

A JOURNAL OF LIBERAL AND RADICAL OPINION

reality

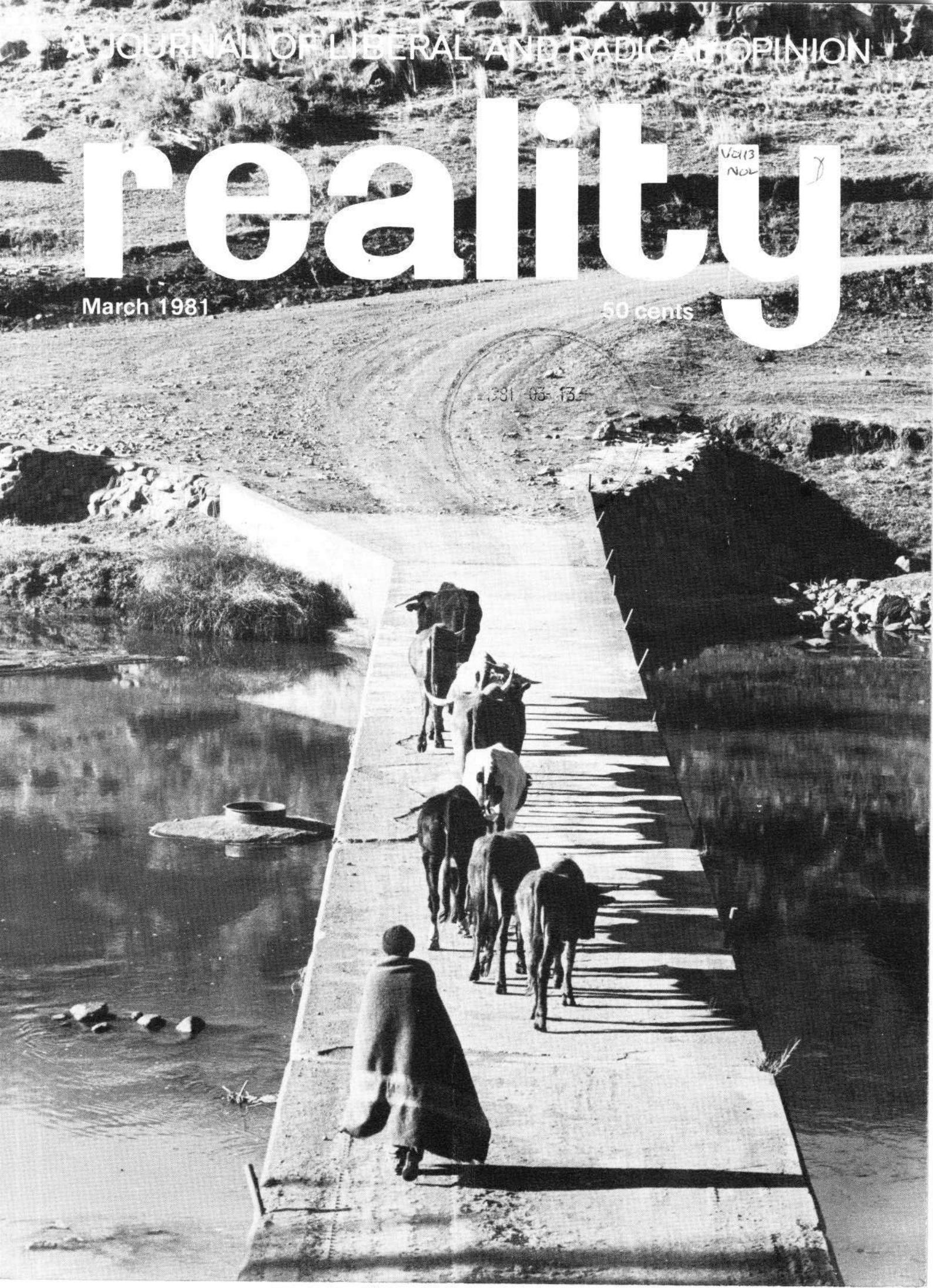
March 1981

50 cents

VOL 13
NO 2

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1981-03-13



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Cover photograph by Joe Alferts

Articles printed in Reality do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Editorial Board.

EDITORIALS

1. THE PRICE OF PROCRASTINATION

Perhaps the most extraordinary thing about the failure of the Geneva talks on Namibian independence is that hardly anyone in South Africa seems particularly concerned. Yet, as far as we can see, unless the negotiating process can soon be got going again, and successfully concluded, the long-term results for South Africa will be disastrous. And not only for her. The long-term interests in this part of the world of South Africa's western 'friends' could also be in jeopardy.

It is a long way from the antiseptic atmosphere of Geneva to the squalor of Cape Town's Guguletu, but there is a relevance between the collapse of the talks and what happened in Guguletu a few hours later. That night, in Guguletu, a mob of hundreds of black school-children besieged the home of Gerry Magobolo, a nineteen-year-old schoolboy, and frightened the wits out of him and his family, threatening to burn their home down and kill them.

The reason for their terrifying experience? Gerry had been offered, and was on the point of accepting, an athletics scholarship to the United States – something which, not long ago, would have won him the approval and envy of his peers.

Why the change?

There are probably two reasons for it, both of which have to do with procrastination.

The first is local and concerns the dilatory manner in which the people who run black education in our country have responded to the mood and demands of black school-children since 1976. In 1976 the substance of those demands was for full integration into the same education system as that provided for white children, and no discrimination within it. Nothing has been done to meet that basic demand, in what is now going on for five years. And now the

emphasis of the demand is beginning to change, in some quarters at least. Where swift action five years ago might have left us with much of the anger of black educational protest defused, there are signs now that, by the time white South Africa gets round to thinking about an integrated educational system, black children may no longer want it. For, if the reports are correct, what that Guguletu mob was asking Gerry Magobolo to do was to turn down his scholarship and, by so doing, dissociate himself from a "white" education, even if it was in the United States.

During this past year of the Cape school boycotts a growing number of black children and educationists seemed to be bent on rejecting even an integrated education system if it was to be one committed to the inculcation of the "white man's values" and to what they see as an education which prepares them for willing absorption into an economic system primarily designed to serve white interests and not theirs.

Would the fury of the Guguletu demonstration have been so intense if Gerry had won a scholarship to Moscow, 'white' though the education there might also be? We suspect not. Which brings us back to the failure in Geneva.

The West, through its historical and economic ties with the South African 'establishment' has allowed itself to be manoeuvred into a position where it is seen by radical black South Africa as a prop to and an extension of the system which dehumanises and exploits them here. When it comes to taking a stand on apartheid it will invariably procrastinate, its critics say.

This assessment may not be altogether fair but if it is to change the West will have to do something dramatic to

convince radical black South Africans that they are wrong. One way to start such a reassessment would be for the West to be seen to have been a decisive influence in bringing about acceptable elections in Namibia. For the moment they have failed to do so. They will have to try harder than ever in 1981. In particular the Western Europeans must try to ensure that the conservative instincts of the Reagan administration do not persuade it to do as little as possible about Namibia, hoping the problem will solve itself. It won't. Violent conflict will escalate and spread.

In our view the major obstacle to an agreement in Geneva, although it was never publicly stated, was the ill-founded belief in South African circles that their military capacity meant that there was no need to hurry over a settlement. This was an illusion shared by the Rhodesian Front for many years. The trouble with this reliance on force of arms to keep oneself in power is that it eventually persuades one's opponents that violence is their only answer to it, the only thing which brings results. It is an insidious doctrine which it is not easy to refute because it does often seem to work. It seemed to work in Guguletu. There the threat of violence made Gerry Magobolo abandon his American scholarship.

The price of procrastination in Zimbabwe was increasing violence. The price of procrastination in the black education system has been increasing violence. The price of procrastination in Namibia will be increasing violence there.

If the West wants to arrest the continuing decline in its credibility in many black South African eyes, of which the Guguletu demonstration was such a vivid illustration, a Namibian settlement should be a top priority for 1981. □

2. PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKES

The South African army's attack on a group of ANC houses near Maputo was spectacular and very dangerous for those who took part in it. It was also extremely dangerous for the rest of us who didn't.

Officially, the strike was designed to forestall possible attacks on South Africa. Unofficially it was designed to dissuade unfriendly neighbours from harbouring people who might be contemplating such attacks.

If the Rhodesian experience means anything it is that pre-emptive strikes achieve hardly anything at all. They may delay for a few moments the march of history, but no more than that.

Maybe the Maputo raid will delay the march of history for a few moments too, but at what cost? How can South Africa's relations with Mocambique not be badly damaged by it? And with Zimbabwe? And with the other frontline states? And what about black/white relations inside South Africa, which Chief Buthelezi so rightly told a Soweto meeting on the day after the raid, could only be made

worse by such an adventure? Acts of retaliation, like the Durban bomb blast, will multiply, each side determined to outdo the other.

An increasingly hostile set of neighbours beyond her borders and deteriorating relations within them are the two things South Africa can least afford. It is a grim thought that the people who planned and authorised the Maputo raid seem either unaware of or unconcerned about its long-term consequences, for they have told us that, if they think it necessary, they will do it again.

What we need now is not military adventurers in the seats of power but men with calm heads, a sense of history and a willingness to talk to black South Africans and our black neighbours about how to bring about acceptable peaceful change here. The mere act of starting to talk would eliminate the threat of urban terrorism overnight.

But that kind of leader, in the seats of power, we greatly fear we have not got. □

3 TWO BLACK FRIDAYS, OR ONE?

Parliament opened in Cape Town on January 23rd, a Friday, as is traditional.

One would have to look hard, back over the past seventy years, to find a session of Parliament which, for most South Africans, didn't turn out to hold in store for them worse things than those that had gone before.

The session that started this January promised to be no different. It was preceded by the banning of the country's two principal black newspapers, this coming in the midst of a sustained new attack on the press in general.

It followed soon after the announcement of a plan to introduce a new national identification system based on fingerprinting the whole population — to which the proper national response in a free country would surely be, "Go to hell!"

It was remarkable only for the government's restatement

of its support for the same old principles which have served us so badly in the past. Even the Prime Minister's emphatic rejection of the idea of ever having African representation on his President's Council was not new.

Can we expect anything better from the first session of the newly-elected Parliament which will start its life on some Friday after the end of April? If we can't, then any hope that the P.W. Botha ministry might somehow be able to start leading South Africa out of the dead-ends of the past will finally have to be abandoned. For if this is not an election to give him a mandate to do that, then it is quite pointless. After April, South Africa will not be able to afford any longer to be led by a Mr Botha who treads the same paralysed course he followed in 1980.

January 23rd looked set to be another Black Friday, ushering in another session of uncompromising government and dashed hopes. We dare not have two of those in one year. □

SOME QUESTIONS

By Vortex

An SADF spokesman recently referred to military service as "stepping out into adult life" and assured parents of trainees that their sons would return "as men".

This would seem to imply that manhood can only be achieved by learning to use a gun. But this view raises certain questions:

- (i) What is one to make of those white South Africans — ardent Nationalists — who refused the excellent opportunities for "adulthood" provided by the Second World War?
- (ii) How can one describe the pity that "patriotic" white South Africans must feel for those nations — Germany, France, Britain, New Zealand, for example — who have produced so very few men of late? (Perhaps this is a point that Dr Craven wishes to reinforce with his passion for sudden rugby tours?)
- (iii) What is one to say of black South Africans? They can hardly be expected to fight for their oppressors, so presumably if they wish to be men they are bound — indeed urged by the SADF — to slip over the border and join the liberation armies . . . □

WHAT IS CIVILIZATION?

By Vortex

A thoughtful person in Europe or North America might well say: "Civilization is a state of society in which the government has learned to adopt humane attitudes. Quite a good test is the question of punishment: by the late twentieth century truly civilized governments tend to have abolished the death penalty."

Most white South Africans would say: "Civilization is the traditional way of doing things in this country. It is what we are fighting to defend against the barbaric terrorists — people like Nujoma, Mugabe, etc. ."

The South African legal system hangs far more people per year than that of any other "Western" country. In his Christmas message Mr Mugabe of Zimbabwe predicted that there would be no hangings in his country while he is Prime Minister.

What is civilization? □

THE CISKEI REFERENDUM

By Nancy Charton

1. Introduction.

On 4th December 1980 Ciskeian voters went to the poll in an unprecedented referendum. They were asked simply to respond YES or NO to the proposal that the Ciskei be independent.

Chief Minister Sebe and his party had negotiated a 'package deal' with the Republican government which they considered an ample basis for assuming new independent statehood. Chief Sebe did not consider a referendum essential. "The voice and the great rumbling of our great Chiefs is so loud and clear that there is no choice for us". A referendum was something which had no precedent in African political culture. However the Quail Commission, set up to investigate the pro's and cons of independence had recommended it. And the Chief Minister felt it was important to comply with international standards of democratic process. If this was self-determination it must be seen to be so, both in South Africa, and overseas. (1)

There are 503 000 registered Ciskeian voters, constituting an estimated 80% of all Ciskeians. Of those registered 299 731 voted. There was thus a 59,5% poll. The results were as follows:

YES	295 891	98,8%
NO	1 642	,5%
Spoilt Papers	2 198	,7%
TOTAL	299 731	(2)

The Rev. W. Xaba, Acting Chief Minister at the time, commented on this result: "The voice of the nation has spoken". Prof. L. Schlemmer has claimed that Chief Sebe has won a large and defensible mandate to proceed with negotiations for independence. (3)

How valid are these claims?

2. THE VOICE OF THE NATION: WHAT NATION?

The problem is of course to define the nation! Different people define their political universe in different ways. Thus in a survey done in Mdantsane in 1976, 6% of respondents were found to relate chiefly to their tribe, 37% to the Ciskei, and 44% to a united South Africa. Even within the Ciskei then there are those who see Ciskeian institutions as less relevant to their interests than the central South African organs of government. Permanently urbanised Africans living in other areas of South Africa tend to be even more alienated from homeland politics. For many of them the Ciskei government is a political fiction, invented to divert their aspirations from the central power structures of the Republic. The Ciskei, and all it stands for is seen as irrelevant to their daily lives; and the Ciskei government, for all its good intentions, has proved unable to articulate the interests of its absentee citizens.

In view of this split in opinions about the legitimacy of homeland institutions, it is interesting to examine and compare voting patterns within the Ciskei, and in the rest of South Africa. In the Ciskei itself there are 208 000 registered voters, of whom 80% or 166 400 voted. In the rest of South Africa there must be 295 000 registered voters; of these 133 331 voted, or 45,2%. What is interesting in this situation is not the average percentage poll, but the actual distribution of the vote. It is clear that the overwhelming majority of Ciskeians living within the Ciskei have spoken. It is equally clear that there are many alienated and apathetic 'citizens' in the remaining areas of South Africa. In East London itself there are 32 000 voters of whom 45% voted. In Uitenhage there are 20 000 voters of whom only 27% voted. Port Elizabeth was a contrast to the general pattern. There are 33 000 registered voters, and no less than 89% voted. (1)

There was apparently little interest in the election in Ginsberg, a stronghold of the black consciousness movement. (2)

Voting patterns then clearly illustrate the split in opinions as between the Ciskei itself, and the rest of South Africa, with Port Elizabeth a notable and interesting exception. Chief Sebe had called on Ciskeians: "Go to the polling stations singing those songs sucked from your mothers' breasts, or if you choose the worst - to betray the nation - do not go to the polling stations." (3)

Many took this advice, and maybe they did not betray the nation, maybe they just had a different definition of the nation in mind. The Quail Commission had recommended a majority both in the Ciskei and in the rest of South Africa in favour of independence as a pre-condition. This has not been met, and maybe, given that difference of definition, it never will be.

3. WAS THE VOICE OF THE NATION FREE TO EXPRESS ITSELF?

Both pre- and anti-independence factions attribute disappointing results to 'intimidation'. There may have been abuses, such as were reported during the election. However, the most effective 'intimidation' is of a more subtle kind. Most Ciskeian perceive the party in power to be the government; they know that it has the power to allocate scarce resources such as houses, pensions and jobs. Most Ciskeians, even the well-educated, remain totally unconvinced that the ballot is secret. Identity numbers must be written on each ballot paper and stamped. And it is claimed that people at Mdantsane were threatened that those who were not registered as voters would lose their houses. In this game facts are not important; perceptions are. The ballot is not held to be secret; the government is all powerful, and the source of essential resources. Discretion dictates that the individual support

1. East London Daily Dispatch: 5/12/80
2. East London Daily Dispatch: 18/12/80
3. Sunday Times: 4/1/81

1. Die Burger: 9/12/80
2. Daily Dispatch: 5/12/80
3. Sunday Times: 21/12/80

the party in power. The bandwagon syndrome has been identified in voting behaviour all over the world. It would certainly explain the unanimity of Ciskeian voters within the Ciskei. In such a situation the vote may be seen as a response to a particular power situation.

Ciskeians outside the homeland itself are not subject to the same pressures, unless of course they are migrant workers. Permanently urbanised Ciskeians do not see the Ciskei government as fulfilling any positive function for them, nor as exercising power over them. They are free to associate, or disassociate themselves from the homeland. A goodly number have chosen the latter path. And admonitions from academics to participate in such opportunities for political expression as the system offers, are unlikely to change their attitudes. (1)

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1. Schlemmer: in Sunday Times: 4/1/81
 2. The Friend: 25/11/80

4. DOES THE REFERENDUM CONSTITUTE A MANDATE FOR INDEPENDENCE?

For large numbers of Ciskeians 'independence' has been presented as a desirable goal. "It is a promissory note guaranteeing all men the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." (2)

The referendum certainly demonstrates considerable internal support. The fruits of independence will determine whether that support will be able to be maintained without the use of force. In the end the electoral appeal of a political party, or a leader rests on ability to produce goods, material or cultural which satisfy the aspirations of the most significant groups in that society. Chief Sebe's regime, whether independent or not, will have to earn its legitimacy like any other regime by satisfying the aspirations of its people, of the chiefs, civil servants, the emerging entrepreneurs and professional people; but also of the workers in the factories of East London, the landless rural poor being re-patriated in their thousands from the urban and rural areas of 'white' South Africa. □

SABATA DALINDYEBO

Paramount Chief Sabata Dalindyebo (A! Jonguhlanga! — he who looks to the nation!) was born, as he lived, in the centre of controversy (25 November 1928). His father had died suddenly some five months earlier before marrying his official Great Wife. Many years later, George Matanzima would say that old Mhlobo Matanzima had been instrumental in selecting Sabata as heir, but the truth of the matter seems to be that he was unanimously chosen by a national meeting of the Thembu people (September 1929) because his mother outranked the three other wives of the late Jogilizwe.

After a stormy school career — he was expelled at least once and never matriculated — Sabata faced up to his regent and guardian (Chief Dabulamanzi Dalindyebo) who refused to present him for circumcision. Backed once again by the full Thembu council, Sabata took the matter to court and forced the issue. He was duly circumcised, and on 30 June 1954, installed as Paramount Chief of the Thembu.

Almost immediately, Sabata and his advisers found themselves locked in conflict with Kaiser D. Matanzima who, at that point, ranked no higher officially than senior chief of St Marks District. K.D. was, however rather older (thirteen years) and considerably better educated (qualified as an attorney) than the young Paramount. Moreover, he had from a very early stage recognised the possibilities of the Bantu Authorities system, which the then Minister of Native Affairs, Dr H. Verwoerd, was busily setting up. Matanzima claimed to be Paramount Chief of 'Emigrant Thembuland', an administrative division set up in 1865 by the Colonial authorities on land confiscated from hostile Xhosa and given to Thembu collaborators. Foremost among these was the first Matanzima, Kaiser's great-grandfather and truly the founder of a family tradition.

Sabata naturally resisted Kaiser's claims which cut back his own authority and divided the Thembu nation into two. But the Government Anthropologist upheld Matanzima —

hardly surprising, since K.D. was a 'Progressive' chief while Sabata's secretary, Jackson Nkosiyané was well known as a vigorous opponent of the South African government and all its works, from tribal authorities to rehabilitation schemes. In 1958, K.D. was recognised as chief of 'Emigrant Thembuland', while Sabata was told that any further "impertinent letters" would result in his deposition. Nkosiyané and other "undesirable advisers" were banished.

Sabata did not waver in the face of this dire example. In 1961, he organised a meeting of some thousand chiefs and headmen to protest against rehabilitation. According to one historian, "in 1963 the Engcobo and Umtata districts were said by police to be the most violent districts in the Transkei."

Sabata supported Victor Poto's Democratic Party against Matanzima in the 1963 elections to the Transkei Legislative Assembly, and he stood by the opposition through Matanzima's successive electoral triumphs, through the defection of Tutor Ndamase (Poto's heir), and, finally, through the disintegration of the Democratic Party itself. Initially, he refrained from open support of either Hector Ncokazi's radical Democrats or Knowledge Guzana's Parliamentarists. But as the former gave way to repression and the latter to irrelevance, he increasingly allied himself with the radicals.

Sabata is reputed to be somewhat erratic in his personal habits ("his path is strewn with broken bottles" runs one line of his praises) and he had no intellectual pretensions. He preferred to leave most of the talking in the Legislative Assembly to his representative (and leading D.P. radical), Florence Mancotywa. Nevertheless, his moral authority was immense. Alone among his fellow-chiefs, he resisted the power and luxury which were his for the asking. Alone, he persevered in obstinate and implacable opposition to Kaiser Matanzima and to the very conception of Transkeian

independence. Alone in Transkei, he dared to say aloud what many others were thinking. Outside of Parliament, he was a powerful and hard-hitting speaker. He called the Matanzima brothers "spies and good boys for the South African government". He called Transkei independence "settling for a fowl-run". And, cutting through the bland official rhetoric which no one in Transkei questions or believes, he delivered the following analysis of K.D.'s well-publicised request (1976) for the release of Nelson Mandela: "They say to the Government 'We want the world to know that we have asked for their release, but don't release them'. If Mandela were brought to the Transkei, I am definitely sure nobody else will be voted for, whether as Prime Minister or as President".

Transkei independence and the Transkei Security Act deprived Sabata of any protection but his high rank and popular respect. His election, in March 1979, as leader of the new Democratic Progressive Party (the rump of the old opposition added to Stella Sigcau's essentially opportunistic Eastern Mpondo breakaway) made him paradoxically more vulnerable. Leading his party in the non-confidence debate of that year, he said, "Let me say we have no confidence in the Government and we feel insecure. We feel so unsafe that literally we feel we may be shot at any time".

Insulated, perhaps, by the belief that Kaiser, his cousin and 'junior' in traditional terms, would accord him due respect (later, in prison, he wrote to Kaiser that their common ancestors had appeared to him in a dream and expressed their shock at his condition — that a King of the

Thembu should be found in such a place), Sabata plunged on. In June 1980 he told a party rally that "the Transkei President visited Pretoria at the insistence of the Boers and accepted independence on terms dictated by them, that the President had an abundance of the necessities of life whilst his people had to live on excreta, and that the President maltreated his people".

For this, and for a casual remark published by a reporter that the Transkei passport was a "useless piece of paper", Sabata was arrested (by police and armoured cars) and indicted for subverting the sovereignty of Parliament and the constitutional independence of Transkei, and for violating and injuring the dignity of the State President. He was found guilty on the latter charge and fined R700 or 18 months. K.D. was not prepared to let him off so lightly. The time had come to break Sabata once and for all. It was suggested to the Dalindyebo Tribal Authority that Sabata should be disciplined for his gross offence. Sabata's councillors tried to placate the government by adding another R100 onto the fine, but this was not what the brothers were after. On the 6th of August 1980, he was deposed and by the 11th he had fled. (Later that same month, Minister Saul Ndzumo, suddenly fallen from favour died in prison).

The flight of Sabata Dalindyebo, the last major public figure to oppose the increasingly repressive regime of the brothers Matanzima, marks the end of an era in Transkei. We may be sure that opposition will not disappear altogether, but that it will henceforth manifest itself in more sudden, violent and unexpected forms. □

LAW

God's sea comes streaming in —
day after day, century upon century —
against God's sandy shore.

Human beings watch the sacred process with customary
awe,

but some with reservations:
upon the beach —
at day so striking,
at night so lonely —
they set their mark:

"For Whites Only". □

Vortex

A NUMBER OF PROPOSITIONS ABOUT ALAN PATON'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY TOWARDS THE MOUNTAIN

Publisher David Philip

By A.E. Voss

1. The product is a handsomely printed and bound book. The general tone of the dust-cover is royal blue. On the front appear (from top to bottom), 'Alan Paton' (in large gold letters), 'Towards the Mountain' (in large light-blue letters), 'AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY' (in smaller gold letters), 'BY THE AUTHOR OF *Cry the Beloved Country*' (in smallest white letters). On the back there is a photographic study of the author: his expression suggests something between guardedness and candour. There is a suggestion too that the photographer caught Alan Paton just before he smiled. The book sells at R15,00.¹

2. **Towards the Mountain** is Alan Paton's account of his own life, from his birth in Pietermaritzburg in 1903, to his emergence, after the publication of ***Cry the Beloved Country*** in 1948, as a writer with a world audience.² From his parent's home and education in Pietermaritzburg, he moved to the life of a schoolmaster, marriage and the beginnings of public life in youth and social work. After a severe illness, and under the influence of restlessness, ambition and the attraction of working with young offenders he moved to Johannesburg as warden (later principal) of Diepkloof Reformatory for African boys. Almost a third of the narrative concerns the Diepkloof years. It was the publication of ***Cry the Beloved Country*** that moved and enabled Alan Paton to resign from Diepkloof, in the very year in which the National Party victory in the South African general election ushered in what Alan Paton calls "this new era", when "For the first time in his life he had to challenge the State . . ." The book is not all narrative, nor all facts: there is much anecdote, comment and speculation; some poetry, some drama.

3. The title comes from Isaiah 11:9, which forms the epigraph:

They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,
as the waters cover the sea.

The image of the holy mountain gives a principle of order to the narrative. Thus Alan Paton names ***Cry the Beloved Country*** and the South African election of 1948 as "the two decisive events of my life". The first released him from the life of a salaried public servant to "the idyllic life of Anerley" (on the Natal south coast). The second "set *him* back on the road to the holy mountain . . . towards which one travels, not always hopefully, and at which one never arrives". An important implication here is the honour-ability of politics. There is a paradox too: the novel,

began as a profoundly private action – "in the grip of powerful emotion . . . in a fever . . . written under the influence of powerful emotion, in hotel rooms in Europe and North America, contributed, after its publication, to the stature and authority (ref. 'author') which made Alan Paton the political figure he was in the 50's and 60's.

4. In one sense Alan Paton's life is like that of his hero Khumalo, who left Natal to find both disillusionment and awakening in the big city. From his birth in "Pietermaritzburg, the lovely city" ("My hometown was paradise".) and "a private world of the self" he moved after education, marriage and in mid-career to Johannesburg ("City of Gold . . . City of Crime"). It is an exemplary South African life, "as rich", as Alan Paton says of his student days, "as any life in Europe"; exemplary in that for all of us fiction and reality, riches and poverty, career and unemployment, service and suffering, Gold and Crime are mutually functional.

5. It could be argued that the Christian era of Western Europe invented only one 'literary' form, the autobiography, dependent in its nature on a particular evaluation of the individual life. The prototype is Augustine's ***Confessions***, an account of an individual's relationship to God in this world. Alan Paton, writing ***Cry the Beloved Country*** is like John Bunyan writing ***Pilgrim's Progress*** in gaol: Bunyan, who "fell suddenly into an allegory". Like Augustine and Bunyan, Alan Paton tells his story as a narrative of conversion to a faith in which he finds order for his life. The autobiography becomes a dialectic between grace and will, circumstance and decision, chance and choice. Thus in 1923, as a student of education Alan Paton writes that he "suffered much religious doubt" when he encountered Behaviourism, which challenged his "notions of the self, of the possibility of its sovereignty, and therefore of the whole concept of using one's life, by conscious resolve, for the service of God and man". The resolution is, as perhaps it must always be, paradoxical: by an act of choice to believe in the validity of choice.

6. The historical interest of Alan Paton's life is considerable. Born in a Victorian colony, he has lived through two world wars, travelled widely, been active in South African public life. He acknowledges a number of guides and heroes along the way, some of whom he has written about before (Hofmeyr, Archbishop Clayton). Often crucial moments in his life seem to follow on a combination of his own political experience (the Diocesan commission of 1941)

and the personal example of others (Mrs. Edith Rheinallt Jones). But there are significant glimpses of less obvious figures too; Paton's charges and colleagues at Diepkloof, for example.

7. Alan Paton is looking back on his life over thirty years ago. It is a writer's life, a story-teller's life. Much is given; though some is withheld, the impression is one of candour. In his account of family, friends and professional relationships, Alan Paton acknowledges occasional pettiness, resentment and infidelity on his own part. Sometimes the factual persons become fictional characters, but they cannot always be controlled. At one stage, exasperated beyond endurance by an ex-Indian Army colleague on the Diepkloof staff, Alan Paton wrote ((To hell with Stewart-Dunkley" on "the immaculately whitewashed wall" of "the white staff lavatory". In his relationship with his own wife and sons, Alan Paton suggests that "The mother-

son contest does not seem to be so much of a conflict of wills as that between father and son . . ." Perhaps the saddest moment in the experience of the book comes earlier, at the end of Chapter 15. Alan Paton's father had disappeared while on a solitary walk in the Town Bush Valley, outside Pietermaritzburg, in May 1930. His body was found only seven weeks later. "So my father's life came to a tragic end. For all his jokes and jollity, his life had in some way been solitary, and he made it more so by alienating the affection of his children. Now of course I think of him with nothing but pity". The last seems to me a sad sentence. □

FOOTNOTES:

1. I received a free copy from **Reality**.
2. I first read **Cry the Beloved Country** in 1950. My copy (from the sixteenth printing) was a school prize. So I got a free copy of that too.

Ex Africa semper aliquid (non) novi . . . ?

A REVIEW OF 'CONFLICT AND COMPROMISE IN SOUTH AFRICA'

edited by Rotberg, R.I. and Barratt, J. (David Philip, Cape Town.)

By Francis Antonie.

One may well agree with Gibson Thula that 'an interesting feature of contemporary political life in South Africa is the degree of attention being given to devising alternative constitutional models.' But one may also be forgiven for believing that the creation of constitutional models appears to have become virtually an end in itself – and indeed, some strange models have recently emerged.

If the Total Strategy Constitutional Model is anything to go by, then it appears that not only has the cart been placed before the horse, but the wheels been dispensed with. Mercifully, the contributors to 'Conflict and Compromise' have managed to replace the wheels, but there still seems to be some doubt about where exactly the horse belongs!

'Conflict and Compromise in South Africa' is a collection of papers arising from a 1978 conference sponsored jointly

by the World Peace Foundation of Boston and the South African Institute of International Affairs. It is primarily concerned with possible future political arrangements for South Africa. These are (1) the further evolution of the National Party's policy of Separate Development; (2) a system based on the principle of 'one man, one vote, one value'; (3) partition of the country into two or more separate states; (4) a federal and/or consociational arrangement.

Harald Pakendorf's paper 'Can Separate Development Evolve?' while not really breaking new ground, gives a lucid account of what verligte Nationalists are thinking, confused though these thoughts appear to be to non-verligte-Nationalists. Where his observations are not confused, they are simply naive. Thus, 'the proposed new South African constitution . . . gives real political leverage to Asians and Coloureds'. Really? (As regards the old Verwoedean dream

of independent African states, John Dugard's observation that the National Party government 'resorted to international-law fictions as a substitute for constitutional-law solutions' seems especially apt.)

An edited interview between Nthato Motlana and John Barratt is included and where the merits of 'one man, one vote, one value' are considered. While the inclusion of this interview is, of course, necessary, one questions the validity of the inclusion of Motlana's Buthelezi-bashing which seems inappropriate in a book of this nature.

Gavin Maasdorp's 'Forms of Partition' is a scholarly and impressive paper dealing with what is often regarded as a 'last resort' or 'extreme solution' to the problems facing South Africa. But the problem with partition is that it tends, more often than not, to externalize conflict. As Hedley Bull, in his paper on South Africa's relations with the West points out, partition 'often leaves a legacy of bitter international conflict'. (India and Palestine are obvious examples). Maasdorp's view that partition need not necessarily be followed by a hostile political climate 'provided that it were negotiated prior to armed conflict' is indeed comforting, but it is difficult to conceive of partition without the prior conflict given the rival claims of Afrikaner and black nationalisms.

Arend Lijphart's learned paper on federation and consociation draws heavily on comparative material and provides useful theoretical frameworks for the policies of the various

white political parties. However, the absence of a meaningful inclusion and understanding of black political aspirations may lead one to question the relevance of these concepts for both the short and long term future of South Africa.

While all the contributors agree that South Africa is an example of a plural society, the nature of this pluralism differs. For example, whereas Robert Rotberg views the South African problem in terms of colonialism, Percy Oboza, on the other hand, points out that 'we are not here dealing with the usual colonial problem'.

More puzzling though, is the virtual neglect of economic issues in understanding the nature and causes of conflict in South Africa. Any solution, constitutional or otherwise, to the problems facing South Africa must of necessity consider these. Thus, Walter Dean Burham's submission that Apartheid is based on 'the famous laager mentality among Afrikaners', while no doubt providing a convenient scapegoat theory, simply ignores the relationship between white-owned capital and black exploitation which is, some would argue, what Apartheid is ultimately all about.

Perhaps the resolution of such issues is impossible within a constitutional framework which regards race or ethnicity as the cause of conflict. Nevertheless, until these issues are resolved, the future prospects for South Africa may well appear to be characterized by conflict rather than compromise. □

FROM CATO MANOR TO KWA MASHU

— class formation and political opposition in KwaMashu township, 1958 — 1980.

By A. Manson

Note This article is partially based on oral evidence collected by myself and Ms. D. Collins while employed by the Killie Campbell Africana Library, Durban. The material is housed in the Killie Campbell Audio-Visual archive (KCAV).

Those concerned with the schools boycott of 1980 in South Africa and in Natal particularly will have noted that the boycott received strong support from the students and parents of KwaMashu, a large township of over 300 000 people to the north of Durban. The stayaway in KwaMashu began on the 29 April and continued intermittently to the middle of July.¹ Two particular features of the boycott were, firstly, that it was totally opposed by the KwaZulu government which increasingly assumed the state's role in suppressing the strike, and secondly that the boycott was not adopted by any of the African townships around Durban or Pietermaritzburg despite attempts by students in KwaMashu to elicit support from fellow students in these areas. Despite the vigour of official attacks on the boycotting students and the violent reaction it evoked among many Inkatha supporters the students were not intimidated by Inkatha's opposition and have continually rejected any assistance from Inkatha officials in solving the continuing education crisis.²

In order to explain the extent of the opposition posed by the people of KwaMashu in this period it is important to trace the origins of the township and to sketch the social, political and economic environment, that, it will be argued, created the particular conditions for political resistance there. A second aim will be to examine the class structure of KwaMashu, an important factor when considering political response and activity in the township. As will become apparent the Cato Manor removals and the re-settlement of its inhabitants at KwaMashu is a Key factor in both these processes.

Section A.

The *raison d'être*, planning and construction of KwaMashu is a fascinating story in itself. However, it is only possible here to give the bare outlines. During the 1930's the African population of greater Durban was mainly housed in the Lamont location, created and controlled by the Durban City Council (DCC). In the early 1940's the war-stimulated industries of the city attracted thousands of African labourers to Durban and its African population grew from about 43 000 to 109 000 between 1935 and 1947.³

It was then impossible to accommodate this population

at Lamont or in the city and the DCC turned to the next most obvious source of land for African housing – the Umlazi Mission Reserve to the South of Durban. This site was convenient because it was near to Durban's industrial centre and was topographically reasonably well suited to urbanisation. In 1942 the DCC did manage to acquire 200 acres of the Umlazi Glebe for urbanisation but the Government refused permission for further land purchase on the grounds that the Natal Native Trust was the sole Trustee of mission Reserves.⁴

In 1947 the Council appointed its own one-man Judicial Commission to investigate the possibilities for housing Africans in the greater Durban area. Not surprisingly the Commissioner (Justice Broome) urged the development of Umlazi Reserve to Durban's south and suggested the possibility of limited urbanisation to the north of the city on the farms 'Richmond' and 'Zeekoe vallei'.⁵ Broome was able to furnish legal reasons why the Africans at Umlazi did not have automatic freehold rights in the Reserve.⁶

Despite Broome's findings the newly elected Nationalist Government refused to sanction the idea of further land purchase in Umlazi, though it was later to use Broome's arguments to support its own actions in urbanising the Umlazi Reserve. The Government was more enthusiastic about the recommendation that land to the north of Durban be bought for African housing.⁷

From the Council's point of view the problem of finding accommodation for the Black population at the end of the 1940's had been aggravated by two factors. The first of these was the growth of a large squatter community of over 30 000 people at Cato Manor, a district within the Durban municipal area and only 4 kilometers from the centre of the city, and the subsequent conflict there between Indians and Africans in 1948–49, the most sustained rioting ever experienced in South Africa up to that date. The second factor was that the Nationalist Government repudiated the findings of the 1946–48 Fagan Commission which recognised Africans as permanent dwellers in urban areas, and reaffirmed the recommendation of the Stallard Commission that Africans were to be temporary sojourners in white towns.⁸

As the black population of Durban continued to grow in the 1950's so the Council came increasingly under pressure from the white inhabitants of Durban who wished, for reasons of security, to clear Durban of its slum areas and from the Nationalist Government which, by the Group Areas Act of 1950, was forcing local authorities to segregate urban areas. The result was that the DCC. was now compelled to take action in regard to the housing of the African population of the city.

Temporarily to ease the situation at Cato Manor an Emergency Camp was set up in 1952 on a site and service basis. The Council then turned to a longer-term measure. Under the circumstances it had no choice but to purchase land to the north, at 'Richmond' and 'Zeekoe vallei', despite the fact that initial investigation revealed it to be too steep for close settlement and that the area was subject to flooding.⁹ True to the tendency for locations in South Africa to be established in the vicinity of rubbish depots or sewage farms, the proposed land for the new location was close to the rubbish depot near the Umgeni river.¹⁰

There then followed a period of prolonged negotiation and planning for the purchase of the land and the building of the township. The DCC had to submit its plans to the central government for approval. For its part the government was determined to pursue its ideological aim of segregation in

urban areas and plans were frequently rejected because they did not meet the strict requirements of the Group Areas Act. The DCC not only had to ensure that 10 000 Indians were removed from the Duff's Road village which fell within the boundaries of the new township but it also had to place buffer zones between African and Indian neighbourhoods and ensure that there were no connecting roads between them.¹¹

In addition the Natal Estates Ltd, the owners of the land, were determined to drive a hard bargain on the sale, and offers and counteroffers were made on three occasions, the government rejecting the final agreement of sale between the Council and Natal Estates and thus necessitating a fourth round of negotiations.¹² Natal Estates also attempted to get the Council to agree to contributing towards the cost of maintaining firebreaks and erecting a 6ft high barbed wire fence between the new township and their property.¹³ Finally in June 1956, over five years after the decision had been taken to re-locate Durban's African population to the north of the city, a final agreement of sale was approved by all parties. A price of £350 000 was paid for the land.¹⁴

In this condition of splendid isolation KwaMashu was born. Plans for the actual construction of the township were presented to the Cato Manor Native Advisory Board simply for approval. The Cato Manor residents were allowed to contribute nothing to policy or planning. Their removal was looked upon as an awkward administrative task and a party of Councillors made a special trip to the Transvaal to investigate how they had moved Africans there from Alexandra to Meadowlands and Daveyton.¹⁵ Even the name KwaMashu was suggested in a competition held by the **Daily News** to find a suitable name for the township.¹⁶ This name was opposed by the Native Advisory Boards in Durban who favoured the names Mahlatanyane (after A.W.G. Champion – Mahlali) or Mafukezela (after Dube – The veteran African politician).¹⁷ A.W. Champion, in his capacity as Chairman of the Joint Locations Advisory Board, attacked the City Engineer's plan to build semi-detached houses in KwaMashu. He suggested that Africans be given sites "where they can build houses of their own choice, out of wood, iron and tile, or wattle and daub – the semi-detached houses are against our lifestyles".¹⁸ Although S.Q. Bourquin, Manager of the Bantu Affairs Department,¹⁹ supported Champion's views,²⁰ the City Engineer ostensibly for reasons of space and economy, persisted in his intention and Champion's recommendation was overlooked.²¹ The first houses were built in September 1957 and in November the Council took the first steps towards organising the removal of Africans from Cato Manor. Thirty-six thousand circulars were distributed in Cato Manor extolling the virtues of home-ownership²² and industries were contacted and asked if they would assist in the removal of their employees.²³ Bourquin reported soon after that there was a "hardening of resistance (to removals) in many quarters"²⁴ and the Chamber of Commerce and Durban Chamber of Industries, which maintained a close liaison with the Council over the removals, reported that "groups are exploiting the antagonistic feelings towards resettlement in Cato Manor."²⁵

The ANC was the most active of these groups and was able to exploit the discernible defiant attitude of the Cato Manor residents in the wider political struggle which was growing in pace and intensity in the late 1950's.²⁶ More mention of this will be made shortly.

By the beginning of 1958, partly in response to local business interests, Bourquin recommended that sites be set aside for

professional offices, a market, shops, service stations, banks and building Societies, YMCA Halls and other social amenities. The extent of white entrepreneurial interest in the Township was reflected in the Town Clerk's request to the Group Areas Board in September 1958 to zone the land around the borders of KwaMashu for African occupation (as agreed in 1956) as these areas had become an "attractive investment not only to business men with an eye to participation in native trade but also to speculators."²⁷ In 1962 a railway line connecting KwaMashu with Durban was inaugurated. By 1970 it was carrying 44 102 workers daily for Durban's workforce.

In March 1958 the first removals took place from Cato Manor. By August 1958, the notorious **Raincoat** district had been cleared, but the removals were slowed down by groups (mainly traders) which took legal action to prevent the demolition of their shacks, and by individuals who simply re-erected their dwellings after demolition.²⁸ In June 1959, this passive opposition flared into open conflict and a period of sustained rioting broke out initiated by the illegal brewers of Cato Manor who saw in the demolition of the shanty-town the loss of their livelihood. The ANC was particularly successful in linking this discontent to the wider protest movement in Natal.²⁹ The period from 1957 to 1962 was characterised by risings in the rural areas of Zululand and Pondoland, a reaction to poverty and depreciation in those areas and the Government's attempts to control the influx of people from the countryside into the cities. The culmination of their resistance was the destruction of the dipping tanks in Zululand by women who were forced to maintain them without pay. It was this mood of defiance that the ANC was able to harness to draw attention to grievances in the urban districts of Natal. In 1960 further riots in Cato Manor took on a more pronounced political outlook after declaration of a state of emergency in the major magisterial districts of the country after the Sharpeville and Langa atrocities.³⁰

From the end of 1960, the opposition to removals diminished. It seems that people moved more willingly because the attractions of Cato Manor — its relative freedom from police and administrative control — had lessened by the expansion of police activity during the state of emergency.³¹ Furthermore with the Liquor Amendment Act of 1961, Africans over 18 were allowed liquor, and the Minister of Justice authorised local authorities to allow licenses for the sale of liquor in African townships.³² Cato Manor thus began to lose some of its attraction as the 'watering-hole' of Durban. It seems that opposition was also defused by Bourquin's decision to remove, at first, only those who indicated willingness to move. However the high level of political awareness among Cato Manor residents was a legacy which was inherited by KwaMashu.

By February 1962 the population of KwaMashu had reached 40 000 people, the majority of whom had been removed from Cato Manor, although pockets of Africans were removed from other city locations (particularly Baumanville) to KwaMashu. Problems of administration concomitantly grew more complex and the Town Clerk as early as August 1962 approached the Department of Bantu Administration with a view to a government takeover of the township.³³ The Bantu Affairs Administration Act of 1971 finally provided for the establishment of boards to replace the departments of local authorities in the Republic. This legislation has been seen as an attempt by the central government to control more thoroughly

the lives of the black inhabitants of the country. While this is undoubtedly true the correspondence of the Durban Town Clerk's Department contains abundant evidence to suggest that the municipality was only too keen to relinquish the task of administering KwaMashu. In 1973 the Port Natal Bantu Affairs Administration Board took over control of KwaMashu.

The most important feature of control by the Bantu Affairs Administration Boards (BAAB) was that they were to be financially self-supporting. Consequently they relied on money from rentals for most of their income. As these were insufficient to cover costs of administration and maintenance of the townships, the Boards established a monopoly over the sale of beer and liquor, generally generating more than half their income from this source. The Port Natal BAAB also cracked down heavily on illegal hawkers and others engaged in informal sector activities to ensure further income from trading licenses. The fruit and vegetable vendors around KwaMashu complain bitterly of the harassment they received from the Board's officials. In 1977 the Port Natal BAAB handed KwaMashu over to KwaZulu and since then the township has been administered on a shoe-string budget by a locally elected council.

As brief as this description of the formation of KwaMashu has been, it has hopefully indicated the issues that concerned the state and its attitude towards the approximately 300 000 people who have settled in the township since its first formation.

Section B

The clearance of Cato Manor and the re-settlement of its inhabitants at KwaMashu was a process of great upheaval for them. It appeared to many of the illegal traders, 'shebeen-queens' and shack landlords who freely operated at Cato Manor that they would lose their livelihood. For those people who were not entitled to be in an urban area it meant certain deportation out of Durban if they were discovered by the municipal authorities. The number of Africans who simply "disappeared" during the course of the removals, estimated at 20% of the population of Cato Manor (30 to 40 thousand people)³⁴ is an indication of the number of Africans resident at Cato Manor without rights to urban residence, though some of these people may have vanished in order to escape resettlement at KwaMashu specifically or for other reasons such as fear of arrest for criminal activities.³⁵

For those who moved to KwaMashu it meant greatly increased travelling costs and inconvenience in terms of commuting to work, and increased costs in accommodation. These grievances were given frequent and vigorous airing by some of the former Cato Manor residents, by the ANC and in various sections of the press.³⁶

Attention will now be given to the social, economic and political changes that occurred as a result of the formation of KwaMashu and the imposition of municipal, governmental and, finally, 'homeland' control of the township. Building primarily on oral sources it is hoped that the processes of change can be fleshed out from the bare facts of township life.³⁷

Probably one of the most fundamental changes in the lives of most of the KwaMashu residents was that they were subject to a barrage of rules and regulations that controlled their everyday activities. Rents had to be regularly paid, permission had to be gained to purchase, build or rent a house, licenses had to be obtained for trading, and permits to run businesses. Bozzoli has observed the fact that

“townships are not **governed** — they are administered”.³⁸ In other words the administering body is **not** answerable to those it administers. Thus the residents found KwaMashu very different from the informal and unstructured existence of Cato Manor.

In addition the neighbourliness and familiarity of life in Cato Manor was replaced with alienation and unfriendliness. The networks of informal relationships that had developed in Cato Manor were virtually broken down overnight. For example the kind of intimacy that grew up through the custom of warning people about the approach of the police (by banging on shack walls or by warning calls) was destroyed.³⁹ The colourful names given to districts in Cato Manor (Raincoat, Fairbreeze, Two Sticks, Dabulamanzi) were replaced with sections A–F. However the residents were quick to give some of the areas in KwaMashu their own names. A story goes that one man, on returning to KwaMashu for the first time after being removed from Cato Manor, was unable to find his house in the dark on account of the uniformity of the houses in the section. On entering a house he presumed to be his own, he was confronted by an angry woman who attacked him. This part of E section was called **Kwamfazi ushayi indoda** (woman beats the man) from this time onwards. The other part of E section was notorious for robbers and murderers who attacked innocent people on their return from work. This was given the name **Kwavezunyawo** “the place where feet (of the dead) stick out”.⁴⁰

The institutions that allowed for the creation of an official class in KwaMashu were first established in 1961 in the form of a Residents Committee. In the mid-sixties this Committee was elevated to the status of a Council and was given a measure of control over the allocation of permits and licenses and the siting of shops, schools and social amenities. The handing over of administration to KwaZulu in 1976/77 meant that new administrative posts were created and as local Councils have assumed more control over amenities, housing and personnel so they are increasingly becoming areas of competition between groups seeking to gain power and jurisdiction in the township.⁴¹ Thus Inkatha backed officials fiercely contested the first elections to the Council, ousting the ‘old Guard’ who had held office from the late sixties.

In addition, the state created links with the ‘outside’ through social, cultural and economic bodies or organisations, such as Chambers of Commerce, Church groups, the Joint Council Organisation and Welfare Societies. The municipal Bantu Administration Department went to great lengths to provide sites for shops, banks, building societies, markets, theatres, professional offices, Churches (over 70) and halls for the Y.M.C.A. and Boy Scouts.⁴²

In this way the foundations were laid for the planned growth of a black bourgeoisie in KwaMashu — the kind of foundations which were non-existent at Cato Manor. And indeed many residents were quick to seize the opportunity to give expression to aspirations that had been largely denied to them in Cato Manor — an ‘illegal’ settlement. Charles Mbutho provides a typical example of such a person. The son of an American mission Board convert, Mbutho first came to Durban in 1936 to complete his school education at the Taylor Street Continuation school. Although qualifying later as a teacher Mbutho chose to expand a clothes-washing business which he had begun while a scholar and living at the Somtseu Road location. In 1954, somewhat against his wishes, he moved into the Dabulamanzi quarter at Cato Manor.

Although engaged in an informal sector activity, like many others at Cato Manor, Mbutho objected to being regarded as a typical Cato Manor resident. He complained that the “Police did not behave . . . they would surround any group of people . . . everybody had to climb in the van and be sorted out at the police station. The following day you’d be before the magistrate, the cases were tried summarily in bulk, people came in groups of ten. You’re told, “You’ve been drinking **shimiyane** and you’re charged for drinking, ‘£1 fine’. “If you protested and said ‘Your worship, I’m from church, here is my Bible, ‘£2’, Please Sir! ‘£3’; until you shut up.”⁴³

Mbutho obviously saw his chance for social and economic elevation in collaboration with white state officials. He made contact with Bourquin and in a series of clandestine meetings advised him in the removal of the notorious ‘Ecabazini’ district of Cato Manor by suggesting that Bourquin print his name on removal notices and that removals be conducted by Corporation officials only; the police taking a back seat.

Although he complained to Colonel R.D. Jenkins, the Port Natal Deputy Commissioner of Police about the treatment meted out by some policemen to the residents of KwaMashu he took care to stress that the “conservative self-respecting type of African (like himself) in all walks of life who have not decided on any positive struggle for the African cause . . . want to work within and along the so-called right channels.”⁴⁴

Mbutho went to KwaMashu voluntarily. The move was “personally to my advantage . . . the life in Cato Manor to me it was a bore. I was not selling liquor, not selling daggá, or enjoying drinking. I had no business there, I had to stay there because there was nowhere else”.⁴⁵ Certainly he profited from the move. In 1962 he was elected to the municipally-created Residents’ Committee and he served on the Council from 1968–79 (holding the position of vice-chairman for two terms of office) before being ousted by an Inkatha-backed candidate in 1979.⁴⁶ Economically too Charles Mbutho profited. While he continued to teach he also continued his laundry business in KwaMashu. “Luckily”, he was able to secure the custom of the ‘single’ man’s hostel in the township which allowed him and his family to build up quite a thriving business.

Given the degree of organised political opposition to the Cato Manor removals and the politicised climate in which KwaMashu was created it is not surprising that Mbutho’s activities did not go unchallenged. In 1962 his house was fire-bombed, together with two other members of the Residents Committee. Mbutho gave evidence in the Supreme Court in Pietermaritzburg some four months later when these men had been caught and brought to trial. They were all ANC supporters.⁴⁷

Mbutho’s case is cited as a good example of those who stood to gain from ‘legitimation’. A look at the records reveals numerous instances of former Cato Manor residents applying for licenses as shop-keepers, undertakers, tradesmen or seeking sites for cinemas, professional offices, service stations and restaurants. In some cases the people who established themselves in businesses in KwaMashu were known to have been ‘illegal’ traders at Cato Manor.⁴⁸

For many others however the removal was disastrous. SJ Shange, a herbalist who had been a Cato Manor resident for 28 years, reported that he lost nearly all his customers when he was obliged to open up his practice in KwaMashu. His former customers were so scattered around the new township that they were unable to travel the long distance

to his shop. In addition he received no compensation for the R1 000 he had invested in a large 12 – room shack in Cato Manor.⁴⁹ Political activists among the Cato Manor ‘traders’, particularly those who enlisted the legal support of Roly Arenstein, the banned Durban lawyer, were apparently unable to gain official sanction for the resumption of their business in KwaMashu.⁵⁰ The brewers and shack landlords of Cato Manor lost their sources of livelihood altogether. The extent of their losses, both actual and potential, is reflected in the profits of the municipal beer halls, what one commentator has termed the “control institution of the native location”.⁵¹ In 1948–49 the corporation beerhalls sold 2,36 million gallons of beer in the Durban district, in 1964–65 11,4 million gallons and in 1971 28,76 million gallons (realising a net profit of R1 270 000).⁵² By appropriating the source of their income the state was able to cut off the brewers from their means of reproduction as a class. As a result of these financial deprivations and the economic demands of the state, in the form of rents and payments for services, many people in KwaMashu were forced to find work in Durban’s growing industrial sector. Thus, while the municipality encouraged the growth of a powerful but **controllable** group of economically active blacks in KwaMashu, and the consequent growth of a “traditional” petty bourgeoisie (traders and shopkeepers) and a “new” petty-bourgeoisie (an official elite),⁵³ the imposition of official control also effectively forced many more thousands into the labour force. Durban’s industrial bosses in fact anticipated this, thus their co-operation with the DCC in the establishment of KwaMashu (see Section A) and their concern over the provision of an adequate transport system to move workers in and out of Durban. The effect of administration over KwaMashu township was thus to split the class unity that existed in the uncontrolled Cato Manor settlement where the common states of illegality had helped to preserve class unity.

It seems therefore that the class structure of KwaMashu has changed fairly dramatically since its foundation. As I have indicated a black bourgeoisie was encouraged to develop in the township and it did develop. On the other hand the working class nature of KwaMashu has become increasingly apparent. In this respect it stands in some contrast to other urban locations in Durban like Umlazi and Clermont where Africans have had title to land and where a semi-rural elite has developed from the 1920’s and 1930’s. According to M.P. Gwala, the writer from Mpumalanga, most of the ‘professionals’ – social workers, academics, Radio Bantu announcers and teachers – have gravitated to Umlazi in the 1960’s and 1970’s. Most of these people are apparently “out-of-towners” in the first instance and have chosen to live in Umlazi rather than KwaMashu.⁵⁴ Nor have Umlazi or Clermont developed in the same intense political environment of KwaMashu.

It is also important to note that opposition in KwaMashu has not been confined to the period of the Cato Manor removals and the school boycotts of 1980. The ANC opposed the state-created organs such as the Residents’ Committee in the early and mid-1960’s claiming that they did not represent the views of the majority of the inhabitants of the township. It was this opposition that was expressed in the fire-bombing of Mbutho’s house in 1962. During the Soweto uprising in 1976 Gwala observed that there “was a tendency for the youth in KwaMashu to run out of the country” (for military training). Gwala went on to claim that “KwaMashu is more advanced in the sense that people are more aware of things . . . In the case of

Soweto in 1976 it became more painful to KwaMashu than for Umlazi.”⁵⁵

It is possible too that a political consciousness has been perpetuated in KwaMashu by rituals such as the annual celebration when the graves of those who died resisting removals at Cato Manor are visited and animals slaughtered in their remembrance.⁵⁶ Political resistance in KwaMashu seems therefore to be related to the intense political activity which preceded the Cato Manor removals (and after) and to the predominantly working class nature of the township. There often has been a tendency to regard urban blacks as a homogeneous group. It is true that they share common political features and have common experiences of segregated township life. However I have tried to indicate in this article on KwaMashu’s history how differences evolve both in class formation within a township and between urban areas with different historical origins. In the particular case of the schools boycott this difference helps to explain why the residents of KwaMashu and not Umlazi defied not only the white authorities but also the full weight of the Inkatha movement. If any organised opposition arises to Inkatha, and the signs are certainly positive, then it is to be expected that the residents of KwaMashu will be in the forefront of this opposition.□

FOOTNOTES

1. The fullest and most lucid account of the boycott in Natal is in *Work in Progress* no. 15 (1980).
2. See *Sunday Post*, 26 October 1980.
3. G. Maasdorp and H. Humphreys (eds) *From Shantytown to Township* (Durban, 1975) C.L.I.
4. Municipal Bantu Administration (BAD) files, S.O. Bourquin to Town Clerk, 14 February 1961.
5. Durban City Council, ‘Report of Judicial Commission on Native Affairs in Durban’, p. 42, submitted by Justice F.N. Broome, January 1948.
6. *Ibid* pp. 39–40
7. L.K. Ladlau, ‘The Cato Manor Riots 1959–60 (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Natal, (1975), p. 12.
8. D. Welsh, ‘The growth of towns; in Wilson and Thompson (eds) *Oxford History of S.A.* vol. II, p. 191.
9. BAD Files H2/R2, pt I, City Water Engineer to Town Clerk Durban, 8 October 1952, quoting Council report of July 1948.
10. The ‘sanitation syndrome’ in the creation of urban townships in S.A. has been noted by Swanson, See M.W. Swanson. “The Durban system”, roots of urban apartheid in colonial Natal, *African Studies*, 35 (1976).
11. BAD Files, Confidential memo. by Town Clerk, 21 September 1953. This was alleged to prevent exploitation by Indian traders of the African population.
12. See BAD Files H2/R2 part II.
13. BAD Files, Confidential letter from Town Clerk to Sec. of Native Affairs, 5 December 1955. Memo by City Treasurer, 6 June 1956.
14. *Ibid*.
15. *Natal Mercury*, 13 November 1956.
16. See *Daily News*, 11 September 1956.
17. BAD Files, memo. on ‘Miscellaneous matters for consideration’, by Town Clerk, 15 February 1957.
18. BAD Files, A.W.G. Champion to Town Clerk, 20 March 1957.
19. S.O. Bourquin retired as Head of the Port Natal Bantu Affairs Administration Board in 1979. In many respects his views differ from the usual incumbents of such posts. His recollections of the Cato Manor removal are recorded on tape in the Killie Campbell Library.
20. BAD Files, Notes of meeting of Inter-departmental sub-committee for KwaMashu, 26 February 1957.

FOOTNOTES CONTINUED:

21. Ibid. Possibly interests in construction consortiums stood to lose business if the residents of KwaMashu had built their own houses.
22. BAD Files, no. 5, Chief Native Affairs Commissioner, Pmb., to Town Clerk, Durban, 17 July 1957.
23. Africans were allowed to buy their own houses in KwaMashu and by 1969 nearly 6 000 had. They were not permitted to buy land in freehold.
24. BAD Files, no. 5, Bourquin to Natal Chamber of Industries, 11 November 1957.
25. Quoted in *Natal Mercury*, 13 March 1958.
26. G.M. Gerhard, *Black Power in South Africa* (Berkeley 1978) pp. 167–172.
27. BAD files, no. 7, Town Clerk to Secretary Group Areas Board, 10 September 1980.
28. See Ladlau, 'Cato Manor riots', Ch. 3; KCAV, Interview with S. Bourquin, 18/10/79.
29. L. Kuper, 'African Nationalism in South Africa', *OHSA*, vol. II, pp. 464–65.
30. Ladlau; Cato Manor Riots, p. 126.
31. Ibid, p. 127.
32. *Race Relation Survey*, SAIR, 1962, p. 130.
33. BAD Files, Department of Bantu Administration to Town Clerk, 7 August 1962.
34. See BAD Files, memo. by Bourquin, 21 April 1961; Maasdorp and Humphrey (eds). *Shantytown to Township*, pp. 61–63.
35. KCAV 175, Interview with S. Bourquin, 4 September 1979.
36. Ladlau; 'Cato Manor Riots', pp. 140–150.
37. These facts are to be found in Maasdorp and Humphreys (eds.), *Shantytown to Township* and in Moller, Schlemmer, Kuzwayo and Mbana, *A Black Township in Durban: A Study of Needs and Problems* (CASS, Durban 1978).
38. B. Bozzoli (ed.), *Labour, Townships and Protest, Studies in the Social History of the Witwatersrand* (Johannesburg 1978) p. 8.
39. KCAV 145, interview with Mrs A. Muguni, 19 July 1979.
40. KCAV 142, interview with C.C. Majola, 20 June 1979,
41. KCAV 137, interview with C.C.L. Mtolo, 12 June 1979, and unrecorded interview with "Mayor of Umlazi", 17 August 1979. More research is needed to clarify the interests of factions standing for election. The election of three independent candidates in KawMakutha (Amanzimtoti) in 1979 is seen by some as a defeat for Inkatha, see KCAV 162, interview with M.P. Gwala, 28 August 1979.
42. See BAD Files, Bourquin to City Engineer, 13 February 1958.
43. KCAV 168, interview with C. Mbutho, 25 October 1979.
44. C. Mbutho Papers K.C.A.L., Mbutho to Col. R. Jenkins, 20 April 1960.
45. KCAV 168, interview with C. Mbutho, 25 October 1979.
46. Mbutho has now clearly seen Inkatha as a respectable organisation. He is a paid-up member and in his capacity as Chairman of a local High School has given support to the introduction of Inkatha as a school subject.
47. KCAV 168.
48. The Mnguni's provide a good example. See KCAV 172.
49. KCAV 179, interview with S.J. Shange, 24 July 1979.
50. KCAV 151, interview with J. Moeli, 3 April 1979.
51. J. Rex, "The Compound, the Reserve and the Urban location; the Essential Institutions of Southern African Labour Exploitation", *S.A. Labour Bulletin* No. 4, 1974.
52. Maasdorp and Humphreys, *Shantytown to Township*, p. 85.
53. K. Sole makes this distinction in "Class, continuity and change in black South African writing", p. 145 in Bozzoli (ed) *Labour, Township, Protest*.
54. Interview with M.P. Gwala KCAV 162, 28 August 1979.
55. KCAV 162, interview with M.P. Gwala, 28 August 1979. This was confirmed by J. Moeli, whose own son fled the country in 1976.
56. KCAV 142, interview with C. Mbutho, 20 June 1979.

ORGANISED BLACK POLITICAL RESISTANCE, 1912 – 1950

First Part of a talk to NUSAS (1912–1930)

By Tom Lodge

In this talk I am going to be concerned with the evolution and development of organised black political resistance in the period 1912 to 1950. The period itself spans the years following the foundation of the South African Native National Congress in 1912 (the organisation which from the 1920s has been known as the African National Congress) to the opening of the decade of mass political organisation in 1950. I will principally be concerned with the progress of two organisations – the African National Congress and the Communist Party of South Africa – and the relationship which developed between them. I think it is important at this juncture to make the point that in restricting my scope to political organisations I am dealing with only one dimension of African protest and resistance to authority in these years, though an important one. Both the African National Congress and the Communist Party tended to be

urban-oriented organisations though the ANC did try and extend its influence in the countryside by attempting to gain the support and loyalty of the chieftaincy. I do not have the time here to discuss the various instances of rural protest and rebellion that occurred in this period though it must be emphasized that they form an essential backdrop to the militancy of the 1950s¹. Another category of protest that we shall rather neglect is the more informal manifestations of resistance that took place – the more or less spontaneous riots, or, to use the official jargon, disturbances, that spatter the inter-war history of virtually all South Africa's major towns. These were usually sparked off by an immediate grievance – price rises, shortages, municipal brewing monopolies, police provocation, pass raids, and so on – but reflected a generalised pattern of worry, tension, and discontent. Of course the concerns of

the organisations I am going to look at would in part be stimulated by this general matrix of grievances, but their leaders often had special preoccupations of their own. The African National Congress in particular, in these years was not a popular movement and only intermittently took up popular issues. By focussing on organisations my approach inevitably is going to be an élitist one and the impression of resistance partial and incomplete.

One more point before I begin. 1949, the year Congress embraced a 'Programme of Action' which involved tactics of boycotts, strikes and civil disobedience towards a vaguely defined goal of 'self determination, freedom from white domination and political independence'¹, is often seen as a moment of truth, when the eyes of African leadership were finally opened to the political realities surrounding them. Much of the political activity preceding the 1950s is viewed as futile – flowing from false premises and resulting in total failure.

One of my purposes tonight will be to demonstrate that this kind of evaluation does not help us in understanding African politics during this period; that politicians were far from naive and by no means totally unsuccessful. However what I want to emphasize now is that while it is possible to detect how political behaviour can be related to certain class interests it would be quite wrong to ascribe to the leaders purely cynical or selfish intentions. What they did or did not do was usually done (or not done) in the sincere belief that it was in the general interest. Though an individual's beliefs and actions would to an extent be determined by those of the class or social group of which he was a member they would be informed by a variety of human feelings including altruism, compassion and charity. A totally unsympathetic interpretation of the motives of the people I am going to discuss would present as much of a falsification as a completely idealised one.

On January 8th 1912 there assembled in Bloemfontein several hundred of South Africa's most prominent black citizens: professional men, chieftains, ministers, teachers, clerks, interpreters, landholders, businessmen, estate agents, building contractors and labour agents. These men, after a lusty rendering of Tiyo Soga's Xhosa hymn 'Fulfil thy promise, God of truth' unanimously resolved to form the South African Native National Congress. Though not the first African political association in South Africa, its formation did mark a clear break with the past. Previously the focus of African politics had centred on electoral activity in the Cape Province where blacks with the required property and educational qualifications could vote and stand for office. Their voice in Cape politics was relatively important: at the turn of the century they constituted nearly half the electorate in five constituencies and some men believed that the most effective way of accelerating African political advancement was to use the black vote to influence the election of men who would be sympathetic to African aspirations. The years following the Peace of Vereeniging witnessed the declining force of this argument. The founding of the SANNC marked the ascendancy in middle-class African circles of the contention that African interests could best be promoted not through sympathetic intermediaries but rather by action by blacks themselves.

There were several reasons for this change in opinion. Among some members of the African middle classes hopes initially raised by the defeat of the Republics in the Anglo-Boer War had been swiftly disappointed. Despite African expressions of Imperial loyalty intermingled with politely phrased complaints at the prevailing discrimination against

men of 'training, character and ability'³ the British Government made it quite clear that its paramount concern was white unity in South Africa. African hopes that the Cape Franchise arrangements would be extended to the defeated Republics were quickly disillusioned, and preparations for the Act of Union indicated that existing rights would not be respected in future. The Act not only removed the theoretical right of enfranchised blacks to take up seats in Parliament (which had existed in the Cape Province) but also made provision for the removal of the franchise from African voters through a two-thirds majority vote of both houses in joint session. Nor, by 1912, was African concern limited to constitutional issues. The first post-Union administration, responding to the mining industry's labour demands and the disquiet of white farmers suffering from competition from African agriculturists, moved quickly to safeguard its position with these groups. Breaking contract was made a criminal offence with the Native Labour Regulation Act, job reservation entrenched in the Mines and Works Act, and in 1911 the Land Bill was drafted which effectively limited African landownership to under eight-per-cent of the area of the country, dispossessing many landowners in doing so, as well as outlawing leasing or tenant farmer relationships between blacks and whites. Obviously there was more at stake here than the interests of that small group who initially through education at mission institutions had come to form an identifiable petty-bourgeoisie. The Land Act and complementary labour legislation were the legislative tools employed to destroy a whole class of peasant producers and force them into new and arduous social relationships – as farm workers, as mine labour, and later in the least skilled and most badly paid positions in urban industrial, municipal and domestic employment. And members of the group of men assembled at Bloemfontein in 1912 would have been well aware of the wider dimensions of the social tragedy that was being enacted around them. But they had a particular concern, the fear of any petty bourgeoisie at a time of crisis, of being thrust back into the ranks of the urban and rural poor. It was a fear which was eloquently expressed by one John Makue in his testimony to the South African Native Laws Commission in 1903:

... Our earning power is very small. I think when we are forced to work there ought to be big pay. There is no decent black man that can manage to exist on £8 a month, pay all the taxes, and the upkeep of his house in the proper manner – I mean a civilised native. I do not mean the raw man who comes from the kraals . . . now we are all blacks and measured with the same measure as the man who cannot look after himself and who is not in the same position as I am . . .⁴

The same feeling underlay an early Congress Civil Disobedience campaign in Pretoria to gain for African railway passengers access to First Class carriages.⁵ Their exclusion from such facilities was sharply resented by African leaders. As Professor Jabavu pointed out at a Natal Mission Conference in 1920

... (Railway) waiting rooms are made to accommodate the rawest blanketed heathen; and the more decent native has either to use them and annex vermin or to do without shelter imbibing wintry weather⁶.

First and foremost the SANNC was to represent the concerns and anxieties of the small professional middle class which founded it. Its first President was John Dube, headmaster of the Ohlange Institute in Natal, its secretary Solomon Plaatje, one-time interpreter and editor of a Kimberley newspaper, and its treasurer Pixley Ka Izaka Seme, one of the four London trained lawyers who convened the

founding conference. These were men who had retained close ties with the chieftaincy, while anxious for the general advancement and 'upliftment of the race' (SANNK constitution)⁷, they were also conservatives, concerned with protecting a moral and social order that they correctly perceived to be under attack. Congress was seen as, firstly a national forum to discuss the issues which affected 'the dark races of the subcontinent'⁸ and secondly as an organised pressure group which would agitate for changes through 'peaceful propaganda'⁹, the election to legislative bodies of Congress sympathisers, through protests and enquiries, and finally, 'passive action or continued movement'¹⁰ – a clear reference to the tactics which were being employed by Gandhi and his followers in the South African Indian community.

However in the first six years of its existence Congress contented itself with less dramatic tactics. African leaders were eager to demonstrate their loyalty for the duration of the First World War. The leadership was in the hands of Cape-educated and influenced men (consistently tending to take a less confrontationist line than their Transvaal colleagues). John Dube, in accepting the Presidency announced his intention to place 'hopeful reliance in the sense of common justice and love of freedom so innate in the British character'¹¹. Two delegations were sent to Britain in 1914 and 1918 to request Imperial intervention in South Africa and Sol Plaatje remained in Britain for much of the war writing his **Native Life in South Africa** and occasionally being received with some sympathy by Liberal politicians.

However, by 1918, there was a discernible shift in the apparent position of the Native Congress (which, from now on, to make things simpler, I'll call the ANC). Still a very small and weak organisation (not more than a couple of thousand subscribing members) nevertheless on the Rand Congress leaders were supporting striking municipal workers, by 1919 were involved in a militant anti-pass campaign, and in early 1920 some Congress organisers were addressing public meetings of mineworkers just before the great African mineworkers strike of that year.¹² Sol Plaatje attended the annual ANC conference in December 1918 and came away very disturbed. As he put it in a letter to De Beers in Kimberley:

... The ten Transvaal delegates came to the Congress with a concord and a determination that was perfectly astounding to our customary native demeanor at conferences. They spoke almost in unison, in short sentences, nearly all of which began and ended with the word 'strike'. It was not difficult to understand the source of their backing for they even preceded the Congress and endeavoured to poison the minds of delegates from other parts ...¹³

What had happened? First of all, wartime industrialisation had expanded the black urban population and industrial labour force, especially in the Transvaal. With black wages pegged at 1914 levels, sharp inflation, and municipal reluctance to do anything towards providing adequate services and housing for this population, there had been a dramatic deterioration in standards of living – among both black workers and members of the lower strata of the petty-bourgeoisie – clerical workers, sales assistants and the like as well as small traders. With the expansion of the industrial proletariat (easier to organise within than in the mining sector) and the example of immediate post-war white labour unrest black workers were becoming increasingly class-conscious. The less affluent members of the black petty-bourgeoisie shared many of the experiences of black workers: their income hardly differed, their

wives had to work in the informal sector, they lived in the same miserable urban slums¹⁴. At the political level this situation was reflected in the developing interest taken in blacks by independent white socialist groups, still yet to coalesce into the Communist Party and the success of these in attracting some black support, especially the syndicalist Industrial Workers of Africa, the trades union movement started by the International Socialist League¹⁵. It was also expressed politically in the leadership change within Congress – in 1917 the executive was taken over by Transvaal men, under the Presidency of the Pretoria Estate Agent S.M. Maghatho. Hardly radical, nevertheless these men were less immune to the stresses provoked and stimulated by wartime industrial and social developments than their colleagues from the Cape. And in 1918, this leadership, prompted from below, and especially from ANC rank and file drawn principally from the most vulnerable and economically precarious layers of the lower middle classes, was willing to articulate such demands as the one shilling a day increase which accompanied the strikes by sanitation workers and others in 1918¹⁶. And when, in the following years, the emphasis switched to passes rather than wages *per se*, it was partly because the experience with strikes had demonstrated how important the whole system of labour allocation and control, of which passes were such an indispensable part, was in keeping wages down.

Nevertheless, though the apparent radicalism of Congress in the immediate post First World War period reflected common interests between working class and petty-bourgeois blacks, Congress hardly represented class alliance. As I have mentioned already, there was considerable unease at the direction Congress appeared to be taking in the Transvaal. Sol Plaatje's misgivings were also shared by Professor D.D.T. Jabavu: 'Bolshevism and its nihilistic doctrines (were) enlisting many natives up country. Socialism of the worst calibre (was) claiming our people'¹⁷. Jabavu and Plaatje were members of a group who had for years considered themselves as authentic and representative spokesmen for the African community: now, suddenly their role was being questioned. More conservative ANC leaders were being publicly denounced and shouted down at meetings when they counselled caution and moderation. These people represented an influential voice in Congress which would help to guide it towards different paths in the oncoming decade. But by themselves they could not have accomplished the deradicalisation of Congress. There were other, more powerful forces at work. From 1920 onwards, until the accession of the Pact government in 1924, the authorities produced a series of measures which though usually incorporating features that offended the integrationist and meritocratic principles of leading Congressmen, nevertheless mollified some of the immediate grievances of petty-bourgeois Africans and detached them from the movement set off by the popular classes. The 1920 Native Housing Act was a measure of this nature. So too was the provision of first class black railway accommodation. In 1923 the Native Urban Areas Act provided for housing programmes executed by municipalities, leasehold in townships and afforded some trading opportunities within the new townships for aspirant African businessmen. There were plenty of objections to the new arrangements: particularly resented were the municipal brewing monopolies enshrined in the new act, but nevertheless they went some way towards the Congress demand for 'some differentiation of treatment ... between those who were educated and civilised and those who had yet to reach that stage'¹⁸. A final motive for

caution on the part of African leadership, was that the pass protests of 1919 brought in a new element — the urban unemployed, more volatile, more violent and much less easy to organise than members of the working class. From 1920, for a few years Congress leadership was to be diverted into safer channels — into the Joint Council movement which provided a medium of consultation between black and white liberals, and the advisory Governor General's conferences, instituted that year in which a select group could advance grievances and discuss policy.

However, from 1922, two other organisations had arrived to complicate the African political scene. These were the Industrial Commercial Workers Union of Africa, led by Clements Kadalie, and the Communist Party of South Africa. As regards The ICU, I will only discuss it briefly here, only in so much as it affected black political organisation and in particular the ANC. The first effect was a negative one. The ICU, while a worker's organisation tended to function as a mass based political party, its charismatic leadership voicing a wide range of popular grievances. Incapable of organising systematically on an industrial base it nevertheless attracted and diverted away from Congress massive support — indicative of considerable receptiveness among the urban and rural poor (especially among farm workers) to political ideas. So, first of all, the ICU contributed to the dwindling popular influence of an increasingly elitist Congress in the 1920s. The second effect was more positive: ICU spokesmen infused into the courtly and often pompous discourse of African politicians a fierce anger and apocalyptic imagery. Listen, for example to James Thaele, later a leader of the ANC in the Western Cape, writing in *The Workers Herald*, in 1923:

We are fed up with the white man's camouflage, his hypocrisy, his policy of pinpricks in the land of our forefathers. I am appealing to the racial consciousness of the radical aboriginal to use all means to rouse the African race to wake from their long sleep of many a decade . . . when those in authority become so unreasonably notorious . . . disregard that authority, be blind and damn the consequences . . .¹⁹

Kadalie himself in 1926:

We natives . . . have always given the game away . . . we are dealing with rascals, the Europeans are rascals . . . There is no native problem, but a European problem of weakness, greed and robbery'.

Such sentiments were beginning to find a certain resonance among some sections of Congress, increasingly disenchanted with negotiation and moderation in the face of an increasingly repressive administration. By 1926 there was additional reason for bitterness. Two years earlier a political re-alignment had taken place in white politics, and with the accession of the Labour/Nationalist pact regime of Hertzog an administration more closely tied to white rural and labour aristocracy interests had come to power. It was less inclined towards co-optive measures than its predecessor and less inhibited with regard to embracing the full political and economic implications of segregation. In 1926 two bills, one removing from Africans the common roll vote in the Cape and the other expanding on the provisions of the 1913 Land Act were tabled. Though they were not passed for another decade the implication for African political leadership was clear: existing rights and privileges were under constant threat. To underline the situation still further, in 1927 the Governor General was given the right to legislate in African Affairs by proclamation.

But before looking at how Congress's leadership was behaving in the late 1920s it is also necessary to under-

stand something of another radicalising stimulus — that is, the Communist Party of South Africa. The Communist Party had been founded in 1921 after a series of manoeuvres between various tiny left wing groups principally on the Rand and in Cape Town²¹. When the Labour Party had a split on the issue of whether to support the First World War those who had contended that it was an anti-working class imperialist struggle had broken away to form the International Socialist League. This, with various other radical marxist and Zionist organisations, many of them informed by the experiences of Eastern European immigrants of elements of the European revolutionary tradition, were eventually to fuse together as the result of the stimuli of the Russian Revolution and the subsequent formation of the Communist International into the Communist Party of South Africa. The CPSA was not a large organisation but it was well organised — its centralised structure patterned on a Leninist model. Some of its members had been involved in earlier syndicalist attempts to organise black workers and so though it did not apparently have any blacks in its original membership it might have had some informal following amongst black workers. However the CPSA was not a syndicalist organisation — it was a political party, prepared because conditions were not yet ripe for revolution in South Africa, to work within and take advantage of existing political institutions. This was to cause some internal dissent — as well as later on criticism from other left wing parties. Though it could, on occasion be accused of opportunistic expediency over the race issue, in general the CPSA adhered to a doctrine that working class unity transcended racial divisions. White working class consciousness as it developed would, its leadership assumed, ultimately eschew racialism — in the short term therefore Communists were prepared to join forces with white labour on certain issues: for example in 1922 Communists were active in the Rand Mineworkers Revolt despite the explicit racialism of its leaders. Similarly it supported the Nationalist-Labour alliance in the 1924 election — but this was to lead to reevaluation: the racist overtones of the campaign led the CPSA at its annual conference to conclude that 'our main revolutionary task is among the natives'²². The initiative for this switch in policy came from Cape Town where the local branch had a substantial coloured membership, and where the ICU had originated in a dockworkers strike.

The ICU, gathering strength in the mid-twenties, was the obvious target for party workers — it had a massive working class membership, and at that stage explicitly socialist goals. Communists joined the ICU and supported it by leaving the field open for ICU men to organise industrially. However by 1927 there were considerable tensions between the Communists and the ICU arising from both tactical and ideological differences. First of all the ICU was not functioning as a trade union organisation as the Communists understood the concept — its membership was scattered and diffuse and tended to be concentrated among farm workers rather than the industrial proletariat. Communists within the ICU tried to reorganise the movement into industrial branches based on individual concerns and this was sharply resented. Secondly the leadership tended to view achievement in petty bourgeois terms — status, wealth and individual power, and hence could with some justification be accused of using the organisation to enrich themselves. Kadalie viewed the struggle as primarily a political one and because of this was to seek institutional respectability for his movement including international affiliations with reformist European labour organisations. Kadalie principally viewed the conflict as a national/colonial question and

could not share the Communist vision of a class struggle complicated only by 'false consciousness'. These tensions eventually resulted in the expulsion of Communists and a sharp turn to the right in the ICU as it withered and decayed^{2,3}. Rejected by the ICU, Communists began to establish their own unions and placed fresh emphasis on African recruitment — by 1928 three members of the Central Committee were black as was most of the Party's 1 750 members. Concurrent with this emphasis on African mobilisation was a re-examination of policy towards the African National Congress hitherto regarded as a purely reactionary movement^{2,4}.

If you remember, ANC leaders by 1927 were increasingly alienated and disillusioned with the politics of diplomatic (and sometimes downright sycophantic) persuasion. Their susceptibility to more radical strategy was signified in an abortive scheme in 1926 for joint ICU/ANC mass demonstrations in protest against the proposed Native Legislation. In 1927 with the election of Josiah Gumede to the presidency the Congress leadership announced its intention to embark on a course of mass organisation involving the building up of branch memberships. The Western Cape was already the scene of an energetic recruitment campaign among farm-workers by two Communists working within Congress, Ndobe and Tonjeni. Here, in contrast to the rest of the country wage labour as opposed to labour tenancy predominated on farms^{2,5}. Significantly, the initiative within the CPSA to work with black organisations had sprung from the Western Cape.

Josiah Gumede had been influenced in the early twenties by the American negro doctrine of Garveyism — a separatist doctrine based on race pride and black exclusiveness with a millinarian ring to it. But Gumede, in 1927 President of the Natal wing of the ANC was receptive to other ideas as well: he accepted an invitation to attend a Communist sponsored Conference of Oppressed Nationalities and later toured the USSR returning to South Africa much impressed with what he had seen. At Brussels the Conference adopted a motion put forward by Gumede and his compatriot, James La Guma of the Cape branch of the CP, endorsing

'the right of self determination through the complete overthrow of capitalism and imperialist domination . . . the principle of Africa for the Africans'^{2,6}

Under pressure from its black and coloured members as well as instigation from the Communist International^{2,7} (itself inspired by Stalin's thoughts on the colonial question) the Communist Party in 1928 took an important step which laid the basis for any alliance with African nationalist organisations. This was the adoption of a vaguely worded slogan laying down as the goal for which party activists should work, 'an independent native republic as a stage towards a workers and peasants republic'. This formulation begged obvious questions which have never been satisfactorily answered but behind it lay an important recognition which when the 'native republic' slogan was shelved continued to inform party policy. This was that South Africa contained within it a colonial situation and socialism would be accomplished through two stages — first a nationalist democratic revolution involving many issues with which it would be easy to cooperate with reformist African petty bourgeois organisations and only then a socialist revolution.

The native republic slogan came at an opportune moment. First of all, it coincided with and complemented the impact of Garveyism on the African National Congress — both Gumede and James Thaele, President of the Western

Cape, were influenced by Marcus Garvey's doctrines. The millinarian undertones of Garveyism would have reverberated strongly in rural parts of the Cape Province where there was considerable unrest among farm workers and where the ANC had succeeded in building up country branches. Second, 1929 was a year of intensification of coercive measures against Africans. A bitter election was fought that year on native policy as the result of the Pact government's inability to gain the required two-thirds majority to alter the franchise arrangements. The election was accompanied by a vigorous tightening of pass laws and mass arrests; in November 700 armed policemen took part in a tax collection raid on a Durban location. In response to this Communists established a 'League of African Rights' to campaign on basic freedoms including freedom of speech, education, the vote and abolition of pass laws. Gumede supported the League on behalf of the ANC and was elected its President. However by late 1929 Gumede was almost totally isolated from his executive — the ANC failed to support the League's proposed mass demonstrations against the pass laws.

In April 1930, after Gumede had addressed the ANC in conference on the need to present a massive challenge on the basis of the Native Republic slogan while the capitalist world found itself in crisis, he was voted out of the Presidency. In his place was elected Pixley ka Izaka Seme and with his ascendancy the ANC shifted several degrees rightwards into almost total moribundancy. Meanwhile the Communist International, working on the assumption that 1930 found the capitalist world in a profound crisis, called for the withdrawal of the CPSA from any association with reformist organisations. The League of African Rights collapsed. The Communists, despite internal misgivings as to whether a revolutionary situation prevailed in South Africa, called for a general strike and embarked on a confrontationist strategy which, though heroic, was to leave the Party decimated (partly because of internal purges) and with its trade union organisation almost totally destroyed. The ANC and ICU's refusal to support the pass burning demonstrations organised by Communists in November 1930 in Johannesburg, Potchefstroom, Pretoria and Durban (where one activist was shot by the police) created a legacy of bitterness between revolutionaries and nationalists. Within the Western Cape, where the ANC had been most radicalised (and closest to the Communists), Congress split as dissidents increasingly distressed by the rightwing swing by Thaele set up their own short-lived Independent ANC.

NB. The second part of this talk will be printed in the May issue.

FOOTNOTES

1. See for examples, Hirson B, 'Rural Revolt in South Africa' in London University, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, *Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa*, Volume 8.
2. Carter, G. and Karis, T., *From Protest to Challenge*, Volume II, Stamford: Hoover, 1973, p. 338.
3. Carter, G. and Karis, T., *From Protest to Challenge*, Volume I, Stamford: Hoover, 1971, p. 20.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Author's interview with Mr W.S. Letlalo, Soweto, 1979.
6. Carter, G. and Karis, T., *op cit*, p. 118.
7. *Ibid*, p. 78.
8. *Ibid*, p. 72.

FOOTNOTES Continued:

9. *Ibid.*
10. Carter, G. and Karis, T., *op cit*, p. 78.
11. Walshe, P., *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, London: Hurst, 1970, p. 38.
12. Author's interview with Mr W.S. Letlalo, Soweto, 1980.
13. Willan, B., 'From Tram Shed to Assembly Hall' in London University, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, *Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa*, Vol. 8, p. 8.
14. Bonner, P.L., 'The Transvaal Native Congress, 1917 — 1920' University of the Witwatersrand African Studies Institute seminar paper, 1980, pp. 8 — 10.
15. Johnston, F.A., 'The IWA on the Rand' in Bozzoli, B. (Ed), *Labour, Townships and Protest*, Johannesburg: Ravan, 1979.
16. See Bonner, *op cit* and also Bonner, P.O., 'The 1920 Black Mineworkers' Strike' in Bozzoli, *op cit*.
17. Carter, G and Karis T., *op cit*, p. 124.
18. See Bonner, P.L., 'The Transvaal Native Congress', p. 6.
19. Carter, G. and Karis, T., *op cit*, p. 215.
20. *Ibid*, pp. 300 — 301.
21. These are described in Johns, S. 'The Birth of the CPSA' in *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 9, no. 3, 1976.
22. Legassick, M., 'Class and Nationalism in South African Protest', unpublished seminar paper, p. 1.
23. A sensitive essay on the decline of the ICU is Bonner, P.L.'s 'The Decline and Fall of the ICU — a Case of Self-Destruction' in Webster, E. (Ed), *Essays in Southern African Labour History*, Johannesburg: Ravan, 1978. Otherwise the standard work is Wickens, P.L., *The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1978.
24. Material on the Communist Party during this phase of its development is drawn mainly from Legassick, *op cit*, and Simons, H.J. & R.E., *Class and Colour in South Africa*, Harmondworth: Penguin, 1969.
25. Morris, M.L., 'The Development of Capitalism in South African Agriculture' in *Economy and Society*, 5, 3, 1976, p. 293.
26. Legassick, *op cit*, p.3.
27. The impetus for the adoption by the CPSA of the 'Native Republic' slogan is a subject of controversy. Roux, E., in *Time Longer than Rope*, views it as primarily the consequence of external influence whereas the Simonses are prepared to accord more importance to pressures within the Party.
28. Communist Party of South Africa, Johannesburg District, *Communism and the Native Question*, Johannesburg, n.d. (c. 1935).
29. Simons, H.J. & R.E., *op cit*, p. 484.
30. Further detail can be found in Bunting, B., *Moses Kotane: South African Revolutionary*, London: Inkululeko Publications, 1975.
31. Carter G. and Karis T., *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. I., *ibid* p. 310.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Opposition to the legislation is discussed in Haines, R. 'The Opposition to General Herzog's Segregation Bills' in University of the Witwatersrand Development Studies Group, *Conference on the History of Opposition in Southern Africa*, January, 1978.
34. See for examples: Stadler, A., 'Birds in a Cornfield: Squatter Movements in Johannesburg' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 6, no. 1, October 1979; Stadler, A., 'A Long Way to Walk: Bus Boycotts in Alexandra, 1940 — 1945', University of the Witwatersrand African Studies Institute seminar paper, 1979; O' Meara, D., 'The 1946 African Mineworkers' Strike' in *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, Vol. 13, no. 2, July 1975; Webster, E.C., 'The 1949 Durban Riots' in Bonner, P.L., *Working Papers in Southern African Studies*, Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, 1977; Gerhart, G.M., *Black Power in South Africa*, Los Angeles: University of California, 1978, Chapters 2 and 3; Davie, K., 'Capital, Labour and the South African State', University of the Witwatersrand African Studies Institute seminar paper, 1979.
35. See Simkins, C.E.W., 'Agricultural Production in the African Reserves of South Africa', University of the Witwatersrand African Studies Institute seminar paper, 1980.
36. See report in *Daily Dispatch*, (East London), 25 1946, p. 10.
37. Gerhart, G., *op cit*, p. 41.
38. Carter, G. and Karis, T., *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. II, p. 305.
39. The developing relationship between the CPSA and the ANC is described in Brooks, A., *From Class Struggle to National Liberation, the CPSA, 1940 — 1950*. University of Sussex, 1970.

JUST A RUMOUR?

It is rumoured that the SADF, acting on irrefutable evidence of ANC planning in the area, intends to carry out a parabat raid on certain houses in an unnamed London suburb. The SADF has stated that it has no intention of harming British police or military personnel, but has strongly advised them not to interfere. An SADF spokesman has added that Mrs Thatcher has been given repeated warnings about the danger of harbouring people hostile to South Africa.

Vortex.

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