest that there was not a land problem in Zululand, but as Limbada pointed out at the 1951 Conference of the NEUM, "a large part of the land is not habitable and large areas are being leased out to private companies prospecting for minerals."<sup>84</sup> As was the case in the other African reserves from the early 1930s, the government was becoming increasingly concerned about the prevalence of agrarian decay in Zululand.<sup>85</sup>

In 1936 the NAD initiated anti-soil erosion measures in Nqutu.<sup>86</sup> This reserve was divided into nine wards, and from the outset the NAD experienced opposition to its anti-soil erosion measures in the ward under Chief Isaac Molefe. Besides voicing his peoples' opposition to these measures to both the Native Commissioner for Nqutu and the Chief Native Commissioner for Natal, Molefe also went to the NAD headquarters in Pretoria in 1936 and registered his ward's opposition.<sup>87</sup> In a letter written to the NAD in 1937, Molefe spelt out the principle reasons why people opposed the anti-soil erosion works,

the soil erosion works here [are] not only doing some damage to our lands but [are] creating hardships and grazing restrictions; contours or dongas [are] made without our consent. The stock is not allowed to graze at certain places.<sup>88</sup>

In 1938 people of Molefe's ward were further enraged when the NAD started culling their livestock allegedly due to the outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the area. Molefe wrote to the Secretary of Native Affairs to express the outrage of the people,

Our cattle, sheep and goats are being destroyed and buried without any notice or reason being given to us. Cattle are our bank. We sell the wool of our sheep and goats and we eat them. They are now being destroyed...If it is meted out to us as a punishment we should be told so, and the offence we have committed should be made known to us.<sup>89</sup>

By 1944 the NAD had had enough of Molefe's "misconduct and his refusal to co-operate" with NAD officials.<sup>90</sup> The NAD suspended Molefe from his chieftainship and replaced him with Wellington Buthelezi. Buthelezi, was favourably disposed towards the government's

<sup>84</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. NEUM Conference Minutes, 1951, p. 17.

<sup>85</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Report of Commission, Natal and Zululand, 5 December 1939.

<sup>86</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Secretary of Native Affairs from the Chief Native Commissioner, Natal, 18 May 1936.

<sup>87</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Native Commissioner, Nqutu, from the Chief Native Commissioner, Pietermaritzburg, 5 June 1936.

<sup>88</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter written to the Native Affairs Department from Isaac H. Molefe, 13 December 1937.

<sup>89</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Secretary of Native Affairs from Isaac Molefe, 18 November 1939.

<sup>90</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Minute No. 1906 to the Governor - General, 18 August 1953, p. 17.

anti-soil erosion works and later the Reclamation Scheme, as the Rehabilitation Scheme was known in Nqutu.<sup>91</sup>

The Molefe Ward was the first area in Zululand to be subjected to large scale Reclamation Scheme measures after the Second World War.<sup>92</sup> As in other reserve areas the first Reclamation measure applied to the Molefe Ward, was the fencing of arable and grazing land. The peoples' immediate response to this measure was to cut the fences. Government officials held the nearest household responsible and fined them. The next measure introduced by the NAD was the removal of people from their scattered homesteads and their concentration into village locations.<sup>93</sup> In the midst of the Scheme's measures being applied to Nqutu, the NAD decided to reinstate Isaac Molefe to the chieftainship. At a meeting to mark his re-instatement the Chief Native Commissioner for Natal issued a warning to Molefe and the people of his ward that the government would not tolerate any opposition to the implementation of reclamation measures and would not hesitate,

to use force, if necessary to have the soil in the Native reserves reclaimed. You should therefore not allow this matter to come to a stage where the Government would be compelled to use force in reclaiming your wasted land.<sup>94</sup>

After people had been herded into concentrated settlements, they were told by the NAD that they were overcrowded. The NAD started to cull the cattle in the District and reduce the amount of land people subsisted on. As much as thirty eight percent of the livestock in the reserve was considered to be in excess of the carrying capacity of the land.<sup>95</sup> In April 1948 the NAD initiated the first culling operations in the reserve. When stockowners in the Molefe Ward were served with notices to produce their livestock, they decided not to comply and conveyed this decision to the Native Commissioner. The Commissioner was, however, determined to proceed with the cull, whether or not he received the co-operation of those afflicted. As a precaution against any possible resistance, a small police force accompanied the Commissioner to the culling centre in Nqutu on the day of the cull. The Commissioner and the police found that those stockowners who had been served with notices were present with their livestock, accompanied by a group of between three to four hundred supporters. When the Commissioner addressed the gathering, people unanimously objected to the branding of livestock to be culled. After lengthy deliberations, which also involved Isaac

<sup>91</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. NEUM Conference Minutes, 1951.

<sup>92</sup> NLSA. *The Star*, 'Abundant grass results from Zululand Reclamation', 10/8/1949.

<sup>93</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. NEUM Conference Minutes, 1951, p. 18.

<sup>94</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Notes of Interview with Chief Isaac Molefe, 12 August 1952.

<sup>95</sup> SAB. SAP 430, 15/9/48/7 - 15/3/48. Letter to the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police from the Office of the District Commandant, Vryheid, Natal, 27 April 1948. *The Star*, 'Abundant grass results from Zululand Reclamation', 10/8/1949.

Molefe, and in the face of a heavy police presence, people eventually relented in their opposition.<sup>96</sup>

In August 1949, *The Star* newspaper carried a glowing report of the reclamation work thus far carried out in the Nqutu. It reported that there was “a marked improvement in the condition of the veld”, and

it is now a common sight to see cattle, sheep and even goats lying down at midday after being able to eat sufficient during the mornings...Culling of surplus stock has twice been undertaken, for after the initial culling in the winter of 1948, a second cull was held...this winter...There was, and still is, a fair amount of opposition, but as the work progresses and the benefits become apparent, it is hoped that this will die away.<sup>97</sup>

The *Star's* report was totally ignorant of the severe impact the Scheme's measures were having on the population. Discussing the application of the Rehabilitation Scheme in the Transkei, Tabata pointed out that the culling of livestock only took two factors into consideration, namely, land and livestock. But, as he questioned, what do the cattle exist for?

When we come down to Earth we find that the Transkei is inhabited by a peasant people who are expected to live by tilling the ground and from their stock. With the figures as given, each man has to plough his plot with one beast, from which he must also get his milk and his meat. But even this one beast, according to protagonists of the ‘culling’ system, is too much. It must be reduced to a fraction, to enable it to get sufficient grass and grow fat, i.e. in accordance with the ‘carrying capacity of the soil.’<sup>98</sup>

By early 1951 Limbada and his group in Dundee had established links with Molefe and the reserve dwellers in Nqutu. Limbada realised that the easiest way to reach the people in the reserves was to work through the chiefs. In Isaac Molefe, Limbada found a chief desperately seeking assistance and solutions to the problems that had emerged for the inhabitants of Nqutu. Besides Isaac Molefe, there were a number of people around him, especially his so-called *Indunas* or advisers, who played an equally important leadership role in the peasants' struggle against the Reclamation Scheme. They also acted as intermediaries between the NEUM leadership and the reserve population, and were crucial in transmitting the political ideas of the NEUM to the people. Jack Molefe, the brother of Isaac, Isreal Moloji and Isaac Mpungose, were three of the notable peasant leaders in Nqutu who fulfilled these roles. These three individuals regularly attended the national conferences of the AAC and NEUM. Isreal Moloji, who was popularly known in NEUM circles as “the one-eyed eagle” (due to the fact that he only had one functional eye), has been described as extremely intelligent and a “most powerful speaker and orator. He enthralled his audience at the Conferences of the All-African

<sup>96</sup> SAB. SAP 430, 15/9/48/7 – 15/3/48. Letter to the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Pietermaritzburg from the District Commandant, Vryheid, 27/4/1948.

<sup>97</sup> NLSA. *The Star*, ‘Abundant grass results from Zululand Reclamation’, 10/8/1949.

<sup>98</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. A Letter to Seymour Papert from I.B. Tabata, 2 June 1950.

African Convention and the Unity Movement,” and was one of the first peasant leaders to be elected on to the national executive of the AAC during the early 1950s.<sup>99</sup>

In April 1951, Jack Molefe attended the NEUM Conference in Cape Town. At the Conference he outlined the development of the struggle against the Rehabilitation Scheme in Nqutu and gave some indication of the impact the Scheme had on the population. He stated,

The people have sent me down to tell you that they are not living happily...When a man has ten cattle, five are taken away...If he has two hundred sheep, one hundred and fifty are taken... Now that is our complaint. We do not know what stand to take. So much of our stock has been taken away from us and lands were taken away.<sup>100</sup>

At the NEUM Conference Tabata addressed the delegates from Nqutu. He pointed out to them that the Rehabilitation Scheme could only be applied if the people accepted it, but that the government got the chiefs to accept the Scheme and in this way it bypass the people. Tabata argued that chieftainship was an institution that had died a long time ago. Chiefs no longer expressed the will of the people but were government appointed and paid servants of the state. Tabata urged the delegates to go home and tell the people not to place their faith in the chiefs. He advised them to form their own organisations, peoples’ committees, and elect their own delegates to represent them, so that,

whenever any problem arises it must be discussed by all the people together, by themselves, and then only must their decisions be taken by elected delegates to the authorities – and not by the chief, who can be bought over. We advise you not to send chiefs to face the authorities.<sup>101</sup>

Tabata encouraged the delegates to spread this message throughout Zululand. Having heard the testimony of peasants from the Transkei who were present at this NEUM Conference, Tabata also encouraged the Nqutu delegates to go to the people throughout Zululand and tell them that the people in the Transkei were experiencing the very same problems as they were in Zululand. In light of the fact they were experiencing the same problems and fighting the same struggle, Tabata urged the Nqutu delegates to work towards forging links between the people of the Transkei and Zululand.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Interview, Kikia, October 1998. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. AAC Conference Minutes, 1953, pp. 27 and 37. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. AAC Conference Minutes 1954, p. 54. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. NEUM Conference Minutes 1951, p. 17. NLSA. *Torch*, ‘How cheap labour is created: poverty, hunger and injustice’, 10/4/1951. SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Chief Native Commissioner, Pietermaritzburg, from the Native Commissioner, Nqutu, 30 June 1952. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. Unity Movement of South Africa [UMSA] Papers. Report on Freedom Fighters of South Africa from The All-African Convention and the Unity Movement, issued by the Headquarters in Exile of the AAC and UMSA, Lusaka, Zambia, September 1965.

<sup>100</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. NEUM Conference Minutes 1951, p. 17.

<sup>101</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. NEUM Conference Minutes, 1951, p. 24.

<sup>102</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. NEUM Conference Minutes, 1951, p. 24.

The Nqutu peasants acted on Tabata's advice. In August 1951 the *Torch* noted the formation of "a huge organisation" in the Nqutu Reserve known as the *Vukuzenzele* Association.<sup>103</sup> The same *Torch* article related an incident of how the people used the *Vukuzenzele* to fight the application of Reclamation Scheme measures in their area and how they had began implementing the NEUM's policy of non-collaboration.

*Torch* tells the story of a meeting of five thousand people held under the auspices of the *Vukuzenzele* Association in Nqutu where a decision was taken to reject the Reclamation Scheme. Representatives of the Association conveyed this decision to the Chief Native Commissioner for Natal. In an attempt to trick the people, the NAD issued orders demanding that all stockowners produce their stock at the dipping tank for counting. But the people knew that the counting of livestock was a preliminary step to stock culling. Several *Vukuzenzele* meetings followed. The people of Nqutu decided not to take their livestock to the dipping tanks. In an attempt to circumvent the decision of the people, the NAD sent its agents to try and convince people that the NAD only wanted to count their cattle and that the *Vukuzenzele* had decided that cattle should be brought to the dipping tanks. When the day came for the livestock to be brought for counting, there was a complete boycott at two of the dipping tanks. At the other two dipping tanks, only a small number of cattle were brought. Women came to each of the dipping tanks to inform the Native Commissioner that the people had decided not to produce their cattle for counting. They stated that since the people had not been consulted about the Reclamation Scheme, the NAD had no right to apply it and in any case the people would not accept the Scheme.<sup>104</sup>

Besides pointing out to the peasantry of Northern Natal that their problems in Zululand were not unique but were a common experience of reserve dwellers throughout South Africa, the NEUM also emphasised to them that they should not view their problems in isolation. The peasants were encouraged to see their problems as a peasant – worker problem. It was pointed out that the peasants could not solve their problems independently, they needed the support of the workers, and so too, the workers could not solve their problems without the support of the peasantry. Cas Kikia, who work closely with Limbada among the reserve dwellers in Nqutu, has claimed that the peasantry of Northern Natal understood and grasped these ideas.<sup>105</sup>

Besides regular meetings between the people of Nqutu and the NEUM leadership in Northern Natal, the national leadership of the AAC also maintained regular contact with the

<sup>103</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Zululand resists Rehabilitation: meeting of 5000 defies government', 7/8/1951, p. 1. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. AAC Conference Minutes, 1953, p. 1.

<sup>104</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Zululand resists Rehabilitation: meeting of 5000 defies government', 7/8/1951, p. 1.

<sup>105</sup> Interview, Kikia, October 1998.

Nqutu peasants through the conferences of the AAC and NEUM, as well as through holding secret meetings with them. For example, on the 5<sup>th</sup> August 1951, an executive meeting of the AAC was held in Lady Frere in the Glen Grey District, which was attended by a delegation of peasant leaders from Northern Natal as well as from several districts in the Transkei and Ciskei. The delegation from Natal included Isaac Molefe. This meeting acted as an important catalyst in forging unity between peasants from different regions of South Africa. Tabata, who attended the meeting, described the impact it had on the peasants in attendance,

It [the meeting] was exceptionally good. The peasants spoke out their minds. I should say 'poured' out their hearts. We arranged that those in Natal should tell their stories in detail for the information of the Transkei and Ciskei ones, and vice versa. The effect was tremendous. Each group which had been nursing a private grievance in isolation suddenly discovered that they were not alone picked out for the satanic tortures.<sup>106</sup>

Again in March 1952 Tabata toured Natal and met with the Nqutu peasants. He briefly related this meeting to Tsotsi,

The peasants of Nqutu, the Molefe crowd, turned up in full force. After the meeting [public meeting in Dundee] we had a full discussion of their problems till two o'clock in the morning, when they looked for taxis to take them back to Zululand.<sup>107</sup>

In June 1952, in the face of stern opposition<sup>1</sup> from the people who had persistently obstructed the NAD in the application of stock culling measures, the Native Commissioner for Nqutu, V. Liebbrandt, issued summons<sup>2</sup> against two of the offenders for contravening Section Seven of Proclamation No. 116 of 1949.<sup>108</sup> Not surprisingly, Liebbrandt selected to charge two of the foremost opponents of the Reclamation Scheme, namely, Jack Molefe and Isaac Mpungose. In the subsequent trial Jack Molefe was found guilty and fined twenty pounds or two months imprisonment with hard labour. The case against Mpungose was remanded as his attorney indicated that that his client would lodge an appeal. Addressing a crowd of about seven hundred people who had come to witness the court proceedings, Liebbrandt stated that the government would proceed with the stock reduction and land reclamation. The people, however, remained unrelenting in their opposition and responded by stating that they would not produce their cattle for culling.

In his report to the Chief Native Commissioner for Natal, Liebbrandt noted that the opposition to the culling of livestock had spread throughout the Nqutu Reserve, and people in adjoining districts had also begun to organise themselves to resist this measure. Furthermore, he asserted that "members of the All African Convention and the African National Congress

<sup>106</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Dora Taylor from I.B. Tabata, 23 August 1951.

<sup>107</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. A Letter to W.M. Tsotsi from I.B. Tabata, 5 March 1952.

<sup>108</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Chief Native Commissioner, Pietermaritzburg, from the Native Commissioner, Nqutu, 26 April 1952.

have interested themselves in the culling of cattle in the Molife Ward.”<sup>109</sup> He was of the opinion that “opposition throughout Natal and Zululand is being instigated by these bodies.” Most significantly, Liebbrandt was of the opinion that Nqutu had emerged as “the testing grounds for the success or failure of stock reduction.”<sup>110</sup> He urged that the NAD should proceed with stock culling despite any opposition that may be forthcoming.

Isaac Molefe’s opposition to the to the government’s Reclamation measures was gradually earning him the wrath of Liebbrandt and in June 1952 he recommended the suspension of Molefe from the chieftainship for a period of at least three years. The Chief Native Commissioner for Natal, M. Liefeldt, was, however, doubtful whether Molefe’s suspension would result in an improvement in the situation as,

He [Molefe] has the sympathy of his people and his suspension at this stage would make a martyr of him in their eyes and very likely have the effect of crystallising their opposition to the reclamation scheme.<sup>111</sup>

Liefeldt decided to summons Molefe to his office where he “reminded” him that it was the government who had appointed him, and warned him that the government had the power to dismiss him. He made it clear to Molefe that the government would not “retain a person in its service who works against it.”<sup>112</sup>

By January 1953 the government was becoming increasingly concerned about underground political activities in Nqutu. Reports by the Special Branch of the South African Police pointed in particular to Limbada as the primary “outside agitator” responsible for “misleading” Isaac Molefe. The reports noted that Limbada was constantly active in Nqutu.<sup>113</sup>

In April 1953 Isaac Molefe and the residents of his ward again refused to produce their stock for the annual counting. In May 1953, Molefe was charged for failing to bring his cattle for counting. The possibility of being charged with the same offence hung over the heads of several hundred Nqutu residents. At the same time twenty women were charged with obstructing the Counting Officer in the execution of his duty. Nineteen of these women were eventually convicted, each woman receiving a fine of two pounds or fourteen days intensive hard labour. They decided to serve the imprisonment sentences instead of paying the fine.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>109</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Chief Native Commissioner, Pietermaritzburg, from the Native Commissioner, Nqutu, 26 April 1952.

<sup>110</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Chief Native Commissioner, Pietermaritzburg, from the Native Commissioner, Nqutu, 26 April 1952.

<sup>111</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Notes of Interview with Chief Isaac Molife, 12 August 1952.

<sup>112</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Notes of Interview with Chief Isaac Molife, 12 August 1952.

<sup>113</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria from the Office of the Officer in Charge, Special Branch, Durban, 6 January 1953. SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria from the Office of the Officer in Charge, Special Branch, Durban, 15 January 1953.

<sup>114</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Chief Native Commissioner, Pietermaritzburg, from the Native Commissioner, Nqutu, 19 May 1953. SAB. SAP 497, 15/17/52 – 15/4/52. Letter to the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria, from the Office of the District Commandant, Vryheid, 26 May 1953. SAB.

In June 1953 Liebbrandt again made a case for the suspension of Molefe. He also recommended that Molefe, as well as his wife, Monica, whom he alleged had led several demonstrations of women in the reserve, be removed from Nqutu. In August 1953 Isaac Molefe was deposed from the chieftainship and he and Monica were deported to the Delville Trust Settlement in the Xalanga District, Transkei.<sup>115</sup> Isaac Molefe and his wife spent five years in effective exile.<sup>116</sup>

Liebbrandt also urged that Limbada, whom he described as “a well known communist...[whose] activities have been detrimental in the Nqutu district during recent months”, be removed from the Dundee District.<sup>117</sup> By this stage, Limbada had already been served with two orders from the Minister of Justice, one under the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 and the another under the Riotous Assemblies and Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1914. These orders effectively banned Limbada, as they prohibited him attending meetings in the Magisterial District of Dundee for a period of twelve months. He was also prohibited “for a period of twelve months, to be present at any place in the Province of Natal or Transvaal, with the exception of that portion of the Magisterial District, Dundee, which is not a Native town or location.”<sup>118</sup> Limbada was, however, given permission to visit his pharmacy, which was located one mile from the Msinga Reserve, once a week. The banning order against Limbada was renewed for a further two years in August 1954.<sup>119</sup>

The banning of Limbada is significant, for he was the first person in South Africa to be banned under the Suppression of Communism Act.<sup>120</sup> Moreover, the significance of Limbada’s banning order lies in the fact that the government clearly considered his political work among the peasantry in the African reserves to be of such a serious nature as to warrant his banning.

The Commissioner for Dundee also recommended that Proclamation 2017 of 1953, which among other measures prohibited meetings consisting of more than ten persons, be

SAP 497, 15/17/52 – 15/4/52. Letter to the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria, from the Office of the District Commandant, Vryheid, 28 May 1953.

<sup>115</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Order by his Excellency the Honourable Ernest George Jansen, Doctor of Law, Governor – General of the Union of South Africa, 18 August 1953.

<sup>116</sup> NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, ‘Home coming of courageous fighter’, Volume 1, Number 2, September 1958, p. 3.

<sup>117</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Statement by V.M.P. Leibrandt, Native Commissioner, Nqutu, re: Conduct of Chief Isaac Molife and his wife Monica Molife, June 1953.

<sup>118</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. AAC Conference Minutes, 1953, p. 3.

<sup>119</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Chief Native Commissioner, Pietermaritzburg, from the Native Commissioner, Dundee, 2 November 1953. SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Secretary of Native Affairs from the Chief Native Commissioner, Pietermaritzburg. NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Dr. A.I. Limbada gagged again’, 17/8/1954. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. ‘Political Background of Unity Movement of South Africa Freedom Fighters, Dr. A.I. Limbada’.

<sup>120</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. ‘Political Background of Unity Movement of South Africa Freedom Fighters, Dr. A.I. Limbada.’

applied to the Dundee District. In support of this recommendation the Commissioner argued that,

For purposes of propaganda meetings and as headquarters for political organisations, Dundee is conveniently situated for Natives in the adjoining reserves of the Nqutu and Msinga districts and for Natives employed on the coal mines of this area. Dundee has in fact been and is the centre-spot of the activities by such organisations as the Natal Indian Congress.<sup>121</sup>

The Commissioner also attached a report from the District Commandant of the South African Police in Dundee to give greater credibility to these views. This report stated that,

The majority of the Natives in Dundee are from the surrounding Native reserves bordering the Dundee Magisterial District, consequently a meeting held in Dundee serves the same purpose as one in the reserve which is prohibited.<sup>122</sup>

Limbada was never removed from Dundee but after being served with his banning order he decided to relocate to Pomeroy, a small rural town situated in the Msinga Reserve about twenty kilometres south of Dundee. Although Limbada was under banning restrictions here, he still continued to co-ordinate the political work among the peasantry. Limbada's youthful assistants utilised innovative means to avoid detection by the Security Branch, such as the use of Limbada's ambulance to ferry peasants from the reserves to Pomeroy.<sup>123</sup> Gradually, towards the late 1950s the centre of NEUM activities in Natal shifted to the Natal Midlands and then to Durban. By 1960 Limbada had relocated to Isipingo, in close proximity to Durban, and along with Karrim Essack co-ordinated political work from there. Through organisers like Posselt Gcabashe and peasant leaders like Isreal Moloyi, the NEUM kept in touch with the peasantry of Northern Natal. Isreal Moloyi remained politically active within the NEUM until at least April 1965, when he arrested and imprisoned.<sup>124</sup>

This chapter has argued that the NEUM approached the peasantry through the land question, which from the mid-1940s reflected itself most acutely in the African reserves through the government's Rehabilitation Scheme. The examples of peasant struggles against the Rehabilitation Scheme indicate how receptive rural dwellers were to the political ideas placed before them by the NEUM. The chapter has shown that in a relatively short period of time a handful of dedicated cadres succeeded in building mass-based organisational structures affiliated to the NEUM in the countryside of the Eastern Cape and Northern Natal. Through these organisational structures the NEUM sought to unite the various peasant movements and

<sup>121</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Chief Native Commissioner, Pietermaritzburg, from the Native Commissioner, Nqutu, 2 November 1953.

<sup>122</sup> SAB. NTS 9524, 138/400/49. Letter to the Native Commissioner, Nqutu, from the Office of the District Commandant, South African Police, Dundee, 23 October 1953.

<sup>123</sup> Interview, Hatia, 6/5/1999. Interview, Kikia, October 1998.

<sup>124</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'Report on Freedom Fighters of South Africa from The All-African Convention and the Unity Movement', issued by UMSA, Lusaka, Zambia, September 1965.

co-ordinate their disparate struggles. By contrast, it has been argued that the ANC was inconsistent in the work it conducted in the African reserves. By the mid-1950s the ANC national leadership had still not recognised the importance of the reserve population in the liberation struggle.<sup>125</sup>

The period from the mid-1950s witnessed a marked intensification of peasant struggles in the South African countryside as a result of the introduction of the Bantu Authorities Act and Bantu Education by the Apartheid government. This spurred the peasantry throughout South Africa to greater levels of mass mobilisation and self-organisation. Moreover, it raised their political consciousness to unprecedented levels.

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<sup>125</sup> G. Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt*, Middlesex: Penguin, 1964, pp. 129–130.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### “WE DON’T WANT ZIPATHE”: THE AAC AND PEASANT MOBILISATION AGAINST BANTU AUTHORITIES AND BANTU EDUCATION, 1955 - 1960

**It is a paradox of the situation that although the peasant oppressed almost have no permanent organisations in most areas, they have been able to put up better, if also sporadic, struggles in defence of their fundamental rights to the land than their urban oppressed with their apparently more stable organisations. This is because the basis of the peasant struggle goes to the fundamental problem of the liberatory movement in South Africa – the agrarian question. The ‘Rehabilitation Scheme’ and Bantu Authorities directly pose the question of land and the franchise.<sup>1</sup>**

From the mid-1950s to the early 1960s militant peasant struggles in the African reserves throughout South Africa intensified markedly. The central causes for the intensification of these struggles was the merging of resistance against the Rehabilitation Scheme with increasing violent opposition to the imposition of the Bantu Authorities Act (1951) and the Bantu Education Act (1953). The Bantu Authorities Act and the Bantu Education Act were the designs of the new Apartheid government aimed at furthering the oppression and exploitation of the African population.

Throughout this period the All-African Convention (AAC) continued to conduct political work in the Transkei and Ciskei, as well as in other parts of South Africa. This chapter will focus on the political activity of the AAC around peasant struggles that emerged against the Bantu Authorities Act and the Bantu Education Act in the Transkei and Ciskei. It will also seek to illustrate the continuing development of a political consciousness among the peasantry.

#### **The Bantu Authorities Act – *Uzipathe***

The Bantu Authorities Act and Proclamation 180 of 1956 abolished the Native Representative Council (NRC), as well as the District Council and General Council system (the Bunga system) of the Transkei and Ciskei.<sup>2</sup> In its place the government envisaged the creation of a

<sup>1</sup> National Library of South Africa (NLSA). *Torch*, ‘In the Transkei To-day (VIII): Land and the Franchise’, 2/2/1961.

<sup>2</sup> University of Cape Town [UCT]. Government Publications Department. Union of South Africa, *Government Gazette*. Proclamation 180 of 1956. Proclamation 180 of 1956 was the amended version of the Bantu Authorities Act that was applied to the Transkei and Ciskei. It made allowance for the creation of District Authorities in the Transkei and Ciskei. W.D. Hammond-Tooke, *Command And Consensus: The Development of Transkeian Local Government*, Cape Town: David Philip, 1975, pp. 202 – 208. R. Southall, *South Africa’s Transkei: The Political*

four-tier tribal administrative pyramid based “as far as possible on the traditional chiefdoms”.<sup>3</sup> The essential features of the Bantu Authorities Act were the reconstitution and expansion of chiefly power and authority, as well as the “retribalisation” of the African population.<sup>4</sup>

Tribal Authorities formed the foundation of the Bantu Authorities system.<sup>5</sup> Operating at the location level, a Tribal Authority brought together a number of locations in a district, consisting “of groups of the same tribe or tribal elements with common interests.”<sup>6</sup> The local chief or headman stood at the head of a Tribal Authority, which was composed of councillors, most of whom were appointed.<sup>7</sup> The duties of Tribal Authorities ranged from the general administration of the locality, to the adjudication of civil and criminal cases, the implementation of Bantu Education and the recruitment of labour. Tribal Authorities were also expected to play a direct role in the reclamation, stabilisation and rehabilitation of the land.<sup>8</sup> A Tribal Authority could only be established once the affected people had been consulted. Consultation was deemed to have taken place once the local chief or headman had held a meeting with the people informing them of the establishment of such an Authority.

District Authorities constituted the next tier. It consisted of at least eight members appointed and elected from the Tribal Authorities in a district and was presided over by a chief or headman. All appointed or recognised chiefs in the district were regarded as *ex officio* members of the District Authority. The District Authority acted as a general watchdog over the activities and functions of the Tribal Authorities.

Above the District Authorities the government proposed to establish a Regional Authority. A Paramount Chief stood at the head of this Authority. If there was no Paramount Chief in a particular region, then a chief or headman would be appointed to act as its head.

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*Economy of an “Independent” Bantustan*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983, pp. 104–106. G. Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants’ Revolt*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964, pp. 39 and 40.

<sup>3</sup> Hammond-Tooke, *Command And Consensus*, p. 202. See also, NLSA. *Torch*, “Fascism Tries to Revive ‘Tribalism’”, 12/6/1951. Mbeki, *South Africa*, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, “Fascism Tries to Revive ‘Tribalism’”, 12/6/1955, pp. 1 and 8. Southall, *South Africa’s Transkei*, p. 104. W. Beinart and C. Bundy, ‘State Intervention And Rural Resistance: The Transkei, 1900–1965’, in M. Klein [ed], *Peasants in Africa: Historical And Contemporary Perspectives*, Los Angeles: Crossroads Press, 1978, p. 305.

<sup>5</sup> In the Transkei and Ciskei Tribal Authorities were also known as Community Authorities.

<sup>6</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, “Fascism Tries to Revive ‘Tribalism’”, 12/6/1955, pp. 1 and 8.

<sup>7</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. Union of South Africa, *Government Gazette*. Proclamation 180 of 1956, p. 6. Hammond-Tooke, *Command And Consensus*, pp. 206 and 207.

<sup>8</sup> Tribal Authorities took over the functions of the Location Advisory Committees which had been set up in each Betterment / Rehabilitation area in terms of the Betterment Proclamation No. 116 of 1949. The key task of the Location Advisory Committees was to ensure the co-operation of the people in the application of the Rehabilitation Scheme. It therefore acted as a crucial link between the NAD and the people in the implementation of the Rehabilitation Scheme. UCT. Government Publications Department. Union of South Africa, *Government Gazette*. Proclamation 180 of 1956, p. 11. UCT. Government Publications Department. Union of South Africa, *Government Gazette*. Proclamation No.116, 1949.

Members of the Regional Authority were drawn from the District Authorities, with recognised and appointed chiefs regarded as *ex officio* members of a Regional Authority. The function of the Regional Authority was the general oversight of the activities of the lower Authorities in the region.

The Territorial Authority stood at the apex of the new tribal administrative apparatus. It would consist of all the members of the Regional Authorities. The head of this Authority, whose appointment was subjected to the approval of the government, was styled the "presiding territorial chief".<sup>9</sup>

In its propaganda the government employed the deception that the Bantu Authorities system would afford the reserve population the opportunity of "administering your own affairs by self government along traditional Bantu lines."<sup>10</sup> For example, C.B. Young, the Under-Secretary for Bantu Affairs, declared in his address to the Transkeian General Council in November 1955 that,

it was the desire of each 'race' to rule itself or take part actively in such rule. The Bantu Authorities Act was a step towards local government of the Bantu, by the Bantu and for the Bantu.<sup>11</sup>

In the Transkei and Ciskei the Bantu Authorities system became synonymous with the term *Zipathe*, literally meaning "rule yourself".<sup>12</sup> But clearly a fundamental idea behind the Bantu Authorities Act was "to limit popular participation in decision-making" through the creation of a "collaborationist class" consisting mainly of government designated chiefs and headmen.<sup>13</sup>

The NEUM recognised that the measures contained in the Bantu Authorities Act marked a qualitative change in the administration of African affairs. It pointed out that this Act was designed to reverse the natural and historical process of development of the African population by "throwing the people back to the age of tribalism, atomising the population into tribal units, which would be subjected to the tyranny of the chiefs."<sup>14</sup> At its National Executive meeting in Queenstown in August 1951 the AAC passed a resolution rejecting the

<sup>9</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. Union of South Africa, Government Gazette. Proclamation No.180, 1956. Southall, *South Africa's Transkei*, p. 105.

<sup>10</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Zeal For Bantu Authorities', 24/4/1956.

<sup>11</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Folding Up Of Transkei Bunga', 6/12/1955, pp. 1 and 8.

<sup>12</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Tembuland Meeting Dissatisfied', 10/9/1957.

<sup>13</sup> Southall, *South Africa's Transkei*, p. 104. See also, M. Chaskalson, 'Rural Resistance in the 1940s and 1950s', *Africa Perspective*, 1,5 and 6, 1987, p. 49. See also, Southall, *South Africa's Transkei*, p. 104. NLSA, *Torch*, 'Fascism Tries To Revive Tribalism', 12/6/1951, pp. 1 and 6.

<sup>14</sup> NLSA *Torch*, 'Bantu Authorities Act Introduced To People', 23/10/1951, pp. 1 and 6. See also, NLSA. *Torch*, 'AAC on the National Situation', pp. 1 and 6, 14/8/1951. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Intensification of the Policy of Oppression', pp. 3. NLSA. *Torch*, 'AAC Conference: National Situation Reviewed', p. 5. W.M. Tsotsi, 'Out of

Bantu Authorities Act. The Executive instructed all branches and affiliated organisations to build the AAC's "organisational machinery" to "counter and nullify" the plans of the government.<sup>15</sup> By this stage the Cape African Teachers' Association (CATA) had already issued a directive to its branches "to work with the people to render the [Bantu Authorities] Act unworkable."<sup>16</sup>

In 1955 both the Transkeian General Council and the Ciskeian General Council accepted the Bantu Authorities Act. From 1956, after a Special Recess Committee had worked out how the Bunga machinery would be dismantled, the government started implementing the Bantu Authorities system. Whereas in other African reserves the implementation of the system started from the bottom up, with the establishment of Tribal Authorities, in the Transkei and Ciskei the government started at the top, with the establishment of the Territorial Authority and District Authorities.<sup>17</sup> The Department of Bantu Affairs experienced little opposition to the establishment of Territorial Authorities and District Authorities, for the creation of these structures did not require the participation of the people but merely involved the collaboration of chiefs and headmen. But when it attempted to establish Tribal Authorities, when as the *Torch* noted, "it tried to plant" the Bantu Authority system among the people, it experienced stern resistance.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Glen Grey peasants resist *Zipathe***

In the Ciskei, the most determined and sustained resistance to the implementation of the Bantu Authorities system occurred in the Glen Grey District. (See Map 2, p. 28b). W.M. Tsotsi played a leading role in organising this District under the auspices of the AAC. Among the Glen Grey population several leaders emerged who made important contributions in building the AAC structures in the District, as well as guiding the people in their struggles. Foremost among these was Joseph Hugo Saliwa. Tsotsi met Saliwa in 1941 when he took up the post as headmaster at the Freemantle Secondary School in the Glen Grey District. Saliwa later became

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Court: *The Memoirs of a Black Lawyer in Apartheid South Africa, 1950 - 1960*, unpublished manuscript, [no date], [kindly provided to me by the author], p. 32.

<sup>15</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'AAC on the National Situation', 14/8/1951.

<sup>16</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Bantu Authorities Rejected', 17/7/1951.

<sup>17</sup> Hammond-Tooke, *Command And Consensus*, p. 206.

<sup>18</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Tembuland Meeting Dissatisfied', 10/9/1957. See also, NLSA, *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Impressive AAC Regional Meeting', Volume 1, Number 2, September 1958, p.1. NLSA, *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'We Don't Want Chiefs: People Chant', Volume 1, Number 2, September 1958, p. 4.

a key organiser for the AAC with Tsotsi, and together founded the Glen Grey Peoples' Association as well as the Glen Grey Parents' Association.<sup>19</sup>

Besides the establishment of these district-wide organisations, Saliwa played an important role assisting Tsotsi with the establishment of peasant committees in each of the twenty-four locations that comprised the Glen Grey District. These committees co-ordinated popular resistance in the District. Each committee met once a week in its respective location and elected delegates to represent it on a Central District Committee. The Central Committee met once a month in the office of Tsotsi's legal practice in Lady Frere, the administrative centre of the District. The various location committees in the Glen Grey District, as well as the Central District Committee affiliated to the AAC.<sup>20</sup> The effectiveness of these committees has been described by Tabata,

the functioning of the local committees in Glen Grey...would give you joy to see with your own eyes. It is one thing to know correctness of a line in theory but quite another to see it actually functioning. The implications of it are terrific. Its ramifications are many. You will be surprised to see [how the] simple clutter of a complicated official machinery can be brushed aside by the one act of centralising its various local committees. Without any fuss the peasants simply turn their eyes towards their central committee and this makes all things – headmen, bunga, etc. unnecessary. It gave me great joy to see the possibilities of this policy.<sup>21</sup>

The district-wide network of peasant committees established by members of the AAC in the Glen Grey District became known as the *Amadyakopu*.<sup>22</sup> According to Robert Mabuto, the term *Amadyakopu* literally meant baboon.<sup>23</sup> He explains that a baboon is a strong and vicious animal that resolutely defends its troupe and territory, therefore,

they called themselves *Amadyakopu* because they were defending their territory and they were demanding their rights. They were protecting their families because baboons will protect their families.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>19</sup> W.M. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', pp. 40 and 108.

<sup>20</sup> W.M. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', pp. 40 and 108. Interview conducted with A.K. Tom by R. Kayser, Ezibeleni, Queenstown, 30/4/1998. Interview conducted with Pennie Fana Pita and Mr Sisusa [from the Zingqutu and Nkonkobe Locations respectively, Glen Grey District] by R. Kayser and A.K. Tom, Ezibeleni, Queenstown, 27/5/1998. Natal Archives Depot [NAB]. PAR, RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The state versus Kader Hassim and 12 others, Evidence of Stanford Sisusa, Zingutu Location, Glen Grey District, p. 2206. See also C. Bundy, 'Land and Liberty: popular rural protest and national liberation movements in South Africa, 1920 – 1960', in S. Marks and S. Trapido, *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London: Longman, 1987, p. 275. C. Bundy, 'Resistance in the Reserves: the AAC and the Transkei', *Africa Perspective*, number 22, 1983, p. 60.

<sup>21</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Seymore Papert from I.B. Tabata, 19/9/1950.

<sup>22</sup> The *Amadykopu* were also known as the 'Jacobins'.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Mabuto is from the Tsomo District and was an active member of the AAC affiliate, the Society of Young Africa (SOYA) during the 1950 and 1960s.

<sup>24</sup> Interview conducted with Robert Mabuto by R. Kayser, Idutywa, 7/5/1998.

In Glen Grey the term *Amadyakopu* also became synonymous with the rejection of chieftainship and the Bantu Authorities system. It was particularly through this district-wide network of committees that rural dwellers in the District co-ordinated their resistance to the implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act during the 1950s and early 1960s.<sup>25</sup>

In the Glen Grey District the institution of chieftainship had come to an end as far back as 1852, when the District was incorporated into the Cape Colony and white magistrates replaced the chiefs. These magistrates administered the District with the assistance of government appointed and paid headmen, most of whom were commoners.<sup>26</sup> Some minor chiefs opted to remain in the District but they were not recognised by the government. With the passing of the Bantu Authorities Act, the government attempted to re-invent the institution of chieftainship in the District.

In September 1951, the Magistrate of Glen Grey raised the question of the re-introduction of chieftainship at a district meeting of chiefs and headmen, which was also attended by ordinary residents. The Magistrate maintained that when he first came to the District people had told him that they wanted their own chiefs. He informed the meeting that if this was still the case, then the moment was opportune for them to press for such a demand as he was of the opinion that the government would be favourably disposed towards such a request. The only support for the introduction of chiefs came from a local Bunga member. After this expression of support, there was a storm of protest from the people, with one speaker bluntly stating that "We do not want chiefs and chieftainship."<sup>27</sup> When a speaker from the audience pointed out that this matter was too important to be decided upon at this meeting and that the rest of the people in the District should also be afforded the opportunity to air their views, the Magistrate promptly objected. He stated that he was not interested in their decisions, he merely wanted their opinion. Sensing increasing condemnation of the idea of chieftainship from the people, the Magistrate adjourned discussion on the matter until a public

<sup>25</sup> Supporters of chieftainship and the Bantu Authorities system were known as the *Ngcothozas* in the Glen Grey District. Interview, Tom, 30/4/1998. Interview, Pita and Sisusa, 27/5/1998. National Archives Depot [SAB]. NTS 7735, 330/333 – 366/333, Record of Enquiry held at Lady Frere on the 25<sup>th</sup> July 1960, into the activities of Cronje Bodlo and Butana Tom. SAB. NTS 7735, 330/333 – 366/333. Letter to the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, King Williams Town, from the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Lady Frere [Glen Grey], 23 March 1960. NLSA. *Ilizwe Lesizwe*, 'A Village Mourns', Volume 1, Number 1, September 1961, p. 3. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *APDUSA*, 'The Struggle of the Peasants in the Glen Grey District' Volume II, Number 13, October 1967, p. 11. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p.108. See also, Bundy 'Land and Liberty', p. 275.

<sup>26</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925, *APDUSA*, 'The Struggle of the Peasants in the Glen Grey District' Volume II, Number 13, October 1967, p. 9. W.M. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', 107.

<sup>27</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Bantu Authorities Act Introduced To The People', 23/10/1951, pp. 1 and 6.

meeting was held in October 1951. At this meeting the Glen Grey people promptly submitted a memorandum to the Magistrate in which they rejected the Bantu Authorities Act. When a vote was taken, the overwhelming majority of the people supported the memorandum. The Magistrate was compelled to state that as the majority of the people were not in favour of the Bantu Authorities system, the matter would be "left for the time being".<sup>28</sup>

Meanwhile the AAC conducted political propaganda against the Bantu Authorities Act in the various locations of the Glen Grey District. In August 1953, for example, A.K. Tom, a migrant worker and a member of the Society of Young Africa (SOYA) in Cape Town, who acted as an occasional organiser for the AAC in the Glen Grey District, convened a meeting in the Zingqutu Location, his place of birth.<sup>29</sup> In his address, Tom argued that the application of the Bantu Authorities Act would mean greater oppression for the African population and that the Act was introduced by the government as a response to the rising political consciousness of the people. He pointed out that under the Act "villages would be grouped into locations with a chief to look after the interests of the oppressors."<sup>30</sup> To fight the Act and other government measures, such as the Rehabilitation Scheme, Tom urged the Zingqutu people to elect a committee, which would function independently of the government and work with the existing committees in the District. He cautioned people not to accept any law without first discussing it in the Glen Grey peoples' committees. Heated discussion followed Tom's address during which the people of Zingqutu decided to reject the Bantu Authorities Act and have nothing to do with the chiefs created under the Act.<sup>31</sup>

The political work conducted in Glen Grey by the AAC in exposing the nefarious measures contained within the Bantu Authorities Act did not go unnoticed by the government. In September 1953, Saliwa who at that stage was the Secretary of the Glen Grey Peoples' Organisation, was served with a banishment order in terms of the Native Administrative Act of 1927.<sup>32</sup>

The order stated that Saliwa was to be banished to a Trust farm in the Pietersburg District of the Northern Province. Saliwa was also served with a warrant, whereby, if he refused to comply with the order, the South African Police would arrest him and dispatch him into exile. On being served with the order, Saliwa immediately went into hiding. In November

<sup>28</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Bantu Authorities Act Introduced To The People', 23/10/1951, pp. 1 and 6 See also, NLSA. *Torch*, 'Glen Grey Rejects Bantu Authorities Act', 6/11/1951.

<sup>29</sup> While working in Cape Town Andrew Kekana Tom studied part-time at the University of Cape Town. He later became a highly respected teacher in the Transkei.

<sup>30</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Bantu Authorities Act Rejected By Zingqutu People', 4/8/1953, p.5.

<sup>31</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Bantu Authorities Act Rejected By Zingqutu People', 4/8/1953, p.5.

1953 the police caught up with him. He was arrested and deported to a Trust farm in Pietersburg.<sup>33</sup> From Pietersburg Saliwa wrote to Tsotsi requesting him to initiate legal proceedings against his banishment. In September 1955 Tsotsi submitted an appeal to the Transvaal Supreme Court. The appeal was based on the grounds that prior to issuing of the order, Saliwa had not been acquainted with the allegations made against him. He was also not granted the opportunity of defending himself against these allegations. Saliwa's appeal failed; the judge ruled that in terms of the Native Administrative Act, it was not necessary for someone issued with a banishment order to be given an opportunity to make representations to the relevant authority. Tsotsi took Saliwa's appeal to the Appellate Division. Here Saliwa's appeal was successful. The Appeal Court ruled that Saliwa was entitled to a hearing before the order was issued.<sup>34</sup>

In June 1956 Saliwa returned to the Glen Grey District. To celebrate his victory and return, the Lady Frere branch of SOYA organised a big public meeting. The meeting had to be held on the banks of the White Kei River on the outskirts of Lady Frere, as the Magistrate would not allow it to take place in Lady Frere. Over two hundred people attended this meeting, with some people coming on horseback from Cala, while a carload came from Queenstown. Several leading members of the AAC in the Eastern Cape, including Honono, Sihlali and Tsotsi addressed the meeting. Saliwa also spoke, stating that "he would rather die a free man than live a slave's life. He had been banished for two and a half years, but had not changed his views at all."<sup>35</sup>

### **Mbinzana peasants fight the Bantu Authorities Act**

In an attempt to persuade people to accept the Bantu Authorities Act, the Glen Grey District was extensively toured by the Commissioner for the District, the Paramount Chief of Tembuland, Sabata Dalinyebo, as well as Kaiser Matanzima, who later became the Paramount

<sup>32</sup> Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p. 41.

<sup>33</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Vicious Attack On People Of Glen Grey', 6/10/1953, p.1. *The Soyana*, 'Behind the Iron Bars', by J.H. Saliwa, June 1958, pp. 1 - 4, [in the author's possession]. *The Soyana*, 'Behind the Iron Bars', by J.H. Saliwa, June 1959, pp. 20 - 23, [in the author's possession]. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', pp. 41 and 42.

<sup>34</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Unsuccessful Appeal Against Banishment', 27/9/1955, p.1. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Mr. Saliwa Wins Appeal', 27/3/1956, p. 1. NLSA. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', pp. 42-44. Immediately after the ruling in Saliwa's case, the Native Administrative Act was amended, giving the government the power to serve banishment orders without prior notice.

<sup>35</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Welcome Home Mr. Saliwa', 19/6/1956, pp. 1 and 8. Interview, A.K. Tom, 30/4/1998.

Chief of Emigrant Tembuland. Everywhere they went they found that people were totally opposed to the Act.<sup>36</sup>

There was a measure of support though for the Bantu Authorities system in one location in the District. This location was Mbinzana, which was situated adjacent to Matanzima's home village, Qamata. The prospective Bantu Authority representative here was Manzezulu Mtikrakra, who was also the headman of Mbinzana and a cousin of Matanzima. According to W.M. Tsotsi, Manzezulu had the support of about twenty-five percent of the Mbinzana villagers, but the overwhelming majority stood opposed to the imposition of Tribal Authorities.<sup>37</sup> The *Amadykopu* had a committee in the Mbinzana Location. Due to the volatile conditions pervasive in the Location, the organisation could not meet openly. Members had to meet secretly at night or hold beer feasts to conceal their meetings. In the Glen Grey District, Mbinzana became the focal point of violent peasant resistance to the imposition of the Bantu Authorities Act.<sup>38</sup>

The first attempt to "sell" the Bantu Authorities system to the people of Mbinzana was made at a meeting called by Manzezulu at the instance of Matanzima in 1955. This meeting was attended by four hundred villagers, as well as by members of the Transkei Organised Bodies (TOB), notably Tsotsi and R.S. Canca.<sup>39</sup> At the meeting four local chiefs lauded the Bantu Authorities Act. A young peasant, by the name of Duna who was a member of the local *Amadykopu* committee, questioned what authority the chiefs would actually possess under the Bantu Authorities Act. Canca pointed out that the Act would not remove the Magistrate and in practice there would be no real transfer of authority to the chiefs. Tsotsi also addressed the meeting and was reported to have exposed "entirely the emptiness of the 'benefits' claimed by the aspiring Bantu Authorities."<sup>40</sup> The meeting went on until sunset, with the people steadfastly refusing to vote on the issue of Bantu Authorities.

By 1959 the imposition of the Bantu Authorities system in Mbinzana came to a head. In March 1959, the Magistrate for Glen Grey convened a meeting in Mbinzana at the homestead of the Manzezulu. The meeting was to be addressed by the Chief Bantu

<sup>36</sup> Kaiser Matanzima was a member of the AAC during the 1940s. He excluded himself from the organisation entering the Bunga. Later he became the government's chief exponent of the Bantu Authorities system. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Quisling Can't Sell Bantu Authorities', 5/7/1955. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p.108.

<sup>37</sup> Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p. 107.

<sup>38</sup>UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925, *APDUSA*, 'The Struggle of the Peasants in the Glen Grey District', Volume II, Number 13, October 1967, p. 11. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p.108 and 109.

<sup>39</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Quisling Can't Sell Bantu Authorities', 5/7/1955.

<sup>40</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Quisling Can't Sell Bantu Authorities', 5/7/1955.

Commissioner for the Ciskei. The Central Executive of the *Amadyakopu* decided that this meeting should be boycotted by all except the Mbinzana residents, who were encouraged to attend to defend their interests.<sup>41</sup>

About one hundred local members of the *Amadyakopu* attended the meeting, along with about thirty other villagers.<sup>42</sup> Matanzima arrived at the meeting accompanied by about two hundred of his supporters armed with sticks. Before the Chief Commissioner arrived, Matanzima announced to the audience that on the arrival of the Commissioner everyone should stand as a sign of respect. He declared that after the Commissioner had spoken, only six men whom he had already selected and who were supporters of chieftainship and Manzezulu, would be allowed to speak. On the arrival of the Chief Commissioner, Matanzima urged the audience to stand, but about one hundred people remained seated. When Matanzima gave the order for the people to sit down, these people, led by two peasant leaders of the local *Amadyakopu*, Nkasiyeki Kaleni and Mawonga Dumezweni, left the meeting as a sign of protest against the proceedings. After these people left, the Chief Commissioner announced that he had come to install Manzezulu as the head of the Bantu Authority in the Glen Grey District and at the same time confer upon him the powers of civil and criminal jurisdiction. According to Tsotsi, this was the first time in the history of the Glen Grey District that such jurisdiction had been conferred on a chief.<sup>43</sup>

Five days later, Kaleni, Dumezweni and a few others were served with a summons requesting them to appear before Manzezulu's court on a charge of insulting him by leaving a meeting without his permission. All those served with a summons refused to appear. They were later brought to the Chief's court with the assistance of the police. They were all convicted of the offence and fined fifteen pounds or one head of cattle and three sheep. After this incident a state of tension emerged in Mbinzana. On the 1<sup>st</sup> May 1959, this erupted into violence with the burning of three huts belonging to headman Mbotoli Sibango. Sibango was the right hand man of Manzezulu and had assisted in bringing the peasant leaders before Manzezulu's court. Members of the *Amadyakopu* were blamed for the hut burning, though

<sup>41</sup> NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Amazing Story of Brazen House Burning', Volume 2, Number 6, October 1959, p. 5. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925, *APDUSA*, 'The Struggle of the Peasants in the Glen Grey District', Volume II, Number 13, October 1967, p.11.

<sup>42</sup> NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Amazing Story of Brazen House Burning', Volume 2, Number 6, October 1959, p.5.

<sup>43</sup> SAB. SAP 497, 15/17/52 – 15/41/51. Letter to the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Grahamstown by the District Commander, South African Police, Queenstown, 9/5/1959. NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Amazing story of Brazen House Burning', Volume 2, Number 6, October 1959, p. 5. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925, *APDUSA*, 'The Struggle of the Peasants in the Glen Grey District', Volume II, Number 13, October 1967, p. 11 and 12. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', pp. 109 -111.

they denied responsibility. They maintained that it was the work of agent provocateurs.<sup>44</sup> A few days after this incident twenty-seven huts belonging to members of the *Amadyakopu* were burnt down by a group of two hundred men. Kaleni's huts were among those destroyed. Several people who witnessed the hut burnings identified Manzezulu and Sibango as having been part of this crowd. Most of those who took part in the attack were, however, unknown to the people in Mbinzana. But it was suspected that they were supporters of Matanzima, because after the attack they moved off in the direction of Matanzima's village.<sup>45</sup>

The next day Kaleni and other eyewitnesses to the hut burnings made statements to the police. When Kaleni returned members of the *Amadyakopu* had assembled at his homestead. They held a meeting during which most speakers advocated an immediate retaliatory attack. Kaleni advised against this and was able to persuade the gathering to postpone this sort of action, pending a report from the Central Committee of the *Amadyakopu*.<sup>46</sup>

In an astonishing twist to developments, Kaleni and four eyewitnesses who had made statements to the police were arrested in May. They were charged with perjury for allegedly making false statements under oath by implicating Mbotoli Sibango in the hut burnings. Advocate Mike Davis, who was closely associated with the NEUM in Johannesburg, assisted by Tsotsi, appeared for Kaleni and the other accused. The prosecution's case hinged on the evidence of ten policemen. They testified that Sibango could not have taken part in the hut burnings as they claimed that on the evening he had spent the night at the local police station. According to Tsotsi, the eight defence witnesses gave a credible account of what had taken place on the night of the hut burnings, and all positively identified Sibango as one of the arsonists. However, in the face of equally credible evidence by the prosecution's witnesses, the presumption was against the accused.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925, *APDUSA*, 'The Struggle of the Peasants in the Glen Grey District', Volume II, Number 13, October 1967, p. 12.

<sup>45</sup> SAB. SAP 497, 15/17/52 – 15/41/51. Letter to the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Grahamstown by the District Commander, South African Police, Queenstown, 9/5/1959. NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Amazing Story of Brazen House Burning', Volume 2, Number 6, October 1959, p. 5. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Terror in the Transkei', 6/8/1959, p. 6. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Murder in the Bantustan', 30/8/1962, p.1. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', pp. 130-132. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925, Letter to 'Members of Organisations Affiliated to the NEUM' from Leo Sihlali, President of the NEUM, 11/1/1963. Mbeki, *South Africa*, p. 131.

<sup>46</sup> SAB. SAP 497, 15/17/52 – 15/41/51. Letter to the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Grahamstown, from the District Commander, South African Police, Queenstown, 12/5/1959. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', pp. 132-134.

<sup>47</sup> SAB. SAP 497, 15/17/52 – 15/41/51. Letter to the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Grahamstown, from the District Commander, South African Police, Queenstown, 12/5/1959. NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Amazing Story of Brazen House Burning, Volume 2, Number 6, October 1959, p. 5. NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Bantu Authorities Arrested', Volume 2, Number 7, December 1959, pp. 5 and 8.

As defence attorney, Tsotsi wrote to the Commissioner of the South African Police requesting that an enquiry be held into the unsatisfactory state of affairs that had arisen during the trial proceedings. In the letter Tsotsi stated that the accused were convinced that the police had fabricated their evidence. He enclosed an affidavit by a former employee of Matanzima, which stated that those who had taken part in the hut burnings had first gathered at Matanzima's home, before proceeding to Mbinzana. After the attack, they returned to Matanzima's home, boasting that they had destroyed several homesteads in Mbinzana. As a result of Tsotsi's letter the Attorney General ordered a stay of proceedings in the case and commissioned an investigation into the matter. Police investigators from East London revealed that the local policemen had lied during their evidence, and that Sibango had not in fact slept at the police station on the night of the hut burnings. With this new evidence Kaleni and the other accused were found not guilty and discharged.<sup>48</sup>

Before their leaders were discharged, the *Amadyakopu* demanded the arrest and trial of Manzezulu and Sibango, as well as their accomplices. In September 1959, after another appeal to the Attorney General by Tsotsi, Manzezulu, Sibango and seven others were arrested and charged with public violence. According to Tsotsi, the entire trial was a farce, degenerating into an enquiry into the political convictions of the peasant witnesses. They were asked whether they accepted Manzezulu as their chief. Typical of the responses from the peasant witnesses was that of Chambers Ziyeki Duna,

There is no chief...I have no chief. Write that down your worship. I do not know Sabata as Paramount of the Tembus; I know him personally. In the Glen Grey I know of Boards [village Management Boards]. I know nothing about chiefs. I never saw any chiefs.<sup>49</sup>

The rejection of any knowledge of chieftainship by the peasant witnesses, like Duna and Kaleni, as well as their rejection of the very concept thereof, ruined their creditability in the eyes of the Magistrate. The eventual outcome of the case was that it was thrown out of court and all the accused were acquitted. According to Tsotsi this dismayed the peasants and confirmed to them that the police and courts of law were part of the machinery of oppression, and that they could not look to them for justice.<sup>50</sup> The Mbinzana peasants continued to build a strong resistance movement within the Glen Grey District and beyond. In August 1962 Matanzima set truck-loads of armed "home guards" into Mbinzana in an attempt to destroy the

<sup>48</sup> Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p.135.

<sup>49</sup> NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Bantu Authorities Arrested', Volume 2, Number 7, December 1959, pp. 5 and 8. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p.141.

<sup>50</sup> NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Bantu Authorities Arrested', Volume 2, Number 7, October 1959, p. 5. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p.142.

resistance movement. During this attack Chambers Ziyeki Duna, the “uncompromising leader against the tyranny of the Bantu Authorities” was brutally murdered by Matanzima’s men.<sup>51</sup>

### **Tembuland peasants fight Bantu Authorities**

The districts of Umtata, Engcobo Mqanduli and Elliotdale comprised a region in the Transkei known as Tembuland. (See Map 2, p. 28b) In these districts resistance to the implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act simmered from the mid-1950s until the early 1960s. This resistance was particularly resolute in the Umtata District. Politically the Umtata District had been exposed to the ideas of the AAC since the mid-1940s. By the early 1950s the AAC was particularly strong in the Baziya Location of the District, where a vigilance organisation, known as the *Iliso Lomzi wase Baziya* had come under the influence of the AAC. In 1951, for example, the *Iliso Lomzi wase Baziya* sent delegates to the December 1951 Conference of the AAC in Bloemfontein. In January 1952 a meeting attended by about two hundred people was held at Baziya to hear a report by the delegates who attended the AAC Conference.<sup>52</sup> The General-Secretary of the AAC, Cadoc Kobus, was among those who also addressed this meeting. Significantly too, the very first conference of the TOB convened outside the town of Umtata and in the countryside proper was held at Baziya in March 1952.

Another location in the Umtata District, which was strongly influenced by AAC politics, was the Mputi Location. This was the home of the very influential Bangilizwe Marelane Joyi. Joyi was of “royal blood” and eligible to become the headman of the Mputi Location, a position he, however, chose not to take up. Instead Joyi became an advocate of the ideas of the AAC. During the 1950s, Joyi was an executive member of the TOB.<sup>53</sup> Bangilizwe’s younger brother, Jongimfene Joyi, also known as Twalimfene Gobinamba, was another key leader in the Umtata District who represented his area at several Conferences of the AAC.<sup>54</sup>

Opposition by rural dwellers to the Bantu Authorities system in the Umtata District surfaced after a Government Notice published in July 1957 declared that the District would be divided into four Tribal Authorities. As a sign of their opposition to the imposition of the Bantu Authorities system, people in three of the four Tribal Authority areas refused to co-

<sup>51</sup> NLSA. *New Age*, ‘Murder in Bantustan’, 30/8/1962, p. 1.

<sup>52</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, ‘AAC Delegates Report Back’, 22/1/1952.

<sup>53</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, ‘2000 People At TOB Conference’, 8/4/1952. Tsotsi, ‘Out of Court’, p.61. SAB. NTS 903, 269/362 (3) A – 271/362. Statement by Jongibandla Mkageli, Esikobeni Location, Umtata District, to the Special Branch of the South African Police, 10/12/1957. SAB. NTS 9037. Statement by William Memani, Ngquga Location, Umtata District, to the Special Branch of the South African Police, 11/12/1957.

operate with the Bantu Commissioner in the nomination of taxpayers to the Tribal Authorities.<sup>55</sup> In August 1957 the people of the Umtata District were granted permission to hold a meeting at Bumbane, the Great Place of Tembuland, to discuss the application of the Bantu Authorities Act to their District. At this meeting many people expressed their dissatisfaction with the Bantu Authorities system. One speaker stated, "I do not know what 'Zipathe' means. Chieftainship is not a mine where foremen and boss-boys are put in charge of people."<sup>56</sup> The meeting unanimously rejected Bantu Authorities and decided to send a delegation to the Magistrate of the District to convey this decision. It was also decided that a letter containing their objections should be submitted to the Secretary for Bantu Affairs in Pretoria.<sup>57</sup>

On the 16<sup>th</sup> September a delegation representing the people of the Umtata District met the Supervisory Officer for Transkeian Bantu Authorities, as well as the Commissioner for the Umtata District. Here they voiced the peoples' objections to the Bantu Authorities system. Among the key objections raised was that, although the government claimed that through the Bantu Authorities system people in the reserves were being granted the power to handle their own affairs, their practical experience of government promises and schemes in the past had convinced them that this was unlikely to be the case. As Baba Billitane, from the Ngqunge Location explained,

[the people] stated that they could not give in on a thing unknown to them because they had had a nasty experience with regard to rehabilitation – they had believed it to be a good scheme but it led to reduction of cattle. When the people asked why cattle were culled they were advised they could not complain as they had already accepted rehabilitation. If a scheme is not accepted it is not enforced.<sup>58</sup>

The government officials were told in no uncertain terms by Jongimfene Joyi that the "unanimous voice of the Tembus is take those things with you and go back to where you came from."<sup>59</sup> The delegation maintained that people in the District wanted a restoration of the independent status, which had existed before their territory was annexed. This implied that the

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<sup>54</sup> NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Banishment Laws', Volume 1, Number 1, July 1958, p. 2.

<sup>55</sup> SAB. NTS 9037. Letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs from the Chief Magistrate Transkei, 1/10/1957.

<sup>56</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Tembuland Meeting Dissatisfied', 10/9/1957.

<sup>57</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Tembuland Meeting Dissatisfied', 10/9/1957. SAB. NTS 9037. Letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs from the people of the Umtata District, 13/9/1957.

<sup>58</sup> SAB. NTS 9037. Tribal Authorities: Umtata, Notes of Interview held at Office of Native Commissioner, Umtata, 16/9/1957.

<sup>59</sup> SAB. NTS 9037. Tribal Authorities: Umtata, Notes of Interview held at Office of Native Commissioner, Umtata, 16/9/1957.

power of the Paramount Chief, Sabata Dalindyebo should be restored and that the Chief be allowed to run their affairs.<sup>60</sup>

The response of the Supervisory Officer for Bantu Authorities to the objections and request made by the delegation, was that the Bantu Authorities system had already become law in the Transkei and that it was too late for people to raise objections. He tried to convince the delegation that the government had the interests of the people at heart,

The whole system [of Bantu Authorities] is intended to help people in rural areas...If anybody tells you that is not so he can be classified as an agitator misleading people for his own ends. I am speaking the truth. Bantu Authorities is for the good of the people. I tell no lies.<sup>61</sup>

In the letter sent to the Secretary for Bantu Affairs by the people of the Umtata District, objections similar to those raised with the Supervisory Officer for Bantu Authorities were expressed. The letter made two specific requests. Firstly, that a deputation representing the inhabitants of Tembuland be allowed to come to Pretoria and hold an interview with the Secretary for Native Affairs. And secondly, that the NAD convene a commission of enquiry to investigate and verify the complaints made by people in the application of the Bantu Authorities system to the Umtata District.<sup>62</sup>

In November a deputation representing the people of Tembuland met C.B. Young, the Under Secretary for Bantu Areas in Pretoria. The delegation consisted mainly of representatives from the Umtata District, among them Jackson Nkosiyan (the Secretary of the Paramount Chief of Tembuland, Sabata Dalindyebo), Jongimfene Joyi, Gebenga Sasa and McGregor Ngolombane. Representatives from the districts of Xalanga, Engcobo, as well as Elliotdale completed the delegation. Again the objections of the people to the Bantu Authorities system were voiced by the delegation. Young, however, maintained that there was a substantial section of the population in the Umtata District who supported the system. He accordingly instructed the delegation to hold "a more representative" meeting among the people to more accurately assess their support for Bantu Authorities.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>60</sup> SAB. NTS 9037. Tribal Authorities: Umtata, Notes of Interview held at Office of Native Commissioner, Umtata, 16/9/1957.

<sup>61</sup> SAB. NTS 9037. Tribal Authorities: Umtata, Notes of Interview held at Office of Native Commissioner, Umtata, 16/9/1957.

<sup>62</sup> SAB. NTS 9037. Letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs signed by Jongabantu Joyi, Gebenga Sasa, Bhamba Bilitane, Sandyula Mnqanqeni and others, 13/9/1957.

<sup>63</sup> SAB. NTS 9037. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Secretary for Native Affairs, 21/11/1957. *Torch*, 'Opposition to Bantu Authorities Act', 21/1/1958. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Bantu Authorities', Volume 1, Number 1, July 1958, p. 2. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p. 65.

In December 1957 a meeting was held at Bumbane at which the delegation presented their report of the interview they had held with Young in Pretoria. At this meeting the people of Tembuland once again unanimously rejected the Bantu Authorities system. The meeting decided to send a letter to the Minister of Native Affairs informing him that they will not accept Bantu Authorities, in whatever form it was presented to them.<sup>64</sup>

In March 1958 a one-person Commission of Enquiry under the chairmanship of C.B. Young was held in Umtata to investigate the reasons why people in Tembuland refused to co-operate in the implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act.<sup>65</sup> The people of Tembuland were instructed to submit the names of their representatives who would appear before Young. But the Secretary for Native Affairs confidentially gave Young authorisation to "decide who will be permitted to appear before him."<sup>66</sup> This meant that leaders like Bangilizwe Joyi, who was among those democratically elected by the people of the district as their spokesman, was prevented from addressing the Commission.<sup>67</sup> The Young Enquiry concluded that only the Tembus of the Umtata District were opposed to the Bantu Authorities system. Accordingly, people in the District were once again ordered to call a meeting at Bumbane to decide whether they were still opposed to the system.<sup>68</sup>

At the Enquiry, the people of Tembuland presented Young with a document entitled "Memorandum on the Difficulties and Tensions arising from the Implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act in Tembuland".<sup>69</sup> The TOB later published the Memorandum and in the preface stated that the organisation was not in agreement with all the views expressed in it, maintaining that the Memorandum could "hardly be said to be progressive."<sup>70</sup> In the Memorandum the people of Tembuland outlined their objections to the Bantu Authorities system. The Memorandum stated that the peoples' central objection to the implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act was that it had fallen far below their expectations. The Memorandum explained that people had expected "a re-transfer or at least a delegation of some powers of the Governor General to the traditional Paramount Chief." However,

<sup>64</sup> SAB. NTS 9037. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Umtata from the Officer in Charge, Special Branch of the South African Police, Transkei. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Opposition to Bantu Authorities Act', 21/1/1958.

<sup>65</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Chiefs VS Tembu People', 25/3/1958, *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Banishments', Volume 1, Number 1, July 1958, p. 2. SAB. NTS 9037. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Secretary of Native Affairs, 4/12/1957.

<sup>66</sup> SAB. NTS 9037. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Secretary of Native Affairs, 4/12/1957.

<sup>67</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Deportation Of Four Spokesmen: TOB Launches Defense Fund Appeal', 26/8/1958, pp. 1 and 8.

<sup>68</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Chiefs VS Tembu People', 25/3/1958.

<sup>69</sup> Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p. 50-59. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Rejects Bantu Authorities: TOB Statement', 4/11/1958, p. 6.

<sup>70</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Rejects Bantu Authorities: TOB Statement', 4/11/1958, p. 6.

far from strengthening the position of the Paramount Chief of the Tembus and preserving the unity of the Tembu Nation, the Bantu Authorities Act had proved to be a source of weakness and disunity. It was primarily for this reason that at several representative meetings of the Tembu Nation, the Bantu Authorities Act, not only its application, has been roundly condemned and rejected.<sup>71</sup>

In May 1958, barely two months after the Young Commission had concluded its enquiry, the democratically elected leaders of the people and co-authors of the Memorandum, namely Bangilizwe Joyi, his younger brother Twalimfene, Jackson Nkosiya and McGregor Mgolombane were arrested and banished. Bangilizwe was banished to the Bergplaas Farm in the Louis Trichardt District, Twalimfene to a Trust farm in the Kuruman District and Nkosiya to a farm in the Soutpansberg.<sup>72</sup> At a meeting under the chairmanship of Young, held at Umtata to announce the findings of the Commission of Enquiry, Young maintained that the four Tembu leaders had been deported because they had spoken disparagingly of high officials of the Bantu Affairs Department (BAD) at Umtata.<sup>73</sup>

The TOB took up the plight of the four banished leaders. The organisation launched a fund to take legal action for the return of the four men and to assist their families. In a published statement, the TOB pointed out that the opposition of the people of Tembuland towards the Bantu Authorities Act,

stemmed from the realisation that the Bantu Authorities are an instrument for splitting the unity of the people by ethnic groupings, thereby facilitating the introduction of schemes like fencing and stock reduction which the great majority have refused to accept over the years.<sup>74</sup>

The TOB maintained that the four leaders had been deported because they had been resolute in expressing the opposition of the people to the Bantu Authorities system.

The Chief Magistrate of the Transkei took issue with the TOB's statement. In response he argued that the four had not been deported due to their opposition towards Bantu Authorities but because they were alleged to have caused "tribal strife" and assumed the prerogatives of the Paramount Chief. He furthermore held that the people were not opposed to government measures. The TOB thereupon denied that the deportees had caused "tribal strife" and instead maintained that the Chief Magistrate was responsible for causing division and

<sup>71</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Rejects Bantu Authorities: TOB Statement', 4/11/1958, p. 6. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p55.

<sup>72</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Four Deported From Tembuland', 10/6/1958. NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Banishment Laws', Volume 1, Number 1, p. 2, July 1958. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Detention Camp For Women Being Built: People's Leaders Exiled by Government', 15/10/1959, pp. 1 and 5. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Bring the exiles Home!', 3/11/1960, p.

3. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', pp. 60 and 69.

<sup>73</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'NAD On Banishment Of Tembu Leadership', 24/6/1958, p. 1.

<sup>74</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Deportation Of Four Spokesmen', 26/8/1958, p.1.

strife among the people. It challenged the Chief Magistrate to permit the organisation to hold a public meeting to test the true feeling of the people about the government's schemes.<sup>75</sup>

With the peoples' leaders removed from the Umtata District, the Magistrate could now confidently proceed to establish a single Tribal Authority for the District. Due to the continued refusal of the people to nominate their own candidates, the Paramount Chief and the Native Commissioner were forced to nominate all the members of the Tribal Authority.<sup>76</sup> Eventually, in November 1963 the banishment orders against the Joyi brothers, Nkosiyana and Ngolombane were withdrawn.<sup>77</sup>

The development of opposition to Bantu Authorities in other parts of the Transkei and Ciskei, and indeed in the other African reserves in South Africa followed the general pattern described in this chapter. In July 1958, for example, the AAC held a regional meeting at Lady Frere, which was attended by over sixty representatives of peasant organisations from about twenty villages in both the Transkei and Ciskei. At this meeting the delegates strongly condemned the Bantu Authorities Act as well as the Rehabilitation Scheme. They recounted how the BAD disregarded the opposition of the people and went ahead with their schemes. In many areas people simply refused to participate in the election of Tribal Authority members. In those areas where chieftainship still existed, the BAD got the chiefs to accept Bantu Authorities in the name of the people. Delegates noted that even in such cases, people had expressed their disapproval by refusing to vote for the chiefs' nominees. As a result most Tribal Authorities consisted of members who were nominated by the chief. It was reported that in one case people had created a deadlock by electing all leaders known to be in opposition to the government's schemes. The Commissioner for this area responded by refusing to accept their names. Delegates also reported that government officials had threatened them with banishment if they continued to lead the opposition in their areas.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>75</sup> NLSA. *Transkeian Territorial News*, 28/8/1958. NLSA. *Daily Dispatch*, 1958. NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Deportation of African Leaders: Bold Stand by Transkeian Bodies', Volume 1 Number 3, November 1958, p. 2. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court' p. 61-63.

<sup>76</sup> SAB. NTS 9037. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Magistrate of Umtata District, 21/5/1958. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Umtata 'Authority' meets in court room', 18/11/1958, pp. 1 and 8.

<sup>77</sup> SAB. URU 4608, 2069, 25/11/1963.

<sup>78</sup> NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Impressive AAC Regional Meeting: Rural Parochialism Dying', Volume 1, Number 2, September 1958, p. 1.



1958 Conference of the All-African Convention held in Edendale, Pietermaritzburg. On the platform from left to right: Dr A.C. Jordan, Nathaniel Honono, W.M. Tsotsi and Leo Sihlali.  
(Photo: Alan Paton Centre, University of Natal).



1958 AAC Conference. At this Conference the Anti-CAD broke away from the AAC and ASC.  
(Photo: Alan Paton Centre, University of Natal).



The 1958 Conference of the AAC. A large delegation of peasant representatives from the Transke, Ciskei and Northern Natal attended this Conference.  
(Photo: Alan Paton Centre, University of Natal).



A 'prohibited meeting' held by members of the Glen Grey peasant committee (the *Amadykopu*) during the 1950s. The meeting is addressed by Joseph Hugo Saliwa (standing in the background).

### **CATA and the struggle against the Bantu Education Act**

While engaged in the struggle against the introduction of the Bantu Authorities system, the AAC especially through its affiliate, the Cape African Teachers' Association (CATA) was also at the forefront of mobilising resistance to the implementation of the Bantu Education Act in the Transkei and Ciskei during the 1950s. CATA took its fight against the introduction of Bantu Education to the grassroots level, winning support through linking it to popular opposition to the Rehabilitation Scheme and Bantu Authorities.<sup>79</sup>

The AAC identified the Bantu Education Act as the second major cornerstone of the Apartheid government's plan aimed at the "Bantuisation" of the African population. The Apartheid government's approach on the question of African education was bluntly outlined by Dr Verwoerd, the Minister of Native Affairs,

My Department's policy is that [Bantu] education should stand with both feet in the Reserves and have its roots in the spirit and being of Bantu society...There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour...For this reason it is of no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community. Until now he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he was not allowed to graze.<sup>80</sup>

The Bantu Education Act of 1953 was based on the recommendations of the Eiselen Commission, which between 1949 and 1952 enquired into the education of African children. Among the most crucial recommendations proposed by this Commission was the transfer of education from Provincial and private bodies to the Native Affairs Department (NAD). It proposed that the NAD take full central control of African education and delegate local power to tribal school committees and school boards, which in turn would be under the supervision of the Tribal, District and Regional Authorities created under the Bantu Authorities Act. In this way the NAD would take control over virtually every aspect of the lives of the African population. The Eiselen Commission's recommendations envisaged a fundamental altering in the curriculum of African education, with an emphasis on manual training and religious instruction as the only compulsory subject. It also recommended that African children be taught in their mother tongue during the first four years of their education. Thereafter, "for

<sup>79</sup> J. Hyslop, *The Classroom Struggle: Policy and Resistance in South Africa, 1940 – 1990*, Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1999, p. 89.

<sup>80</sup> Dr H.F. Verwoerd, 'Bantu Education: Policy for the Immediate Future', quoted in I.B. Tabata, *Education for Barbarism*, London: Unity Movement of South Africa, 1980, (first published in 1959), p. 13.

economic considerations" African children should obtain some knowledge of one or both of the "official" languages.<sup>81</sup>

CATA immediately took up the struggle against the "Bantuisation" of African Education. In December 1953 it convened a national teachers' conference in Queenstown to consider ways in which the introduction of Bantu Education could be opposed. Two hundred teachers attended this Conference, with "fraternal delegations" from the Teachers' League of South Africa (TLSA) and the Transvaal Indian and Coloured Teachers' Association.<sup>82</sup> At the Conference a resolution was adopted which identified the introduction of Bantu Education as a "deliberate devise to stunt the intellectual development of the African child and deny him the rights of citizenship in modern society."<sup>83</sup> The resolution called upon the black population to struggle not only against the Bantu Education Act, the Bantu Authorities Act and the entire oppression system, but also to struggle for the rights of full citizens.<sup>84</sup> CATA, the AAC and the NEUM therefore linked the struggle against Bantu Education to the broader national struggle for full democratic rights. Indeed, Tabata regarded the struggle against Bantu Education as an excellent opportunity to draw people into the broader national political struggle. At the 1955 CATA Conference he argued that the struggle against Bantu Education could be utilised,

to enhance the general struggle for liberty. The proper application of our policy of non-collaboration and our slogan or tactic of the boycott will give us a grand opportunity to give our movement a great fillip and carry it several notches forward.<sup>85</sup>

At the practical level the AAC and CATA's struggle against Bantu Education took the form of calling upon the African population to boycott school committees and school boards. CATA identified school committees and school boards as the "very pillars" upon which Bantu Education would be built. The Association recognised that by refusing to elect or stand for

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<sup>81</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Education for Slavery: Commissions Recommendations on African Education', 19/2/1952. See also, NLSA. *The Teachers' Vision*, 'Union-wide Teachers' Conference', Volume XXI, Number 3, January – March 1954, pp. 6 - 10. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Glen Grey Against "Bantuisation": Parent-Teacher meeting pledges itself to struggle', 10/8/1954. See also, T. Karis, G.M. Carter and G.M. Gerhart, *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882 – 1964*, Volume 3, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1977, p. 30.

<sup>82</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Historic Teachers' Conference Discusses Anti-Education Act: Call to Struggle Against "Bantuised" Schooling', pp. 1 and 8. NLSA. *The Teachers' Vision*, 'Union-wide Teachers' Conference', Volume XXI, Number 3, January – March 1954, pp. 6 - 10. See also, Hyslop, *The Classroom Struggle*, p. 43. T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, Johannesburg: Ravan, 1985, p. 118.

<sup>83</sup> NLSA. *The Teachers' Vision*, 'Union-wide Teachers' Conference', Volume XXI, Number 3, January – March 1954, pp. 6 - 10.

<sup>84</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Historic Teachers' Conference Discusses Anti-Education Act: Call to Struggle Against "Bantuised" Schooling', 22/12/1953, pp. 1 and 8. NLSA. *The Teachers' Vision*, 'Union-wide Teachers' Conference', Volume XXI, Number 3, January – March 1954, pp. 6 - 10.

election to these committees and boards parents would be able to thwart the implementation of the Bantu Education Act. CATA encouraged teachers to play a leading role in the formation of parents' associations, which would be established on the basis of the rejection of the "Bantuisation" of education. CATA appealed to teachers not to abandon the teaching profession but to go into the schools and fight the introduction of Eiselen education. It, however, cautioned teachers not to accept the special posts that were created in terms of the Bantu Education Act.<sup>86</sup>

CATA's strategy to fight Bantu Education stood in contrast to that of the ANC. The ANC called upon school children to boycott classes indefinitely. The AAC condemned the ANC's approach, maintaining that by withdrawing from school, African children were being asked to sacrifice the little education (though inferior) which was available to them. The AAC furthermore pointed to the hypocrisy of the ANC's stance on Bantu education, which while calling upon children to boycott classes was at the same time encouraging the election of school committees and school boards.<sup>87</sup>

The AAC and CATA took their fight against the introduction of Bantu Education to the various districts and locations in the Transkei and Ciskei. This was done, by among other things, holding public meetings. In April 1954, for example, the CATA executive, consisting of its President J.L. Mkentane, Nathaniel Honono, Leo Sihlali and Z.K. Mzimba addressed regional conferences organised by CATA in the Transkeian districts of Mount Frere, Matatiele and Umtata.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, in July 1954 the AAC held a meeting in Lady Frere to discuss ways in which the people of the Glen Grey District could fight the "Bantuisation" of African education. The Lady Frere meeting was particularly well attended, especially by parents in the District and was addressed by Tsotsi, Tabata and Canca. In his address Tabata maintained that the Bantu Education Act, the Bantu Authorities Act and the Rehabilitation Scheme needed to

<sup>85</sup> UCT. Archives and Manuscripts Department. Unity Movement of South Africa / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Speech by I.B. Tabata, CATA Conference, 1955.

<sup>86</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Growing Opposition to Eiselen Schooling', 27/4/1954. NLSA. *Torch*, 'The Murders of Learning: CATA Analyses Verwoerd's Education Policy', 12/10/1954. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Battle Against Eiselen Schooling: Lively Discussion at AAC Conference', 28/12/1954. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Quisling Meets His Moses: Tsolo Rejects Bantu Education', 15/2/1955. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Butterworth District Opposes Bantu Education: Election of School Committee Rejected', 15/2/1955. See also, Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p.240. Hyslop, *The Classroom Struggle*, p. 42.

<sup>87</sup> NLSA. *New Age*, 'Congresses Plan Alternative education for Children: Schools will be Boycotted', 14/4/1955, pp. 1 and 8. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Intensify Schools Boycott, Says ANC', 2/6/1955, p. 7. NLSA. *Liberation*, 'Fighting Against Bantu Education', Number 14, December 1955, pp. 3 – 7. NLSA. *Liberation*, 'Transkei Re-Visited', Number 16, February 1956, p. 18. See also, A. Drew, 'Social Mobilization', p. 473. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa*, pp. 121 – 127. Hyslop, *The Classroom Struggle*, pp. 65 – 80 and 91. Karis, Carter and Gerhart, *From Protest to Challenge*, Volume 3, pp. 30 – 35.

<sup>88</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Growing Opposition to Eiselen Schooling', 27/4/1954.

be seen together, as it formed part of the legislation directed against the African population, the basis of which was the need to satisfy the labour demands of the ruling class. The Rehabilitation Scheme, Tabata argued, was directed at the adult population, while the Bantu Authorities Act aimed to create the machinery to implement the Bantuisation of African education. If parents worked the Bantu Authorities Act, Tabata stressed, then they would be “paving the way for Eiselen schooling.”<sup>89</sup>

The government established the 1<sup>st</sup> April 1955 as the date by when the NAD would take control of African education. In the Transkei and Ciskei, however, this move was preempted due to the general opposition of the population. In particular this opposition was reflected through the peoples’ support of the AAC’s call to boycott the election of school committees and school boards. At a meeting in Tsolo in January 1955 the overwhelming majority of people supported a resolution which stated that,

We neither sell nor hire out our school buildings to the Department [NAD], and we shall boycott the Bantu Authorities, School Boards and School Committees that will be used to squeeze out taxes from us and who will thus be used as tools for the enslavement of our children. We shall ostracise whoever takes up positions in these Herrenvolk institutions.<sup>90</sup>

Similarly, in January 1956 members of the Bunga and the Native Representative Council called a public meeting in Butterworth to discuss the election of school committees. Two hundred people attended this meeting, with representatives from each of the twenty-five locations in the District. People walked out of the meeting when the chairman refused to accept a motion from a member of the AAC stating that “the people reject the [Bantu Education] Act and refuse to elect [school] committees”.<sup>91</sup> Meanwhile, in the Glen Grey District the local Magistrate and the Inspector of schools went around from village to village “telling people about the good in Bantu Education and that they should elect Eiselen Committees.”<sup>92</sup> However, due to the AAC’s campaign against the Bantu Education Act, by April 1955 eleven locations in the District refused to have anything to do with the elections for school committees. In the remaining thirteen locations, elections had only taken place after threats by the Magistrate that schools would be closed down if people did not elect school committees.<sup>93</sup> In the districts of Mount Ayliff and Tsomo the AAC also received strong

<sup>89</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Glen Grey Against “Bantuisation”: Parent-Teacher Meeting Pledges itself to Struggle’, 10/8/1954.

<sup>90</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Quisling Meets His Moses: Tsolo Rejects ‘Bantu Education’, 15/2/1955.

<sup>91</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Butterworth District Opposes Bantu Education: Election of School Committee Rejected’, 15/2/1955.

<sup>92</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Glen Grey Parents Reject Eiselen De-Braining: Parents Resolute Battle’, 5/4/1955.

<sup>93</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Glen Grey Parents Reject Eiselen De-Braining: Parents Resolute Battle’, 5/4/1955.

support in its call to boycott the election of school committees. In both these districts the election of twenty-five out of approximately thirty school committees were completely boycotted.<sup>94</sup>

CATA's campaign against the introduction of Bantu Education in the Transkei and Ciskei was met with repressive government action. In 1951 the Cape Education Department stopped recognising CATA as a representative teachers' association. From June 1954 CATA meetings in the Transkei and Ciskei were effectively banned when the government issued Proclamation 97 of 1954.<sup>95</sup> In July 1954 the Special Branch of the South African Police armed with warrants raided the schools and homes of three leading CATA members in the Transkei, namely, its newly elected President, Nathaniel Honono, J.L. Mkentane and Leo Sihlali. Among the material confiscated by the Security Police during these raids were the financial documents and minutes of CATA conferences.<sup>96</sup> CATA received a further blow in January 1955 when the government issued new regulations governing the employment of African teachers. These regulations made it an offence for African teachers to criticise any government department or government official.<sup>97</sup>

In light of these regulations CATA stopped publication of its quarterly teachers' journal, *The Teachers' Vision*. In the final publication of its journal, CATA called upon "a body of public-spirited men and women" who were not actively engaged in teaching to "immediately organise the publication of a magazine like *The Teachers' Vision*."<sup>98</sup> Soon afterwards a new CATA journal, *The New Teachers' Vision* was launched. At its June 1955 Conference, CATA teachers decided that they would not succumb to the government's intimidation by disestablishing the teachers' association.

<sup>94</sup> NLSA. *The Teachers' Vision*, January – March 1955. See also, Hyslop, *The Classroom Struggle*, pp. 83 and 84. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa*, p. 128.

<sup>95</sup> In terms of the Proclamation meetings of more than ten people in rural areas were prohibited unless prior permission had been obtained from government authorities. Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', 227. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Butterworth teachers to appear in court', 10/8/1954.

<sup>96</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'Police Raid AAC and CATA Officials: Search for Books, Minutes and Addresses', 3/8/1954. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Treason Witch-Hunt in Transkei: Police Intimidation Continues', 10/8/1954. Also, Hyslop, *The Classroom Struggle*, p. 43.

<sup>97</sup> The particular clause stated that "any teacher employed by the School Board who...identifies himself with a political party or body, or who actively participates in political affairs...or contributes to the Press by interview or in any other manner or otherwise publishes a letter or article criticising or making unfavourable comment on the Department of Native Affairs and State Department, School Committee, School Board or any Bantu authority, or any officer connected with any bodies mentioned...is guilty of misconduct and action shall be taken against him." NLSA. *Torch*, 'CATA is Silenced; Calls to Parents: Last Issue of "The Vision" Published', 5/4/1955.

<sup>98</sup> NLSA. *The Teachers' Vision*, 'Parents of Our Orphaned Children – the "Vision" is yours', January – March 1955, p. 19. NLSA. *Torch*, 'CATA is Silenced; Calls to Parents: Last Issue of "The Vision" Published', 5/4/1955.

In July 1955 the NAD through the school boards dismissed the first batch of nine African teachers from their posts in terms of new regulations introduced by the government controlling the employment of African teachers. All nine teachers were CATA members, four of whom were executive members and leading opponents in the fight against Bantu Education. The four CATA officials dismissed were, Nathaniel Honono, the CATA President and principal of Nqabara Secondary School; J.L. Mkentane, CATA Treasurer and the principal of Fort Malan Secondary School; Leo Sihlali, the Editor of *The Teachers' Vision* and a Secondary School teacher in Butterworth, and lastly Z.K. Mzimba, the CATA Secretary and a teacher at Qokolweni Secondary School in the Umtata District. The only reason provided by the NAD for the dismissal of these teachers was that they were "unsuitable" teachers in Bantu education.<sup>99</sup> By October 1955 a further six CATA teachers were dismissed.<sup>100</sup>

CATA contested the dismissal of its members in court by challenging the validity of the NAD regulations governing the employment of African teachers. The Association decided to make applications for the reinstatement of two of its dismissed members, namely, Leo Sihlali and Alfred Mangcu.<sup>101</sup> In January 1956 the Supreme Court in Grahamstown ruled in favour of the two CATA teachers, declaring that the NAD regulations were "of no force and effect."<sup>102</sup> Their dismissals were set aside and they were reinstated. On the basis of this judgement CATA made an application for the reinstatement of all dismissed teachers in the Cape Province, which by January 1957 stood at more than sixty.<sup>103</sup> The NAD subsequently regularised the position with regard to its employment of African teachers and brought these into effect in January 1958. In March 1958, the NAD once again dismissed Sihlali and Mangcu, as well as all the reinstated teachers, despite the fact that none of these teachers had signed a contract bidding them to the new regulations.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>99</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'CATA Officials Dismissed: First Job of NAD School Boards', 2/8/1955. See also, NLSA. *Torch*, 'CATA Replies to Attack: Condemns Victimisation and Intimidation', 9/8/1955.

<sup>100</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'CATA Appeal for Dismissed Teachers: Legal Action to be Taken', 25/10/1955. See also, NLSA. *Torch*, 'CATA Reports to AAC: sterling work under difficult conditions', 20/12/1955. Hyslop, *The Classroom Struggle*, p. 88.

<sup>101</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'CATA to Contest Dismissals: Court Case in October', 2/10/1956. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Dismissed Teachers Sue Verwoerd: Judgement Reserved in Two CATA Cases', 13/11/1956. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa Collection / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Bantu School Boards on Trial,' issued by CATA, 1957. See also, Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', pp. 215 and 218.

<sup>102</sup> NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Fight Against Dismissals of Teachers Continues: CATA's last round with NAD.', Volume 1, Number 3, November 1958, p. 1. See also, Tsotsi, 'Out of Court', p. 225.

<sup>103</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'CATA wins Test Case: Two Teachers Reinstated, applications for more than 50 others', 22/1/1957, NLSA. *Torch*, 'CATA Wins Test Case: Two Teachers to be Re-instated', 29/1/1957. By 1958 157 teachers had been dismissed in the Cape. See Hyslop, *The Classroom Struggle*, p. 88.

<sup>104</sup> NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Fight Against Dismissals of Teachers Continues: CATA's last round with NAD', Volume 1, Number 3, November 1958, p. 1. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Dismissed CATA Teachers Re-Dismissed', 11/2/1958.

In June 1957 the NAD banned the CATA Annual Conference for the second year running. By contrast the Cape African Teachers' Union, which supported Bantu Education, was granted permission to hold its Conference. To convene meetings CATA branches were subjected to a number of restrictions. Among these were that the Special Branch had to be present at all stages during its meetings, furthermore, the names of all the people attending the CATA meetings, as well as a copy of the minutes of such meetings had to be submitted to the authorities.<sup>105</sup> Repressive government measures ultimately led to the decline of CATA by the end of the 1950s.

The imposition of the Bantu Authorities system and Bantu Education raised peasant resistance in the Transkei and Ciskei to new levels of militancy and political consciousness. The AAC played an important role in the Eastern Cape reserves during this period. At great cost to themselves, members of the AAC propagated against the Bantu Authorities Act and Bantu Education Act and advised rural dwellers how they could resist the implementation of these acts. Among other things the AAC urged the peasantry to form their own organisations through which they could co-ordinate resistance. Reserve dwellers were also advised not to participate in the structures created under the acts.

The government resorted to repressive measures in an attempt to crush the rising tide of resistance in the reserves. Peasant leaders were banished and members of CATA and the TOB (many of whom held leadership positions within the AAC and NEUM) targeted for punitive government action due to the close association they had forged with rural dwellers. In 1956 I.B. Tabata, who was closely associated with the AAC's political work in the countryside, became the second member of the NEUM to be banned under the Suppression of Communism Act. He was banned for five years which made him the first person in South Africa to be banned under this Act for this length of time.<sup>106</sup>

By the end of the 1950s CATA and the TOB were unable to operate effectively any longer. But by this stage these organisations had already made an important contribution in spreading the AAC's liberatory ideas and in so doing raising the level of political consciousness among the reserve dwellers of the Transkei and Ciskei.

<sup>105</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'NAD Bans CATA Conference: Conference now banned for second time', 7/5/1957.

<sup>106</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to C.M. Kobus from the Acting Secretary for Justice, Department of Justice, 28/5/1956. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Protest Against Ban on NEUM Leader', 20/3/1956. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Savage Ban on NEUM Leaders', 13/3/1956, p. 1.

## CHAPTER FIVE

“CIVIL WAR IN THE TRANSKEI”: THE *MAKHULUSPAN* AND *KONGO* FIGHT  
*UZIPATHE*, 1955 - 1962

[T]here is general unrest in the Transkei because of the people's opposition to government policy. The people see so-called Bantustan Bantu Authorities, Rehabilitation Scheme or so-called 'reclamation', as one and the same thing, an intensification of oppression and exploitation. When the government tried to introduce the so-called Rehabilitation Scheme ten years ago the whole people of the Transkei showed their opposition in no uncertain terms. That is why the government found it necessary to pass the Bantu Authorities Act, to create machinery whereby, through a group of hand-picked henchmen, the government could have its 'rehabilitation' scheme 'accepted' with all that that implies. The hand-picked Bantu Authorities were brought into being to 'accept' on behalf of the people, what the people in fact opposed.<sup>1</sup>

By 1960 a state of "insurrection and anarchy" was prevalent throughout most of the Transkei as rural dwellers constituted themselves in organisations, committees and "vigilante" brigades, and increasingly turned to violent measures to resist the imposition of the Bantu Authorities system and various other government schemes.<sup>2</sup> The government responded by declaring a state of emergency in the Transkei during November 1960. The police force supported by army units entered "trouble spots" to forcefully crush resistance. By February 1961 over four and a half thousand people were detained throughout the Transkei.<sup>3</sup>

Two of the most notable peasant movements to emerge in the Transkei towards the end of the 1950s were the *Makhuluspani* (or 'big team') and the *iKongo* movements. Both these organisations emerged spontaneously among rural dwellers and are further illustrations of peasant self-organisation and signify the maturation of a political consciousness among the South African peasantry.

The *Makhuluspan* and *Kongo* movements form an important part of the NEUM's history. In 1963 the NEUM claimed to have secured the affiliation of the *Makhuluspan*, a

<sup>1</sup> National Library of South African (NLSA), *Torch*, 'Herrenvolk Are Worried', 16/6/1959.

<sup>2</sup> SAB. SAP 597, 15/5/60, Volume 2. 'Geheim'. See also, NLSA. *New Age*, 'Civil War in the Transkei: Murder and arson as people fight Bantu Authorities', pp. 1 and 8. NLSA. *New Age*, '20 Killed in Transkei Battle: More deaths feared', p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> SAL. *New Age*, 'Aid Pondo Detainees', 2/2/1961. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Hundreds Arrested in Transkei as Peasant Revolt Flares up', p. 1. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Thousands more arrested in Transkei round-ups'. R. Southall, *South Africa's Transkei: The Political Economy of an "Independent" Bantustan*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983, p. 113. T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983, p. 281.

mass organisation with a following in at least five districts of the Transkei.<sup>4</sup> The *Kongo* movement was also a mass-based organisation that was at the forefront of the Pondoland revolt. The NEUM was able to capitalise on the militancy that was still prevalent in Pondoland after the revolt and drew a substantial section of the *Kongo* membership in its ranks.

### **The *Makhuluspan***

The immediate impetus resulting in the formation of the *Makhuluspan* was the inability of government authorities to stem the tide of the extraordinary prevalence of stock theft in several districts of the East Griqualand region of the Transkei. In the Tsolo District, for example, the number of reported stock theft cases increased from one hundred and four cases in 1950 to two hundred and eighty four cases by 1956. Of the reported cases in 1956 only sixty-two were brought to court, of which there were thirty-nine convictions.<sup>5</sup> The *Makhuluspan* first emerged in the Qumbu District in 1956 and soon spread into several East Griqualand districts, notably, Tsolo, Matatiele and Mount Fletcher.<sup>6</sup> Later it was also active in the Tembuland district of Engcobo, part of which bordered Tsolo.<sup>7</sup> (See Map 2, p. 28b).

Stock theft in East Griqualand reached such proportions by the late 1950s that thieves became “openly arrogant”, making no attempt to conceal their identity.<sup>8</sup> They could be recognised by their grey coats and balaclava caps. The stock thieves were a well-organised group. In the Tsolo District, for example, they were group together in an organisation known as the *Majapane* (‘the Japanese’).<sup>9</sup> The *Majapane* was run by a committee of six under the

<sup>4</sup> University of Cape Town (UCT). Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa (UMSA) /I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *South Africa: A memorandum submitted to the Committee of Nine by the All-African Convention and Non-European Unity Movement*, Dar es Salaam: Mwnanchi Publishing, December 1963, p. 15. A. Drew, ‘Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa, 1928 – 1960’, Doctor of Philosophy dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1991, p. 475.

<sup>5</sup> SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Magistrate for Tsolo, 28 March 1957.

<sup>6</sup> SAB. NTS 7694, 430/332 – 443/332. Letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs, Pretoria, from the Chief Magistrate Transkei, 14 March 1957. SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Magistrate for Tsolo, 28 March 1957. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Officer in Charge, Security Branch, South African Police, 1/10/1958. W.D. Hammond-Tooke, *Command and Consensus: The Development of Transkeian Local Government*, Cape Town: David Philip, 1975, p. 106.

<sup>7</sup> Interview conducted with Montford Mzoli Mabuto by R. Kayser, Idutywa, Transkei, 7/5/1998. Interview conducted with D. Nyamela by R. Kayser, Kentane, Transkei, 16/11/1999.

<sup>8</sup> Hammond-Tooke, *Command and Consensus*, pp. 105 and 106. See also, SAB. NTS 7694, 430/332 – 443/332. Letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs, Pretoria, from the Chief Magistrate Transkei, 14 March 1957.

<sup>9</sup> SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Statement by Mpiyegezwe Msusazembe, 20 April 1959. Hammond – Tooke, *Command and Consensus*, p. 106.

Chairmanship of Tuntebele Qeliso, a former headman, who was known to be playing a leading role among stock thieves in the District.<sup>10</sup>

Faced with eventual ruin, people decided to remedy the “deficiencies of the law” by organising themselves into “vigilante” groups which were between three to four hundred strong.<sup>11</sup> They attacked anyone remotely suspected of being a stock thief. In the Qumbu District these “vigilante” groups were referred to as the *amaRashiya* (‘the Russians’).<sup>12</sup> Later the various “vigilante” groups organised themselves into a formal network which they called the *Makhuluspan* (big team). A committee ran the *Makhuluspan*, consisting of among others, a chairman, secretary and treasurer. A levy was imposed on the local population for its support.<sup>13</sup> In the Tsolo District the apparent founders and leaders of the *Makhuluspan* were Vincent Mbabama, a former teacher and headmaster, Magade Madapu, a headmen and William Tyabashe.<sup>14</sup> All three men were elderly, Mbabama was seventy-four, while Madapu and Tyabashe were in their early sixties.<sup>15</sup> With rare exceptions, the leadership of the *Makhuluspan* was drawn from ordinary location residents and not from chiefs and headmen. Hammond-Tooke, who conducted fieldwork in the region in the early 1960s, has made the pertinent comment that the authority of the *Makhuluspan* leadership therefore did not rest on the,

ascribed status in the political system, but on charismatic qualities of personality, drive and initiative. The legitimacy of their authority rested originally on the widespread feeling that here was a reprehensible violation of group norms which the constituted authorities were unable to deal with. Thus the movement’s drastic action against stock thieves was considered to be fully legitimate in that it was being exercised for the community’s good.<sup>16</sup>

The *Makhuluspan* commanded widespread support in at least four East Griqualand districts that were severely affected by stock theft. Government authorities in the Tsolo

<sup>10</sup> SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Statement by Macebo Tiya, 20 April 1959. SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Statement by Mpiyegezwe Msusazembe, 20 April 1959. SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Letter to the Deputy Commissioner, South African Police, Umtata, from the Security Branch, South African Police, Umtata, 25 May 1959.

<sup>11</sup> SAB. NTS 7694, 430/332 – 443/332. Letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs from the Chief Magistrate Transkei, 14 March 1957. See also, NLSA. *Daily Dispatch*, ‘Reign of Terror in Qumbu District’, 12/3/1957, p. 3. See also, NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Sequel to Stock Thefts’, 21/5/1957.

<sup>12</sup> Hammond – Tooke, *Command and Consensus*, p. 106.

<sup>13</sup> Interview, Nyamela, 16/11/1999. Hammond – Tooke, *Command and Consensus*, p. 106.

<sup>14</sup> SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Letter to ‘Sy Edele Die Minister’, 2/6/1960. KAB. CMT. Volume 3/1533. Reference 5b/A/19. Letter to the Town Clerk, Queenstown, from L.N. Mbabama, 24/5/1961.

<sup>15</sup> KAB. CMT. Volume 3/1533. Reference 5b/A/19. Letter to the Town Clerk, Queenstown, from L.N. Mbabama, 24/5/1961. NLSA. *Sunday Times*, ‘The Banished...’, 23/4/1961. NLSA. *New Age*, ‘And many more were banished in 1960: Some released, sent into exile again’, p. 4.

District observed that the *Makhuluspan* had a significant influence over the inhabitants.<sup>17</sup> In Qumbu the Magistrate noted that “a movement known as the ‘Makuluspaan’ is prominent in the Locations.”<sup>18</sup>

The *modus operandi* of the *Makhuluspan* was to send an anonymous letter to their intended victim, warning of the impending action and the reasons for it.<sup>19</sup> One of two methods was employed to deal with stock thieves. Firstly, known or suspected stock thieves would be brought before a secret tribunal, consisting of ordinary residents. Here they would be fined under threat of having their homestead razed to the ground or being killed. Alternatively, the homestead of a stock thief would be surrounded at night, after allowing the occupants to flee, the homestead and all property would be destroyed.<sup>20</sup> By March 1957 four hundred huts in Qumbu had been burnt down since the start of the *Makhuluspan's* campaign.<sup>21</sup> In Mount Fletcher the homesteads of ninety-five reputed and known stock thieves were destroyed and eighteen thieves killed between April 1957 and July 1958.<sup>22</sup> By 1960 the *Makhuluspan* had achieved considerable success in reducing the level of stock theft in East Griqualand.

The greater significance of the *Makhuluspan* was that it subsequently broadened its activity towards “overt political action”.<sup>23</sup> In the Qumbu District from at least March 1957 the *Makhuluspan* opposed the imposition of soil stabilisation measures.<sup>24</sup> In both Qumbu and Tsolo this was soon extended to include resistance to the introduction of the Bantu Authorities

<sup>16</sup> Hammond – Tooke, *Command and Consensus*, p. 107.

<sup>17</sup> SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Letter to ‘Sy Edele Die Minister’, 2/6/1960.

<sup>18</sup> SAB. NTS 7694, 430/332 – 443/332. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Magistrate for Qumbu, 28 July 1958.

<sup>19</sup> This was employed in all the districts where the *Makhuluspan* was active. SAB. NTS 7694, 430/332 – 443/332. Letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs, Pretoria, from the Chief Magistrate Transkei, 14 March 1957. SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Security Police, Umtata, 1 October 1958.

<sup>20</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, ‘Sequel to Stock thefts’, 21/5/1957. SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Letter to the Native Commissioner for Tsolo from the Station Commander, Tsolo, 22 January 1959. SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Letter to ‘Sy Edele die Minister’, 2/6/1960. Hammond – Tooke, *Command and Consensus*, p. 106.

<sup>21</sup> SAB. NTS 7694, 430/332 – 443/332. Letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs, Pretoria, from the Chief Magistrate Transkei, 14 March 1957.

<sup>22</sup> SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Security Police, Umtata, 1 October 1958.

<sup>23</sup> Interview, Mabuto, 7/5/1998. Interview, Nyamela, 16/11/1999. Hammond – Tooke, *Command and Consensus*, p. 107. See also, KASB. 1/QBU, Volume 40. N.1/9/2. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Qumbu, 4 March 1961. C. Bundy, ‘Land and Liberation: Popular Protest and Liberation Movements in South Africa, 1920 – 1960’, in S. Marks and S. Trapido (editors), *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London and New York: Longman, p. 275. C. Bundy, ‘Resistance in the Reserves: the A.A.C. and the Transkei’, *Africa Perspective*, Number 22, 1983, p. 60. W. Beinart and C. Bundy, ‘State Intervention and Rural Resistance: The Transkei, 1900 – 1965’, in M Klein (editor), *Peasants in Africa: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, Beverly Hills and London: Sage, 1980, p. 307.

system.<sup>25</sup> The *Makhuluspan's* campaign against the Rehabilitation Scheme and Bantu Authorities included targeting government appointed chiefs. In the Qumbu District the Magistrate cautioned that he had received information that the *Makhuluspan* had undertaken to assassinate Chiefs Sandi Majeke and Issac Matiwane because these Chiefs "have been supporting the Government's policies of rehabilitation and Bantu Authorities. They are obviously earmarked for their co-operation with the Government."<sup>26</sup> The *Makhuluspan's* new focus resulted in a frenzy of hut burnings especially in the Tsolo District. In May 1960, over a period of four days, one hundred and ninety three huts were razed to the ground in eight locations in the District.<sup>27</sup>

To stem the tide of resistance to the implementation of the Rehabilitation Scheme and Bantu Authorities system, as well as to put an end to the hut burnings, government authorities in Tsolo recommended the removal of the three leading *Makhuluspan* members in the District, namely, Mbabama, Madapu and Tyabashe.<sup>28</sup> In July 1960 Mbabama and his two associates were arrested and immediately deported without being charged or tried in a court of law. They were banished to a camp in Driefontein in the Vryburg District of the North West Province.<sup>29</sup> The declaration of a state of emergency in the Transkei in November 1960 gave the police unprecedented power to deal with members of the *Makhuluspan*. By February 1961 thirty-two *Makhuluspan* leaders were arrested in Qumbu, while in Tsolo twenty-three were arrested.<sup>30</sup>

Despite repressive government action the *Makhuluspan* was able to remain in existence. In the Lower Culunca Location of Qumbu, for example, the *Makhuluspan* was

<sup>24</sup> SAB. NTS 7694, 430/332 – 443/332. Letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs, Pretoria, from the Chief Magistrate Transkei, 14 March 1957.

<sup>25</sup> KAB. 1/QBU, Volume 40. N.1/9/2. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Qumbu, 4 March 1961. SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Letter to 'Sy Edele Die Minister', 2/6/1960. KAB. 1/QBU, Volume 70. N.1/9/2. Letter to the Officer Commanding Transkei Command, Umtata and the District Commandant, Umtata from the Station Commander, South African Police, Qumbu, 22 March 1961.

<sup>26</sup> KAB. 1/QBU, Volume 40. N.1/9/2. Letter to the Chief Magistrate Transkei from the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Qumbu, 4 March 1961. See also, KAB. 1/QBU, Volume 70. N.1/9/2. Letter to the Officer Commanding Transkei Command, Umtata and the District Commandant, Umtata from the Station Commander, South African Police, Qumbu, 2 March 1961.

<sup>27</sup> SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Letter to 'Sy Edele Die Minister', 2/6/1960.

<sup>28</sup> SAB. NTS 7695, 444/332 – 487/332. Letter to 'Sy Edele Die Minister', 2/6/1960.

<sup>29</sup> NLSA. Sunday Times, 'The Banished...', 23/4/1961. KAB. CMT. Volume 3/1533. Reference 5b/A/19. Letter to the Town Clerk, Queenstown, from L.N. Mbabama, 24/5/1961. NLSA. New Age, 'And many more were banished in 1960: some released, sent into exile again', p. 4.

<sup>30</sup> SAB. SAP 597, 15/5/60, Volume 2. Letter to the Minister of Justice from the Commissioner, South African Police, 27 February 1961.

holding secret meetings in the mountains.<sup>31</sup> In April 1962 the nucleus of the organisation was still present in at least seven locations in the Qumbu District. The Commissioner for this District warned that this nucleus could easily be converted to engage in agitation against the government in the event of an outbreak of unrest.<sup>32</sup>

Dabulamzi Nyamela, a member of the Society of Young Africa (SOYA) since the early 1950s, drew the NEUM's attention to the existence of the *Makhuluspan*.<sup>33</sup> Nyamela's homestead was situated in the Engcobo District, where he had come into contact with the *Makhuluspan*. In the early 1960s NEUM organisers established contact with the *Makhuluspan*.<sup>34</sup> Their key contacts in the Tsolo District were Mbabama and Dazana, who was an old member of the Cape African Teachers' Association (CATA).<sup>35</sup> In August 1963 the NEUM succeeded in drawing several of the "top leaders" of the *Makhuluspan* into its local structure in the region. And by December 1963 the NEUM claimed to have secured the affiliation of the *Makhuluspan*.<sup>36</sup>

### **The Pondoland revolt and the *Kongo***

The *Kongo* movement emerged during the 1959 – 1960 Pondoland revolt, the high water mark of peasant resistance in South Africa. In scale, organisation and expression of political ideas, this revolt remains unsurpassed. The Pondoland revolt occupies an important place in the history of the NEUM, for as will be shown in Chapter Six, it had a profound impact on the political decisions taken by the NEUM leadership during the early 1960s. Furthermore, the

<sup>31</sup> KAB. 1/QBU, Volume 70. N.1/9/2. Letter to the Officer Commanding Transkei Command, Umtata and the District Commandant, Umtata from the Station Commander, South African Police, Qumbu, 22 March 1961.

<sup>32</sup> KAB. 1/QBU, Volume 70. N.1/9/2. Letter to the Chief Bantu Commissioner, Transkei from the Bantu Commissioner, Qumbu, 27 April 1962.

<sup>33</sup> Interview, Nyamela, 16/11/1999.

<sup>34</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Diep River, Cape Town. Unity Movement of South Africa Papers. Letter to S. Hassan from Karrim Essack, 28/11/1963. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Dora Taylor from I.B. Tabata, 28/8/1963. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Diep River, Cape Town. Unity Movement of South Africa Papers. Report submitted by Z. Makasi to the Botswana Centre at Lobatsi, approximately June / July 1965. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Diep River, Cape Town. Unity Movement of South Africa Papers. Report detailing organisational work conducted in the Transkei by NEUM organisers, M. Pilliso, Z. Makasi and S. Mvambo, 28/12/1965.

<sup>35</sup> Interview conducted with Zitobile Makasi by R. Kayser, Queenstown, 4/8/1998. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Diep River, Cape Town. Unity Movement of South Africa Papers. Report submitted by Z. Makasi to the Botswana Centre at Lobatsi, approximately June / July 1965.

<sup>36</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Dora Taylor from I.B. Tabata, 28/8/1963. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Diep River, Cape Town. Unity Movement of South Africa Papers. Letter to S. Hassan from Karrim Essack, 28/11/1963. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / Tabata Collection, BC 925. *South Africa: A memorandum submitted to the Committee of Nine*, p. 15. A. Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism', p. 475.

NEUM gained a strong foothold in Eastern Pondoland during the aftermath of the revolt. (See Map of Eastern Pondoland on p. 104a)

Like peasant struggles that emerged in the Transkei and Ciskei after 1955, the key issue that sparked-off the Pondoland revolt was the government's attempt to impose the Bantu Authorities system on the population. A deeper and more overriding cause for the revolt, however, was the burning issue of the land question which reflected itself most acutely through the government's Rehabilitation Scheme.<sup>37</sup>

From the early 1950s rural dwellers in Eastern Pondoland waged a prolonged struggle against the implementation of the Rehabilitation Scheme. In the District of Lusikisiki, which emerged as one of the epicentres of the Pondoland revolt, the earliest documented example of resistance to the Rehabilitation Scheme occurred in 1952.<sup>38</sup> Here the Magistrate of Lusikisiki had been attempting to remove residents from the Mtambala and Lower Ntafufu locations, claiming that they were responsible for the destruction of forests in that area. These residents refused to co-operate, suspecting that the Rehabilitation Scheme was going to be applied to their locations. In June 1952 the Magistrate of Lusikisiki, accompanied by the Paramount Chief of Eastern Pondoland, Botha Sigcau, held a meeting with the residents. At the meeting Sigcau praised the Rehabilitation Scheme as a good measure against soil erosion. A spokesperson for the people responded by rejecting the Scheme, stating that,

If our words and prayers still fail to convince you that we reject the Scheme, then we will certainly be forced to convince you by anything else at our disposal. We swear, here and now, that we shall resist the Rehabilitation Scheme... You will first have to wipe out all the Mantusini and others before you interfere with the scratch of land left for our already finished stock and for growing the few cobs of mealies on which we have to live.<sup>39</sup>

The meeting eventually broke up in disorder but not before a peasant by the name of Mnyungula Maqutu, danced towards Botha Sigcau, uttering war cries. He brought himself directly opposite "the Europeans, removed his loin cloth and deliberately bared his bottom at them, at the same time driving an assegai into the ground."<sup>40</sup> In his report of this incident, the

<sup>37</sup> Bundy, 'Land and Liberation', p. 275. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa*, p. 279 and 281. Southall, *South Africa's Transkei*, p. 108.

<sup>38</sup> SAB. SAP, 214,11/17/31 (Volume 2). 'Native Unrest: Lusikisiki District', Letter to the Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria from the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Umtata, 30/7/1952. SAB. SAP, 214,11/17/31 (Volume 2). 'Report by Deputy Commissioner [South African Police]', Umtata, 30/7/1952. NLSA. *Torch*, 'We Shall Resist: Rehabilitation Scheme Rejected', 15/7/1952. Mbeki, G., *South Africa*, p. 118.

<sup>39</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, 'We Shall Resist: Rehabilitation Scheme Rejected', 15/7/1952.

<sup>40</sup> SAB. SAP, 214,11/17/31 (Volume 2). 'Native Unrest: Lusikisiki District', Letter to the Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria from the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Umtata", 30/7/1952.

Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police cautioned that this was “the gravest insult that could be inflicted to persons in authority and the final action was a definite declaration of war.”<sup>41</sup>

Maqutu and another “ringleader”, Mnqingo Pikani, were both charged with obstructing and insulting the Magistrate and Botha Sigcau. The two men left their homesteads with a considerable following to live in the forests. They were armed and prepared to resist any attempt by the police to arrest them. When the government eventually gave up on the affair, Pikani disbanded his following and returned to his homestead. He was later arrested and jailed at Engcobo. After his release he was compelled to remain in that district as a deportee.<sup>42</sup> It was against this background of resistance to the Rehabilitation Scheme that the government attempted to introduce the Bantu Authorities Act in Eastern Pondoland after 1955.

The first open demonstration of opposition to the Bantu Authorities system in Eastern Pondoland occurred at a public meeting held at Bizana in September 1957.<sup>43</sup> At this meeting the Magistrate of Bizana, R.A. Midgley, intended explaining the Bantu Authorities system and the Rehabilitation Scheme to the people. People attending the meeting would not allow Midgley to address them. A spokesman for the people stood up and said, “[y]ou need not talk anymore we have heard all these things from your predecessor and we gave our answer, which was we do not want any of these things.”<sup>44</sup> The uproar and disorder eventually reached such heights that the Midgley was forced to close the meeting. The Paramount Chief, Botha Sigcau, fearing the people would attack him, fled the meeting in his car. Midgley’s explanation for the incident was that,

It was done as a demonstration of their opposition to Bantu Authorities, stabilisation and the suggestion that the occupation of land should be regularised...It would appear

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See also, SAB. SAP, 214,11/17/31 (Volume 2). ‘Report by Deputy Commissioner [South African Police]’, Umtata, 30/7/1952.

<sup>41</sup> SAB. SAP, 214,11/17/31 (Volume 2). ‘Native Unrest: Lusikisiki District’, Letter to the Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria from the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Umtata’, 30/7/1952.

<sup>42</sup> SAB. SAP, 214, 11/17/31, Volume 2. Letter to the Commissioner of the South African Police from the Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Umtata, 11/12/1952. SAB. SAP, 214, 11/17/31, Volume 2. ‘Native Unrest: Lusikisiki District’, Letter to the Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria from the Deputy Commissioner of the South African Police, Umtata’, 30/7/1952.

<sup>43</sup> SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. ‘Minutes of Quarterly meeting of Chiefs, Headmen and people held at Bizana on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 1957’. SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. ‘Stabilisation meeting at Bizana: 30/9/57’. SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. Letter sent to the Magistrate of Bizana from Paramount Chief Botha Sigcau, 2/10/1957. SAB. SAP, 5967, 15/5/60/ Volume 2. ‘Views as expressed by Mr. R. H. Midgley: Assistant Chief Native Commissioner: Eastern Pondoland’, (no date). SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. ‘Departmental Committee of Inquiry into Unrest in Eastern Pondoland’, 9/9/1960.

<sup>44</sup> SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. ‘Minutes of Quarterly meeting of Chiefs, Headmen and people held at Bizana on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 1957’.

also that generally the district is opposed to Bantu Authorities and with it any suggestion of stabilisation or kindred measures.<sup>45</sup>

He also reported that the majority of the people in the District were opposed to Botha Sigcau and his Secretary, Saul Mabude, for the people accused them of having accepted Bantu Authorities without their knowledge or consent. Midgley felt that the opposition of the people to the Rehabilitation Scheme was so resolute, that "it would take years of propaganda and instruction to down the opposition of the population."<sup>46</sup> The Special Branch of the South African Police was also instructed to investigate this incident. Their informers indicated that people in Bizana opposed stabilisation and that,

meetings had been held prior to this meeting by natives in the various locations, where it was decided that stabilisation was not to be accepted...There is no evidence obtainable that the ANC [African National Congress] or the AAC [All-African Convention] was influencing the natives in their attitude against stabilisation.<sup>47</sup>

After the September 1957 meeting in Bizana, opposition to Bantu Authorities was particularly strong in the Isikelo Location, with pockets of opposition discernible in the Imzizi, Entsimbini, Emonti locations. Notwithstanding this opposition, Botha Sigcau proceeded to appoint councillors to the various Tribal Authorities in the District. This led to the next significant development in the Isikelo Location, when in March 1960 three councillors were attacked by about two hundred people at a tribal meeting at the Great Place of Chief Mhlabuvelile.<sup>48</sup> The attack emerged out of the fact that people were not consulted about the appointment of the councillors to serve on the Tribal Authority. After the attack on the councillors, the homesteads of members and supporters of the Tribal Authorities, including that of Saul Mabude, were razed to the ground. Violent resistance to the Tribal Authorities soon spread to a further nine locations in the Bizana District. When the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei entered the Isikelo with heavily armed police, residents told him that they were totally opposed to the system of Bantu Authorities, as they held that these Authorities would

<sup>45</sup> SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. 'Quarterly meeting: Chiefs, Headmen and People', 30/9/1957. SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. Letter sent to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata by the Magistrate of Bizana, 2/10/1957.

<sup>46</sup> SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. Letter sent to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories from the Magistrate of Bizana, 4/10/1957. SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. 'Quarterly meeting: Chiefs, Headmen and People', 30/9/1957. SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. Letter sent to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, Umtata by the Magistrate of Bizana, 2/10/1957.

<sup>47</sup> SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. Letter to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories from the Office of the Security Branch, Umtata, 13/3/1958 (Marked: Secret).

<sup>48</sup> SAB. SAP, 12/1/60 – 15/5/60, Volume 1. 'Onlus: Bizana', SAP, 596, 12/1/60 – 15/5/60, Volume 1, SAB. Also, 'Memorandum'. SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. 'Report of the Departmental committee of Inquiry into Unrest in Eastern Pondoland', 9/9/1960.

take their land from them. By May 1960, forty homesteads were destroyed as a result of violent opposition to Tribal Authorities.<sup>49</sup>

At this point people opposed to Bantu Authorities decided to stop attending meetings at the *Inkundla* or Great Place. The *Inkundla* was the seat of tribalism. In the past the people regarded the *Inkundla* as their own instrument, where they could discuss issues affecting them in a democratic manner. However, they realised that it had now become a tool of oppression, used by the government through its agents to implement laws that were not in their interests. Gideon Mahanjana, who emerged as one of the resistance leaders in the Enkantolo Location of Bizana, has argued that “the Great Place of the chiefs were completely left because they were used to oppress us.”<sup>50</sup> The decision to leave the *Inkundla* was significant, for it meant that people were turning their backs on the tribal system. The way was now open for the peasantry to embrace modern democratic principles that were only enjoyed by the white population in South Africa.

After they left the Great Place people in Bizana held their own meetings on a hill called *Nonqulana*, in the Isikelo Location.<sup>51</sup> All the locations in the Bizana District were invited to the *Nonqulana* meetings. According to Fanele Nxasana, who emerged as one of the leaders of the peasant resistance movement in Bizana, the Magistrate supported by the police approached people meeting on *Nonqulana*. He asked them to return to the Great Place, where he maintained their grievances would be discussed. They accepted this offer and selected four speakers to convey their grievances to the Magistrate. Nxasana recalls that at this meeting their spokesmen stated that the people were totally against Tribal Authorities because they believed that it was through these Authorities that the government would enforce the Rehabilitation Scheme. They also raised other grievances, such as Bantu Education, which they maintained was being introduced as a result of the Tribal Authority system. The Magistrate responded to these grievances by stating that “this can’t be changed because it’s law.”<sup>52</sup> The meeting ended indecisively, with the arrest of people whom the police suspected were responsible for the assault on the three Tribal Authority councillors at the meeting at

<sup>49</sup> SAB. SAP, 12/1/60 – 15/5/60, Volume 1. ‘Onlus: Bizana’. SAB. SAP, 596, 12/1/60 – 15/5/60, Volume 1. ‘Memorandum’.

<sup>50</sup> Interview conducted with Gideon Mahanjana by R.Kayser, assisted by Kwezi Tshangana [interpreter] Ludeke Halt, Bizana, 20/5/1998.

<sup>51</sup> Interview conducted with Mpitsi Ncenjana by R.Kayser, assisted by Kwezi Tshangana, Isikelo Location, Bizana, 5/11/1999. Interview conducted with Fanela Nxasana by R.Kayser, assisted by Kwezi Tshangana, Isikelo Location, Bizana, 4/11/1999. Interview, Mahanjana, 20/5/1998. *Truth and Reconciliation Report*, Volume Three, Chapter Two, Regional Profile: Eastern Cape, p. 52.

<sup>52</sup> Interview, F. Nxasana, 4/11/1999.

Mhlabuvelile's Great Place. Also arrested were the speakers who addressed the Magistrate. According to Nxasana, after this incident "the whole of Pondoland stood up."<sup>53</sup>

In April 1960 the peasant resistance movement in Bizana started meeting at the *Ndlovu* Mountain. This mountain was chosen because it was centrally situated in the District and that would give the resistance movement access to a wider support base.<sup>54</sup> At this stage the Bizana resistance movement decided to extend the geographical area of their struggle and sent a delegation to the Lusikisiki District.<sup>55</sup> In Lusikisiki, the Bizana delegation discovered that people opposed to Bantu Authorities had also left the Great Place and were meeting on their own in the mountains.

The incident that sparked off the revolt in Lusikisiki, was the decision by Botha Sigcau to divide the land in the Lambasi Location into camps.<sup>56</sup> The Lambasi residents opposed this, and accused Sigcau of wanting to sell their land to the whites. In May 1960, the Magistrate of Lusikisiki held a meeting in Lambasi to discuss the Rehabilitation Scheme. This meeting was attended by between two and three thousand people from Lambasi and other locations in Lusikisiki. After the meeting people attacked Tribal Authority members in the District. One Tribal Authority member, Councillor Celi, was killed and several homesteads were burnt down. People maintained that as a result of introduction of Tribal Authorities, the Rehabilitation Scheme was now applied to the Lambasi Location. A South African Police memorandum dealing with the outbreak of the revolt in the Lusikisiki District stated that the unrest emerged out of dissatisfaction with the introduction of Tribal Authorities and the Rehabilitation Scheme. It noted that the unrest couldn't be attributed to political organisations, such as the ANC and PAC.<sup>57</sup>

According to Pindiso Zimambane from the Lusikisiki District, the delegation from Bizana wanted the people in Lusikisiki to join them in an attack on Quakeni, the Great Place of Botha Sigcau.<sup>58</sup> People in Lusikisiki were, however, hesitant and instead sent their own delegation to Bizana to obtain first hand information on what was happening there. The Lusikisiki delegation consisted of six people; the most prominent of whom were Wana

<sup>53</sup> Interview, F. Nxasana, 4/11/1999.

<sup>54</sup> Interview, Mahanjana, 20/5/1998. Interview, F. Nxasana, 4/11/1999.

<sup>55</sup> Interview conducted with Pindiso Zimambane by R.Kayser, assisted by Kwezi Tshangana, Flagstaff, May, 1998. Interview, Mahanjana, 20/5/1998.

<sup>56</sup> SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Onluste: Bizana en Lusikisiki', [marked: secret].

'Memorandum Insake Bantoe-Onluste te (1) Bizana en (2) Lusikisiki op 21.5.60', SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Lusikisiki R.C.I. 10/5/60'. Interview, Zimambane, May 1998.

<sup>57</sup> SAB. SAP, 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Memorandum'.

Johnson, Mtshibini Mxghotha and Sithembiso Mposwa.<sup>59</sup> The delegation met with the Bizana resistance movement on Ndlovu Mountain. Nonkwenkwe Mjungula, who was part of the Lusikisiki delegation, has recalled the essence of what was discussed at that meeting, “we came there...the people from Bizana said we don’t want this Rehabilitation Scheme. That is why there is this fracas...when we returned, we came along with this and put it to Lusikisiki.”<sup>60</sup> On the 30<sup>th</sup> May 1960 a big meeting, which attracted delegations from seven locations in the Lusikisiki District was held at Ngquza Hill.<sup>61</sup> Here Wana Johnson and the delegation reported on what they had learnt about the resistance movement in Bizana. From Lusikisiki and Bizana the resistance movement spread into the neighbouring district of Flagstaff, and later into the Tabankulu and Mount Ayliff districts.<sup>62</sup>

Initially the peasants in Bizana simply referred to their struggle against Tribal Authorities as *Nonqulana*.<sup>63</sup> Later, however, the name *Kongo* or *Ikongo* emerged.<sup>64</sup> Govan Mbeki has stated that “the movement became known as ‘Ikongo’ (Congress)”.<sup>65</sup> The inference by Mbeki is that the name *Ikongo* was used as a substitute for Congress, in other words, the African National Congress.<sup>66</sup> However, as Fanele Nxasana explains,

the reason why we called it, picked this *Kongo* is because there was a fight in Congo where Lumumba was fighting...So they picked this name *Kongo* because this was happening in Congo...we didn’t attach *Kongo* to any political organisation.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Interview, Zimamabane, May 1998.

<sup>59</sup> SAB. JUS 459, 1/99/18. Statement by Matandela Mbambela, Msthayelo Location, Lusikisiki, at Mtontsasa Police Station, Lusikisiki, 13/7/1961. Interview conducted with Mjungula Nonkwenkwe by R. Kayser, assisted by Kwezi Tshangana, Lusikisiki, 9/11/1999. UCT. Government Publications Department. G68E: Nati 1/60. Departmental Committee of Inquiry into the unrest in Eastern Pondoland during 1960. Evidence by Albert Somadlangati from the Vlei Location, Lusikisiki, to the, p.129. Interview, Zimamabane, May 1998.

<sup>60</sup> Interview, Nonkwenkwe, 9/11/1999.

<sup>61</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. G68E: Nati 1/60. Departmental Committee of Inquiry into the unrest in Eastern Pondoland during 1960. Evidence by Albert Somadlangati from the Vlei Location, Lusikisiki, to the, p.129. SAB. JUS, 459, 1/99/18. Statement by Matandela Mbambela, Msthayelo Location, Lusikisiki, at Mtontsasa Police Station, Lusikisiki, 13/7/1961, Interview, Nonkwenkwe, 9/11/1999.

<sup>62</sup> SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, Volume 1. ‘Bantoe Onluste: Transkei Gebied’. SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, Volume 1. ‘Gehiem’, 8/11/60. KAB. CMT, 3/148. Letter to the Chief Magistrate and Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Umtata from the Magistrate/Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Mount Ayliff, 19/11/1960, SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, Volume 1. ‘Gehiem’, 8/11/60.

<sup>63</sup> Interview, Ncenjane, 5/11/1999. *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report*, Cape Town: CPT Book Printers, Volume Three, Chapter Three, p. 52.

<sup>64</sup> Interview, F. Nxasana, 4/11/1999. Interview, Mahanjana, 20/5/1998. Interview, Zimamabane, May 1998. Interview, Danisa and Mobumbela, 2/11/1999. SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, Volume 1. ‘Geheim’, 27/11/60. SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, Volume 1. ‘Onluste Pondoalnd-Oos’, 7/12/60. Mbeki, G, *South Africa*, p.120. Essack, K, *The Armed Struggle*, Volume 2, Dar es Salaam: Tankers, 1979, pp. 28-30.

<sup>65</sup> Mbeki, G, *South Africa*, p.120.

<sup>66</sup> Southall, *South Africa’s Transkei*, p. 109. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa*, p. 283.

<sup>67</sup> Interview, F. Nxasana, 4/11/1999. Also, interview, Zimamabane, May 1998. Interview conducted with Rhina Lande by R. Kayser, Ngquza Hill Location, Lusikisiki, 2/11/1999.

Mpitsi Ncenjane, from the Isikelo Location, maintains that the people didn't attach much significance to the name *Kongo*.<sup>68</sup> Rather, peasants used the term *Kongo* because it evoked a sense of mystery, of revolution, associated with Patrice Lumumba, who was engaged in a liberation struggle against the Belgian occupiers of the Congo in central Africa. In fact as Pindiso Zimamabane has pointed out, officials of the Bantu Affairs Department drew their attention to the struggle of the people in the Congo. He recalls attending a meeting of people from all the districts in Pondoland called by Hans Abraham, the Commissioner General, at which he stated,

“you know what you are doing here is what Lumumba is doing in Congo...we have killed that Lumumba of yours, so you must not come and do that here what Lumumba is doing there in that Congo.”<sup>69</sup>

There is also an additional twist to the name *Kongo*. As pointed out in Chapter Two, during the late 1940s rural dwellers in the Mount Ayliff District formed a resistance movement which they referred to as the *Kongo*. In the Mount Ayliff District the *Kongo* operated right up until and during the Pondoland revolt.<sup>70</sup>

What is more significant though than the name given to the resistance movement was the fact that when people left the Great Place, they established their own committees to coordinate their resistance. These peasant committees met in the mountains and were referred to as the *Intabas* or mountain committees.<sup>71</sup> The *Intabas* represented a nascent democratic form of decision-making and governance in the locations and districts, in contrast to the Bantu Authorities, which people identified as a corrupt and oppressive form of tribal administration. During the revolt these *Intabas* became the virtual administrative organs in Eastern Pondoland. The *Intabas* established their own courts. People suspected of collaborating with the government were summoned to appear before the *Intaba* courts and if found guilty fined. Failure to pay such a fine would result in the destruction of their homesteads. The *Intabas*

<sup>68</sup> Interview, Ncenjane, 5/11/1999.

<sup>69</sup> Interview, Zimambane, May 1998. See also, Interview, F. Nxasana, 4/11/1999. On the 8<sup>th</sup> August 1961, at a meeting to install the Chairman of the Ciskei Territorial Authority, the Minister of Bantu Affairs, de Wet Nel, is reported to have stated that “We are determined not to allow a second Congo in South Africa.” NLSA. *New Age*, ‘Transkei Chiefs Again Demand Independence’, 16/11/1961, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>70</sup> KAB. CMT 3/1480. ‘Native Unrest: Mount Ayliff District’, Letter to the Chief Magistrate Territories from the Office of the Magistrate Mount Ayliff, 12/10/1951. KAB. CMT 3/1480. ‘Native Unrest: Mount Ayliff District’, Letter to the Chief Magistrate Territories from the Office of the Magistrate Mount Ayliff, 21/10/1952. See also Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa*, p. 283.

<sup>71</sup> Interview conducted with Leonard Nikani by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 24/12/1998. NLSA. *New Age*, ‘Pondo Mass Meeting This Week’, 13/10/1960, pp. 1 and 5. Mbeki, *South Africa*, p.120. J. Copelyn, ‘The Mpondo Revolt 1960’, B. A. Honours dissertation, University of Witwatersrand, 1974, p. 36. Lodge, *Black Politics in*

established a Defence Fund and every person in the region was expected to donate one shilling towards the fund. This fund was used to assist people who had been arrested during the revolt. Another important function assumed by the *Intabas* was the allocation of land.<sup>72</sup>

Mbanbani Solomon Madikezela was the most prominent leader of the *Intaba* in the Bizana District.<sup>73</sup> Madikezela was an evangelist who often acted as the spokesperson for the people in their meetings with government officials. Govan Mbeki, in an attempt to make a case for the involvement of the ANC in the Pondoland revolt, has given Anderson Ganyile a prominent leadership role during the revolt.<sup>74</sup> Ganyile, a member of the ANC Youth League, was expelled from the University of Fort Hare in January 1960 due to his political activities. According to Mbeki, after his expulsion, Ganyile returned to his home in Bizana and plunged himself into the peasants' struggle. However, as Copelyn has argued, given Ganyile's youth, it is unlikely that he was able to exercise much influence over people during the revolt.<sup>75</sup>

In the Lusikisiki and Flagstaff Districts, Elijah Lande and Wana Johnson were the two most prominent leaders. Lande was a retired schoolteacher and a member of the Cape African Teachers Association. Lande must have been held in high esteem in the Lusikisiki District, for Botha Sigcau nominated him for the position of Secretary of the Mtshayelo Tribal Authority in the Lusikisiki District. Lande promptly rejected this offer, and instead became the Secretary of the Lusikisiki – Flagstaff *Intaba*.<sup>76</sup> Wana Johnson earned his living as a shoemaker and was classified as "Coloured" by the government.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1960 a fatal clash occurred between peasants grouped within the *Intabas* and the South African Police on the slopes of Nqguza Hill in the Lusikisiki District.<sup>77</sup>

*South Africa*, p. 279. Southall, *South Africa's Transkei*, p. 109. *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report*, Volume Three, Chapter Two, p. 52.

<sup>72</sup> SAB. SAP, 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Geheim', 8/11/1960. SAB. NTS, 7735, 330/333. 'Departmental Committee of Inquiry into Unrest in Eastern Pondoland', 9/9/1960. L. Nikani, Chapter 11: 'High and Dry', unpublished manuscript. Mbeki, *South Africa*, p. 125. Essack, *The Armed Struggle*, p. 29. Southall, *South Africa's Transkei*, p. 110.

<sup>73</sup> Interview, F. Nxasana, 4/11/1999. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Pondo Mass Meeting This Week', 13/10/1960, pp. 1 and 5. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Pondo Leaders Go to Prison', 3/11/1960, pp. 1 and 4. Mbeki, *South Africa*, 123. Copelyn, 'The Mpondo Revolt', p. 80.

<sup>74</sup> Mbeki, *South Africa*, 123.

<sup>75</sup> Copelyn, 'The Mpondo Revolt' p. 80.

<sup>76</sup> Interview, Zimambane, May 1998. UCT. Government Publications Department. G68E: Nati 1/60. Departmental Committee of Inquiry into the unrest in Eastern Pondoland during 1960. Statement by Sinyubela Dweba, Ramzi Location, p.263. SAB. NTS 9048, 280/362 94) – 281/362 (1). Letter to the Chief Native Commissioner, Umtata from the Native Affairs Commissioner, Lusikisiki, 26/7/1957. SAB. NTS 9048, 280/362 94) – 281/362 (1). Letter to the Chief Native Commissioner, Umtata from the Secretary for Native Affairs, 17/10/1957.

<sup>77</sup> Interview, Mjungula, 9/11/1999. Interview, Zimambane, May 1998. SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Onluste – Bizana en Lusikisiki', 6/6/1960. SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Bantoe Onrus: Transkeigebied'. SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. Letter to the Minister of Justice from H.J.Du

On that day the Lusikisiki - Flagstaff *Intaba* planned to hold a big meeting. While a group of about two hundred and fifty people were waiting on the slope of the hill for their compatriots to arrive, they noticed the presence of the police on top of the Hill. Four policemen gradually made their way down the slope of the hill and installed a machine gun directly opposite the gathering. Pindiso Zimambane vividly recalls what took place thereafter,

[We] were unarmed so they said: 'Lets hang a white flag to show we are not fighting, we are just talking'. Nonkwewe Mjungula, produced this white flag. It was posted, planted. Wana Johnson...came to sit here and was busy with his snuff. Now, we heard the first shot...that they were shooting to kill. The first one to fall was Wana Johnstone.<sup>78</sup>

Twelve people, including Wana Johnson, were killed by the police on the slopes of Ngquza Hill that day. Twenty-one people were also arrested during the incident, among them was Elijah Lande.<sup>79</sup> Of those arrested, nineteen were sentenced to between eighteen and twenty-one months imprisonment.<sup>80</sup> Interestingly, Lande was released. Later, however, the police realised their mistake and Lande became a wanted person in Eastern Pondoland. According to Lande's daughter-in-law, the police wanted to charge Lande with inciting the peasants to revolt, for they discovered that he was one of the literate people reading "subversive" newspapers to them.<sup>81</sup> In November 1960 Lande fled South Africa with the assistance of the AAC.

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Plooy, Commissioner of the South African Police, 8/9/1960. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Pondos Rebel Against Bantu Authorities', 8/9/1960, pp. 1 and 6. Mbeki, *South Africa*, 121.

<sup>78</sup> Interview, Zimambane. See also, Interview, Mjungula. NLSA. *Daily Dispatch*, 'Police Fire As Pondos Flee', 27/10/1960, p. 4. NLSA. *Daily Dispatch*, 'Tribesmen Tells Of Fatal Shootings', 28/10/1960, p. 3. *Truth and Reconciliation Report*, Volume Three, Number Two, p. 53 -54. For the South African Police version of the incident see, SAB. SAP 596 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Memorandum Isake Bantoe-Onluste to (1) Bizana en (2) Lusikisiki op 21.5.60'. Copelyn, 'The Mpondo Revolt', p. 70. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa*, p. 280. Southall, *South Africa's Transkei*, p. 112.

<sup>79</sup> SAB. SAP 596 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Memorandum Isake Bantoe-Onluste to (1) Bizana en (2) Lusikisiki op 21.5.60.' SAB. SAP, 597, 15/5/60, volume 2 'Ngquza Hill Inquest. Inquest No. 7/1960. Lusikisiki District', 13/2/1961. SAB. JUS, 459, 1/99/18. List of People killed at Ngquza Hill, 14/2/1961. *Daily Dispatch*, 'Pondo Deaths Inquiry Intervention: Court informed number of killed totaled 11', 3/9/1960.

<sup>80</sup> SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60 - 15/5/60, volume 1, 'Memorandum Insake Bantoe-Onluste Te (1) Bizana en (2) Lusikisiki op 21.5.60'. *Truth and Reconciliation Report*, Volume Three, Number Two, p. 54.

## MAP 4: EASTERN PONDOLAND



Source: Copelyn, 'The Mpondo Revolt', B.A. Hons. Dissertation, University of Cape Town, 1974.



The 'old man' Elijah Lande at his homestead in the Lusikisiki District. Lande was the Secretary of the *Kongo* in Lusikisiki.  
(Photo: Courtesy of Rhina Lande).



Solomon Madikizela (key leader of the *Kongo* in Bizana) addressing a mass meeting of peasants during the Pondoland revolt.  
(Photo: Mayibuye Archives, University of the Western Cape)

The AAC had a long-established presence in Eastern Pondoland. The Transkei Organised Bodies had a presence throughout the Transkei and played a significant role in directing peasant struggles, especially against the Rehabilitation Scheme. But it was particularly through the radicalised Cape African Teachers Association that the AAC and its political ideas infiltrated Pondoland.<sup>82</sup> In the early 1950s the CATA had branches in Lusikisiki, Flagstaff, Bizana and Mount Ayliff.<sup>83</sup> The CATA teachers played a crucial role as political cadres of the AAC throughout the Transkei and Ciskei. During the Pondoland revolt Elijah Lande was a noteworthy example of the cadre type of role played by teachers in the countryside who had come into contact with the ideas of the AAC. According to Pindiso Zimamabane, Lande played a significant role in the political education of the Lusikisiki and Flagstaff peasants during the revolt. Zimamabane recalls that,

there was a small awakening amongst the people at this point in time. There were people now working amongst us. For instance, in our midst, the old man Lande...he belonged to the All-African Convention. He was the one who tried to educate us with a political understanding.<sup>84</sup>

In October 1960, Nathaniel Honono, the President of the All-African Convention and a former President of the CATA, accompanied by Leonard Nikani, the former Chairman of the Durban Branch of the Society of Young Africa, entered Eastern Pondoland.<sup>85</sup> After being dismissed from teaching by the government in 1955 for his opposition to Bantu Education, Honono worked for an insurance company. It was under the guise of selling insurance policies that Honono and Nikani entered Eastern Pondoland to conduct political work.<sup>86</sup> At Elijah Lande's homestead they held a secret meeting with several leaders of the *Ntaba*, among them was Lande. At the meeting Honono, Lande and Nikani attempted to raise the discussion about the revolt from the level of complaints and local concerns onto the political plane. As Nikani recalled,

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<sup>81</sup> Interview, Lande, 2/11/1999.

<sup>82</sup> The Pondoland Branch of the Cape African Teachers Association affiliated to the AAC in 1952. NLSA. *The Torch*, 'Pondoland CATA Affiliates to All-African Convention', 14/10/1952.

<sup>83</sup> NLSA. *The Teachers' Vision*, Volume XXIII, Number 3, March 1948. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Pondoland CATA Affiliates to All-African Convention', 14/10/1952. NLSA. *The Teachers' Vision*, June 1950, pp. 15-16.

Interview, Nikani, 24/12/1998.

<sup>84</sup> Interview, Zimamabane, May 1998.

<sup>85</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'A report on events as I went through them and as I saw them in South Africa during 1970', by Leonard Nikani, 21/4/1976.

Interview, Nikani.

<sup>86</sup> Interview, Nikani, 24/12/1998. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Diep river, Cape Town. Unity Movement of South Africa Papers. 'Biography: Leonard Makhuzi Nikani', [no date].

We told the peasants about the 10 Point Programme and Non-Collaboration and unity of all the oppressed, especially the unity of the workers and peasants. We gave them the example of struggles of the peasants in Lady Frere, Queenstown district, Kentane and the rest of the Transkei and Ciskei and how these peasants were members of the All-African Convention.<sup>87</sup>

At this meeting the *Ntaba* leaders requested arms from the AAC to fight the government. Honono and Nikani advised them against such a course of action. They pointed out that for an armed uprising to have any chance of success “the whole nation must fight not them alone.”<sup>88</sup>

Evidence presented by participants in the Pondoland revolt to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in March 1997 indicates that the Pondoland peasants also approached the ANC, in particular Albert Luthuli, the then banned President of the ANC. According to Simon Silangwe, Luthuli advised them not to oppose the proposed granting of “independence” or homeland status to the Transkei. Luthuli suggested that they should get their own candidates elected in the new Transkei Parliament. At the TRC hearing Silangwe stated that,

He [Luthuli] said to us, ‘Comrades, there is nothing I can do and you cannot fight whilst you are outside. You can fight a bit better when you are inside.’ What he was advising us to do is for us to elect our own people and go to Umntata and fight from within the parliament there.<sup>89</sup>

Was Luthuli suggesting that they should now become part of the oppressive system that had driven them to revolt in the first place? A few *Kongo* leaders also came into contact with the ANC through their appeals to the Pondo migrant association in Durban for material assistance. The chairman of this association was Leonard Mdingi, an ANC activist. Contact with the Congress movement could also have been facilitated through Rowley Arenstein. Arenstein was a Durban attorney who defended several people charged during the revolt until he was restricted in October 1960.<sup>90</sup> There is, however, no convincing evidence to suggest that the ANC played a direct role in the Pondoland revolt. At most they attempted to shape the perceptions of the leaders of the *Kongo*. Mbeki’s claim, that the *Kongo* movement “adopted the full programme of the African National

<sup>87</sup> Personal correspondence with Leonard Nikani, 14/7/1998. See also, Interview, Nikani, 24/12/1998.

<sup>88</sup> Personal correspondence with Leonard Nikani, 14/7/1998.

<sup>89</sup> *Truth and Reconciliation Report*, Volume Three, Number Two, p. 57.

<sup>90</sup> See Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa*, pp. 282 and 283. Southall, *South Africa’s Transkei*, p. 110. Copelyn, ‘The Mpondo Revolt’, p. 79 – 80.

Congress and its allies as embodied in the Freedom Charter”, therefore, needs to be treated with extreme reserve.<sup>91</sup>

Soon after the Ngquza Hill incident the government established a Committee of Enquiry to investigate the reasons behind the revolt. During the latter half of July 1960, the Committee sat in Bizana, Flagstaff, Lusikisiki and Umtata, hearing the evidence of one hundred and eight people. Participants in the revolt expressed their grievances and demands, and prominent resistance leaders, such as Lande and Solomon Madikizela made statements before the Committee. Several locations submitted memoranda articulating their grievances and demands.<sup>92</sup>

The evidence presented to the Committee of Enquiry clearly revealed that the Pondoland revolt was sparked off by the introduction of the Bantu Authorities Act. Among other things, people maintained that the Bantu Authorities Act had brought about an increase in the stock-rate, as well as taxation, and was responsible for the introduction of Bantu Education. But above all peasants linked the introduction of the Bantu Authorities system to the application of the Rehabilitation Scheme.

they had a meeting in the Lusikisiki district – they said that they would murder Botha [Sigcau], because he has sold the country for his own benefit. He has allowed Bantu Authorities and Rehabilitation to be introduced. They think the two are identical – there is no division between the two schemes.<sup>93</sup>

The statement made by Elijah Lande on behalf of the Lusikisiki peasants, before the Committee was of great significance, especially to the NEUM. In his statement Lande pointed out that the root cause for the unrest in Eastern Pondoland was due to the fact that the African population were denied representation in Parliament. Lande maintained that the unrest in Eastern Pondoland would continue until such time as the African population had obtained the right to direct representation in Parliament.<sup>94</sup> Pindiso Zimamabane has confirmed that this was a demand that emerged from among the people during the revolt. He has argued that “the

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<sup>91</sup> Mbeki, *South Africa*, p. 129.

<sup>92</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. G68E: Nati 1/60. Departmental Committee of Inquiry into the unrest in Eastern Pondoland during 1960.

<sup>93</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. G68E: Nati 1/60. Departmental Committee of Inquiry into the unrest in Eastern Pondoland during 1960. Statement by Chief Makasonke Sigcau, p. 55.

<sup>94</sup> UCT. Government Publications Department. G68E: Nati 1/60. Departmental Committee of Inquiry into the unrest in Eastern Pondoland during 1960. Statement by Elijah Lande, p. 280.

people...were demanding now that they want representation where the laws are made...They wanted their representative to go straight to where those laws are made.”<sup>95</sup>

During October 1960 the Committee of Enquiry announced its findings at meetings held at Bizana, Flagstaff and Lusikisiki.<sup>96</sup> The Committee conceded that certain complaints voiced were justified, particularly in relation to the appointment of Tribal Authority councillors and the demarcation of Tribal Authority boundaries. It, however, explained away these complaints through “mistakes” and malpractice in the observation of “the laws and customs of the tribes.”<sup>97</sup> As to the central demand of the people, namely, that they were totally opposed to Bantu Authorities and did not want it, the Committee remained silent. The “fear” that Bantu Authorities would result in the application of the Rehabilitation Scheme, was pronounced unfounded. It stated that the increase in taxation, stock rate, health and general levy, could not be attributed to Bantu Authorities, and would continue. Rather people were rebuked by the Committee for not bringing their complaints to the attention of the government “in the normal way through their magistrate”, and for holding secret meetings by themselves instead.<sup>98</sup> The Committee also lashed out at people for the use of “force and intimidation”, when the magistrate was “always available to listen to grievances and to put them right, if they are justified.”<sup>99</sup>

After the Committee announced its findings, evidence of dissatisfaction among the peasantry of Eastern Pondoland was immediately observable. For example, at the Lusikisiki meeting where the Committee presented its findings, a spokesperson for the people stood up and stated that people did not want Botha Sigcau and headmen, and that they would continue

<sup>95</sup> Interview, Zimamabane, May 1998. See also, *New Age*, ‘Pondos Want A Say in Parliament’, 17/11/1960, pp. 1 and 8.

<sup>96</sup> KAB. 1/FSF, 6/97, C3/2. Departmental Committee of Enquiry: Pondoland Disturbances: Statement by Chairman: Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner of the Ciskei, Mr. J. A. C. Van Heerden: Bizana Meeting: 11<sup>th</sup> October 1960. SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. ‘Bantoe Onluste: Pondoland en Die Transkei-Gebied’, Letter to the Secretary of Bantu Affairs en Development from the Commissioner of the South African Police, C. J. Els, 14/10/1960. NLSA. *New Age*, ‘Pondo Mass Meeting This Week’, 13/10/1960, pp. 1 and 5. NLSA. *New Age*, ‘Govt. Reprisals in Pondoland: Leaders to be exiled, communal fines imposed’, 20/10/1960, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>97</sup> KAB. 1/FSF, 6/97, C3/2. Departmental Committee of Enquiry: Pondoland Disturbances: Statement by Chairman: Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner of the Ciskei, Mr. J. A. C. Van Heerden: Bizana Meeting: 11<sup>th</sup> October 1960.

<sup>98</sup> KAB. 1/FSF, 6/97, C3/2. Departmental Committee of Enquiry: Pondoland Disturbances: Statement by Chairman: Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner of the Ciskei, Mr. J. A. C. Van Heerden: Bizana Meeting: 11<sup>th</sup> October 1960.

<sup>99</sup> KAB. 1/FSF, 6/97, C3/2. Departmental Committee of Enquiry: Pondoland Disturbances: Statement by Chairman: Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner of the Ciskei, Mr. J. A. C. Van Heerden: Bizana Meeting: 11<sup>th</sup> October 1960. NLSA. *Torch*, 19/10/1960. NLSA. *New Age*, ‘Govt. Reprisals in Pondoland: Leaders to be exiled, communal fines imposed’, 20/10/1960, pp. 1 and 5. See also Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa*, p. 281.

to hold their meetings. The speaker then once again re-iterated the peasants' demand for representation in Parliament.<sup>100</sup>

Meetings were held in Bizana and Lusikisiki to discuss the Committee's findings. On the 5<sup>th</sup> November 1960 a huge meeting attended by up to fifteen thousand people was held at Ndlovu Hill.<sup>101</sup> Delegates from Lusikisiki and Flagstaff, as well as from other districts in the Transkei, such as Idutywa, Willowvale, Kentani and Butterworth attended. The peasants were clearly not satisfied with the Committee's findings, and the decisions taken at this meeting indicated that they were determined to intensify their struggle. They decided to continue the boycott of village traders in Bizana, and extend this boycott to the districts of Lusikisiki, Flagstaff, Mount Ayliff, Tabankulu, and the Western Pondoland districts of Port St Johns and Libode. This boycott would continue until the Committee came back and produced a report that recognised their grievances. They also refused to pay taxes until the government released their leaders, and withdrew their labour until such time as their demands were met. They also decided to expose and reject members of school committees and school boards, who they maintained collaborated with the government.<sup>102</sup>

Police reports dealing with the "security situation" in Eastern Pondoland during November 1960 revealed the unfolding of an intensified struggle by the peasants. In the Flagstaff District, twenty-five huts were burnt down in the Bala Location during the night of 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> November. Five huts were destroyed on the 26<sup>th</sup> November in the Vlei Location, Lusikisiki. The resistance movement was also spreading to other locations in the Lusikisiki District, such as Ngcoya. A police report noted that the *Kongo* organisation was encouraging people in the Lusikisiki District to reject Bantu Authorities, not to dip their cattle, not to pay taxes, and to contribute three shillings and six pence towards the struggle. In the Bizana District village traders were boycotted.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>100</sup> SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Bantoe Onluste: Pondoland en Die Transkei-Gebied', Letter to the Secretary of Bantu Affairs en Development from the Commissioner of the South African Police, C. J. Els, 14/10/1960.

<sup>101</sup> Documents vary on the estimated number of peasants attending the meeting. SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Geheim', 7/11/1960. NLSA. *Torch*, 'Pondoland Boycott', 16/11/1960.

<sup>102</sup> SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Bantoe Onluste: Transkei Gebied', 14/10/1960. SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Geheim', 8/11/1960. SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Geheim', 7/11/1960. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Move to Seize Pondo Cattle', 10/11/60. See also, Copelyn, 'The Mpondo Revolt', p. 81 and 82. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa*, p. 281.

<sup>103</sup> SAB. SAP 597, 15/5/60, volume 1. 'Onluste: Pondoland – Oos', 7/12/1960. SAB. SAP 596, 12/1/60-15/5/60, volume 1. 'Geheim', 27/11/60.



Nonkwenkwe Mjungula from the Lusikisiki District who was present at Ngquza Hill when 12 peasants were killed by the police in June 1960. (Photo: R. Kayser, 1999).



Peasants from the Amadiba Location shouted *Bayete* as they arrived at the assembly point for the meeting to hear the findings of the Commission of Enquiry into the Pondoland revolt. (Photo: Mayibuye Archives, University of the Western Cape).



A column of peasants numbering thousands and bearing a white flag make their way to the airstrip in Bizana to hear the findings of the Commission of Enquiry into the causes of the Pondoland revolt. (Photo: Mayibuye Archives, University of the Western Cape).



Part of the crowd listening to the findings of the Commission of Enquiry. (Photo: Mayibuye Archives, University of the Western Cape).

In November 1960 the Executive of the AAC held a secret meeting at Lady Frere, in the Glen Grey District, with a delegation of *Kongo* leaders from Eastern Pondoland.<sup>104</sup> Elijah Lande led the delegation. The discussions revolved around the political situation in Pondoland, in particular the peasants' determination to stage an armed uprising. At this meeting the AAC executive advised the delegation against such a course of action, pointing out an armed uprising could only succeed if conducted on a national scale. The AAC also impressed upon the delegation to lower the intensity of their political activity in the light of the Ngquza Hill massacre and other atrocities being committed by the police against the people. They were, however, advised not to disband their committees. At this meeting it was decided that due to government repression in Eastern Pondoland, it would be dangerous for Lande to return home. Later W. M. Tsotsi took him to Lesotho.<sup>105</sup>

In response to the security situation, which according to a police report had reached a state of "insurrection and anarchy", the government imposed a state of emergency in the Transkei on the 29th November 1960 through the promulgation of Proclamation No. R400, and later Proclamation No. R413.<sup>106</sup> Police and army operations to crush the peasant resistance movement in Eastern Pondoland under the emergency regulations began on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 1960. Hundreds of *Kongo* members and supporters were arrested by the police under the emergency regulations. In Bizana, for example, six hundred people had been detained by February 1961.<sup>107</sup> The most politically active peasants, like Mpompota Mhomba and Magaduzela Betswana, were forced to flee their homesteads and live in the forests.<sup>108</sup> Prominent leaders like Madikizela were banished to remote areas of South Africa.<sup>109</sup> Between August and October 1961, thirty people were sentenced to death for their involvement in the

<sup>104</sup> Interview, Tsotsi, June 1998. Interview, Nikani, 24/12/1998. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'South Africa, A Memorandum submitted to the Committee of Nine by the All-African Convention and Non-European Unity Movement', December 1963. Unity Movement of South Africa Archives, [Privately held]. Biographical notes of Mr. Wycliffe Mlungisi Tsotsi, dated 4<sup>th</sup> November 1964. W.M. Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile', unpublished Manuscript, kindly provided to me by the author, p.4.

<sup>105</sup> Interview, Nikani. Interview, Tsotsi. Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile', p.4. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Report by Prof. G. Carter on interview held with Tabata, Honono and Miss Gool near Mbabane, Swaziland, 25 July 1963.

<sup>106</sup> SAB. SAP 597, 15/5/60, volume 2. 'Geheim'. See also, Mbeki, South Africa, p. 124. Copelyn, 'The Mpondo Revolt', pp. 81 and 82. Southall, South Africa's Transkei, p. 113. SAB. SAP, 599, 15/5/60C. *Extraordinary Government Gazette*, Proclamation R.400, 30 November 1960. SAB. SAP, 599, 15/5/60C. *Extraordinary Government Gazette*, Proclamation R.413, 14 December 1960.

<sup>107</sup> SAB. SAP 597, 15/5/60, Volume 2. Report to Kompol, Cape Town, from the Inspector-General, South Africa Police Headquarters, Pretoria,

<sup>108</sup> Interview conducted with Mhomba family by R. Kayser, Lusikisiki, 2/11/1999. NLSA. *Spark*, 'I Shall Never Surrender: Pondo Leader Fights on in the Hills', 27/12/1962, p. 3.

revolt.<sup>110</sup> Police reports maintained that the operation to quell resistance had been successful, pointing to the fact that the boycott of the village of Bizana had been lifted considerably, labour recruitment had become more frequent and tax payments had increased.

Significantly, among the first batch of twenty people arrested under the emergency regulations in the Transkei, outside of Pondoland, were at least eight members of the All-African Convention.<sup>111</sup> The most prominent among these was Nathaniel Honono, President of the All-African Convention, and Richard Canca, Secretary of the All-African Convention. Honono was imprisoned for six months without being charged. While detained he was subjected to interrogation concerning the activities of the AAC in Eastern Pondoland.<sup>112</sup> Leo Sihlali, the President of the NEUM at the time, and W.M. Tsotsi were both forced to flee South Africa to avoid arrest, as the Special Branch of the South African Police discovered that they were present at the Lady Frere meeting with the Pondoland delegation.<sup>113</sup> As a result of government repression the *Kongo* movement was compelled to cease open political activity. But a police report of August 1961 noted that underground activity was still taking place in Eastern Pondoland.<sup>114</sup>

By 1960 a state of near "civil war" had emerged in the Transkei as mass peasant resistance spread to virtually every district, taking an increasingly more confrontational and violent form of opposition to the government.<sup>115</sup> These developments were not, however, unique to the Transkei. In virtually every African reserve the imposition of the Bantu Authorities system evoked determined resistance.<sup>116</sup> Mass arrests and the banishment of key

<sup>109</sup> NLSA. *New Age*, 'Renewed Tension in Pondoland: Banishments, Fines and Whippings Anger People', 12/7/1962, p. 1.

<sup>110</sup> NLSA. *Torch*, "'Pondo' land Death Sentences Total 30', 8/11/1961. Mbeki, *South Africa*, p. 125.

<sup>111</sup> SAB. SAP 599, 15/5/60D-15/5/60C. 'Geheim', 14/12/1960.

<sup>112</sup> Unity Movement of South Africa Archives [Privately held], 'Who is this Mr. N. Honono now serving a five year ban and house arrest' by I.B. Tabata, March 1963. Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile', p.3. Nikani, Chapter 11: 'High and Dry', unpublished manuscript. *New Age*, 29/12/1960.

<sup>113</sup> Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile', p.4.

<sup>114</sup> SAB. SAP 597, 15/5/60, volume 2. 'Geheim / Secret', January 1960. SAB. SAP, 598, 15/5/60B-15/5/60/1. Letter to the Commissioner of the South African Police, Pretoria from Transkei Control Area, Umtata, 1/8/1961.

<sup>115</sup> NLSA. *New Age*, 'Civil War in the Transkei: murder and arson as people fight Bantu Authorities', 22/9/1960, pp. 1 and 8. For further examples of peasant resistance see, NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Tense Situation in Mount Fletcher', Volume 2, Number 6, October 1959, p. 1. NLSA. *New Age*, '20 Killed in Transkei Battle: more deaths feared', 29/12/1960, p. 1. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Another Chief shot in Transkei: Verwoerd's men flee before people's anger', 29/9/1960, pp. 1 and 8. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Pitched Battle in Tembuland: Transkei home guards in action against people', 26/1/1961, pp. 1 and 3. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Murder in Bantustan: people's anger near boiling point', 30/8/1962, p. 1. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Transkei Chiefs take fright', 4/5/1961, p. 5. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Tembu again reject Bantu Authorities: 2, 000 meet at Sabata's great place', 26/7/1962, pp. 1 and 8. Mbeki, *South Africa*, pp. 126 - 128. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa* pp. 283 - 288.

<sup>116</sup> For disturbances in the Lefurutsi see, Parliamentary Library, Cape Town. 'Report of Commission of Enquiry into recent unrest and disturbance in the Linokana and other Native Areas in the District of Marico and in the Native Areas in the Ajoining Districts'. C. Hooper, *Brief Authority*, Cape Town and Johannesburg: David

leaders became the order of the day in the reserves during this period, as the state tried to suppress the mounting political ferment.<sup>117</sup> The intensification of resistance in the reserves was accompanied by a significant development in the political consciousness of the peasantry. This was most strikingly reflected in the Pondoland revolt. Here two factors stood out, the rejection of tribalism and the demand for liberty. This demonstrated that the peasantry had begun to shrug off their traditional parochial outlook and had started to develop a national political outlook; their attention had been drawn to Parliament where the laws that oppressed them were made.

To the NEUM the mass peasant struggles in the countryside during the late 1950s and early 1960s was seen as a vindication of its formulation that the key issue facing the liberation movement in South Africa was the agrarian question. It confirmed the NEUM's position that the peasantry was a vital section in the liberation struggle, whose revolutionary potential had to be harnessed. By contrast, the revolt was a wake up call to the ANC, which only now began to realise the important role of the peasantry in the liberation struggle. As Govan Mbeki has pointed out,

The Pondoland movement succeeded by example in accomplishing what discussion had failed to do in a generation – convincing the leadership of the importance of the peasants in the reserves to the entire national struggle.<sup>118</sup>

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Philip, 1989. For Sekhukhuneland, see P. Delius, 'Sebatakomo, Migrant Organisation, the ANC and the Sekhukhuneland Revolt', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 15, Number 4, 1989, pp. 608 – 610. P. Delius, *The Lion Amongst the Cattle: Reconstruction and Resistance in the Northern Transvaal*, Portsmouth: Heineman, Johannesburg: Ravan and Oxford: Currey, 1996.

<sup>117</sup> NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Concentration camps in South Africa', Volume 2, Number 4, February 1959, p. 10. NLSA. *Ikhwezi Lomso*, 'Eight men facing deportation', Volume 2, Number 7, December 1959, p. 1. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Bring the exiles home!', 3/11/1960, 5. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Families of banished men starve in the Transkei', 18/2/1960. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Thousands more arrested in Transkei round-ups', 2/3/1961. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Hundreds arrested in Transkei as peasant revolt flares up', 1/6/1961. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Free these exiles', 6/4/1961, p. 6. NLSA. *New Age*, 'Detention camp for women being built: People's leaders exiled by government', 15/10/ 1959, pp. 1 and 5. NLSA. *New Age*, '23 men are missing', 19/12/1961, p. 4.

<sup>118</sup> Mbeki, *South Africa*, p. 130.

## CHAPTER SIX

**“THE NEW TURN”: THE FORMATION OF APDUSA AND THE ADOPTION OF THE  
ARMED STRUGGLE, 1960 - 1965.**

**For the first time in the history of South Africa we are seeing society as a whole being thrown into motion...[this is] an essential pre-requisite for drastic change in any society...[W]hen it is set into motion it is those parties and movements that are clearest about the historical process that will get the ear...of the population. It is because of this that you find us sticklers for theory; that we cannot tolerate a deviation from our theory. Those who have the knowledge of the historical process and can bring it to bear on the daily lives of the people and bring them into step towards an ultimate line, must succeed.<sup>1</sup>**

The momentous events in South Africa during the early 1960s, especially the Pondoland revolt of 1959-1960 and the social unrest in the aftermath of the Sharpsville massacre, convinced the leadership of the NEUM that the country was entering a pre-revolutionary situation.<sup>2</sup> The NEUM held that these events had thrown society “in motion”, which it regarded as a pre-requisite for fundamental political, social and economic change to be effected through revolutionary means.<sup>3</sup> A NEUM pamphlet analysing political events of 1960 observed that “a qualitative change” had occurred “in the mood and outlook of the people in town and country,” strikingly demonstrated,

by the deportment of the people, first during their encounters with the police and then their behaviour during the trials. The slaves of yesterday had suddenly dropped their humility and presented themselves before the disconcerted magistrates like men who have sloughed off their chains.<sup>4</sup>

The NEUM leadership was convinced that their political ideas had taken root among a significant section of the population and that it had raised them to a new level of political consciousness.<sup>5</sup> It noted, however, that popular struggles were sporadic, localised and sectional

<sup>1</sup> University of Cape Town (UCT). Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa (UMSA) / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘Contribution to the discussion on the International Situation’ by I.B. Tabata, NEUM Conference, December 1962, Edendale, Natal, pp. 8 and 9.

<sup>2</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘Notes for a discussion with Kwame Nkrumah’, by I.B. Tabata, April (?) 1964.

<sup>3</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. I.B. Tabata, *The Pan African Adventure in Perspective*, issued by NEUM, September 1960, pp. 6-8 & 14. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection. ‘Contribution to the discussion on the International Situation’ by I.B. Tabata, NEUM Conference, December 1962, Edendale, Natal, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tabata, *The Pan African Adventure in Perspective*, p.14.

<sup>5</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘The Birth of the African Peoples’ Democratic Union of Southern Africa (APDUSA)’, issued by the Central Executive of the APDUSA, March 1961, p. 4. South African Library [SAL]. *Ilizwi Lesizwe*, ‘APDUSA Is Born’, Volume 1, Number 1,

ventures because the population failed to grasp “national aspect” of the liberation struggle.<sup>6</sup> Tabata stressed that the various sections of the oppressed black population needed to be brought into the national movement, where as “a nation”, directed by a “central authority”, the activities and struggles of the people could be co-ordinated.<sup>7</sup> He warned that this task needed to be achieved with urgency, or “the historical tide might pass over and drown the liberatory movement itself.”<sup>8</sup>

The response of the NEUM to this challenge was to form the African Peoples’ Democratic Union of Southern Africa (APDUSA) in January 1961. Through APDUSA, the NEUM aimed to harness the revolutionary potential unleashed by the events of the early 1960s and overthrow the Apartheid state. Two years later the NEUM adopted the armed struggle, realising that a revolutionary overthrow of the state could only be effected through these means.

### **The origin and political launch of APDUSA**

The origin of APDUSA is traceable to the convergence of a number of factors in the late 1950s / early 1960s. One factor that prompted the creation of APDUSA was the organisational split that occurred within the NEUM in 1958. The split occurred when a faction within the NEUM grouped around Ben Kies and Hosea Jaffe, largely located in the Anti-CAD broke away from the Tabata group, organised mainly in the AAC and ASC.<sup>9</sup> This split was fundamentally the resolution to a struggle that had raged in the NEUM from the mid-1950s.<sup>10</sup> The Kies-Jaffe group, intimidated by

September 1961, pp. 1 and 4. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tabata, *The Pan African Adventure in Perspective*, p.13. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Extended Executive (H.U.C.) Meeting of the NEUM, January 1963.

<sup>6</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tabata, *The Pan African Adventure in Perspective*, p.14. See also, *Ilizwi Lesizwe*, ‘APDUSA Is Born’, Volume 1, Number 1, September 1961, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>7</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘The Birth of the African Peoples’ Democratic Union of Southern Africa [APDUSA]’, 1961, p. 4. See also, *Ilizwi Lesizwe*, ‘APDUSA Is Born’, Volume 1, Number 1, September 1961, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>8</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Notes by I.B. Tabata, 1962.

<sup>9</sup> Hosea Jaffe was originally a member of the Fourth International Organisation of South Africa (FIOSA), a Marxist organisation that was formed in 1941 under the leadership of Moshe Averbach, the one time leader of the short-lived Communist League of South Africa. (See Chapter One). FIOSA members attended the conferences of the NEUM but were highly critical of the NEUM. At some point in the early 1950s Jaffe was expelled from the FIOSA and was allowed to enter the NEUM through the Anti-CAD’s Fellowships. Interview conducted with Alie Fataar by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 2/9/1999. A. Drew, *South Africa’s Radical Tradition, A Documentary History, Volume One, 1907 – 1950*, Cape Town: Bunchu Books, Mayibuye Books and UCT Press, 1996, pp. 27 and 330.

<sup>10</sup> In the Fellowships, Jaffe began setting forth a different interpretation of Point Seven (which dealt with the land question). Jaffe held that Point Seven meant the equal distribution of land in South Africa among the peasantry. Later he launched an attack on the leadership of the AAC, labeling them “Black Kulaks” and “Nkrumahs” because he alleged that they typified nationalist leaders in Africa and were fighting for the right of the peasantry to buy land. The Kies-Jaffe group conveniently seized up Jaffe’s interpretation of Point Seven as well as his vilification of the AAC leadership to spark-off a bitter polemic within the NEUM with the aim of sowing disorder and incapacitating the NEUM. Interview conducted with I.B. Tabata and Jane Gool by A. Drew, Harare, Zimbabwe, 15 and 17 December 1987. Interview conducted with Jane Gool by L. Hassim. Interview, Fataar, 2/9/1999. Held by the

the brutality of the Apartheid government, wanted to withdraw from mass political struggle. The Tabata group, however, were determined to press on with organising the oppressed population and believed the time had come to take a “qualitative leap” into revolutionary activity.<sup>11</sup>

After the split, Tabata, Tsotsi, Honono, Sihlali, from the AAC, Jane Gool and Fataar from the Anti-CAD, and Limbada, Enver Hassim and Karrim Essack from the ASC constituted the core leadership of the NEUM.<sup>12</sup> The immediate problem for the reconstituted NEUM especially in the Western Cape was that its supporters in the TLSA, Parent-Teacher Associations, Fellowships and Civic Associations were without a political home as all these organisations were affiliates of the Anti-CAD. It was also felt that a key weakness within the NEUM in the past (which was also seen as a contributory factor to the split) was that it was “top heavy” with intellectuals, which resulted in the workers and peasants not assuming leadership positions within the organisation.<sup>13</sup> The leadership of the NEUM thus felt that a new organisation should be created not just to provide a political home for its members in the Western Cape, but one in which the demands of the workers and peasants took priority. At the 1959 Conference of the NEUM the idea of forming a new political organisation was proposed for the first time.<sup>14</sup>

The first step towards launching a new political organisation was taken soon after the Sharpsville massacre when this idea was placed before members of the Society of Young Africa (SOYA) in the Western Cape. According to Kwezi Tshangana, a member of SOYA’s Cape Peninsula Branch, the SOYANS enthusiastically embraced the idea. Members of SOYA were split into groups which went on a recruitment drive throughout the Peninsula and Boland in preparation for the launch of the new organisation.<sup>15</sup> In December 1960, Tabata, Jane Gool and Alie Fataar called a public meeting in Cape Town where the African Peoples’ Democratic Union (APDU) was launched.<sup>16</sup> Soon afterwards two branches of APDU were established in the Western Cape, the

author. A. Fataar, ‘Falsification of History – the role of the Unity Movement in Liberation, March 1999. University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg). Alan Paton Centre. Hassim Collection, PC 116. ‘The First Ten Years of the Non-European Unity Movement’, a lecture delivered to the Cape Flats Educational Fellowship by H. Jaffe, December 1953.

<sup>11</sup> Interview conducted with Kader Hassim by R. Kayser, Pietermaritzburg, 28 and 29 April 1999. See also, personal correspondence with “Bill Johns”, 25/3/2002.

<sup>12</sup> The Kies-Jaffe also called themselves the NEUM but they refrained from engaging in mass political activity.

<sup>13</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. ‘The Birth of the African Peoples’ Democratic Union of Southern Africa [APDUSA]’, 1961, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. A Report from the Central Executive Committee to the First National Conference of the APDUSA, held in Cape Town on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1962’, by A.K. Wilcox (Assistant Secretary) for the Central Executive of APDUSA. pp. 1 and 2. Natal Archives Depot [NAB]. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Kader Hassim, p. 4776.

<sup>15</sup> Privately held by R. Kayser. ‘Organisational trends that led to the established of APDU and APDUSA’, by Kwezi Tshangana.

<sup>16</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. African Peoples’ Democratic Union [APDU], Draft Constitution, 4 December 1960, p. 2.

Cape Peninsula Branch and the Paarl Branch.<sup>17</sup> At this stage APDU was restricted to the Western Cape.

In January 1961 the NEUM called its leading cadres throughout the country to a secret Extended Head Unity Committee meeting held in the mountains above Chapman's Peak Drive in Cape Peninsula.<sup>18</sup> At this meeting APDU was launched as a nation-wide political organisation but with the important distinction that the term "Southern Africa" was incorporated into its name. APDU became the African Peoples' Democratic Union of Southern Africa (APDUSA).<sup>19</sup> In a letter to Tsotsi, Tabata described this important development in the NEUM's history,

On the appointed day was born a lusty baby, APDUSA. [It] was no ordinary birth. [Its] birthplace was the mountainside facing the turbulent seas with a vista stretching far beyond the ocean. Such a birth and such a setting were symbolic of the times. It was felt that the times were pressing hard upon us and we could not wait for a more propitious time. We had to press forward, moving as quickly as possible.<sup>20</sup>

At this meeting a draft constitution drawn up by a committee consisting of Tabata, Jane Gool and Ali Fataar was adopted, a provisional executive was appointed and cadres were instructed to return to their respective areas, recruit members and form branches. A branch could be constituted once fifty members had been recruited.<sup>21</sup>

In April 1962, APDUSA was formally constituted at its first National Conference held in Cape Town. At the Conference Tabata was elected President of APDUSA, the first time that this key theoretician and influential leader within the NEUM accepted an official position. Nathaniel Honono, the President of the AAC, was elected Vice-President and Livingstone Mqotsi, the Joint-

<sup>17</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. African Peoples' Democratic Union [APDU], Draft Constitution, 4 December 1960, p. 2. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. A Report from the Central Executive Committee to the First National Conference of the APDUSA, held in Cape Town on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1962', by A.K. Wilcox (Assistant Secretary) for the Central Executive of APDUSA. pp. 1 and 2. Personal correspondence with "Bill Johns", 25/3/2002. Interview conducted with U.F. by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 12/4/2002. Interview conducted with Gwen Wilcox and Robert Wilcox by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 15/4/2002.

<sup>18</sup> SAL. *Ilizwi Lesizwe*, 'APDUSA Is Born', pp. 1 and 4. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. Letter to W.M. Tsotsi from I.B. Tabata, 9/4/1961. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'The Birth of the African Peoples' Democratic Union of Southern Africa [APDUSA]', 1961, p. 3. Interview, Kader Hassim, 28 and 29 April 1999.

<sup>19</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. A Report from the Central Executive Committee to the First National Conference of the APDUSA, held in Cape Town on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1962', by A.K. Wilcox (Assistant Secretary) for the Central Executive of APDUSA. p. 1. See also, A. Drew, 'Social Mobilization and Racial Capitalism in South Africa, 1928 – 1960', Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1991, p. 502. A. Drew, *South Africa's Radical Tradition: a documentary history*, Volume 2, Cape Town: UCT Press, Bunchu Books and Mayibuye Books, 1997, p. 35.

<sup>20</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to W.M. Tsotsi from I.B. Tabata, 9/4/1961.

<sup>21</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. A Report from the Central Executive Committee to the First National Conference of the APDUSA, held in Cape Town on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1962', by A.K. Wilcox (Assistant Secretary) for the Central Executive of APDUSA. pp. 1 – 4. Personal correspondence with "Bill Johns", 25/3/2002. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. African Peoples' Democratic Union of Southern Africa (APDUSA), Draft Constitution, 1961, p. 3.

Secretary of the NEUM, was elected to the position of General Secretary. Alfie Wilcox as Assistant Secretary, Andrew Lukele, Treasurer and Enver Hassim, Publications Officer, were the other elected officials.<sup>22</sup>

### **APDUSA's political strategy**

APDUSA was constituted as a non-racial, national unitary political organisation. Individuals, regardless of race could join the organisation directly. This made APDUSA the first non-racial unitary liberation organisation in South Africa, for at that time both the ANC and PAC remained racially exclusive. APDUSA affiliated to the NEUM and adopted the NEUM's Ten Point Programme, as well as its policy of non-collaboration with the oppressor.<sup>23</sup>

The founding of APDUSA indicated that the NEUM would not confine the liberation struggle to the achievement of bourgeois or capitalist democracy. While APDUSA, like the NEUM, had as its immediate goal "the liquidation of national oppression", the organisation anticipated that the political struggle would move beyond national liberation.<sup>24</sup> This was reflected by Clause 3c of APDUSA's constitution under the heading Programme and Policy, which stated that "the democratic demands and aspirations of the oppressed workers and peasants shall be paramount in the orientation of APDUSA in both its short term and its long term objectives."<sup>25</sup> APDUSA was therefore the first liberation organisation to assign central revolutionary authority to both the workers and the peasants and was also the first organisation to specifically target both the workers and peasants for recruitment into the liberation struggle. Through adopting this clause APDUSA also signalled the proletarian character of the South African liberation struggle.<sup>26</sup> In his Presidential Address to the first national conference of APDUSA in April 1962, Tabata, emphasised that,

the only class which has a historical future can lead society out of crisis. History has placed the destiny of our society in the hands of the toiling masses. If we are to succeed in our liberation, we must link ourselves dynamically and inseparably with the labouring classes.

<sup>22</sup> SAL. *Ilizwi Lesizwe*, 'First APDUSA Conference', Volume 1, Number 6, May / June 1962, p. 5.

<sup>23</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. African Peoples' Democratic Union of Southern Africa (APDUSA), Draft Constitution, 1961, p. 3.

<sup>24</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. African Peoples' Democratic Union of Southern Africa (APDUSA), Draft Constitution, 1961, p. 1. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Presidential Address delivered at the First National Conference of the African Peoples' Democratic Union of Southern Africa', April, 1962, Cape Town', reprinted in *The Freedom Struggle in South Africa*, New York: Alexander Defense Committee, November 1965, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. African Peoples' Democratic Union of Southern Africa (APDUSA), Draft Constitution, 1961, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'The Dynamic of Revolution in South Africa, Speeches and Writings by I.B. Tabata', edited by Dora Taylor, with an introduction by Dora Taylor, unpublished manuscript, England, 1969, p. 171.

Without them we are nothing. With them we are everything, and nothing can stand in our way. No power on earth can hold us back in our march.<sup>27</sup>

The political orientation of APDUSA reflected the application of Leon Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution to the South African situation.<sup>28</sup> The NEUM envisaged the national struggle for democratic rights being carried over uninterruptedly into a socialist struggle. APDUSA was designed to bridge the division between the bourgeois democratic revolution and the struggle towards socialism. The founding of APDUSA was thus the clearest indication yet given by the NEUM leadership of the socialist goal it ultimately aimed to strive for.

The formation of APDUSA also reflected a theoretical advance on the NEUM's application of the theory of permanent revolution to conditions in South Africa. The NEUM recognised the economic integration of the Southern African states, as well as the central role played by the South Africa within the economy of the sub-continent. Flowing out of this recognition the NEUM argued that the unfolding of a revolutionary process in South Africa could not be held back within its borders, rather it would engulf the whole of Southern Africa. APDUSA was seen as the revolutionary organisation for the population of Southern Africa, hence the considered use of the term "Union of Southern Africa" in the name of the organisation.<sup>29</sup>

The leadership of the NEUM emphasised that while the establishment of APDUSA manifested the socialist goal of the NEUM, this did not, however, turn the NEUM or APDUSA into socialist parties with a socialist programme. The NEUM remained a national liberation movement but with the key distinction that it was led by a socialist leadership. The uniqueness of the NEUM, Tabata explained, lay in the fact that while it mobilised the population for the achievement of democratic demands,

it at the same time...orientates them towards the attainment of a maximum programme [socialist revolution]. The important thing to remember is that in our country the democratic stage can only be achieved under the dictatorship of the proletariat, which will

<sup>27</sup> Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Presidential Address delivered at the First National Conference of the African Peoples' Democratic Union of Southern Africa', April, 1962, Cape Town', reprinted in *The Freedom Struggle in South Africa*, New York: Alexander Defense Committee, November 1965, p. 19.

<sup>28</sup> L. Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution*, (1930) in L. Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution and Results and Prospects*, London: New Park, 1982.

<sup>29</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Contribution to the discussion on the International Situation', by I.B. Tabata, NEUM Conference, Edendale, Natal, December 1962, pp. 7 and 8. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. A Letter to Fidel Castro from I.B. Tabata, 9/6/1967. R. Kayser, 'The Struggle for Land and Liberty: The Revolutionary Path of the Non-European Unity Movement / Unity Movement of South Africa, 1933 - 1970', BA (Hons), University of Cape Town, 1997, pp. 80-81.

immediately put the socialist tasks on the agenda and uninterruptedly advance towards the socialist goal.<sup>30</sup>

The key objective of APDUSA was to bring together the separate struggles of the workers and peasants into a single organisational channel – a national political organisation – on the basis of a national struggle for the realisation of the key democratic demands for land and liberty. Once the support of the workers and peasants was captured, APDUSA's task would then be to orientate their struggle towards the achievement of the socialist goal. APDUSA was therefore to link the bourgeois democratic revolution with the struggle towards socialism in Southern Africa. Ultimately though, within APDUSA a revolutionary vanguard would emerge, who at the appropriate historical time would found a new Marxist Workers' Party of South Africa, which would spearhead the socialist revolution in Southern Africa.

### **Building the worker – peasant alliance**

After the founding of APDUSA in January 1961 the work of recruiting members began immediately. By the end of 1961 several branches had been established in the various regions of South Africa. In June 1961 the two APDU branches in the Western Cape reconstituted themselves as the Cape Peninsula Branch and the Paarl and Districts Branch of APDUSA respectively. Soon afterwards a branch of APDUSA was established in Wellington.<sup>31</sup> An organiser for the Boland recalls how APDUSA was built in the region,

House meetings were called all over Paarl, Wellington, Franschoek, Stellenbosch, Pniel and Newton to introduce the constitution of APDUSA to people who had over the years, from as far back as 1952, been brought into the NEUM. The years of political work in the region made the task easier to raise people to a new political plain. Young people were particularly drawn to APDUSA and regularly and faithfully attended meetings.<sup>32</sup>

Besides drawing people into APDUSA who were familiar with and active in the NEUM affiliates, a notable feature about APDUSA's growth in the Western Cape was that it succeeded in recruiting workers into the organisation. For example, a number of workers employed in the

<sup>30</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. A Letter to W.M. Tsotsi from I.B. Tabata, April 1969.

<sup>31</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Report of Head Unity Committee Meeting held in August 1961, p. 2. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. A Report from the Central Executive Committee to the First National Conference of the APDUSA, held in Cape Town on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1962', by A.K. Wilcox (Assistant Secretary) for the Central Executive of APDUSA, p. 4.

<sup>32</sup> Personal correspondence with 'Bill Johns', 25/3/2002.

food and canning industry who were previously active in trade unions controlled by the Communist Party joined the Paarl and Districts Branch of APDUSA.<sup>33</sup>

In Natal three branches of APDUSA were founded, in Pietermaritzburg, Durban and Dundee respectively. The combined political work of these branches reflected APDUSA's orientation of being a workers and peasants organisation. The Pietermaritzburg Branch achieved tremendous success in recruiting workers from especially the leather industry, the biggest industry in Pietermaritzburg in the early 1960s, employing hundreds of mainly African workers. The foundation for APDUSA's success among these workers had been laid in 1960, when workers employed at the Eddels leather factory, the largest factory in the town, went on strike when the owners attempted to impose the incentive system to raise productivity and increase profits.<sup>34</sup> During the 1960 strike, Shaik Hassan, a worker at Eddels who belonged to the Pietermaritzburg Progressive Study Circle, an affiliate of the NEUM, became the undisputed leader of the leather workers. Hassan was an excellent orator and for months he was able to carry the striking workers with him. When the factory owners laid a charge against the striking workers, Hassan called upon Enver Hassim, a member of the NEUM's executive who practised law in Durban, to defend them. This exposed the striking workers to the ideas of the NEUM. As Kader Hassim recounts,

Enver use to come to Pietermaritzburg regularly to talk to the workers as to the progress of their case. Now, you are not dealing with one client where you can sit in an office and talk, you're dealing with hundreds, nearly thousands...And when the business was over he [Hassim] dealt with the politics of the day.<sup>35</sup>

The result of the active participation of the NEUM in the leather workers struggle of 1960 was that when APDUSA was launched in Pietermaritzburg in 1961 it captured the support of a large section of these workers.<sup>36</sup> By 1963 the Pietermaritzburg Branch of APDUSA, with Shaik Hassan as its Chairman, was one of the largest in the country.

In Durban young people who received their political education and cut their political teeth in the Society of Young Africa and the Durban Students' Union were among the first to join the Durban Branch of APDUSA. Their youthful enthusiasm made them ideal organisers for

<sup>33</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Report of Head Unity Committee Meeting held in August 1961.

<sup>34</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. A Report from the Central Executive Committee to the First National Conference of the APDUSA, held in Cape Town on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1962, by A.K. Wilcox (Assistant Secretary) for the Central Executive of APDUSA. p. 4. Interview, Hassim, 28 and 29 April 1999.

<sup>35</sup> Interview, Hassim, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> April 1999..

<sup>36</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. A Report from the Central Executive Committee to the First National Conference of the APDUSA, held in Cape Town on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1962, by A.K. Wilcox (Assistant Secretary) for the Central Executive of APDUSA. p. 4.

the new organisation. They were particularly active in Indian working class areas, like Avoca, Merebank, Bayhead and Clairwood, where they achieved a fair degree of success. As Yusuf Jacobs describes,

We got a lot of positive responses from working people...where we went there were real working class people. You take Avoca...we used to walk along the footpaths over the hills and bushes...we were handing out the Ten Point Programme, talking to people and telling them they must join an organisation, they must become politically involved but there has to be a national organisation, we've got to fight this thing nationally...we need the masses involved.<sup>37</sup>

Besides organising in the Indian working class areas, the Durban Branch of APDUSA also conducted political work in the African locations close to city, as well as in the peri-urban areas on its outskirts. Karrim Essack, the Chairman of the Durban Branch played a key role here. Essack was a lawyer and many of his clients came from the African locations. Not missing an opportunity to propagate the organisation, he soon built up a formidable team of African organisers for APDUSA. Among these organisers was Benjamin Madikwa, who has been described as an extremely hard-working organiser, who could sway people with his commanding voice.<sup>38</sup> Madikwa along with other organisers such as, Mr Zaca, Booi Tebete, Benedict Nyakeni and Galena Tebete recruited members for APDUSA in several African locations close to Durban, such as Umlazi and Howardsdale. Joined by Posselt Gcabashe from Northern Natal, they also worked deep inside the African rural areas of Natal, such as Ixopo, Bergville, Ladysmith and Izingolweni. From these areas, organisers like Madikwa, Zaca, Nyakeni and Gcabashe moved into the Transkei. Zaca was especially active in the Matatiele and Umtata districts of the Transkei, while Madikwa and Gcabashe, who were appointed as fulltime national organisers for APDUSA, were particularly active in Eastern Pondoland.<sup>39</sup>

The Dundee Branch of APDUSA also drew many of the young people who had come through the Society of Young Africa and the Progressive Forum into its ranks. From Dundee organisers were sent out into the surrounding African reserves of Northern Natal. In May 1962 an organiser using the *nom de plume* "Falaza" reported to Tabata on political work

<sup>37</sup> Interview, Jacobs, 10/11/1999.

<sup>38</sup> Interview conducted with Mac Reddy, 10/11/1999. Madiwa first made his appearance in NEUM circles in SOYA in 1955. He then disappeared for a while and in 1961 re-appeared in APDUSA. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Kader Hassim, p. 4787.

<sup>39</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'In Verwoerd's South Africa', 3/4/1965. Interview conducted with Elma Carolissen by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 30/6/1999. Interview conducted with Booi Tebete by R. Kayser, Durban, 11/5/1999. Interview conducted with Clive Vawda by R. Kayser, Durban, 11/5/1999. Interview conducted with Sunny Venkatrathnan by R. Kayser, Durban, 5/11/1999. Interview, Jacobs, 10/11/1999. Interview, Reddy, 10/11/1999.

carried out by APDUSA in the Dundee District. Travelling on push-bike "Falaza" had gone to several African-owned farms in the District where the ideas of APDUSA were introduced to "the peasants", who despite "their local and petty quarrels – are eager for a new light and correct leadership."<sup>40</sup> At some point Limbada joined up with "Falaza" and the two addressed a meeting of peasants on one farm and another meeting of teachers in the District.<sup>41</sup>

On the Witwatersrand a central branch of APDUSA was founded towards the end of 1961 in Johannesburg. The core membership of the Branch consisted of activists drawn mainly from the Society of Young Africa and the Progressive Forum. The social composition of the Branch reflected a non-racial mixture of white and Indian middle class radicals and largely African workers from the locations surrounding Johannesburg, like Western Native Township, Alexandra and Pimville.

The formation of the Johannesburg Branch of APDUSA galvanised the NEUM on the Witwatersrand to new levels of political activism. According to Leonard Nikani who was elected Chairman of the Branch in 1962,

The days were gone when study groups and lectures took up most of our time. Now theory and practice were to go hand in hand... We carefully planned the work of the branch and selected targets to aim for.<sup>42</sup>

The Johannesburg Branch decided to concentrate its political work in two areas that were extremely sensitive to the functioning of the South African economy, the mining industry and the African reserves. As will be discussed later in the chapter, APDUSA's entry into the mines had a dynamic effect, as mineworkers spread APDUSA to their co-workers from different parts of South Africa and since mineworkers were migrants, APDUSA also gained access to the African reserves in especially the Northern Provinces.<sup>43</sup>

In the Eastern Cape a branch of APDUSA was established in Queenstown towards the end of 1961. In East London and Port Elizabeth house meetings were held but although there was a good response to APDUSA it had not been possible to form a branch by August 1961

<sup>40</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to I.B. Tabata from "Falaza", 7/4/1962.

<sup>41</sup> In January 1963 it was reported that the Dundee had done a tremendous amount of work, drawing in people from all sections of the black oppressed. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Extended Executive (HUC) Meeting, January 1963, p. 1.

<sup>42</sup> L. Nikani, 'My Life under White Supremacy and in Exile', Chapter 13, 'Unity of Town and Country', 2000, [unpublished manuscript (containing no page numbers), in the author's possession]. See also, Interview conducted with Leonard Nikani by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 24/12/1998. Interview conducted with Wesley Seleka by R. Kayser, Lobatsi, Botswana, 23/10/1998.

<sup>43</sup> Nikani, 'My Life under White Supremacy', Chapter 13, 'Unity of Town and Country'. Interview, Nikani, 24/12/1998. N. Traub, 'My Recollections of the Johannesburg Branch of Apdusa', April, 2002, (in the author's possession). Interview Seleka, 23/10/1998.

due to insufficient numbers.<sup>44</sup> In the Transkei progress was initially sluggish especially due to the state of emergency which banned meetings. APDUSA groups were, however, slowly established in areas like Kentani and Lady Frere.<sup>45</sup> Later organisers succeeded in drawing in the leaders and members of the *Makhuluspan*, a peasant organisation that spanned the districts of Qumbu, Tsolo and Matatiele (see Chapter Four).<sup>46</sup> A region of the Transkei where APDUSA received an overwhelming response was Eastern Pondoland. As will be demonstrated in this chapter, this region was worked intensively by the APDUSA organisers from Natal, who were able to capitalise on the militancy unleashed by the 1959 – 1960 Pondoland revolt.<sup>47</sup>

### **The NEUM adopts the armed struggle**

The other significant response by the NEUM to the emergence of pre-revolutionary conditions in South Africa during the early 1960s was its adoption of the armed struggle. In 1962 the NEUM had already taken the first tentative steps in this direction when Tabata secretly left South Africa soon after his five-year banning order expired. Tabata's mission was to ascertain the extent to which the NEUM would be able to extract support abroad if it launched an armed struggle. The NEUM was particularly keen to determine whether it would be able to secure assistance from socialist countries in Eastern Europe as well as from China. Furthermore, it was also critical to ascertain whether it could rely on support from other African states. For, at least during initial stages of the armed struggle, the co-operation of the African states would be crucial in providing a base from which the NEUM could launch its armed struggle.

<sup>44</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Dora Taylor from Bridget (Tabata), 13/3/1963. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Report of Head Unity Committee Meeting held in August 1961, p. 3. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. A Report from the Central Executive Committee to the First National Conference of the APDUSA, held in Cape Town on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1962, by A.K. Wilcox (Assistant Secretary) for the Central Executive of APDUSA. p. 5. Privately held by R. Kayser. 'Organisational trends that led to the established of APDU and APDUSA', by Kwezi Tshangana.

<sup>45</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. A Report from the Central Executive Committee to the First National Conference of the APDUSA, held in Cape Town on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1962, by A.K. Wilcox (Assistant Secretary) for the Central Executive of APDUSA. p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. Report submitted to the Botswana Centre by Z. Makasi, June / July 1965. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. Report submitted by Maxwell Piliso, Sisa Mvambo and Zitobile Makasi (national organisers for APDUSA), 28<sup>th</sup> December 1965. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Dora Taylor from I.B. Tabata, 28/8/1963. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *South Africa: A Memorandum submitted to Committee of Nine by All-African Convention and Non-European Unity Movement*, Dar es Salaam: Mwanachi Publishing, December 1963, p. 15. Interview conducted with Zitobile Makasi by R. Kayser, Queenstown, 4/5/1998.

<sup>47</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Report of Head Unity Committee Meeting held in August 1961. Telephonic discussion with Kwezi Tshangana, 11/4/2002.

Tabata passed through several African countries that were still engaged in an independence struggle with their colonisers, such as Zimbabwe, Malawi and Kenya.<sup>48</sup> Here he held discussions with the respective nationalist movements. The fact that these nationalist movements were still engaged in their own struggle meant that they could not offer much assistance. The two newly independent African countries Tabata targeted were Tanzania and Algeria. He received a warm reception in both countries. Algeria, in particular, which was being ruled by the radical National Liberation Front (FNL), made a commitment to assist the NEUM in its armed struggle.<sup>49</sup> Due to time constraints, imposed through a prior arrangement with Andrew Lukele, who would assist him to slip back into South Africa on Christmas day 1962, Tabata was unable to reach Eastern Europe and China. He did, however, manage to establish contact with the embassies of these countries in England, before being forced to return to South Africa.<sup>50</sup>

In January 1963 the NEUM held an important Extended Executive meeting at Kommetjie on the coast of the Cape Peninsula. Delegates from all over South Africa were present, Johannesburg, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Dundee, the Transkei, East London, Port Elizabeth and the Boland. Tabata placed before this gathering the idea of preparing for an armed struggle abroad. He indicated that his recent tour of Africa had convinced him that the NEUM could count on assistance from the African states if it took this step. There was unanimous agreement among delegates that this was the appropriate time for the NEUM to adopt the armed struggle.<sup>51</sup>

The NEUM assigned an important role to APDUSA within the NEUM's new approach. At the Kommetjie meeting it was argued that wars were declared by nations and not by individuals or groups. APDUSA was to be built into a mass political organisation to represent "the nation" of South Africa. The directive adopted at the meeting declared,

We...[should] make it quite clear to the people what our intentions were according to the decisions of that meeting...The people should not be apologetic, they should come out boldly, for they represent a genuine peoples' struggle, and should tell the people of the

<sup>48</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to a relative of Vic Sondlo in Bechuanaland, 30/9/1962.

<sup>49</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Meeting with M. Bentoumi, representing the Political Section of the FNL', Algiers, 7/11/1962. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to His Excellency Ahmed Ben Bella, President of the Algerian Peoples' Democratic Republic, from I.B. Tabata, 3/12/1964. NAD. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. *The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Kader Hassim*, p. 4784. National Library of South Africa (NLSA) *Mercury*, 'Local man aid terrorists', 18/8/1971.

<sup>50</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter of introduction to Embassies in the U.K., June 1962. R. Kayser, 'The Struggle for Land and Liberty', p. 85.

<sup>51</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. *The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Kader Hassim*, p. 4776. Interview, Hassim. NLSA. *Mercury*, 'Local men aid terrorists', 18/8/1971. Notes of interview conducted with Gwen Wilcox and Robert Wilcox by R. Kayser, 15/4/2002. Personal correspondence with "Bill Johns", 25/3/2002.

new approach; that by building an organisation we were building a nation, an army that was to seize power.<sup>52</sup>

For the NEUM, the interconnection between the building of an army and that of building a nation was crucial to its concept of a liberation struggle, which aimed at the complete overthrow of the state. The first point the NEUM made in relation to its concept of armed struggle was that people would be sent out for military training in order to build an army, which would be at the forefront of the liberatory struggle. It rejected the approach of the ANC's military wing which committed isolated acts of sabotage as a means of pressurising the Apartheid government to the negotiating table.

While the NEUM maintained that the establishment of an army was important, it stressed that the most essential task remained the political organisation of the population into APDUSA. Moreover, the NEUM envisaged that both the army and the nation would be brought together under a central political authority, which would direct and co-ordinate "all the activities of the various arms of the nation-at-war."<sup>53</sup> As Tabata explained,

This means then, that while we are sending people out for training, we have to knuckle down to a more important task of organising the people into a nation and teaching them to look to a single political command. In this connection our federal structure comes in handy. Through it we gather those who do not belong to any organisation. Where there are committees in the countryside we draw them into the AAC while at the same time presenting APDUSA particularly to catch and tie down the leadership of those committees.<sup>54</sup>

At another secret meeting on a farm in Newcastle in March 1963 the NEUM leadership formulated a concrete programme to prepare the population for an armed uprising.<sup>55</sup> Firstly, this entailed that arrangements be made with independent African states for the establishment of a camp where people could be trained. Secondly, it required the immediate training of ten members of the NEUM, who would become the "commanders of the revolutionary army." And lastly, it meant that an initial group of between five hundred to one thousand people would be sent out of South Africa for military training.

<sup>52</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Extended Executive (H.U.C.) Meeting, January 1963.

<sup>53</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. A Letter to Dora Taylor from I.B. Tabata, 28/8/1963. See also, UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Extended executive (H.U.C.) Meeting, January 1963.

<sup>54</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. A Letter to Dora Taylor from I.B. Tabata, 28/8/1963.

<sup>55</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Evidence by Zitobile Agreement Makasi, pp. 4190 and 4408. NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'I remember, but not because of fear', 25/11/1971. NLSA. *Mercury*, 'Plans but no action, court told', 25/11/1971.

To achieve these objectives the meeting decided that Tabata, Jane Gool and Nathaniel Honono would leave South Africa immediately for Swaziland. They were to make their way to Dar es Salaam, the capital of Tanzania and headquarters of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). Here they would make representations on behalf of the NEUM to the African Liberation Committee (ALC) of the OAU for the recognition of the NEUM as one of the political movements fighting for liberation in South Africa. Recognition by the ALC would give the NEUM access to funding which various independent African states had pledged towards the cause of liberation in Africa.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, recognition would place an obligation on the OAU to provide members of the NEUM with military training. Soon after Jane Gool, Honono and Tabata left the Newcastle Extended Executive meeting they secretly crossed the border into Swaziland. In Swaziland Tabata wrote a letter to Dora Taylor (now living in England) in which he captured the mood within the NEUM at the time,

I was determined not to leave until I achieved what I wanted. Three times I toured the country [before the Newcastle Extended Executive meeting]. I am now satisfied that things are moving and moving in the direction I want. The potential is terrific. The executive met two weeks ago. The reports are thrilling. All centres are working at high pitch. There is a sense of urgency and terrific excitement.<sup>57</sup>

#### **‘The Book Under the Stone’: APDUSA in Eastern Pondoland**

Whereas APDUSA’s first branches were formed in the urban areas, its influence soon spread to several African reserves. During the early to mid-1960s APDUSA made significant inroads into the Eastern Pondoland region of the Transkei, as well as into Sekhukhuneland and the Lehurutse areas of the Northern Provinces. (See Map 4 for Eastern Pondoland, p. 104a, and Map 1 for Lehurutse and Sekhukhuneland, p. 19a)

APDUSA’s growth in the reserves was most prolific in Eastern Pondoland, which borders Natal in the north. Benjamin Madikwa, who was originally from Pondoland, was the key organiser who introduced APDUSA to the peasantry of Eastern Pondoland. Karrim Essack co-ordinated this work from Durban. APDUSA got a foothold in Eastern Pondoland towards the end of 1961, when Madikwa recruited a bus driver in Isipingo, Samsom Mabude, into APDUSA.<sup>58</sup> Mabude, who came from the Enkantolo Location in the Bizana District, took

<sup>56</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Notes for a discussion with Kwame Nkrumah by I.B. Tabata, Accra, April (?) 1964. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. A Letter to Dora Taylor from I.B. Tabata, 1/6/1963 and 28/8/1963.

<sup>57</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. A Letter to Dora Taylor from I.B. Tabata, 1/6/1963.

<sup>58</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mpitsi Ncenjane, p. 2256. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mpompota Mhomba, p. 5141. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case

Madikwa to Bizana and introduced him to his brother, Welcome Notsibande Mabude. Notsibande Mabude arranged several meetings in Bizana at which Madikwa introduced APDUSA to rural dwellers in the District.<sup>59</sup> He later took Madikwa to the Lusikisiki District and introduced him to peasants there.<sup>60</sup>

Ngcikwa Vimba, who became a stalwart of APDUSA, remembers that the very first meeting held by Madikwa in the Lusikisiki District took place at the homestead of Elijah Lande (who had fled to Lesotho after the Pondoland revolt). Those present at this meeting included, Notsibande Mabude, Fanele Nxasana, Mpompota Mhomba, Ndofera Nxasana, Pakela Finisi, Madikwa and Vimba. According to Vimba, Mabude spoke first, introducing Fanele Nxasana and himself as people who came from Bizana. He then pointed to Madikwa and said that he came from Durban, and would address them in connection with his mission to Pondoland. Vimba recalls that Madikwa said to them that they would be saved from the desert by joining APDUSA. When asked to explain himself, he replied that,

In your beast there is a part which belongs to the government [because] you cannot slaughter your stock without reporting to the government. There is not one among you who owns a letter called a title [deed]. When you get married you have got to report to the government that you are married. When a child should be born of that marriage you have to go and report, 'I have now born a child' ... By that I want to demonstrate to you that you own nothing. Let us join the organisation in order that we may come back from the desert.<sup>61</sup>

These words had a powerful impact on the gathering, Vimba has explained that, "We were thankful for his remarks because in fact we had not known that we were all the time in a desert."<sup>62</sup>

Madikwa approached the Pondoland peasants particularly through grievances relating to the land question.<sup>63</sup> Gideon Mahanjana from the Bizana District recalls the specific issues related to the land question which Madikwa raised at these meetings,

99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mpompota Mhomba, p. 3366. Interview, Tebete by R. Kayser, 11/5/1999.

<sup>59</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mfolwane Mbele, pp. 5141-51445.

<sup>60</sup> Interview conducted with Fanele Nxasana by R. Kayser, Isikelo Location, 4/11/1999. Interview conducted with Ndofera Nxasana by R. Kayser, Mhlwazini Location, Lusikisiki, 1/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Ngcikwa Nagi Vimba, pp. 5835-5836. Evidence by Mfolwane Mbele (accused no. 2) in the Trial of Kader Hassim and 12 others, p. 5141. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Dam Gideon Mahanjana, p. 5722. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mpompota Mhomba, pp. 3368-3369.

<sup>61</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Ngcikwa Vimba, pp. 5835 - 5836.

<sup>62</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Ngcikwa Vimba, pp. 5835 - 5836.

It was rehabilitation and the resettlement of people, the cutting up [of land] into small bits of grazing areas and the transfer of kraals to be built together in an area and the many taxes which we paid.<sup>64</sup>

This struck a powerful chord with the peasantry, for as James Mgnobi Mobumbela explains, “when it came to that question of land, people were prepared to die for this.”<sup>65</sup>

Madikwa pointed out that as individuals, or as small groups meeting on their own, they would not be able to solve their problems. He emphasised that only once they had united within a political organisation would they be in a position to work towards solving their problems. Madikwa presented APDUSA as an organisation that they could join which was fighting for the resolution of their problems.<sup>66</sup> Mfolwane Mbele from the Isikelo Location, Bizana has recalled the essence of Madikwa’s message to the peasants,

Madikwa indicated to us that it was not possible for us in the Transkei...to speak to the government or complain about these things on our own, unless we become one in the movement, in the organisation, because these things come to us from those who legislate...Only when we come together and become one and refer to the government in one voice about these things, shall we be able to be heard.<sup>67</sup>

Madikwa therefore emphasised to the peasants that their land problem was ultimately a political question. And that the only way they could begin to solve their problems was through entering the broader national struggle for political rights.

In January 1963, the NEUM took the decision to prepare the population for an armed uprising. Madikwa conveyed this to the peasantry in Eastern Pondoland. He advised them that once they had organised themselves into APDUSA, some of them would be selected to go abroad for military training, to return later to fight the government. As Pindiso Zimambane recalls, “Madikwa was emphasising the question of arms. And this attracted a lot of us, this

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<sup>63</sup> Interview conducted with Ndengenzi Makokoba by R. Kayser, Ludeke Halt, Bizana, 21/5/1998. Interview conducted with Nonkenkwe Mjungula by R. Kayser, Lusikisiki, 1/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Dam Gideon Mahanjana, p. 5723. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mpitsi Ncenjane, pp. 2260-2261. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Magegeni Pungashe, p. 2444.

<sup>64</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Dam Gideon Mahanjana, p. 5723. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mfolwane Mbele, p. 5141.

<sup>65</sup> Interview conducted with Richard Pennington Danisa and James Mgnobi Mobumbela by R. Kayser, Mhopho Location, 2/11/1999.

<sup>66</sup> Interview conducted with Pindiso Zimambane by R. Kayser, Lusikisiki, 15/5/1998. Interview conducted with Mpitsi Ncenjane by R. Kayser, Isikelo Location, 5/11/1999. Interview, Makokoba, 21/5/198. Interview, Danisa and Mobumbela, 2/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mfolwane Mbele, p. 5142. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Dam Gideon Mahanjana, p. 5723.

<sup>67</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mfolwane Mbele, p. 5144.

idea of arms.”<sup>68</sup> Mpompota Mhomba has spelled out why the suggestion of arms and military training appealed to them,

When Madikwa came with this suggestion of guns it became something tangible because during the disturbances [the Pondoland revolt] when we met on the hill tops, we had nothing by way of arms except assegais.<sup>69</sup>

APDUSA was able to obtain support from a significant section of the peasantry in Eastern Pondoland. Pindiso Zimambane, for example, recalls that often a large hut was inadequate to accommodate large numbers of people so meetings were held out in the open.<sup>70</sup> Yusuf Jacobs who worked closely with Madikwa, ferrying him to meetings with peasants in Pondoland and Natal, has claimed that APDUSA’s membership in Pondoland totalled thousands. He recalls several private meetings held with APDUSA organisers at which Madikwa submitted “a stack of lists containing the names of hundreds, if not thousands, of people in Pondoland who had signed-up as APDUSA members.”<sup>71</sup>

In Pondoland APDUSA was often referred to by its members as CAMDUSA which they took to mean, “Come APDUSA, come closer, come to APDUSA”.<sup>72</sup> During the 1960s APDUSA was the only liberation movement to operate in Pondoland. As Mpitsi Ncenjane has maintained,

APDUSA [was] the only organisation which initiated the struggle in Pondoland...the other organisations which seem to be taking the forefront now [1990s], they came later, very much later here in Bizana.<sup>73</sup>

Two branches of APDUSA were initially established in Eastern Pondoland, the Bizana Branch and the Lusikisiki – Flagstaff Branch. The headquarters of the Bizana Branch of APDUSA was at Welcome Notsibande Mabude’s homestead in the Enkantolo Location.<sup>74</sup> Members of the Lusikisiki – Flagstaff Branch referred to their branch as *Incwadi*

<sup>68</sup> Interview conducted with Pindiso Zimambane by R. Kayser, Ludeke Halt, 6/11/1999. Interview conducted with Mnyamezeli Njenjane by R. Kayser, Enkantolo Location, 5/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mdodi Tshanda (also known as Fenisi Nuba), p. 2350.

<sup>69</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mpompota Mhomba, pp. 3379-3380.

<sup>70</sup> Interview, Zimambane, 6/11/1999. Interview, Nxasana, 1/11/1999. Interview, Ncenjana, 5/11/1999. Interview, Njenjane, 5/11/1999. Interview conducted with Gideon Mahanjana by R. Kayser, Ludeke Halt, 20/5/1998.

<sup>71</sup> Private conversation with Yusuf Jacobs, 10 May 2002.

<sup>72</sup> Interview, Danisa and Mobumbela, 2/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Ngcikwa Nagi Vimba, p. 5924. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Jamani Mxwenge (also known as, Jamani Jali), p.1419.

<sup>73</sup> Interview, Ncenjana, 5/11/1999.

<sup>74</sup> Interview, Nxasana, 4/11/1999.

*ePhantsikwelitye*, meaning “The book under the stone”.<sup>75</sup> According to N dofela Nxasansa, the reason why the branch was given this name, was because the organisation had to be kept secret, it had to be kept away from the government and its informers.<sup>76</sup> The state of emergency was also still in force in Pondoland and APDUSA, like the *Intabas* and *Kongo* during the Pondoland revolt, operated underground. Meetings were held at night in as much secrecy as possible. Ishmael Tsheka has reflected on the methods they employed to avoid detection by the police,

if we go to the meetings we must take our bibles and pretend we are going to church. In other words [we were] covering [ourselves] with the bible...maybe say two will be outside watching for some spies... So when the police came [we] would hide maybe papers, membership cards, things like that...and one would pretend as if he’s preaching.<sup>77</sup>

The APDUSA branches were well organised and were run by committees consisting of between seven to nine people. The committee of the Bizana branch consisted of Notsibande Mabude, who was the Chairman, Milis Njiyela, Vice-Chairman and Magegeni Pungashe, the Treasurer.<sup>78</sup> The first Secretary of the Branch was Fanele Nxasansa, who was later replaced by Mpitsi Ncenjane.<sup>79</sup> Two of the ordinary committee members of the Bizana Branch were Mfolwane Mbele and Jamani Mxwenge.<sup>80</sup>

In the Lusikisiki – Flagstaff districts, N dofela Nxasana was the Chairman of the APDUSA Branch, with Pakela Finisi, who was more commonly known Ramza, as the Vice-Chairperson.<sup>81</sup> The Secretary of the Branch was Mhlalawa Vumazonke.<sup>82</sup> Ordinary Committee members of the Lusikisiki – Flagstaff branch included, Ngcikwa Nagi Vimba, Baninji Tauka and Nodanana Mabodiya.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Interview, Zimamabane, 6/11/1999. Interview, Nxasana, 1/11/1999.

<sup>76</sup> Interview, Nxasana, 1/11/1999. Interview, Zimambane, 6/11/1999.

<sup>77</sup> Interview conducted with Ishmael Tsheka by R. Kayser, Maseru, Lesotho, 24/4/1999.

<sup>78</sup> Interview, Njenjane, 5/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Jamani Mxwenge, pp. 1389-1390. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mpitsi Ncenjane, pp. 2259, 2313 & 2333. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Magegeni Pungashe, p. 2418.

<sup>79</sup> Interview, Ncenjane, 5/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mpitsi Ncenjane, p.2259.

<sup>80</sup> Interview, Njenjane, 5/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Jamani Jali, p. 1389.

<sup>81</sup> Interview, Danisa and Mobumbela, 2/11/1999. Interview, Zimambane, 6/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by N dofela Nxasana, p. 6061. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mlandwa Maqoqela, also known as, Xanjana, Makweba and Silangwe, 3363.

<sup>82</sup> Interview, Zimambane, 6/11/1999.

<sup>83</sup> Interview, Mjungula, 1/11/1999. Interview, Zimambane, 6/11/1999.

Branches delegated certain people to act as organisers, though it was generally accepted that it was the duty of each member to recruit people into APDUSA. Branch members paid an annual subscription fee of two shillings and sixpence, or twenty-five cents, and were provided with membership cards. The secretaries of branches kept regular minutes of proceedings at branch meetings.<sup>84</sup> These minutes were later destroyed, on instruction from the executive committee of the NEUM, when the Special Branch of the South African Police started clamping down on the activities of APDUSA in Eastern Pondoland.<sup>85</sup> Branches were in constant contact with the leadership of the NEUM through the APDUSA organisers. Likewise the leadership of APDUSA in Pondoland frequently travelled to Natal, meeting Karrim Essack, as well as the broader leadership of the NEUM in places like Durban, Isipingo and Tongaat.<sup>86</sup>

In June 1963 a delegation representing APDUSA's members in Eastern Pondoland met the senior leadership of the NEUM in Swaziland.<sup>87</sup> This meeting had been arranged to inform APDUSA's peasant membership that the trio consisting of Tabata, Gool and Honono had been delegated by the organisation to leave South Africa with the directive of seeking recognition for the NEUM from the Organisation of African Unity, as the first step towards launching the NEUM's armed struggle.<sup>88</sup> Mhlalwa Vumazonke, who represented the Bizana Branch of APDUSA, recalls the essence of the message Tabata and the rest of the leadership of the NEUM conveyed to the peasant delegation at this meeting,

Tabata and the leadership of the Unity Movement emphasised the importance of building the organisation and getting the African people to become united and strong. They further went on to say that, in order to hasten this process of liberation, it was necessary that people should be recruited and go abroad to be trained...in arms, so that they could come back and then freedom could be achieved through sticks [arms].<sup>89</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Interview, Tscheka, 24/4/1999. Interview, Ncenjana, 5/11/1999.

<sup>85</sup> Interview, Ncenjane, 5/11/1999.

<sup>86</sup> Interview, Nxasana, 1/11/1999. Interview, Zimambane, 6/11/1999. Interview, Nxasansa, 4/11/1999. Interview, Jacobs, 10/11/1999. Interview, Reddy, 10/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Ndofera Nxasana, pp. 5059, 5060 & 6062. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mpompota Mhomba, pp. 3367 & 3371. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mhlalwa Vumazonke, also known as Madikizela and Ngutyane, pp. 4085. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. Report on Head Unity Committee Meeting of 26/9/2964, dated October 1964. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'Johannesburg Report', report submitted by Z. Makasi to the Botswana Centre at Lobatsi in June or July 1965. Tsotsi, W. M., 'My Life in Exile', pp. 11 & 26.

<sup>87</sup> Interview, Tsheka, 24/4/1999. Interview, Nxasansa, 4/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mhlalwa Vumazonke, also known as Madikizela and Ngutyane, pp. 4085 & 4106-4019. Tsotsi, W. M. 'My Life in Exile', pp. 9 & 26. Interview, Reddy, 10/11/1999.

<sup>88</sup> Interview conducted with I.B. Tabata and Jane Gool by Allison Drew, Harare, 15/12/1987 – 17/12/1989. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. A letter to Dora Taylor from I.B. Tabata, 28/8/1963.

<sup>89</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mhlalwa Vumazonke, also known as Madikizela and Ngutyane, p.4109.

The Pondoland delegation indicated that they could immediately recruit five hundred people from their area for military training. The leadership of the NEUM pointed out that it was necessary for recruits to be drawn from all regions of South Africa, for in their view an armed uprising could only succeed if conducted on a national scale. The delegation was told that when the NEUM was ready it would accept an initial batch of twenty-five recruits from Pondoland.<sup>90</sup> In a letter Tabata jotted down some of his impressions of this meeting with the peasants,

They were eloquent in putting forward their suffering and their thoughts concerning the future. When we finally bade them goodbye the afternoon of the next day they revealed unforgettable warmth. It would be harsh for anyone to let down such a people whose humanity transcends all physical, penury and spiritual denudation. Touch them and you touch strength.<sup>91</sup>

The Pondoland peasants organised within APDUSA accepted that building a strong political organisation on a national scale was essential before embarking on an armed struggle. They soon spread APDUSA to other districts in Pondoland, such as Umzimkulu, Mount Ayliff and Tabankulu. They also spread it to various areas in Natal, such as Izingolweni, along the South Coast of Natal.<sup>92</sup> Mpitsi Ncenjana, for example, recalls Mfolwane Mbele and himself undertaking trips on bicycle from their Isikelo Location in Bizana, to organise people in Umzimkulu and districts in Natal bordering the Isikelo Location.<sup>93</sup> Their determination to build APDUSA was not limited to organising in their immediate and surrounding areas. In a historically noteworthy development, they sent their organisers to the Witwatersrand and Sekhukhuneland to build APDUSA among the workers and peasantry in the Northern Provinces of South Africa.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Interview, Tabata and Gool, 15/12/1987 – 17/12/1987.

<sup>91</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Dora Taylor from I. B. Tabata, 17/6/1963.

<sup>92</sup> Interview, Njenjane, 5/1/1999. Interview, Mahanjana, 20/5/1998. Interview, Tshaka, 24/4/1999. Interview, Ncenjana, 5/11/1999. Interview, Danisa and Mobumbela, 2/11/1999. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Archives, 'The Peasants' Welcome APDUSA Organisers', Report submitted by Maxwell Piliso, Sisa Mvambo and Zitobile Makasi (national organisers) after a tour of Pondoland, Glen Grey and East Griqualand, 28/12/1965.

<sup>93</sup> Interview, Ncenjana, 5/11/1999.

<sup>94</sup> Interview, Danisa and Mobumbela, 2/11/1999. Interview, Nxasana, 1/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mpompota Mhomba, pp. 3371 & 3393. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by N dofela Nxasana, p. 6063. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Archives, 'Report'. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. Letter to I. B. Tabata from W. M. Tsotsi, 16/7/1964. Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile', pp. 30-38. Nikani, 'My Life under White Supremacy', Chapter 13, 'Unity of Town and Country'. K. Essack, *The Armed Struggle*, p. 20.



Members of the Extended Executive Committee of the NEUM, Kommetjie, January 1963. Back row (left to right): Livingstone Mqotsi, Alfie Wilcox, Dr A.I. Limbada, W.M. Tsotsi, Eric Jama, Ernest Jama, Ronnie Britten, Mutuzele Mphele, Alie Fataar, Karrim Essack and Denis Lobi. Sitting in front: Jane Gool, Leo Sihlali (President of the NEUM) and I.B. Tabata. (Photo: Courtesy of Alie Fataar).



Livingstone Mqotsi and I.B. Tabata, elected General Secretary and President of APDUSA, respectively, in April 1962. (Photo: Courtesy of Gwen Wilcox).



Karrim Essack, Chairman of the Durban Branch of APDUSA. (Photo: Courtesy of Elma Carolissen).



Leonard Nikani, Chairman of the Johannesburg Branch of APDUSA in the early 1960s.  
(Photo: *Drum*, January 1972).



Sisa Mvambo, one of the national organisers of APDUSA during the 1960s.  
(Photo: Natal Archival Depot).



Zitobile Makasi, one of the national organisers for APDUSA in the mid-1960s.  
(Photo: Natal Archival Depot).



Cas Kikia and Lawrence Nota. Nota was the 'operative leader' of APDUSA's political work in Sekhukhuneland. Later, from exile in Botswana, Kikia and Nota were at the forefront of organising peasants in the Lehurutse area into APDUSA.  
(Photo: Courtesy of Queen Nota).



**Milisi Njiyela, Vice-Chairman of the Bizana Branch of APDUSA during the 1960s.**  
(Photo: National Archives Depot).



**Ishmael Tsheka, organiser for the APDUSA Branch in Bizana.**  
(Photo: R. Kayser, 1999).



**Mpitsi Ncenjane, Secretary of the APDUSA Branch in Bizana during the 1960s.**  
(Photo: R. Kayser, 1999).



**Jamani Jali, committee member of the Bizana Branch of APDUSA.**  
(Photo: National Archives Depot).



**Ndofela Nxasana, Chairman of the Lusikisiki/Flagstaff Branch of APDUSA during the 1960s. (Photo: Natal Archival Depot).**



**Pakela Finisi (Ramza), Vice-chairman of the Lusikisiki/Flagstaff Branch of APDUSA during the 1960s. Ramza conducted political work for APDUSA among migrant workers in the gold-mining industry on the Witwaterand. (Photo: Natal Archival Depot).**



**Richard Danisa and James Mobumbela, members of APDUSA in the Flagstaff District who conducted organisational work on APDUSA's behalf among migrant workers on the Witwatersrand. (Photo: R. Kayser, 1999).**



**Suza Boyi, committee member of the Lusikisiki/Flagstaff Branch of APDUSA. Boyi assisted in APDUSA's political work on the Witwatersrand and in Sekhukhuneland. (Photo: Courtesy of Mrs Boyi).**



Ndengenzi Makokoba Mbele, a member of the Bizana Branch of APDUSA.  
(Photo: R. Kayser, 1999).



APDUSA membership card belonging to Ndengenzi Makokoba Mbele (left).  
(Source: Courtesy Mr Mbele).



Richard Danisa, a member of the Lusikisiki/Flagstaff Branch of APDUSA.  
(Photo: R. Kayser, 1999).



APDUSA membership card belonging to Richard Danisa (left).  
(Source: Courtesy Mr Danisa).

### Unity of Town and Country

As pointed out earlier in the chapter, the formation of the Johannesburg Branch of APDUSA galvanised the activities of the NEUM on the Witwatersrand to new levels of political activity. The high water mark of this activity occurred from about January 1964, when the Branch gained a foothold among the migrant workers on the gold mines of the Witwatersrand. This in turn gave APDUSA access to the population in the African reserves of especially the Northern Provinces.

Organising on the mines was difficult and dangerous work due to the compound system and the tight security. Thus the strategy employed by the Johannesburg Branch was to enter the gold mines through the migratory labour system. Peasants organised within APDUSA in Eastern Pondoland played a crucial role here, acting as facilitators and intermediaries. Organisers from the Johannesburg Branch arranged with Madikwa to meet them in Eastern Pondoland where they held discussions with the Pondoland regional leadership of APDUSA in Lusikisiki. They managed to persuade three of the most politically advanced members of the Lusikisiki – Flagstaff Branch of APDUSA, namely Ramza (Pakela Finisi), Suza Boyi and Mpompota Mhomba to accompany Madikwa to Johannesburg to initiate political work among the migrant workers on the Witwatersrand.<sup>95</sup> This was the beginning of regular trips that were made to the Witwatersrand by members belonging to APDUSA in Pondoland. In Johannesburg they stayed with members of APDUSA for up to three weeks. They visited the mine compounds, as well as the barracks and hostels where migrant workers from Pondoland lived and recruited them into APDUSA. They also took APDUSA's organisers on the Witwatersrand to address secret meetings late at night, which they had arranged outside the mine compounds. According to Nikani, who was intimately involved in this clandestine activity, these meetings were attended by groups of mine workers numbering between twenty to fifty at a time.<sup>96</sup>

At the same time, the Johannesburg Branch of APDUSA came into contact with migrant workers belonging to the *Fitakgomo* and *Likwepepe*. The *Fitakgomo* was originally known as the *Sebatakgomo*, an organisation founded in Pretoria in 1955 as a trade union to organise mainly migrant workers from Sekhukhuneland employed in the Witwatersrand and surrounding urban areas. The impetus to form this organisation came from two individuals

<sup>95</sup> Interview, Nikani, 24/12/1998. L. Nikani, 'My Life under White Supremacy', Chapter 13, 'Unity of Town and Country'. Interview, Nxasana, 1/11/1999. Interview, Danisa and Mobumbela, 2/11/1999. Interview, Zimambane, 6/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mpompota Mhomba, pp. 3371 & 3393.

<sup>96</sup> Nikani, 'My Life under White Supremacy', Chapter 13, 'Unity of Town and Country'. Privately held by the author. N. Traub, 'My Recollections of the Johannesburg Branch of Apdusa, 1961 – 1966', April 2002.

within the ANC, namely Flag Boshielo and John Nkadimeng. In 1957 it was decided to change the name of the *Sebatakgomo* as it was felt that its name, which in Sepedi meant “a call to war” would draw unnecessary government attention to it. Consequently, the name was changed to *Fitakgomo O Soare Motho*, meaning “leave our cattle and take our land”, which referred to a past when BaPedi chiefs prospered through incorporating groups rather than raiding their cattle.<sup>97</sup>

The *Fitakgomo*, like its predecessor, was essentially urban based, but to create a permanent rural base for itself, the leadership of the *Fitakgomo* established the *Khuduthamaga* (or central committee) in Sekhukhuneland during the course of 1957. The *Khuduthamaga* thus functioned as the parallel rural counterpart of the *Fitakgomo*. In 1960 the leadership of the *Fitakgomo* established the *Likwepepe*, meaning between the Vaal River and the Limpopo River. This was a broader umbrella organisation, which sought to co-ordinate resistance in the African reserves of the Northern Provinces against especially the Rehabilitation Scheme and the Bantu Authorities system.<sup>98</sup>

From the late 1950s, the *Khuduthamaga*, *Fitakgomo* and *Likwepepe* played a central role in co-ordinating resistance to the implementation of the Rehabilitation Scheme and Bantu Authorities Act in the Northern Provinces, resulting in the rapid growth of these organisations during this period. Due to this resistance the Department of Bantu Affairs was forced to temporarily abandon the implementation of these measures in Sekhukhuneland up to 1961. In 1957, in an attempt to stem the tide of resistance, the government banished key leaders of the *Fitakgomo*, notably, Lot Maredi and ‘Kgaqudi Moruthangane (both of whom were banished to King Williams Town in the Ciskei) and Godfrey Sekhukhune, who was banished to Natal. The Paramount Chief of Sekhukhuneland, Maroamoche Sekhukhune, who under pressure from the *Khuduthamaga* and *Fitakgomo* refused to collaborate with the government in the

<sup>97</sup> P. Delius, ‘Sebatakgomo; Migrant Organisation, the ANC and the Sekhukhuneland Revolt’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 15, Number 4, 1989, p. 610.

<sup>98</sup> SAB. NTS 7694, 443/332. A Letter to the Chief Native Commissioner, Pietersburg from the Native Commissioner, Sekhukhuneland, 23/5/1958. SAB. NTS 7694, 443/332. ‘Memorandum’, [no date]. SAB. NTS 7694, 443/332. Statement by Stephen Sekhukhune and Judah Sekhukhune, 2/5/1958. SAB. NTS 7694, 443/332. ‘John Kgoane Nkadimeng’, [no date]. SAB. NTS 7694, 443/332. ‘Phetedi Thulare’, October 1959. SAB. NTS 7694, 443/332. Statement by Seraki Frans Kgoloko, Mohlatetsi, Lydenburg District, 12/9/1958 - 6/10/1958. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. W.M. Tsotsi, ‘The Peasants in the Transvaal’, no date. P. Delius, ‘Sebatakgomo; Migrant Organisation, the ANC’, pp. 607 – 615. P. Delius, *The Lion Amongst the Cattle: Reconstruction and Resistance in the Northern Transvaal*, Johannesburg: Ravan Pres, Portsmouth: Heinemann, Oxford: J. Curry, pp. 114 and 140, 1996.

implementation of the Rehabilitation Scheme and the Bantu Authorities Act, was also banished in March 1958 to the Cala District in the Transkei.<sup>99</sup>

The NEUM's first contact with leading representatives of the *Fitakgomo* occurred in 1958, when W.M. Tsotsi met the exiled Maredi and Maroamoche Sekhukhune, to convey the AAC's solidarity with the struggles of the people in Sekhukhuneland. It was not until the beginning of 1964, however, that a definite start was made on an organisational basis to draw the peasants and workers of the Northern Provinces into the NEUM and APDUSA.<sup>100</sup>

APDUSA's contact with the *Fitakgomo* and *Likwepepe* was established through Joel Carlson, an attorney in Johannesburg, who had been a member of the Progressive Forum and remained politically close to the NEUM. One day, by co-incidence, members of the *Fitakgomo* had come to consult Carlson at the very same time that Karrim Essack was in Carlson's office seeking legal advice. Carlson introduced the *Fitakgomo* members to Essack, who in turn introduced them to members of the APDUSA Branch in Johannesburg. Nikani distinctly remembers the names of two of the *Fitakgomo* members Essack introduced them to, Phala who was originally from Sekhukhuneland and lived at Dube hostel in Western Native Township, and Richard who stayed in the Alexandra township.<sup>101</sup> They later became the first members of the *Fitakgomo* to join APDUSA.<sup>102</sup>

From January 1964 the NEUM was engaged in protracted negotiations with the *Likwepepe* and *Fitakgomo* with the aim of drawing these organisations into its fold. During these negotiations APDUSA's leading members in Pondoland played a crucial part in convincing the peasants and workers within the *Fitakgomo* and *Likwepepe* of APDUSA's political authenticity.

In March 1964 the Johannesburg Branch of APDUSA organised a meeting at which representatives of the *Likwepepe* met a delegation representing peasants belonging to APDUSA's branches in Pondoland. The *Likwepepe* delegation consisted of six representatives drawn from a vast area in the Northern Provinces, Sekhukhuneland, Pietersburg, Rustenburg

<sup>99</sup> Delius, 'Sebatakgomo; Migrant Organisation, the ANC', pp. 607-615. Delius, *The Lion Amongst the Cattle*, pp. 123. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tsotsi, 'The Peasants in the Transvaal'.

<sup>100</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. W.M. Tsotsi, 'The Peasants in the Transvaal'. Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile', p. 30. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. APDUSA, 'The Revolt of the Peasantry in South Africa', Special Edition, Volume 2, Number 12, June - September 1967, p. 17.

<sup>101</sup> Letter to R. Kayser from Leonard Nikani, 14/7/1998. Interview, Nikani, 24/12/1998. Nikani, 'My Life under White Supremacy', Chapter 13, 'Unity of Town and Country'.

<sup>102</sup> Interview, Nikani, 24/12/1998. Private correspondence with Leonard Nikani, 9/4/1998. Nikani, 'My Life under White Supremacy', Chapter 13, 'Unity of Town and Country'.

and Zeerust.<sup>103</sup> The *Likwepepe* delegation was overwhelmed to meet their counterparts from Pondoland, as testified by this statement,

We have been longing to meet you from the South [Pondoland]. We heard about your struggles and whenever we went to sleep we hoped to meet you, because the struggle that you wage is similar to ours. Seeing that we have met, we must roll up our sleeves and work hard to build the nation.<sup>104</sup>

As a token of their commitment to forge unity, the *Likwepepe* invited the Pondoland delegation to Sekhukhuneland. The *Likwepepe* delegates also indicated an eagerness to visit Pondoland.

In May 1964 a NEUM delegation led by Tsotsi engaged the *Likwepepe* in further talks.<sup>105</sup> Representatives from Pondoland were part of this delegation. According to Tsotsi, the *Likwepepe* delegation accepted the NEUM's programme and policy, as well as the necessity for an armed uprising. They also expressed a willingness to affiliate to the NEUM. During the discussions, however, it emerged that the main obstacle inhibiting the *Likwepepe* from affiliating to the NEUM was its apprehension concerning the NEUM's policy of non-racialism. The NEUM delegation ascertained that the *Likwepepe* was organised on the basis that "whites represented the oppressors" and consequently their constitution excluded whites from joining the organisation.<sup>106</sup> The NEUM and *Likwepepe* delegations agreed to hold further discussions to resolve this contentious point.

At a NEUM Head Unity Committee meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 1964, it was decided to arrange another meeting with the *Likwepepe*. The NEUM decided to once again include APDUSA members from Pondoland within its delegation, with the hope that they could persuade the *Likwepepe* to accept the NEUM's non-racial policy. James Mgnobi Mobumbela has recalled Madikwa discussing the problem the NEUM was experiencing in its negotiations with the *Likwepepe* with the APDUSA members in Pondoland,

Madikwa...[came] up with an organisation which was there at Bapedi, in the Transvaal, that's Sekhukhuneland. But their problem with this organisation was that it did not need whites, only blacks.<sup>107</sup>

According to Mobumbela, Madikwa took Ramza and Mhomba with him to meet the *Likwepepe* representatives in Johannesburg.

<sup>103</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'Report', 1964. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. W.M. Tsotsi, 'The Peasants in the Transvaal', 1966.

<sup>104</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'Report', 1964.

<sup>105</sup> W.M. Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile', pp. 32-34. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tsotsi, 'The Peasants in the Transvaal', 1966.

<sup>106</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tsotsi, 'The Peasants in the Transvaal', 1966. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. Letter from Durban, 16/6/1964.

At a meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 1964, Ramza and Mhomba took up the question of non-racialism from the perspective of their own recent struggle. They pointed out that for the past five years the people in Pondoland had been engaged in “a life and death struggle”, during which all they gained support from all racial groups. They emphasised that in the liberation struggle the question of colour was of no consequence. The *Likwepepe* representatives were, however, still not prepared to yield on this point. The NEUM delegation decided not to pursue the issue any further and instead requested that Ramza and Mhomba be taken to Sekhukhuneland, so that they could introduce APDUSA to the population there. The NEUM also suggested that the *Likwepepe* in turn send their representatives, at the expense of NEUM, to Natal and the Transkei. The *Likwepepe* delegation accepted these suggestions in principle but indicated that they first needed to discuss this matter with their executive.<sup>108</sup>

On the 27<sup>th</sup> June a NEUM delegation again met the *Likwepepe*.<sup>109</sup> At this meeting the representatives of the *Likwepepe* indicated that its executive proposed that the Pondoland delegation visit Sekhukhuneland in August. They also indicated an eagerness to send a *Likwepepe* delegation to Natal and Pondoland during October. The NEUM, however, rejected the time frame proposed by the *Likwepepe*, as it was suspected that the *Likwepepe* were applying delaying tactics. Consequently, the NEUM delegation impressed upon the *Likwepepe* representatives the urgency and importance with which unity needed to be forged. They argued that,

The people of the North as well as the people throughout the country want leadership and unity. We...as the representatives of the people and therefore as leaders were duty bound to forge that unity. If we felt unable to do this, our duty was to stand down and let other people do the job or else children yet unborn would forge this unity.<sup>110</sup>

This argument proved persuasive, and the *Likwepepe* representatives agreed to consult their executive on the earliest possible date for receiving an APDUSA delegation from Pondoland. In addition they agreed to engage in immediate practical political work with APDUSA in Johannesburg. They appointed one of their members to accompany APDUSA

<sup>107</sup> Interview, Mobumbela and Danisa, 2/11/1999. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. *The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others*. Evidence by Mpompota Mhomba, pp. 3371.

<sup>108</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. Report of June 1964 negotiations with the *Likwepepe*, July 1964. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. Letter from Durban, 16/5/1964. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tsotsi, ‘The Peasants in the Transvaal’.

<sup>109</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. Report of June 1964 negotiations with the *Likwepepe*, July 1964. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tsotsi, ‘The Peasants in the Transvaal’.

<sup>110</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. Report of June 1964 negotiations with the *Likwepepe*, July 1964.

organisers to a meeting that had been arranged for the following day at the West Driefontein mine on the West Rand. In turn APDUSA appointed one of its members to attend a *Likwepepe* meeting which was to be held on the East Rand on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 1964.

Eventually, the *Likwepepe* took Mhomba, Madikwa and two of the organisers for the Johannesburg Branch, Lawrence Nota and Mjoli, to Sekhukhuneland. From Mhomba's report on this mission, APDUSA appears to have made an immediate impact on members of the *Fitakgomo*. According to Mhomba, the *Fitakgomo* accepted the importance of forging national unity during this critical period. Furthermore, their Central Executive requested five thousand membership cards to enrol their members into APDUSA.<sup>111</sup>

After this breakthrough the Johannesburg Branch placed Lawrence Nota in charged of the organisational work in Sekhukhuneland and other rural areas organised by the *Fitakgomo* and *Likwepepe*. Nota was well suited to the job. He had come through the Johannesburg SOYA and by this stage was a mature activist, who also had a good command of African languages besides his own. He was also not tied down to regular employment and could undertake this organisational work on a full-time basis. Diliza Lande who came from Lusikisiki, Mtutuzele Mphele and Mjoli were three of the other Branch members who assisted Nota in this work.<sup>112</sup> According to Nikani these organisers were extremely successful in recruiting individuals in the rural areas of the Northern Provinces into APDUSA, to such an extent that the Johannesburg Branch soon ran out of membership cards.<sup>113</sup>

The ultimate objective of the NEUM was to get the *Fitakgomo* and *Likwepepe* to affiliate to it. During September 1964, three *Likwepepe* delegates who came from the Middleburg and Lydenburg districts were sent to meet APDUSA members in Pondoland, as well as the senior leadership of the NEUM in Natal. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> September they met the Regional Committee of APDUSA for the Lusikisiki – Flagstaff districts. Later a meeting was held with members of the Bizana Branch of APDUSA.<sup>114</sup>

These joint meetings afforded peasants from two distant regions of South Africa the opportunity to discuss their problems and share ideas as to how they could go about solving

<sup>111</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers 'Tour of Northern Transvaal Delegation – Pondoland', November 1964.

<sup>112</sup> Interview, Nikani, 24/12/1998. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'Lawrence Nota', a biographical sketch, no date. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'Biography: L. Diliza Lande', 29/1/1968.

<sup>113</sup> Nikani, 'My Life under White Supremacy', Chapter 13, 'Unity of Town and Country'. Interview, Nikani, 24/12/1998.

<sup>114</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'Tour of Northern Transvaal Delegation – Pondoland', November 1964. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. UCT.

these problems. At the September 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting, the *Likwepepe* delegation pointed out that the people in Sekhukhuneland viewed “a revolution and nothing less” as the solution to their problems.<sup>115</sup> They accordingly enquired as to whether APDUSA could supply them with arms and military training. Mhomba responded to this question by emphasising that at this present juncture the essential task of those engaged in the liberation struggle was,

the building of the Nation after which the question of arms or military training and other important problems connected with a revolutionary struggle will undoubtedly be the next move.<sup>116</sup>

At this meeting the regional leaders in Lusikisiki and Pondoland decided to send Suza Boyi to the Northern Provinces to assist with building APDUSA. To fund his trip, two members of the APDUSA Regional Leadership each offered an ox for sale.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> September 1964 the *Likwepepe* delegation, together with three APDUSA members from Pondoland met the leadership of the NEUM in Durban.<sup>117</sup> At this meeting the Chairman of the *Likwepepe* tabled his delegation’s report on the tour of Pondoland. The report showed that the *Likwepepe* delegation was overwhelmed by the calibre of people they had encountered in Pondoland. The Report reads,

We first met the members at Lusikisiki. I can say I have met ‘men’ in the true sense of the word. It made me feel small to meet a leadership so sincere in the struggle. Whilst I was surprised at Lusikisiki, I was even more surprised when I went to Bizana where the people are more powerful...[they] spoke strongly on the need for unity...On my return home I shall tell our people that...the time has come for us to take this new step, as the people of Pondoland have. They may not believe me when I explain the fighting spirit I witnessed, and I feel the Pondoland leadership should come over to Sekhukhuneland and table their reports.<sup>118</sup>

The Chairman of the *Likwepepe* expressed the urgent need with which unity needed to be built, drawing in people from all over South Africa. He indicated that a meeting should be called where,

representatives from the Orange Free State, Sekhukhuneland, Lusikisiki, Pondoland and Natal must meet and work out a policy of unity. On that day we must gather and decide

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Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tsotsi, ‘The Peasants in the Transvaal’. Tsotsi, ‘My Life in Exile’, pp. 35 & 36.

<sup>115</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. ‘Tour of Northern Transvaal Delegation – Pondoland’, November 1964.

<sup>116</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. ‘Tour of Northern Transvaal Delegation – Pondoland’, November 1964.

<sup>117</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. ‘Report on Head Unity Committee meeting of 26/9/1964’, October 1964. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Tsotsi, ‘The Peasants in the Transvaal’. Tsotsi, ‘My Life in Exile’, pp. 37 & 38.

<sup>118</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. ‘Report of the Executive Members of the *Likwepepe* (i.e. their Chairman and another – R) together with the Organisers, to Members of the H.U.C. after a Tour of the Transkei’, [no date].

what is to be done for the people from all areas of the country. I maintain that if the people respond in the manner that the Pondoland people have, then liberation will be ours.<sup>119</sup>

At these meetings the *Likwepepe* representatives were eventually convinced of the necessity to include all racial groups within the liberation movement. The acceptance of the principle of non-racialism by the *Likwepepe* delegation is reflected in their report at the Durban meeting,

I feel that the people of Sekhukhuneland will also be pleased that all racial groups are in this nation. We must not allow the racial groups that the government formed to divide us. All the oppressed must come together. But collaborators, whether African, Indian or Coloured have no place in the Nation; even if they do so to earn a living, they have lost their seats.<sup>120</sup>

At this meeting the *Likwepepe* also raised the question of military training and arms. The leadership of the NEUM responded to this request by once again emphasising the importance of building unity as the necessary first step before embarking on an armed uprising. The *Likwepepe* delegates were advised that, they

could not come as a separate 'Nation' asking another (foreign) 'Nation' for arms, etc. They should first join APDUSA and then help to build in other areas in order that in as short a space of time the whole Nation could decide on the nature of the struggle to be undertaken.<sup>121</sup>

They were told that the NEUM had no arms to offer them, "nor would they advise the using of force in one part of the country when the Nation had not been properly organised for the struggle."<sup>122</sup> The *Likwepepe* delegates accepted this position and indicated that they would convey this to their executive. The NEUM later claimed to have secured the affiliation of both the *Fitakgomo* and *Likwepepe*.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>119</sup>Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'Report of the Executive Members of the *Likwepepe* (i.e. their Chairman and another – R) together with the Organisers, to Members of the H.U.C. after a Tour of the Transkei', [no date].

<sup>120</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. Report of the executive members of the *Likwepepe* (i.e. their Chairman and another – R) together with the Organisers, to Members of the H.U.C. after a Tour of the Transkei', [no date].

<sup>121</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'Report of Head Unity Committee Meeting of 26/9/1964', October 1964.

<sup>122</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'Report of Head Unity Committee Meeting of 26/9/1964', October 1964.

<sup>123</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to S. Chale, Secretary of the African Liberation Committee, from I.B. Tabata, 10/9/1965.

### State repression

Only one more delegation from Sekhukhuneland visited Eastern Pondoland before a nationwide crackdown on the activities of the NEUM severed this contact. The government opted not to ban the NEUM, as it had done with the ANC and PAC. Rather it attempted to incapacitate the organisation through banning, detaining and imprisoning its leadership. APDUSA, which had a unitary structure was, however, banned in the Transkei.<sup>124</sup>

On the 28<sup>th</sup> September 1964, just two days after the Durban meeting, Tsotsi was arrested under the under the ninety-day detention law while making his way back to Lesotho. He was held in solitary confinement for eighty-two days. In November both Karrim Essack and Enver Hassim were arrested. Posselt Gcabashe, one of the national organisers was arrested in December 1964. He was sentenced to two years imprisonment for holding illegal meetings in the Transkei. In February 1965, Leo Sihlali, who was elected President of the NEUM in 1962, was arrested while trying to escape South Africa. He was later convicted of violating the Suppression of Communism Act and seeking to leave South Africa without valid documents. He was sentenced to five years imprisonment on Robben Island. Virtually all the executive members of the NEUM, AAC and APDUSA were served with a five-year banning order during this period. Most notable among these were, Dr A. I. Limbada, the Treasurer of the NEUM, and Ali Fataar and Livingstone Mqotsi, both Joint-Secretaries of the NEUM. It was within this context of severe state repression that several leading members of the NEUM, such as Limbada, Essack and Fataar, were forced to flee South Africa into exile during late 1964 / early 1965.<sup>125</sup>

The peasantry organised within APDUSA experienced the same fate as the leadership of the NEUM. In fact the state's repression against the NEUM in 1964 started with the peasantry in Eastern Pondoland. At the Durban meeting of the 26<sup>th</sup> September it was reported that six leading members of APDUSA in Eastern Pondoland had been arrested.<sup>126</sup> All six had attended the June 1963 meeting in Swaziland. Among those arrested was the Chairman of the Bizana Branch of APDUSA, Notsibande Mabude.

<sup>124</sup> G. Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt*, Middlesex: Harmondsworth, 1964, p. 60.

<sup>125</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'South Africa launches fresh attacks on members of the All-African Convention and Unity Movement', 30/11/1964. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. Letter to I.B. Tabata from W.M. Tsotsi, 22/12/1964. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Verwoerd Lets Loose Terror on All-African Convention and Unity Movement of South Africa', December 1964, BC 925. Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile', p.13. Nikani, 'My Life under White Supremacy', Chapter 14, 'Exile', unpublished manuscript.

<sup>126</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'Report on Head Unity Committee Meeting of 26/9/1964', October 1964.

It was the arrest of Madikwa in March 1965, however, that dealt a particularly severe blow to APDUSA in Pondoland, as well as in Sekhukhuneland. Madikwa was subjected to severe torture and divulged information to the police about APDUSA's work among the Pondoland and Sekhukhuneland peasants.<sup>127</sup> This resulted in the arrest and interrogation all the leading members of APDUSA in Pondoland by the Special Branch of the South African Police. Vimba, Ndofera Nxasana, Ramza, Mbele, Ncejane and Tsheka were among the APDUSA leadership in Eastern Pondoland who were constantly detained under Proclamation R400 during this period.<sup>128</sup> Tsheka recalls being arrested several times during the mid-1960s. He remembers a notorious member of the Special Branch in Eastern Pondoland, Captain Dreyer, accusing him of having "influenced all these things in Bizana" and of having gone to Natal to "spread all this poison".<sup>129</sup> Dreyer told Tsheka that the Security Police knew that the Pondoland peasants wanted to leave South Africa to undergo military training. Tsheka refused to admit to this and was consequently severely tortured by the police. Upon his release on that occasion, Tsheka made his way to Natal. There he met members of the NEUM's executive who advised him to leave South Africa immediately, and join other NEUM exiles in Lesotho.<sup>130</sup> In 1965 Mpompota Mhomba, the peasant organiser from Lusikisiki who had conducted organisational work for APDUSA on the Witwatersrand, as well as in Sekhukhuneland, was arrested under Proclamation R400. He was later sentenced to four years imprisonment for "furthering the aims of communism (APDUSA)."<sup>131</sup>

Despite constant police repression and intimidation members of APDUSA in Eastern Pondoland continued to conduct political work. As Ncenjana, the Secretary of the Bizana has related,

During this time Madikwa had turned against the organisation, it was not good...he was helping the boer [police]...You see when we came back [after being arrested] we proceeded with the work of the organisation, though the police told us that if you repeat again we will arrest you. But when we came back, we started up again.<sup>132</sup>

As a result of the government's crackdown on the activities of the NEUM, there was a momentary loss of contact between the national leadership of the NEUM, now mainly in exile,

<sup>127</sup> Nikani, 'My Life under white Supremacy', 'Chapter 14, 'Exile'.

<sup>128</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *APDUSA*, Special Edition, September - October, 1966, Volume 11, Number 5, pp. 16 and 18. Interview, Ncenjana, 5/11/1999.

<sup>129</sup> Interview, Tsheka, 24/4/1999.

<sup>130</sup> Interview, Tsheka, 24/4/1999.

<sup>131</sup> SAB. SAP 598, 15/5/60C. Letter to the Commissioner of the South African police from Major A.J.C. Jooste, Officer in Charge, Transkei, 10/9/1965. SAB. SAP 598, 15/5/60C. Letter to the Commissioner of the South African police from Major A.J.C. Jooste, Officer in Charge, Transkei, 9/12/1965. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others Evidence by Mpompota Mhomba, p.3391.

and APDUSA in Pondoland. However, after Madikwa's arrest, the Johannesburg Branch of APDUSA sent its organisers into Pondoland. Zitobile Makasi was the first organiser from Johannesburg to enter Eastern Pondoland after the arrest of Madikwa and Gcabashe.<sup>133</sup> His report of the state of the APDUSA in Eastern Pondoland during June/July 1965 was rather gloomy. He maintained that the organisation was in danger of collapsing there, unless contact was immediately revived and maintained.<sup>134</sup> A few months later, another organiser, Maxwell Piliso, conducted a more extensive tour of the region.<sup>135</sup> In his report, dated the 28<sup>th</sup> December 1965, he noted that APDUSA committees were still active in Bizana, Lusikisiki and Mount Ayliff. He also discovered that there were APDUSA members in the Tabankulu District. According to his report, APDUSA had spread into Nyandeni in the Libode District of Western Pondoland.<sup>136</sup>

The re-establishment of contact between the national leadership and the peasantry organised within APDUSA in Eastern Pondoland was short-lived. In March 1966 Makasi was arrested.<sup>137</sup> Soon afterwards Maxwell Piliso died in mysterious circumstances. It is alleged that Piliso doused himself in petrol and set himself alight when he was about to be arrested by the police.<sup>138</sup> These dramatic developments brought to an end the second chapter of the NEUM's involvement with the peasants of Eastern Pondoland. The next chapter would begin in 1970, when the NEUM sent its cadres from Zambia to recruit peasants to undergo military training abroad. These developments will be discussed in the final chapter.

This chapter has shown that the NEUM believed conditions had sufficiently matured in South Africa by the early 1960s, to present the country with the opportunity of heading towards a revolt or revolution. The leadership of the NEUM wanted a revolution, for they maintained that only a revolution would bring about fundamental change in South Africa which would be in the interests of the oppressed black majority. The chapter has shown that in the early 1960s the NEUM took decisive steps to prosecute a revolution in South Africa. It established a new national political organisation, APDUSA, and adopted the armed struggle. APDUSA was established with the strategic objective of harnessing the revolutionary potential

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<sup>132</sup> Interview, Ncenjane, 5/11/1999. Interview, Zimambane, 6/11/1999.

<sup>133</sup> Interview conducted with Zitobile Makasi by R. Kayser, Queenstown, 4/5/1998.

<sup>134</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'Johannesburg Report', submitted to the Botswana Centre in Lobatsi by Zitobile Makasi, June or July 1965.

<sup>135</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State Versus Kader Hassim and 12 others Evidence by Mpitsi Ncenjane, p. 2311.

<sup>136</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. 'The Peasants Welcome APDUSA Organisers', 28/12/1965.

<sup>137</sup> Interview, Makasi, Queenstown, 4/5/1998.

<sup>138</sup> Interview conducted with Norman Traub by R. Kayser, Cape Town, March 1998.

of especially the workers and peasants and orientating the liberation struggle in a socialist direction. The case study illustrating APDUSA's entry and growth among the peasantry of Eastern Pondoland revealed the political maturity of the South African peasantry and its revolutionary potential. To convert the support it had achieved in the countryside and in the towns into concrete political gains the NEUM needed the assistance of the OAU. It was virtually impossible for any exile liberation movement to conduct an effective struggle without this recognition. The last chapter will discuss the NEUM's struggle in exile to obtain recognition from the OAU.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

## THE REVOLUTION SUBVERTED, 1963 - 1976

**All signs indicate that South Africa is moving towards an explosion. The only question is – What will that explosion be? Revolt or revolution? Only such a revolution as we are preparing for stands a chance of success. The country itself has in our organisation a leadership of the calibre that can prepare and achieve a revolution.<sup>1</sup>**

The promise of military training and arms were among the key reasons why APDUSA was able to gain enthusiastic support from the politically advanced sections of the peasantry in certain areas of South Africa. The fulfilment of this promise to the peasantry proved to be a far more daunting task than the NEUM leadership initially imagined. This chapter will account for the NEUM's inability to convert the support it had built up among workers and peasants through APDUSA in the early to mid-1960s into a revolutionary struggle.

**Exile**

In March 1963 Tabata, Jane Gool and Nathaniel Honono were instructed by the NEUM to leave South Africa with the objective of having the NEUM recognised as an authentic liberation movement by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). This would grant the NEUM access to funding and military training that the OAU was offering to all liberation movements in Africa, which the OAU deemed were genuinely engaged in a struggle against colonialism. In August 1963, after a dramatic escape from South Africa via Swaziland, the NEUM delegation arrived in Dar es Salaam, the OAU's administrative headquarters, in a wave of publicity. This was described by Honono to a fellow member of the organisation,

we were officially welcomed by the Minister of External Affairs and Defence [Oscar Kambona]...[and] followed like film stars by all sorts of photographers and pressmen. Never before had we in the life of the Movement received so much publicity...It was rumoured that it was the first time that leaders of any organisation had ever been received in such grand style.<sup>2</sup>

After their arrival the NEUM delegation petitioned the African Liberation Committee (ALC) for recognition. The ALC was established in 1963 by the OAU and was initially

<sup>1</sup> University of Cape Town (UCT). Manuscripts and Archives Department. Unity Movement of South Africa (UMSA) / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Dorothy Padmore from I.B. Tabata, 30/6/1964.

<sup>2</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. Unity Movement of South Africa (UMSA) Papers. Letter to S. Ntshona from N. Honono, 10/2/1963. See also, privately held by G. Wilcox, Cape Town. Jane Gool Papers. *Daily Nation*, 'Refugees Fly in, 17/8/1963. Privately held by G. Wilcox, Cape Town. Jane Gool Papers. *Tanganyika Standard*, 'Kabona Welcomes S.A. Leaders', 16/8/1963.

composed of representatives from nine independent African states. This Committee determined which liberation movements in Africa would be granted recognition and material assistance by the OAU.

In September 1963, at a special ALC meeting attended by representatives of all liberation movements in Dar es Salaam, the NEUM delegation encountered its first taste of opposition to its presence in exile. Ironically, this opposition was voiced by fellow South African freedom fighters, in the form of the ANC's Joe Mathews and the PAC's Peter Molotsi. They objected to the NEUM's presence at the meeting, on the basis that the NEUM was not recognised by the ALC and its representatives "had come out of South Africa too late after the struggle for liberation had made considerable development."<sup>3</sup> By this stage both the PAC and ANC were recognised by the OAU, having attended the first sitting of the ALC in Addis Ababa during July 1963. Despite this opposition, the NEUM delegation succeeded in its application to petition before the ALC.

Prior to their appearance before the ALC, the NEUM delegation was requested to submit a memorandum, which analysed the political situation in South Africa and outlined their view of the nature of the liberation struggle. The NEUM's Memorandum differentiated sharply between two struggles being waged simultaneously in South Africa.<sup>4</sup> It argued that the first struggle was a conflict between the Afrikaner Nationalist government and the liberal bourgeoisie.<sup>5</sup> The Memorandum maintained that the ANC had been drawn into this conflict (later known as the anti-Apartheid struggle) due to its historical attachment to the liberals. The NEUM pointed out that this struggle had as its objective the mere removal of the Afrikaner Nationalist government from power, and that it would ultimately lead to neo-colonialism in South Africa.<sup>6</sup>

The second struggle outlined by the Memorandum was characterised as "the true revolutionary struggle", being waged by the majority of the South African population, most notably the peasantry.<sup>7</sup> It argued that this struggle was against both national oppression and

<sup>3</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to S. Ntshona from N. Honono, 10 February 1964. See also, UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Political activities of UMSA Abroad', report by N. Honono, December 1981.

<sup>4</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *South Africa, A Memorandum submitted to the Committee of Nine by the All-African Convention and Non-European Unity Movement*, Dar es Salaam: Mwanachi Publishing, December 1963, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Harry Oppenheimer, Chairman of the multi-national Anglo-American Corporation, was a classical example of a representative of the liberal bourgeois in South Africa.

<sup>6</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *South Africa, A Memorandum*, December 1963, pp. 1, 2 and 7.

<sup>7</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *South Africa, A Memorandum*, December 1963, p. 1.

economic exploitation, and was therefore anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist in nature. The NEUM had committed itself to this struggle. The Memorandum concluded with an appeal to the independent African states to grant the people of South Africa such assistance that would not land them "in the quagmire of neo-colonialism" but place the liberation struggle along "the road leading to true independence, a road that leads to political liberty and freedom...a road that leads to the achievement of that society where there will be no exploitation."<sup>8</sup>

In December 1963 the representatives of the exiled South African liberation movements - the NEUM, PAC and ANC - appeared before the ALC. Again the NEUM experienced opposition from representatives of the ANC and PAC, who were intent on preventing the NEUM from being granted a hearing. The ALC, however, overruled their objections.<sup>9</sup> During their presentation the NEUM delegation encountered hostility from yet another quarter. This time it came from the Chairman of the ALC, Jaja Wachuku, a Nigerian lawyer. Wachuku's hostile attitude towards the delegation severely compromised the NEUM's chances of being granted recognition. Immediately after the hearing, Tabata wrote a letter of protest to the ALC in which he expressed outrage at the manner in which the NEUM delegation was treated by Wachuku. He protested that during their hearing they were at a disadvantage,

As the man who conducted the interrogation was in the chair and we were therefore not free to answer back on an equal footing. We tried to complain to the chairman that his questions and the manner in which he restricted our replies had the effect of casting aspersions on our political integrity. At the end of it all, we left feeling as though we were regarded as beggars who had come to the Committee to solicit funds for illegitimate purposes.<sup>10</sup>

The ALC's rejection of their application for recognition came as no surprise to the NEUM delegation.<sup>11</sup> The reasons put forward by the Committee for its decision were,

As for the A.A.C. and N.E.U.M., the Committee noted that it did not fall within the purview of its immediate charge of decolonisation. Its programme of promoting grass-roots social reformation in South Africa had made it fail to come to grips with the present problem of overthrowing the racialist government of South Africa. Consequently, the Committee decided not to accord it recognition nor to grant it any material assistance.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. *South Africa, A Memorandum*, December 1963, p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to S. Ntshona from N. Honono, 10 February 1964.

<sup>10</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to the Liberation Committee of Nine from I.B. Tabata, 6 December 1963.

<sup>11</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to the Representatives of the All-African Convention and Non-European Unity Movement from S. Chale, Executive Secretary of the African Liberation Committee, 11 January 1964.

<sup>12</sup> Letter to African Liberation Committee from S. Chale, the Assistant Secretary - General of the African Liberation Committee, 15 February 1966, UMSA Papers.

Tabata later pointed to what the delegation believed was the real reason why the NEUM had not been granted recognition by the ALC,

what he [Wachuku] really wants to say and cannot, was that the funds contributed by Independent States should not be used in a struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism.<sup>13</sup>

The NEUM delegation immediately appealed against the decision of the ALC. After two unsuccessful appeals to the Committee, the delegation was advised by the ALC to appeal to the July 1964 Summit Conference of the OAU in Cairo. However, the NEUM's case was never heard at that conference.<sup>14</sup> In 1965 an executive member of the ALC bluntly told Honono that no useful purpose would be served by the NEUM attending subsequent meetings of the Liberation Committee.<sup>15</sup> The consistent refusal of the ALC to recognise the NEUM became a major obstacle to the advancement of the NEUM's liberatory struggle. It meant that African states which confidentially supported the NEUM were reluctant to provide the organisation with assistance because they feared this would jeopardise their standing in the OAU. It also deprived the NEUM of the status and prestige that went along with recognition as an "authentic" liberation movement, an essential requirement in attaining the assistance of countries outside of Africa.

### **The NEUM's organisational structure in exile**

Despite rejection by the OAU, the NEUM gradually began to establish an organisational structure in exile. In 1964 the name of the NEUM was changed to the Unity Movement of South Africa (UMSA), as it was felt that the term non-European was politically outdated. In 1964, soon after Zambia was granted independence, Tabata and Jane Gool proceeded to Lusaka.<sup>16</sup> Honono remained in Dar es Salaam as UMSA's representative, within easy reach of the ALC. In Lusaka, Tabata and Gool were joined by several leading members of UMSA, such as Dr A.I. Limbada and Livingstone Mqotsi. Together they established UMSA's headquarters in exile. At an Extended Executive meeting (which acted in lieu of a national conference) held

<sup>13</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to Advocate H.O. Davies, Q.C., from I.B. Tabata, 13 January 1964.

<sup>14</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. A letter to Ahmed Ben Bella, President of the Algerian Peoples' Democratic Republic, from I.B. Tabata, 3 December 1964.

<sup>15</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. A Letter to the Administrative Secretary-General, OAU, from I.B. Tabata, 22 February 1965.

<sup>16</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to the Chief Representative of U.N.I.P. from I.B. Tabata, 2/1/1964. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to the Secretary, African Liberation Committee, from the AAC and Unity Movement, 23/5/1964.

in South Africa in July 1964, Tabata was elected President of UMSA and Tsotsi as its Vice-President. Jane Gool became UMSA's Chief Representative in exile. Despite the fact that UMSA was not recognised by the OAU, it was initially recognised by the government of Zambia. The Zambian government later established a Liberation Centre in Lusaka, which UMSA shared with several African liberation movements, including the ANC and PAC.<sup>17</sup>

UMSA centres were established in two additional Southern African countries, Lesotho and Botswana. Tsotsi together with Carl Brecker ran the Lesotho Centre.<sup>18</sup> The key personalities stationed at the Botswana centre were Ali Fataar, Karrim Essack, Leonard Nikani and Lawrence Nota. The Botswana Centre operated from Lobatsi, a town situated close to the South African border. By June 1965 twenty UMSA members formed part of this Centre.<sup>19</sup> The key functions of the Botswana and Lesotho centres included receiving organisers from within South Africa who brought reports to and took back instructions from the NEUM headquarters in Lusaka. They established underground committees and sought routes across South Africa's borders to afford the safe passage of military recruits.<sup>20</sup>

A UMSA group was also constituted in England. The key person here was Dora Taylor, who was elected onto the UMSA executive in 1964. Other members included, Norman Traub (who had entered the NEUM through the Johannesburg Progressive Forum in the 1950s and joined APDUSA in 1961) and Bernard Berman (also a former Progressive Forum member from Johannesburg).

As a result of the consistent refusal of the ALC to grant UMSA recognition, it explored other avenues to acquire financial assistance and military training. As a start UMSA decided to approach Ghana, which under its President, Kwame Nkrumah, was one of the most progressive states in Africa. Tabata first established contact with Nkrumah in August 1963, indicating to him that he was keen to meet the President to discuss the political situation in South Africa.<sup>21</sup> In April 1964 Tabata was granted an audience with Nkrumah.<sup>22</sup> In these discussions Tabata

<sup>17</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Report of HUC Meeting, 10 July 1964, p. 2. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to Mr Sidky, Chairman of the Defense Committee of the ALC, from N. Honono, 22/5/1971.

<sup>18</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Report of HUC Meeting, 10 July 1964, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> L. Nikani, 'My Life Under White Supremacy And In Exile', Chapter 14, 'Exile' [unpublished manuscript (containing no page numbers)], in the authors possession, 2000. Interview conducted with Leonard Nikani by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 24/12/1998.

<sup>20</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town Extended Executive Members Meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 1968, p. 68. W.M. Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile', p. 41.

<sup>21</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to I.B. Tabata from the Director, Bureau of African Affairs, Ghana, 7/11/1963.

<sup>22</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Kwame Nkrumah from I.B. Tabata, 14/4/1964. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Notes for a discussion with Dr Nkrumah' by I.B. Tabata, Accra, 1964. UCT. Manuscripts and

expressed his incredulity at the position adopted by the ALC towards UMSA. He pointed out that there was something radically wrong with the ALC if it refused to support a struggle against neo-colonialism and arrogated to itself "the right to support some tendencies as against others, among freedom fighters in the same country."<sup>23</sup> This put the OAU in a position to determine which liberation movement would ultimately form the government of a country. A key issue Tabata conveyed to Nkrumah was that the political and economic future of the rest of Africa would be determined by the nature of the state which emerged in South Africa from the liberation struggle. As he argued,

Which way will South Africa swing? This has become a question of international importance. Will it continue to be a base of Western Imperialism in the soil of Africa? Or, will it become part of the Africa, dynamically and inseparably linked with the fate of the Continent? If South Africa takes the first course, then all its mineral and industrial resources together with its potential and actual capital are lost to Africa. If, on the other hand, she follows the second alternative, the chances of Africa attaining its independence are enhanced, and the plans of Imperialism are undermined.<sup>24</sup>

Tabata impressed upon Nkrumah that the direction South Africa took was crucially bound up with the political objectives of the liberation movement the independent African states decided to support in South Africa. He outlined UMSA's programme for preparing the South African population for armed struggle and made an appeal to Ghana to provide UMSA with financial and military assistance. Tabata concluded by noting that for the past eight months UMSA had been appealing to the Liberation Committee for funding and "eight months is a long time in pre-revolutionary situation."<sup>25</sup>

In August 1964 Nkrumah made a commitment to train UMSA members in guerrilla warfare, and to provide the organisation with financial assistance. UMSA was also granted permission to open an office in Accra. This was an important breakthrough for the UMSA leadership in exile and in January 1965 the first batch of UMSA members, Diliza Lande, Edward Ncalu, Mtutuzela Mphele and Ronnie Britten, arrived in Ghana to be trained as the commanders of the "revolutionary army". This breakthrough was, however, short-lived, for in

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Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Dora Taylor from I.B. Tabata, 15/ 8/ 1964

<sup>23</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Notes for a discussion with Dr Nkrumah' by I.B. Tabata, Accra, 1964.

<sup>24</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Notes for a discussion with Dr Nkrumah' by I.B. Tabata, Accra, 1964.

<sup>25</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'Notes for a discussion with Dr Nkrumah', Accra, 1964.

1965 Nkrumah was displaced from power in a military coup and UMSA members in Ghana were forced to leave Ghana.<sup>26</sup>

Despite the hostility of most ALC members towards UMSA, the organisation persisted with lobbying the OAU for recognition.<sup>27</sup> In 1967 the ALC meeting in Kinshasa again refused to recognise UMSA. The stated reason was that the ALC would be creating a precedent if it recognised three liberation organisations in one country. The ALC still persisted in the view that UMSA was not a political organisation but a social body. After this decision, UMSA was advised to change its tactics with the ALC.<sup>28</sup>

During the course of 1967 Tabata held discussions in Dar-es-Salaam with George Magombe, the Executive Secretary of the ALC and Dr Samie, the Chairman of the ALC's Defence Committee. These discussions centred on the consistent refusal of the ALC to recognise UMSA. Both Magombe and Samie advised Tabata that instead of applying for recognition from the OAU, UMSA should present recruits for military training at the next ALC meeting and ask the ALC for material assistance to train the recruits. Magombe indicated that there existed a precedent where members of an unrecognised liberation movement had been trained by the ALC after it had presented its recruits to the ALC.<sup>29</sup>

At the July 1968 Algiers meeting of the ALC, UMSA dropped its application for recognition and instead requested material assistance from the ALC in three specific areas. Firstly, to train at least two hundred of its cadres. Secondly, it requested diplomatic facilities, to enable military recruits to acquire travel documents which were needed to pass legally through the various African countries when going for training. Thirdly, it requested the ALC to supply it

<sup>26</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Dora Taylor from I.B. Tabata, 15/8/1964. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to the President, Republic of Ghana from I.B. Tabata, 15/10/1964. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Political Activities of UMSA Abroad, by N. Honono, 1981, pp. 3 and 4. Personal Correspondence with 'Bill Johns', 25/3/2002.

<sup>27</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers 'South Africa Memorandum: An Application for the Re-consideration of our Case', to their Excellencies the Heads of African States and the Council of Foreign Ministers from the All-African Convention and Unity Movement of South Africa, no date. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to the administrative Secretary-General, Organisation of African Unity, from I.B. Tabata, 22/2/1965. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town Letter to S. Chale, Administrative Secretary, African Liberation Committee, from I.B. Tabata, 10/9/1965. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town 'Report of the OAU Conference. Summit Meeting of Heads of State and Foreign Ministers, held from 21st October - 24<sup>th</sup> October 1965', submitted by Jane Gool, 1965.

<sup>28</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to the Acting Secretary, Unity Movement of South Africa, from H.I.A Ugwu, Executive Secretary, African Liberation Committee, 16/2/1967. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to Dr Ousman Ba, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Mali, from I. B. Tabata, 18/2/1967. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'The Struggle for Recognition of UMSA', a report by N. Honono at the Extended UMSA Executive Meeting in Lusaka, 1981, p.3.

with arms and ammunition once members had been trained.<sup>30</sup> After the Algiers meeting Magombe informed UMSA that the ALC had agreed to these requests in principle and the matter had been referred to the ALC's Standing Committee on Defence for execution.<sup>31</sup>

### **Military training and recruitment**

During 1967 UMSA achieved two further breakthroughs in its endeavours to get its armed struggle launched in South Africa. In June / July 1967 an UMSA delegation consisting of Tabata, Jane Gool and Tsotsi toured China seeking assistance to train UMSA recruits. Besides receiving a financial contribution towards their struggle, the UMSA delegation was given an assurance from the Chinese that from January 1968 they would be in a position to assist UMSA in the training of its members.<sup>32</sup>

In 1967 UMSA achieved its most significant breakthrough when Cuba gave a firm commitment to train UMSA recruits in guerrilla warfare. A year earlier Tabata travelled to Cuba with the intention of attending the Tri-Continental Conference. At the instigation of the ANC he was excluded from the Conference. While in Cuba, Tabata appealed to Fidel Castro for Cuban assistance in the training of UMSA members.<sup>33</sup> Later leading members of the Fourth International, in particular Ernest Mandel, played a significant role in facilitating a breakthrough with the Cubans for UMSA. In 1967 Mandel, a close political ally of Tabata<sup>34</sup>, personally went to Cuba and on UMSA's behalf secured an assurance from the Cubans that they would train UMSA recruits in Cuba.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Members of H.U.C. Meeting held on the 26<sup>th</sup> April 1967, p. 12. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Meeting of Members of the Executive held on the 14 March 1968.

<sup>30</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to the Secretary, African Liberation Committee, 9 July 1968. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Statement by the Unity Movement of South Africa to the Foreign Ministers attending the Council of Ministers of the O.A.U. at Addis Ababa, June 1971.

<sup>31</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to the Secretary General of the African Liberation Committee, Mr Magombe from I.B. Tabata, 15 January 1969. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to Mustafa Hanafi, Residency Cabinet for African Affairs, Cairo, from A.I. Limbada, Treasurer, UMSA, 2 September 1968. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Unity Movement of South Africa Memorandum, prepared for the O.A.U., 1971. Tsotsi, 'My life in Exile', p.129.

<sup>32</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Meeting of Members of the Executive held on the 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1967, pp. 26 – 29.

<sup>33</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Commandant Fidel Castro from I.B. Tabata, 9/1/1966.

<sup>34</sup> Tabata first met Mandel in Brussels in 1962 while on his secret trip abroad. Once in exile Tabata, in his individual capacity, annually attended the World Congress of the Fourth International. In 1965, at the Eight World Congress of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, Tabata was elected onto the International Executive Committee of the United Secretariat Executive Committee. R.J. Alexander, *International Trotskyism 1929 – 1985, A Documented Analysis of the Movement*, London: Duke University Press, 1999, p. 676.

<sup>35</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Meeting of Members of the Executive held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1967, p. 21. Nikani, 'My Life Under White Supremacy', Chapter 15, 'In Guinea Conakry'.

In the latter half of 1969 Tabata returned to Cuba and met members of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party to make concrete plans for the training of UMSA members. Members of the Central Committee recommended that UMSA cadres be trained in Africa. Guinea was identified as the most suitable country in Africa, as the Cubans already had their military experts in that country, training the local army and population, as well as Amilcar Cabral's guerrillas from Guinea Bissau. The Cubans indicated that they were prepared to train up to twenty UMSA members.<sup>36</sup>

UMSA envisaged the training of its members taking place on a continuous basis. It would begin with the executive members who would constitute the general and field staff. After they had been trained, the rank and file members would follow. The key reason why it was decided that the leadership should be the first to receive military training was because UMSA wanted to avoid militarism in the organisation and to ensure that the political struggle remained paramount. The objective was that the leadership would direct both the political and military components of the organisation, and as Tsotsi has explained, "so preserve the unity of the struggle."<sup>37</sup> To this end the UMSA Executive in Lusaka passed a resolution to the effect that all executive members of the organisation as well as non-executive members under the age of fifty were obligated to undergo military training.<sup>38</sup> Limbada was sent to Botswana to convey this decision to members of the Botswana Centre and to stress the urgency with which recruits needed to be brought out of South Africa for military training.<sup>39</sup>

From October 1968 to March 1969 five executive members of UMSA, Honono, Tsotsi, Nikani, Edward Ncalu and Ernest Jama underwent training by Cuban military instructors in a camp situated in the small town of Kindia to the north-west of Conakry, Guinea.<sup>40</sup> During their five months at the camp, the UMSA members received training in arms, explosives, guerrilla war tactics, intelligence and security. Before their actual training, however, the group had a three-day discussion with their Cuban instructors on the South African economy, geography, population and the strength and composition of the South African armed forces. The Cubans formulated their training programme bearing these facts in mind. Towards the end of their

<sup>36</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. Meeting of Members of the Executive held on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 1967, p. 30. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Extended Executive Members Meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 1967, pp. 54 – 57.

<sup>37</sup> Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile' p. 125.

<sup>38</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. UMSA Papers. Extended Executive Members Meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 1967, p. 58.

<sup>39</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town. Extended Executive members Meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 1968, pp. 66 and 67.

training programme, Tabata joined the group. While in Cuba, Tabata received a crash course in the theory and practice of guerrilla warfare. In Kindia he took part in the final part of the course, which dealt with security and intelligence.<sup>41</sup> According to Tsotsi, the Cubans were very impressed by the calibre of the UMSA cadres and at the end of the programme “our professors [Cuban military instructors] congratulated us and told us that of all the South African contingents we were the best that they had ever trained.”<sup>42</sup>

Before the five UMSA members left for training in Guinea, members of APDUSA’s branch in the Lehurutse began making their way into Botswana in transit to undergo military training.<sup>43</sup> From 1965 UMSA members at the Botswana Centre made gradual inroads among the Bafurutse peasantry of the Lehurutse in the North West Province of South Africa. (See Map 1, p. 19a). Leonard Nikani, Lawrence Nota, Sisa Mvambo and Cas Kikia were particularly involved in this work.<sup>44</sup> They established contact with the Bafurutse through two exiled leaders, Chief Abram Moilwa and the “old man” Silas Siane.<sup>45</sup> Moilwa and Siane had played a prominent role in the widespread opposition, which erupted in the Lehurutse as result of the introduction of passes for women and Bantu Education in 1957.<sup>46</sup> Siane was especially receptive to the ideas of APDUSA and he and his son Joel, who lived in the Lehurutse, became the first Bafurutse to join APDUSA. With the assistance of Joel Siane small groups of Bafurutse peasants, numbering about twenty at a time slipped across the border into Lobatsi where they held meetings with UMSA members. At these meetings APDUSA was introduced to the Bafurutse and in due course a number of them joined the organisation. A branch of APDUSA was subsequently established in the Lefurutse, with Joseph Tshukudu Maleka and Simon Lefatse as its leading members. Members of this branch gradually spread APDUSA to areas beyond the Lehurutse, such as Rustenburg and Vryburg. They also played an important

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<sup>40</sup> The reason why only five UMSA members went for military training was because the Cubans had miscalculated the amount of money needed to send twenty people to Guinea. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Minutes of a Members Meeting held at Lusaka on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 1968.

<sup>41</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Executive meeting held in Lusaka on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 1969.

<sup>42</sup> Tsotsi, ‘My Life in Exile’, p. 127. Nikani, ‘My Life Under White Supremacy’, Chapter 15, ‘In Guinea Conakry’.

<sup>43</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Minutes of a Meeting of the Members of the Executive held in Lusaka on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 1969.

<sup>44</sup> Interview conducted with Cas Kikia by R. Kayser, Serowe, Botswana, 1998. Interview, Nikani, 24/12/1998. Personal correspondence with Leonard Nikani, 14/7/1998 and 9/4/1998.

<sup>45</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. W.M. Tsotsi, ‘Peasants in the Transvaal’, p. 11. Nikani, ‘My Life Under White Supremacy’, Chapter 14, ‘Exile’. Tsotsi, ‘My Life in Exile’, p. 40. Interview Nikani, 24/12/1998. Interview, Kikia, 1998.

<sup>46</sup> Parliamentary Library, Cape Town. ‘Report of Commission of Enquiry into recent disturbances in the Linokana and other Native Areas in the District of Marico and in the Native Areas in the Adjoining Districts’. See also, C. Hooper, *Brief Authority*, Cape and Johannesburg: David Philip, 1960.

role as couriers, conveying messages from the Botswana Centre to APDUSA members in Johannesburg, as well as escorting UMSA's national organisers into and out of Botswana.<sup>47</sup>

Towards the end of 1968 the first group of eight Bafurutse peasants led by Makela came out for military training. By January 1969 the number had increased to twenty-five, and they had come as far north as Maun in north western Botswana, about three hundred and fifty miles from Zambia's Livingstone border post.<sup>48</sup>

When the first batch of recruits arrived in Botswana, UMSA informed the ALC about their presence and requested the Committee's assistance in getting them into Zambia. Magombe, however, responded by saying that the ALC was not ready to receive them. He maintained that this was due to the fact that the ALC's Special Standing Committee for Defence had still to consider UMSA's request placed before the ALC at the Algiers meeting in July 1968. Magombe indicated that the Defence Committee would only meet again in December 1968 or January 1969. Due to this delay and the inherent dangers of keeping the recruits hidden in Botswana with the South African Defence Force and South African Police operative in the frontline states, UMSA decided to filter them back into South Africa. Subsequently, twenty of them, including Maleka, were arrested and charged under the Terrorism Act for having left South Africa illegally with the intention of undergoing military training. By June 1970 most of them had been released since the state could not gather conclusive evidence to convict them.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 10. Criminal Case 33/1972. The State versus Joseph Tshukudu Maleka. Evidence by Mavemedi George Malekane from Mompani, Zeerust District, p. 6. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 10. Criminal Case 33/1972. The State versus Joseph Tshukudu Maleka.. Evidence of Joel Siane pp. 11-15. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 10. Criminal Case 33/1972. The State versus Joseph Tshukudu Maleka. Evidence of Sidiakgotle Papier Moroeng, pp. 171 – 183. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 10. Criminal Case 33/1972. The State versus Joseph Tshukudu Maleka. Evidence of Joseph Tshukudu Maleka, pp. 491 – 496. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 10. Criminal Case 33/1972. The State versus Joseph Tshukudu Maleka. Evidence of Simon Ketshwenebotata Lefatse, pp. 109 – 127 and 140 – 153. Interview, Nikani, 24/12/1998. Interview, Kikia, 1998. Interview conducted with W.M. Tsotsi by R. Kayser. W.M. Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile', pp. 38 and 40. Nikani, 'My Life Under White Supremacy', Chapter 14, 'Exile'. Interview conducted with Sidiakgotle Papier Moroeng by R. Kayser, interpreter Wesley Seleka, Boseia / Botilhaolelo, Gopane, Lefurutsi, 23/10/1998. Interview conducted with Veronica Maleka by R. Kayser, interpreter Wesley Seleka, Gopane, Lefurutsi, 14/10/1998.

<sup>48</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to Botswana Centre from I.B. Tabata, 21/8/1968. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to N. Honono from I.B. Tabata (?), 26/8/196. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Minutes of a meeting of the Membes of the Executive held at Lusaka on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 1969. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 10. Criminal Case 33/1972. The State versus Joseph Tshukudu Maleka. Evidence by Lefatse, pp. 116 – 121. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 10. Criminal Case 33/1972. The State versus Joseph Tshukudu Maleka. Evidence by Kealeboga Magakgala Radepitzi, pp. 263, 266, 270, 282. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 10. Criminal Case 33/1972. The State versus Joseph Tshukudu Maleka. Statement by Sidiakgotle Papier Moroeng. Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile', pp. 41 and 130.

<sup>49</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to Hanafi from I.B. Tabata, 2/9/1968. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to G. Magombe by I.B. Tabata, 15/1/1969, UMSA Papers. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to Magombe from I.B. Tabata, 8/3/1969. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to A.I. Limbada from J.C.I. [Sisa Mvambo ?], 27/6/1970. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 10. Criminal Case 33/1972. The State versus Joseph Tshukudu Maleka. Evidence by

In March 1969 Magombe informed UMSA that the ALC's Defence Committee met in February and had arrived at certain conclusions regarding UMSA's request to have two hundred of its members trained. Firstly, the Committee decided that the training of South Africans from any organisation would be pegged for the time being. Secondly, it insisted that a process of infiltration of those already trained must take place. Only once this had taken place would the matter of training be reconsidered. Thirdly, the Committee maintained that the OAU training camps were full at present and could not accommodate more people. Finally, it was pointed out that there was insufficient funding for further training.<sup>50</sup> After being informed about these decisions, Honono and Tabata approached Magombe several times in the hope that they could persuade him to convince the Defence Committee to be more sympathetic towards UMSA. Eventually he advised them that the ALC was in a position to train between ten to fifteen people, and he recommended that UMSA should ask the ALC to train such a number instead of the two hundred originally applied for.<sup>51</sup>

UMSA felt that while it could not change its original request to have two hundred of its members trained, it could agree to stagger the number of recruits brought from South Africa for military training.<sup>52</sup> In March 1969 Tabata met Sidky, the new Chairman of the Defence Committee of the ALC. Sidky informed Tabata that at its last meeting the Defence Committee had agreed to train UMSA members. He stated that as Chairman of the Defence Committee it was his duty to find a suitable training camp and military instructors. Sidky thus requested UMSA to draw up a memorandum indicating how many people it wanted to have trained and the kind of training the organisation required.<sup>53</sup>

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Radepitzi, p. 291. NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 10. Criminal Case 33/1972. The State versus Joseph Tshukudu Maleka. Evidence by Lefatse, p. 119. Held Privately. UMSA Papers. Letter to Magombe by I.B. Tabata, 9/6/1971. W.M. Tsotsi, 'My Life in Exile', p. 130. Nikani, 'My Life Under White Supremacy', Chapter 15, 'In Guinea Conakry'.

<sup>50</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to Hanafi from I.B. Tabata, 22/6/1969.

<sup>51</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Minutes of an Extended Executive Members Meeting held at Lusaka on the 9<sup>th</sup> June 1969. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Minutes of an Extended Executive Members Meeting held at Lusaka on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 1969. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. H.U.C. Executive Meeting: 24 August 1969. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Minutes of Members Meeting held Lusaka on the 30<sup>th</sup> August 1969. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. 'History of our attempts for recognition by the ALC', 11 May 1972.

<sup>52</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. UMSA statement to the Foreign Ministers attending the Council of Ministers meeting of the OAU at Addis Ababa, June 1971.

<sup>53</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Minutes of a Members Meeting held in Lusaka on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 1970. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to W.M. Tsotsi from I.B. Tabata, 15/10/1970.



“Tanganyika is your country”, the Minister for External Affairs, Oscar Kambona, told the NEUM delegation when he welcomed them to his country in August 1963. From left to right: Nathaniel Honono, Jane Gool, Oscar Kambona and I.B. Tabata.  
(Photo: *Daily Nation*, 16/8/1963).



Members of the Unity Movement of South Africa in Lusaka, December 1964.  
Back row, left to right: Ronnie Britten, Dr Ahmed Ishmail Limbada, Diliza Lande, Eddie Ncalu, Mtutuzele Mphele, Eric Jama, Livingstone Mqotsi and Elma Carolissen.  
Seated: Nathaniel Honono, Jane Gool and Isaac Bangani Tabata.  
(Photo: Courtesy of R. Britten).



I.B. Tabata posing in army fatigues with a automatic rifle in Cuba, January 1966. Tabata had hoped to attend the Tri-Continental Conference in Cuba but was excluded at the instigation of the ANC. While in Cuba he managed to make a request to Fidel Castro to assist in the training of UMSA cadres. In 1968 Tabata returned to Cuba and was instructed in the art of guerrilla warfare. The same year Cubans put a select batch of UMSA Executive members through a guerrilla warfare training programme in Guinea, West Africa. (Photo: Courtesy of R. Wilcox).



Representatives of liberation organisations at a meeting of the African Liberation Committee, Algiers 1966. The UMSA delegation is in the far left-hand corner (from left to right, Dr A.I. Limbada, unknown person, Scrape Ntshona and I.B. Tabata. The ANC delegation is in front, with Joe Mathews second from left. (Source: Courtesy of R. Britten).

### Mission to South Africa

Once it finally obtained an assurance from the Defence Committee of the ALC that it would train its members, UMSA was faced with the urgent task of once again bringing recruits from South Africa to undergo military training. The arrest of the Lehurutse peasants in 1969 as well as the flight of UMSA's two remaining national organisers (Mjoli and Mvambo) into Swaziland and Botswana in 1967, meant that UMSA's contact with the South African home front had become very tenuous. UMSA decided that in these circumstances its only option was to send four of its trained cadres, Leonard Nikani, Ernest Jama, Edward Ncalu and Diliza Lande into South Africa.<sup>54</sup> Their objectives were to bring at least two hundred recruits out of South Africa to undertake military training and revive UMSA's organisational structures in South Africa.<sup>55</sup> Since UMSA envisaged recruitment taking place in phases, it was essential that an effective organisational infrastructure be established within South Africa, which would be able to continue the process of sending recruits out of the country once the cadres had left South Africa.<sup>56</sup> The cadres, as Nikani has noted, were "mere catalysts to set the process in motion."<sup>57</sup>

Each cadre was assigned to a particular area of South Africa and given specific tasks to perform on the mission. Ncalu was to be based in Johannesburg, where he would work out the departure routes for the recruits. Later he would assist with recruitment in the Transkei. Lande would focus on recruitment in Pondoland, an area well known to him as he was born and grew up in the Lusikisiki District of Eastern Pondoland. Nikani was assigned to the Transkei and Ciskei and would do the most travelling. Jama would join the group later in South Africa and concentrate on recruitment in Cape Town. It was estimated that the cadres could remain in South Africa for up to four months without being detected by the police. In mid-June 1970 Nikani, Lande and Ncalu slipped into South Africa in disguise. The cadres hoped to bring the first batch of recruits out of South Africa by the end of August.

Eastern Pondoland, an APDUSA stronghold during the 1960s, was the first area targeted by the cadres. UMSA was hopeful of recruiting a substantial number of peasants from

<sup>54</sup> Lande was not part of the group trained by the Cubans but was given a crash course in the art of guerrilla warfare by those who went to Guinea.

<sup>55</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'A Report on the events as I went through them and I saw them in South Africa during 1970', by Leonard Nikani, 21 April 1973, pp. 3 and 21. L. Nikani, 'My Life Under White Supremacy', Chapter 16: 'Mission to South Africa'. NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Coup was planned in S.A. – claim', 10/3/1972, p. 3.

<sup>56</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. 'Report on the deliberations and recommendations of the special committee appointed by the President to examine and make recommendations on the whole operation of bringing our men out of South Africa to Zambia in transit for military training, with particular reference to whether or not the machinery in Botswana is competent to conduct the operation, October 1969'. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to Sidky from I.B. Tabata, 18/9/1970. Nikani, 'My Life Under White Supremacy', Chapter 15: 'In Guinea Conakry' and Chapter 16: 'Mission to South Africa'.

this area. Towards the end of June 1970, Nikani and Lande entered the Lusikisiki District. Here they met N dofela Nxasana and Ramza, the former Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Lusikisiki / Flagstaff Branch of APDUSA.<sup>57</sup> Nxasana and Ramza were apprehensive on meeting Nikani and Lande, and expressed their doubt as to whether any recruits would be forthcoming from Lusikisiki. According to Nikani, Ramza repeatedly emphasised that,

he wished the break-through with the Liberation Committee of the O.A.U. had come earlier...when the organisation in Pondoland was at its acme...at that time...recruitment would have been no problem as many in the ranks of the peasantry were more than eager to come out for military training. But because for more than five years nothing had happened, the membership had lost interest in the struggle and the local leadership was in disarray.<sup>58</sup>

Nxasana and Ramza advised Nikani and Lande to proceed to Bizana, as they felt that the peasantry in that area would be more receptive to their mission. While proceeding to Bizana they were approached by Nqcikwa Vimba, a stalwart of APDUSA in the Lusikisiki area since early 1960s. Ramza had informed Vimba of the mission and he encouraged them to return to the Lusikisiki and Flagstaff districts once they had been to Bizana.<sup>60</sup>

In Bizana, Nikani and Lande went directly to the homestead of Notsibande Mabude, the former Chairman of the Bizana Branch of APDUSA. Mabude welcomed their presence in the area and immediately called a meeting at Mfolwana Mbele's homestead of the Bizana peasant leadership who had been active in APDUSA. After Mabude introduced Nikani and Lande, they presented their mission, indicating that they hoped to recruit between fifty to one hundred people from Pondoland, out of the total of two hundred recruits.<sup>61</sup> Peasants responded by first enquiring where the UMSA cadres had been all these years. They also wanted to know how long the recruits would be away and the method of departure to be utilised. Satisfied with the cadres' answers they committed themselves to recruiting people in the Bizana District, as well as in the neighbouring districts of Lusikisiki, Tabankulu, Umzimkulu, Mount Ayliff and

<sup>57</sup> Nikani, 'My Life Under White Supremacy', Chapter: 'Mission to South Africa', p. 16.

<sup>58</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by N dofela Nxasana, Mhlwazini Location, Lusikisiki, pp. 6064 – 6065. Interview conducted with N dofela Nxasana by R. Kayser, Mhlwazini Location, Lusikisiki, 1/11/1999.

<sup>59</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'A Report on the events as I went through them and as I saw them in South Africa during 1970', by Leonard Nikani, 21/4/1973. Nikani, 'My Life Under White Supremacy', Chapter 16, 'Mission to South Africa'.

<sup>60</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Ngcikwa Nagi Vimba, Vlei Location, Lusikisiki, p. 5839. Interview conducted with Pindiso Zimambane by R. Kayser, assisted by Kwezi Tshangana, Ludeke Halt, Bizana, 6/11/1999.

<sup>61</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Jamani Mxwenge, Isilangwe location, Bizana, pp. 1375 – 1376. NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Magegeni Pungashe, Bixzana, pp. 2410 –

Harding in Natal. Mbele confidently stated that in Bizana alone they would be able to raise fifty recruits for military training, and that Pondoland could supply the entire contingent of two hundred.<sup>62</sup>

In early July Nikani left Bizana, while Lande returned to the Lusikisiki and Flagstaff districts. For the next month Nikani travelled the length and breadth of the Transkei, as well as touching on several districts in the Ciskei. His aim was to seek out individuals who had been active in the AAC and APDUSA, in the hope that they would either volunteer to leave South Africa or assist in putting him in touch with people who were prepared to undergo military training. In the Mount Frere District of the Transkei, for example, Nikani met with Novukela, who had been politically active in CATA and the AAC since the late 1940s. Novukela informed him that the organisations affiliated to the AAC had stopped functioning in the District and the people were totally disorganised. He was of the opinion that it would not be possible to get any recruits in the district. In the Kentane District, Nikani contacted Sizani, a former peasant organiser of the AAC who along with Honono had been arrested in 1960 under Proclamation R400. Sizani took Nikani to Kaiser Nkomombini, a peasant leader in the District. Nkomombini told Nikani that they had organised the people in the district into APDUSA but due to police intimidation over the years contact had been lost. He concluded that under the circumstances there was nothing he could do about recruiting people for military training. With the exception of positive responses in the Engcobo and Cala districts of the Transkei, these were the standard responses Nikani received in the Transkei and Ciskei to his request for recruits. Organisations affiliated to the AAC had clearly run the gauntlet of the government's repressive machinery and the population was living in a state of fear.<sup>63</sup>

In early August Nikani, Ncalu and Lande met in Mount Frere to assess their progress. Ncalu reported that in Johannesburg only three individuals showed interest in their mission. As

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2411, 2456 and 2460. National Library of South Africa (NLSA). *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Police gave family meaies, terror trial told', 14/9/1971.

<sup>62</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mfolwana Mbele, Isikelo Location, Bizana, pp. 5148 – 5152. NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Magegeni Pugashe Bizana, pp. 2410 – 2411 and 2456 – 2460. Interview conducted with Gideon Mahanjana by R. Kayser, Ludeke Halt, Bizana,, 20/5/1998. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'A Report of Events as I went through them and saw them in South Africa during 1970', by L. Nikani, 21/4/1973.

<sup>63</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Archibald Bottoman, Engcobo District, pp. 2681 and 2731. NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Dabulamzi Alcott Ernest Nymela, Engcobo District, p. 3658. NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Goodwin Wanga (Suthu)Qaba, p. 4018. NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Why I kept silent on training campaign', 16/11/1971. NLSA. *Mercury*, 'Witness tells of sympathy for men', 16/11/1971. NLSA. *Mercury*, 'Court told of agent', 13/10/1971. Interview conducted with Suthu Qaba by R. Kayser, Nqamakwe, 9/5/1998.

for Pondoland, Lande indicated that in Bizana the peasant leaders were still working on recruitment and it was not yet clear how many would be available to leave South Africa by August. In Lusikisiki four peasants promised to leave for training, while in Flagstaff there had been a positive response at a meeting but no one had come forward to leave. The three decided that Lande accompanied by Ncalu should return to Pondoland and focus on raising as many recruits as possible in Bizana and Flagstaff. Nikani would return to the Transkei and Ciskei to follow up on the response he received in the Engcobo and Cala districts. He would also attempt to contact former AAC members whom he had thus far been unable to reach.<sup>64</sup>

Again Nikani's efforts in the Transkei and Ciskei bore no results.<sup>65</sup> In Engcobo he had hoped to be put in touch with the *Makhuluspan* (see Chapter Five). However, he was informed by Dabulamzi Nyamela (the former Chairman of the Cape Peninsula Branch of APDUSA who was now banned and confined to the Engcobo District) that serious differences had emerged within the organisation, with the result that the *Makhuluspan* had broken up into hostile splinter groups. In early September 1970 Nikani returned to Johannesburg without a single recruit. He discovered that Lande and Ncalu had already left for Botswana with four recruits, three from Lusikisiki and one from Bizana. Nikani waited in Johannesburg for their return.<sup>66</sup>

A few weeks later Ncalu returned to Johannesburg in the company of Ernest Jama, the fourth of the UMSA cadres assigned to undertake recruitment in South Africa. Jama had been instructed by the UMSA headquarters to undertake recruitment in Cape Town, and he proceeded to directly to this destination. Ncalu went back to Pondoland, while Nikani decided to return to the Transkei. After another fruitless tour of the Transkei, Nikani went to Pondoland to assist Ncalu. Again only a handful of recruits were mustered, on this occasion five peasants from the Bizana district.<sup>67</sup> The recruits were taken to Johannesburg. In Johannesburg Jama

<sup>64</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'A Report of Events as I went through them and saw them in South Africa during 1970', by Nikani, 21/4/1973, p. 12. Interview conducted with A.K. Tom by R. Kayser, Ezibeleni, Queenstown, 30/4/1998.

<sup>65</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Helmet Ntwana, Xalanga District, pp. 2176 – 2179. NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Stanford Sisusa, Zingqutu Location, Glen Grey District, pp. 2180 – 2181. NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Max Tabata, pp. 5805 5814.

<sup>66</sup> NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Africans can be uplifted without politics', 15/10/1971, p. 3. NLSA. *Mercury*, 'Court told of agent', 13/10/1971. NLSA. *Natal Witness*, 'Men agreed to train for war, Court told', 28/9/1971. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'A Report of Events as I went through them and saw them in South Africa during 1970', by Nikani, 21/4/1973. NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Samuel Madolo, Buffelsdoorn Location, Glen Grey District, pp. 2222 – 2223. Nikani, 'My Life Under White Supremacy', Chapter 16: 'Mission to South Africa'.

<sup>67</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Jamani Mxwenge, Isilangwe Location, Bizana, pp. 1483 and 1485. NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal

reported that he expected at least five recruits from Cape Town, but none arrived on the arranged day. The cadres then proceeded with the recruits to Mafikeng from where they slipped across the border into Botswana. Pindiso Zimambane, from the Lusikisiki District, accompanied the group to the Botswana border. The idea was to show Zimambane the departure route that was used to smuggle the recruits out of South Africa, so that he could later lead more people out of the country.<sup>68</sup>

In Botswana the mission was assessed. Ncalu felt that the mission had been successful, but both Nikani and Jama maintained that it had been a failure in light of the fact that they had only been able to recruit nine people for military training. Ncalu returned to Zambia, while Nikani and Jama re-entered South Africa. After another two and half months they failed to raise any additional recruits. At that juncture they were informed by their contacts in South Africa that there was a frenzy of police activity in the Transkei and it was recommended that they leave South Africa immediately. Nikani fled to Swaziland, while Jama successfully reached Botswana. Nikani was arrested by the Swazi police. After many months in detention he was granted political asylum in Sweden.<sup>69</sup>

### **Mass arrests and detention**

In December 1970 the Special Branch of the South African Police initiated a nation-wide swoop on UMSA members. Two hundred people were arrested under the Terrorism Act. Among the leading UMSA members arrested in this swoop were Leo Sihlali, J.L. Mkentane and A.K. Tom. The majority of those arrested were peasants from the Bizana, Lusikisiki and Flagstaff districts. Nxasana, Ramza, Vimba, Mbele, Mahanjana and Zimambane were among these. Several Bafurutsi peasants were also arrested in this swoop, including Maleka. The Special Branch of the South African Police established a detention camp in the Mkambati Forest, a remote area situated along the coastline of Eastern Pondoland. Here detainees from the

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Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mdojiyana Tekase, Isokelo Location, Bizana, p. 2253. NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Mdodi Tshada, Isokelo Location, Bizana, p. 2403. NLSA. *Natal Witness*, 'Police brutality: Judges firm line', 22/10/1971. NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Police did not hit me', 28/9/1971.

<sup>68</sup> NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Man is quizzed on solitary confinement', 22/1/1972. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Terror trial accused tried suicide', 27/1/1972. 'A Report of Events as I went through them and saw them in South Africa during 1970', by Nikani, 21/4/1973, pp. 16 and 17. Nikani, Biography, Chapter 16: 'Mission to South Africa'. Interview conducted with Pindiso Kwezi Tshangana by R. Kayser, Ezibeleni, Queenstown, 30/6/1998. Interview, Zimambane, 6/11/1999.

<sup>69</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to I.B. Tabata from W.M. Tsotsi, 19/11/1970. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to Archie Mafeje from W.M. Tsotsi, 18/11/1970. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. 'A Report of Events as I went through them and saw them in South Africa during 1970', by Nikani, 21/4/1973. Nikani, 'My Life Under White Supremacy', Chapter 16: 'Mission to South Africa' and Chapter 17: 'My Escape'.

Eastern Cape and Johannesburg were kept in army tents and locked-up in the back of police vans. They were subjected to severe forms of torture, including electric shock.<sup>70</sup>

Pindiso Zimambane vividly recalled how on one occasion the Special Branch took him into the forest that surrounded the clearing of Mkambati detention camp. He was handcuffed, his eyes covered by a cloth tied around his head and clips were attached to his ears. A policeman asked him about the whereabouts of Diliza Lande and the number of people that left the country with him. Zimambane replied that he was aware of only two people who had left with Lande. This did not satisfy the police and soon after hearing a “whirring or whining sound” coming from some sought of machine (referred to by the detainees as the *Mpundula*, which in Transkeian folklore referred to a bird that ate human-beings) he felt,

a painful sensation such as jabs or pin pricks commenced in the region of the back of my neck near the ears and descended down to the top half of my body and down through my arms. It felt as though sparks were coming out of my eyes. The painful and creeping sensation descended to my solar plexus causing me to vomit...After some time the rotating sound came to an end and the sensation described died down.<sup>71</sup>

Zimambane was subjected to this treatment repeatedly until he could he longer feel any pain but merely sensed his body convulsing.<sup>72</sup>

Most suspects thought to have taken a leading role in assisting the cadres from Zambia were subjected to this form of torture at the Mkambati detention camp.<sup>73</sup> The severity of this torture resulted in the death Mthayeni Cuthsela from the Isilangwe Location, Bizana. He died after forty days in detention. Another peasant, Nohlaza Jakade, from Flagstaff attempted to commit suicide through slitting his throat, as he could no longer endure the torture.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>70</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Casparus Johannes Dreyer (Commander Security Police, Bizana), p. 6418. NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, ‘Lawyer talks of ‘torture camp’ in the forest’, 22/10/1971.” NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, ‘Swanepoel and Soggot clash’, 24/11/1971. Interview, A.K. Tom, 30/4/1998. Interview, Zimambane, 10/5/1998 and 6/11/1999. Interview, Mahanjana, 20/5/1998.

<sup>71</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Affidavit by Pindiso Zimambane, Exhibit ‘PP’. NLSA. *Daily News*, ‘Torture by Security Police alleged’, 13/8/1971. NLSA. *Daily News*, ‘Man cut his own throat’, 14/9/1971.

<sup>72</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Affidavit by Pindiso Zimambane, Exhibit ‘PP’. NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, “Witness quizzed on ‘torture’”, 27/1/1972. See also, Interview, Zimambane, 10/5/1998 and 6/11/1999.

<sup>73</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 44. Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Affidavit by Dam Gideon Mahanjana, Exhibit ‘QQ’; affidavit by Ngcikwa Nagi Vimba, Exhibit ‘RR’; affidavit by Mfolwane Mbele, Exhibit ‘OO’. NAB. PAR. RSC. Volume 44, Criminal Case 99/1971. The State versus Kader Hassim and 12 others. Evidence by Ndofera Nxasana, Vlei Location, Lusikisiki, p. 6053. NLSA. *Mercury*, “Terror trial witness tells of ‘torture camp’”, 26/1972. Interview, A.K. Tom, 30/4/1998.

<sup>74</sup> Interview conducted with Mrs Myezo, daughter of Mthayeni Cuthsela, by R. Kayser, Ludeke Halt Bizana, 20/5/1998. Interview conducted with Nohlaza Jakada’s son by R. Kayser, Mxhopho Location, Flagstaff, 2/11/1999. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report, Cape Town: CPT Book Printers,

Ultimately fourteen members of APDUSA were charged on four counts under the Terrorism Act. All the accused had been held in detention, many in solitary confinement, for a period of at least a year, and in some cases up to sixteen months.<sup>75</sup> They represented a cross-section of the oppressed black population (ten Africans, two Coloureds and two Indians) and came from all walks of life (intellectuals, workers and peasants) from town and country and from all parts of South Africa. Pindiso Zimambane, Nqicikwa Vimba, Mfolwane Mbele, Gideon Mahanjana and Tshukudu Maleka were the five accused peasants. In the indictment the state alleged that among other things, the accused conspired to overthrow of the government of South Africa by violent means. It was also alleged that the fourteen were involved in a campaign to recruit people for military training in Zambia.<sup>76</sup> The minimum sentence the accused faced if convicted on these charges was five years and the maximum sentence was death. When the trial began, Maleka was charged and tried separately. He was charged on three counts under the Terrorism Act and later acquitted as the state failed to prove "beyond reasonable doubt" that he was guilty.<sup>77</sup> The trial of the remaining thirteen lasted eight months during which the court heard one hundred witnesses, making it the longest trial in South African legal history.<sup>78</sup> All the accused were convicted and sentenced to terms of imprisonment on Robben Island ranging from ten to twenty one years. As the sentences ran concurrently, the longest actual term served was eight years.<sup>79</sup> The accused from Pondoland were singled out for harsh sentences, because according to the Judge,

Your case differs radically from the others. The evidence suggests you accepted with alacrity that people should leave the country for military training and you assisted the agents in many respects to this end.<sup>80</sup>

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Volume Three, Chapter Three, p.40. NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Man wants inquest on father', 3/8/1971. NLSA. *Mercury*, 'Dead man named in Terror Case', 2/8/1971. NLSA. *Daily News*, 'Man cut his own throat', 14/9/1971. NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Tried to shit his throat', 24/11/1971. NLSA. *Mercury*, 'Witness tells of suicide bid', 26/11/1971.

<sup>75</sup> NLSA. *Cape Times*, 'Terror trial get 5 to 8 years', 7/4/1972, p. 9. NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Terror 13 get up to 8 years', 7/4/1972, pp. 1 and 2.

<sup>76</sup> NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, '14 on Terror Act charges', 17/6/1971. NLSA. *Mercury*, 'Accused spoke against violence', 19/8/1971. NLSA. *Mercury*, 'APDUSA trial adjourns', 23/3/1972.

<sup>77</sup> NAB. PAR. RSC, Volume 10. Criminal Case 33/1972. 'Judgment', p. 570. NLSA. *Daily News*, "'Devil' told man to train", 3/3/1972. NLSA. *Natal Witness*, 'Judgement in Terror Trial Today', 23/3/1972. NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Veteran freed on charge', 22/3/1972.

<sup>78</sup> NLSA. *Mercury*, 'Trial has made S.A. legal history', 22/11/1971.

<sup>79</sup> NLSA. *Cape Times*, 'Terror trial 13 get 5 to 8 years', 7/4/1972, p. 9. NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Terror 13 get up to eight years', 7/4/1972, pp. 1 and 2..

<sup>80</sup> NLSA. *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Terror 13 get up to 8 years', 7/4/1972, p. 2.

### **The ALC and the fate of the recruits**

In Lusaka UMSA found itself once again locked into an agonising battle with the ALC over the training of the peasants who had been brought out of South Africa to undergo military training. Soon after the first batch of recruits reached Lusaka, Tabata travelled to Dar es Salaam to inform Magombe of their arrival, and in accordance with the agreement UMSA secured with the ALC, requested Magombe to make arrangements for their training. To Tabata's astonishment Magombe responded by stating that the Defence Committee of the ALC had not authorised the expenditure to train the recruits, and hence the ALC could not take them immediately.

A few months later Tabata approached Magombe once again in Dar es Salaam. Magombe informed Tabata that the position had not changed, but as a way out of the impasse suggested that the recruits could be trained by the ALC under the auspices of the PAC. UMSA rejected this offer maintaining that the PAC presented a security risk, as there were rumours that enemy agents had infiltrated the organisation. Later, in February 1971, at the Moshi Conference of the ALC, UMSA was unexpectedly informed that the Defence Committee had reversed its previous decision. It now requested UMSA to bring fifty recruits out of South Africa for military training, as the Committee maintained that it would be too expensive to train only nine people. UMSA pointed out that it would not be able to comply with such a request for two reasons. Firstly, it was impossible for a group of fifty recruits to traverse long distances in South Africa without being detected by the South African security police. Secondly, Zambia would not allow UMSA to keep such a large number of recruits on its soil. It was pointed out that as matters stood at present, Zambia was demanding that the nine peasants undergo training before it would allow more recruits to enter Zambia from South Africa.<sup>81</sup>

In June 1971 Tabata wrote a letter to Magombe in which he urged him to assist UMSA in getting the recruits trained. He pointed out to Magombe that nine months had now passed since the first batch of peasants had come to Zambia in expectation of receiving military training from the ALC, and with no hope for training in the immediate future they were becoming increasingly restive, demanding to be allowed to go back to South Africa. Tabata warned of the danger of keeping men in a camp for an indefinite period,

<sup>81</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. A Letter to W.M. Tsotsi from I.B. Tabata, 15/10/1970. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. A Letter to Tabata from W.M. Tsotsi, 23/11/1970. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. A Letter to Magombe from I.B. Tabata, 9/6/1971. Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Statement to the Foreign Ministers attending the Council of Ministers of the OAU at Addis Ababa, June 1971. Tsotsi, 'Life in Exile', pp. 130-131.

As you know from experience, it is the locking up of men in a camp indefinitely...that has been the basis of revolts and desertions from organisations. It would seem to me that the Committee is creating unnecessary problems for us. I have never received a convincing explanation from the Liberation Committee for this inordinate delay in training our men.<sup>82</sup>

From 1972 UMSA decided to re-apply for recognition from the OAU when its supporters within the ALC advised that its non-recognition stood in the way of the recruits being trained by the Defence Committee. At every conference of the ALC, beginning with the Benghazi Conference in January 1972, UMSA submitted an application for recognition. Eventually, at its Yaounde Conference in May 1974, the ALC decided to establish a six-nation sub-committee to investigate the question of UMSA's non-recognition. Despite the sub-committee's findings that "there is no doubt that UMSA...is committed to the principle of independence and total liberation of South Africa", the committee recommended that UMSA's recognition should be deferred for one year.<sup>83</sup> This recommendation was endorsed by the ALC meeting in Dar es Salaam in January 1975. However, just over a year later, in April 1976, UMSA was informed that the ALC was not prepared to entertain any further applications from the organisation for recognition.<sup>84</sup> Meanwhile, Tabata's warning that the peasant recruits would become rebellious towards the UMSA leadership if they were kept waiting indefinitely was proven correct. By the mid-1970s most of them deserted the organisation.<sup>85</sup> Without recognition UMSA was never able to launch its programme of preparing the population in South Africa for an armed struggle. The revolutionary tide unleashed by the events of the early 1960s had gradually slipped away by the mid-1970s.

To launch an effective armed struggle in South Africa UMSA needed the support of the independent African states. Key leaders secretly left South Africa to seek assistance especially from the OAU, which had been expressly established by independent African states to assist liberation movements in their struggle for freedom in their respective countries. Despite going to extreme lengths to prove its authenticity as a liberation movement in South Africa, including

<sup>82</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. Letter to Magombe from I.B. Tabata, 9/6/1971.

<sup>83</sup> Privately held by R. Wilcox, Cape Town UMSA Papers. 'Report of Fact - Finding Mission on the Applications for Recognition submitted by UNITA, FROLIZI and UMSA', 25/11/1974.

<sup>84</sup> UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Grey Zulu, Minister of Defence, Lusaka from I.B. Tabata, 3/4/1973. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Major Mbita, Executive Secretary of the OAU Liberation Committee from I.B. Tabata, 1/10/1973. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to Executive Secretary, OAU Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa, from I.B. Tabata, 14/2/1975. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to I.B. Tabata from Laban Oyaka, Assistant Executive Secretary, Policy and Information, OAU Liberation Committee, 28/2/1975. UCT. Manuscripts and Archives Department. UMSA / I.B. Tabata Collection, BC 925. Letter to UMSA from Laban Oyaka, 2/4/1976.

sending its own members into South Africa to recruit people for military training, the OAU consistently refused to grant UMSA recognition. Finding itself blocked at every turn in Africa, and indeed the world, through what UMSA perceived to be the machinations of imperialism and its agents, the neo-colonial African states and certain liberation movements in Africa, the revolutionary tide in South Africa soon passed-over. To UMSA a key moment for South Africa and indeed for Africa had been missed.

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<sup>85</sup> Interviews conducted with Norman Traub by R. Kayser, Cape Town, 20/2/1998 and 16/2/2000.



**Pindiso Zimambane**, a member of APDUSA in Lusikisiki. In 1972 he was imprisoned on Robben Island for eight years for his active participation in UMSA's recruitment mission in 1970. (Photo: R. Kayser, 1999).



**Mfolwane Mbele**, a committee member of APDUSA in Bizana. In 1972 he was sentenced to 8 years on Robben Island for his participation in UMSA's recruitment mission in 1970. (Photo: R. Kayser, 1999).



**Mlandwa Xanjana**, a member of APDUSA in Lusikisiki demonstrates how he was tortured by the Security Police in the Mkambati Forest detention camp. He was handcuffed with a chain to a pole placed behind his knees. In this position he was suspended from a tree for 12 hours. (Photo: R. Kayser, 1999).



**Gwayiman Cele**, a member of APDUSA from Lusikisiki who left South Africa in 1970 to undergo military training in Africa. (Photo: Natal Archival Depot).

## CONCLUSION

This dissertation has argued that Marxism determined the NEUM's political perspective. Through the application of Marxism to the particular conditions prevalent in South Africa at the time, the NEUM concluded that the two fundamental problems faced by the oppressed black population in South Africa were the agrarian question and the national question. Hence the NEUM adopted the slogan "Land and Liberty". The dissertation described how the NEUM gradually built up an organisational structure in the African reserves, firstly, in the Eastern Cape and Northern Natal, and then later in the Northern Provinces. It has shown that the NEUM approached the peasantry on the basis of their immediate needs and struggles. These were centered on the demand for land and resistance to the Rehabilitation Scheme, Bantu Authorities and Bantu Education.

The NEUM demonstrated to rural dwellers that they had been deliberately rendered landless and subjected to countless government schemes and acts to meet capitalism – imperialism's need for cheap labour. Most importantly, the NEUM introduced new political ideas and concepts to the peasantry. The policy of non-collaboration with the oppressor was placed before the peasantry, which they applied in their struggles against the Bunga, Rehabilitation Scheme, Bantu Authorities and Bantu Education. Through this policy the NEUM drew attention to the class nature of the liberation struggle. The NEUM encouraged reserve dwellers to form their own independent organisations, the peasant committees, through which they could rally their resistance. It impressed upon the peasantry to view their problems not just as a peasant problem but from a national perspective, and in particular as a peasant – worker problem. The NEUM thus emphasised the unity of interest of peasant and worker.

The 1950s and early 1960s witnessed a series of unprecedented peasant revolts in the African reserves. In the Transkei especially, the intensification of peasant struggles came close to civil war as reserve dwellers mobilised *en masse* and increasingly resorted to violent confrontation with government authorities. To illustrate this development and reveal the revolutionary potential inherent in peasant mobilisation, the dissertation focussed specifically on the 1959 - 1960 Pondoland revolt. Given the large amount of documentary and oral evidence available on the Pondoland revolt, the dissertation also sought to consider to what extent a national political consciousness had emerged among the South African peasantry, and to what extent this process could be attributed to the NEUM. The revolt revealed that a national political outlook had started to emerge among rural dwellers. During the revolt the peasantry

broadened their struggle from a district level to a regional, and evidence shows that they sought to elicit support from other districts in the Transkei. Furthermore, they began looking to national political organisations for guidance in their struggle. They sought out the leadership of the AAC which advised them to direct their resistance away from open confrontation with the police and army. Most significantly, the idea of liberty had taken root among the peasantry. This was concretely reflected in the peasants' demand for direct representation in Parliament. To the NEUM this demand was of great significance as it demonstrated that the peasantry had connected their demand for land with the question of attaining political rights. The Pondoland revolt therefore vindicated the NEUM's position that the land question was a key problem in the liberation struggle and that the peasantry were a source of revolutionary potential.

This study has also pointed out that the ANC failed to recognise the importance of the land question in South Africa, and consequently did not concern itself with rural mobilisation. The odd forays by the ANC into the African reserves tended to be episodic and were undertaken on the initiative of individuals.

Most importantly, this dissertation has attempted to capture a key moment in South Africa's historical development. It has argued that by the early 1960s the NEUM believed South Africa was entering a pre-revolutionary situation. Organisationally the NEUM prepared itself for this new period through the formation of APDUSA and tactically through the adoption of the armed struggle. The dissertation described how rural dwellers rallied to APDUSA. These developments were taking place in a period of extreme government repression directed at the liberation movement, when political activity by other liberation movements was hardly evident. The dissertation also indicated how key leaders of the NEUM left South Africa. Their directive was to have the NEUM recognised by the OAU as a crucial first step in the launching of the NEUM's armed struggle. In their endeavours to have the NEUM recognised, the NEUM leadership found themselves blocked at every turn by imperialism, through its agents in the OAU and certain neo-colonial African states. By the early 1970s the revolutionary tide had spent its force in South Africa, and a key turning point in the liberation struggle had been missed.

These political developments did not, however, sound the death knell of the UMSA and APDUSA. From the early 1980s, after its internal leadership had been released from Robben Island, UMSA was gradually rebuilt in South Africa. It especially targeted the recruitment of young people and in the mid-1980s the African Peoples' Democratic Youth Movement (APDYM) was founded. Contact was re-established with the UMSA headquarters which was

transferred to Harare in 1981 after Zimbabwe gained independence. South Africa's negotiated settlement in the early 1990s and the transition to democracy with the ANC at the helm signalled the gradual withering away of UMSA. Historically there was no further role for UMSA as the negotiated settlement signalled the achievement of South Africa's national liberation. While UMSA has faded from view since the mid-1990s, APDUSA, which was specifically created as an organisational bridge between bourgeois democracy and the struggle for socialism, has increasingly assumed its historical role. As a step in the direction of socialism, APDUSA has formulated a Transitional Programme, which demands the completion of those tasks which were not fulfilled through the achievement of bourgeois democracy in South Africa, most notably the resolution of the agrarian question.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> APDUSA, 'National Conference 1995: Speeches and Resolutions', October 1995, p. 32. 'From the NEUM to UMSA: A Reply to Yousuf Rassool', by Norman Traub, in *What Next?, Marxist Discussion Journal*, Number 21, 2002.

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*Cape Times*, 1971 and 1972  
*Daily Dispatch*, 1958  
*Daily News*, 1971 and 1972  
*Drum*, 1952 and 1972  
*Ilizwi Lesizwe*, 1961 - 1962  
*Ikhwezi Lomso*, 1958 - 1961  
*Liberation*, 1955 - 1959  
*Natal Witness*, 1971 and 1972  
*SOYAN*, 1956 - 1959  
*Star*, 1949  
*Spark* (issued by the Workers' Party of South Africa), 1935 - 1939  
*Spark*, 1962 - 1963  
*Southern African Political Economy Monthly*, 1988  
*Sunday Times*, 1960  
*Teachers' Vision*, 1942 - 1955  
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*Mercury*, 1971 and 1972.  
*New Age*, 1955 - 1962  
*New Teachers' Vision*, 1956  
*Rand Daily Mail*, 1971 and 1972.  
*Umthunywa*, 1943  
*Voice of the All-African Convention*, 1945 – 1949.

### III. INTERVIEWS

A. Interviews conducted where tapes and transcripts are in the author's possession.

(i). Interviews in Xhosa and English by R. Kayser (RK) assisted by Kwezi Tshangana (KT), interpreter.

Boyi, Mrs., Mkamela Location, Lusikisiki, 1/11/1999.

Danisa, Richard and Mobumbela, James, Jakeda, with contributions by Pindiso Zimambane, Mxhopo Location, Flagstaff, 2/11/1999.

Jahede, Mr., with contributions by Pindiso Zimambane, Mxhopo Location, Flagstaff, 2/11/1999.

Mabude, Mrs., with contributions by Gideon Mahanjana, Bizana, 4/11/1999.

Mahanjana, Dam Gideon, Ludeke Halt, Bizana, 20/5/1998.

Makokoba, Ndengenzi, Ludeke Halt, Bizana District, 21/5/1998.

Mhomba family, with contributions by Pindiso Zimambane, Lusikisiki District, 2/11/1999.

Mjungula, Nonkwenkwe, Lusikisiki District, 9/11/1999.

Mxwenge, M. Mrs. and Jamani, M. Mr., with contributions by Pindiso Zimambane, Isilangwe Location, Bizana, 4/11/1999.

Ncenjana, Mpitsi, Isikelo Location, Bizana District, 5/11/1999.

Njenjane, Mnyamezeli, Enkantolo Location, Bizana District, 5/11/1999.

Nxasana, Fanele, Isikelo Location, Bizana District, 4/11/1999.

Nxasana, N dofela, Ramzi Location, Lusikisiki District, 1/11/1999.

Xanjana, Mlandlwa, Ramzi Location, Lusikisiki, 3/11/1999.

Zimambane, Pindiso, Flagstaff, Flagstaff District, Transkei, May 1998 and Ludeke Halt, Bizana District, 6/11/1999.

(ii). Interviews by R. Kayser assisted by interpreters other than Kwezi Tshangana:

Tsheka, Ishmael, Pitsoground, Maseru, Lesotho, 24/4/1999. (Interpreter Khotso Tsheka).

Pita, Penni Fana (from Zingutu Location, Glen Grey District) and Sisusa (from the Nkonkobe Location, Glen Grey District), Ezibeleni, Queenstown, 27/5/1998. (Interpreter A.K. Tom).

Makela, Veronica, Gopane, Lehurutse, 14/10/1998. (Interpreter Wesley Seleka).

Moroeng, Sediakgotla, Gopane, Lehurutse, October 1998. (Interpreter Wesley Seleka).

(iii). Interviews conducted in English by R. Kayser:

Canca, Richard Sidney, Idutywa District, 7/5/1998.

Carolissen, Elma, Cape Town, 30/6/1999.

Dudley, Richard, Cape Town, 30/9/1999.

Fataar, Alie, Cape Town, 2/11/1998 and 2/9/1999

Hassim, Kader, Pietermaritzburg, 28 and 29 April 1999.

Hattia, Yunus, Pomeroy, Natal, 6/5/1999.

Jacobs, Yusuf, Durban, 10/11/1999.

Kikia, Cas, Serowe, Botswana, October 1998.

Lande, Rhina, Ngquza Hill Location, Lusikisiki District, 2/11/1999.

Mabuto, Robert, Idutywa District, Transkei, 7/5/1998.

Makalima, Siphon, Alice, Victoria East District, Ciskei, 2/6/1998.  
 Makasi Zitobile, Queenstown, 4/8/1998.  
 Nikani, Leonard, Cape Town, 24/12/1998.  
 Nyamela, Dabulamazi, Willowvale District, Transkei, 16/11/1999.  
 Qaba, Suthu, Kentani District, 9/5/1998.  
 Reddy, Mac, Durban, 10/11/1999.  
 Seleka, Wesley, Lobatsi, Botswana, 23/10/1998.  
 Tebete, Booi, Durban, 11/5/1999.  
 Tom, Andrew Kekena, Ezibeleni, Queenstown, 30/4/1998.  
 "U.F", Cape Town, 12/4/2002.  
 Wilcox, Robert and Gwen, Cape Town, 15/4/2002.  
 Traub, Norman, Cape Town, 16/2/2000.  
 Tsotsi, Wycliffe, Cape Town, 10/6/1998 and September 1998  
 Vawda, Clive, Durban, 8/11/1999.  
 Venkarthathnan, Sunny, Durban, 5/11/1999.

**B. Interviews by others where the tapes are in the author's possession.**

Gool, Jane, by Lyova Hassim, Durban, 21/11/1990.  
 Tabata, Isaac Bangani and Gool, Jane, by Allison Drew, Harare, Zimbabwe, 15 and 17 December 1987.

**C. Interviews where tapes and transcripts are located at the Manuscripts and Archives Department, University of Cape Town.**

Tabata, I.B. and Gool, J. by S. Jeppie and E. Cairncross, Harare, Zimbabwe, 16 – 22 January 1989.  
 Tabata, I.B. and Gool, J., Harare, Zimbabwe, 10/9/1989. (video, film-maker, Amina Hughes).

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