The liberation struggle – KwaZulu-Natal

1800-1910

The Emergence of the Mabhudu, Ndwendwe and Mthethwa Kingdoms and their Power Struggles for Territorial Hegemony

The Mabhudu-Tembe kingdoms are among the oldest in South East Africa. There is no doubt, judging from oral and recorded history, that their expansion is partly as a result of contact with foreign traders, be they Arab, Portuguese or Dutch and English. That contact was mainly on the basis of trade in ivory and later in slaves. Historians are of the opinion that the conflict among the aforesaid kingdoms began when the Mabhudu expanded to the South and the Ndwendwe-Mthethwa to the North. In establishing a coherent semi-central authority, the formation of the Amabutho was initiated. The competition, and perhaps the fear of invasion by other neighbouring kingdoms, sparked off the centralization of power and influence. This expansion occurred in the later part of the eighteenth century. The Mthethwa King, Khayi kaMadango KaXaba, began very early to consolidate his power. Communities newly subjected to the overlordship of the Mthethwa ruling house were incorporated into Mthethwa’s Kingdom through manipulation of their traditions of origin in a way that enabled them to be able to claim to be kinsfolk of the ruling house. In the reigns of Jobe and his successor Dingiswayo, which spanned the turn of the century, political incorporation began to take place on a different basis. Chiefdoms subjected to Abakwa Mthethwa rule were now no longer incorporated into the core group which claimed kinship links with the ruling house; instead, they were deliberately prevented from making such claims, and so came to form a statum with the Mthethwa’s polity that was politically and socially quite distinct from, and subordinate in status to, the core of groups linked to the ruling house. The emphasis on common origins that had earlier served to unite subjected groups with the Abakwa Mthethwa ruling house now gave way to an emphasis on the distinction that existed between the core of the older groups and the newly subjected ones, with the latter being excluded from certain rights and privileges enjoyed by the core and subjected to demands for tribute in cattle and labour.

The emergence of this distinction can be seen as marking the beginnings of the formation of embryonic social classes within an embryonic state. In this policy, the power exercised by the emergent aristocracy over the class of commoners (Abantukazana) was increasingly based, not only on the ruling chiefs’ ritual and managerial authority but also on the growing coercive power at his disposal. The dynamics behind the Ndwendwe emergence are still not fully clear. Whilst the above-mentioned powers developed there were also small chiefdoms, in the interior and coastal regions that also had undergone a process of centrality though very small in size as compared to the Ndwendwe-Mthethwa powers. These polities were Qwabe, Ngcobo and eMbomkhize on the coast and the Hlubi, Ngwane, Dlamini, Shabalala, Hlatswayo-Kubheka Zwane- Mazibuko in north west of iMfolozi. These polities and their powers were less centralized and less stratified than those of the Mthethwa and Ndwendwe.

As these chiefdoms grew and expanded, they became dependent on the maintenance of Amabutho. As this dependence grew, so did the necessity for rulers to acquire extra resources

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2 Hamilton, C., Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power, pp. 112-118; 122-130.
of cattle redistribution as largesse (free gift) and reward (*ukuxoshisa*) to the *Amabutho*. There was no way in which these needs could be met from the ruling house’s own cattle holding, or from the cattle which it was politically safe to extract from their subordinates in the form of tribute. To meet their immediate demands, cattle could be acquired only by raiding them from other chiefdoms. The rise of *Amabutho*-based states therefore saw the development of raiding as a structural necessity. Raids had no doubt been frequent enough among these chiefdoms before emergence of states, but from the late eighteenth century they increased in frequency and scale. And, as the political importance of cattle as a means of supporting the *Amabutho* system increased, so raids began to turn into wards of territorial conquest aimed at bringing regions of good grazing land under the permanent control of expanding chiefdoms.

It is in the midst of this competition that the conflict between the AbakwaNdwandwe and AbakwaMthethwa appeared in the scene. Dingiswayo by then had allowed a relative autonomy over the tribute paying chiefs and they could form their own *Amabutho* as well. This was the case with Senzangakhona Zulu. The conflict and vying for territorial supremacy ended with the Ndwandwe emerging as victors. Dingiswayo was mysteriously killed. There is no coherent account as to how he was actually killed by Zwide’s forces.

The Mthethwa called on Shaka to lead their armed forces and protect them against the Ndwandwe pending menace. While all that happened Senzangakhona had also died. He is said to have died before Dingiswayo. This was a long awaited opportunity for Shaka to show his military skills at the hour of national need and insecurity. Shaka merged the two Mthwethwa and the AbakwaZulu forces and waited for Zwide to take a first step. Zwide did attack Abakwa Zulu three times. The bloodiest conflict was at Mhlathuze and at Gqokli hill. Shaka came out victorious. From there the regions between uThukela and uPhongolo lay open for him as undisputed leader. Shaka continued and increased the custom of the *amabutho*.

**Shaka’s Consolidation of Political Power and the Creation of the Zulu Kingdom**

The need for cattle was aggravated by the drought and famine known as *indlala kamadlantule*. Historians have confused the proper meaning behind this word. They always wrote *uMadlathule*, (eat and remain silent) which inevitably gave a wrong meaning. A system for controlling the *Amabutho* was to *ukubutha* them (recruiting them to the army) and *ukuthunga isicoco* (the putting on of a headring) and then, later *ukujutshwa bayoganwa* (the permission to get married). Male and females were conscripted.

Females would stay at their parents’ homes whilst the males would be called on to serve at the various *Amakhanda* scattered around the kingdom. In this way, Shaka’s power grew rapidly. One could say that this system, strange as it may sound, served the society of that time in two important ways: firstly, the birth of illegitimate children was unknown in those days; secondly, it served to check the population explosion, for men only got married at an advanced age, at approximately 35 years. As Shaka’s rule expanded, the Qwabe, Khumalo and eMathenjini resisted Shaka domination. Another innovative move, which Shaka undertook, was the formation of an aristocracy known as *izikhulu*. The King, the princes (most were his brothers) and the *izikhulu* (the former Amakhosi) followed by the *izinduna* and the *izilomo* formed the ruling class.

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The second group was Amantungwa or ubuntuungwa as opposed to the lower group known as Amalala, Amamhlengwa (Thonga) and iziyendane. The structure became so rigid that Shaka would appoint his brothers from the collateral Royal House and place them in different regions of his kingdom.

By 1826/27 Shaka attacked and defeated Sikhunyana kaZwide Ndwandwe and his brother Soshangane, 1827 at izindololwane-eNcaka Mountains. Finally, mention should be made of the Mfecane upheavals. Historians used to hold Shaka solely responsible for the Mfecane wars, but later evidence emerging pointed to other forces at work namely the slave traders. The Boers during the Great Trek and their creation of a servile community through the politics of *inboekseling* (servile and registered labour on Boer farms), also played a role. Shaka’s military expansion was a factor in the Mfecane upheavals but not the motor to it. Historians and anthropologists are currently debating the possible causes of the Mfecane turmoil.

**The Interaction with the Settlers**

By 1824 Shaka had firmly established his rule in Northern Nguniland. Clearly the monarch needed to retain control of trade routes in order to ensure wealth resources. Through use of his tightly organised hegemony into the Delagoa Bay hinterland and maintained a trading contact with the Portuguese traders through the medium of Tsonga middlemen traders. He also engaged in conflict with Swaziland in order to obtain cattle supplies for trading ventures. By far the most important trading contacts were those made between Shaka and the English traders at Port Natal from 1824. Through this connection, Shaka retained a royal monopoly on European imported firearms and incorporated the traders into the Zulu society using them in military campaigns and giving them chiefly status. In the year 1824 three English adventurers from the Cape Colony came in a small vessel called the Julia to the shelter inlet which has since been known as the Port of Natal, with view to endeavour to open a trade with the blacks of the neighbourhood. The adventurers were: Lieutenant Farewell of the Royal Marines, who had some years before been upon the coast in the prosecution of exploring or surveying duties, Lieutenant King and Mr Fynn who was afterwards one of the magistrates of Natal.

After some delays they were permitted to settle along the shore. The interaction between the settlers and the Zulu king grew as the time went on. Shaka persuaded by the settlers sent his *induna* Sotobe kaM pangalala Sibiya with his retinue as an envoy to the Cape Colony to establish diplomatic relations. This encounter between Shaka and the settlers had rather unpleasant repercussions namely, that the descendants of the settlers claimed that Shaka had sold a piece of land Port Natal to the settlers. This claim is strongly to be reputed since there was no policy for selling land in Zululand before, during and after Shaka. One, even the king cannot alienate land. Dingana succeeded Shaka and continued the link with the settlers especially John Cane and Henry Ogle, who after Fynn’s departure for the Cape Colony took

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4 Bryant, A.T., *Olden Times*, pp. 63, 88; Guy, J., *Ecological Factors*, pp. 111-112, Bonner, P., *Kings, Commoners and Concessionnaires*, pp. 20-23. As opposed to the wrong writing and the meaning given thereto. The correct version is herewith given. *Umadlantule* - eat and still be in want, i.e. still remain hungry and search for more food. The second term whose meaning has been misconstrued and misinterpreted by many white historians is e*Mkhondo* meaning at the path or track; the third is the term *iSandlwana*. This is mistaken for *isandla* (hand), therefore a small hand. However, the correct meaning is *iSandlwana*, a small house, for the little hill resembles a small house.
charge of the trading settlement at Port Natal. The American missionaries in Zululand preceded the English missionaries. However, they could not settle in Zululand, hence they left for Natal. Captain Allen Gardiner visited King Dingana kaSenzangakhona to ask for permission to preach the gospel among the Zulu people. He later on went to England and came back with Rev. Owen. Both missions were a failure, they could not convince King Dingana to accept Christianity. Another group of settlers came from the Cape. These were Pieter and Jacobus Uys, Hans de Lange, Stephanus Maritz and Gert Rudolph. They left the Cape Colony out of protest against the English rule, which abolished slavery in 1834. In the following year another party of dissatisfied settlers came to Natal led by Hendrick Potgieter and Pieter Retief. They initially met the English settlers and later travelled to eMgungundlovu to meet the Zulu King Dingana. Now I shall consider the life and times of King Mpande.

The controversial role of King Mpande 1840-1872

None of the Zulu kings was involved in colonial history as much as Mpande kaSenzangakhona Zulu. The protagonists within Zululand claim that Mpande saved the Zulu Kingdom from havoc and extinction, which was partly brought about by Dingana kaSenzangakhona. Dingana, they claimed, had killed almost all his father’s sons and furthermore had brought wrath and misery upon Zululand by killing Piet Retief and his party and thereby provoking the Boers into war against the Amazulu, which almost destroyed not only the Royal House but also the country at large. Mpande had no option but to act as he did in order to save both the Royal House and Zululand. The evidence of Mpande’s peaceful character, they claim, is vindicated by peace and stability, which Zululand enjoyed between 1840 and 1872.

The protagonist among the colonists including the missionaries speaks of Mpande’s reign as being the best in Zululand. Besides being the best, Mpande was the only king whom the whites could trust. They could take thousands of hectares of land without any protest from Mpande and the Amazulu as the Boers did in 1840.

Kwantabankulu or Northern Zululand between 1750-1840

The area known as KwaNtabankulu, which is situated between the sources of two rivers the iMfolozi eMnyama (Black iMfolozi) and the iMfolozi eMhlophe (White iMfolozi) was since time immemorial occupied by two clans. The Abakwakhumalo and the abaseMantshalini Abakwakhumalo were under King Zikode kaMkhatshwa and the abaseMantshalini were under King Mlotha Mtshali. When Zwide was ruling over the abakwaNdwandwe tribe between the iMfolozi eMnyama and the uPhongolo rivers, the abakwaNdwandwe were predominant in those days, in fact competing with the abakwaMthethwa under Dingiswayo kaJobe for political supremacy.

At the same time King Mashobana kaZikode was ruling the abaKwa Khumalo ca 1800. Mashobana was attacked and killed by Zwide kaLanga. Mzilikazi, one of Mashobana’s sons survived the massacre. He then subsequently gathered the remnants of his tribe and asked for protection under Shaka or voluntarily combined his forces with those of Shaka Zulu in defence against Zwide’s next imminent onslaught.

5 Hamilton, C. (ed). The Mfecane Aftermath. In this volume major papers on the Mfecane debates can be found.
Zwide in the course of his conquest attacked the abaseMantshalini. In that attack King Mlotha was killed. His tribe was ruled by Hlangabeza kaMabhedla and Khondlo kaMagalela all of them being chiefs of the Amantshali clans. On the western side of KwaNtabankulu there lived the Amangwane tribes under King Matiwa kaMasumpa Hlongwane, between Utrecht and uPhongolo. North of Ntabankulu lived and ruled the Amangwe tribe under King Mangethe kaNdlovu Zwane. They inhabited this area together with offshoot tribes Abakwa Mazibuko at eNcaka under King Phuthini kaMashoba, Cebekhulu and AbakwaLinda.

The years between 1800-1820 underwent violent historical vicissitudes; Shaka Zulu completed the wars of conquest begun by Zwide kaLanga Ndwandwe and Dingiswayo kaJobe Mhethwa. Having driven Zwide kaLanga out of the kwaNongoma area, Shaka, in order to secure his own border of his kingdom, placed Maphitha kaSojiyisa Zulu of the abaKwaMandlakazi collateral Royal House between eMkhuze and eMfolozi eMnyama near the upper Mona River. He placed Mathaka kaMpasa kaMnomo Zulu and Sithayi, kaMbuzi (alias Mavunula) kaNdaba and Ntshingwayo kaGanganana kaNdaba Zulu of eGazini collateral Royal House at Kwaceza on the source of the iThaka River. After these arrangements, Shaka subsequently attacked AbaKwaZwane under Mangethe. Mangethe’s people left the area later on and settled across UMzinyathi River below the Drakensberg Mountains. (Izintaba zokhahlamba).

Shaka subsequently placed his aunt Mkabayi kaJama Zulu in that area previously inhabited by AbakwaZwane and iKhanda was built at eDumbe close to eZungwini and was named eMhlabaneni, later renamed as eBaqulusini. Henceforth all the regions north of Vryheid and Obivane were put under the jurisdiction of eBaqulusini. Furthermore, Shaka placed Mnqundane kaNobhongoza at eNgoje, which later on became KwaNgenetsheni under Hamu kaNzibe. He also placed Ntshosho at eNgoje as well. He furthermore placed at eMkhuze river Mamba kaNdaba of eGazini collateral Royal House at Kwaceza on the source of the iThaka River. After these arrangements, Shaka subsequently attacked AbaKwaZwane under Mangethe. Mangethe’s people left the area later on and settled across UMzinyathi River below the Drakensberg Mountains.

Most of the abaseGazini sided with Mpande and eventually crossed the uThukela to the Boers and to ask for their assistance against Dingana. Godide kaNdlela Ntuli, Maphitha kaSojiyisa Zulu and Masiphula kaMamba Ntshangase remained loyal to Dingana until his overthrow in January 1840. After Mpande’s victory the people returned and reoccupied their former territories. EGazini Princes Mkhanyle alias Nobetha kaZivalele kaMnomo and Nkunga kaSithayi kaMbuzi were placed at Ntabankulu. Mathaka kaMpasa kaMnomo was placed at Ngwibi area above Imfolozi River. Mkhanyle kaZivalele kaMnomo kaNdaba built his amakhanda eMyandlini and eNjeni along iMfolozi emhlophe towards eMndefane and EMhlahlanzi River. His heir Nkankane lived not far from eHlonyane. The territory, which Mpande allocated to his brother Mkhanyle the heir of the AbaseGazini collateral Royal House, starts from eNhlopheni at the police camp to eNhlazatshe (eMkholokotho River). From there to the eMfolozi eMnyama (Black iMfolozi) through eNcunje (Driefontein), to eLenjane eMnyathi next to abakwaMdlalose.

From there to the iMfolozi eMhlopho (White iMfolozi) there connecting to eNhlopheni, where we began. Nkunga built at kwaMnyathi, kwaHanisi at eLenjane opposite AbakwaMdlalose. He was placed in the territory designated for uMkhanyile, the heir of aBasegazini Collateral Royal House. This House is, originally the Great House where the heir
(iNkosana yaseNdlnkulu) to the throne of the abaKwaZulu clan was born since the days of King Ndaba kaMageba kaZulu. This heir was Mnomo kaNdaba Zulu. Shaka had also placed Ngqengelele Buthelezi at Esikhwebezi and eThaka areas after he had defeated the Ndawandwe kings. In 1840 when a new order was launched in Zululand after Mpande’s ascendency to the throne, Mnyamana kaNgqengelele was ruling over AbakwaButhelezi in eSikhwebezi7.

Chief Mkhanyile kazivalele Zulu (Wasegazini Izimpohlo Ibutho): 1840-1873

Mkhanyile and Mpande belonged to the izimpohlo regiment. Shaka had forbidden them to marry. Their task was to fight wars. As time went on it happened that Mpande got sick and could not go out and fight. Shaka decided to exempt Mpande from military duties. He was sent home to eMlambongwenya. Shaka instructed Mkhanyile to accompany Mpande and look after him. He should go around and look for the herbs (izimbiwa nekhathazo) for healing Mpande. Gradually Mpande recovered from his illness. Shaka, however, never called him back to the army; instead Shaka gave Mpande one of his Royal girls (uMndlunkulu) as a wife so that he should bear children for their father Senzangakhona. The Royal girl (uMdlunkulu) was Monase kaMntungwa Nxumalo. She bore uMbuyazi, who later fought against Cetshwayo in December 1856. He contested the succession to their father Mpande. However, Mbuyazi was killed at the battle of Ndondakusuka. Cetshwayo was victorious and remained an undisputed leader until his coronation in 1873.

Through Mpande’s ailment and subsequent procreation, Mkhanyile was able to take wives and bore children. In that way Mkhanyile’s house survived to date. Mkhanyile and Nkunga protected and assisted Mpande during Dingane’s reign. Nxagwana is the one together with Mathunjana kaSibhaca Nkwanxana, who saved Mpande from being killed by Dingane consequently Mpande fled from eMlambongwenya and cross uThukela River to the Boers in Natal in October 1839. This rebellion is referred to as ukugqabuka kwegoda. On their return from Natal Mpande gave Mkhanyile the area between KwaNtabankulu, eMfolozi emnyama and eMfolozi eMhlophe. Mkhanyile alias Nobethe built his ikhanda eMyandlini because eGazini is the house which originally bore the Kings. Mkhanyile the heir and head of all abaseGazini settled at iMfolozi eMhlahlane where he had his amaKhanda eMyandlini and eNjeni, where, Mandlenyathi and Sichotho were living. Later on, Mkhanyile’s heir and successor Nkankane (ibutho uThulwana ca 1830/32), left eMyandlini to establish his own ikhanda eMeveni and eMathongeni. Mpande, in gratitude for Mkhanyile’s support and service, gave him one of his Royal wives (uMdlunkulu) namely kaMtshali. Then, as Mkhanyile’s wife and iNkosikazi of eNjeni she bore Sichotho. Sichothis’ descendants today are Walter and Elphas kaMyekeni (uVukayibambe ibutho) kaSichothiso kaMkhanyile. Myekeni took kaMhlongo as his wife and bore Walter and Elphas. Walter, born in 1920 (ibutho Ntabayezulu) is now deceased at his homestead at eNjeni eMhlahlane next to eMabedlana. Also living at eMhlalange is Elphas’ son Zwelibanzi born ca 1954 (ibutho iNala). Mkhanyile had other brothers Godolozi and Ndabazezwe kaZivalele, who bore Hlezibana. Godolozi a brother of Mkhanyile built his ikhanda eNtleleni at eKuhlengeni. From eNteleleni sprang out the following Amakhanda under Godolozi and Ndabazezwe, viz; KwaPhangumbuso, Dedelabenabe, Gabangani, eZitheni, eSalukazi and eNdlabephika. Augustus kaHezekiya (Dakwakusutha) from KwaDedelabenabe now lives in...

7 Msimang, C.T., Buzani kuMkabayi, pp. 183-190; Interview with Prince Phiwangubani kaKhangeza Zulu (eGazini) eTholakele on 22.9.1994.
Soweto at Dube and Richard kaAbisayi from eNdlabephika, Gabangani and eZitheni lives in Soweto. Today, Mnomo’s descendants at eMathongeni kwaNtabankulu are; Gijima (Esau) kaBotha and Masusa kaMabhekeshiya kaNkankane kaMkhanyile kaZivalele kaMnomo kaNdaba. Mhunzini also built at eKuhlengeni. There are other people of eGazini like Nxumbunxumbu.

The Battle of Blood River

The Battle of Blood River (\textit{Slag van Bloedrivier}; Zulu: \textit{iMpi yaseNcome}) is the name given for the battle fought between 470 Voortrekkers led by Andries Prestorius, and an estimated 10,000–15,000 Zulu attackers on the bank of the Ncome River on 16 December 1838, in what is today KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Casualties amounted to three thousand of king Dingane’s soldiers dead, including two Zulu princes competing with prince Mpande for the Zulu throne. Three Trekker commando members were lightly wounded, including Pretorius himself.

In the sequel to the Battle of Blood River in January 1840, prince Mpande finally defeated Dingane in the Battle of Maqongqe, and was subsequently crowned as new king of the Zulus by his alliance partner Andries Pretorius. After these two battles of succession, Dingane’s prime minister and commander in both the Battle of Maqonqe and the Battle of Blood River, general Ndlela, was strangled to death by Dingane on account of high treason. General Ndlela had been the personal protector of prince Mpande, who after the Battles of Blood River and Maqongqe, became king and founder of the Zulu dynasty.

The Trekkers called Voortrekkers after 1880 decided to dethrone Zulu chief Dingane kaSenzangakho after the betrayal murder of chief Trekker leader Piet Retief, his entire entourage, and some of their women and children living in temporary wagon encampments during 1838.

On 6 February 1838, two days after the signing of a negotiated land settlement deal between Retief and Dingane at UmGungundlovu, which included Trekker access to Port Natal in which Britain had imperial interest, Dingane invited Retief and his party into his royal residence for a beer-drinking farewell. The accompanying request for the surrender of Trekker muskets at the entrance was taken as normal protocol when appearing before the king. While the Trekkers were being entertained by Dingane’s dancing soldiers, Dingane suddenly accused the visiting party of witchcraft. Dingane’s soldiers then proceeded to impale all Retief’s men, lastly clubbing to death Retief, while leaving the Natal treaty in his handbag intact.

Immediately after the UmGungundlovu massacre, Dingane sent out his impis (regiments) to attack several Trekker encampments at night time, killing an estimated 500 men, women, children, and servants, most notably at Blaukraans. Help arrived from farmers in the Cape Colony, and the Trekkers in Natal subsequently requested the pro-independence Andries Pretorius to leave the Cape Colony, in order to dethrone chief Dingane.

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After the Battle of Blood River, the Dingane-Retief treaty was found on Retief’s bodily remains, providing a driving force for an overt alliance against Dingane between Zulu prince Mpande and Pretorius. On 26 November 1838, Andries Pretorius was appointed as general of a wagon commando directed against Dingane at UmGungundlovu, which means “the secret conclave of the elephant”. By December 1838, Zulu prince Mpande and 17,000 followers had already fled from Dingane, who was seeking to assassinate Mpande. In support of prince Mpande as Dingane’s replacement, Pretorius’ strategy was to target Dingane only. To allow prince Mpande to oust king Dingane through military might, Pretorius had first to weaken Dingane’s personal military power base in UmGungundlovu. Dingane’s royal residence at UmGungundlovu was naturally protected against attack by hilly and rocky terrain all around, as well as an access route via Italeni passing through a narrow gorge called a defile.

Earlier on 9 April 1838, a Trekker horse commando without ox wagons, thereafter called the “Flight Commando”, had unsuccessfully attempted to penetrate the UmGungundlovu defence at nearby Italeni, resulting in the loss of several Trekker lives. Trekker leader Hendrik Potgieter had abandoned all hope of engaging Dingane in UmGungundlovu after losing the battle of Italeni, and subsequently had migrated with his group out of Natal. To approach UmGungundlovu via the Italeni defile with ox wagons would force the wagons into an open column, instead of an enclosed laager as successfully employed defensively at Veglaer on 12 August 1838.

The military commander during Dingane’s attack on Veglaer was Ndlela kaSompisi. The highly experienced general Ndlela had served under Shaka, and was also prime minister and chief advisor under Dingane. Ndlela with his 10,000 troops had retreated from Veglaer, after three days and nights of fruitless attempts to penetrate the enclosed Trekker wagon laager.

General Ndlela personally protected prince Mpande whom Pretorius later crowned as Zulu king in 1840 from Dingane’s repeated assassination plans. King Dingane desired to have his half brother Mpande, the only prince with children, eliminated as a threat to his throne. Prince Mpande was married to Msukilethe, a daughter of general Ndlela. General Ndlela, like Pretorius the promotor of prince Mpande, was responsible for Dingane’s UmGungundlovu defence during the Trekkers’ second attack attempt under Pretorius in December 1838.

Given general Ndlela’s previous defence and attack experience at Italeni and Veglaer during April 1838 and August 1838 respectively, Ndlela’s tactical options were limited. Proven UmGungundlovu defence tactics were to attack Trekker commandos in the rocky and hilly terrain on the narrowing access route at Italeni, thereby neutralising the advantages mounted riflemen had over spear-carrying foot soldiers. Ndlela had to let Pretorius come close to UmGungundlovu at Italeni, and lure the Trekkers into attack.

Ndlela was not to attack the Trekkers when they were in a defensive wagon laager position, especially not during the day. The problem for Pretorius was that he had somehow to find a way to make Dingane’s soldiers attack him in a defensive laager position at a place of his choice, far away from UmGungundlovu and Italeni.

On 6 December 1838, 10 days before the Battle of Blood River, Pretorius and his commando including Alexander Biggar as translator had a meeting with friendly Zulu chiefs at Danskraal, so named for the Zulu dancing that took place in the Zulu kraal that the Trekker commando visited. With the intelligence received at Danskraal, Pretorius became confident enough to propose a vow, which demanded the celebration, by the commando and their
posterity, of the coming victory over Dingane. The so-called covenant included that a promise that a church would be built in honour of God, should the commando somehow be successful and reach UmGungundlovu alive in order to diminish the power of Dingane. Building a church in Trekker emigrant context was symbol for establishing a settled state, like the Republic of Natalia, which was established during 1840, when the Dingane-Retief treaty was implemented under king Mpande.\footnote[9]{Hermann Giliomee and Bernard Mbenga (2007). New History of South Africa. Tafelberg Publishers, Cape Town, p. 146}

After the meeting with friendly Zulu chiefs at Danskraal, Pretorius let the commando relax and do their washing for a few days at Wasbank till 9 December 1838. From Wasbank they slowly and daily moved closer to the site of the Battle of Blood River, practicing laager defence tactics every evening for a week long. Then, by halting his advance towards UmGungundlovu on 15 December 1838, 40 km before reaching the defile at Italeni, Pretorius had eliminated the Italieni terrain trap\footnote[10]{Muller, C.F.J. (ed)(1981). Five Hundred years: a history of South Africa; 3rd rev. ed., Pretoria: Academica, p. 166}.

**Enyathi under Chief Nkunga Kasithayi Zulu (Wasegazini) ca 1840-1873**

Nkunga kaSithayi kaMbuzi Zulu (eZeni) of eGazini collateral Royal House was born somewhere in Babanango, Mpembeni or the Mkhumbane area. The iKhanda (homestead) in which he was born was eGazini, which was established by Mageba.\footnote[56]{Other Amakhanda next to eGazini were eMqekwini, Nobamba and eSiklebeni. After Shaka had returned to Zululand from KwaMthethwa, and had taken over the reigns among the Zulu clan, and had subsequently defeated Abakwa Ndwendwe, Shaka placed Sithayi and Ntshingwayo in the North at KwaCeza Nkunga was subsequently recruited in the isiphezi regiment.}65 Other Amakhanda next to eGazini were eMqekwini, Nobamba and eSiklebeni. After Shaka had returned to Zululand from KwaMthethwa, and had taken over the reigns among the Zulu clan, and had subsequently defeated Abakwa Ndwendwe, Shaka placed Sithayi and Ntshingwayo in the North at KwaCeza Nkunga was subsequently recruited in the isiphezi regiment. Isiphezi has three meanings: first it is a mountain in today's eNquthu district; secondly it is the name of a Royal ikhanda and finally a name of a regiment.67 Shaka recruited Nkunga as ukubuthwa into this regiment from 1818 to 1820. It seems Nkunga was an induna of this regiment or as prince (an uMntwana) played a major role in building and shaping its reputation. All the princes (abantwana) of eGazini during the days of uShaka, were sent to the battle without exception wherever and whenever necessary. They were Mkhanyile, Mbopha, Nkunga, Nkabana, Mpaphe, Shibela, Mathaka, Kiwana and Nkunziyezindlovu to name just a few. One of these legendary battles was against the Abakwa Ndwendwe under Zwide kaLanga. These battles were fought at Mvemve along the UMhlathuze River and at eGqokli hill towards eNkandla. During these battles Shaka had shown and proved his military genius, which determined the cause of Nguniland in the following ten years. Nkunga led the isiphezi regiment at the battle of eMvemve along the UMhlathuze River. From eSiphezi Nkunga moved to KwaMathikhulu at the foot of Magula hill, south of eShowe. Nkunga left isiphezi from the north, and moved southwards because his life and the lives of all eGazini people were no longer safe. This change in the situation was brought about by the death of Shaka kaSenzangakhona at the hands of Mbabyi, Dingana, Mhlangana and Mbopha kaSithayi Zulu. After this incident Mbopha was subsequently killed. Not only Mbopha, but many of Senzangakhona’s sons were eliminated during the general purge. Mkhanyile, Nkunga and others of abase Gazini moved southwards to rally around Mpande and Gqugqu the only remaining sons of Senzangakhona. In ensuring Mpande’s safety and security Mkhanyile was influential. Dingana and Mbabyi, after eliminating Mbopha, called upon Nkunga to raise (ukuvusa) Mbopha’s house. Nkunga complied with this request, as Mbopha was his elder full brother. Nkunga took a woman for Mbopha and sired offspring for him. This woman was...
placed at an *ikhanda* called *eKuvungameni, uZulu uyavungama* (at the mumbling place). This was a reference to the state of the nation during Dingana’s purging times. The descendants of Mbopha through levirate i.e. bearing children for his deceased brother Mbopha (*ukuwusa*) by Nkunga live below mount *izihlalo* zika*Mzanyosi* Mbatcha at Mahlabathini. *Ekuvungameni* homestead is under Mbongiseni Alford Zulu eGazini kaMfanawezinsizwa (*ibutho Nqabayembube*) kaTshikoza (*ibutho Vukayibambe*)

By October 1839, the political situation was for Prince Mpande and the rest of the Abasegazini no longer safe. Mkhanylie kaZivalele, Ndlela kaSompisi Ntuli and Nzobo alias Dambuza kaSobadli kaDlukulu Ntombela and Maphitha kaSojiyisa were the most influential people during Dingana’s reign. Mkhanylie, Ndlela and Sotobe kaMphangalala Sibiya never showed Dingana their dissatisfaction about his conduct and rule. Dingana had then recently presented uMpande with a herd of cattle, upon which according to Zulu courtesy Mpande was expected to come in person to express his gratitude for this favour from his brother Dingana. Mkhanylie advised uNdlela to tell those soldiers who were driving the cattle to uMpande at eMlambongwenya namely: Ngxagwana kaZivalele Zulu and Mathunjana Nkwanyana to tell prince Mpande never to come to King Dingana to express his gratitude for the gift, for that was a trap to entice and eventually to kill him. After this warning Mpande prepared in earnest to leave Zululand and cross the uThukela and ask for help from the Boers.

In October 1839 Mpande, Mkhanylie, Mathaka, Nkunga, Nkabana, Mpaphe Sotobe and Mbilini kaCungela Mkhanazi rebelled in what was called *ukugqabuka kwegoda* (*the tearing of a rope*). They took a large number of people with them. Those who remained with Dingana, Ndlela, Nzobo, Maphitha, Masiphula, and Godide kaNdlela and the rest of Abaqulusi were called Ndlela’s *rectum* (*umdidi kaNdlela*).

On arrival across the uThukela, the Boers, who wanted to know the reason for such an exodus, met Mpande and his eGazini brothers? Mkhanylie, Nkunga and Mbilini accompanied Mpande at that meeting of the eHlawe River. The result of the meeting was that Mpande and his brothers returned to Zululand and fight against Dingana’s forces to prove that Dingana was really a danger or an enemy for Mpande. Mpande returned to Zululand and his forces were led by Nongalaza kaNondelamzimba Mnyandu an offshoot of the Qwabe clan. Nongalaza’s forces met with Ndlela’s forces in a historic encounter at eMaqonqo hill. The Boers did not fight; they stood at a distance behind Nongalaza’s forces. Mpande’s forces were victorious. Mpande was then crowned by Mkhanylie, Godolozi, Nkunga, Nkabana, Mpaphe, Sotobe and Mbilini and later on at a meeting was confirmed and endorsed by the Boers. Mpande was so grateful for the unwavering support he received from eGazini people; he then placed Mkhanylie in the area between the iMfolozi eMnyama and the iMfolozi eMhlophe towards eMhlahlane. Mkhanylie built his place of dwelling at eHlonyan, eMyandlini and eNtolelweni. Furthermore Mpande gave one of his uMdlunkulu to Mkhanylie. She was a girl from eMantshalini clan. She was the mother of Sichotho, and Mandlenyathi kaMkhanyile eNjeni.

The present head and leader of eNjeni in the House of Sichotho, is Walter kaMyekeni kaSichotho eMhlahlane. At eMhlahlane lives Zwelibanzi kaElphas kaMyekeni kaSichotho as well. On settling at eNyathi Nkunga built the following Amakhanda: eMantshunguntshwini, eSikhonkwaneni, eNzwabulungu, eMonyeni, eKhamukhamu, eMpumalanga, eNzangabomu and eKuvungameni. Nkunga’s umuzi was situated at eLenjane close to abakwa Mdhalose under Ndengezi kaKhuzwayo Mdhalose. Nkunga had ca 30 wives. Nkunga, Ndengezi and

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their people did not take part in the battle of eNdondakusuka in December 1856. Nkunga reasoned that Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi were not supposed to settle their succession dispute through arms. However, if they were to fight he, Nkunga, did not want to be part of the spilling of the royal blood. Mpande encouraged them to settle their scores through a battle as he had also done against Dingana sixteen years before. It was known that Mpande was in favour of Mbuyazi’s cause.

Cetshwayo was victorious, Mbuyazi died. Mpande was furious at Nkunga and Ndengezi for they did not fight on the side of his favourite Mbuyazi. Cetshwayo was also angry with Nkunga, he suspected him of favouring his opponent Mbuyazi. According to Zulu laws Nkunga was Cetshwayo’s father (uBaba omncane) therefore he could not challenge Nkunga openly and fight against him. Cetshwayo secretly ordered a certain chief whose name is not known to attack Nkunga and Ndengezi at night. Indeed the order was carried out. Nkunga’s imizi were invaded and burnt down, however Nkunga and Ndengezi survived the massacre. They hid themselves in the mountain eNyathi, 1857 to 1861. Mthonga, Mgidlana, Nkunga and Ndengezi escaped to Utrecht in hiding. Cetshwayo’s forces including Nomantshali kaZigulana Ntuli killed Mpoyiyana the youngest son of Mpande. Mkhungo and Sikhotha escaped to Natal across the uThukela.

Cetshwayo sent his envoys from eMangweni under Mnyakanya kaMandondo Xulu to request the Boers to hand over Mthonga, Mgidlana Nkunga and Ndengezi. The Boers refused, but later on agreed on condition that Cetshwayo would not kill them. Cetshwayo kept his promise. Mthonga never went with Nkunga and Ndengezi for he feared for his life more than the two. When Nkunga and Ndengezi returned to KwaNtabankulu, Cetshwayo gave orders that they should move with their people (iSizwe) to KwaMandlakazi under Maphitha kaSojiyisa Zulu, the izinduna and abaseGazini opposed Cetshwayo’s plans to move Nkunga and his people to KwaMandlakazi, therefore Cetshwayo had to back down and withdrew the plans. The people of eNyathi refused to move as well. Nkunga was reunited with his people and was then left in peace. Nkunga had his many children of whom Mlandu was an inkosana (heir). He belonged to a regiment (ibutho) called ukhandampevu; others say he belonged to uMxhapho regiment together with Zibhebhu kaMaphitha born in ca 1837 and recruited in 1868 under Mkhosana kaMvundlana kaMenziwa Biyela eMabedlana - Mhlahlane area. His other sons were; Lugwembe (Lazarus), Malungana, Nyamana, Simbosendoda and Obed.

In June 1862 the missionaries Christian Wagner, Albert Liefeld and Hans Heinrich Schroeder arrived at eNyathi. Nkunga was reluctant to receive them and he even refused to accept their present (isethulo). Nkunga told them to go with izinduna and get a confirmation from Mpande. Mpande sent his izinduna to notify Cetshwayo and Nkunga that he had met the missionaries; if Nkunga wished them to settle at his place he could accept them or refuse them. There was another reason for Nkunga’s refusal to welcome the missionaries, namely, the events which had taken place two years before which almost cost him his life were fresh in his memory. Therefore Nkunga did not want to involve himself with national political affairs. The smallpox epidemic, which swept across Zululand in 1863, brought sorrow to Nkunga’s family and people. Four of Nkunga’s wives were swept away by the epidemic. The missionaries Filter, Wagner and Liefeld described Nkunga’s attitude towards them as being positive. Colenso reported that Nkunga died of sickness during 1872 or 1873.

One of Nkunga’s izinduna was a member of the Madide family. Mlandu succeeded his father as chief of abaseGazini in the House of Nkunga kaSithayi kaMbuzi (eZeni). The head and leader of the House of Nkunga kaSithayi was Mfaniseni kaBafana kaSiphwe kaMlandu. Other than Bafana, Siphwe had other sons like Andreas Khifa, Melule, Bosimile and Gasa.

Now we are moving to a period under Mlandu kaNkunga eNyathi in the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s.  

Chief Mlandu kaNkunga Zulu (waseGazini uMxhapho regiment) ca 1873-1920

Mlandu kaNkunga must have been born ca 1837 that is to say before the battle of Thulwana against Amaswazi. Mlandu would have grown up and known the area of eNyathi from childhood. Nkunga, as has already been shown in the previous chapter, occupied eNyathi after their return with Mpande from the Ehlawe (Thungathi) River, where they met the Boers. Like any other young soldier Mlandu was recruited (wabuthwa) into the uKhandempevu regiment, which was named after the ikhanda (homestead) under the induna Mkhosana kaMvudlana kaMnenziwa Biyela. This regiment was recruited around 1868/9, following uthulwana regiment which put on its head ring (ukuthunga isicoco) in 1867. UKhandampevu put on the head ring in ca 1872/73 under Cetshwayo. Cetshwayo, then a prince, lived at the Ukhondampevu ikhanda at Mbedlana. This regiment fought gallantly in the battle of Esandlwana, Ehlobane, Kwakambule and Ulundi. Mlandu was also present in all these battles. This regiment had three major divisions (Amaviyo) under Mkhosana kaMvundlana Biyela, Vumandaba kaNtethi Biyela and Nquqa kaMpundulwana Zungu respectively. Mlandu showed his leadership qualities as early as 1868/69 when he openly challenged missionary Jacob Filter, for Mlandu was against his brothers becoming Christians; hence he fetched them and chased them away from mission stations. Other oral sources claim that Chief Mlandu was of the uMxhapho regiment, which would make him as old as Zibhebhu kaMaphitha Zulu from KwaMandlakazi.

Mlandu’s chieftainship was more challenged after the battle of eSandlwana in January 1879. His area eNyathi suffered severely during the civil war of 1880 to 1884. Troops, both Royalists and opposition were roaming through his territory. Mlandu, kaNkunga, Hlezibane kaGodolozi and Simoyi kaNkabana kaSithayi were represented by their izinduna in the 1882 deputation for the return of King Cetshwayo. Many people out of Mlandu’s territory died during the ambush at eNqotheni laid by the abakwaNgenetsheni in which Hlezibane kaGodolozi kaZivalele fell. Two months later a massacre conducted by the Mandlakazi forces led by Zibhebhu kaMaphitha took place at Ulundi Royal Palace on July 21, 1883. Mlandu survived that carnage, however Sichotho kaMkhanyile fell in action with many leading izinduna. When Cetshwayo eventually died on February 8, 1884 the civil war continued which temporarily ended at the battle of Etshaneni on the 5th June 1884. Capitalizing on the predicament in which the uSuthu forces found themselves, the Boers took a large territory from Northern Zululand in which they declared the ‘Nuwe republiek’, 1884-1888. Mlandu’s area fell within this area therefore he virtually lost eNyathi to the Boers.

Chief Ndengezi Kakhuzwyo Mdlalose ca 1800-1900

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The AbakwaMdlalose clan is an offshoot from the Zulu clan. Like the Abakwa Ntombela, so were the AbakwaMdlalose excised (badatshulwa) from the Zulu Royal House as far back as the times of uZulu and Malandela. In the history of Zululand the AbakwaMdlalose were and are always connected with Abakwa Zulu. There are by now different houses of the Mdlalose clan. The ruling house is that of the descendants of Sekethwayo kaNhlaka kaDikane Mdlalose. Other houses are those of Ntuzwa kaNhlaka, Tondolozi kaNhlaka and Ndengezi kaKhuwzwayo Mdlalose. Today Abakwa Mdlalose live under inkosi B.J. Mdlalose at oThaka in the Vryheid area.

Here we will briefly look at the career of Ndengezi kaKhuzwayo Mdlalose. He was not only related to the Zulu Royal House, but also he encountered the Hermannsburg missionaries and he also suffered the fate of dispossession, for his chiefdom lay in the disputed area and he suffered under the occupation and dispossession by both the Boers and English in Northern Zululand. Ndengezi must have been born ca 1800 for by 1818 he was already fighting in Shaka’s expeditions as a soldier. He was one of the most exalted Shakan heroes. His career stretches from Shaka - Mpande until Dinuzulu in the 1880s and 1890s. Missionary Friedrich Volker spoke of him as being very old and had fought under Shaka and Dingana as a soldier, hence he estimated his age to be in the 90s. When James Stuart in the early 1890s made an investigation into the past history of the Zulu Nation, he interviewed many old people and recorded their evidence.

The Civil War of December 1856

On the 2nd of December 1856, a war broke out between the supporters of the two contending sons, who claimed seniority in the succession to the throne after Mpande’s death. They were Princes Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi. At this disastrous encounter, 4000 of Mbuyazi’s supporters were massacred.

The civil war caused a lot of commotion within Zululand. Those who supported the opposing party, which lost the war, had to run for their lives. Most of them crossed the uThukela River and populated the reserves. Others went to the mission stations. Schreuder continued his work between 1856-1860 unabated. On August 14th 1859 Schreuder baptised a 16-year-old boy by the name of Mzuza (Nzuza) at eNtumeni. Another aspect of Schreuder’s contributions was to serve as a diplomat between the king and the colonial government. This task carried a heavy responsibility. Schreuder had to prove to the kings that he was different from his predecessors, like Grout, who had to be deported from Zululand for his alleged subversive behaviour.

Schreuder, in order to be able to remain in Zululand, had to fulfil the following conditions: neutrality, loyalty and faithfulness. He promised not to convey the internal affairs of Zululand to the British. In addition to the above principles, Schreuder, unlike his predecessors, had allowed the young Christian converts as Amabutho to go to the royal Amakhanda to render their service to the king. As a token of appreciation and satisfaction for his service, Schreuder was given a Zulu name: “uMankankanana” Zululand experienced a difficult and challenging time in the years between 1857 and 1861. Cetshwayo and Mpande were competing for control and influence and therefore for the consolidation of power in Zululand.\(^{15}\)

Schreuder served during these years as a diplomat - indeed as an envoy for peace. Judging from the balance of power in Zululand, one could say that Mpande remained *de jure* ruler of Zululand between 1861 and 1872, whereas Cetshwayo remained *de facto* ruler of Zululand after he became victorious against his brother in 1856. The colonial government knew about this balance of power and the political status in Zululand. Whatever the colonial rule was undertaking in relation to Zululand had to be done via uCetshwayo and his *izinduna*. When Cetshwayo ascended the throne succeeding his father, Schreuder was no longer loyal to the Zulu kings. He became more and more in favour of the British interventionist policy. His letters to Shepstone bear evidence of his changed attitude and his call for a colonial military intervention, if necessary, to eventually dissolve Zululand. The dissolution of Zululand, Schreuder thought, would pave the way for missionary activities. The relationship deteriorated between Cetshwayo and the missionaries on the one side and the colonial rule on the other until 1878\(^6\).

### A Pending War Between the Amazulu and the Boers 1860-1879

People in North Zululand were constantly living under the fear that a pending war between the Amazulu and the Boers could start any time. In the years 1860 to 1879 Cetshwayo, intermittently mobilized his Amabutho at various *Amakhanda* (homesteads) to get ready for an imminent confrontation.

It was reported, or rather there were rumours spreading around in Natal to the effect that the Kings Mushweshwe and Cetshwayo had entered into an alliance against the whites. These rumours spread after King Mushweshwe’s forces had defeated the Boers. Due to internal and external pressure against Cetshwayo the war did not take place. The hereditary chiefs (*Izikhulu nezimpunga*) and Mpande himself were against the war, hence Cetshwayo had to withdraw his plans. King Cetshwayo kaMpande gave altogether a different version of the events in North Zululand, when he was interviewed in Cape Town in 1880/81. The Boers had attacked Thinta’s homestead, a brother to Dikana Mdlalose, and father of Sekethwayo. During this raid they caught a number of women and children. Thinta himself was bitten by a Boer and a Boer shot at a young man. On several occasions the Boers threatened the Abaqulusi under Sekethwayo and people living at eNhlazatshe. King Cetshwayo, when interviewed by the British in Cape Town in 1881 on the events in Northern Zululand prior to the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 stated

> “The Zulus then got alarmed and armed, I also gave orders to the whole of Zululand to arm themselves and keep themselves in readiness until they were told whereabouts in the country the Boers are lying, but on my ascertaining that the Boers had gone back to their own country, I immediately apprised all my soldiers of it, and told them to go home, and keep quiet. This, is what was called in Natal Cetshwayo has armed himself, and is about to fight.”

Cetshwayo was actually referring to various incidents, where in each case a war almost broke out between Amazulu and Amabhunu. These were during the times of Mpande 1864 to 1866 and later on during Cetshwayo’s reign 1877 to 1878. After the 1866 upheavals Mpande on the advice of the Chiefs, (*izikhulu*) allowed the uThulwana regiment and other regiments of the same age to put on head rings (*ukujutshwa nokuthunga izicoco*) in 1867. This decree was

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long overdue for uThulwana regiment to which Cetshwayo belonged, had already reached the age of forty years. This also explains the reason why Cetshwayo had very few children compared to the other Zulu kings. Mpande did not want to give permission to the uThulwana regiment for he feared that Cetshwayo might take power from him not de facto as has already been the case but also de jure for if Cetshwayo had put on a head ring at an early stage say thirty-three or so, this would have meant then that he was a full man with all authority to snatch political power from him. In order to prevent that from happening, Mpande delayed giving permission to (uthunga) for at least eight years since the battle of eNdondakusuka in 1856 in which Cetshwayo was victorious. The conflict between the Amazulu and the Boers in what was called border dispute and land encroachment by the Boers, created a climate of real animosity and bitterness.

King Cetshwayo and the Zulu War of 1879

In 1873 Cetshwayo succeeded his father as King of the Zulus. Theopphilus Shepstone, however, now Administrator of the British Colony of Transvaal, rejected the Zulus’ claims, which he had previously supported, at a meeting at Blood River on 18th October 1877. He advised the British government to wage war on the Zulu kingdom. Only when the king’s power was broken would British rule be secure:

“Cetshwayo is the secret hope of every [...] independent chief, hundreds of miles from him. And it will not be until his power is destroyed that they will make up their minds to submit to the rule of civilization.”

When the British annexed the Transvaal two years later and Shepstone became the Governor General of the Transvaal, he backed the Boers against the Zulu kingdom. At this news, negotiations between Cetshwayo and Shepstone broke down, and rumours of war were rife. The Zululand-Transvaal boundary dispute served as a pretext for Shepstone’s proposed annexation of Zululand. To investigate the border conflict, the Natal administration under Sir Henry Bulwer appointed a Boundary Commission. The publication of the Commission’s report was delayed. Even though it supported the Zulu king’s claims, its publication was coupled with an ultimatum to the Zulu king. Among other measures, fines were imposed on Zululand inhabitants for alleged border violations (which were not confirmed by the report of the Commission), and the Zulu military system was to be abolished.

In 1879, the British army invaded Zululand, was defeated at Isandhlwana, but emerged victorious at Ulundi a few months later. In the wake of this victory, Cetshwayo was captured and deported, and the Zulu kingdom was divided into 13 chiefdoms whose chiefs were appointed by the British administration. These appointed chiefs did not command the support of the followers of the Zulu royal chiefs, and civil war arose whose main protagonists were Zibhebhu and Hamu on the side of the uMandlakazi, and Ngenetshni (they called themselves Abashokobezi) and Dinuzulu, Mnyamana, and Ndabuko on the side of the Usuthu. Dinuzulu sought the help of the Boers to oust Zibhebhu, and in return was lured into an agreement with the Boers to cede individual plots of land for farms in the North Western part of Zululand.

Southern Transvaal Boers alleged that the Usuthu leaders promised them 800 farms in Central Zululand in return for supporting them against the Mandlakazi. Consequently, a total

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18 Shamase, M.Z., Zulu Potentates; From the earliest to Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu (Durban, S.M. Publications, 1996), pp. 56-75.
of 2710000 acres were surveyed and portioned into farms for white settlers - far in excess of the agreed New Republic territory, - turning thousands of Zululand inhabitants into labour tenants on their community-held land. The area, proclaimed 1886 as New Republic, eventually (after several surveys and delimitations) came to span the central area from the upper ranges of the Mhlatuze River in the South to the Pongola River in the North, with Vryheid as the capital. The area bordering this territory on the southeast (down to the Thukela River), the so-called Reserve Territory, was created as a buffer between Natal and Zululand; Cetshwayo was given the central part of Zululand, and Zibhebhu received a territory to the northeast. In 1887, the central state authorities saw these territories annexed - the New Republic to the Transvaal, and the whole of Zululand, including the Reserve Territory, and Cetshwayo’s and Zibhebhu’s territories to Natal. The whole territory was now subject to white magistrates.

In the South African Republic, the first anti-squatting law (plakkerwet, 1887) came into effect, restricting inhabitants living on white-owned farms to five families per farm. When the Boer commandoes continued their fight in the form of guerilla warfare, the British troops retaliated by destroying all supplies, means of transport, and transport routes, especially along the Natal/Transvaal border. With the capitulation of Boer commandoes in Vereeniging in 1902, Transvaal became a British colony\(^{19}\). The British administration restored property relations in the countryside by, among other things, allowing Boers to keep the livestock they had looted from blacks during the war, and restoring to them the cattle looted from blacks. Zululand was opened up for white settlement and Zulu-speaking inhabitants assigned to “locations” and “reserves”.

**Prince Mbilini kaMswati and Chief Manyonyoba kaThulasizwe Kubheka in Defence of Northern Zululand 1874-1879**

Chief Manyonyoba, according to African succession laws, should have been installed as a chief over his people. One year had lapsed between the death of his predecessor and his installation. The mourning time and purification ceremony had to be observed strictly. Manyonyoba, however, could not enter his eNtombe area for the Boers and missionaries had been preventing him from assuming his office. The Boers claimed to have jurisdiction over eNtombe and eNkombela whereas the missionaries imposed themselves as rulers over eNtombe residents. It seems with Mbilini’s help, Manyonyoba managed to assert his authority in eNtombe as a chief under Cetshwayo’s rule eBaqulusini in Northern Zululand. Chief Manyonyoba was not happy when his people became Christians. The missionary was making amakhafula out of his people; therefore he should leave Manyonyoba’s area\(^{20}\).

**Boers versus Missionary Wagner**

The Boers came back to eNtombe to revive their claims over eNtombe for the third time in 1885/86. Wagner had written a series of letters and sent delegates to the Boer Republic Headquarters in Pretoria to defend the mission’s right of possession of eNtombe. In the previous section we observed and analysed Wagner’s methods of approach in dealing with the black Africans. His method then was first to assert his authority as de facto and de jure missionary and therefore authority over eNtombe residents and second if that modus operandi

\(^{19}\) C 3247, Enclosure 1 in No. 78, pp. 67-70; 1882, *A Meeting with Commissioner for Zululand Mr Melmoth Osborn*, 21.4.1882

\(^{20}\) Guy, Jeff, *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, pp. 201-204.
did not function then he would use the state police to evict the disobedient residents. This stance and position is suggestive of an already existing alliance between the mission society or missionaries and the colonists be they English or Boers. Reference to King Mpande’s permission when dealing with the Africans, was never mentioned, for doing so, would be an admission that the territory belonged to the Zulu kings. Wagner carefully avoided this. However, in dealing with the second party, namely the Boers, Wagner and Fröhling mentioned and used Mpande’s authority in defence of the mission’s right over eNtombe and other stations against the encroaching Boers.  

Dispossession: Settlers vs Zululand

The settlers also had their ulterior plans to invade Zululand and open it up for labour in colonial Natal. This was clear from the policies of Lord Carnarvon, Shepstone, Bulwer, Bartle Frere and Garnet Wolseley. The British policy of confederation had a destructive effect on Zululand. The disagreements of the South African Republic with its native neighbours, chiefly the Zulus, were numerous and bitter. It was then primarily with a view to lay the foundation of a sound system of self-protection against native danger and so shift the burden onto the right shoulders, that Lord Carnavon moved in the direction of confederation. Some of the colonists in Natal thought that the immediately urgent call for a general union showed the formidable character of the native question and the importance of a uniform, wise and strong policy in dealing with it. There was a school of thought in colonial Natal that in the white public interest there should be control over native affairs. It purported that reforms were essential to the colony’s development; without them, they would have a black colony, which would mean the decay of resources, the absence of prosperity, and a general decline in the level of subsistence. There was the understanding that a confederation would certainly create strength, diminish the risk which was inseparable from the existence of those great native tribes, and preserve the European communities from sudden panics.

As regards the border dispute, it was the intention of the Boers to take a strip of land in northern Zululand about four farms deep, along the whole length of the reserve border down to the sea. This belt of land was ten miles wide and the Boers intended when this belt had been laid off, to lay off, if necessary, another similar belt of farms alongside the first, and so on, until the full number of 800 farms had been completed. The English administration in colonial Natal tended to portray the attitude of favoring the Zulus against the Boers, when it felt that its interests were threatened. For the colonists in Natal, the occupation by the Boers of the Zulu country from the Transvaal border to the sea was an act of most serious importance to the colony of Natal, because it was an act that would effectively close the outlet hitherto existing between Natal, Zululand and Portuguese East Africa. The English settlers argued that for forty years Natal had been a refuge for the natives from Zululand, until the native population had become a cause of inconvenience and threatened to become a source of danger. It was always held that those people who fled and lived in colonial Natal belonged to the Zulu country by right of birth and heritage.

The annexation was advocated from April to July 1877 by both the press in Natal and the missionaries. The Natal Witness stated: “It is high time that the British Government should


22 Colenbrander, P.J., ‘Some reflections on the kingship of Mpande, History of Natal and Zululand, (Durban, 1985), pp.17-18
step in and put an end to this wanton and reckless sacrifice of human life, remove the constant menace and danger to ourselves in Natal; but on higher grounds, our bounden duty to break the yoke of the tyrant and let the oppressed free”. The Natal Witness further stated that “the pacification of Zululand would seem to be an even more important business than the annexation of the Transvaal”. The annexation of Zululand was justified on the grounds of humanity. It was said that Britain had not only the obligation to intervene on humanitarian grounds, but a contractual right to do so. Reports began to be received from March onwards of attacks on mission stations and the murder of converts, and these were accompanied by further reports of more general slaughter in Zululand. There is abundant evidence, stated the Natal Mercury to prove that kafir residents at mission stations were being constantly killed in cold blood. It was said that King Cetshwayo was killing his subjects too, at the rate of fifty people a day and he had announced his intention of shedding more blood than Kings Shaka and Dingane combined. Such statements and other propagandistic utterances spearheaded by the press and the missionaries were directed against King Cetshwayo and Zululand. Indeed, they were calling for the destruction of King Cetshwayo kaMpande (rex Cetshwayo delendum est) The Border Commission found in favour of Zululand’s claims, but the interest of confederation superseded the border question. The colonial office in England instructed Shepstone to annex the Transvaal on the 11th of April 1877, contradicting itself entirely. With this act, Britain and colonial Natal conspired to annex Zululand, an action which was effected soon thereafter. The annexation did not solve the question of border disputes. Shepstone and Bulwer could not reverse the developments towards war, which they had provoked. From December 1877 until January 1878, Shepstone and Frere called for the destruction of Zululand.

After the Anglo-Zulu war of January 1879 and the civil war from 1880 – 1888, a Demarcation Commission was appointed to survey and demarcate the boundary between the Boer and Zulu territories. The Commission consisted of two high colonial administration officials on the British Natal side and three on the Boer side, and an observer, Martin Luthuli, delegated by king Dinuzulu kaCetshwayo. Major Mc Kean, the, surveyor, submitted a lengthy report on the day-to-day beacon-to-beacon proceedings of the Commission. In his survey, he gave particular attention to the ethnographic significant of the eMakhosini district, incorporating the royal graves, and a topography with special mention of rich agricultural and cattle keeping areas, one of which was chosen for Boer settler occupation and divided up into 65 farms. The dispossession and expropriation was perfect. The mission of the Demarcation Commission, then turned out to be not one of safe-guarding the Zululand inhabitants’ interests, but a mission of encroaching settlers, and one of the pacification of Zululand, an exercise on which British and Boer interests converged. Consequently, the demarcation line at many points was designed to provide for exchange and interchange and passage between the New Republic and colonial Natal, by defining a principle of passage by virtue of fact that it is fixed, at one point, along the most viable wagon road.272 Havelock told the gathered inhabitants of Zululand:

“Dinuzulu must know, and all the Zulus must know, that the rule of the House of Chaka is a thing of the past. It is dead. It is like water spilt on the ground. The Queen rules now in Zululand and no one else. The Queen who conquered Cetshwayo has now taken the government of the country into her own hands. The Governor is sent to represent the Queen, and to maintain her authority in Zululand. Let Dinuzulu and Undabuko and everyone know that the Governor is determined to do this. The Queen

has taken the rule of the country out of the kindness for the Zulu nation. The Zulus can no longer stand by themselves. If they were left to themselves they would fight among themselves, and others would come and take the whole country down to the sea... It is to save the Zulus from the misery that must fall upon them if they were left to themselves that the Queen has assumed the Government of the country."

Therefore it is appropriate in retrospect to say that the encounter and dispossession in Northern Zululand was a scenario in a long chapter in the history of conquest. The perpetrators were missionaries and settlers on the one side and the victims were Amakhosi and their people on the other. Hence, it was a bitter-sweet encounter. The demarcation process benefitted the farmers to whom the land was allocated, and in a way also benefitted the missionaries in that some of the mission stations which had originally been annexed were returned to them. The total losers were the chiefs and their people.

1910 to 1960

The period of 1910 to the 1950s in the liberation struggle coincides with two major events in the consolidation of white power in South Africa’s political history. Firstly, in 1910 the Union of South Africa was formed, officially declaring the country an independent state following the end of colonial rule. Secondly, apartheid policies to oppress black people began to be legally implemented after the founders of apartheid, the National Party, had won the national government elections in 1948. It is instructive to also note that this era is one in which the liberation struggle was still characterised as passive, as opposed to launching an active resistance campaign against apartheid. The two strategies have mainly been distinguished by the early apprehension to use violence in fighting the apartheid state initially, versus the decision to use any and all tactics, including actively violent means in advancing the course of the liberation movements adopted in the later years of the twentieth century.

These two major events in the consolidation of white minority rule which have been mentioned above, led to a myriad of racist laws aimed at promoting the principle of separate development. Given the socio-economic dynamics of the time, the most critical issue around which whites and blacks conflicted was the question of land ownership and occupation. In 1913 the Native Land Act was adopted by the apartheid state. The ownership, occupation and use of land was especially significant in provinces in which rigorous economic activities were taking place, steady or rapid industrialisation was experienced, and rapid urbanisation was fast becoming a serious challenge. What is now known as the province of KwaZulu-Natal is an archetypal example of the above described situation. The liberation struggle against apartheid as taking place in KwaZulu-Natal between 1910 and the 1950s, paying particular attention to land and housing disputes, will be the focal point of this section.

The Province of KwaZulu-Natal was so named in 1994 after the end of apartheid. The area had been forged from an amalgamation between what was previously known as the Province of Natal, and the Bantustan of KwaZulu/Zululand. A resurgent tradition of resistance is said to be relatively vociferous in KZN dating back to the rule of traditional kings and chiefs in the area. People in KZN were ‘constantly endeavouring to comprehend, take advantage of,
and struggle against established power within the city [of Durban].’

One of the principal displays of struggle between the apartheid government and the people of Durban, was the 1930s when members of the community flat out refused to be relocated to KwaMashu from the then Mkhumbane area, which is now known as Cato Manor. Land in this area was mostly owned by Indian people who would then rent out some of it out to blacks who were working or searching for employment in the Durban.

**Resistance to Forced Removals**

Expanded industrial and commercial activities in the city of Durban attracted scores of African labourers who came to settle in shanty towns in and around the city in a bid to stay close to sources of employment. The primary reason why Africans who were providing much needed labour to the growing economy of Durban were forced to build shacks to live in was simply because no formal housing had been put aside for Black folk in the white residential spaces of Natal. Africans were not permitted to purchase and own land in Durban, as this area had been reserved for whites. It was only between 1904 and 1913 that blacks were ‘permitted to purchase land outside of theirs locations and reserves’.

This decision was of course reversed with the introduction of the new land act in 1913 which further expropriated land from Africans to whites. The national and local governments prioritised it in their interest to annex and dominate over most of KwaZulu-Natal’s arable, valuable and productive land. Whenever a recommendation to increase the land reserved for blacks was raised, such as when the Natives Land Trust Act of 1936 added 22 000 square miles as “potential” Native areas it would be heavily rejected by white citizens especially farmers and business owners. But this was not the only significant reason for the development of shanty towns in Natal. Several other reasons have been suggested. One such reason, which has received enormous emphasis, is the effects of modernisation on the lifestyles that Africans who moved to urban areas from the reserves became accustomed to.

It is argued that on the one hand, Africans living in Zululand were essentially imprisoned, cordoned off into specified (non-liveable) living areas by the white government. Whilst similar demarcation had occurred with the establishment of townships surrounding Durban, there was nonetheless a bit more freedom in these urban locations than in the Zululand Reserve. However on the other hand, Africans living outside of Zululand lived a precarious existence whereby violent raids and forced removals could befall them at any time. They were also subjected to various taxes and high rents, which included those living in shack dwellings. The Natives Urban Areas Act of 1923 determined the living conditions of Africans staying outside of the Reserves.

**Proletarian Resistance in Mkhumbane/Cato Manor**

‘Worlds made by slave owners or mining capitalists are in continual conflict with worlds made by slaves and miners’

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This opening quote reveals the very *raison d’être* behind the conflict surrounding the attempts by Durban’s Native Administration Department to forcibly remove all black people living in Mkhumbane – a shantytown located in the Cato Manor Farm area near to the industrial area; to KwaMashu – a formal housing area that had been established to increase the geographical spread between races. Notably, over and above the separatist and racist mentality from which the KwaMashu, and all other housing projects were born, there were several benefits that Africans could accrue upon relocating to these new areas. The most important and emphasised of these benefits were health related, as proper water, sanitation, and refuse removal infrastructure had been put in place in the design of KwaMashu. In contrast, the shantytown of Mkhumbane failed to meet any of these basic human living conditions. In spite of the potential benefits, the proletarian folks of Mkhumbane refused to reside in KwaMashu, fearing apartheid administration’s strict control of the area. In Mkhumbane residents were very much free of the racist paternalistic policies which came with living under apartheid authority. In the shantytown, black people were not administered by anyone, and it can be said that they were very much only accountable to their Indian landlords as far as rent paying was concerned.

Arguably as a spinoff of the pseudo self-governance which Africans enjoyed in the shantytowns, proletarian militancy was on the increase. The shack dwellers had fostered a powerful sense of unity and community in the area, and were determined to gain permanent legal land rights in Mkhumbane by the late 1940s. There was also a consciousness and desire to derive politico-economic advantages from the industrialisation which was taking place in the city; wherein Africans were playing a critical part as exploited labourers. Therefore when the municipality began to force occupants out of the Mkhumbane shantytown, strong resistance broke out. Many of the residents simply avoided and ignored eviction instructions from the municipality for prolonged periods. Another of the popular tactics used by the residents of Mkhumbane to avoid going to KwaMashu was ‘shack-shifting’, whereby a person who is evicted from one shantytown would move to another shack area instead of going to the formal housing township to which they had been designated.

In the late 1940s and in the 1950s, the apartheid state, capital owners and shack dwellers were in constant conflict over land ownership, occupation, usage and the housing question. These structural issues were also linked to socio-cultural antagonisms coming from whites and some of the Indian land owners around Cato Manor farm against the blacks. Stereotypes about noise making, beer drinking, unruly behaviour, disease breeding, criminal activities etc provided a major push behind the forced removals of the black shack dwellers to KwaMashu; and the resistance with which this was met from the Africans, who had really worked hard to make do with living conditions that were far below any standard. In the end however by the late 1950s the apartheid administration had succeed in its relocation programme.

**Trading Class Formation in KwaMashu**

The freedom of the Mkhumbane shantytown allowed for several types of informal, as well as ostensibly illegal, trading to emerge, which augmented the salaries of families living in the shack lands. The brewing of beer was an especially important survival strategy for widowed women, whilst some of those who could not secure employment in the formal sector ended up proving materials, building, or renting out shacks to newcomers in the area. Taking into


consideration that these traders had devised a way of getting an income from the Mkhumbane area, it was no surprise that they would be vehemently against the forced removals. Seeing this, the municipal administration then provided incentives for African traders to move to KwaMashu. These included, well built shop facilities where traders could sell their goods from. The formation of a bourgeois class in KwaMashu fitted well within the divide and rule philosophy of the apartheid government. Officially pitting one class against the other broke the unity which the shack dwellers had established in Mkhumbane, and significantly weakened the ability of the African residents to work together in fighting for land rights.

**Rural Struggles against forced removals in the late 1950s**

An organisation of white liberals, the Liberation Party, played a crucial role in the mobilisation of Africans against forced removals from their land in the rural areas which was taking place in the 1950s. It is essential that some of their key informants be recognised as unsung heroes and heroines. This may be possible through discussions with the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA) which had taken over from where the Liberal Party left off, championed by founding member Peter Brown, in the 1970s and was still in existence in the early 1990s.

**Natal Indian Resistance**

1910

26 February, Mahatma Gandhi supports the African Peoples Organisations resolution to declare the day of arrival of the Prince of Wales in South Africa as a day of mourning in protest against the South Africa Acts disenfranchisement of Indians, Coloureds and Africans in the upcoming Union of South Africa.

1911

The last ship to bring indentured Indian labour to Natal, the *Umlazi*, arrives in Durban. At this stage the indentured labour scheme was finally abolished.

1917

The Indian Printers Union and the Indian Workers Union were founded. Their secretaries, MK Moodley and Rev BLE Sigamoney, were both Natal-born Indians.

1921

5 March, The Durban Land Alienation Ordinance, No 14 of 1922, was passed by the Durban Town Council, enabling it to exclude Indians from the ownership or occupation of property in designated White areas. This legislation preceded the imposition by the Nationalist Party of apartheid legislation by 27 years

6 March, The Natal Indian Congress was re-established in Durban for the second time. Ismail Gora was elected president.

1923

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Draft: Not for distribution

31 May, The Mayor of Durban, Walter Gilbert, officially opened the third national conference of Indian organisations in the Durban Town Hall, which formally established the SA Indian Congress. Omar Hajee Amod Jhaveri was elected its first president

13 January 1949

Following an incident between a black youth and an Indian shopkeeper in Victoria Street, riots broke out in Victoria Street, Grey Street, Victoria Avenue, Tollgate, Mayville, Musgrave Road and Cato Manor. According to official figures 200 people were killed and 1029 injured with over 25,000 people being displaced from their homes.

The 1960s

Several factors converged at the beginning of 1960 to usher in a decade characterised by extreme repression and demoralisation in the political life of the nation. With the 1959 Bantu Self-Government Act in place, the Nationalist government embarked on a policy of ‘divide and rule’. The banning of the ANC and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) in April 1960 was an attempt to repress all forms of opposition, although non-violent and legal, in the country as a whole. In Natal, the decade was marked by the widespread imposition of restrictions, banning and banishment orders on individuals, arrests, detentions and police brutality, and by criminal prosecutions under the main pillars of apartheid legislation.

From the early sixties, the pass laws were the primary instrument used by the state to arrest and charge its political opponents. By the same token, it was mainly the popular resistance mobilised against those pass laws that kept resistance politics alive during this period. Africans in Natal incurred heavy fines for burning reference documents. One of those fined was Chief Albert Luthuli, president of the ANC and 1960 Nobel Peace Laureate. Shortly before its banning, the ANC organised anti-pass law demonstrations in Durban, resulting in large-scale arrests and detentions. Protests against the Group Areas Act became another major feature of resistance at this time, particularly in areas where residents were under threat of removal.

Reconstituting the ANC underground

As was the case in other parts of the country, the Natal ANC was also preoccupied with the reconstitution of the organisation as an underground movement after the bannings and the lifting of the state of emergency in August 1960. At the time a close relationship had developed between members of the ANC, the South African Communist Party (SACP), and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), with many people having membership in all three organisations. Natal had also experienced a wave of militancy in the late 1950s up to the period prior to the Sharpeville massacre. In this province the M-Plan was implemented differently to the way it was done in other provinces. The various areas were divided into blocks, each with its own network of cells led by seven member committees. Several cells existed on the same street, depending on the length of the street. Members of different cells didn’t know one another. Only the block leaders knew the leaders of the various cells within the block, but not the members of each cell. The combination of factory committees and clandestine organisation in the townships, built around the M-Plan, helped forge the kind of organisation that could survive the repressive response of the state.

Umkhonto we Sizwe
The ANC established a separate armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), in 1961 and developed an underground campaign to expose and counter state repression. The multi-pronged strategy included a propaganda campaign and student protest action in a number of black and English-medium universities. On 16 December 1961, MK launched a sabotage campaign directed mainly at government installations. This led to a large number of bannings, arrests and prosecutions, and the torture of detainees in Natal. Many operatives and activists were sentenced to jail terms for sabotage or for membership of the banned liberation organisations; many more were driven into exile.

From the mid-1950s, many young people in the Natal province were recruited into the various affiliates of SACTU and thereafter into the ANC. Among these new recruits were Louis Mkhize, Japhet Ndlovu, David Ndawonde, Justice Mpanza, Cletus Mzimela, Matthews Meyiwa, Leonard Mdingi, Zakhele Mdlalose, Cleopas Ndlovu, Jethro Ndlovu, Russel Maphanga, Queeneth Dladla and many others. Gwala and Mabhida recruited activists like Anthony Xaba, William Khanyile and Joel Kunene in the Pietermaritzburg area. Once the MK national high command had been established, a regional high command was constituted in Natal. It consisted of Ronnie Kasrils, Bruno Mtolo, Eric Mtshali, Curnick Ndlovu and Billy Nair. Each member of the regional high command was made responsible for a particular area of the province: the South Coast, North Coast and Midlands.

Most MK units were manned by trade unionists, including Justice Mpanza, Cletus Mzimela, David Ndawonde, Abolani Duma, Kay Moonsamy, Natrival Babenia, George Naicker, Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim, Billy Nair, Bruno Mtolo, Solomon Mbanjwa, Alfred Duma, Bernard Nkosi and Queeneth Dladla. In the Pietermaritzburg area, Harry Gwala had organised units that included Anthony Xaba, John Mabulala Nene and David Mkhize. Riot Mkhwanazi maintained links between the Durban-based units and those on the North Coast. MP Naicker served as the main link between the Natal Regional Command and the National High Command. Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim and Solomon Mbanjwa were co-opted into the regional command to bolster the Natal structures, while David Ndawonde, Stephen Mtshali and Abolani Duma served as members of the reserve command in Natal. They reported to the Commander of MK, Nelson Mandela, until his arrest in Howick in 1962, and thereafter to Raymond Mhlaba.

Units were formed in several parts of Natal. Some operated from Hammarsdale under the leadership of Solomon Mbanjwa, while others were based in Pietermaritzburg, Ladysmith, Clermont, Tongaat and Stanger. MK members received their initial training internally. Members of the high command received training in the handling of explosives and sabotage from Jack Hodgson. In December 1961, MK began a campaign of sabotage directed at government installations, especially communications and power installations. The Natal region carried out more than 30 acts of sabotage in and around Durban.

The sabotage campaign began with an attempt on 15 December 1961 to bomb the Durban offices of the Department of Bantu Affairs. Other acts included the November 1962 attempt to sabotage pylons in the Durban/Pinetown area, the bombing of the Durban Post Office in December 1962 and the January 1963 attempt to sabotage telephone services in an industrial area of Durban. An African tax office, a beer hall and a section of railway line were also damaged by sabotage at this time.
In the 1964 ‘Spear of the Nation’ trial, Billy Nair, Curnick Ndlovu and seventeen others stood accused of twenty-seven acts of sabotage in Natal, the possession of explosives and the recruitment of military trainees. Bruno Mtolo gave evidence for the state, allegedly at the behest of Jan Daniel Potgieter, from the Security Branch’s intelligence unit. Potgieter claims to have ‘turned’ many of the informers and/or askaris [‘turned’ guerrilla fighters] who assisted the Security Branch in Natal. Nair and Ndlovu were sentenced to twenty years, one was discharged and the rest were given sentences of five to fifteen years.

In response to the sabotage campaign, the General Laws Amendment Act (76 of 1962) created the offence of sabotage. Sabotage was loosely defined as “wrongful and wilful” acts designed to “obstruct, injure, tamper with or destroy” things such as the ‘health and safety of the public’ or the “supply of water, light, fuel or foodstuffs”. The penalties ranged from a minimum five-year sentence to the death penalty. From the beginning of August 1963, many members of MK units in Natal were detained, including the three members of the Natal Regional Command, Curnick Ndlovu, Billy Nair and Bruno Mtolo. Others arrested included Harry Gwala, Matthews Meyiwa, Alpheus Mdlalose, Nattrival Babenia, David Mkhize, Bernard Nkosi, George Naicker, Siva Pillay, Sunny Singh, Solomon Mbanjwa, Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim and David Ndawonde. Many others left for exile, while the majority listed here were sentenced to years’ of imprisonment for sabotage.

### Into exile

Many cadres were ordered to leave the country and undergo military training abroad. Among those who left from Natal were Eric Mtshali, Cletus Mzimela and Justice Mpanza. From mid-to late 1963 there was an exodus of young men and women from different parts of the country. Many travelled throught Johannesburg, from where they were taken through Bechuanaland (Botswana), through Southern Rohdesia (Zimbabwe), through Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and eventually to Tanganyika (Tanzania). Cadres from Natal made up a large contingent of the groups that were subsequently sent to Morroco, Egypt, China and and the Soviet Union for military training.

By the mid-1960s, the underground structures of the ANC had collapsed and formal opposition politics were at their most subdued. After the Rivonia trial (1963–64) in which Nelson Mandela and other members of the MK high command were tried, an attempt was made to reconstitute the high command, but all its members were subsequently arrested (see below). The internal units of MK were in disarray, and any Natal operatives who were not in prison or on trial went into exile. About 800 MK cadres were in exile by 1965, undergoing training in Tanzania, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union and China under the command of Joe Modise. The leadership of the struggle was shifted to the ANC in exile.

### The African People’s Democratic Union of South Africa (APDUSA)

APDUSA (refer to section on the Wesetern Cape above) also took root in this province. Branches were formed in Pietermaritzburg, Durban and Dundee. The Pietermaritzburg branch recruited mainly among workers from the leather industry, one of the major economic activities in the city. Shaik Hassan, a leather worker and member of the Pietermaritzburg Progressive Study Circle, an NEUM affiliate, emerged as one of the main leaders of a leather workers’ strike in the city in 1960. When he called on Enver Hassim, Durban lawyer and NEUM executive member, to represent the strikers, an opportunity was created to recruit
many of them as members. With Hassan as chairman, the Pietermaritzburg branch became one of the largest in the country.

The Durban and Dundee branches drew support from younger activists who had been politicised through NEUM affiliated student and youth organisations such as the Society of Young Africa, the Durban Students Union and the Progressive Forum. The chairman of the Durban branch, Karrim Essack, a lawyer and NEUM executive member, built up a network of part-time and full-time organisers, partly funded from his own pocket. Besides recruiting members and conducting meetings in Indian working class areas and black locations in and around Durban, they also worked in rural areas of Natal such as Ixopo, Bergville, Ladysmith, Izigolweni and even as far afield as eastern Mpondoland in the Transkei. The Dundee branch was also active in the rural areas of northern Natal.

**The Post-Rivonia ANC, MK and SACP**

After the arrest of the leadership of the ANC, SACP and MK at Lilliesleaf Farm, Rivonia, on 11 July 1963, a new political leadership was established for the ANC and a military leadership for MK. Shortly before the Lobatse conference in late 1962, the ANC formed a National Secretariat to understudy its National Executive Committee (NEC). The Secretariat was made up of the chairman, Gabula Mahlasela, Michael Dingake (publicity secretary), Ruth Mompati, Alfred Nzo, Bartholomew Hlapane, Henry Makgothi and John Mavuso, as well as NEC members Govan Mbeki and Dan Tloome. After July 1963, the National Secretariat took over the functions of the NEC, including the task of reconstituting ANC structures depleted by the Rivonia arrests and the subsequent detention, imprisonment, banning, and forced departure from the country of large numbers of members. However, a number of members of the secretariat had already been imprisoned or forced into exile. The remaining leaders in the National Secretariat were Gabula Mahlasela, Michael Dingake and Dan Tloome. Josiah Jele was co-opted onto the National Secretariat during the second half of 1963 in order to augment the structure.

Women played a critical role in ensuring that the underground structures functioned effectively. Albertina Sisulu, Gertrude Shope, Greta Ncaphai, Hunadi Motsoaledi, Irene Mkwang, Tiny Nkwe, June Mlangeni, Beauty Makgothi, Rita Ndazanga, Eufenia Hlapane and others worked closely with some of the leaders who had not been arrested. These women performed various special roles, such as organising safe accommodation for those who were on the run, finding safe storage for propaganda and publicity equipment, managing an elaborate communications system and courier network for the underground, and undertaking routine political chores such as gathering information about and attending to the welfare of victims of the struggle.

However, the National Secretariat faced a difficult situation in mid-1963. It dealt with underground structures that were destroyed as soon as they were set up. It was a difficult period because the police would detain leaders as soon as they emerged. In addition, a climate of suspicion enveloped the ANC once it became clear that people in detention were being tortured into revealing information. This gave rise to ‘constant paranoia’ and a reluctance to respond to overtures to organise underground.

Unlike the ANC, no understudy structure had been created for MK. The Rivonia Trial began on 9 October 1963, and was still in progress when the first steps were taken to reconstitute MK, and a new NHC was appointed. Within a relatively brief period, the new High
Command had reactivated MK structures. With members of MK’s first NHC either in prison or in exile, and most of the regional commands sorely depleted, the second NHC was established, with Wilton Mkwayi chosen as the leader. The second NHC was established just before the Rivonia Trial began in October 1963. Despite innumerable difficulties the new NHC was able to re-establish regional commands. In Natal, Cleopas Ndlovu, Jethro Ndlovu and James Ngwenya were drawn into the second regional MK command.

However, in 1964 another wave of mass arrests took place. Several members of MK’s second NHC were apprehended in July and September. Wilton Mkwayi, David Kitson, Laloo Chiba, John Edward Matthews and Mac Maharaj were later convicted of more than 50 acts of sabotage in what became known as the ‘little Rivonia Trial’. The state listed 58 acts of sabotage for which the accused and/or their co-conspirators were allegedly responsible. These included the use of petrol, chemical and incendiary bombs to set alight factories, police residential quarters, petrol depots, railway signal cables, carriages and lines, electricity pylons, private houses and government buildings in Port Elizabeth and various parts of the Transvaal and Natal. The state compiled a list of 35 people in the Transvaal, 29 in Natal and 41 in Port Elizabeth who had participated, together with or in support of the wishes of the accused, in carrying out these acts of sabotage. A second list, containing the names of 139 people who had been recruited for military training, was submitted as Annexure D. There is thus evidence that MK carried out some actions during the period. However, the bulk of the activities were directed at recruiting and sending people out of the country.

The chairman of the National Secretariat, Gabula Mahlasela, was among the hundreds detained during the second half of 1964, and on his release towards the end of the year he left the country. Other notable leaders of the ANC underground who went into exile were Florence Mophosho, who was banned in 1964, Kate Molale, Bernard Molewa, Obed and John Motshabi, and Joe Nhlanhla. After these events, the leadership of the underground shifted to Communist Party leader Bram Fischer. However, Fischer was detained on 23 September 1964 and subsequently charged under the Suppression of Communism Act. He skipped bail in January 1965 and went underground for some 10 months.

During the time Fischer was underground a provisional local committee of the Central Committee was established, and communication with the remaining members of the Communist Party in Cape Town, Durban and other parts of the country was maintained through encrypted correspondence. One of the first things Fischer did to revive the underground was to re-establish links with old cadres, such as Row-ley Arenstein in Natal and Fred Carneson in Cape Town. Fischer’s contact with Durban-based Arenstein was David Rudin, who was sent to Durban in March 1965 to enlist Arenstein’s support for revival of the Congress movement in Natal. Arenstein agreed to cooperate with the Johannesburg-based members of the Congress movement.

Contact with MK and ANC members in Natal was maintained through David Rudin, who obtained reports from Durban-based David Ernst on the requirements of the African membership of the Congress movement and MK in the region. Fischer was also able to communicate with Jethro Ndlovu, a member of the Natal regional MK command, through Rudin, and supported Ndlovu’s request for assistance when he went underground and relocated from Natal to Johannesburg. Fischer was to supply Ndlovu with a false passbook. Fischer was arrested on 11 November 1965 and subsequently sentenced to.

In Natal several small ANC underground networks continued to operate, albeit in a state of semi-paralysis, in the second half of the 1960s. They were made up of ANC members who
had survived the mass arrests. The arrest of Dorothy Nyembe in 1969 revealed the existence of an ANC underground that operated in the Greater Durban area and in south-western Natal after 1966. Other members of the underground unit to which Nyembe had belonged, most of whom were under banning orders, were Leonard Mdingi, Johannes ‘Passfour’ Phungula, Gladys Manzi and Florence Mkhize.

The Wankie and Sipolilo Campaigns

In 1967, MK cadres were sent into Rhodesia with Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) units in what was known as the ‘Wankie Campaign’. The main MK unit (the Luthuli Detachment) was to forge a way to South Africa whilst another established a transit base in Sipolilo, Rhodesia. The South African security forces were invited into Rhodesia by the Smith government and launched a joint operation against MK-ZAPU units. These were the first cross-border actions against MK cadres from Natal. The Luthuli Detachment included well-known Natal MK cadres such as Justice Mpanza from Groutville and Daluxolo Luthuli.

The South African Students’ Organisation (SASO)

In the late 1960s, new forms of resistance and new challenges emerged internally. The South African Students’ Organisation (SASO) espoused the philosophy of Black Consciousness, which addressed the psychological oppression and the daily experience of racism of black people. As indicated in the section on the Western Cape above, the leading figure behind the formation of SASO was a medical student at the University of Natal’s Black Section, Steve Biko. Biko was elected first president of SASO at its inaugural conference at Turfloop in July 1969. Other students from the University of Natal elected into the leadership include Aubrey Mokoape, Vuyelwa Mashalaba and J. Goolam.

Like their counterparts at Fort Hare and the University of the Western Cape, Indian students at what later became known as the University of Durban-Westville gravitated towards the new student movement. Included among these students were Saths Cooper, Asha Rambally, Ben David, Sam Moodley, Strini Moodley, Dennis Pather, Kiruba Pillay, Sam Pillay, Kogs Reddy and Ror Thatiah. Saths Cooper and Strini Moodley were elected into the leadership of SASO at its inaugural conference.

At the University of Zululand, better known as Ngoye, prominent student leaders that joined SASO when it was formed included Mthuli Shezi, vice president of the National Catholic Federation of Students, Alex Mhlongo, Mosibudi Mangena and Sipho Buthelezi -- and, later, Welile Nhlapo, Siphiwe Nyanda and Ziba Jiyane. Some of them had already become involved in student politics as members of the University Christian Movement (UCM) members before they joined SASO.

The 1970s

The Black Consciousness Movement

From the outset SASO focused on community projects, beginning with projects in and around Durban. Students undertook tasks ranging from assisting impoverished squatters, building more durable shelters and providing clean water, to health services at clinics over weekends. By the mid 1970s Wentworth and Durban-Westville students managed to extend community
building activities to villages on the Natal South Coast. Similar initiatives were also undertaken by the BPC after it was formed in 1972. Among these was the Solempilo Community Health Centre, established to provide primary health care to communities on the south coast of Natal. A number of the leaders of SASO, as well as the BPC were drawn from Natal, including Saths Cooper and Ben Langa.

One of the first BC organisations formed for the youth was the Natal Youth Organisation (NAYO), established in 1973. In Durban’s African townships, SASO-aligned activists such as Mphakama Mbete, Themba Bophela, Bheki Langa, Dumisani Makhaye, and others set up youth and community organisations after they had established that the youths from such places as KwaMashu were critical of SASO, seeing it as this elite organisation distinct from the township. They consequently helped found the KwaMashu Youth Organisation (KWAYO) in 1973, which in turn made contacts with youths in other Durban and coastal townships such as Clermont and Groutville. Using resources provided by the Black Community Project of SASO, they networked and mobilised other youths politically. Subsequently a provincial youth formation known as the Natal Youth Organisation was formed through the initiative of Mphakama Mbete. Some youths in KwaMashu consulted regularly with the recently released political leaders such as William Khanyile, who encouraged members of the Natal underground to join existing community organisations in their respective townships. Among these were the Umlazi and the KwaMashu Residents’ Associations. The Black Women’s Federation was formed in December 1975 at a conference attended by more than 200 women, representing 41 organisations countrywide. Durban-based academic Fatima Meer was elected its first president.

Perhaps one of the most significant events in the history of the Black Consciousness Movement in the first half of the decade was the ‘Pro-Frelimo’ rallies. Events in the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique had a radicalising effect on BCM and signalled that important changes were afoot. The SASO president at the time, Muntu Myeza, planned a rally in September 1974 to celebrate the victory in Mozambique and bring additional spark into the BCM. But the rallies were banned and the crowds that turned up at the various centres were dispersed by the police. In Durban, the presence of Myeza, who had actually come to disperse the gathering at the Curries Fountain stadium, inspired the chanting masses. Myeza began chanting with them and the police dispersed the crowd. Arrests followed, however, and taken into custody with Myeza were other organisers of the Durban rally such as Zithulele Cindi, Saths Cooper, Patrick Mosioua Lekota, Aubrey Mokoape, Strini Moodley and Nkwenkwe Nkomo – later charged with treason.

**Durban strikes**

The Durban strikes of 1973 marked a turning point in the history of political resistance in the province. With wages practically frozen for over a decade, the growing poverty in the cities – and therefore also in the rural areas where families depended on the wages of migrant breadwinners – led to strikes which affected 150 establishments and involved 60 000 workers during the first few months of 1973.

The Durban strikes began early in January 1973, when 1,200 night watchmen downed tools, demanding a wage increase of R10 a month. Shortly thereafter 2,000 Coronation Brick & Tile workers also went on strike on 9 January, demanding a minimum wage of R30 a week. The next day a short strike broke out at A.J. Keeler Transport Co. Another took place at T.W. Beckett & Co., where workers demanded a wage increase of R3 a week. The police were
called in. On 15 January 1973, workers at J.H. Akitt & Company downed tools; on 22 January 1973, drivers at Motor-Via in Pinetown picketed for wage increases and long-distance truck drivers also joined the strike, demanding R40 a week.

All this was followed closely by a strike involving more than 7,000 workers (the largest number thus far) that broke out at the British owned Frame Group at the New Germany industrial complex outside Pinetown and spread to other plants in the same group. Workers demanded an increase in their basic wages, which stood at a paltry R6 a week at the time. At the end of January 1973, more than 10,000 Durban City Corporation workers joined in and within a few weeks, factories as far away as Hammarsdale, Pietermaritzburg, Tongaat and Charlestown were also hit by industrial action. By April, industrial strikes had also erupted at the Mandini and Richard’s Bay industrial areas. The wave of strikes then spread rolled on to Johannesburg and other industrial centres in the country and it has been estimated that there were as many as 246 strikes involving African workers in various sectors of the economy during 1973. On 11 September 1973, the SAP fired at striking mineworkers at Western Deep Levels Mine, killing 12 and wounding 38 others. They were protesting against poverty wages.

The strikers were ultimately forced to back down, but they laid the foundations for a new labour union movement and for organised social resistance in other spheres of the anti-apartheid struggle. The General Factory Workers’ Benefit Fund also opened the way for the organisation of workers in a number of industrial fields. This was an initiative of the Wages Commission, set up at the University of Natal in 1972 to research labour conditions and to provide workers with a vehicle to voice their grievances.

**The revival of trade unions**

The Durban strikes set the stage for the revival of the political unionism of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) during the 1950s. Formed in March 1955, SACTU expanded rapidly, drawing a further 17 African trade unions into its ranks and forming 12 new ones within a few years. Its membership stood at 20,000 in 1956 and peaked at just under 55,000 in 1962. From its inception, SACTU concerns included not only factory floor issues but also township living conditions and the overriding problem of oppressive state power. Political unionism meant that SACTU had alliances with the ANC and its partners in the Congress Alliance and participated in joint campaigns on daily concerns such as transport and housing, in addition to shop floor issues. However, SACTU’s political unionism led to its destruction in the early 1960s as the state targeted its leaders. It emerged in exile only as a leadership structure later in the decade.

SACTU threw its weight behind reviving trade unions in South Africa. Those leaders in the frontline states were told to establish the external machinery to coordinate links with activists at home. In June 1970 and again in 1973 discussions were held on ways of reviving SACTU structures in South Africa. Plans were made to send potential organisers out of the country to receive training. Upon their return, these cadres would be deployed in various industrial areas in Natal, where the revival of SACTU structures was further boosted by the release of trade unionists who had been imprisoned in the 1960s.

Among the first Natal trade unionists to be freed in the late 1960s were David Mkhize and Stephen Dlamini. Others were released in the early 1970s such as Harry Gwala, Matthews Meyiwa, William Khanyile, Shadrack Maphumulo and David Ndawonde who were all freed
in 1972. Between 1972 and 1974 Zakhele Mdlalose, John Mabulala Nene, Riot Mkwanazi, Jethro Ndlovu, Bernard Nkosi and Alfred Duma were released. These former prisoners linked up with seasoned trade unionists who were either operating undercover or serving banning orders. In the Natal midlands experienced campaigners included Azaria Ndebele, Moses Bhengu, and John Khumalo. In the Greater Durban area, SACTU operated through the underground machinery led by Joseph Mdulu. These operatives established offices and appointed organisers paid with funds received from the Swaziland-based SACTU machinery.

The Durban strike wave also gave rise to other initiatives to form trade unions. Included here are the NUSAS-supported initiatives in Natal, the Western Cape and on the Witwatersrand. At its annual conference in 1971 NUSAS decided to initiate Wages Commissions on each of its affiliated campuses and, under the leadership of Jeanette Curtis, these were established almost simultaneously in Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg. In Durban, Halton Cheadle, David Hemson, David Davies, Foszia Fisher and Karel Tip set up the General Factory Workers Benefit Fund (GFWBF) in April/May 1972. They worked closely with Harriet Bolton of the Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA) and, to a lesser extent, with Norman Daniels of the registered trade unions. The aims of the Benefit Fund were to provide the basis for worker organisation by making workers aware of their rights through an in-house newspaper, Isisebenzi, and by making representations to Wage Boards for new skilled worker determinations. The Benefit Fund was a stepping stone to proper trade unionism once sufficient numbers per sector had been achieved.

Cheadle and Hemson extended their responsibilities from supportive roles in the Benefit Fund to active organisation of workers. They expanded existing trade unions such as the African Textile Workers Industrial Union (A-TWIU) and helped form new ones. Cheadle became acting secretary of A-TWIU and Hemson served as the research officer for the Textile Workers Industrial Union (TWIU). Late in 1972 Hemson succeeded Ambrose Reddy, the Durban TWIU organiser and secretary, and Harriet Bolton took over as the Natal secretary of TWIU. Following the outbreak of the Durban strikes in January 1973, crowds of workers gathered each Saturday morning at the premises of the Benefit Fund to apply for membership. These developments expedited the formation of trade unions and by April 1973, the first union formed with the assistance of the Benefit Fund, the Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU) was launched in Pietermaritzburg, with Alpheus Mthethwa elected as branch secretary. Just over a month after the formation of MAWU, the TWIU Congress resolved to establish a parallel unregistered union for African workers, the National Union of Textile Workers (NUTW). It was formally established in September 1973. Cheadle was elected Natal organising secretary, with June-Rose Nala as secretary and Manyathi branch chairperson.

The NUTW was followed by the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) and Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU), founded in 1973 and 1974, respectively. Omar Badsha was elected its secretary in 1975. The growing number of new unions in Natal created a need for a coordinating body and the Trade Union Advisory and Coordinating Council (TUACC) was formed in October 1973, with MAWU and NUTW as founding members and TGWU and CWIU affiliating in 1974. TUACC had a close working relationship with the KwaZulu leadership, especially Mangosuthu Buthelezi and Barney Dladla.

The Natal based NUSAS students were assisted by a group of white activists who were supportive of the labour movement but remained outside it. Most were academics, experts in labour, and professionals working for supporting organisations such as the Institute of
Industrial Education (IIE). In Durban, Richard Turner, Eddie and David Webster, Alec Erwin and Charles Simkins were part of this ‘freelance intellectuals’ group. The IIE was founded in Durban in May 1973 to serve as a correspondence school for trade unionists, providing basic information and skills for effective trade union activity. It also produced the South African Labour Bulletin, which first appeared in 1974. The IIE’s chancellor was Mangosuthu Buthelezi and its chairperson Lawrence Schlemmer. Others involved were Foszia Fisher, Eddie Webster, David Hemson and Omar Badsha.

In the second half of the decade, the state began a clampdown on trade unionists. Alpheus Mthethwa and Mfundise Ndlovu of MAWU in Natal were banned. The regime also detained many activists. In Natal more than a dozen trade unionists were detained in the last two months of 1975. Five of them, Harry Gwala, Anton Xaba, John Nene, Matthews Meyiwa and Zakhlele Mdlosane, who had been previously convicted for political offences, received life sentences. Joseph Nduli was sentenced to 18 years, Cleopas Ndlovu and Magubane to 15 years each, and Azaria Ndebele to seven. Conviction and the growing trend of deaths in detention forced SACTU to operate even more clandestinely than previously. At the same time, it deepened the coordination between the internal and external structures of SACTU.

New kinds of trade unions, known as community-based unions, also emerged during the second half of the 1970s. They were mainly regional and were structured as general unions. Some had a foothold in manufacturing industries, while others had a presence in service sectors where working conditions were bad and organisation generally weak, such as cleaning, catering, and local government. These trade unions were more focused on direct involvement in broader political struggles and stressed that shop-floor struggles could not be separated from political campaigns against apartheid. Prominent among these unions were the South African Allied Workers’ Union (SAAWU) in Durban which broke away from BAWU in 1978. In 1980 BAWU split. The first division was in mid 1980 and involved the Empangeni and Ladysmith branches led by Matthew Oliphant and Magwaza Maphalala. They formed the National, Iron, Steel, Metal and Allied Workers Union (NISMAWU), which joined forces with Sam Kikine’s SAAWU. Kikine then recruited Maphalala and Oliphant into the Natal underground of SACTU.

The Natal Indian Congress (NIC)

The Natal Indian Congress (NIC) was revived in 1971. While the movement rejected the exclusivist aspirations of Black Consciousness, it became an outspoken opponent of ethnic and racially-based government administration in both the province and the country, and was effective in raising political consciousness in the Indian community.

The NIC was revived at a meeting held at Bolton Hall in Prince Edward Street, Durban, on the 25 June 1971. It was a body originally founded in 1894 by Mahatma Gandhi and a key part of the Congress Alliance through the national body, the South African Indian Congress in the 1950s under the leadership of Dr Monty Naicker. The NIC had become dormant in the mid 1960s when state repression intensified. Its leadership was banned and some members went into exile. Yet unlike other political bodies in the Congress Alliance, the Indian Congress had not been banned.

Leading the move to re-launch the NIC was Mewa Ramgobin and his wife, Ela Gandhi (Mahatma Gandhi’s grand-daughter), from Phoenix. One catalyst for the revival were rumours that the Grey Street area, the heart of Indian business in Durban, was to be declared an Indian
commercial group area. This would make thousands of Indian tenants vulnerable. The members of the ad hoc committee that had prepared for the meeting at the Bolton Hall included M.R. Moodley, Dasrath Bundhoo, Numsi Naicker, Dr Dilly Naidoo, Bill Reddy, S.P. Pachy and George Sewpersadh. Several had been politically active since the 1950s, and they drew in more support. There was a flurry to establish branches, with meetings held in garages, parks, sports grounds and even under trees. Ramgobin had a ‘phenomenal response’ from the middle-class neighbourhoods of Durban to the sugar estates in Inanda and the working-class homes of Chatsworth.

Ramgobin was banned in September 1971, placed under house arrest. George Sewpersadh replaced Ramgobin as leader. Initially, membership was confined to Indians. Sewpersadh explained that this was not because of any racialistic or sectional beliefs; it was merely being realistic, in the early stages, to limit numbers. The issue was hotly debated at the first conference of the re-launched NIC in April 1972. While the NIC did in fact open its membership to all in 1973 the reality was that membership and leadership were overwhelmingly Indian.

From the beginning, members of SASO exhibited interest in talks about the revival. Ramgobin had some prior contact with them and spoke at several of their meetings. By the time the Bolton Hall meeting took place, SASO was confident in its assertion that the oppressed people of South Africa should think black and organise as blacks. Furthermore, it had significant support from Indian students at the medical campus of the University of Natal and at the University College for Indians on Salisbury Island. The political direction that the students hoped would be taken differed from the aspirations of the NIC ad hoc committee, whose strategy was to allow all to have their say. Although the students did not succeed in convincing the NIC to adopt a new discourse and to move away from its multi-racial approach rooted in the 1950s, they did become members of the NIC and were strongly represented in the Durban Central Branch. Saths Cooper was a leading figure in the SASO faction, while Omar Badsha was a member of the Durban Central branch.

At the second NIC conference in 1972, Jerry Coovadia spoke candidly about what he saw as the ‘spectre’ of BC; he raised some serious concerns. He pointed out that it was the whites who used a definition by skin colour, and the NIC should be wary of falling into the same trap with BC views. But there were those who urged that the NIC should seriously consider both the concept and philosophy. It was only a matter of time before rifts appeared. The NIC’s secretary, Ramlall Ramesar, representing the older generation, accused SASO of perpetuating the exclusive racial politics of the PAC, which angered Cooper and his fellow BC adherents. Cooper, Drake Koka, Mthuli Shezi and the Reverend Mayathula went on to form the Black Peoples’ Convention (BPC) in July 1972. This had an impact on the NIC’s central branch when many young people, Cooper included, surrendered their membership.

There were many discussions with SASO/BPC members at such places as Phoenix, where leadership workshops were held in the early 1970s. These provided a forum for young intellectuals and activists of all races to engage in frank discussions about how best to challenge apartheid. Participants included Rick Turner, Steve Biko, Barney Pityana, Strini Moodley, Saths Cooper and others. NIC policy towards SASO and BPC was ‘to work in harmony’ with them; it supported BPC initiatives such as the commemoration meeting for Sharpeville. However, tensions were inevitable. Pityana, Biko, Cooper and Moodley threatened to ‘destroy the NIC’. Cooper was scathing of the NIC, saying that the legacy of Gandhi was all very well but that times had changed. He raised questions about the NIC
membership, its orientation and its support in the early years of its revival. However his attack on NIC is not borne out by the facts. In 1972, the NIC had 28 branches and a membership of just below 7,000. While among its leaders there were many professionals – doctors (Jerry Coovadia, Dilly Naidoo, Farouk Meer); lawyers (Sewpersadh, M. J. Naidoo); social workers (Ramesar and Ela Gandhi) – its membership was drawn from all walks of life – doctors, lawyers, workers, trade unionists, small shop-keepers and students – and from all age groups.’ Among the youth recruited were Pravin Gordhan, Yunus Mahomed and Zac Yacoob, and their impact on the organisation was certainly felt in the closing years of the decade.

The NIC’s relationship with SASO and BPC was a thorny issue only in the early years. By the middle of the decade, the arrests of SASO members after the pro-FRELIMO rally in 1974 emphasised the need to cooperate rather than compete. Furthermore, the message that came from the Congress Alliance leaders on Robben Island was for the NIC to continue its work of mobilisation, and not to alienate the BCM. BC thinking did permeate NIC eventually, as it did in white newspapers when ‘black’ replaced ‘non-white’. By the end of the decade, the NIC had replaced SASO in securing the support of Indian students at the University of Natal, Durban. Following the move from Salisbury Island to Westville in 1972 the NIC linked up with key members of the student body. It also had political education programmes for youth; these work-camps had the effect of politicising many students and nurturing leadership.

The leadership of the NIC was also exposed of the repressive activities of the apartheid regime. Dilly Naidoo, one of the senior NIC members had been interrogated by security police after the 1972 conference; in 1973 Ramgobin and his children had narrowly escaped serious injury when a parcel bomb exploded at his Durban office; George Sewpersadh was banned in 1973 and had to be replaced as president by M.J. Naidoo; Ela Gandhi’s tyres were punctured after a meeting in Merebank and she too was placed under house arrest in 1973.

The central issue confronting the NIC during the decade was the South African Indian Council, an advisory body established by the apartheid regime. In his presidential address in 1974, Naidoo urged that the SAIC should be used as a ‘protected platform’ to make demands for full democracy. This, he said, would help the NIC to reach the people and also inform the government of Indian demands. But Ramesar took the opposite position, arguing that it would be unwise to plunge headlong into something that is wrong merely because the NIC’s progress was proving slow and difficult. To join the SAIC, he said, would be to abandon principles that had stood the test of time. The NIC’s policy of non-participation thus remained unchanged. In 1979 Naidoo, now vice president, did a turn-about and rooted for non-participation in reaction to a lobby led by Pravin Gordhan and Yunus Mahomed, who were arguing for participation.

So severe were the differences that individuals flew to London to seek the advice of the elderly Yusuf Dadoo and the ANC. Dadoo, Mac Maharaj and Aziz Pahad held meetings with the two lobbies. Dadoo’s aim was to get unity. Despite different interpretations on the conclusion reached, the pro-participation lobby caved in on their return. The NIC again affirmed its policy of non-participation. The The NIC launched a mass campaign of mobilisation and in 1981, when the elections to the SAIC took place Indian voters resoundingly snubbed the entire process.

The NIC played an important role in remembering the members of the Congress Alliance imprisoned on Robben Island. From its inception, many mass meetings were held to heighten awareness of those who were banned or had suffered through repression. One of the first of
these commemorations was after the death of Ahmed Timol in 1971; others were a prayer meeting for Bram Fischer in 1975 and in 1977 for Dr H. Haffejee and B. Mzizi. Members of the NIC had mobilised workers on the sugar estates in 1971; participated in the Wages Commission set up by academics from the University of Natal; and supported the strikes at Corrobrick in 1973, when Ramgobin’s office was literally taken over by the workers. Furthermore he employed trade unionists Harold Nxasana and Vusi Mtshali to do NIC and trade union work and NIC officials organised food supplies from Indian merchants and issued pamphlets to Indian workers to support the cause of African workers. Towards the close of the decade, young activists such as Pravin Gordhan, Yunus Mahomed and Roy Padayachee began to engage in community issues in the working-class districts of Phoenix and Chatsworth – including areas of housing, rents and transport. When the Durban City Council proposed autonomy for Phoenix; this provided a point for mobilisation to oppose the move. NIC individuals played a key role in setting up the Phoenix Working Committee (PWC) and the Chatsworth Housing Committee (CHAC).

Inkatha

In 1975, the Inkatha Cultural Liberation Movement (Inkatha) was revived, marking a new era in the province’s political life. Its strategy and its future relationship with other opposition groupings were shaped by the Durban strikes as well as by the scholars’ uprising of 1976 in Soweto. The formation of Inkatha had the approval of the ANC, because the new movement appeared to offer access to rural areas. Initially, Inkatha placed itself squarely within the political tradition of the ANC’s founding fathers. However, Inkatha was later to operate uncontested on any scale within the space provided by the homeland policy and the state’s repression of all other opposition.

The political life of the province during this period was marked by attempts by Inkatha to consolidate its regional power base. By the late 1970s, Inkatha’s membership had swelled substantially. Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi described Inkatha as the “largest and best organised Black constituency” ever seen in South Africa. Described as a ‘national cultural liberation movement’, it aimed to promote African democracy that was suited to the Zulu way of life. There would only be one political party in KwaZulu; it would take decisions on the basis of consensus. Only Inkatha members would be eligible to stand for election to the KLA and the Inkatha president would be the chief minister of KwaZulu. The KLA predictably adopted the Inkatha constitution as its own, thus merging the political party and the Bantustan administration. The KwaZulu constitution firmly entrenched the position of chiefs and stipulated that the chief minister should be a hereditary chief.

Apart from tightening control within Natal and KwaZulu, Inkatha purged people considered disloyal to the party. In October 1978 the Inkatha Central Committee expelled its first secretary-general, Sibusiso Bengu, and certain other members, including Reginald Hadebe, for allegedly persuading the Inkatha Youth Brigade to embark on a programme of mass action to express support for the BPC. By the end of the 1970s Inkatha had a firm hold on the Bantustan structures and its leaders had laid down the foundation of a one-party system. This entrenched a culture of political intolerance in KwaZulu, and from the late 1970s many organisations were banned. Even the Zulu monarch was not spared the wrath of Inkatha when he stepped out of line.

In the first few years after the revival of Inkatha in 1975, the ANC regarded Chief Buthelezi as an important ally inside the country. Buthelezi himself stated repeatedly that Inkatha was
based on the ideals proposed by the ANC’s founding fathers in 1912. In these early years, the external mission of the ANC maintained contact with him and encouraged their supporters back home to join Inkatha. However, emerging differences of opinion and strategy between Chief Buthelezi and the ANC leadership in exile began to cause tensions between the two organisations. While the ANC called for sanctions and disinvestment and advocated an armed struggle and protest politics, Chief Buthelezi opposed these methods, arguing that the demise of apartheid was best brought about through constituency-based politics, focusing on evolutionary (rather than revolutionary) change. Opposition to apartheid, he believed, was best located within the structures of the state. The ANC failed to mobilise its supporters to give effect to Chief Buthelezi’s strategy. According to Oliver Tambo, this was due to “the understandable antipathy of many of our comrades towards what they considered as working within the bantustan system”.

For a while in the early 1970s relations between the KwaZulu Bantustan leadership and BC organisations were cordial. But the calm was short-lived. He grew irritable whenever SASO and SASM raised doubts about his political credentials within the anti-apartheid camp. When Biko queried his acceptance of a position within the Bantustan system, and said this had created confusion over who the ‘real leaders’ of the people were, Buthelezi was highly offended. Opposition to the KwaZulu Bantustan also came from the University of Zululand. Students demonstrated at a graduation ceremony where an honorary doctorate was to be conferred on Buthelezi. Clashes broke out between Buthelezi’s supporters and the protesting students and in the ensuing fracas, Buthelezi’s car was stoned. Tensions deepened during the 1976 student uprisings when university students went on the rampage on campus, destroying university property.

Political animosity between BC-aligned youths and Bantustan officialdom assumed violent proportions at the funeral of Robert Sobukwe in Graaff-Reinet in March 1978. Buthelezi was asked to leave the funeral. While he was leaving in a rush to his official car, one of Buthelezi’s bodyguards opened fire, wounding three youths. The incident rattled Buthelezi politically by casting serious doubt on his claim that he was a leader of the liberation movement.

By the end of the 1970s the political intolerance of the KwaZulu leadership, whether in dealings with the media, BC organisations or religious groups, stemmed from their firm belief that Inkatha was the only political formation with a visible following in the country. Their arrogance was also bolstered by the cordial relationship they enjoyed with the ANC in exile, which gave them some measure of political respectability. Matters came to a head at a London meeting between Chief Buthelezi and the ANC leadership in exile in October 1979. Chief Buthelezi expressed his disagreement with the ANC’s strategy of the armed struggle and its belief in revolutionary change. He claimed that the ANC in exile no longer had a mandate from the masses. The masses, he said, had given up on waiting for the exiled ANC to liberate them militarily and were now seeking liberation through constituency politics. Chief Buthelezi accused the ANC’s external mission of being hypocritical and of having deserted black South Africans. Chief Buthelezi interpreted the ANC’s motives for the meeting as a desire to make Inkatha an internal wing or surrogate (and therefore an inferior subsidiary) of the ANC. He, for his part, went to the meeting to make a claim for political independence:

Inkatha is a political phenomenon of considerable magnitude and the ANC will be faced with having clearly to endorse the Inkatha position.
The meeting resulted in the severing of ties between the ANC and Inkatha. The ANC described the meeting as a failure. Former IFP national council member Walter Felgate, on the other hand, described it as ‘good news’. In his view, Chief Buthelezi had shown the ANC that he had the necessary support and could go it alone. Following the meeting, relations between the ANC and Inkatha deteriorated rapidly. IFP felt that “from then onwards Inkatha was singled out as an enemy”.

**The Soweto uprising**

At a national level, the 1970s were shaped by the events and consequences of Soweto 1976. While it took some time for the full impact to be felt in Natal, the focus of opposition shifted decisively to a new generation and brought about an age divide that was to have far-reaching consequences for traditional relationships between old and young. The 1976 Soweto uprising produced a wave of popular protest in the province and generated the beginnings of youth and student polarisation. Student organisations such as the South African Students’ Movement (SASM) and the junior wing of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) confirmed their policy of rejecting all government-created institutions and foreign investment, bringing them into conflict with Inkatha policy. The opposition of Inkatha and the KwaZulu government to the school-based protests deepened existing tensions between political groups and organisations in the province.

**The ANC**

In 1969, the ANC in exile established a Revolutionary Council to oversee all political and military work. Various attempts to send MK into South Africa, particularly into the rural areas, were thwarted when operatives were captured or killed, so there was very little MK activity in the late sixties and early seventies. The political landscape changed with the release of MK cadres such as Harry Gwala, Joe Gqabi and Jacob Zuma from Robben Island starting in 1972 and with Mozambique’s independence in 1974, giving MK a corridor into South Africa. MK units in Natal began to redevelop routes to their units in Swaziland.

The initiatives for internal underground political work during the first half of the decade came mainly from people who remained inside South Africa. Their efforts were supplemented by a number of political prisoners released during the first half of the decade.

In the early 1970s, one underground network was led by Johannes Phungula, assisted by Henry Chiliza, who Phungula had recruited into the underground in the 1960s. Their area of operation covered Hlokozi in the Greater Highflats area, the MacDonald area across the Umzimkulu River to the southwest, Springvale, Harding, Donnybrook, Bulwer and Hluthankukhu in the Mtwalume area. Mbhedeni Ngubane was another activist responsible for the underground units in the Harding area. He was a member of the ANC who had spent a short prison term in the early 1960s for burning his pass. Bayempini Mzizi, who had distinguished himself as a disciplined, defiant and shrewd operator even before he was recruited into Phungula’s underground network, was the main contact in the Springvale area.

Another of Phungula’s recruits was Cyprian Mkhize, an inyanga from the Hlokozi area in Highflats. Mkhize main task in the underground during the 1970s was to house cadres who were on their way out of the country for military training. He also served as a courier after Phungula had left the country in 1976. Mkhize housed these operatives who passed for his
patients in the different huts that dotted his yard. Mkhize also worked with Gladys Manzi, after, to whom he had been introduced by Phungula shortly before Phungula’s departure into exile in 1976. The main focus of Phungula’s underground work had been to revive political consciousness among the rural communities that had participated in the popular rural struggles of the late 1950s.

Apart from Phungula’s underground outfit, there was another network that revolved around Joseph Mdluli. Albert Dhlomo and Griffiths Mxenge joined this network upon their release from prison in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The release of other leading cadres like Stephen Dlamini, George Mbele, Albert Dhlomo, Frederick Dube, Msizi Dube and Griffiths Mxenge from Robben Island in the late 1960s had infused some life into the ANC underground. The re-establishment of underground networks in Natal gained greater momentum after the release of a larger contingent of political prisoners between 1972 and 1976. The result was the development of a well coordinated underground that operated throughout the province with commands in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. Jacob Zuma, who was also recruited into MK by the Natal High Command in the early 1960s, became the roving coordinator. He had returned from Robben Island in December 1973 after serving a ten-year prison sentence. Other seasoned trade unionists such as Azaria Ndebele, Moses Bhengu, and John Khumalo (alias John Makhathini) were responsible for the trade union component of the new underground network in the midlands area. Ndebele recruited Moses Ndlovu into it.

ANC structures were organised into cells of two to three people. Members would, in turn, organise their own units which were unknown to other members to insulate them from possible infiltration by the security police agents. The responsibilities of each cell were to explore ways of reviving the ANC within the country, to conduct political education in order to raise levels of political consciousness, to identify young men and women who could be recruited and sent abroad for military training, and to revive the SACTU aligned unions. Former Robben Island prisoners Anton Xaba and John Nene belonged to one cell and Kubheka, Moses Bhengu and Truman Magubane belonged to another. Meyiwa, Zakhele Mdlalose and the Reverend Benjamin Ngidi also belonged to a cell in the Hammarsdale area.

Matthews Meyiwa was responsible for linking up the Pietermaritzburg based units with those in the Mpumalanga, Hammarsdale and Georgedale areas. He also linked up the Natal midlands underground with the Zuuland underground that included Riot Mkhwanazi and Merica Mthunya. He also served as a courier between the Mpumalanga-Hammarsdale unit and the underground unit based in Ladysmith whose members included Alfred Duma and Bernard Nkosi, who had both served prison terms on Robben Island for MK activities during the 1960s.

Meyiwa and Mdlalose mobilised people in Mpumalanga, Hammarsdale and Georgedale behind an anti-crime campaign. Women members of the Durban network of the Natal underground included Dorothy Nyembe, Miriam Busane, C. B. S Makhathini, Mrs Gumede, Mrs Mpisi and Mrs Luthuli. They provided safe venues for meetings and harboured operatives who had been infiltrated into the country in the 1970s. By the mid-1970s, the Natal underground operated from the following three areas: Pietermaritzburg, involving Gwala’s outfit; Durban, with Joseph Mdluli as a central figure; and southwestern Natal with Phungula and Chiliza among its prominent members.
Many young men and a few women were recruited and sent abroad for military training through Swaziland and Mozambique between 1974 and 1976. Reginald Mandla Sikosana, Siphiwe Edgar Zondi, Jabulani Ndaba, Raymond Madoda Hadebe and Mandlenkosi Christopher Hadebe were recruited and sent out for military training by Anton Xaba and John Nene. Similarly, Anton Xaba recruited Thamsanqa Muthu Khumalo, Vikelasizwe Colin Khumalo, Bhekuyise Caiphas Nene, Philemon Fano Mokoena, Michael Bhi Gumede, and George Mkhize also from Sobantu. The Swaziland command exerted pressure on the Natal underground to bring out large numbers of young men and women for military training. Approximately 200 recruits were smuggled out of the country during the three years which ended in June 1976.

There was also a propaganda unit in Durban, led by Raymond Suttner. Suttner arrived in Durban in June 1971 and took up employment at the University of Natal in Durban. At first he worked on his own, producing and duplicating pamphlets, which he then distributed to hundreds of addresses in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. He recruited two fellow staff members at the University of Natal, Lawrence Kuny and Jennifer Roxburgh, towards the end of 1974. On 17 June 1975, he was arrested.

During this period, the security forces adopted a more proactive strategy in dealing with the liberation movements. Reports and allegations of the torture of political detainees increased steadily and became more widespread. Abductions and political assassinations were also reported. Following the national outcry over deaths in police custody, the security forces began to consider other ways – such as assassination – to silence their opponents. Military combatants of the banned ANC and PAC were often the ‘faceless victims’ of assassination by the security forces, their identity frequently unknown by their killers or their own units.

Combatants were not the only victims, however. Human rights activists, academics and ideological leaders engaged in legitimate opposition to the state’s policy of apartheid were also targeted for attack. Assassination became a way of silencing and removing those who could not be charged with criminal offences, even within the broad parameters of the security legislation at the time.

Deaths in custody during this period were characterised by a marked discrepancy between official police explanations and independent forensic evidence. In the main, the police claimed that deaths in detention were caused by suicide, by accidental events or in the course of attempted escape. In some cases, inquest rulings appeared to support the police version of events, clearly at odds with the other available evidence.

More treason trials were held in this period. In 1976, Harry Gwala and nine others were charged under the Terrorism Act. Two of the accused said that they had been kidnapped in Swaziland and tortured. In several other treason trials held in the province in the late 1970s, activists were charged with planning to undergo military training and encouraging others to do so. Isaac Zimu and three others, tried in 1977, and Timothy Nxumalo, Nqutu teacher Vusumuzi Lucas Mbatha and others, tried in 1978, all claimed that they had been tortured in various ways while in detention.

In this period, security trials relating to organisational activities outnumbered those relating to violent action by resistance movements. People were tried for community and labour mobilisation, membership of the banned resistance movements, recruitment to banned organisations or military training, and the possession of banned literature. However, an
increased number of sabotage attacks were reported across the whole province. In February
1977, Thembinkosi Sithole and Samuel Mohlomi, both from KwaMashu, were charged with
taking part in ‘terrorist activities’ and for attempting to leave the country for military training.
They were also charged and convicted of arson in respect of firebomb attacks at KwaMashu
schools in October 1976.

Harry Gwala and his wife, Kaipi Elda Gwala, were arrested at their home on 30 November
1975. Anton Xaba, John Nene, Truman Magubane, Azariah Ndebele and Sipho Kubeheka
were arrested on 2 December 1975. Moses Bhengu was detained on 4 December 1975.
William Khanyile, Bernard Nkosi, Matthews Meyiwa, Zakhele Mdlalose and Joshua Zulu
were arrested on 5 December 1975. Judson Khuzwayo was arrested at the University of Natal
also on the 5th December 1975. Russell Maphanga and Stephen Dlamini were also detained.
On 18 March police detained Joseph Mdluli at his home in Lamontville Township, south of
Durban. Mdluli died in detention on 20 March 1976. Two prominent Swaziland-based ANC
underground operatives, Joseph Nduli and Cleopas Ndlovu, were abducted from the
Swaziland/South African border on 25 March 1976. In the subsequent trial Gwala, Xaba,
Nene, Meyiwa and Mdlalose, who had previous convictions for political offences, were
sentenced to life imprisonment. Joseph Nduli was sentenced to eighteen years, Ndlovu and
Truman to fifteen years each, and Azaria Ndebele to seven. The south-western machinery
remained relatively intact during these raids. Mdingi was the only one detained. Other key
operatives escaped the security dragnet, including Zuma, Phungula and Chiliza.

Skirmishes between guerrilla fighters and members of the security forces were also reported
in this period. In one such skirmish near Pongola in November 1977, a guerrilla fighter was
killed and a policeman injured. In December 1977, ANC guerrilla fighter, Oupa Ronald
Madondo, was caught by the police in the Pongola area. An ANC commander, thought to be
Toto Skhosana, was killed in the clash. Police recovered two scorpion pistols, ammunition
and three grenade detonators. Madondo was convicted under the Terrorism Act in an Ermelo
court in March 1978 and killed by members of the Security Branch in April 1980.

A number of acts of sabotage were reported. The ANC claimed responsibility for some of
these. As indicated in the section on the Western Cape, machineries for the conduct of the
armed struggle had been established in most countries neighbouring South Africa by 1978. In
1977 Mozambique became the key launching pad for military operations. The initial task of
MK structures in Mozambique was to provide military training to recruits. In 1977 the MK
Central Operational Headquarters established the Natal Urban and Rural Machineries in
Maputo. The urban machinery of MK was commanded by Mduduzi Guma, Lionel Hadebe,
Krishna Rabilar, Cyril Raymonds (alias Fear), Zweli Nyanda (alias Oscar) and Sonny Singh
(alias Bobby Pillay). The rural machinery was commanded by Johannes ‘Pass Four’
Phungula, Henry Chiliza, Mandla Msibi, and Cyril ‘Edwin’ Dlamini (alias Chris). Natal also
had two Internal Political Reconstruction Committees (IPRCs) based in Mozambique and
Swaziland. Between 1976 and 1980 the Mozambique IPC was headed by Indres Naidoo,
Jacob Zuma, John Nkadimeng, Sue Rabkin, Sonny Singh; and the Swaziland one by Judson
Khuzwayo, Ivan Pillay and T. Tyron. Between 1976 and 1980 the National Internal Political
Reconstruction Committee was headed by Moses Mabhida, who was succeeded by Simon
Makana. Other members were Godfrey Pule, David Motsweni (alias Willy Williams), ‘Peter’
Tshikari and ‘Ulysses’ Modise.

Contacts with cadres who were left behind were revived – with people such as Shadrack
Maphumulo, a former Robben Island prisoner who survived the swoop of 1975 to 1976, and
Mduduzi Guma. Maphumulo recruited Patrick Nyawose and Jabu Nzima, who doubled as operatives of the ANC underground as well as leaders of the Black Allied Workers’ Union (BAWU). Others were members of the urban networks that Sonny Singh and others had set up before Singh was forced to leave the country. This underground network remained active and continued to recruit young men and women for military training. There were supporters and low key activists of the ANC who were stung by former members of the ANC who undermined the liberation struggle and felt that something had to be done to stem the tide of continued betrayal of the struggle in Natal. One such person was the Reverend Mandla Msibi. In 1976 Msibi showed up in Swaziland and offered to neutralise some of the turncoats. After a security check, he was given a crash course in the handling of weapons such as the Makarov pistol and AK 47s and smuggled back into the country.

Several armed incursions were carried out in the Ngwavuma area between 1977 and 1980. Some of the MK units that were infiltrated into the Ngwavuma area were involved in shoot-outs with security forces. Some of the operatives moved further south to Nongoma and Vryheid, where arms caches were buried. Among those who carried out these tasks were Themba Mthethwa and Sihle Mbongwe.

**Deaths in detention**

Several ANC and PAC members, including Aaron Khoza of the PAC and Hoosen Haffajee, Bayempini Mzizi and Joseph Mdluli of the ANC, died in police custody during this period.

PAC member Aaron Khoza was detained in Krugersdorp on 9 December 1976, along with Johnson Vusumuzi and Ivan Nyathi. He was subsequently moved to Pietermaritzburg prison, where he died on 26 March 1977. On 12 July 1977, an inquest magistrate found that Khoza had committed suicide by hanging. Advocate Harry Pitman, appearing for the family, said the evidence of the prison authority was conflicting and the investigation unsatisfactory. According to Aaron Khoza’s widow, Alletta Maki Khoza, her husband was detained in November 1976 for underground activities and was held for 106 days. She said that she did not believe that he committed suicide as his face was scarred, showing that he had been severely assaulted. Nyathi remained in Krugersdorp and was admitted to hospital on 2 February 1977 after allegedly falling out a window at Krugersdorp police station.

ANC member Joseph Mdluli died in detention on 19 March 1976, just a day after his arrest in connection with the 1976 Gwala treason trial. Four security policemen were charged with culpable homicide, namely Frederick Van Zyl, Colonel ARC Taylor, Mandlakayise Patrick Makhanya and Zabulon Ngobese. In their trial they claimed that Mdluli had tried to escape and had fallen over a chair. A pathologist presented evidence disputing the police version. All four accused were acquitted on 25 October 1976, the fifth day of the trial. The presiding judge said there was insufficient evidence to connect them directly to the death. He called for further investigation. In March 1979, Mdluli’s widow sued the state in a civil court and accepted an out-of-court settlement of R28 616.

Dr Hoosen Mia Haffajee, a 26-year-old dentist at Durban’s St George V hospital, died in detention at the Brighton Beach police station on 3 August 1977. The inquest magistrate found that he had committed suicide by hanging. Haffajee may have died as a result of torture. He was allegedly found hanging by his trousers from the grille of his cell door at the Brighton Beach police station less than twenty hours after his arrest. At the inquest in March 1977, two of the Security Branch policemen who effected the arrest and interrogation of
Haffajee, Captain James Brough Taylor and Captain PL du Toit, denied that they had tortured him during interrogation. The pathologist’s report stated that the death was consistent with hanging. However, it also stated that Haffajee had sustained multiple injuries and that some sixty wounds were found on his body, including his back, knees, arms and head. The inquest magistrate found that Haffajee had died of suicide by hanging and that the injuries were unconnected and collateral to his death.

Former Security Branch policeman, Mohun Deva Gopal, was present whilst Haffajee was interrogated, assaulted and tortured. He said that Haffajee was stripped naked and Captain Taylor initiated the assault by slapping and punching him when he refused to divulge any information. Later, Captain Du Toit joined in. As the day wore on, the assault became more violent. Although they continued until midnight, Haffajee refused to divulge any information. The next morning Taylor told Gopal that Haffajee was dead. Du Toit later called them into his office and told them they had to prepare their stories for the inquest. He was told to say that Haffajee had tried to escape and in so doing, had hit his body on the car. Gopal does not believe that Haffajee committed suicide, as he was very strong psychologically.

Dr DH Biggs, who was employed by the Haffajee family, reported on the unusual marks observed on the body of the deceased and found that he could duplicate the lesions found on the body by compressing the skin with an implement similar to that used to compress lead seals onto string or wire.

**Covert Security Branch activity**

A number of prominent community leaders and activists were targeted for attack during this period. Many of these attacks were attributed to the covert operations of the security police. Durban academic Fatima Meer’s home was petrol-bombed in 1977. Meer had been the target of another attack the previous year, when a caller knocked at the door and started firing when it was opened. A visitor, Zwelihle Ngcobo, was injured in the shooting. The gunman was never identified, but was seen driving off in a green minibus.

Shortly after this incident, an unknown person fired on Harold Strachan at his home in Durban. Strachan pursued the gunman, who managed to escape in a vehicle registered to the Durban City Council. In the ensuing court case, evidence was led to the effect that the vehicle had not left the Council property on the night in question and the accused was acquitted. The night before judgement was handed down, shots from an automatic firearm were again fired into the Strachan home. The gunman was seen fleeing in a green minibus.

A green minibus was also seen outside Dr Richard Turner’s home on the night he was killed, in January 1978. Bureau of State Security (BOSS) operative Martin Dolinchek was in possession of a green minibus at the time. Turner was the first white activist and academic to be assassinated. University of Natal political scientist Dr Richard ‘Rick’ Turner was fatally shot soon after midnight on 8 January 1978 at his home in Bellair, Durban. Turner was centrally involved in the development of the trade union movement and had been involved in establishing the university-based Wages Commission in 1972.

In March 1972, Turner’s home had been firebombed. In 1973, Turner was banned along with seven NUSAS members and placed under surveillance by the BOSS. In December 1973, his car tyres were slashed and the engine damaged while the vehicle was parked in front of his house. In 1976, the Durban Security Branch bugged his telephone. A week before the
assassination, the Security Branch’s surveillance was suddenly terminated on orders from police superiors.

The police themselves suspected the involvement of the state apparatus in the assassination and sought to obstruct the investigation. Brigadier Christiaan Earle, the original investigating officer, said he believed that Turner was killed by “people who were part of the security forces and that they wanted to protect this and not have it known”. He believed that his investigations into the killing led him to suspect the involvement of BOSS operative, Martin Dolinchek. Dolinchek’s pistol was sent for ballistic testing but no other investigation into Dolinchek took place.

Earle and his immediate superior, Major Christoffel Groenewald, believed the investigation was being obstructed when Groenewald and his superior, Brigadier Hansen (now deceased), were called to Pretoria and instructed not to waste time investigating Dolinchek, because there was no proof of his involvement in the killing. Both expressed the view that Dolinchek had been responsible for the killing.

Former Vlakplaas Commander Eugene de Kock reported that one of his informants, former BOSS member Piet Botha, told him that Dolinchek had killed Turner and that Dolinchek’s brother-in-law, Von Scheer, drove the getaway vehicle. According to a former BOSS member BOSS was behind the killing and may have set it up to look like the work of Scorpio, a right-wing group based in Cape Town but suspected to have been active in Natal as well. He named former BOSS agent, Phil Freeman (now deceased), as a person possibly responsible for Turner’s death. Whoever was responsible for this death, the probabilities overwhelmingly favour the view that he was killed by a member of BOSS or the SAP.

Among the MK operatives targeted for assassination during the period 1976–82 was ‘MK Scorpion’, killed in Northern Natal in 1980. Oupa Ronald Madondo, known as ‘MK Scorpion’, was killed in April 1980. A Soweto-based MK operative, believed to be. Madondo was detained for several months. A number of Security Branch operatives from various police stations were drawn together and instructed to kill him. He was allegedly sedated heavily and taken to Jozini, in Northern Natal, where he was shot three times. His body was then blown up with explosives allegedly provided by Security Branch policemen in Pietermaritzburg.

One of the major assassinations during this period was that of prominent Durban attorney and long-time anti-apartheid activist Griffiths Mxenge on 20 November 1981. This was one of the first cases where the target was known to be an activist and not associated in any way with the military operations of MK. On 20 November 1981, Griffiths Mxenge was found dead at a cycling stadium at Umlazi. Three Vlakplaas operatives, namely Commander Dirk Coetzee and askaris Almond Nofemela and David Tshikilange were charged and convicted of the killing. Two former Durban security policemen, Brigadier Johannes van der Hoven and Colonel Andy Taylor, were also charged with the killing but were acquitted. Brian Ngqulunga, an askari who was involved in the killing, was himself killed shortly after testifying to the Harms Commission. Vlakplaas policeman Joe Mamasela publicly admitted having helped to plan the killing.

According to Coetzee, Brigadier van der Hoven, then divisional commander of the Durban Security Branch, approached him and told him to “make a plan with Mxenge”, which Coetzee understood to mean that he was to make arrangements to kill him. He was told that
the security police had been unable to bring any charges against Mxenge, who had become a ‘thorn in their flesh’. Coetzee said that Van der Hoven had told him to make it look like a robbery. Colonel Taylor briefed Coetzee regarding Mxenge’s movements and Joe Mamasela was brought down to assist in planning and executing the operation. Former head of the Security Branch’s Section C, Willem Schoon, was also informed of the planned operation.

Coetzee said he put together a hit squad that included Nofemela, Tshikilange, Mamasela and one Ngqulunga who was from the Umlazi area and knew the vicinity well. Coetzee took charge of the general planning and arranged details such as obtaining strychnine to poison the Mxenge’s four dogs. The details of the actual killing were left to the four members of the squad he had appointed. According to Nofemela, the four men intercepted Mxenge on his way home from work on the evening of 20 November 1981. They dragged him out his car and took him to the nearby Umlazi stadium where they beat and stabbed him repeatedly. Mxenge had resisted his attackers fiercely until he was struck on the head with a wheel spanner. He fell to the ground, and the stabbing continued until he was dead. They disembowelled him and cut his throat and ears. Then they took his car, wallet and other belongings to make it look like a robbery. Mxenge’s vehicle was later found, burnt and abandoned near the Golela border post between South Africa and Swaziland.

The 1980s

By April 1980, the national campaign of students against overcrowding in schools, lack of equipment and books and lack of student representation had spread to KwaMashu, north of Durban. Boycotting pupils in KwaMashu defied Chief Buthelezi’s calls to return to school, resulting in clashes between pupils and Inkatha supporters. Altogether thirty-six KwaZulu and Natal schools were affected by the school boycotts of 1980 and 1981. These boycotts allegedly led to an increased exodus of youth from the country to join the ANC. However, the liberation struggle in the region during this period was dominated by three main developments: the formation of the UDF and increasing mass mobilisation; the escalation of the armed struggle; and the conflict between the ANC and its allied organisations on the one hand, and the security forces and Inkatha on the other.

Inkatha

In summary, Inkatha moved to consolidate its position in the province by relying increasingly on ‘traditional’ authority for control. Additional powers granted by the state consolidated its power base and control over the population. The ‘Inkatha syllabus’ entered the educational system; rents and transport became sources of revenue for the KwaZulu government and townships came under the control of KwaZulu. Townships earmarked for incorporation became centres of conflict. The KZP came into being, initially to serve as a state guard to protect KwaZulu government officials and property. Chief Buthelezi, as both chief minister and minister of police, soon called for greater powers and more resources for the KZP.

In the meanwhile ANC youth, now in the front lines of resistance to the government and in a situation of increasing political rivalry with members and supporters of Inkatha, were making more militant demands of their own leaders. The relationship between the two organisations came to a bitter end after their failure to agree on numerous issues at meeting in London on 29-31 October 1979. It had consequently become increasingly difficult for the ANC to establish some presence especially in areas that fell under the control of the KwaZulu Bantustan and its ruling party, Inkatha, by the early 1980s. As the battle lines were drawn,
Chief Buthelezi turned to and received support from the state security apparatus and Inkatha found itself part of the state’s strategic response to ‘the total onslaught’ by the liberation and resistance movements.

The ANC underground

The ANC underground had suffered great losses with the arrests and death-in-detention of some of its key operatives in the mid-1970s and the departure for exile of many of its key members who had just been released from prison terms on Robben Island. Jacob Zuma left the country in December 1975 soon after the arrest of Harry Gwala and other members of the Natal-midlands underground. Johannes Phungula, Henry Chiliza, Alzinah Zondi and Eleanor Khanyile left shortly after the detention of Stephen Dlamini and the arrest and death-in-detention of Joseph Mdluli. Mac Maharaj and Sonny Singh, who had just been released from Robben Island left the country in 1977. Mandla Judson Khuzwayo, William Khanyile, Phyllis Naidoo, Mduduzi Guma, Jabu Nzima, Patrick Nyawose and Shadrack Maphumulo joined the exodus into exile shortly thereafter. Khumuzile Phungula, Nkosazana Dlamini and a few others followed them into exile during the 1970s. Many of these operatives re-emerged as commanders and members of key ANC and MK structures responsible for the revival of the Natal underground between 1976 and 1980. Mduduzi Guma was appointed the commander of the urban machinery of the NRC based in Maputo in Mozambique until his assassination during the SADF raid on Matola in January 1981. Krishna Rabilal from Merebank, too served on the NRC until he got killed in the Matola raid with Guma. Lionel Hadebe, Sonny Singh (alias Bobby Pillay), Cyril Raymonds and Zweli ‘Oscar’ Nyanda served on this command. Johannes Phungula commanded the rural machinery of the NRC from the late 1970s to 1983. Henry Chiliza, Mandla Msibi and Edwin Dlamini served on it.

Many of the prominent civic and youth leaders were doubling up as ANC underground operatives. There were more than dozen ANC underground networks which operated side by side, albeit independently, in Southern Natal during the 1980s. Pravin Gordhan, Yunus Mohamed, Yusuf Vawda, Jerry Coovadia served in one of the highly-regarded ANC underground units in Durban in the early 1980s. They simultaneously held prominent positions in the NIC, UDF and various civic organisations. Yunis Shaik, Moe Shaik and Jayendra Naidoo belonged to another ANC underground unit which operated in the greater Durban area during the 1980s. They too started off as activists in the civic movement. Abba Omar and Moe Shaik led a propaganda unit which operated in and around Durban during the first half of the 1980s. It fell under the command of Ivan Pillay and it was made up of about 13 operatives who occasionally blitz Durban with ANC propaganda material in support of popular community struggles, or in support of the activities of MK units. Lenny Naidu, who was killed in an ambush on MK cadres in 1988, Kumi Naidoo who skipped the country in 1987, Derek Naidoo, Jude Francis and Raymond Metheraj Sakloo constituted another unit. Benjamin (Ben) Johnson Langa and Simphiwe Mgoduso were part of a Durban-based ANC underground machinery. They operated from the Alan Taylor residence in Wentworth. Their network operated in the Durban city centre, KwaMashu to the north of the city, Umlazi, Lamontville, Verulem and beyond. It liaised closely with the Pietermaritzburg-based ANC underground network, which fell under the leadership of Benedict Duke (Dikobe) Martins, and which was made up of medical doctors who were former students of the University of Natal’s Medical School. They included the Edendale Hospital-based doctors Mvuyo Ernest Tom, Modise Faith Matlaopane and Norman Bantwini (alias Norman Ngciphe). Zakhele
Charles Ndaba, who was a student at the University of Natal’s Medical School, was part of the ANC underground network which operated in Durban until he left for exile in 1983.

Thami Mohlomi and Themba Nxumalo, who were former Robben Island prisoners, established underground units which operated within the labour movement in the early 1980s. Thami Mohlomi rose to the rank of a provincial secretary of COSATU in the late 1980s. Themba Nxumalo found the NFW which later joined COSATU when it was formed in 1985. Yunis Shaik and Jayendra Naidoo too worked in the labour movement from about 1984 onwards. Shaik was the General Secretary of the Garment Workers’ Industrial Union and Jayendra Naidoo, who started off as a volunteer while he was a student at the UDW in 1981, first became an organiser and later an education officer of the Catering, Commercial and Allied Workers’ Union (CCAWUSA) which was later renamed the South African Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union (SACCAWU). Siphiwe Wilfred Makhathini, Gayo Jabulani Walter Nxumalo, Morgina Shezi, Bonginkosi Rodgers Malinga, Sithembiso Nzuza, Moses Thabo Ramahlothlo and Mthokozisi Noblemen Shezi belonged to an ANC underground and MK unit which operated from Clermont in 1982. Thembinkosi Merrand, Lucky Maphumulo, Sipho Msomi, Aleck Cheriwé, Phelelani Mshengu and Ephraim Mthethwa belonged to an underground unit which recruited and/or ‘incited’ others to join the ANC and to leave the country to receive military training at more or less the same time.

Griffiths Mxenge and Victoria Mxenge served in underground structures in Durban until their assassination in 1981 and 1985 respectively. Toto Roy Dweba worked in a unit which included Johannes Khumalo and a Durban attorney named Mafika Mbili. Durban-based attorneys Vivian Made, Kwenza Elijah Mlaba and Linda Zama too were part of the underground which provided logistical support to MK units which operated in the Empangeni/Richard’s Bay between 1986 and 1987. Reverend Mcebisi Xundu, George Sithole, Dr Diliza Mji, Ms Thoko Msane-Didiza and many others were part of the ANC underground in Durban at different times during the 1980s. There were a few other loose ANC underground units which surfaced in Southern Natal towards the end of the decade despite ‘Operation Butterfly’s and Operation Vula’s intentions to impose top-down control over all underground and MK units. Two former student leaders of the 1980 KwaMashu student boycotts, Hymnal Nkosinathi (Nathi) Mthembu and Thembinkosi Ngcobo were involved in the recruitment of youths into the ANC and for sending them out of the country to receive military training in the 1980s. Furthermore, Cletus Mzimela, Vuyani Nkosi, Cassius Lubisi and Harry Gwala had established an ANC underground network which ambitiously planned to unban the ANC in defiance of the apartheid regime by March 1990.

Ben Martins was sent by the External Mission to Pietermaritzburg to re-establish the ANC underground network in the area in the late 1970s. He helped establish the D.C.O. Matiwane Youth League that served as nucleus from which the ANC underground structures re-emerged in Pietermaritzburg’s black townships in the early 1980s. His network included his younger brother, Joel George Martins, Sithabiso Mahlobo, and the Edendale Hospital-based doctors Mvuyo Ernest Tom, Modise Faith Matlaopane, Norman Bantwini (alias Norman Ngciphe), and the Durban-based ANC underground operatives, Benjamin (Ben) Johnson Langa and Simphiwe Mgoduso. Ben Martins also interacted with progressive artists Mafika Gwala, Bongi Dlomo, Geina Mhlophe, Sipho Mdanda and others who often stopped by at the Lay Ecumenical Centre in Pietermaritzburg during the early 1980s. Ben Martins had recruited most members of the Youth League’s leaders into the ANC underground between February and October 1983. He arranged for Andile Reve, Mlungisi Maphumulo, and Thandi
and Phumla Gqubule to travel to Lesotho to make contact with the ANC. Mlungisi Maphumulo and Aubrey Ngcobo were possibly earmarked for future roles as couriers.

Internally-based Vish Suparsad, from Durban, established contact with the ANC in Swaziland in 1979, and regularly crossed the borders to ferret arms, literature, equipment and operatives. Shortly after the outbreak of the June 1976 student uprising, he met Pravin Gordhan, who at the time had been approached by Mac Maharaj to join the ANC underground. Suparsad established the Tongaat Youth Group and worked closely with the Tongaat Civic Association. He was active in the NIC and also kept in touch with organizations in Pietermaritzburg. In 1980 he established the Community Research Unit (CRU), which gave research, organizational and other support to community organizations, including the Durban Housing Action Committee and the Joint Rent Action Committee. He also assisted trade union, cultural, religious and other organizations. Together with others, he played a role in the launch of the United Democratic Front (UDF).

In Howick and New Hanover in the Natal Midlands, ANC veterans Emmanuel “Mdayisi” Nene and David Mkhize were instrumental in the formation of popular organisations.

Underground political units of the ANC played a crucial role in various campaigns in the early 1980s, including the Anti-South African Indian Council campaign. The most important of these was a Natal unit led by Pravin Gordhan, which included Yunus Mahomed, Zac Yacoob and Professor Gerry Coovadia. Initially the unit recommended taking part in the elections for the SAIC in order to take over the Council and destroy it from within in conformity with an ANC National Executive Committee decision in relation to the SAIC taken in August 1979. However, another ANC-aligned faction in the Indian community wanted a boycott of the election. Following a meeting of the two factions with Mac Maharaj in London in late 1979, it was agreed that, in order to mirror the tactics in African areas which favoured boycott of all elections for state-created institutions, ANC-aligned groups inside the country would recommend a total boycott of SAIC elections. However, it was agreed that the final decision had to be taken by activists inside the country. The eventual decision was to boycott the elections.

The civic movement

In Durban’s African townships, rent increases and related matters such as the lack and poor quality of housing as well as increases in transport costs were the main reason for the emergence of civic organisations. On 8 April 1983, the Joint Rent Action Committee (JORAC) was formed as an umbrella body of residents’ associations serving five townships: the Lamontville Residents’ Association, the Hambanathi Residents’ Association, the Chesterville Residents’ Association, the Klaarwater Residents’ Association, and the Shakaville Residents’ Association. JORAC’s leadership included several veterans of the ANC – such as the Reverend Xundu, the JORAC vice-chairperson – as well as several underground ANC activists – such as Victoria Mxenge.

Community organisations emerged in quick succession in Southern Natal’s African, Indian and Coloured townships from the late 1970s onwards. They engaged the state and its auxiliary forces, the black urban councils, the KwaZulu Bantustan, and the Indian Local Authorities Council (LACs) in fierce struggles which were aimed at addressing ‘bread and butter issues’ which affected local communities on a daily basis. Among these was the Phoenix Rent Action Committee (PRAC), whose leadership included Mr J.M. Singh, who
was elected the chairperson of PRAC, Mrs Maharaj, Messrs Luke Naidoo, Jackie Nair and a few others who were elected onto the PRAC executive committee. The PRAC leadership created political and social awareness through concerts, musical shows and plays which always conveyed subtle political messages. PRAC also opposed the Durban Municipal Council attempts to transfer the administration of Phoenix to the South African Indian Affairs Council.

The rise of popular civic movement inspired two groups of UDW and local secondary schools students to participate in community struggles. The first comprised of Maggie Govender, Charm Govender, Shoots Naidoo, Kumi Naidoo, Spider Juggernath, Kumba Govender, Viv Pillay, Baptist Marie and Myron Peters. The second included Pregs Govender, Bobby Subrayan, Alf Kariem, Abier Maharaj, Abbar Omar, Moe Shaik and Yunis Shaik. They organised themselves into secret sub-committees which went into the various communities to explore possibilities of getting involved in their activities. Maggie Govender, Shoots Naidoo and Kumi Naidoo, who organised themselves into the Chatsworth area committee, linked up with Roy Padayachee who was already active in the Chatsworth Housing Action Committee (CHAC) which campaigned for better township housing, affordable rents and reasonable prices if the residents wished to purchase township houses from the Durban municipal authorities.

Meanwhile Janey Juggernath, Spider Juggernath and other activists got involved in the Merebank Ratepayers Association (MRA) which waged campaigns against pollution in the Merebank/Wentworth areas. Civic organisations were formed in Clairwood, Sydenham, Newlands East and Wentworth at about the same time. Vish Suparsad, Segi Pillay, Siva Naidoo, Logie Naidoo and Shirley Raman emerged as key activists in the Tongaat Civic Association and the Tongaat Youth Club. The Shaik brothers, Yunis and Moe, linked up with the NIC activists Thumba Pillay, Pravin Gordhan and Yunus Mohamed, and consequently got involved in community struggles in Phoenix, Sydenham and Chatsworth. On 29 March 1980, more than 50 Indian and Coloured civic organisations from various Durban’s Indian and Coloured townships came together under the auspices of an umbrella body named the Durban Housing Action Committee (DHAC) with Pravin Gordhan and Virgil Bonhomme as secretaries.

Meanwhile militant community organisations, which mobilised residents around ‘bread and butter’ issues such as rent and transport hikes, sanitation facilities, decent sports and school facilities, also emerged in Durban’s African townships of Lamontville and Chesterville, and Hambanathi in Verulem. Lamontville, Chesterville and Hambanathi were Durban’s oldest townships after Baumannville. They were the Lamontville Residents’ Association, the Hambanathi Residents’ Association, the Chesterville Residents’ Association, the Klaarwater Residents’ Association and the Shakaville Residents’ Association. Residents of the KwaZulu Bantustan administered Umlazi and KwaMashu townships revived their old Resident Associations, the KwaMashu and the Umlazi Residents’ Associations. On 8 April 1983, these civic associations, like their Indian and Coloured counterparts, formed an umbrella body the Joint Rent Action Committee (JORAC) with Reverend Mcebisi Xundu, Harrison Msizi Dube, Richard Gumede, Ian Mkhize and Lechesa Tsenoli as its prominent leaders.

**Armed actions of the ANC**

Various MK units carried out numerous armed operations in support of the community struggles in and around Durban during the first half of the 1980s. Three Durban-based MK
operatives, Patrick Ntobeko Maqubela (a lawyer from Durban), Mboniswa Maqhutyana from Umlazi and Seth Mpumelo Gaba carried out eight bomb attacks in Durban between February and November 1981. The Maqubela unit detonated a bomb at the Harriet House in Field Street which housed the Scotts Stores on 7 February 1981. It caused damage estimated at R13, 590. One person was injured. The second bomb blast hit the railway line at Umlazi on 25 May 1981. No one was injured in this explosion. The third bomb exploded at recruiting offices of the South African Defence Force (SADF) at the Trust Bank Building in Smith Street in Durban on 27 May 1981, causing damage estimated at R23, 385.

The fourth explosion was at the Cenotaph Francis Farewell Square on 26 June 1981. Maqubela’s unit placed 5kg of TNT at two motor car showrooms at McCarthy Leyland on Smith Street and Parks for Peugeot also on Smith Street in Durban on 26 July 1981. These explosions were an act of solidarity with the striking workers at these car factories in Pretoria and in the Western Cape. The blasts ripped open the frontage of the McCarthy Sigma and McCarthy Leyland showrooms, and destroyed 15 cars. The Maqubela unit was responsible for two more bomb blasts which rocked the Durban city centre on 10 October 1981. The first was an explosion at the Durban train station. The second hit the offices of the Department of Co-operation and Development which was responsible for administering African affairs. The blast destroyed part of the local offices of the Department and caused damage to about a dozen stores and other offices within a 200-metre radius. Five people were wounded in the explosion, which occurred just after 8pm. On 3 November 1981 the Maqubela unit bombed the South African Indian Affairs offices in Stanger Street in Durban in support of the Natal anti-SAIC elections campaign.

Others explosions damaged the Durban-Empangeni line and the Durban-Johannesburg railway line near Delville Wood. A bomb exploded at the central Memorial Square in Durban city centre on the 26 June 1981. Two MK members, Siphiwe Wilfred Makathini (alias Drift, Mpi, or Meshack Mhlongo) and Gayo Jabulani Walter Nnumalo (alias Bafana or Bongani Mvundla), were infiltrated into Southern Natal in April 1982. Drift Makathini and Gayo Nnumalo secured accommodation in Clermont with the help of Miss Morgina Shezi and her boyfriend, Bonginkosi Rodgers Malinga. Miss Shezi and Mthokozisi Shezi were drawn into Makathini’s and Nnumalo’s underground and MK unit. Makathini and Nnumalo spent their four weeks’ stay in Clermont at Malinga’s rented place at No 1381 Clermont Road. Nnumalo subsequently revealed to Malinga that he and Makathini were ANC members and recruited him into their unit. A few days later his brother-in-law, Mthokozisi Shezi, brought two other young men named Moses Thabo Ramahlollo and Sithembiso Nzuza. Makathini and Nnumalo trained their four recruits militarily in the use of arms and ammunition, and in the handling of explosives.

The Makathini-Nnumalo unit carried out four armed actions in and around Durban in April and May 1982. Drift Makathini and Gayo Nnumalo proceeded placed an explosive device at a water-pipeline in Umlazi River canal during the night of 25 April 1982. It exploded causing extensive damage to the pipeline. The unit carried out three armed operations on 21 May 1982. Makathini, Nzuza and Ramahlollo targeted the Coloured Affairs Administration building on the second floor of the ILCO Homes Centre on Armitage Street in Durban. The explosive device was timed to explode at five o’clock that afternoon. Nnumalo and Malinga placed an explosive device at the PNAB building in Moodie Street in Pinetown and timed it to go off at 17H00. Makathini placed an explosive device on the water pipeline near the Ngwenya School next to the southbound N2 Highway in Chesterville during the night of 25
May 1982. It exploded causing minimal damage. This was their last armed action before they returned to Swaziland to replenish their financial resources towards the end of May 1982.

Sithabiso Mahlabo (alias Sikhuselo Msibi) was deployed to Pietermaritzburg in January 1980. Mahlabo’s tasks were to reconnoitre the Pietermaritzburg and Escourt areas for suitable places where the ANC could establish its bases; reconnoitre the area for suitable targets; gauge the feeling of the local population so that the ANC underground could try to link up struggles over popular social issues with the ANC’s clandestine political work; establish arms caches that MK units could use; and launch selective military strikes against state targets. Mahlabo carried out a number of attacks in Pietermaritzburg until his recall to Lusaka in 1983.

Among the most spectacular operations in Durban was an attack on the Durban South electrical sub-station on the 21st April 1981. The sub-station provided electrical power to the nearby African township of Lamontville, about 15 kilometres from the centre of Durban, and the attack took place at a time when the residents were protesting against a hike in electricity tariffs. The explosions caused an estimated R2.5-million damage, thousands of people were left without power, and factories were closed in Prospecton and Umbogintwini and telephone communications disrupted. The unit responsible was made up of Jonathan Magome, Ambrose Sizakele and Mbuso. They placed a bomb outside the offices of the Daily News which exploded and blew out the entire front of a nearby clothing store, shattered shop-fronts and scattered debris across a street in the heart of Durban’s business district just after the lunch hour on 7 February 1981. The attack did not result in any serious injuries or deaths because of steady rainfall.

In June, Natal was once again targeted by a series of explosions. A bomb explosion in the central Memorial Square in Durban city centre on the 26th June resulted in no deaths or injuries, but occurred an hour before thousands of people normally passed through the area. The railway line between Felixton and Fort Durnford on the Natal North Coast was damaged for the second time within a month by explosive devices on the 28th June. During the year MK combatants in Natal also linked their operations with popular struggles. For instance, when cadres from Natal units placed 5kg of TNT in two motor-car showrooms in Durban on the 26th July they were doing so to express support for striking workers at motor firms in Pretoria and the Western Cape.

Two explosions rocked the Durban city centre on the 10th October 1981. The first was an explosion at the Durban train station. The second was directed against the offices of the Department of Co-operation and Development, responsible for administering African affairs. The blast destroyed part of the local offices of the Department, and damage to about a dozen stores and other offices within a 200-metre radius. Five people were wounded in the explosion, which occurred just after 8pm. In December newspapers reported the arrest of 6 suspected members of the ANC that constituted the cell responsible for most of the bombs in the Durban area during 1981. A number of Africans, Indians and Whites were among those arrested and large quantities of arms, ammunition and explosives were seized. It was widely speculated that the ‘arrests had almost certainly smashed the ANC cell that has evidently been operating in the area this year’. The Natal units suffered another blow when three men were arrested and several arms caches of limpet mines, arms and grenades were discovered in remote parts of Piet Retief, Nongoma and Nqutu in northern Natal between December 6 and December 16.
The Port Natal Administration Board in Pinetown and the Offices of Department of Coloured Affairs in Durban were targeted in 1982. This was followed on the 2nd June by 6 explosions in three different parts of the northern Natal area bordering Swaziland. One blast occurred at the Paulpietersburg railway station, another four at the Kemps List Mine, and one at a fuel depot in Paulpietersburg. The Pietermaritzburg Supreme Court was attacked on the 30th, when a bomb was placed below the concrete steps leading up to the Supreme Court and exploded at midday. Five offices, including a charge office and the offices normally used by the security police during political trials were extensively damaged. The latter building was again targeted less than two months later when an explosion ripped through the building on the 21st March.

On 30 January 1983, Thembinkosi Paulson Ngcobo, commonly known as ‘Naughty’, planted an MZ demolition limpet mine at the provincial Supreme Court building on College Road, Pietermaritzburg. ‘Naughty’ Ngcobo’s brother, Nqaba Ngcobo and other Swaziland based commanders had instructed him to blow up the building because it symbolised political oppression and judicial tyranny and was the venue for almost all political trials in Natal. On 11 February 1983, Ngcobo bombed the Drakensberg Administration Board (DAB) offices at Sobantu township in an act of solidarity and support with its residents, who were at the time involved in struggles against rent and bus-fare increases.

Sithabiso Mahlobo hit at least two targets in Pietermaritzburg. Ben Martins helped him blow up the Supreme Court building complex at about 18:30 on 21 March 1983. They detonated the bomb in a flower pot on an enclosed porch. The explosion blew up a lorry that was parked nearby and caused damage estimated at R46,000. No one was injured because the building had not yet been completed. Ben Martins again assisted him bomb the old Supreme Court building on the evening of 21 April 1983. The bomb ripped through the judge’s chambers, which were located directly above the point of the explosion. The nearby City Hall suffered structural damage estimated at R20,000, and the night-watchman Pratesh Maharaj and caretaker Douglas Patterson, suffered light injuries. Mahlobo left the country quickly in late April 1983.

In 1983, attacks in August marked the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF), a coalition of anti-apartheid organisations formed in Cape Town on the 20th August. Among these was an explosion that destroyed a power pylon in Cato Manor, Durban, just prior to the launch of the new organisation. In November MK carried out a number of attacks in Natal, including bomb explosions on the Johannesburg-Durban railway line on the 1st, and at a municipal depot and police warehouse in Durban the next day. On the eve of the anniversary of the launch of MK on 16th December there were three small explosions in Durban on the 15th December.

‘Naughty’ Ngcobo was responsible for both explosions at the Eskom pylons on 15 August and 14 October 1983. The first explosion at Ashdown served as an act of solidarity and support with Ashdown residents who had embarked on protests against the local council elections that were scheduled for October 1983. Following this, the chairperson of the Ashdown Community Council (ACC), M.M. Mbuli, and his entire council resigned. Ngcobo was responsible for two other bomb blasts on Eskom pylons on 14 October 1983. The first was at Ashdown and the second at Morcom Road in Prestbury. His intention was to cut off the power supply to the city and disrupt its economic activity.
In 1984, an MK unit was deployed to the rural Ingwavuma district in Northern Natal. The unit sent into the country for this operation, like similar units sent into different parts of the country at the time with similar objectives, was tasked with establishing guerrilla bases, recruiting and training locals, and mounting armed actions. Several bases were set up in the district, while a number of locals were recruited and trained by the unit. Wilfred Mhlawumbe Maphumulo, Robert Mfundisi Dumisa, James Edward Marupeng, Norbert Sifiso Buthelezi and Bhekintaba Moses Nzimande were tasked with recruiting locals into armed MK units, training them in military combat and establishing military bases in the caves of the Ubombo Mountains in the Ingwavuma district of Northern Natal. This was part of an ambitious plan to circumvent long-standing attempts by the apartheid regime, its Swaziland Government allies, and the KwaZulu Bantustan authorities to render the area and the whole of KwaZulu north of the Thukela River ‘a-no-go-area’ for the liberation movement.

Another MK unit was sent into the Nongoma district in Northern Natal in late 1984 to establish an underground military network by recruiting and training locals. An underground operative only identified as Matthew Maphalala solicited the help of Cornelius Nzama Zulu to establish the ANC underground machinery at Nongoma. Zulu in turn approached King Goodwill Zwelithini’s induna, Salusha Malinga Zondo. In early October 1984, Zulu brought Timothy Fana Magagula to the home of Salusha Zondo. His mission was to reconnoitre and assess the area for its suitability as a base for the envisaged ANC underground machinery. Magagula spent a few days at Zondo’s place before he left. A few weeks later, Nzama Zulu brought two ANC operatives, Themba Zondi and Mpumelelo Mbatha, to Salusha Zondo’s home. Zondo provided the two men with accommodation and food during November 1984.

MK mounted a series of attacks at the beginning of the year, including the bombing of an ESKOM installation at Georgedale near Pietermaritzburg on the 23rd February, and the ESKOM power station at Pietermaritzburg on the night of the 28th February. MK carried out a major operation in Durban on the 3rd April, involving a massive car bomb explosion in a building that housed the offices of Department of Internal Affairs, as well as the offices of the South African Indian Council. Three people were killed in the attack and 12 injured. The attack, coming as it did a just over two weeks after the signing of the Nkomati Accord, dented the confidence that the government may have had that it had succeeded in neutralising the ANC.

Charles Morabe, who was nicknamed ‘Rabbit’, carried out spectacular bomb explosions in Durban on 3 April 1984. He detonated a massive car bomb at the Department of Internal Affairs and South African Indian Affairs building on the corner of Stanger Street and Victoria Embankment at 7.30 in the morning. The explosion damaged the nearby block of flats at John Ross House and a number of shops whose doors were blown off from their hinges. Five cars were damaged and three people were killed. Twelve others were injured in the blast.

According to the TRC, in April 1984, Anamalai ‘Daya’ Rengasamy and Leelavathi Rengasamy were killed and approximately twenty people were injured in a car bomb explosion on the Durban Esplanade. Less than a fortnight later, on 13 May 1984, there was an RPG-7 attack on the Mobil Oil Refinery, Durban. In an ensuing shoot-out at the refinery, four insurgents and three bystanders were killed. The Security Branch claimed that the four dead men could be linked to the fatal car bomb explosion on the Esplanade, as well as other attacks over the previous two years.
The guerrillas had fired several rockets at the massive complex in the Merebank area of Durban from a bluff overlooking the refinery. The rockets cut three fuel lines and one hit a fuel tank. The fleeing guerrillas managed to make their way from the site of the attack by car, but were cornered at a paint factory in Jacobs. In the ensuing gun battle the four guerrillas and three civilians caught in the crossfire were killed. In the various skirmishes that ended with the shootout at the paint factory, a policeman was shot in the head and a police dog shot dead. Clifford Brown from Buffalo Flats in East London was one of the MK operatives killed.

In June, two unidentified MK cadres were shot dead in a shootout with police in Verulam, Durban, a week before the anniversary of the Soweto uprising. Police found a huge arms cache nearby consisting of large quantities of arms, ammunition and limpet mines. A few weeks later, on the 21st June, a bomb exploded in the Durban Berea area and damaged a 66 000-volt electrical transformer in Musgrave Road.

On 12 July 1984, five people were killed and twenty-seven injured in a car bomb explosion on Bluff Road, Durban. Oliver Tambo asserted that the bomb had been intended for a military convoy and condemned the bombers for being “inexcusably careless” by causing civilian casualties. The Swaziland MK machinery had taken a decision in 1983 to form a separate unit responsible for special operations under the Natal Command of MK. ‘Ralph’ (Raymond Edgar Lawrence) was in charge of this unit. This unit was to specialise in car bomb attacks on military targets in the Durban and Pietermaritzburg areas. Targets identified for attack included the Natal Command, C.R. Swarts, a military office in Pietermaritzburg, the Bluff Military Base, the military training college in Jacobs, and the military maintenance depot in Jacobs. One of the unit’s first operations was the powerful car bomb explosion on the 12th July on Bluff Road (Jacobs) in Durban which left five civilians dead and 27 others injured. The explosion went off just seconds after two lorries carrying soldiers passed nearby. Charles Morabe carried out this operation.

By 1985, an MK machinery led by, among others, Vejay Ramlakan, and commanded by the Swaziland-based Natal Urban Machinery, covered most of the Durban area. It included both African and Indian cadres. The so-called ‘Durban bombers’ were brought to trial in 1986, and the 10 accused were Vejay Ramlakan (a medical doctor), Sibongiseni Dhlomo (another medical doctor), Dudu Buthlelezi, Phumezo Nxiweni (a student at Alan Taylor residence), Dhanpal ‘Ricky’ Naidoo, Jude Francis, Bafu Nqugu, Sibusiso Ndlanzi (real name Mbongwa), Ordway Msomi, and Sipho Bhila.

The command structure of MK in Durban consisted at various times of Induduz Sithole (‘Belgium’), Sihle Mbongwa, Lulamele Khatle, Dlomo and Ramlakan. Each of these commanders was responsible for recruiting and establishing units. Ramlakan, for example, had under his command units led by Ricky Dhanpal Naidoo, Raymond Metharaj Saclou and Jude Francis.

In the indictment it was alleged that the Durban MK machinery’s first operation was an aborted attempt by a member of a unit attached to the Durban MK command, Nxiweni, to bomb SADF vehicles in Wentworth and Lamontville during April 1985. The next was a series of explosions at a Spars Foodliners, the Trust Bank Centre, and Gillespie Street in Durban on April 18. In June, Nxiweni placed a limpet mine at the XL restaurant on the beachfront in retaliation against the SADF raid in Botswana. On June 16, Sipho Bhila placed a bomb at the Lamontville township offices.
Three MK units under Ramlakan’s command carried out a series of attacks in the second half of the year. Sibongiseni Dhlomo, another member of the Durban MK command, carried out a number of attacks around the same time. Sibongiseni Dhlomo travelled to Swaziland, returning with two MK cadres trained abroad: Ndlanzi and an unidentified individual by the name of ‘Kevin’. At the end of November, Dhlomo made another visit to Swaziland and on this occasion returned with another three trained cadres, including Andrew Zondo, who was responsible for the Amanzimtoti bomb blast. One of these infiltrators carried out an attack on the Mopeni Post Office on December 8. Ndlanzi, after receiving instructions from the Swaziland machinery that an operation should be planned to retaliate for the attack on ANC houses in Maseru, passed the instructions on to Zondo. Zondo discussed the matter with Msomi, who attached a bomb on a vehicle parked in Durban’s Pine Street causing an explosion on the 21st December. Two days later Zondo placed a bomb at the Sanlam shopping centre in Amanzimtoti, killing five people.

Audway Msomi was commander of a sub-unit of the Durban MK unit that included Thuso Tshika and ‘Bafungu’. An externally trained MK cadre known only as ‘Stan’ provided Msomi with a crash course in the use of firearms, explosives and explosive devices. This unit took part in a number of attacks, after having established a DLB in Umgababa on the Natal south coast with a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition of Eastern European origin in November 1985. Msomi and other members of the Area Politico-Military Committee were arrested on the 24th December, just after the Amanzimtoti blast. Tshika was not picked up in the police swoop and managed to make his way into exile.

The Swaziland machinery launched an operation called ‘Operation Butterfly’ in late 1985 to support the Durban machinery. The objective was to: ‘settle a group of middle-ranking, externally trained political and military cadres in the Durban area; to reorganise the local underground from the top downwards, asserting authority over existing (and often isolated) underground units; to reflect the principle of integrated political-military command in structures; and to prepare the ground for the clandestine entry into the area of more senior leadership.’ Another objective was to establish the first major Area Politico-Military Committee (APMC) inside the country. Most of the cadres infiltrated were arrested soon after entering the country, and the internal network subsequently uncovered. According to Ivan Pillay, ‘…the Butterfly experience was an ultimate failure. But it did achieve some success…. It drew in lots of militants from the townships and so on.’

Five people were killed and over sixty injured in a bomb explosion on 23 December 1985 in a shopping centre at the upper South Coast seaside town of Amanzimtoti. The limpet mine had been placed in a refuse bin outside the Sanlam shopping centre. Most of the victims were holidaymakers doing last minute Christmas shopping. Sibusiso Andrew Zondo (19) was arrested in connection with the bombing in February 1986. Zondo had been in Maputo when the SADF attacked ANC houses in Matola in 1983, and he subsequently decided to go for military training. He underwent two years military training in Angola, and in 1985 was deployed to supplement the ANC units in Natal. Here he was placed under the command of Lulama Tollman, and led three cells in the region. In 1985, Zondo received instructions from the Swaziland machinery that an operation should be planned to retaliate for the Maseru attack. Zondo discussed the matter with Audway Msomi, who attached a bomb on a vehicle parked in Durban’s Pine Street causing an explosion on the 21st December. Two days later Zondo placed a bomb at the Sanlam shopping centre in Amanzimtoti. It appears that, in an unauthorised choice of targets that did not conform to what the ANC considered legitimate
targets, Zondo, together with an unidentified colleague, placed a sports bag containing the limpet mine in a bin outside a shopping centre on the 23rd December.

Two other MK members thought also to have been involved in the bombing, Phumezo Nxiweni (20) and Sipho Stanley Bhila (31), were subsequently executed. The state’s main accomplice witness in the case, a Mofokeng, told the court that he provided the limpet mine and accompanied Zondo to the shopping centre. Mofokeng claimed that the explosion was in retaliation for the South African security forces’ raid on Maseru, Lesotho four days earlier, in which nine people were killed. Zondo, who admitted his role in the bombing, was convicted and given five death sentences. He was executed on 9 September 1986.

In 1986, another attempt was made to establish a permanent MK network in the Natal Midlands when Zenzele Terence Dlamini was deployed to the area. Dlamini linked up with other MK operatives already based in Pietermaritzburg, as well as with an ANC underground political unit in the area, before carrying out a number of operations. MK units were also deployed to the Greater Newcastle area in 1986. These units were charged with carrying out armed operations to stimulate political activity, and to recruit and train locals for the military wing of the ANC.

An electrical sub-station mid-way between Durban and Pietermaritzburg was bombed on the 20th February 1986. The electrical transformer was destroyed in the blast at the sub-station, and power switched off in a number of adjoining areas. A limpet mine was attached to a police van while it was patrolling Umlazi, Durban, on the 11th February. The mine exploded at about 11.45 pm after it had been parked in the police compound, causing damage to two vehicles. A Durban unit of MK struck at an electrical sub-station in Sideman on the 18th February. Two explosions occurred on the site of the attack, the second four hours after the first and after corporation employees had been allowed into the area to inspect the damages. No one was hurt when the second mine, which was buried beneath a pile of sand less than 2 metres from the transformer, exploded.

A series of explosions rocked different parts of Durban in one weekend after the 10th commemoration of the June 16th uprising, and a few days after the declaration of a state of emergency on the 12th. These operations were carried out by a unit of Special Operations based in the Wentworth coloured township led by Gordon Webster and Robert McBride.

On 14 June 1986, three people were killed and about sixty-nine injured in a car bomb explosion at Magoo’s Bar on the Durban beachfront. The operation was carried out by Robert McBride, Greta Apelgren and Matthew le Cordier. McBride was convicted of the killings and sentenced to death three times for the bombing. His sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment and he was released in terms of the Record of Understanding in 1992. Apelgren was acquitted on all counts. Le Cordier gave evidence for the state and escaped prosecution.

McBride had been instructed by his MK commander in Botswana, Aboobaker Ismael, to choose a military target for a car bomb attack. He said that he had conducted a reconnaissance exercise to ascertain that the bar was frequented by off-duty military personnel. However, this exercise had been conducted in an extremely amateurish and naïve manner. His claim that the Magoo’s bar was targeted because it was believed to be a rendezvous for SADF members could not be substantiated. None of those killed or injured
had any link to the military or the SAP. The unit carried out a number of other attacks during 1986.

In August, police in different parts of the country killed a number of suspected members of MK. This included four killed in a shootout with police in Durban on the 8th August following an incident in which a house in KwaMashu was fired upon and attacked with three hand grenades.

Gordon Webster (alias Steve Mkhize, or Joe Webster) from New Hanover, a small farming town between Pietermaritzburg and Greytown, established the next MK unit. It operated in the Natal Midlands and southern Natal areas from Pietermaritzburg, New Hanover, Mooi River to Hammersdale and Durban, He returned via Zambia and Botswana as part of Operation Zikomo in November 1985. Webster recruited Welcome Welela ‘Blackie’ Khumalo (alias Themba Khumalo), Nazeem Cassiem and Bheki ‘Zola’ Ngubane into his Pietermaritzburg based MK unit. Sam Mthembu often assisted them. In Durban he recruited his former school-mate, Robert McBride into MK.

Webster’s Pietermaritzburg unit he placed a limpet mine on a pipe near the Lion Park turn off from the N3 highway to Pietermaritzburg in January 1986, causing extensive damage. This turned out to be a water pipe. Webster and Khumalo then blew up the electricity substation at Umlaas Road between Camperdown and Pietermaritzburg in February 1986. On 2 March 1986, Webster and Khumalo sabotaged an electricity sub-station near Camperdown causing extensive damage. Webster was confronted by two policemen on 15 April 1986, and after being shot was arrested and taken to Edendale Hospital. On the evening of 4 May 1986, the Durban unit led by Robert McBride, and including Greta Apelgren, Robert’s father, Derrick, Themba Khumalo, Greta Apelgren, Antonio Arturo du Preez, and Matthew Lecordier, rescued Webster from the hospital in a daring operation.

Twenty-four people were injured in two bomb explosions outside the Magistrates’ Court in Newcastle on 11 November 1986. SAP Sergeant Vusimuzi Kunene lost both legs in the explosions. In August 1987, MK combatants Thuso Tshika, Basil Sithole, Patrick Nkosi and Abraham Mathe faced charges of terrorism in connection with these explosions and others, including a grenade and small arms attack on 10 October 1986 at Osizweni KZP station, in which one KZP officer was injured. The first three accused were convicted and sentenced to prison terms on Robben Island. Mathe was acquitted. MK operations continued in October, with a bomb exploding in a manhole in Muben, Durban, on the 10th; a limpet mine explosion outside a Lamontville, Durban, police station used by members of the SAP and SADF on the 20th.

In mid-November the scene of operations shifted to northern Natal, when 28 people were injured in two bomb blasts in Newcastle. Two of the more seriously injured were policemen. The first bomb went off at 2.42 pm at the CNA in the Game shopping centre, and the second, hidden in a dustbin in front of the ‘B’ court at the local Magistrate’s Court, went off at 3.10 pm. Two suspected insurgents subsequently arrested were, according to the police, linked to the Newcastle attack, as well as with a mine explosion at the Glencoe railway station and an attack with AK-47 rifles at the Osizweni police station on 10th October.

Zenzele Terence Dlamini, Baba Majola from Imbali and Mduduzi Xaba from Sobantu carried out two armed operations on the Sobantu mobile police station near the Sobantu Community Hall and the military base at Khwezi School. Zenzele Dlamini had established several combat
units at both Imbali and Sobantu by the time of his arrest towards the end of 1986. Members included Pho Zimu, Sibusiso Xaba, Mlungisi Magubane, Thabani Zulu and many others. Almost all members of this unit were arrested in late 1986 and convicted in 1987. Moses Ndlovu, who was from KwaShange, also helped establish SDUs in his Vulindlela area, and trained local youths militarily. He linked up with old trade union comrade, Sipho Kubheka, with whom he had served as a trade unionist and member of the ANC and SACTU underground since the early 1970s. Kubheka supplied Ndlovu with an MK cadre identified as ‘Mjitha’. Dumisani Zuma, Dennis Zondi and Mandla Khumalo also helped with the SDUs in the Vulisaka, Mcakweni and Gezubuso areas.

Dumezweni Zimu organised one of the units which provided support to the SDUs towards the end of 1988. Bheki Mlangeni, an attorney who was later assassinated by the apartheid hit-squads, introduced him to MK operatives, Nkululeko Sowazi and Banzi Nyanda, who trained him militarily. Towards the end of 1988 Zimu suspended his studies and relocated to Pietermaritzburg. Zimu’s MK unit comprised of his childhood friends Nhlanhla Nicholas Ngcobo, Fisokwakhe Michael Dlamini and Robert Msizeni Madlala. Dlamini was a serving member of the SAP who had worked at the Protea and Moroka police stations in Johannesburg when Zimu was at Wits.

Other underground units co-existed with Zimu’s in Pietermaritzburg. One was led by Sipho Gcabashe, a COSATU member who had established an ANC underground unit which consisted of himself (as political counsellor), Linda Ntuli and Victor Vesi (Musa Gwala). Towards the end of 1989, Siphiwe Nyanda, through Harry Gwala, instructed Zimu to identify cadres who could be trained for Operation Vula. He recruited Nhlanhla Ngcobo and Peter Bhengu into this unit.

By the end of 1987, Cassius Lubisi had also set up an ANC underground network. This specialised in political education, production of propaganda material, and support for SDUs. Lubisi’s unit comprised of himself, Bafana Khumalo, Tshinyiwaho Pidane, Monwabisi Manjezi and Mpumelelo Sigalelana. He also recruited Mzwandile Mbongwa, Sylvester Sithole, Mduduzi Sibanyoni and Dumisani Bukhosini into the underground by 1989. In addition, Lubisi liaised with Chris Hani on the provision and distribution of military equipment needed by the SDUs.

Several prominent UDF leaders and activists had also been drawn into the ANC underground by the second half of the 1980s. Sipho Moloko, the chairperson of the Ashdown Youth Organisation (AYO), for example, belonged to a four-person MK unit which comprised himself, two other operatives who were only known as Rita and Mandla, and Sipho W. Motaung.

In 1987, a small two-man MK unit was sent to Empangeni and Richards Bay in Northern Natal to establish underground networks, recruit locals and train them in the handling of weapons and explosives, and to carry out armed actions in the area. A one-man MK unit carried out a series of operations in Durban in the year. Mohammed Rafiq Rohan, then a reporter with The Post newspaper in Durban, was recruited by Aboobaker Ismail, who was MK Chief of Ordnance at the time. Ismail requested him to contribute by smuggling weapons into South Africa. Rohan instead opted to be a combatant and, after acquiring permission for establishing the unit from MK Headquarters, Ismail introduced Rohan to the Zimbabwean Regional Commander of Ordnance, Riaz Saloojee (MK name ‘Kelvin Khan’). MK
Headquarters also gave Ismail permission to run the new unit, although his tasks were to provide military supplies to MK cadres in the field.

During training sessions he and Saloojee discussed various possible targets, such as the Police Radio Headquarters in Ridge Road, Durban, the Natal Command, and the Durban headquarters of the Security Branch at CR Swart Square. Among the operations Rohan carried out were an attack on the Natal Command during the course of a military function on the 10th of March which involved explosive devices that damaged the building where the event was taking place and injured 17 people; and the placing of a limpet mine near the male residence on the premises of the Security Police Headquarters on the 7th April.

In the late 1980s, the headquarters of “Operation Vula” was established in Durban at the suggestion of Billy Nair. The ‘Operation Vula’ commanders set up three key committees to supervise the structures which they formed in and around Durban. They were the military, political and overall politico-military committees. Siphiwe Nyanda headed the military committee and its members were Zakhele Charles Ndaba, Mbuso Shabalala and Dipak Patel. The members of the Political Committee were Jabu Sithole, a Mathematics lecturer at the University of Zululand and its chair, Pravin Gordhan and Mpho Scott, who were its joint secretaries, and Vusi Tshabalala. Teeruth Mistry who had slipped out of the country after the arrest of the members of ‘Operation Butterfly’ in December 1985 was kept separately, according to Mac Maharaj, because he had a specialised task of manufacturing timing devices from local sources. Moe Shaik headed Vula’s intelligence structures.

Sydney Mufamadi, Reverend Frank Chikane, Father Simangaliso Mkhatshwa and Cyril Ramaphosa formed a core committee within the MDM which was responsible for setting up the agenda within the UDF and COSATU in consultation with the ANC in Lusaka via Mac Maharaj. Operation Vula had presence in the Western Cape where Charles Nqakula and Max Ozinsky served as regional commanders. A handful of other ‘Vula’ operatives were infiltrated into the country after July 1988. They included Dipuo Catherine Mvelase, Susan Tshabalala, Janet Love and Little John. Ivan Pillay was responsible for Operation Vula in Lusaka where he worked with a network of operatives which included Zarina Maharaj and a few others. He later joined other Vula members in Natal after the un-banning of the ANC and other organisations in February 1990.

**Attacks on ‘collaborators’**

**The Killing of Ben Langa**

Student activist Ben Langa was killed by MK members in Edendale, Pietermaritzburg in June 1984, on suspicion of being a police informer. Clarence Lucky Payi and Mashayini Sipho Xulu were sentenced to death for the killing. They were executed on 7 September 1986. The Swaziland-based Natal Commander, Edward Lawrence, (aka Fear or Ralph Mgcina), ordered the two to assassinate Ben Langa on the grounds that he was an informer who supplied information that had compromised MK operatives. He cast suspicion that Langa was one of the state witnesses in the trial of Mahlobo and two others, despite the fact that records show that Langa’s name was not on the list of witnesses who testified in the trial. Edward Lawrence, according to the ANC, admitted to its security personnel that he was a police agent who had infiltrated the ANC during the 1970s. Lawrence was a former student of the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and joined the security police while he was in
Durban in 1973. He died in ANC custody. Despite Lawrence’s confession to the ANC security personnel, Eugene de Kock denied that he was a security police agent.

**Other struggles**

In 1982, the Sobantu community when it embarked on struggles against rent and bus-fare hikes. Unrest erupted on 28 September 1982, when a large group of residents, mainly youths, gathered opposite the township superintendent offices, where rents were paid. The police used dogs, teargas and *sjamboks* to disperse the protesters. A total of 19 people, 10 men and nine women, were arrested and charged under the Internal Security Act. They appeared at the magistrate’s court on 1 October 1982, charged with intimidation and disturbing the peace. They were Eric Mkhize, Makhosi Madlala, Makhosi Mkhize, Dano Mokoena, Nhlanhla Mndaweni, Rebecca Nxumalo, Khomaphi Nkala, Langeni Zondi, Joyful Shabalala, Joyce Shabalala, Raphael Hadebe, Audrey Mkhize, Lucky Dube and six unnamed juveniles.

At an anti-rent demonstration for 30 September 1982, hundreds of residents, mainly youths, who were marching towards the superintendent’s office fled were fired upon by the police. Graham Sibusiso Radebe ran into Constable Sipho Mthembu’s yard, where the policeman opened fire, killing him instantly. Evidence led at the subsequent inquest established that Radebe had been shot in the back as he ran away. Two other 15-year-old youths, Mhlengi Duma and Jabulani Nkosi, also sustained injuries in the same shooting incident. A number of confrontations with the police followed.

Mpophomeni residents also engaged in rent struggles against their KwaZulu- administered town council when rent increases were imposed in 1983. The Mpophomeni community struggles gave rise to the formation of the Mpophomeni Youth Organisation (MPOYO1) in 1984. Some of its prominent members were Bhoyi Ndlela, Isaiah Ntshangase, and Dominic Ngubo. They worked closely with the ANC veteran, Emmanuel ‘Mdayisi’ Nene, who had featured prominently in the 1959 Sobantu community struggles. Meanwhile another ANC veteran and former Robben Island prisoner, David Mkhize, helped to form the Mpolweni Youth Organisation (MPOYO2) at the Mpolweni mission near New Hanover in 1984. Sikhumbuzo Ngwenya, then a local school teacher, assisted him. Mkhize had served a five year jail term on Robben Island for MK activities in the 1960s. He was released from prison in the early 1970s. His son, Moses Mkhize, also served time on Robben Island in the 1980s.

**The United Democratic Front**

The NIC and DHAC provided the nucleus from which the first UDF region emerged in the country. It was formed in Durban on 14 May 1983, ahead of the Western Cape and Transvaal regions which were formed on 24 May and 31 May 1983 respectively. The Southern Natal Regional Executive Committee (REC) of the UDF was made up of the Professor Jerry Coovadia as the Chairperson, Virgil Bonhomme of the Wentworth Civic Association as the Deputy Chairperson, Mr Yunus Mahomed and Dr Joe Paahla as Co-Secretaries, Mr Rabbi Bugwandeen and Mrs Victoria Mxenge as co-Treasurers and Archie Gumede as its President. Mcebisi Xundu, Lechesa Tsenoli, Baba Dlamini and several other activists served as additional members. Among them were three white activists from the Black Sash and Diakonia in St Andrew’s Street in Durban.

Most of the African members of the Southern Natal UDF REC were from the lower middle class professional backgrounds rather than the working class, and almost half of its members
were from the NIC and DHAC. Kumi Naidoo traces this to the beginnings of political divisions between two UDF affiliated groups which were aligned to the ANC. The first were a loose group of township based African activists who were mobilised behind the banner of SAAWU, and the second were predominantly Indian activists who formed the core of the NIC and DHAC. The former were kept at the margins of the processes which led to the formation of the UDF whereas the latter dominated the Regional Executive Committee in spite of minimal support for it among ordinary Indian people. This group was later accused of cabalism.

The UDF had a slow start in Southern Natal’s African townships because of the non-participation in its formation of the country’s biggest predominantly black trade union, the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU). Since the UDF was born out of the campaign to challenge the apartheid regime’s attempts to co-opt the Indian and Coloured population by introducing two legislative chambers known as the House of Delegates and House of Representatives, its Southern Natal region embarked on campaign to attract all race groups into its ranks. It launched an unprecedented media campaign to popularise itself.

A Conference at the New Holmes Hotel in May 1983 was attended by teachers, social workers, students, youth, religious and community leaders, who represented approximately 42 local organisations. The meeting elected a Committee of Concern. The Committee of Concern served as the UDF Natal Midlands interim structure until the UDF Regional Executive Committee (REC) was elected in February/March 1985 and opened the first UDF offices at the Edendale Lay Ecumenical Centre on 30 October 1983. This was the second UDF office established in Natal after the one in Durban. Most of the initial Natal Midlands UDF affiliates were from the Indian areas to the northeast of the city. The leaders of the Committee of Concern, and later the UDF, were consequently forced to play active roles in the formation of African youth and civic organisations to the west of the city centre between 1984 and 1985. These included the Imbali Youth Organisation (IYO), the Edendale Youth Organisation (EDEYO), and the Ashdown Youth Organisation (AYO). By early 1985 the Natal Midlands UDF had become truly non-racial in its composition.

The Natal Midlands REC of the UDF was formally constituted at a mass meeting in March 1985. Appiah S. Chetty, the Pietermaritzburg-based NIC leader and struggle veteran, was elected its first regional chairperson; Sikhumbuzo Ngwenya, the organising secretary; Martin Wittenberg, the minute secretary; Muzi Thusi, the rural organiser; and D.V. Chetty, the Treasurer. Simon Gqubule, Colin Gardner and Simon Motala were elected as additional members. A Local General Council (LGC), which was made up of 20 members, was also elected. Its members were Yunus Carrim, who represented the local branch of the NIC; Hloni Zondi and S. Faizel who represented organised labour; Kenneth Dladla and Kam Chetty who represented the civic associations; Sipho Gabela and Sobhuza Dlamini who represented students; Sithembiso Benedictus Hlongwane, Sithembiso So Ngcobo and Robbie Mkhize, who represented the youth; and John Jeffrey, who represented the Pietermaritzburg Congress of Democrats. Mike Hart, John Gultig, Dennis Dickson, Reginald Hadebe and Thamsanqa Mseleku were later drawn in as representatives of the National Education Union of South Africa (NEUSA). The initial leadership was obviously male-dominated, and it would take a few years before Makhosi Khoza, Jean Ngubane, Nana Mnandi, Karuna Mohan, Sibongile Mkhize, Happy Bhulose and Thandi Matiwane were able to form the Natal Midlands branch of the Natal Organisation of Women (NOW).
Six Natal detainees fled from police custody and hid in the British Consulate in Durban in early September 1984. Among them were the UDF president, Archibald Gumede, and five NIC leaders including its president, George Sewpersad, and its executive committee members Billy Nair, Mewa Ramgobin, M.J. Naidoo and Paul David. Sewpersad, Ramgobin and Naidoo left the British Consulate a month later on 6 October 1984. They were immediately detained Gumede, Nair and David only left the British Consulate after 90 days in December 1984. They too were immediately arrested as soon as they stepped out of the British Consulate. They were subsequently charged with high treason together with other UDF leaders.

The state tried to crush popular resistance by declaring two states of emergency in July 1985 and June 1986. Several prominent UDF and COSATU leaders and activists were either detained or forced underground. Many others left the country and joined the ANC in the mid-1980s. Among them were Muzi Thusi, Mvuselelo Mdiyane, Nkosinathi Thenjwayo, Babsy Sithole, Mxolisi Penwell ‘Mubi’ Khumalo, Nhlanhla Zama, Brother Xaba and many others. Bheki Mtolo, Lu Madondo, Mxolisi Dlamini, Langa Gabuza also joined the exodus out of the country in the late 1980s.

The state simultaneously stepped up secret military and financial support for Inkatha to enable it to crush the UDF with a campaign of violence. The state-sponsored vigilante violence intensified in communities which had embarked on militant community struggles earlier in the decade. Inkatha established a network of semi-clandestine warlord and hit-squad machinery which operated in parts of the Natal Midlands. Prominent among these warlords were Jerome Mncwabe, Abdul Awetha and Sichizi Zuma, who operated at Edendale, kwaMpumuza and Imbali; an induna named David Ntombela at Vulindlela; Councillor Mncwabe at Sinathing; Mbadlazi Vezi at Phatheni in Richmond; iNkosisi Mdluli of kwaNyavu at Mkhambathini; Thomas ‘Mshoki’ Gcaba at Maqongqo in Table Mountain; Psychology Ndlovu at kwaGcumisa at Mswathi in New Hanover; and many others. These warlords unleashed a reign of terror among various Natal Midlands communities. They clashed with the residents of Imbali, Edendale, Ashdown, Sobantu and Mpophomeni at first. They then extended their operations to include the rural areas of Vulindlela, Mkhambathini, Mshwathi, Swayimane, Camperdown, Inchanga and Richmond during the late 1980s. Violence had reached Bruntville in Mooi River and Wembezi in Estcourt by the early 1990s. The warlords received a further boost from an injection of Caprivi trainees.

The combination of state-sponsored political violence and mass detention of activists after the declaration of the 1986 nationwide state of emergency almost shattered democratic organisations on the ground in parts of the Natal Midlands. The burden of leading the progressive political formations shifted mainly to COSATU whose Pietermaritzburg leadership liaised with their head office counterparts, Chris Dlamini, the deputy president; Jay Naidoo, general secretary; and Sydney Mufamadi, deputy general secretary, on ways and means of providing political direction in the absence of on the ground UDF structures from 1987 onwards. They adopted a multi-pronged approach which included the establishment of SDUs where they did not exist, and supporting existing bodies. They also exerted pressure on the state and Inkatha to stop violence, through Supreme Court interdicts, and campaigned for peace in Natal.

Contradictions and tensions wracked the UDF in Natal in the late 1980s. The UDF President, Archie Gumede, and a handful of its African leaders who felt marginalised like MJ Naidoo and others spoke openly about the alleged existence of a cabal within the UDF.
The Forward Youth

The Forward Youth was launched at Sobantu on 17–18 December 1985, with Lyov Hassim as its secretary and Adam Habib as its deputy secretary. It was part of the Marxist Workerist Tendency (MWT) of the ANC which had links with the five former NUSAS members: Martin Legassick, Rob Petersen, Paula Ensor, David Hemson and Peter Collins, who were expelled from the ANC for their factional tendencies in June 1985. In Cape Town the MWT worked through groups such as R.O. Dudley’s Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) and the Cape Action League (CAL). In Pietermaritzburg it relied heavily on Azanian Peoples Organisation (AZAPO) members from Mpumalanga and Imbali townships, such as Christopher Mathebe, Masibu Majola and Jabulani Jeffrey Makhathini, among others. Majola was elected as the president of Forward Youth and Makhathini its organiser. At Howick, Mooi River and Inanda in Durban they worked through NEUM structures, or created new ones. They worked through the South African Committee for Higher Education (SACHED) to infiltrate and re-orientate trade unions in Pietermaritzburg and Pinetown. This created tension between the Pietermaritzburg COSATU local and the local SACHED office when some unions objected to the distribution of MWT literature, Inqaba Yabasebenzi.

The Forward Youth’s presence in Sobantu gave rise to fierce rivalry and conflicts between its supporters and Sobantu Youth Organisation (SOYO) members. Tensions culminated in the fatal assault on France Gcamu and serious injuries to Sifiso Bhengu at the hands of Forward Youth members. On 11 July 1987, the members of Forward Youth gained entry into the house of Sifiso Bhengu at the Dark City section of Sobantu, violently assaulted both Ngcamu and Bhengu and dragged them out of the house onto the street, where the assault and stabbing continued. Gcamu later died from brain haemorrhage and stab wounds which pierced his lungs. Christopher Mathebe and nine others were arrested and charged with murder and attempted murder in 1987-1988. Mathebe was from Mpumalanga township, where AZAPO members had been involved in fierce fights with UDF supporters. Accused number 2 (Masibu Majola), 6 (Xolani Ngubane), 9 (Tana Khanyile) and 10 (Jeffrey Jabulani Makhathini) were all from Imbali. They had come to Sobantu on the pretext that they were political refugees, only to engage in ferocious violence against members of UDF affiliates, SOYO and the Natal Student Congress (NASCO), the Natal successor of COSAS after its banning in 1985. There are untested allegations that a few Afrikaans-speaking coloureds, presumably from the Cape, were brought in to help fight the UDF supporters for allegedly embracing the ‘nationalist’ ideological outlook of the ANC leadership.

The state withdrew all charges against Christopher Mathebe, Thulani Ndlovu and Jeffrey Makhathini. Although they were present at the murder of France Ngcamu and the assault on Sifiso Bhengu, the state witness, Sonto Bhengu, could not testify to their actual roles. Masibu Majola was found guilty and sentenced to seven years; Zwekaje Baba Ceke to three years; Israel Bongani Mbambo to six years; Xolani Ngubane to five years; Sibusiso Zulu to six years; and Tana Khanyile to six years. Sifiso Ngwenya was given a three year sentence suspended for five years plus corporal punishment of seven lashes to be administered at the magistrate court cells. Former leaders of the Forward Youth have subsequently claimed that their Sobantu branch collapsed within six months of its formation because its leadership tried to mobilise an African constituency whereas it was predominantly Indian. While there may well be some truth in this claim, it should be treated cautiously because it conveniently exonerates them from any responsibility for Ngcamu’s death. The Forward Youth succeeded in sowing disunity and sparked counter-revolutionary violence where the apartheid regime
and its auxiliary forces, Inkatha and UWUSA, had failed. It also enhanced the apartheid state’s ability to sponsor violence at Sobantu. The security branch secretly backed a group of Sobantu gangsters known as iziphemane to pretend they were the key fighters on the side of SOYO. In fact they were part of state sponsored low-intensity warfare.

**Escalation of conflict**

The assassination of Durban attorney, Victoria Mxenge (see below) marked a pivotal point in the further polarisation of Inkatha and the UDF. After the event, conflict quickly spread to other townships around Durban, Pietermaritzburg and surrounding areas. In the months leading up to Mxenge’s death, the security forces had made a public show of cracking down on UDF-aligned activists in an attempt to create the impression that the UDF was the main force behind the political violence in the province. The security forces were often seen to be standing by and refusing to intervene in clashes between the UDF and Inkatha supporters. In other reports, the police were alleged to be actively supporting Inkatha in the conflict.

The conflict spread also to the factory floor. After the strike and killings of COSATU members in Mphophomeni in 1986 (see below), local conflict and violence in and around Pietermaritzburg intensified dramatically. By the early nineties it was being referred to as ‘the Midlands war’ (see below).

**Political violence**

In KwaZulu and Natal, this period was dominated by conflict and violence that reached the proportions of a civil war in some areas. Political allegiances were crucial in the conflict, with lines sharply drawn between the supporters of Inkatha and the supporters of the ANC-aligned UDF, which was formed in 1983 to co-ordinate protest against the new Constitution and the proposed Tri-cameral parliament. The conflict manifested itself in all spheres of political life in the province and was felt particularly in educational institutions and in the workplace.

On 29 October 1983, four students and an Inkatha supporter were killed and many others injured in a clash between students and a group of approximately 500 Inkatha supporters at the University of Zululand (Ongoye), south of Empangeni. The clash was triggered when students opposed an attempt by Inkatha leader, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, to use the campus for a ceremony to commemorate the death of King Cetshwayo. Attackers broke down locked doors behind which students were hidden, dragged them out and assaulted and stabbed them with traditional weapons. This event, known as the ‘Ongoye massacre’, was another decisive turning point in the relations between Inkatha supporters and those aligning themselves with the banned ANC.

In the labour field too, the conflict between the two movements took organisational form through the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) in 1984, and the counter-formation by Inkatha in 1985, with substantial state funding, of the United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA).

The SAP and other security personnel were frequently and directly involved in political violence in the province. Security and public order policing became characterised by a failure to apprehend known criminals, poor investigations and active collusion of the police with one side of the conflict. The most obvious case of security force collusion is that of the Trust Feed
massacre on 3 December 1988 (see below). The state’s National Security Management System (NSMS), with its web of local Joint Management Councils (JMCs), was fully operational by mid-1985. Inkatha members became members of JMCs by virtue of their positions in township councils, tribal authorities and the KwaZulu civil service.

In August 1983, the 1982 Black Local Authorities Act came into effect, imposing local black town councils on a number of townships. In line with its policy of countering apartheid from within the system, Inkatha moved quickly to gain control of these councils. At that time, national opposition to black local authorities, to homeland governments and to traditional leaders was on the increase, and emerging extra-parliamentary opposition groups strenuously opposed the creation of these town councils which were perceived to be dominated, if not controlled, by Inkatha.

Through the NSMS, the South African government planned to win the war against the ANC and its affiliates, not through military might but through destabilisation. The government was sensitive to international opinion and, to avoid images of white policemen assaulting and shooting at black demonstrators, it sought to delegate repression to counter-revolutionary forces with black faces. A wide range of such surrogates emerged, including vigilantes, warlords, gangsters, hit squads, auxiliary forces, agents provocateur and moderate black organisations. The strategy was thus to cast the political conflict in the country as ‘black-on-black’ violence. For this to work, the involvement of the state had to be secret.

Furthermore, during the PW Botha era, the state perceived the primary threat to national security to be external. Its counter-revolutionary strategy was therefore based on pre-emptive intervention beyond the country’s borders in both defensive and offensive actions. By 1985, when the situation inside the borders had entered a revolutionary phase, the state began to apply its principle of counter-revolutionary warfare internally. Revolutionary opponents of the state became ‘legitimate’ targets for attack. The enemy included not only armed cadres of the liberation movements, but trade unionists, activists and sympathisers. Moderate black leaders and organisations had to be co-opted to combat the revolutionary threat. A wide range of support, including military training and finance, was given to moderate black organisations, including Inkatha, as exemplified by the Caprivi training initiative (see below).

As conflict developed in the form of attacks, revenge attacks, sieges and assassinations, each side blamed the other for the violence sweeping the province. Each accused the other of collaborating with the apartheid government to bring about violence and mayhem. Death threats against Chief Buthelezi prompted the Inkatha leader to claim that the ANC was out of touch with the realities of the country and served the interests of the state by fomenting dissent. The security establishment was well placed to feed the rumours of assassination with evidence gleaned from informers, from ANC propaganda and from its own unsubstantiated beliefs. Chief Buthelezi’s response was to turn to the South African government for assistance to combat the ANC/UDF. These appeals led to the clandestine training of some 200 Inkatha members by the Special Forces arm of the South African Defence Force (SADF) in the Caprivi Strip in Namibia (see below).

By 1988, some of the principles of the state’s security thinking could be seen reflected in security force operations, particularly in the use of auxiliary forces such as special constables and surrogate forces such as vigilante groups. Vigilante groups operated side by side with members of the security forces. Both perceived the same enemy, and were perceived as the same enemy. There were various ways in which the security forces had collaborated with
Inkatha in attacks on the UDF. This included warning Inkatha supporters of impending attacks, disarming ANC supporters, arming Inkatha supporters, transporting Inkatha attackers and standing by while Inkatha supporters attacked people.

Whereas vigilante formations often started out simply as local suppressors of petty crime and school-related unrest, as the political battle lines sharpened in the early 1980s they became the shock troops of politically aligned warlords. They engaged in a variety of criminal and lethal activities, even recruiting from criminal gangs. The vigilantes’ initial targets were community structures, groups and individuals campaigning for the dismantling of homelands and black councils. Later the targets became less specific and vigilante tactics switched to indiscriminate terrorising of township communities.

Opposition to the government’s authority structures (including traditional chiefs and urban town councillors) was perceived as rebellion. Once chiefs and councillors came to realise that their survival in office depended on neutralising the militant opposition, their involvement in the violence was almost inevitable. Some chiefs, therefore, became known as ‘warlords’. There was collusion between the security forces and Inkatha warlords.

Some members of the ANC also behaved like warlords, gathering strongmen about them, intimidating people and directing acts of violence. This was particularly so in the Natal Midlands towards the end of the 1980s, where charismatic ANC leaders like Harry Gwala rose to prominence and offered a rallying point for UDF/ANC supporters who had been exposed to and engaged in the political conflict for some time. Towards the end of this period, the UDF adopted a campaign to make the townships ungovernable. Educational institutions and trade unions became key sites of revolutionary activity. School boycotts and strikes were transformed into scenes of violent conflict and bloodletting. At the Kabwe Conference 17 in June 1985, the ANC took a decision to drop the distinction between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ targets. This resulted in an increase in the killing and maiming of civilians in MK sabotage operations where targets held only a tenuous link to the state and its institutions.

The period is remarkable for the emergence of organisations and associations in a rising tide of opposition to the imposition of local authorities and the incorporation of certain areas into KwaZulu. Such organisations included residents’ and ratepayers’ associations and rent action committees. There was also an increase in the number of NGOs set up to promote social justice and democracy in all arenas of civil society. Many of these organisations, based chiefly in Durban and Pietermaritzburg, ran on a non-profit basis and were supported financially by churches and other donor organisations. Many became affiliates of the UDF in 1983, although some later withdrew from active participation when the political situation in the province became more sharply polarised in the later 1980s.

This period was dominated by conflict between the UDF and Inkatha, the key sites of which were conflict in Durban townships resisting incorporation into KwaZulu; struggles surrounding the imposition of black local authorities; clashes between members of UWUSA and COSATU affiliates, and offensives by ‘Caprivi trainees’.

Detentions and harassment

Individuals affiliated to human rights organisations during this period were subjected to constant harassment, intimidation, surveillance and detention by the security police. For the most part, these organisations were based in the main urban centres of the province and
functioned to promote social justice and democracy in all arenas of civil society. Diakonia in Durban and the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness (PACSA) in Pietermaritzburg worked to promote social awareness in the churches. The Black Sash and paralegal organisations such as the Legal Resources Centre (LRC) and Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) offered basic legal advice and support to ordinary people. The End Conscription Campaign (ECC) monitored developments in military conscription and offered advice to conscripts. Some organisations were set up to offer careers advice to school leavers and to address the problems of inequity in the educational arena. Others were set up in response to crisis situations brought on by intensified police repression and the repeated imposition of rule by emergency. Among these were the Detainees’ Parents’ Support Committee and the Education Crisis Committee.

These and other NGOs often worked shoulder to shoulder in joint social campaigns: calling for the release of political prisoners, the lifting of states of emergency, the withdrawal of troops from the townships, the abolition of the death penalty, the lifting of restrictions on the media and the free flow of information. Diakonia took up residence at the Ecumenical Centre in Durban when it was established by the mainline churches in 1983 to provide office and meeting space for religious and other organisations committed to building peace and justice in the province. It soon became the object of intense scrutiny and surveillance by the Security Police. The tenants had to endure constant harassment by the security police and worked under the perpetual threat of police raids, detention and arrest. In 1985, the library housed at the Centre was severely damaged in a firebomb attack. No perpetrators were ever identified or brought to book.

Several individuals working for these organisations were detained during the 1980s, among them Paddy Kearney and Sue Brittion of Diakonia and Richard Steele and Anita Kromberg of the ECC, who were all detained in 1985 under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act No 74 of 1982. Kearney, who was held in solitary confinement for seventeen days, was arrested at the same time as a heavy police crackdown on the UDF and preceded the August 1985 death of Victoria Mxenge and the destruction of the Gandhi settlement at Inanda outside Durban (see below). He said that the detentions were part of a police attempt to create the impression that the UDF was responsible for most of the violent conflict in the province and that UDF activists were being severely dealt with.

Deaths in custody

Numerous reports of torture and deaths in detention were received, particularly from the Newcastle area. Newcastle was an MK gateway to Swaziland and Mozambique and the Security Branch intensified its operations in Newcastle in an attempt to obstruct the movement of operatives in and out of the country. It was also a centre of strong student and union resistance. A number of student activists and unionists were detained and tortured by members of the Newcastle Security Branch during 1986 and 1988. Deaths in custody were also reported from other urban centres, amongst them, Ephraim Thami Mthethwa, who died on 25 August 1984 in the Durban Central Prison after 165 days in custody awaiting trial on charges relating to his alleged attempts to leave the country for military training. Mthethwa was alleged to have committed suicide by hanging himself with his tracksuit jacket. He was twenty-three years old at the time.

Lamontville UDF activist Bongani Cele was constantly harassed by the police in 1987 and went into hiding. Police approached his brother S’khumbuzo, assaulted him and forced him
to point out where Bongani was hiding. Bongani was taken into detention. Later police brought Bongani, heavily chained, to his house to point out where he had allegedly hidden weapons. On 9 July 1987, his family was informed that he had been shot dead by police officers allegedly acting in self-defence. According to the police, Bongani had attempted to pull a pin from a grenade. However, the post mortem report indicated that Bongani had been shot in the back at very close range while his feet and hands were chained. No one was ever prosecuted in connection with the death.

Public order policing

The introduction of an auxiliary force of special constables during this period was seen as a means of bolstering the work of the SAP in combating the rising militancy of the UDF in the province’s townships. It was also part of a strategy employed by the state to remove ‘white faces’ from the front line of public order policing of the conflict brewing between Inkatha and the UDF at the time. Former SAP Captain Brian Mitchell, based in the Natal Midlands, understood the special constables to be a vital element of the state’s strategy. Mitchell described the special constables as the ‘third force’ in the Midlands area; their sole purpose was offensive deployment against UDF supporters and for the support and assistance of Inkatha.

In 1988, some 300 Inkatha recruits were trained and deployed as special constables in the Pietermaritzburg area. Inkatha membership appeared to be a criterion for selection in Natal. Inkatha officials and indunas (headmen) assisted in recruiting the young men and endorsed their applications. William Basil Harrington, a member of Riot Unit 8, worked closely with special constables and those based in Pietermaritzburg had their applications for employment signed by Inkatha leader, David Ntombela. This drawing of special constables from the ranks of Inkatha supporters confirmed the open collaboration of the state security forces with the activities of Inkatha. In Natal, the special constables constituted a convenient and effective striking force for the state and for Inkatha against the UDF alliance. Between 1988 and 1989, special constables played a role in bolstering Inkatha in the greater Pietermaritzburg area, particularly in the Edendale Valley, KwaShange and other sections of Vulindlela.

In January 1988, the first batch of Natal recruits, numbering approximately 300 Inkatha supporters, was taken for special constable training at the SAP’s Koeberg base in the Western Cape. The batch included 130 ‘Caprivi trainees’ who had already received secret offensive training by the SADF’s Special Forces in 1986. During their training at Koeberg, they were shown gruesome videos of burning houses and brutally slain people and were told by their instructors, one of whom was Warrant Officer Rolf Warber of the Pietermaritzburg Security Branch, that the scenes were typical of ANC/UDF violence against innocent Inkatha members, their ‘brothers and sisters’. Special constables testified that they cried openly at the sessions and were urged to kill UDF people on their return to Natal. After six weeks of training, the special constables were attached to SAP Riot Units and deployed in the Pietermaritzburg and Mpumalanga areas where the UDF was gaining the upper hand. Many special constables were sent to guard Inkatha officials and traditional leaders and became involved in vigilante and hit squad activities.

The special constables deployed in the townships around Pietermaritzburg soon became associated with acts of extreme criminal brutality. In the first year of their deployment in the Pietermaritzburg area, 137 special constables had their services terminated. Of these, 102
deserted their posts and the remainder was dismissed as a result of criminal charges that were brought against them.

The special constables were deployed to the Pietermaritzburg-based Riot Unit 8, a unit that had already gained notoriety during the latter half of the 1980s for its active collusion with Inkatha supporters in the political conflict. The unit was headed by Major Deon Terreblanche (now deceased), described by General Jac Buchner as a ‘military man’ who was very close to Inkatha. Terreblanche was named by Brian Mitchell as the mastermind behind the Trust Feed massacre (see below). He was also named by Daluxolo Luthuli as having provided arms and ammunition to Inkatha, particularly in the Mpumalanga township.

De Wet’s unit worked in a large area that included Pietermaritzburg and surrounds, Mpumalanga, Richmond, Greytown, Mphophomeni, Inchanga, Table Mountain and Bulwer. They worked in a clandestine way, using pseudonyms and vehicles with false/changed registration numbers. They generally operated at night and wore civilian clothes and balaclavas when engaged in a covert operation. While the unit injured and killed indiscriminately at times, they targeted mainly UDF activists, who they interrogated, tortured and/or killed. Methods of torture included electric shocks to the body with a dynamo taken from a telephone, suffocation with a car tube, and the ‘helicopter treatment’ described earlier.

**The Trust Feed massacre**

The Trust Feed massacre of 1988 provides a window into the operations of the special constables and the SAP in the Midlands during the late 1980s. In the early hours of 3 December 1988, gunmen opened fire on a house in the Trust Feed community, near New Hanover, killing eleven people and wounding two. In October 1991, seven serving and former members of the SAP stood trial on eleven counts of murder and eight of attempted murder. The accused were Captain Brian Mitchell, Station Commander at the New Hanover police station at the time of the massacre, Sergeant Neville Rose and Captain Jakobus van der Heever (both of the SAP), and four former SAP special constables, Kehla Ngubane, Thabo Sikhosana, Dumisani Ndwalane and David Khambule.

Brian Mitchell, his colleague Sergeant George Nichas and two Security Branch members, together with the Inkatha leader in the area, Jerome Gabela, were involved in setting up the Inkatha-aligned Landowners’ Committee in opposition to the largely UDF-supporting Trust Feed Crisis Committee. Gabela was also, at the time, in the ad hoc employ of the Security Branch as an informer on trade union members at the bakery where he worked in Greytown. At a meeting at the Inkatha headquarters in Edendale in August 1988, attended by Terreblanche, Mitchell, David Ntombela, Gabela and two other Inkatha members, an attack on the Trust Feed area was planned for December 1988, involving members of Inkatha and special constables. After a police ‘clean-up’ operation to disarm and round up UDF suspects, the police would withdraw, leaving Inkatha members and the special constables to launch an attack on UDF members.

On 29 November, Constable Willem de Wet brought four special constables to New Hanover police station. They wore civilian clothing and lodged with Gabela, who provided them with firearms. On the following day, Captain Van der Heever arrived to run the operation from the police and Riot Unit side. He requested Mitchell to assist in ‘sweeping’ the area after the operation, picking up used shells (doppies) and removing evidence. On 2 December, about thirty to forty policemen rounded up known UDF members, videotaped them all and detained
them under state of emergency regulations. The police were then withdrawn from the area. At midnight, Mitchell, who had been drinking heavily, went to see how the operation had gone, accompanied by two police reservists. Disappointed that only a building had been burnt and no one had been killed, he instructed the special constables to attack and burn the shop of Faustus Mbongwe, chair of the Crisis Committee, and to attack a particular house. These instructions were carried out, and the doppies disposed of in a long-drop toilet at Gabela’s house.

In the attack on the house, which became known as the Trust Feed massacre, eleven people were killed. The victims had been attending a night vigil following the death of a relative. The deceased were Mseleni Ntuli, Dudu Shangase, Zetha Shangase, Nkonyeni Shangase, Muzi Shangase, Filda Ntuli, Fikile Zondi, Marita Xaba, Sara Nyoka, Alfred Zita and Sisedewu Sithole. Ida Hadebe and Nomagoli Zulu were injured. None was a member of the UDF.

Following the massacre, Mitchell reported to Major Deon Terreblanche who was the first senior officer at the scene, joined by acting Greytown District Commander Davies and Brigadier Marx who, according to Mitchell, knew of the special constables’ involvement in the attack. When the two police reservists who had accompanied Mitchell volunteered information to the investigating officer, Mitchell informed senior officers of the Security Branch in Pretoria. He was told not to worry.

At an informal inquest into the deaths of the massacre victims at New Hanover, the magistrate found that Mitchell and the special constables were all involved in the killings. Warrants of arrest were issued for the special constables but were never circulated or sent to the criminal record register in Pretoria. Almost immediately after the massacre, the special constables were taken into hiding by certain senior KZP and Inkatha officials. They were hidden for some time at the Mkhuze camp (which fell under the command of KZP Captain Leonard Langeni) and continued to receive their salaries. Later they were taken to the KZP barracks in Ulundi, and then to the homes of various Inkatha-supporting chiefs. In 1990, they were assisted in joining the KZP.

In July 1991, SAP Captain Frank Dutton took over the investigation of the case. He traced the addresses of the special constables and was able to arrest two of the four: Khambule, who was in Mpumalanga using a false identity document, and Ndwalane who was in hiding at the home of an Inkatha-supporting Chief Khawula on the South Coast. Both were still serving KZP members. They both made full admissions of guilt. Mitchell was arrested on the 2 August 1991 in Mooi River, despite being warned by colleagues of his impending arrest. Immediately after this, General Van der Westhuizen, Colonel Langenhoven and Captain Kritzinger from Pretoria were sent to Natal, ostensibly to assist with the investigation. It soon became clear to Dutton that they had been sent to obstruct the work and prevailed on the Attorney-General to remove them from the case.

Captain Dutton traced the other two special constables via the then Commissioner of the KZP, General Jac Buchner, who arranged for them to be delivered by Langeni from their hiding place at Mkhuze within days. In his section 29 hearing, Buchner confirmed the cover-up and conspiracy in Trust Feed, claiming the involvement of not just one or two individuals, but many. JMC records seized from the Wartburg police station during the investigation implicated Mitchell in the creation of the Trust Feed Landowner’s Committee as a STRATCOM project.
In court, Mitchell, the special constables and Jerome Gabela changed their evidence to exonerate Captain Van der Heever. During the trial, it became evident that the special constables were to take full responsibility for the massacre. They demanded separate legal representation, which set about exposing the role of Mitchell’s command. By this time, Mitchell could not implicate his senior officers without revealing his earlier perjury.

In his judgement, Justice Andrew Wilson called for a full, open inquiry into the matter of SAP cover-up and rejected a departmental investigation. He questioned, amongst other things, the actions of General Van der Westhuizen and his two officers, the promotion of Mitchell despite knowledge of his complicity, and other areas where the police failed to investigate. He also questioned the readiness of the Commissioner of Police to authorise the employment of senior counsel to assist a police officer who, on the face of it, appeared to have acted improperly.21

Covert Security Branch activities

During this period a number of people disappeared, some of whom were thought to have left the country to join MK or the ANC in exile. In other cases, family members suspected that Security Branch members or askaris may have abducted them.

The Case of the Chesterville Four

Vlakplaas operatives killed four members of the Chesterville Youth Organisation in an undercover operation using askaris in May/June 1986. The deceased were Russell Mngomezulu, Muntuwenkosi Dlamini, Russell Mthembu and Sandile Khawula. In the November 1989 inquest into the deaths of the four men, a Durban magistrate found that the police, who had fired between sixty-seven and eighty-eight rounds at the victims, were acting in reasonable self-defence. Vlakplaas operatives Willie Nortje, Izak Daniel Bosch and Colonel Eugene de Kock were responsible for their deaths.

The Case of the Quarry Road Four

On 7 September 1986, members of the Security Branch in Quarry Road, Durban, killed four men believed to be part of an MK cell in Durban: Blessing Mabaso, Thabane Memela, Percival Luvuyo Mgobhozi and Mbongeni Zondi. A quantity of illegal weapons was found in the vehicle in which the four deceased were travelling. The police claimed the four deceased were responsible for an attack on a home in KwaMashu on the previous day as well as an AK-47 and hand-grenade attack on a home in Umlazi on 22 August 1986, in which Evelyn Sabelo, wife of Inkatha member Winnington Sabelo, was killed and her four children injured. Durban inquest magistrate, F M Vorster, found that police were justified in killing the four men.

The Killing of Ntombi Khubeka

In May 1987, a group of C-Section Security Branch members from Vlakplaas and the Natal Security Branch from Durban were allegedly responsible for the death of MK member Ntombi Khubeka, who was allegedly involved in liaison between the local and external units of MK. The Security Branch members had information that a locally trained ANC combat unit was operating in KwaMashu and Inanda. Khubeka was alleged to be responsible for
stashing weapons, accommodating external operatives and gathering intelligence on possible targets. Two of her brothers were at the ANC headquarters in Lusaka. In May 1987, she was abducted by Vlakplaas askari Jimmy Mbane and taken to Winkelspruit where she died under interrogation by members of the Security Branch. They buried her body at Inanda Newtown.

The Killing of Phila Portia Ndwindwe, aka MK Zandile

Phila Portia Ndwindwe, otherwise known as ‘MK Zandile’, was the acting commander of MK activities between Natal and Swaziland and was responsible for the infiltration of ANC cadres into Natal. She was also believed to have given orders for a number of violent MK actions in Natal, including the killing of Durban Security Branch policeman, Warrant Officer Sokhela, in August 1986. Ndwindwe was abducted from Swaziland by Durban Security Branch members Lieutenant Sam du Preez, Sergeant Lawrence Wasserman, Colonel Andy Taylor, J A Steyn and J A Vorster in October 1988 and taken to their farm or ‘safe house’ at Elandskop, outside Pietermaritzburg. She refused to co-operate with the police. The police officers, lacking admissible evidence on which to prosecute her, decided to kill her. Her body was buried on the Elandskop farm and was exhumed.24

The Killing of Jameson Ngoloyi Mngomezulu

Swaziland-based MK commander, Jameson Ngoloyi Mngomezulu, was abducted from his home in June 1985 and taken to Piet Retief where he was assassinated by members of Vlakpaas and the Jozini Security Branch. Gert Schoon, Paul van Dyk, Almond Nofemela, Colonel Eugene de Kock, Johannes Koole and askari Thapelo Johannes Mbelo were responsible.

The Killing of Stanley Bhila

MK member Stanley Bhila was acquitted in the Durban trial of Dudu Buthelezi and nine others in February 1987. The ten trialists were accused of involvement in thirteen attacks in the Durban area. Security Branch members suspected that Bhila was also involved in a fatal bombing at Amanzimtoti in December 1985 (see below). On 18 February 1987, days after his acquittal, he was abducted and killed by members of the Durban and Vlakplaas Security Branches, on the instruction of Colonel Andy Taylor. These included Frank McCarter, Adrian Rosslee, Sergeant L G Wassermann, Izak Daniel Bosch and Colonel Andy Taylor.

The Killing of Dion Cele

MK member Dion ‘Charles’ Cele (real name Mzimela), based in Swaziland, was involved in smuggling arms to South Africa. He was also allegedly responsible for a number of explosions in the country and for recruiting cadres for internal and external training. Cele was abducted from Manzini, Swaziland, in July 1987 by Security Branch members Sergeant Lawrence Wassermann and Hentie Botha, with the help of an unknown informer, and taken to a house in the eastern Transvaal for questioning. When he refused to co-operate he was taken to the Security Branch farm at Elandskop, Natal. His hands were tied and a bag was forced over his head. He was hit with a heavy piece of wood on the head and finally shot in the head. Cele was killed by Sergeant LG Wassermann, Colonel Andy Taylor, J A Vorster, J H S Labuschagne and A E Verwey.

The Killing of Phumezo Nxiweni
Phumezo Nxiweni was a student at the University of Natal Medical School. He was arrested in February 1987 in connection with two explosions in Durban during 1985. The first was a limpet mine explosion at the XL tea-room on 19 June 1985 in which seven people were injured; in the second incident a bomb exploded at the Spar Foodliner in St George’s Street, Durban. In May 1986, Nxiweni was one of ten accused in the Dudu Buthelezi trial in connection with thirteen attacks committed in the Durban area. He was acquitted in February 1987. Security Branch members also suspected Nxiweni of involvement in the fatal Amanzimtoti bombing in December 1985 (see below). In November 1988, Nxiweni was abducted and taken to the Security Branch farm at Verulam for interrogation, where he was killed and buried. Security Branch members responsible for his murder include H J P Botha, J A Steyn, J A Vorster, Lieutenant Sam du Preez, Colonel ARC Taylor, C van der Westhuizen, and Sergeant LG Wasserman.

The Killing of Bhekayena Raymond Mkhwanazi

Bhekayena Raymond Mkhwanazi, known by his MK name ‘Tekere’, left the country in 1984 after being harassed by the police. According to the amnesty applications of a number of Security Branch members, ‘MK Tekere’ was caught while on a mission to place bombs in the Durban area. He was abducted and taken to the Security Branch farm at Elandskop, where he was killed by SAP members Lieutenant-Colonel JA Vorster, Colonel ARC Taylor, S du Preez and LG Wasserman.

The Killing of Mxolisi Penwell Khumalo, aka ‘MK Mubhi’

MK operative Mxolisi Khumalo, aka ‘MK Mubhi’, was killed on 30 July 1988 at Pietermaritzburg in an incident in which, according to the police, a hand grenade in Khumalo’s possession exploded. A retired member of the Greytown Security Branch, a Warrant Officer Gwala alleged that Pietermaritzburg and Greytown Security Branch members, notably Sergeants Simon Makhaye, Thulani Kleinbooi, Zimu and Mzolo, were responsible for Khumalo’s death. Khumalo was deliberately lured to a place in Sobantu where he was killed. Khumalo went into exile in 1986. Sergeant Simon Makhaye was present at the time of Khumalo’s death, accompanied by Sergeants Kleinbooi, Zimu and Mzolo. They had obtained information about an MK operative in the area and had found Khumalo, who was allegedly known to Zimu. According to Makhaye, the four policemen tried to arrest Khumalo, but he reached for a grenade in his pocket and a struggle ensued. Makhaye stepped away to avoid the explosion. Kleinbooi allegedly shot Khumalo, who threw the grenade at Zimu, injuring him slightly in the explosion.

Neither the Mountain Rise police station nor the Pietermaritzburg mortuary had any record of Khumalo’s killing. It was later discovered that Khumalo’s remains had been buried in a pauper’s grave at the Mountain Rise Cemetery on 8 August 1988, under the name of ‘Thembilile Gladman Sithole’. The inquest report number concerned a pedestrian accident in Edendale that bore no relation to either Khumalo or one Thembilile Gladman Sithole.

Contra-mobilisation

The early 1980s saw a steady increase in groups of vigilantes who used terror to quell the growing revolt among rural youth against the old order. By and large, vigilantism was closely allied to the South African government’s institution of homeland administrations and black
local councils. In many areas, and particularly with the rise of radical anti-apartheid opposition in the early 1980s, those associated with these structures often found themselves isolated and reviled, particularly by radical youth. They started to defend their interests (and sometimes their very lives) through the formation of vigilante ‘armies’ drawn from the more traditionalist and uneducated of the local population. Vigilante activities appeared to have the support, both covert and overt, of the security forces. The security forces colluded with Inkatha vigilantes in the following ways:

In 1982, residents of the Lamontville township in Durban South formed the Lamontville Rent Action Committee to oppose rent increases announced by the Port Natal Administration Board (PNAB). In early 1983, similar committees from several PNAB-administered townships (for example, Hambanathi and Chesterville) came together to form the Joint Rent Action Committee (JORAC). Besides opposing rent increases, JORAC also opposed plans, already underway, to incorporate a number of PNAB townships into KwaZulu.

A vigilante group calling itself the ‘A-Team’ was formed to counter support for JORAC in Lamontville and Chesterville, both of which, along with Clermont and Hambanathi, had been identified for incorporation into KwaZulu. The conflict and violence which beset each of these areas for the next four years was to some degree centred around those involved in the incorporation question, including councillors and vigilantes.

**The Killing of Harrison Dube**

On 25 April 1983, Lamontville councillor and JORAC chairperson Harrison Msizi Dube was shot dead after returning from a JORAC meeting. Dube’s death sparked outrage. His community went on the rampage, attacking councillors’ homes and buildings belonging to the PNAB and killing three alleged police informers. The violence quickly spread to the Chesterville township. In Lamontville, five people, including the Inkatha-aligned mayor, Moonlight Gasa, were arrested on 22 June 1983 in connection with Dube’s killing. All five were subsequently convicted of the murder. Vakuthethwa Yalo, Ebenezer Mngadi and Julius Mngadi were sentenced to death (later commuted to life imprisonment). Bangu Mbawula was sentenced to eight years’ imprisonment and Moonlight Gasa to twelve years’ imprisonment.

In Chesterville, JORAC members and supporters were targeted for attack by an Inkatha-supporting and state-sponsored vigilante group set up in the township in 1983/4, also known as the ‘A-Team’. The group was based in Road 13. Incidents between 1985 and 1989 included at least ten killings, several cases of attempted murder and severe ill treatment and arson attacks. The A-Team established a reign of terror in Chesterville over a number of years. They took over Road 13, illegally occupying houses and burning surrounding houses in order to make a safe area for themselves. They also allegedly brought in Inkatha youths from other townships to bolster their power base. Their sole aim was to target members of youth and other UDF-linked organisations. This they did with the active complicity of the SAP, including the Riot Unit and the Security Branch.

According to former Durban Riot Unit member Frank Bennetts, the Security Branch colluded with members of the A-Team. According to Bennetts, the A-Team assisted the Riot Unit by identifying alleged UDF activists to be detained and passing on other information to the security forces. In return, the Riot Unit offered them protection by putting extra patrols into their street and escorting them in and out of the township. Despite good cause to do so, A-Team members were never detained under the emergency regulations. Bennetts alleged that
the A-Team was started by a military intelligence agent employed by the Natal Provincial Administration as the township manager to oversee the administration of Chesterville. He denied that the Riot Unit paid them or provided them with weapons. However, he had good reason to believe that either the military or the security police provided them with monetary and logistic assistance (firearms, petrol bombs and ammunition). He said further that “in all likelihood” some of the atrocities committed by the A-Team were planned by some unit of the security forces.

**The Killing of Philemon Khanyile**

Chesterville community leader Philemon Khanyile was stoned and burnt to death in his car by an angry crowd of residents when he attended the funeral of Harrison Dube. The crowd had been led to believe that he was a police informer. Khanyile was a member of JORAC and a teacher at the Chesterville High School. According to Bennetts, the Riot Unit had deliberately framed Khanyile as an informer. Bennetts and a colleague had visited Khanyile’s sister and handed her an envelope containing R500 in cash, which they asked her to give to her brother. According to Bennetts, this tactic was used on numerous occasions. Another tactic used by Riot Unit members was to pick up an activist, keep him for half an hour, and then take him along to uncover a firearm they already knew about. This would be done in full view of the community. The Riot Unit members would then release the activist, who would in all probability be labelled as an informer and possibly be killed. Bennetts admitted at his section 29 hearing that “a hell of a lot”, “a couple of hundred” people had been framed in this manner, and that “quite a few” had died as a result: “I’d say about five. But a lot just vanished, never to be seen again.”

**The Killing of the Mdluli Family**

On 8 January 1987, the A-Team petrol-bombed and burnt down a number of houses belonging to UDF supporters. Musa Mdluli, a Chesterville resident, was at work when he received a phone call telling him that members of the A-Team were attacking his house. He rushed home to find his five children inside the burning house. One of them (Nokwazi, aged twenty-five years) was already dead. Three other children died in hospital. They were Bongi (5), Brenda (2) and Sithabile (6 months). A-Team member Bheki Mdlalose was sentenced to twenty-seven years’ imprisonment for his part in the attack.

Bennetts said that, in 1987-88, some members of the A-Team moved out of Chesterville and operated from a house in Umlazi and Ntuzuma. The Riot Unit would escort them into Chesterville, where they would carry out a ‘hit’, after which they would be escorted out again. The community came to fear and hate the Riot Unit because of its demonstrated partiality towards the A-Team.

In KwaMashu, the AmaSinyora gang, a group of Inkatha-supporting vigilantes based in K Section, KwaMashu, north of Durban, was set up in 1987 to oppose UDF-aligned activists in the township. The gang was allegedly responsible for attacks on many non-aligned residents of the township and was described as carrying out a reign of terror from the late 1980s through to 1991, resurfacing temporarily in 1994. In 1991, one of the founder members of the AmaSinyora gang, Bheki Mvubu, made an affidavit to the LRC in which he implicated himself in burning at least eight to ten houses and in participating in attacks in which about forty UDF supporters were killed. All these took place in KwaMashu K Section. During house raids, the relatives of UDF supporters were sometimes killed. Another founder
member, Dumisani Zondo, a member of the SADF, allegedly assisted in training the gang members and supplying weapons and ammunition.

The group was supported by the KZP stationed at KwaMashu. Detective Zondi of the KwaMashu KZP was the father of one of the AmaSinyora members and allegedly kept the group informed of complaints laid against them at KwaMashu police station. Another KwaMashu KZP member, Khetha Shange, also worked with the AmaSinyora, providing them with bullets and occasionally joining in attacks. According to Bheki Mvubu, in 1988 the AmaSinyora gang was introduced to Lindelani IFP leader Thomas Shabalala (see below), who supplied them with three shotguns and several boxes of bullets and praised their activities. They met with him several times to request money, guns and ammunition.

In January 1988, the AmaSinyora began collecting ‘protection money’ from residents of K Section. The gang began reporting to the local councillor and Inkatha chairman in K-Section, Zwane, who took control of the ‘protection money’. According to Mvubu, the KZP stopped charging the AmaSinyora members for killings or other criminal activities once they joined Inkatha. For example, Mvubu was arrested after killing a young UDF supporter by the name of Jomo in mid-1989. He and a few others were still standing around the corpse when the KZP arrived. They were all arrested and taken to the police station, where they denied the killing. They were released after about four hours and dropped off in K Section.

Mvubu said that, to his knowledge, no AmaSinyora members were convicted as a result of KZP investigations. In July 1990, a joint SAP–KZP investigation team launched an investigation into the activities of the AmaSinyora, which resulted in a few arrests and convictions. According to the LRC and the Human Rights Commission, the AmaSinyora were implicated in 291 attacks in 1989–90, including approximately 100 killings. During the same period, approximately 400 homes in K Section were abandoned. During 1989, the AmaSinyora joined up with one Shozi, an Inkatha leader from Z Section, Umlazi, who allegedly provided them with weapons from time to time and used some of the stronger AmaSinyora members to fight for him in Umlazi, transporting them in his vehicle and accommodating them in his Umlazi home.

The term ‘warlord’ first came into common currency in the late eighties as an analytical, though initially pejorative, description of a number of ‘vigilante’ and Inkatha leaders who had risen to prominence in the growing party conflict in the province. It is believed that the appellation was first used by academics involved in unrest monitoring, and was soon taken up by the media. This suggests that the term strove to denote something more than simply a leader in violent activities, seeking to describe the nature of the relationship of such leaders to other forces in society.

In the KwaZulu-Natal context, a warlord is a powerful local leader who gets and keeps political power in an area by paramilitary or military force and who has an ambiguous or only nominal allegiance to a higher authority. During the period under review, this authority was usually Inkatha but also, in a sense, the police, who represented the central government and demonstrated its tolerance of such unofficial local or district ‘government’. The warlord tends to gather a group of professional strong-arm men around him and pay for their services by extracting fees, fines and protection money from the local populace. Though self-interest and the acquisition of personal wealth often play a strong role in the seizure or maintenance of the warlord’s power, political allegiance plays a significant role in his rise to power.
Some ANC leaders also behaved in a warlord-like way. Harry Gwala, the Natal Midlands ANC leader, gained considerable notoriety as a warlord, though he did not derive particular material benefit from his position of authority. Gwala’s popularity with the militant ANC youth in the area derived from the uncompromisingly aggressive line he took towards Inkatha leaders and members. At an ANC rally in April 1992, Gwala said he would not discourage people from attacking IFP warlords: “Make no mistake”, he said, “we will kill [Inkatha] warlords”. Gwala gathered around himself a group of ‘strongmen’ who intimidated and threatened people who clashed with him within the ANC and SACP. On occasion, he ordered assassinations, though they were not always carried out. He had the charisma associated with warlords and his confrontational leadership style resonated with ANC supporters in the Natal Midlands who had borne the brunt of Inkatha and police attacks for years.

Former ANC leader Sifiso Nkabinde of Richmond also gained notoriety as a warlord for the considerable power he wielded in the area after he led a violent and successful campaign to defeat Inkatha opponents. He soon became a leading ANC figure in the province, though tainted by allegations of complicity in the killing of some ANC youth leaders in Richmond and, in 1996, of three Indian policemen. In April 1997 he was exposed as a long-serving police agent and expelled from the ANC.

Thomas Mandla Shabalala is representative of the urban warlords who controlled the numerous informal squatter settlements and shacklands ringing the city of Durban. He became the foremost warlord in the Durban region as the self-styled community councillor and self-proclaimed Inkatha mayor of the squatter settlement of Lindelani. He was reportedly elected spokesperson for the community at a residents’ meeting in 1984, went on to chair the local Inkatha branch and later become the KLA member for Lindelani, and a member of Inkatha’s Central Committee. Shabalala set up what he called a ‘community guard force’ in Lindelani, which was paid for by an informal house ‘tax’ of R3.00 exacted from every household. He also exacted fees for Inkatha membership cards, school funds, site rental, school teachers and other taxes and rents. In 1988, he owned a fleet of taxis, the only butchery and bottle store in Lindelani, and a development business.

Shabalala’s community guards – described as amabutho [a military regiment] – were soon armed with licensed weapons and engaged in attacks on neighbouring areas and on UDF supporters within Lindelani. Many attacks in the early 1980s were related to attempts by KwaZulu to incorporate areas such as Hambanathi and Lamontville into the KwaZulu homeland. The first major attacks by large groups of men took place in August 1985 in response to large-scale unrest in the Durban area, initiated by a COSAS schools boycott. Shabalala himself allegedly led a 300-strong group that attacked the memorial service for assassinated Victoria Mxenge in August 1985, killing seventeen people.

Vigilantes seized control of Ntuzuma, KwaMashu and Umlazi and continued with increasing intimidation and sporadic conflict for months thereafter. The latter half of 1989 saw about 300 people killed in the townships surrounding Durban. Shabalala was also alleged on numerous occasions to have intimidated, assaulted, tortured and killed opponents.

On 26 May 1986, Belinda and Simon Mfeka obtained a temporary interdict against Shabalala because he had threatened them for not paying their Inkatha, Inkatha Women’s Brigade, UWUSA and community guard dues. Within an hour of the granting of the interdict, a group of a hundred people arrived to demolish the Mfeka’s three-roomed brick house.
On 20 May 1989, Sibusiso Nkabinde was taken forcibly from his home to Shabalala’s house where he was assaulted by two persons acting on Shabalala’s instructions. Shabalala himself pushed a barrel of a rifle into the back of Nkabinde’s head. Nkabinde continued to be assaulted in Shabalala’s presence and heard unknown people deciding that he should be killed and his body burnt. He escaped and the following day his house in Lindelani was burnt down.

During September 1985, Victor Madele of Lindelani was forcibly taken to Shabalala’s house where he was questioned about his activities and held in a locked room for about two weeks against his will. At the end of this period of imprisonment, he was again forcibly brought before Shabalala, who assaulted him by stabbing him in the right eye with a fork. Madele was forcibly taken from his home to Shabalala’s house on four more occasions in 1988: on 6 June, after which Madele reported the matter to the KwaMashu police station; on 19 June; on 1 December 1988, and again ten days later. He reported the matter to the SAP at CR Swart Square in Durban.

In 1987, Shabalala was implicated in the killing of seven KwaMashu Youth League members. He was acquitted at a trial in August 1989, but two of his personal bodyguards, Emmanuel Khyenile and Wilfred Phewa, were convicted. On 25 April 1988, Lindelani Jabulani Msimango, Innocent Mzo Ndlovu, Bheki Gcashe and others were walking near Lindelani when two vehicles stopped near them and a number of men, including Thomas Shabalala, armed with guns and traditional weapons, got out and fired at the group, severely injuring Msimango. The men chased, attacked and killed Gcashe and attacked and severely injured Ndlovu. Shabalala was arrested for the shooting of the sixteen-year-old Gcashe, but was released on bail and later acquitted.

On 17 June 1990, Thomas Shabalala assaulted Nkosinathi Musa Mjoli at an Inkatha rally at the King Zwelethini Stadium at Umlazi. Mjoli was wearing a T-shirt with the slogan ‘Workers demand a living wage’, and Inkatha supporters believed him to be a supporter of a COSATU-affiliated union and referred to him as a member of the amaqabane [comrades]. At the end of the rally, Shabalala instructed Inkatha supporters to kill Mjoli who was subsequently stabbed to death in the toilets of the stadium.

Shabalala had a presence of armed men in many different parts of the region and was believed to have been involved in conflict in North Coast areas including Eshowe, Mandini, Esikhawini and Ngwelezana. By the end of the 1980s, he controlled a large area around the informal settlement of Lindelani. He continued to exact fees from residents and it is alleged that some of the proceeds went into his personal business ventures. In spite of the accumulation of evidence against him, Shabalala remained seemingly immune to police action.

When David Ntombela of Mncane in Vulindlela became the induna of KwaMncane, the money he collected from people for a ‘co-operative store’ allegedly went into building his own store. Ntombela became known for spearheading attacks against UDF supporters who had begun to infiltrate the Elandskop area towards the end of 1987.

On the night of 9 October 1987, Ntombela, his brother and six other men went to the home of Mandla Mkhize at Zondi’s store, an area in his region. They were looking for Mkhize’s sons, COSATU members Mangethe and Muntu. They were out but their mother, Maqhikila Angelica Mkhize, was at home with three children. According to one of the children,
Ntombela then shot and killed the mother with a small handgun and the men killed one of the daughters, Petronella. The inquest magistrate found in 1989 that it was possible that David Ntombela and five others “were in some way responsible for the deaths”. The case was not taken to trial.

On 31 January 1988, David Ntombela was among a number of people who addressed a large Inkatha rally at Mpumuzi in Sweetwaters. Witnesses allege that he said: “Anyone who does not want to belong to Inkatha should be killed”. He said he would go to each of the Chiefs’ areas and kill those who were not Inkatha. He reportedly asked permission of the Chiefs to stop the meeting so that he could lead the people out and drive the UDF and COSATU from the area. After this meeting, an attack was launched on the township of Ashdown, assisted by the police. Ntombela enjoyed a good relationship with senior members of the police and units of the riot police were often seen at his home. Ntombela was in regular contact with the police and worked with them in the recruitment, administration and payment of special constables. In April 1997, it was revealed that Ntombela, along with ANC leader Sifiso Nkabinde, had been a long-time police informer and agent.

Abdul Awetha of Imbali was described as representative of the urban town councillor-type of warlord. Awetha gained prominence through his opposition to the rise of youth resistance in the 1980s. As the pressure on the black township councils increased, he began to gather a number of unemployed strongmen around him. He also built up a lucrative patronage system through the granting of housing sites and trading licenses. He is said to have used false promises of access to houses to get people to join Inkatha. Awetha played a prominent role in much of the conflict in and around Imbali during this period. He is alleged to have been involved in procuring weapons with the help of security police.

In 1985, vigilante groups clustered around Imbali town councillors were reported to be going from house to house demanding that all UDF, AZAPO and Imbali Civic Association members be handed over to them. A number of attacks, assaults and acts of intimidation took place. Awetha was one of three people arrested on 9 June 1992 in connection with the death of S’khumbuzo Ngwenya, who chaired the Imbali ANC branch. However, charges were dropped when the state’s key witness refused to testify after allegedly being threatened. Awetha has not been prosecuted for the violence in which he is alleged to have been involved or for his corrupt behaviour as a town councillor.

**Operation Marion**

The apartheid state encouraged Inkatha to create a network of armed militias headed by warlords who either worked directly with or were somehow linked to Daluxolo Luthuli, the political commissar of the Caprivi-trained Inkatha hit-squads. These Caprivians were part of the state’s low-intensity warfare project known as ‘Operation Marion’, which was intended to give Inkatha the capacity to fight the supporters of the ANC and its allies, the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). The highest levels of the state’s security apparatus were involved in the paramilitary training of Inkatha-supporting recruits for deployment against the UDF/ANC in townships and other areas around the province. In the face of rising militancy in the UDF, the chief minister and minister of police in the KwaZulu government, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, expressed the embattled position of Inkatha supporters on the ground as follows:
I hardly need to emphasise that we need to be placed in a far better position to defend our property and the lives of our people from those kinds of attacks. We do not intend to be sitting ducks ... In fact, I believe that we must prepare ourselves not only to defend property and life but to go beyond that and prepare ourselves to hit back with devastating force at those who destroy our property and kill us.

It will be a sad day when brother has to defend himself against brother. This is exactly what we will be forced to do if these kinds of incidents escalate. According to a secret State Security Council document, the Inkatha Central Committee decided during 1985 “that the whole of KwaZulu and Natal must be turned into a so-called ‘no-go area’ for the UDF, regardless of the consequences”.

In late 1985, Chief Buthelezi was alerted to alleged MK plans to assassinate him and turned to the government and SADF for assistance. His requests, as detailed in various military intelligence and State Security Council documents, included the training and deployment of a VIP guard unit, an intelligence structure, a KwaZulu army, the authority to issue firearm licenses, and a paramilitary force. Former IFP National Council member Walter Felgate recalled discussions in which he had specifically advised Chief Minister Buthelezi of the need for a defensive and pre-emptive capacity for Inkatha. What was envisaged, he said, was a ‘strike capacity’ for the IFP, not purely a defensive group to look after KwaZulu government VIPs and property.

One of the outcomes of these deliberations was the clandestine paramilitary training of some 200 Inkatha supporters by the SADF in the Caprivi, Namibia, during 1986, known as Operation Marion. The ‘Caprivi trainees’ returned to KwaZulu and Natal in September 1986, after six months of special forces training which, they were told, was to equip them to destroy the UDF/ANC. The ‘Caprivi trainees’ were variously deployed around the province: some to the KLA Protection Unit, some to Inkatha constituency offices and some to KZP stations. The trainees were required to make themselves available to local Inkatha leaders as well as to undertake the training of Inkatha youths in the areas where they were deployed.

The role of the ‘Caprivi trainees’ came under the spotlight in the Durban Supreme Court during the so-called ‘KwaMakhutha trial’ of 1996. The Court found that Inkatha members trained by the SADF in the Caprivi were responsible for the killing in January 1987 of thirteen people, mostly women and children, in an AK-47 attack on the home of UDF leader Bheki Ntuli, in the KwaMakhutha township south of Durban.

In 1986, the SADF force conspired with Inkatha to provide Inkatha with a covert, offensive paramilitary unit (hit squad) to be deployed illegally against person’s and organisations perceived to be opposed to or enemies of both the South African government and Inkatha. The SADF provided training, financial and logistical management and behind the scenes supervision. According to General Magnus Malan, the State Security Council sanctioned all steps taken up to and including the Liebenberg report. There is a considerable variance between the training contemplated in para 24. c.i, and ii of the Liebenberg report and the actual training received.

It is clear from the military documents of 16 April 1986 that General Magnus Malan, Chief Buthelezi and Admiral Putter had to finalise the nature of the training and the deployment of the trainees before the end of the basic training. Malan confirmed a meeting with Chief
Buthelezi on 17 April. Jan Anton Nieuwoudt of SADF Special Forces confirmed that he was sent to the Caprivi to undertake training by General Groenewald who fell under Putter. Training in the Caprivi Strip included inter alia, the following features:

- the use of the special forces as instructors;
- the use of soviet weapons;
- the use of heavy duty weapons such as mortars and rpg7s;
- the use of explosives, landmines, and hand grenades;
- techniques in how to carry out attacks without leaving clues and tactics on how to avoid arrest, detention and interrogation at the hands of the police;
- attacks on houses with the aim of killing all the occupants.

The SADF’s final withdrawal from the project was not an act of disassociation but an attempt to avoid its own involvement from being exposed. When it withdrew, it failed to put a stop to Marion’s unlawful activities, paving the way for further acts of violence to be committed.

In October 1986, approximately fifteen to twenty ‘Caprivi trainees’ were told to report to the police station in the township of Mpumalanga, outside Durban. Although they never underwent any KZP training, screening or tests and never filled in any KZP application forms, the trainees were issued with KZP certificates appointing them to the rank of detective constable. They were also issued with official police firearms, which they were allowed to take home with them. Most of them were sent to guard the homes of chiefs [amaKhosi], indunas and councillors in the areas surrounding Pietermaritzburg. Each trainee was expected to identify local Inkatha youth and train them in weapon handling and combat skills.

The SAP policed the Mpumalanga township until February 1989, when policing was handed over to the KZP. Under the guise of official law enforcement agents, the ‘Caprivi trainee’ constables engaged in large-scale hit-squad activities in the Pietermaritzburg/Mpumalanga area for two years, directing their attacks against perceived UDF/ANC members.

Zweli David Dlamini was part of the group assigned to the Mpumalanga police station. He was issued with a false KZP appointment certificate, a 7.65mm pistol and ammunition. Members of the local KZP station aided the operatives by transporting them to and from the scene of attacks, warning them of possible ANC attacks and providing them with firearms. Certain members of the Pietermaritzburg Security Branch, Riot Unit 8 and Military Intelligence also assisted in the provision of weapons. According to the former political commissar and commander of the ‘Caprivi trainees’, Daluxolo Luthuli:

During this period, there were literally hundreds of incidents where attacks were launched against UDF people, property or homes. It is impossible for me to record the extent of these attacks. The comrades responded by attacking us with equal vigour. A state of war existed between us. I often played a command role in directing our attacks. I did the following: arranged for arms and ammunition; distributed arms and ammunition; gathered fighting men; chose people who would lead the attacks and different aspects of the attacks; decided on the strategy of an attack; decided on the target or area to be attacked.

After the attack, I arranged for injured persons to be medically treated by sending them to clinics or hospitals; collected firearms and ammunition and stored them
safely; arranged our defensive structures and strategies; reported back to the planning committee through MZ Khumalo.

**The Summertime House Attack**

Luthuli gave information about an attack on a UDF meeting at a house named ‘Summertime’ in Unit 1 South Mpumalanga on 18 January 1988. About 300 people were gathered at the house for the meeting. Luthuli did not participate in the attack himself but sent a group led by Phumlani Xolani Mshengu and including Sbu Bhengu, members of the Inkatha youth and other ‘Caprivi trainees’. According to Luthuli:

“Phumlani Mshengu and Sbu Bhengu were armed with two of our AK-47 rifles. The Inkatha Youth members were also armed with whatever arms we were able to lay our hands on. The group approached the house and commenced firing on the people who were there. From there they went on and attacked other houses. They destroyed approximately eight houses and killed about nine people.”

The deceased included Mfanafuthi Gasa, Kinathi Mabhida, Musa Khoza, Thomas Mncwabe, Thomas’s brother and a man identified only as ‘Rolla’. An estimated 200 people were injured during this attack.

According to former UDF member John Mazwazwa, on the day before the meeting at Summertime house, he and other UDF members had expressed concern for the safety of the school children because the new school term was about to begin. Katiza Cebekhulu, who came from the area, was called in because of his claim earlier that he had a police connection who could protect the UDF against an Inkatha attack. At the Summertime house meeting the next day, Cebekhulu allegedly undertook to telephone the police to tell them of the gathering and to ask them to patrol the area. Within two minutes of Cebekhulu’s departure, the attack began.

The activities of the ‘Caprivi trainees’ extended also to the freehold township of Clermont, north-west of Durban. In the early 1980s, Clermont was one of the townships identified for incorporation into the KwaZulu homeland. The campaign for incorporation was led by leading Inkatha member Bekizizwe Samuel Jamile, then KwaZulu Deputy Minister of the Interior and a resident of Clermont.

The Clermont Advisory Board, a representative body elected by ratepayers in the township in September 1982, opposed incorporation. The Board was chaired by prominent Durban attorney Aubrey Nyembezi and composed of mainly UDF-aligned businessmen and advocates. In October 1985, three weeks before scheduled elections for the Advisory Board, Nyembezi’s home was set alight whilst he and his wife were inside. The couple survived but their house and its contents were destroyed.

Jamile contested the October 1985 election and was defeated. Nyembezi was returned to his position on the newly elected Board, together with Advocate Vuka Shabalala, Zazi Khuzwayo and Emmanuel Norman Khuzwayo. During February 1987, Jamile, together with Inkatha-supporting Chiefs Khawula and Lushaba, were attacked with a petrol bomb in Clermont. Jamile blamed members of the Clermont Advisory Board and allegedly instructed hired hit men to kill members of the Board.
During April 1987, Jamile instructed Vela Mchunu and another ‘Caprivi trainee’ to kill UDF members Cornelius Delani Sikhakane, Johannes Sibongumusa Luthuli, Khayelihle Ndlou, Nkosinhathi Sithole and Thembia Msimango who were opposed to the incorporation of Clermont into KwaZulu and had used abusive language to Jamile the previous day. Jamile instructed Mzisi Hlophe to guide the two attackers to a particular house, where they opened fire on the victims. Cornelius Sikhakane and Johannes Sibongumusa Luthuli were injured in the attack.

On 5 April 1987, at Mamba Valley Riverside in the Inanda District, Jamile unlawfully and intentionally killed Bhekuyiswe Khumalo, and attempted to kill Thokozile Shabalala. In 1991 Jamile was convicted in the Durban Supreme Court of murder and received the death sentence, later commuted to life imprisonment. During April 1987, Jamile instructed Daluxolo Luthuli to kill Zazi Khuzwayo, a member of the Clermont Advisory Board. Luthuli instructed Sbu Bhengu and ‘Caprivi trainees’ Phumlani Xolani Mshengu, Alex Sosha Khumalo and Vela Mchunu, who carried out the attack on 9 May 1987. Jamile’s son, Hlakaniphani Jamile, transported the hit men to and from the scene. Clermont youth Msizi Hlophe pointed Khuzwayo out to the assassins.

In October 1987, Jamile instructed Daluxolo Luthuli to kill Pearl Tshabalala, a prominent businesswoman and member of a women’s organisation which supported the Clermont Advisory Board. Tshabalala was the wife of board member Vuka Tshabalala. Luthuli instructed four ‘Caprivi trainees’, including Alex Sosha Khumalo and David Zweli Dlamini, to assist him in the killing. Jamile instructed Mzisi Hlophe to guide the group as they were not familiar with Clermont. On 15 October 1987, the men fired several shots at Tshabalala’s moving vehicle outside her business premises in Clermont. She survived the attack. On the evening of the 10 February 1988, Pearl Tshabalala was shot dead in front of her five-year-old child as she was leaving her business in Clermont.

On 21 February 1988, Obed Mthembu and his wife Zuzwe survived an attempt on their lives. Obed Mthembu, who chaired the North Coast Chamber of Commerce, was opposed to incorporation and had delivered a speech at Pearl Tshabalala’s funeral just four days earlier.

Taxi owner Nicholas Mkhize was killed on 15 July 1988. He, too, was a prominent businessman opposed to incorporation. He was shot dead by Mzisi Hlophe, who was later convicted for this murder.

On 28 February 1988, Jamile instructed a ‘Caprivi trainee’ to kill UDF supporter Emmanuel Norman Khuzwayo, who was also opposed to the incorporation of Clermont into KwaZulu. Again, Jamile asked Mzisi Hlophe to accompany the assassin as a guide. Khuzwayo was killed on the same day.

In 1991, Jamile and Hlophe appeared in court facing fifteen charges, including five counts of murder, seven of attempted murder, and three of incitement to murder. In the indictment, Jamile was accused of being involved between 1987 and 1989 in the killing of UDF-associated persons opposed to the incorporation of Clermont into KwaZulu. Two ‘Caprivi trainees’ who were implicated during the trial, Zweli Dlamini and Vela Mchunu, were hidden by the KZP until it was over. Owing to the inability of the police to trace these two suspects and other witnesses, Jamile was convicted on only two counts: one of murder and one of attempted murder. Hlophe was convicted on two counts of murder. Jamile was sentenced to life imprisonment but was released in terms of the Indemnity Act of 1992.
The assassination of Victoria Mxenge

At the time of her death, Victoria Mxenge was an executive member of the UDF. To date there have been no prosecutions in connection with her killing. Apparently, a former Security Branch operative, Bongani Malinga, was Mxenge’s assassin. According to the ANC, Marvin Sefako (alias Bongani Raymond Malinga) from Hillcrest, Durban, was recruited by the Security Branch. His handler was Brigadier Pieter Swanepoel. Malinga allegedly confessed to the ANC that he had killed at least five people, including Victoria Mxenge. Malinga also allegedly participated in the attack on the memorial service for Victoria Mxenge (see below). Malinga’s case was heard by the ANC’s People’s Tribunal in Lusaka on 7 May 1990. In addition to the killings, he was found guilty of a number of other ‘offences’, including ‘collaborating with the enemy’ to infiltrate the ANC with the intention of killing MK Chief of Staff Chris Hani and MK Commander Joe Modise.

The Umlazi Cinema Massacre

A memorial service for Victoria Mxenge was held in the Umlazi Cinema on 8 August 1985. There was a large contingent of police and soldiers outside the cinema. During the service, hundreds of men armed with spears, knobkierries and firearms burst into the cinema and began stabbing and shooting randomly. Terrified mourners jumped over the cinema balcony to escape the attackers. Witnesses alleged that the attackers included Inkatha vigilantes recruited from the adjacent shack settlements and from Lindelani, north of Durban. Soldiers and police were allegedly present but took no action to prevent the attack. Seventeen people died in the incident.

David Sponono Gasa, Chairperson of the Umlazi Residents’ Association, had led the memorial service. According to Gasa, Inkatha and KLA members Winnington Sabelo (now deceased) and Thomas Shabalala led the attackers, who stabbed and fired on the mourners.

The Attack on David Gasa

Victoria Mxenge’s funeral was held in King Williams Town in the Eastern Cape, on 12 August 1985. A few days later, David Gasa’s home was attacked and burnt. A mass funeral for the people killed in the Umlazi Cinema attack was held on 23 October 1985. That same day a busload of Inkatha supporters attacked Gasa’s home a second time. The attackers were allegedly led by Winnington Sabelo (now deceased). Gasa was out at the time of the attack but his wife and mother-in-law were home. The attack resulted in the death of his mother-in-law one week later. Six months later, his wife developed hypertension and died.

The Killing of Jacob Dlamini

Josiah Dlamini was the owner of the Umlazi Cinema and made it available for the memorial service. His son, Jacob, was subsequently killed by Inkatha members in Lindelani.

The aftermath

Large-scale violence erupted in Umlazi after Mxenge’s killing. A State Security Council document compiled in March 1989 described the killing of Victoria Mxenge as the turning point in the conflict in Natal and KwaZulu:

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The murder of Victoria Mxenge, a radical lawyer from Umlazi, on 1 August 1985 – for which the UDF blamed Inkatha and the SAP – was the biggest contributory factor to the [subsequent] violent conflict between the UDF and Inkatha, especially in the Durban area. Large-scale unrest continued until March 1986 and even the state of emergency (June 1986) could not inhibit the sporadic violent incidents. From January 1987 the situation systematically deteriorated and the focal point of the unrest (especially since September 1987) moved to the Pietermaritzburg area.

Zulu/Pondo conflict

The violence in Umlazi spread to the neighbouring Umbumbulu district, approximately twenty kilometres south of Durban. In December 1985 and January 1986, intense conflict broke out between Zulus and Pondo's living in Umbumbulu, particularly in KwaMakhutha and Malukazi. By the end of January 1986, approximately 120 people had been killed and 20 000 people displaced from their homes in and around the township of KwaMakhutha. The conflict was often referred to as ‘tribal clashes’ or ‘faction fighting’ and was attributed to intense rivalry for land, water and jobs. The ethnic nature of the conflict supported the state’s contention that political conflict in the province was ‘black on black’, and helped play down the failure of the security forces to intervene in a way that might have limited the scale of the suffering and loss.

According to researchers39, Durban’s squatter population grew from around half a million in 1979 to 1.3 million in 1985. This influx exacerbated the struggle for access to basic resources such as water, land and employment. Amongst those making their way to the city were thousands of Pondo's streaming in from the Pondoland area of the Transkei in search of employment. Easily distinguishable from Zulus as a group, they were resented for encroaching on scarce resources. Land was allocated informally by powerful local figures and councillors controlled the scarce water supplies. Certain tribal leaders favoured Pondo's, resulting in the establishment of Pondo enclaves.

In December 1985, the head of the Umbumbulu tribal authority, Chief Bhekizitha Makhanya, allegedly insisted that all Pondo's living in KwaMakhutha without his permission should leave and return to the Transkei. The KwaZulu representative for Umlazi, Winnington Sabelo (now deceased), also allegedly warned of more bloodshed if the Pondo's did not leave.40 The Transkei administration, however, supported the Pondo's refusal to leave the area. Serious fighting broke out between Zulus and Pondo's at Malukazi, Umlazi, on Christmas Eve of 1985, resulting in sixty-four deaths and up to forty-seven serious injuries. Reportedly, approximately 2 000 Zulus formed into impis and attacked 3 000 homes in the area.41

On 21 January 1986, a Pondo man was killed near Isipingo Rail. Two days later, some 500 Pondo's staged a revenge attack on the home and shopping centre of the KwaZulu representative for Umbumbulu, Roy Mbongwe. About 1 000 Zulu supporters arrived and there was a gun battle on the road between Umbogintwini and KwaMakhutha. The police arrested 553 Pondo warriors and confiscated truckloads of weapons. They were held overnight, charged with public violence and released on a warning. In the meanwhile, several Zulu supporters marched on KwaMakhutha where they looted and set fire to homes belonging to Pondo people. Between 4 000 and 10 000 shacks were razed. Police failed to disperse the attackers. The following day, the charred remains of bodies were found in the burnt-out buildings. It is estimated that forty-five people were killed that day. Estimates of
the number of Pondos who fled KwaMakhutha that day range between 20 000 and 40 000 – some back to the Transkei while others sought refuge in and around Durban, hiding in the bush and in disused railway coaches.

The Pondo settlement at Malukazi, a few kilometres further south, was also affected by the Zulu–Pondo clashes. On 27 January 1986, the Pondo–Zulu conflict spread to Magabheni on the Natal South Coast. The number killed since December rose to 113. On 10 March 1986, the conflict spread to the factory floor at Umbogintwini AECI factory when about 900 Zulu workers downed tools in protest against management’s decision to rehire Pondo workers who had fled the violence.

**Destruction of the Gandhi settlement, Phoenix**

In August 1985, the settlement established by Mahatma Gandhi in 1904 at Phoenix, outside Durban, was destroyed by fire and looting in violent clashes between Indians and Zulu nationalists. Gandhi’s house – known as Sarvodaya [for the welfare of all] was also destroyed. The settlement was a symbol of non-racialism, self-reliance and peace in South Africa. It was here that Gandhi formulated his philosophy and technique of satyagraha, the form of non-violent struggle that eventually led India to independence.

According to the then curator of the settlement, Richard Steele, the conflict was sparked off by the killing of Victoria Mxenge in Umlazi and the rapid escalation of violent clashes between supporters of Inkatha and the UDF. He said that Indians and Africans had been living together harmoniously for fifty years. At the time that conflict broke out, Indian families and traders came under a series of sustained attacks which were, according to Steele, “led by modern-day Zulu warriors wielding sticks and spears, shouting slogans to the effect that Indians must leave because this is all Zulu land”.

Forty-seven Indian shops were looted and razed by fire and 500 Indian families forced to flee. Other buildings destroyed included the Kasturba Gandhi Primary School. Steele noted that residents from a nearby informal settlement were seen stripping the buildings of materials for use on their own houses. Twelve wood-and-iron houses belonging to Indian families on the settlement were burnt by Indian vigilantes who wanted to deny Africans the use of any building materials. Steele said that the police did little to intervene in the attacks as the government had already given these families and traders notice to leave Inanda, in terms of the Group Areas Act.

Attacker broke into and looted the Gandhi Memorial Library and Museum, Sarvodaya, Gandhi’s original house and the house built in 1944 by Gandhi’s son, Manilal. Steele, who was present at the time, said he saw someone leaving the Museum with a paraffin lamp that Gandhi had used while at Phoenix. He went up to him and, through an interpreter, explained that the lamp should not just be in one person’s house, but should be available for all people to see, because of the kind of person Gandhi was. The lamp was returned. Steele was able to rescue most of the books from the library and a few other items of no apparent use to the looters. Following the ransacking of the settlement, however, most of the buildings were reduced to smouldering ruins.

**Clashes in the workplace**
Clashes between COSATU-affiliated workers and UWUSA members were also reported during this period. One of the first clashes between UWUSA and a COSATU affiliate occurred at the Hlobane colliery, near Vryheid, one month after UWUSA was launched in mid-1986. Eleven miners were killed and 115 others injured in clashes between NUM and UWUSA on 6 June 1986.

The Hlobane Colliery Incident

Tensions developed at the Hlobane collieries in 1985 when management and the mineworkers, members of NUM, deadlocked over wage negotiations. This led to a three-day strike. KwaZulu Minister of Welfare, Prince Gideon Zulu, who addressed the workers at the invitation of management, called on them to join the Zulu union which, he said, was to be launched in the near future. On the day of the UWUSA launch at Kings Park, Durban, in May 1986, NUM members at Hlobane decided to work. Those who attended the rally reported that they were advised to leave NUM and join UWUSA. Management formally recognised the new union, alienating members of NUM, who accused management of promoting the idea that COSATU (and therefore, NUM) was for Xhosas and UWUSA for Zulu mineworkers.

On 6 June 1986, miners went on strike after a shop steward was dismissed. They gathered in the company hall to attend a meeting with management. At about 09h00, two busloads of Inkatha supporters from Nqutu, Nongoma and Ceza arrived. They were seen talking to the mine security personnel and police who had been called in to monitor the strike, then they allegedly began attacking the strikers in the hall. The police and mine security officials allegedly assisted the Inkatha attackers. Eleven people died and at least 115 were injured in clashes as the workers attempted to escape the hall. Many Xhosa miners lost their jobs as a result of this incident and had to return to the Transkei (Newcastle hearing). In May 1987, the Pietermaritzburg Supreme Court granted NUM members at the colliery an interdict restraining UWUSA members from assaulting them.

The Sarmcol Strike

The township of Mphophomeni, near Howick in the Natal Midlands, was built in 1985 when black residents were forcibly removed from Howick into the boundaries of KwaZulu. Most of the residents were employed at the British Tyre and Rubber (BTR) Sarmcol factory, part of the British-based Dunlop Group. In 1985, Sarmcol workers went on strike in support of demands for recognition of their union, the Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU). Management claimed the strike was illegal and, in March 1985, fired all 970 workers. Tensions between MAWU members and the BTR SARMCOL management began in August 1983 when the employers stalled and delayed the preliminary recognition agreement between themselves and MAWU. By 1983 MAWU had recruited 83% of the company’s workforce. However, management refused to recognise the union. In December 1984 the workers embarked on strike over wages. In April 1985, MAWU conducted a ballot among its members at the factory on the course of action that they should take in the face of the management’s refusal to recognise their union. About 1,000 workers voted unanimously in favour of a strike on 30 April 1985. The Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) organised a solidarity rally with the SARMCOL workers at the Edendale Lay Ecumenical Centre on 1 May 1985. Thousands of workers from as far away as Hammarsdale, Estcourt, Howick, as well as the 950 striking SARMCOL workers, attended. Three days later, management dismissed the striking workers and replaced them with scab labour from the Inkatha strongholds of Elandskop and surrounding areas.
Virtually the entire township population was without employment and COSATU established a co-op to assist the fired workers. Local, regional and international pressure was applied to have the workers reinstated. The strike-breakers initially stayed on the factory premises for their own protection and later commuted from distant Inkatha strongholds. Although Mphophomeni was administered by KwaZulu, it had become a UDF-dominated area and Inkatha supporters were forced to move out to neighbouring KwaHaza and KwaShifu. The community supported the striking workers by embarking on a consumer boycott, which lasted 42 days, while school pupils embarked on stayaways.

On 5 December 1986, Inkatha held a rally in the Mphophomeni community hall attended by approximately 200 Inkatha supporters, mainly Youth Brigade members. On leaving the hall, they spread out throughout the township, assaulting residents and damaging property. Four prominent MAWU members, Phineas Sibiya, Micca Sibiya, Simon Ngubane and Flomena Mnikathi were abducted and forced into the community hall, where armed men in KZP uniforms questioned and assaulted the union members. They were then bundled into a car and driven towards Lions River. Though shot and injured, Micca Sibiya managed to escape. The charred bodies of the remaining captives were found the following day.

A formal inquest into the killing of the three MAWU members found nine known Inkatha members responsible for the killings. Despite the inquest finding, no one has been charged for these killings to date. One of those named was Vela Mchunu, a ‘Caprivi trainee’. In order to prevent Mchunu from testifying at the inquest, KZP Captain Leonard Langeni and Chief Minister Buthelezi’s personal assistant, MZ Khumalo, arranged for him to be hidden at the Mkhuze camp. In 1987, Sarmcol signed a recognition agreement with UWUSA, the Inkatha-aligned trade union, set up in opposition to COSATU.

The Midlands war

After the strike and killings of COSATU members in Mphophomeni in 1986, local areas in and around Pietermaritzburg became increasingly polarised. The tribal areas surrounding Pietermaritzburg had been strongly Inkatha-supporting, governed by Inkatha-supporting amaKhosi and indunas. However, in the latter part of the 1980s, many young people began rebelling against tribal authorities and openly expressing sympathy with the UDF. Many adults also renounced their Inkatha membership. Inkatha was in retreat in the Vulindlela Valley. Rumours spread that chiefs and indunas had fled for their lives.

During 1987, as a result of their waning support, Inkatha embarked on a substantial recruitment drive in the Edendale and Vulindlela valleys, bordering on Pietermaritzburg. They were assisted by a number of ‘Caprivi trainees’ who had been deployed in the area from late 1986. UDF supporters vigorously resisted Inkatha’s attempts to make inroads into their areas. The conflict escalated dramatically from 1987 and came to be referred to as the Midlands War. At around this time, some 300 Inkatha recruits were trained and deployed as special constables in the greater Pietermaritzburg area in order to bolster the presence of Inkatha, particularly in the Edendale Valley, KwaShange and other sections of Vulindlela. Conflict initially broke out in the Edendale Valley (which included Imbali, Ashdown, Caluza, Harewood) and then spread into the Vulindlela valley. Strong allegations have emerged of collusion between Inkatha and the SAP in attacks on UDF supporters. UDF members were detained in their hundreds while, at most, a handful of Inkatha supporters were detained.
So intense was the fighting in the township of Imbali during the latter half of the 1980s that a foreign journalist likened it to Beirut. With perhaps one exception, a few prominent Inkatha supporters were repeatedly implicated in violent crimes in the township.

In 1983, the South African government attempted to impose a local town council on Imbali in terms of the new Black Local Authorities Act. This brought tension between Inkatha, which sought to gain control of the new town council, and UDF supporters and community residents who actively resisted the imposition of the government’s local authority structure. In October 1983, at council elections in Imbali, only three of the six seats were contested, and 248 votes cast. Patrick Pakkies was elected as mayor and councillors included Jerome Mncwabe and Abdul Awetha (see above).

Pietermaritzburg Security Branch member, Warrant Officer Rolf Warber, was frequently named in connection with harassing and intimidating non-Inkatha supporters in Imbali. During the Trust Feed Trial (see above), evidence emerged to the effect that Warber had assisted in the purchase of twenty-four revolvers on behalf of Inkatha members in Imbali in 1988. Three of those for whom he bought firearms were implicated in murder cases. They were Abdul Awetha, ‘Skweqe’ Mweli and Toti Zulu.

The Case of Vusumuzo Khambule

The vice-president of the Imbali Youth Organisation during the 1980s, Vusumuzo Khethokwakhe Khambule was repeatedly intimidated and harassed by both the Special Branch and Inkatha members in Imbali during the 1980s. In 1984, Khambule was detained, tortured and interrogated by members of the Security Branch. On his release, the police attempted to recruit him as an informer. In 1986, both his house and car were petrol-bombed and destroyed by Inkatha members Dika Awetha, Mandla Madlala (now deceased) and one other. Also in 1986, he alleged, Inkatha supporter Thu Ngcobo (now deceased) attempted to poison him at his workplace. He further alleged that Awetha tried to run him over.

The Case of Hansford Shangase

Hansford Thabo Shangase, a UDF supporter, was attacked by Inkatha supporters at the Imbali sports ground during an inter-school sports meeting on 17 July 1986. The attack left him unconscious and in hospital for a year. He remained paralysed and confined to a wheelchair. Shortly after his discharge from hospital, he was attacked again, this time while defenceless in his wheelchair. His attackers were Inkatha supporters and member of the KZP that included Toti Zulu and Wasela Awetha, aka Sean Hoosen Awetha.

The Case of Busisiwe Paulina Mbeje and Others

Around November/December 1987, ‘Caprivi trainees’ Zweli Dlamini and Trevor Nene were posted to guard Councillor Jerome Mncwabe (now deceased) at Imbali. While they were there, fighting broke out in the area. Daluxolo Luthuli arrived at Mncwabe’s home with additional support in the form of more ‘Caprivi trainees’ (Alex Sosha Khumalo, Sbu Bhengu, Phumani Xolani Mshengu, De Molefe, Thulani Vilakazi and one other). As they arrived it appeared to them that a large UDF group was about to attack Mncwabe’s house. Luthuli and his men decided to attack first and approached the group, Luthuli shouting instructions to the trainees. They started by throwing stones and then fired shots, which were returned by the UDF group. The shooting carried on until a police helicopter arrived.
By that time, the attack had moved about 800 metres from Mncwabe’s house into a cemetery. According to Dlamini, about ten people were shot dead and many others injured. It is believed that Busisiwe Paulina Mbeje was one of those killed during this incident. According to Mbeje’s grandmother, Lorra Msimango, Paulina was killed on 30 December 1987 at the Sinathing cemetery, together with other children, by Jerome Mncwabe and his Inkatha supporters. Inkatha supporters were not from the area and were thought to have been brought in by Mncwabe for the purpose of attacking the UDF. Others who were injured in the attack include Bongiwe Mbeje, Simangaliso Mkhathsha and Sibongile Mabuza.

Following this attack, the ‘Caprivi trainees’ under Luthuli gathered at Mncwabe’s house and planned several counter-attacks. Together they made petrol bombs that they then used in an attack on the home of a UDF supporter. Some people died in the attack, others were injured and the house was badly burnt.

The Case of the Ndlovu Family

On 21 May 1989, the Imbali home of COSATU shop steward Ms Jabu Ndlovu was attacked by well-known Imbali Inkatha supporters, including Jerome Mncwabe, Thulani Ngcobo, Michael Thu Ngcobo and Sichizo Zuma, who were seen knocking at the Ndlovu’s door. Jabu’s husband, Jabulani Ndlovu, who opened the door, was shot fifteen times. The attackers then set the house alight. One of the Ndlovu’s two daughters, Khumbu, tried to escape, but was shot and forced back into the burning house. Jabulani died at the scene. Jabu and her daughter both died later as a result of their burns.

In August 1989, Thulani Ngcobo, Petros Ngcobo and Fredrick Mhlaluka, all of Imbali, were charged with the killings of Jabu, Jabulani and Khumbu Ndlovu. They were denied bail. In a separate hearing, Jerome Mncwabe was also charged with the three murders. He was granted bail of R750. Mncwabe was killed in May 1990. Michael Thu Ngcobo was killed on 1 January 1990. His killing led to the acquittal of his brother, Petros, who told the court in August 1990 that Michael Thu had often borrowed his gun, which had been ballistically linked to the killings of the Ndlovus. Petros Ngcobo told the court that he knew nothing of the attack on the Ndlovus and others for which he was charged. The judge accepted this evidence and Ngcobo was acquitted. No further convictions have followed.

The 1990s

The political transition to democracy in South Africa, heralded by the unbanning of the ANC and the release of Nelson Mandela in February 1990, was marked by a renewed escalation of civil strife in the province. One of the major expressions of this was the so-called ‘Seven Day War’ in the lower Vulindlela and Edendale Valleys south of Pietermaritzburg at the end of March 1990 (see below).

In July 1990, Inkatha was formally constituted as a political party – the IFP – and embarked on recruitment campaigns in KwaZulu and Natal. At the same time, many UDF activists and affiliates were engaged in open political campaigning as members of the now unbanned ANC. The political climate in the province during this period was characterised by a gross political intolerance and growing enmity between the ANC and the IFP. This was particularly true of areas known to be party strongholds, where efforts to establish freedom of political activity and association often resulted in violent clashes and forced dissenting individuals to
flee with their families. The battle for territorial control led to frequent and widespread outbreaks of conflict and violence in the province. Tens of thousands of people were affected by the violence, suffering death, injury, maiming, bereavement and displacement on a large scale.

Youth were in the front line on both sides of the conflict. While whole families were drawn into the violence, most of the casualties of war were in the thirteen to twenty-four years age group, followed by the twenty-five to thirty-six years age group. The traditional notions of the relationship between old and young had shifted perceptibly. The political conflict had mobilised the children beyond the reach of the parental protection they needed. Ukuhlonipha [respect], the cornerstone of African cultural and social life, had broken down substantially.

Parents and elders living in the tribal areas had had little if any exposure to the ANC and/or UDF and chose to stay with what they knew – the IFP. As a result, many families were divided along generational lines. Some parents disowned their children; others were attacked for failing to control their children and allowing them to join the ANC. As a result, many young people took to living in the forests and bush. They were unable to attend school for fear of being attacked.

While two sides were clearly perceptible in the political conflict and violence, allegiances were at times complex and ambiguous. Inkatha had an independent existence and support base, but was seen by the state as an essential ally in its attempt to withstand ANC/UDF resistance. At least one ANC leader who rose to considerable power and prominence in the Midlands was later exposed as an informer for the security police and became associated with the activities of a prominent Inkatha warlord in the area.

The theory of a ‘third force’ involved in the unfolding conflict was often used to explain and analyse events in this period. The term, however, came to carry a multiplicity of meanings. ANC president Oliver Tambo had used it earlier to label non-ANC opposition groups, especially those associated with Black Consciousness and Africanism. By the mid- to late-1980s, it came to be used in the province to refer to various activities that seemed to fall outside the conflict between the ANC and Inkatha. At times, it was used to refer to activities with chains of command running all the way up to ministerial or even presidential level. At others, it referred to the local police who took sides in incidents involving Inkatha and the ANC. It was even used to explain purely criminal activity. Amnesty applicant Captain Brian Mitchell said that the special constables deployed in the Midlands in the late 1980s were the ‘third force’, created by the SAP and deployed specifically to destabilise UDF areas and kill UDF supporters.

Traditional leaders, IFP-supporting township councillors and the KZP were partisan and intolerant, preventing the ANC from making inroads into their areas. Indeed, the first ever ANC gatherings to be permitted on the North Coast (in Ngwelezane and Esikhawini) were in March 1993, some three years after the organisation’s unbanning. At worst, ANC supporters became the targets of violent attack.

In 1990, an amendment to the Natal Zulu Code of Law virtually legalised the carrying of dangerous weapons and the arming of the amaKhosi. The Chief Minister’s department could issue G-3 semi-automatic rifles to chiefs and headmen for the protection of KwaZulu government property, thereby circumventing normal weapons licensing regulations. State functionaries were able, by way of permits, to issue these weapons to ‘tribal policemen’ or
'community guards’. By law, these weapons were to be used to protect KwaZulu government buildings and property. However, evidence points overwhelmingly to the fact that they were also used in clashes between ANC and IFP supporters.

Evidence has also emerged that the IFP was receiving arms and ammunition from right-wing organisations and sections of the security forces. There were many allegations of SAP and security force complicity with IFP supporters. In July 1991, a Weekly Mail investigation revealed that the security police had secretly funded Inkatha rallies held in November 1989 and in March 1990 to the tune of R250 000. The government admitted to the allegations and said that secret funding to Inkatha had ceased after March 1990. This was disproved in November 1991 when the Weekly Mail published evidence that security police had funded an IFP rally in Umzumbe (South Coast) in January 1991. The security police admitted to funding this rally.

By the beginning of the 1990s, the conflict had spread to rural areas which – apart from some ‘faction fighting’ – had escaped much of the political turbulence and violence of the preceding decades. The political struggle was taken to the rural areas by unionised workers and youth. Many of the rural youth had attended township schools where they were exposed to the ANC and to political activism. Back home, they directed attacks at IFP-supporting chiefs and local councillors whom they labelled as non-representative, non-democratic and, in some cases, corrupt. They questioned the decision-making processes under the tribal system and developed a general disrespect for and rejection of tribal officials. Violence was perceived as a way to replace autocratic tribal institutions with democratic structures.

IFP-supporting chiefs who lost their lives in the conflict included Chief J Ndlovu from Ixopo, Chief Duma from Donnybrook, Chiefs Memela and Molefe, both from Bulwer and Chiefs Nyela Dlamini and Majozzi, both from Richmond. More than twenty indunas (headmen) died in political conflict.

In 1990, three IFP residents of Mahwaqa ward, Mtwalume (South Coast), successfully secured a court interdict restraining their chief, Bhekizizwe Luthuli, and his supporters from threatening, intimidating, destroying their properties or engaging in any unlawful attacks on any persons resident in Mahwaqa ward. In their affidavits, Chief Luthuli was cited as the main aggressor who mobilised and led his amabutho to attack their homes on 3 March 1990 – leading to the destruction of more than 200 houses belonging to ANC supporters. Chief Luthuli was alleged to have ordered his people to kill all UDF children in his area. He was also alleged to have led armed men in three consecutive attacks at Mahwaqa between 23 and 25 March 1990, in which eleven people were killed.

On 14 September 1991, the ANC and IFP were party to the signing of the National Peace Accord, binding themselves to adopt certain procedures and to change the strategies and tactics currently employed by their supporters. In practice, however, the Peace Accord did little to change the situation. The Peace Accord made provision for the establishment of “voluntary associations or self-protection units in any neighbourhood to prevent crime and to prevent any invasion of the lawful rights of such communities” (clause 3.7.1). It stated unequivocally that “all existing structures called self-defence units shall be transformed into self-protection units” (clause 3.7.6) and that “no party or political organisation shall establish such units on the basis of party or political affiliation, such units being considered private armies” (clause 3.7.2). In reality, neither of these clauses was adhered to. The ANC continued to use the term ‘self-defence unit’ (SDU) to describe its paramilitary, community-based
‘defence’ units, while the IFP adopted the term ‘self-protection unit’ (SPU) in place of previous terms such as tribal policemen or community guards.

ANC-aligned SDUs emerged in the mid-1980s following a decision by the external mission of the ANC to become more involved in internal politics. The SDUs underwent formal paramilitary training under MK, primarily outside South Africa’s borders. Informal training was conducted in a number of local communities as well as in the Transkei. The ANC gave arms and assistance selectively to areas hardest hit by violence, such as the Transvaal and Natal. The SDUs also drew upon community resources to arm and sustain themselves. Arms were also procured for some ANC-aligned union leaders. Weapons were used in offences committed in various places around the province.

The SDUs were most organised in the townships/urban areas. They were composed largely of radicalised youth, many of whom had abandoned their education and chosen to rebel against their elders and the local authorities. The militaristic and highly politicised nature of the SDUs bred a culture of violence and lawlessness, which was especially harmful to impressionable township youth. This led to many of the SDUs turning into criminal gangs. In some Natal communities, the SDUs became uncontrollable and unaccountable to the residents. Internal divisions and conflict became a feature of SDU activity, particularly in rural communities where the ANC was less organised.

In September 1993, the IFP and KLA embarked on what was to be the biggest training project of IFP supporters yet. The SPU training project was based at the Mlaba camp near Mkuze in Northern Natal. By April 1994, over 5 000 IFP supporters had received so-called self-protection training at the Mlaba camp (as well as at the Emandleni-Matleng camp).

By mid-1993 the province had become a jigsaw puzzle of party political strongholds and ‘no-go’ areas. Townships and tribal authorities were divided into ANC and IFP sections. Arson attacks, involving the widespread burning of houses, became a means of forcing residents to flee their homes, thereby facilitating the consolidation of a party stronghold. The incidence of such attacks increased dramatically in the period leading up to the national elections in 1994, affecting the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. Supporters of the IFP were overwhelmingly responsible for pursuing this means of eradicating their opposition.

**Police misconduct**

Two well-known ANC members in KwaSokhulu were killed by a member of the Empangeni SAP Murder and Robbery unit in August 1992. Former Detective Warrant Officer Hendrik Jacobus Steyn was sentenced to eighteen years’ imprisonment for the killing of Simon Bongani Msweli (24) and Michael Mthethwa. During the early hours of the 14 August 1992, the SADF (SADF) surrounded the house where Msweli and Mthethwa had spent the night. A battle ensued, the details of which are not certain. Witnesses allege that the two men were dragged into a nearby SAPPI forest where they were viciously assaulted. It appears that the SADF then loaded the two men into their vehicle, allegedly to take them to hospital. The SADF vehicle was intercepted by Steyn who dragged the men out of the vehicle and shot them both dead.

After the ANC was unbanned in 1990, the KZP made efforts to frustrate the movement’s attempts to gain political ground in KwaZulu. Residents of some townships, notably KwaMashu, KwaMakhutha and Esikhawini, went so far as to describe the KZP as inflicting a
reign of terror in their areas. A number of KZP members gained particular notoriety for killing people perceived as UDF/ANC sympathisers. They appeared to be immune from prosecution. Two examples are Detective Constable Siphiwe Mvuyane from Umlazi, who allegedly claimed to have killed “more than twenty but not more than fifty people”, and Constable Khethani Shange from KwaMashu.

Calls for the disbanding of the KZP gained momentum during 1990, with a national stay away and countrywide marches. In March 1990, 15 000 residents of KwaMakhutha protested against the presence of the KZP and handed over a memorandum of grievances against the local KZP. In April, over 50 000 Umlazi residents marched and handed over a memorandum calling for the immediate withdrawal of the KZP. In June, Madadeni residents marched to the KZP station and demanded the removal of the KZP from the township. Many successful interdicts and restraining orders were brought against the KZP during the early 1990s.

During 1992, the KZP was investigated by the Wallis Subcommittee of the Goldstone Commission, recommending that certain KZP members should be suspended and/or investigated. This was not followed up. In late 1993, three members of a KZP/IFP hit squad operating in the Esikhawini township near Richards Bay were arrested. In February 1994, the then Commissioner of the KZP, Major-General Roy During, admitted to the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) that he knew of the existence of hit squads within the KZP. He resigned a few months later.

The Wallis Subcommittee of the Goldstone Commission stated:

The fact that there is incompetence of this magnitude in a police force having a responsibility for policing one of the most sensitive areas of the country in the run-up to the elections due to take place on the 27 and 28 April 1994, is of itself a cause not only for grave concern but a cause for steps to be taken to remedy that situation.

The KZP took over policing of the KwaMakhutha township (in the Umbumbulu district, south of Durban) from the SAP in June 1986. Within the first three weeks, residents filed more than twenty affidavits of assault by KwaMakhutha KZP members, some of which led to successful prosecutions. In October 1989, a large group of women in KwaMakhutha met with the Umlazi station commander to complain about the KwaMakhutha KZP. Two UDF activists, Raphael and Winnie Mkhize, were killed in an attack on their KwaMakhutha home in the early hours of 9 March 1990. Their son, Duduzi Mkhize, was wounded. In May 1990, eight people, including four KZP members, were arrested in connection with the killings, namely Constables Patrick Mbambo (25), Wellington Mncwango (26), Mohande Whu and Cyril Ngema (27). They were released on bail.

Two of the KZP police officers who had been arrested in connection with killing the Mkhizes – Wellington Mncwango and Mohande Whu – were convicted in January 1992 in connection with the attempted murder of KwaMakhutha community leader Mkhanyiseni Eden Mngadi. Mngadi, the secretary of the KwaMakhutha Peace Committee, was shot three times in a 02h00 attack on his home on 13 March 1990, just four days after the killing of Raphael and Winnie Mkhize.

Following the killing of the Mkhize couple and the attempt on Eden Mngadi’s life, a general stay away was called for the 14 March to call for the withdrawal of the KZP from KwaMakhutha. More than 15 000 KwaMakhutha residents marched to the KZP station and
handed over a memorandum to Colonel Cele of the KwaMakhutha KZP. The memorandum listed incidents that had taken place during the first two weeks of March 1990: not responding to emergency calls; insulting and assaulting residents and conniving with warlords who were accommodated at the police barracks; disrupting funeral vigils; failing to take action against vigilantes; constantly raiding the homes of UDF members.

The KwaMakhutha home of UDF/ANC supporters David and Maria Bhengu was attacked on 19 January 1990, allegedly by KZP and IFP members including Mvuyane. Maria and their two children, Siphelile and Hlengwa, were shot dead. David Bhengu survived by escaping through the window. The house was looted.

A school pupil, Austin Zwane, was shot dead in his Lamontville home on 7 August 1990 by a group of four KZP members, led by Mvuyane. After killing Zwane, the policemen forced his friends to load his body into the police van. Mvuyane himself was shot dead the day before the case was to be heard (Durban hearing, 9 May).

Mfanafuthi Khumalo was shot by Mvuyane in Umlazi on 26 April 1992, when he was sixteen years old. Khumalo was sleeping over at a friend’s home when Mvuyane and a colleague came looking for him. Mvuyane told the other youngsters to leave and remained behind with Khumalo. He was shot. Eventually the policemen put Khumalo in their car and drove to the police station, where they left him in the car with the windows closed and the heater on. His mother found him there an hour later. Khumalo was admitted to the Prince Mshiyeni hospital approximately five hours after he had been shot. He has since undergone six operations and still does not have the use of his right arm.

In April 1990, Shange shot and killed KwaMashu ANC activist Themba Gumede. At the night vigil for Gumede, a group of about twenty-five people dressed in KZP uniforms arrived. They ordered the mourners to lie down and opened fire on them, injuring three people. On 29 May 1991, Shange was convicted of killing Gumede and attempting to kill three mourners at the vigil. He was sentenced to twenty-seven years’ imprisonment. In passing judgement the presiding judge, Justice Gordon, said that Shange appeared to ‘revel in his reputation as a hit man and the fear that this instils in others’. Shange was released after serving just nine months of his sentence, allegedly due to an error by the Ministry of Law and Order. He was re-arrested in February 1998 on a number of charges, including murder.

The KZP was a highly politicised force, openly assisting the IFP – by omission and by active participation – in the commission of gross human rights violations, as well as being grossly incompetent.

**Security Branch activities**

There was a dramatic fall in the number of reported violations, overt and covert, on the part of the Security Branch during this period. This is believed to be due to the state’s counter-revolutionary strategy of using surrogate forces to deflect attention from the role of its own security forces in the civil conflict which, by now, had gained a momentum of its own. However, there were several extra-judicial killings of MK operatives.

MK members Charles Ndaba and Mbuso Shabalala were both involved in Operation Vula. Both were abducted by Durban Security Branch members on 7 July 1990. The Security Branch claimed that Ndaba was one of their informers and was arrested by mistake by
members who did not know this. He helped them to arrest Mbuso Shabalala. After the Security Branch had taken Ndaba and Shabalala into custody, the government announced that any Operation Vula operatives that were under arrest would not be prosecuted. Not wanting to release the two men, the Durban Security Branch members decided to kill them, which they did on 14 July 1990. The bodies were dumped into the Tugela River mouth.48

Goodwill Mbuso aka Neville Sikhakhane (born 1961) was a former ANC member who had undergone military training with MK in Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania and Swaziland. On his return in 1989, he apparently surrendered to the police. He began working as an askari with the Natal Security Branch, under Colonel Andy Taylor. At some time during 1991, certain members of the Security Branch decided that Sikhakhane was a threat to the security of their operations. According to Taylor, Sikhakhane was “not a very efficient member … the information he supplied created the impression that he did not try too hard”. He was seen in Swaziland on a number of occasions while on leave, creating the suspicion that he might be working for the ANC as a double agent.

The order to kill Sikhakhane was issued from the highest ranks of the Security Branch in the region. Steyn instructed Andy Taylor to use ‘outside’ people to do the job. Taylor thereupon requested Eugene de Kock from Vlakplaas to carry out the killing. A few days later, Taylor met with Vlakplaas operatives Willie Nortje, ‘Duiwel’ Brits and ‘Blackie’ Swart and put them up at the Lion Park Hotel outside Pietermaritzburg. Local Security Branch member Larry Hanton was sent to assist the Vlakplaas members in getting hold of Sikhakhane. Vlakplaas operative Willie Nortje carried out the assassination in Greytown on 21 January 1991. According to Nortje, the order to kill Sikhakhane came from Engelbrecht, the commander of C Section. Colonel Eugene de Kock was convicted in 1996 for the killing of Sikhakhane.49

Civil conflict

**Violence stemming from the unbanning of the ANC**

A number of incidents of violence occurred during celebrations to mark the release of Nelson Mandela from prison. These incidents were more common in KwaZulu areas than in Natal. Incidents directly related to Mandela’s release were reported in KwaMakhutha, KwaMashu, Umlazi, Folweni, KwaNdengezi, Ntuzuma and Mpumalanga.

There were several deaths as well as arson attacks, four of which were IFP homes, one ANC and two non-partisan. In Ntuzuma, north of Durban, ANC supporters celebrating the release of Mandela on 11 February burnt down the house of IFP supporter, Nomchule Gowane. ANC and Inkatha supporters clashed in Ntuzuma for the rest of the month. On 17 February 1990, Inkatha-supporting Ntuzuma councillor Phillip Muzikayise Gasa was stabbed to death by unknown ANC supporters. His wife was threatened by the attackers and was forced to flee.

**The Seven Day War**

From the 25–31 March 1990, the communities in the lower Vulindlela and Edendale Valleys, south of Pietermaritzburg, were subjected to an armed invasion by thousands of heavily armed men from the rural, Inkatha-supporting areas higher up in the valleys. Over seven days, 200 residents in the lower valley were killed, hundreds of houses looted and burnt down and as many as 20 000 people forced to flee for their lives. The communities most seriously affected were Ashdown, Caluza, Mpumuza, Gezubuso, KwaShange, and KwaMnyandu.
In the late 1980s, communities in the Edendale and lower Vulindlela valleys were pro-UDF/COSATU, whilst those living in Upper Vulindlela tended to be more rural, traditional and pro-Inkatha, living under Inkatha-supporting chiefs and indunas. Most UDF supporters who had initially lived in the upper Vulindlela area had fled down to Edendale by 1989. People living in the upper parts were obliged to travel through lower Vulindlela and Edendale to get to Pietermaritzburg and frequently had shots fired or stones thrown at them by the UDF supporters. The tension between the two areas increased dramatically with the unbanning of the ANC and the release of Mandela in February 1990.

During February and March 1990, buses carrying commuters from the Vulindlela area were stoned by young UDF and ANC supporters as they drove through Edendale, damaging buses and injuring passengers. Some deaths were also reported. The Inkatha president and KwaZulu Bantustan leader, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, addressed a poorly attended rally, funded by the security police, at King’s Park stadium on 25 March 1990, exactly a month after Nelson Mandela had addressed a rally of more than 100,000 people at the same venue in February. At the meeting David Ntombela warned that, should buses passing through Edendale be stoned again, steps would be taken against the culprits, that is, UDF and ANC supporters in that area. The Edendale residents, on the other hand, claimed that the stoning incidents were in response to assaults on local people by occupants of a bus which stopped at Georgetown on its way to Durban. That afternoon, buses carrying Inkatha rally-goers travelled through Edendale and were again stoned, injuring passengers and damaging the buses. Roadside skirmishes were reported between the Inkatha supporters and Edendale residents. At least three people were killed, including UDF supporters Sihle Brian Zondi and his aunt Grace Gabengani Zondi, at the Mabeza store.

The next day, Monday 26 March, Inkatha supporters from Vulindlela could not get to work in town because no buses were running on that route. T Mbanjwa from Caluza recalls that he saw a group of well-armed men descending from the hill:

And as we were still confused as to what was happening, it was apparent that we had to run for our lives because we heard some gunshots, and some people were attacked with pangas and assegais, as well as traditional weapons. And the community tried to get together in order to prevent the attacks, but it was very difficult because we were not armed and we were fighting against people who were armed with traditional weapons as well as ammunitions.

But the most deluding thing was that the police would come, and instead of arresting the perpetrators or the attackers they would shoot at the residents and they would throw teargas canisters at the residents. This went on for quite some time.

The scale of the attack intensified dramatically the next day. Large groups numbering up to 2 500 men from the Inkatha-supporting Sweetwaters and Mpumuza areas descended into the lower Edendale Valley. The men were armed with traditional weapons as well as firearms. Residents came under heavy fire and many houses were burnt and looted. In a revenge attack on residents of Payiphini, Mpumuza by UDF supporters later that night, one person was killed and nineteen homes set alight.

On Wednesday 28 March 1990, David Ntombela held a meeting of Inkatha supporters at his house in the Elandskop area, after which he instructed a member of the SAP Riot Unit to pick
up a large group of special constables in a police vehicle and take them to Gezubuso. Ntombela then instructed the constables to proceed on foot with a large group of armed men to KwaShange, and instructed a member of the Riot Unit to follow the group in his vehicle.

At KwaShange, the special constables and the group of armed men attacked residents and killed fifteen people, looted and set fire to an unknown number of houses and drove away cattle belonging to residents of that area. Ntombela instructed a member of the SAP Riot Unit who was present not to interfere with what was going on at KwaShange. The household goods removed from residents’ houses in KwaShange were loaded onto the vehicle used by the Riot Unit and taken to Ntombela’s house. Cattle taken from residents were driven to Ntombela’s house. KwaZulu Government trucks were seen offloading Inkatha men who then began attacking people and cattle, burning and looting homes in the neighbourhood.

Members of an MK unit comprising Dumezweni Zimu, Nhlanhla Ngcobo and Linda Ntuli stepped in to stop attacks on unarmed communities in the mid-afternoon of 28 March 1990. By then the number of invading Inkatha members had increased from roughly 2,500 or 3,000 men on the previous day to more than 12,000 the following morning. Zimu’s unit felt that Inkatha and the regime’s decision to deploy thousands of largely untrained people to attack communities was premised on the assumption that there were no trained MK operatives on the ground in Edendale. They therefore felt that in response they should send a signal that this was a misconception and that they risked turning their vigilantes into cannon-fodder. Their intention was not shoot anyone but to warn the regime that MK was around. They chose hill overlooking a spot where policemen and soldiers were in evidence, and fired three rounds into the air. The police and soldiers, who all along had been mere spectators while Inkatha mercilessly butchered unarmed women and children, sprung into action. Several police vans drove fast up the footpaths. The unit slipped away.

Thursday 29 March 1990 saw little respite in the attacks from up the Valley. Friday, 30 March, was considerably quieter. On Saturday, 31 March, large groups of Inkatha supporters were again seen, gathering at the homes of Chief Ngcobo and David Ntombela. However, only sporadic incidents occurred during the day. There were allegations of active police complicity in the attacks and that police fired on ANC residents without provocation. Policemen were seen transporting the Inkatha attackers and then standing idly by while they attacked people and burnt houses. Special constables participated in the attacks. The SADF was deployed in the valley only in mid-April, once the fighting had passed.

In accordance with the law, the SADF was only deployed in support of the SAP during the Seven Day War. At a joint planning committee meeting between SAP and SADF officers, a decision was taken to deploy the Defence Force resources on the lower Edendale Road to ensure that the road to Pietermaritzburg stayed open. Throughout the week, Defence Force personnel (approximately 100 men) and six military vehicles did not venture beyond Edendale Road. When Brigadier Swanepoel, the Commanding Officer of the Pietermaritzburg-based Group 9 at the time of the Seven Day War, realised that the situation was bad he requested more troops and called for urgent “intervention on a senior level”. The additional troops, four companies from the Transvaal, arrived in mid-April 1990.

By the end of the week, an estimated 20 000 people had been displaced from their homes. Most, if not all, of these people had lost everything they ever possessed. No disaster relief was forthcoming from the government. It was left to churches and humanitarian organisations
to attempt to provide relief and assistance. Most of these people have not returned to their homes to this day.

The arena of conflicts had also shifted to Imbali, where continuous shooting was heard on the 29 March. The attacks appeared to be moving to the outlying areas such as Mpophomeni in Howick and Khokhwana at Elandskop, where Inkatha conducted several raids during the day and into the night of 29 March. For example, a group of about 500 Inkatha warriors raided Mpophomeni in Howick at about midday, but were repulsed by the residents. The police then stepped in and fired at the residents, giving Inkatha a chance to regroup at the nearby kwashaShifu area of Haza. During the night vigilantes torched four houses and murdered two people in Elandskop.

The day’s events were dominated by protest action and pressure by civil society organisations. A group of 500 women marched on the Plessieslaer police station to protest against police inaction against Inkatha which had been raiding and killing the Vulindlela and Edendale communities since the early hours of Tuesday 27 March 1990. The police reacted aggressively to this peaceful march. They arrested 11 women and ordered the others to disperse immediately or face the full might of the law.

Violence monitors spent most of 30 March, exerting pressure on the state to deploy the police and investigate and arrest the perpetrators of violence. The attacks had shifted to Mpophomeni and Mkhambathini in Table Mountain by Saturday 31 March 1990. A group of 200 Inkatha men from kwashaShifu raided Mpophomeni that morning. Three people were killed and 35 others were seriously wounded. An impi from kwaNyavu also invaded Maqongqo. They shot and killed two men. But the tide had turned. The COSATU/UDF members and supporters brought in reinforcements and organised the defence of Edendale. It had dawned on Inkatha supporters at Elandskop and other parts of Vulindlela that they had nowhere to buy their food supplies. They were afraid to go to Pietermaritzburg in case they were accosted by the people who had been turned into refugees earlier that week. Some of the Inkatha members tried to buy replenishments at Howick and Richmond but the locals remained vigilant. Two meetings of about 1,000 people gathered at induna David Ntombela’s homestead at kwaMncane and Chief Ngcobo’s homestead at kwaMafunze to discuss their plight.

Riot police, in particular, fired on the residents of ANC-supporting communities without provocation. A police helicopter had circled over kwaMnyandu as the area was destroyed on 28 March 1990. The police told the survivors that they should leave kwaMnyandu because they were not prepared to protect them. They had earlier told the residents of Gezubuso that they should leave their homes because they were understaffed and unable to protect them. David Ntombela, a well known Inkatha warlord, was able to issue instructions to the police either to transport kitskontables to various areas where attacks on communities were taking place, or order them not to stop the attacks on UDF/ANC supporters.

Meanwhile violence spread to the smaller Natal Midlands towns and townships like Richmond, Mooi River and Estcourt, as well as rural areas such as Maqongqo and kwaXimba at Mkhambathini. Zimu’s unit resumed its activities from December 1990 onwards. Gwala was later arrested and served a short prison sentence for SDU activities after December 1990. Zimu maintains that their unit was left largely intact throughout its operations in the Natal Midlands from the late 1980s to the early 1990s. Although two of its members were arrested and served prison sentences they did not reveal the existence of the unit.
Violence had assumed the form of assassinations in which prominent members and leaders of both the ANC and Inkatha were killed by the early 1990s. The Inkatha hitmen shot and killed Rev. Sipho Victor Africander, the president of the Pietermaritzburg Council of Churches, on 4 May 1990. An Inkatha member, Toti Godfrey Zulu, was arrested and convicted for this murder in 1991. However, he was acquitted on appeal. Unknown gunmen, presumably members of the ANC, gunned down the Inkatha warlord, Jerome Mncwabe, at Imbali on 16 May 1990. Shortly thereafter an Imbali resident named Baveni Philemon Ngcobo was killed in what was suspected to be a revenge killing. Mncwabe’s son, Nhlanhla Luthuli, was charged for the murder. However, he was acquitted when a policeman who was the only witness to the killing, was himself killed. Four MK operatives, Sipho Motaung, Bhekimpendle Dlamini, Nhlanhla Sibisi and Johannes Sithole, shot and killed a prominent Inkatha member and warlord, Arnold Lombo, at a Pietermaritzburg shop on 31 October 1990.

The four operatives later told the TRC amnesty hearings that two MK commanders, Rita and Mandla, had instructed them to eliminate Arnold Lombo because he was a warlord. Political assassinations continued beyond 1990.

**Hit-squad Activity**

Hit-squad activity became widespread in KwaZulu and Natal during the 1990s. The hit-squad operations undertaken by the ‘Caprivi trainees’ and other political networks were predominantly supportive of the IFP, drawing in officials of the KwaZulu government and police force, as well as senior politicians and leaders of the party. As such, hit-squad members had access to KwaZulu Government resources such as vehicles, arms and ammunition. A measure of protection from prosecution was gained through the collusion of the KZP and the SAP with the activities of hit networks. The killing of two activists in New Hanover in 1990 and the case of the Esikhawini-based hit squad led by Brian Gcina Mkhize provide two examples of the operation of the many hit-squad networks that existed in the region during this period.

During 1990, a Roman Catholic priest from the Wartburg area, Reverend Garth Michelson, wrote a letter to the then Minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok, in which he expressed his concern that there was a police hit squad operating in the Mbava area, near Wartburg. His concerns were raised following the killing of two UDF activists, Vusi Ngcobo and Bonowakhe Gasa, in Mbava on 6 January 1990. The two activists, Ngcobo and Gasa, had been shot and left to die in a mealie [corn] field in Swayimane on 6 January 1990. Witnesses said that the killing was carried out by one white and three black men wearing light blue shirts similar to the SAP uniform. The four men had been seen arriving at the home of KwaZulu Member of Parliament Thanduyise Psychology Ndlovu in a yellow police van and then proceeding from Ndlovu’s home in a white Crusade with a private registration number.

An informal inquest held in 1991 found that ‘persons unknown’ were responsible for the deaths. A second inquest was held in May 1995. The inquest magistrate, RA Stewart, found that former special constable Welcome Muzi Hlophe (aka ‘BigBoy’ Hlophe), SAP Lance Sergeant Peter Smith, KwaZulu government driver Abraham Shoba and a fourth unknown man were prima facie directly responsible for the killings. He also found that the original investigating officer, Major Joseph van Zyl, was an accessory to the killings and recommended that an investigation be opened with a view to a possible conviction of Van Zyl. He further found that the then Secretary of the KwaZulu Legislature, Robert Mzimela, KwaZulu employee Z Mkhize, and then head of the KLA Protection Unit Major Leonard
Langeni had been implicated in a cover-up operation. (Mzimela and Langeni were both involved in the operations of the Esikhawini hit squad – see below.)

In the Esikhawini area, near Richards Bay, politically motivated violence between supporters of the ANC and the IFP erupted and escalated in 1991. The township was predominantly ANC-supporting and the IFP were losing support. J2 section of the township was considered an IFP stronghold and was regularly attacked by ANC supporters. At a certain stage, local Inkatha leaders approached the Inkatha leadership in Ulundi because they were concerned that they were losing the struggle against the ANC in the township.

In 1991, as a result of these concerns, Daluxolo Luthuli summoned Gcina Brian Mkhize to a meeting in Ulundi. Mkhize was a ‘Caprivi trainee’ who had joined the KZP and was posted to the Esikhawini Riot Unit in 1990. The meeting was held at KZP Captain Leonard Langeni’s office in Ulundi early in 1991. At the time, Langeni was the officer commanding the then KLA Protection Unit. Others present at the meeting were Luthuli, Prince Gideon Zulu (then KwaZulu Minister of Pensions), M R Mzimela (then Secretary of the KwaZulu Legislature), and MZ Khumalo (then personal assistant to Chief Buthelezi).

According to Mkhize, it was at this meeting that he was told that “the time had arrived to use the skills acquired at the Caprivi”. He was instructed to take action against the ANC in Esikhawini. It was the intention of those present that unlawful means would be employed against the ANC. He was told to work directly with the Mayor of Esikhawini, BB Biyela, and IFP councillor Lindiwe Mbuyazi and to report directly to Langeni and Luthuli. Mkhize was told to gather reliable people to assist him. Initially, the plan was that he would join with Inkatha youth who were already attacking ANC-dominated areas. He worked with, amongst others, Nhlakanipho Mathenjwa, Lucky Mbuyazi and Siyabonga Mbuyazi. Captain Langeni arranged for Mkhize to collect weapons for these illegal activities from Thomas Buthelezi, a ‘Caprivi trainee’ based at Port Durnford.

The youth were unable to halt the ANC attacks on Inkatha members, and reported this to Langeni and Luthuli. In the subsequent months, the composition and operations of the hit squad were discussed at a number of other meetings in Ulundi and Esikhawini and a decision was made to form a more sophisticated hit squad. Those proposed were Romeo Mbuso Mbambo, a KZP member, Israel Hlongwane, who had been involved with Luthuli in the violence in Mpumalanga, and Zweli Dlamini, a ‘Caprivi trainee’ who had also been involved in violence in both Clermont and Mpumalanga. KZP Constable Victor Buthelezi and at least two other ‘Caprivi trainees’ were also included in the hit squad. Not all members of the hit squad participated in every attack. Mkhize was the leader of the group and generally took instructions from Captain Langeni. Mbuyazi and Mayor BB Biyela were aware of their activities and, in specific instances, provided actual support to their operations. Others who were sometimes involved included Prince Gideon Zulu from Eshowe, Chief Mathaba from Nyoni and Robert Mkhize from Empangeni.

Mbuyazi arranged with the District Commissioner, Brigadier Mzimela, for Mbambo to be transferred to the Detective Branch where he would be in a position to cover up the crimes of IFP supporters and prevent their arrests. Robert Mkhize was already a member of the Esikhawini Internal Stability Unit (ISU) and his instructions were to ensure that patrols would be kept away from where Inkatha was planning to attack. Mbambo’s instructions were to ensure that cases against the hit-squad members were not properly investigated, by destroying evidence and making misleading entries in the police dockets. The hit squad was
to carry out attacks on those nights when Mbambo and Mkhize were on duty and therefore able to carry out these instructions.

Between 1991 and August 1993 (when Mbambo was arrested by members of the SAP), the hit squad killed an unknown number of people in the Esikhawini area and was also responsible for a number of killings and attempted killings elsewhere, particularly in the Sundumbili/Nyoni, Mandini and Eshowe areas. Prominent Inkatha-aligned officials gave ongoing direction and logistic support (such as weapons, ammunition, vehicles, accommodation and finances). This applied both at the local level (BB Biyela, Mbuyazi, Chief Mathaba, Brigadier Mzimela) and at a regional level (Captain Langeni, Daluxolo Luthuli, Prince Gideon Zulu, MZ Khumalo). A number of hit lists were compiled at meetings with the IFP leaders. The targets were all ANC leaders, members or sympathisers. The hit squad was responsible, inter alia, for the following killings: Naphtal Nxumalo, Nathi Gumede, April Taliwe Mkhwanazi, Sgt Dlamini, Sgt Khumalo, John Mabika, and four young MK members killed at a shebeen. In addition to targeting particular individuals for assassination, the hit squad carried out dozens of random attacks on shebeens, bus stops, buses and streets where ANC supporters were known to gather. On some nights, the hit squad would carry out two or three attacks on different targets; sometimes they would drive around a section of the township known to be an ANC stronghold, looking for people to attack. After every hit, Mkhize would report back to Langeni, either personally or telephonically, to keep him informed of all their operations.

**The Killing of April Taliwe**

April Taliwe was killed on 19 April 1992. Taliwe was a shop steward of a COSATU-affiliated trade union and was employed at the Mondi paper mill in Richards Bay. He was also an active member of the ANC. Prior to his death, he had received a number of threats. On the morning of his death, he told his wife that, if he died, she should know that Gcina Mkhize would be one of the suspects. Mkhize, Mbuyazi, Langeni and MZ Khumalo all implicated themselves in the killing. According to Mkhize, Major Langeni gave the instruction for the killing and Mayor BB Biyela provided the vehicle. According to Mbambo, Luthuli, Langeni and MZ Khumalo congratulated him and expressed their pleasure over the killing when he reported back to them.

**The Killing of Sergeant Khumalo**

Sgt Khumalo, a KZP member stationed at Esikhawini, was killed on 8 May 1992 by members of Gcina Mkhize’s hit squad. Khumalo had been identified for assassination because he was suspected of being an ANC member and of leaking details of dockets to the local ANC leadership. He was killed with the approval of Captain Langeni.

**The Killing of Sergeant Dlamini**

Sgt Dlamini, a KZP member stationed at Esikhawini, was shot dead on 19 June 1993 by Israel Hlongwane, who was accompanied by Romeo Mbambo, Mthethwa and Gcina Mkhize. In 1995 Mkhize, Mbambo and Hlongwane were all found guilty in the Durban Supreme Court of killing Dlamini. According to the amnesty applications of the three convicted men, Dlamini was identified for assassination by the local IFP leadership because he was supplying the Goldstone Commission with information regarding the hit-squad activities in Esikhawini. He was also thought to be an ANC supporter as he was allegedly selling ANC T-
shirts. Both Mbambo and Mkhize alleged that KZP District Commissioner, Brigadier Mzimela, assisted in covering up their involvement in Dlamini’s killing by tampering with the murder weapon.

In passing judgement on the matter, Justice Van der Reyden said that the court had heard evidence that could only be described as ‘disturbing’ regarding the initial investigation of Dlamini’s death. Van der Reyden said that it would be improper for the court to make specific findings in regard to the initial investigation without giving the other parties an opportunity to reply. He therefore chose to refer the allegations concerning the alleged cover-up to the Minister of Safety and Security for investigation.

**The Case of Sam Nxumalo**

Members of the Esikhawini-based hit squad led by ‘Caprivi trainee’ Gcina Mkhize gave details of a conspiracy to murder the local ANC leader, Sam Nxumalo. They allege that KwaZulu Cabinet member, Prince Gideon Zulu, summoned them to a meeting at his home. Those present were Zulu, Gcina Mkhize, Romeo Mbambo, Daluxolo Luthuli, Robert Mzimela, Chief Calalakubo Khawula, Captain Langeni, Chief Biyela, and Nyawuza (Prince Zulu’s driver). Zulu told them that he wanted the hit-squad members to kill Nxumalo. The hit-squad members were provided with a car from the Chief Minister’s department and Mkhize, Mbambo, Dlamini and Hlongwane drove to the Eshowe Hospital on the appointed day. Nxumalo appeared to have been warned of the planned attack, because when he saw the operatives he telephoned the SAP who arrived within minutes. The operatives left, deciding to return later. When they returned that night, the hospital was full of policemen, so they postponed the proposed attack.

Israel Hlongwane admitted his involvement in several killings and attempted killings in the Sundumbili area during 1992 and 1993. He alleged that local IFP leaders provided him with a list of the names of people they wanted him to kill. There were about fifteen names on the list. Hlongwane’s victims include Siduduzo Cedric Khumalo (an ANC scholar whom he shot dead on 31 October 1992), Sipho Thulani Xaba (also known as ‘Gindinga’, ANC leader at Odumo High School), Themba Mkhukhu and Mncedisi Kalude (two scholars from the Tugela High School shot dead on 7 August 1993), Daludumo Majenga (shot dead on 29 March 1993) and Canaan Shandu (a COSATU official).

**The Killing of Bheki Mzimela**

Bheki K Mzimela, an induna located in Chief Mathaba’s area of Nyoni, was alleged to be sympathetic towards the ANC because he supported the ANC’s call for a ban on the carrying of traditional weapons. Mathaba enlisted the help of the Esikhawini-based hit squad led by Gcina Mkhize to kill Mzimela. Three members of the hit squad, namely Mkhize, Zweli Dlamini and Israel Hlongwane, together with Jerry Mdanda and a man identified only as Dumisani, went to Induna Mzimela’s home on the night of 23 March 1992 and shot him dead. Mkhize, Mbambo and Dlamini were arrested by the SAP (rather than the KZP) in 1993, following pressure from the Goldstone Commission and Advocate Neville Melville, the police reporting officer. Brigadier Mzimela, Captain Langeni and others attempted to prevent the arrest of Mkhize and Mbambo.

In 1994, hit-squad members, Mbambo, Mkhize and Dlamini were convicted of a number of crimes carried out by the squad. In mitigation of sentence, the three argued that the hit squad
had been set up by senior IFP, KwaZulu Government and KZP members based in Ulundi and Esikhawini. Accepting their evidence in mitigation, the presiding judge, the Honourable Justice Van der Reyden, said that when the trial commenced he was taken aback by the appalling standard of investigation by the KZP. Later he had realised that, what he had taken for incompetence, was a deliberate design to cover up.

In 1994, the Investigation Task Unit (ITU) was mandated to investigate the allegations of the three accused in the Mbambo matter. In June 1996, the ITU presented a comprehensive report to the Natal Attorney-General, Tim McNally, in which they recommended the prosecution of eight IFP/KZP/KwaZulu Government officials: Prince Gideon Zulu, M R Mzimela, Major M L Langeni, Robert Mkhize, Lindiwe Mbuyazi, Chief Mathaba, BB Biyela, and Brigadier C P Mzimela. In the report the ITU argued that:

Eight of the individuals identified by the accused [in the Mbambo matter] are suspects in the present cases. All three accused are state witnesses in the present matter. They were the ‘foot soldiers’ who executed a programme of murder and destruction at the behest of powerful individuals who by virtue of their positions have been protected from detection. These persons utilised their position in the government and police, the very institutions which were meant to uphold law and order, to facilitate a murderous hit-squad network. Such a network, or form thereof may very well persist today. In so doing, the individuals involved have undermined the rule of law and have contributed substantially to the state of lawlessness and violence that is seen in many parts of KwaZulu-Natal today. These persons continue to occupy key positions of power and influence within the regional government and police. The investigation, as directed by the Supreme Court ruling in the Mbambo matter, has been aimed at exposing and bringing to justice those behind the hit squad (‘the suspects’). It is imperative that those who manipulated and used young operatives, who believed that they were acting with impunity, be prosecuted as vigorously as the operatives have been.

The Attorney-General declined to prosecute any of the suspects in the case on the grounds that there were discrepancies between statements made to the ITU by the key witnesses and statements they had previously made to the Goldstone Commission and the SAP. The ITU argued that these discrepancies were easily explained by the fact that, in the earlier statements, the witnesses were still covering up their personal involvement as well as that of their superiors. Despite the discrepancies there was sufficient evidence, including objective evidence, to press charges against the suspects. None of the Esikhawini hit squad’s hierarchy nor any of the other operatives have been prosecuted.

**Individual assassinations**

A large number of senior community members, including professionals, church leaders and party leaders, were assassinated during the 1990s. In some cases, the individuals’ links with party politics were tenuous.

**The Killing of Reverend Sipho Africander**

Imbali priest and chairperson of the Pietermaritzburg Council of Churches, Reverend Sipho Victor Africander, was shot dead on 4 May 1990. IFP supporter Toti Godfrey Zulu, from Imbali, was convicted in 1991 but was later acquitted on appeal.
The Killing of Jerome Mncwabe and others

Imbali councillor Jerome Mncwabe was shot dead at his daughter’s home in Imbali on 16 May 1990. He was thirty-eight years old at the time. It is suspected that he was killed in revenge for the killing of Reverend Africander.

In what could have been a revenge attack for Mncwabe’s killing, Imbali resident Baveni Philemon Ngcobo was shot dead the next day. Mncwabe’s son Nhlanhla Luthuli was arrested in connection with Ngcobo’s killing. However, he was acquitted after the state’s key witness, a policeman who had witnessed the killing, was himself killed. Then on 23 May 1990, Imbali resident Ndleleni Anthony Dlungwane was killed in his home. The attackers blamed him for Mncwabe’s assassination. Sean Awetha was arrested in connection with Dlungwane’s death but was later released.

The Killing of Dr Henry Luthuli

Dr Henry Vika Luthuli, a young medical doctor, was one of the early casualties in the violence in Esikhawini. He was shot in the consulting room at his Esikhawini home on the night of 2 August 1990 and died in the arms of his wife Dorcas.

Luthuli was one of the first black people to graduate with a degree in community medicine from the University of Natal. Although he was not a member of any political organisation, he used to treat many scholars who were victims of the conflict.

The KZP investigation into this case indicates an extensive cover-up. The initial investigating officer, Detective Sergeant Derrick Ntuli, arrested Vlakplaas Constable Thembinkosi Dube in connection with the killing. Ntuli then searched Dube’s homestead and removed police equipment for ballistic testing. Ntuli alleged that high-ranking officers of the KZP reprimanded him severely for searching Dube’s home. Members of the Empangeni Security Branch took the equipment he had seized, preventing him from sending it for ballistic testing. Ntuli says he questioned Dube in the presence of Colonel Strydom of the Empangeni Security Branch, who taped the interview. Dube allegedly confessed to killing Luthuli. After this, Ntuli was moved off the case. Dube was subsequently killed in mysterious circumstances.

Dorcas Luthuli persisted in pressurising the police to investigate her husband’s killing. She wrote letters to the then State President, FW de Klerk, and to General Jac Buchner, then Commissioner of the KZP, after which she received death threats. Eventually new investigating officers were appointed and an inquest was opened in 1996. The following year, the inquest court found Vlakplaas policeman Thembinkosi Dube responsible for the killing of Dr Luthuli.

The Killing of Arnold Lombo

IFP leader Arnold Lombo was shot dead on 31 October 1990 at the Joshua Doore furniture shop, Pietermaritzburg, where he was employed. Four ANC members were arrested in connection with the killing: Sipho Motaung, Bhekimpendale Dlamini, Nhlanhla Sibisi and Johannes Sithole. Motaung was a trained Umkhonto we Sizwe member. He claimed that the assassination was planned and directed by his superiors “in the furtherance of the political struggle waged by the ANC against the apartheid regime that existed at the time”.

The Killing of Chief Mhlabunzima Maphumulo
On the night of the 25 February 1991 the President of CONTRALESA, Chief Mhlabunzima Maphumulo, was shot dead as he drove up the driveway of his central Pietermaritzburg home. Maphumulo was a chief from the Maqongqo/Table Mountain area, east of Pietermaritzburg. He had survived numerous previous attempts on his life and had fled from Table Mountain with his family in 1990 after their house was burnt down. His killing was not solved. Maphumulo had been president of CONTRALESA since 1989. He had previously been harassed by policemen and askaris and had led a campaign calling for a commission of enquiry into the violence in the Natal Midlands.

The Killing of Winnington Sabelo

IFP Central Committee member and KwaZulu MP for Umlazi, Winnington Sabelo, was shot dead in his Umlazi shop on 7 February 1992. A customer was also mistakenly killed in the shooting. At the time of his death, Sabelo was a member of the local peace committee and as such was involved in a number of peace initiatives in the community. Sabelo’s wife, Evelyn, was killed in an attack outside their home in August 1986. His killing was investigated by SAP member De Beer. The KZP suspected ANC member Sbu Mkhize of involvement in the killing. According to Mkhize’s mother, Florence Mkhize, the police visited the Mkhize home and searched for weapons. They found a firearm belonging to Mkhize’s father and took his father in for questioning. His father was killed in the police station. Sbu Mkhize himself was killed in July 1992 during a shoot-out with police at Isipingo.

The Killing of S’khumbuzo Ngwenya (Mbatha)

S’khumbuzo Ngwenya Mbatha (more commonly known as S’khumbuzo Ngwenya) was the chairperson of the Imbali ANC branch, member of the ANC regional executive committee and a field worker at PACSA. He was assassinated on 8 February 1992. He was shot dead while leaving a restaurant in central Pietermaritzburg after dining with PACSA colleagues and visiting American academics. Ngwenya was thirty-four years old at the time. He had been deeply involved in spearheading various peace initiatives in the Pietermaritzburg area during the late 1980s, although his efforts were severely hampered by several detentions and a banning order. Imbali mayor Phikelele Ndlovu, deputy mayor Abdul Awetha and a sixteen-year-old were arrested on 9 June 1992 in connection with Ngwenya’s killing. However, charges were dropped when the state’s key witness refused to testify after allegedly being threatened. As a result, no one has been prosecuted in connection with Ngwenya’s killing.

The Killing of Reggie Hadebe

On 27 October 1992, ANC Natal Midlands Deputy Chairperson Reggie Hadebe was shot and killed when the car in which he was travelling with other senior ANC officials was ambushed outside Ixopo. Hadebe was returning from a Local Dispute Resolution Committee meeting together with ANC Midlands Region Executive member Shakes Cele and ANC official John Jeffries. Cele sustained slight wounds while Jeffries escaped without injuries. According to Daluxolo Luthuli:

“On a Saturday afternoon after the assassination of Reggie Hadebe from Pietermaritzburg there was an IFP march to the Durban City Hall. At the march, I met Bongani Sithole who was a Caprivian. He had in the interim joined the KZP and was attached to the BSI in Mpumalanga. He told me that he was implicated in the murder of Reggie Hadebe. He said that he had used a G-3 rifle which was allocated to Vezi
who was the IFP chairman of Patheni near Ixopo. Bongani complained that the SAP was collecting G-3 rifles to compare them to spent cartridge cases which had been found at the scene of the murder. They had approached Vezi and wanted to remove the G-3 that had been used in the murder. Vezi refused to hand them the weapon until he received another in its place.”

Imprisoned IFP member Richard Sibusiso ‘Sosha’ Mbhele claimed that Hadebe’s assassination was ordered by the late Chief Xhawulengweni Mkhize and discussed at a small meeting at Mkhize’s home. The meeting included a former KZP member and a local SPU commander, two unnamed KZP members and a “white man with a neat red moustache” who “drove a cream car and spoke Zulu very well”. It was decided that Hadebe would be ambushed on one of the corners in the Umkomaas valley area. Mbhele claimed that a KZP member and two other men left to carry out the operation. The KZP member returned home alone in the afternoon some time after 14h00. He appeared to be very happy and reported that he had “finished with Hadebe”. Later Mbhele heard a radio report of Hadebe’s killing.

**The Killing of Professor Hlananathi Sibankulu**

Professor Hlananathi Sibankulu, a member of the ANC Midlands Executive Committee and long-standing trade union and civic leader from Madadeni, was killed in November 1992 in Madadeni township, outside Newcastle. His body was dismembered and burnt in his car. Sibankulu was a highly energetic trade union, political and civic activist, and one of the most prominent residents of this large township. He had been detained several times in the late 1980s by the Newcastle Security Branch. He successfully brought two interdicts against the police after being tortured in detention. In 1988, Sibankulu was charged with treason, along with fellow union activist Mandla Cele, but was acquitted after a fourteen-month trial. Despite a thorough investigation, there were no arrests. The evidence suggests that there was KZP involvement in the killing.

**The Killing of Claire Stewart**

Claire Stewart, a British citizen and trained agriculturist who ran a community project in KwaNgwanase in the Manguzi area of KwaZulu Natal was also killed. Stewart’s active membership of the ANC led to an IFP boycott of the project after a speech made by senior IFP official, Prince Gideon Zulu. On 10 November 1993, she was abducted by unknown persons while driving to a meeting. Her body was found on 24 November 1993 in the Ingwavum area, with bullet wounds to the head.

**The Killing of Michael Mcetywa**

On 22 November 1993, Michael Mcetywa, the Pongola ANC Chairperson, was assassinated by a local IFP member Emmanuel Mavuso. Mavuso was subsequently convicted and sentenced to twenty-five years for the murder. However, he evaded custody after being given bail pending an appeal. A co-conspirator to the assassination, Mdu Msibi, in custody for a related murder, claimed that Mcetywa’s murder had been planned by the IFP leadership in Piet Retief and members of the Piet Retief Security Branch. Mdu Msibi alleged that two leading IFP members (from Pongola and Piet Retief) and a member of the Piet Retief Security Branch decided to eliminate Emmanuel Mavuso while he was in custody and standing trial. Mavuso was allegedly dissatisfied because he had been promised protection from prosecution and Msibi was asked to poison him. Mavuso heard of the plot and stopped
eating food given to him. It was then decided to wrest him from police custody when he appeared at the trial. Msibi attempted to do this but was recognised at the court and arrested for a Piet Retief killing. (Msibi was subsequently convicted and imprisoned for murder cases in Piet Retief.)

**Hostel Violence**

In the early 1990s, Inkatha undertook a vigorous recruitment drive in township hostels. Until that time, relations between hostel-dwellers and township residents had been cordial. However, this changed after February 1990 when township residents tended to join the unbanned ANC. Hostels became Inkatha’s point of entry into the township: all hostel residents were compelled to join Inkatha or leave. Inmates were required to attend all functions organised by Inkatha. Hostels became Inkatha strongholds and no-go zones for township residents. Strangers entering the hostels were frequently suspected of being from the township and were killed. Similarly, the townships were identified as ANC strongholds and were no-go zones for the hostel-dwellers. Hostel-dwellers travelling through the township to get to and from the hostel were frequently attacked by township youth. The violence in the Bruntville township outside Mooi River in the Natal Midlands is illustrative.

The township of Bruntville, near the farming town of Mooi River in the Natal Midlands, was administered by a town council set up under the Black Local Authorities Act of 1982. Around 1990, Mooi River Textiles (Mootex) was the largest employer in the area. About two-thirds of its labour force lived in the company’s hostels located in Bruntville. The hostel-dwellers were predominantly Inkatha-supporting and members of UWUSA. In contrast, the township residents were predominantly ANC-supporting and members of COSATU.

On 8 November 1990, sixteen township residents were killed by approximately 1 200 hostel-dwellers and other Inkatha supporters who were allegedly brought into the area to assist in a pre-dawn attack. About 1 500 people, mainly women and children, fled their homes. Violence continued throughout the following year.

**The Attack on the Majola Family**

The chairperson of the Bruntville ANC, Derek Majola, and his wife Mavis were killed on 24 April 1991 when four armed men wearing balaclavas attacked their home. Their four-year-old daughter was seriously injured in the attack. While the township residents were frequently disarmed and subjected to weapons searches by members of the security forces, hostel-dwellers often paraded through the township, openly brandishing their traditional weapons. In October 1991, the ANC called a stay away boycott to protest against what they perceived to be discriminatory treatment.

On the night of 3–4 December 1991, eighteen people were killed when large groups of IFP hostel-dwellers launched two large-scale attacks on houses and residents in the township. Many allegations were made that the police were reluctant to intervene in the attack. Victims and survivors say that the police never approached them for statements. There were no prosecutions in connection with the massacre.

Pensioner and ANC member Joseph Sabelo Mthethwa arrived home from work at 18h00 and noticed a large group of men gathered outside the hostel. Soon afterwards, he heard gunshots, and people came running past, shouting that Inkatha was attacking them. He remained in his
home until the fighting died down. A while later there was a knock on his door. It was someone from the hospital to tell him that his twenty-two year old son, Nkosinathi, had been killed. Late that night, SADF members conducted a weapons raid throughout the township. In the early hours of the next morning, the hostel-dwellers launched a second attack on the township residents. Bongeni Alson Majola lost his wife in the pre-dawn attack.

Janet Madlala (65), her daughter Ria and three granddaughters aged eighteen years, six years and eighteen months lived in one of the homes targeted in the hostel-dwellers’ pre-dawn offensive. Ria and the girls were able to climb through a back window and run away. The attackers gave chase and caught up with Thando (18), whom they stabbed to death, and the six-year-old, whom they pounded with a rock and left for dead. Ria hid in a pit latrine with the baby. When all was quiet again Ria emerged from her hiding place and went in search of her family.

The Goldstone Commission inquiry into the violence in Bruntville on 3–4 December 1991 showed that, of the nineteen people killed, eighteen had died of wounds inflicted by weapons other than firearms (assegais, knobkierries, pangas and bush knives).

**Clashes in the workplace**

In July 1990, not long after the release of Nelson Mandela, workers at the Durnacol mines, Dannhauser, went on strike over a wage demand. The subsequent industrial unrest at the mines developed along Zulu–Xhosa ethnic lines. The mine employed mainly Zulu workers. Justice Masiba, a Durnacol employee for twenty years, was killed by other miners on 12 February 1991 because he was Xhosa.

A Xhosa-speaking worker claimed that the trouble had spread to the Dannhauser mine from the nearby Hlobane Colliery, where clashes between Zulu and Xhosa coal miners had caused at least ten deaths and many more injuries. The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) claimed that Iscor management wanted to get rid of the union and was actively encouraging Inkatha to attack NUM members. The NUM alleged that mine security and the SAP had watched the attack, but had not tried to stop it. As on the mines in the former Transvaal, certain members of the police and certain mine officials, especially the security officials, promoted the separation of Xhosa and Zulu people because this helped them to control the labour force. They encouraged the tendency of workers to join different trade unions according to their ethnic background – Zulu miners joining the UWUSA union while Xhosas joined the COSATU unions.

At Durnacol specifically, Zulu workers were encouraged to organise themselves separately from the rest of the workforce. They began to hold their own meetings. In late 1991, Xhosa miners were told to return to the Transkei. Fearing for their lives, the Xhosa-speakers fled their workplace. Amongst these was Justice Masiba. After a series of attacks on the homes of people of Xhosa descent, the Masibas fled to Madadeni. After a while Masiba decided to apply for a transfer to Durban and on 12 February 1991 he returned to the mine to collect his transfer forms. A large group of unknown mineworkers chased him back to his home, where he was killed. Sergeant Komandu, who was handling the case, said there was nothing that he could say or do because whites refused him to arrest those people who killed him. Masiba’s attackers followed his widow to Madadeni, where she was living with her sister, and burnt all her possessions.
Party strongholds/’no-go zones’

The rural and urban areas of Natal and KwaZulu were divided into a jigsaw puzzle of party political strongholds or of what became known as ‘no-go zones’. Townships were divided according to sections; rural areas according to valleys, rivers, ridges or roads. Often a party flag or graffiti would serve to stake out the party stronghold. It was impossible for people to be non-partisan without fearing for their lives and those of their families. Those people without strong party affiliations had no choice but to support the party in whose stronghold they were living. They were required to join the party, attend its gatherings and participate in its marches, night ‘camps’ and patrols. Failure to do this could be fatal.

Many of the attacks at this time were indiscriminate, perpetrated by men from one stronghold on people living in a stronghold of an opposing party. Often the victims were non-partisan but were labelled as IFP or ANC simply because of where they lived. They lived in the stronghold of one political party and the attackers were seen or presumed to be coming from a neighbouring stronghold of the opposing party. Sokhulu, a rural area north of Richards Bay, was split into an ANC-supporting section and an IFP-supporting section soon after the unbanning of the ANC. Many reports were received of armed men from the IFP side launching attacks on people living in the ANC side. People from the ANC side who went across to the IFP side were killed.

The Killing of Caleb Mthembu and his brother-in-law

On 2 February 1992, Caleb Fana Mthembu and his brother-in-law, both from the ANC side, went to buy an ox in the area considered to be IFP. They were both shot dead.

By 1993, both the town of Escort and its dormitory township, Wembezi, had become demarcated into ANC and IFP sections, and even the taxi ranks in town were separated by party. In Wembezi, homes situated on the borders between ANC and IFP sections would be burnt, forcing their occupants to flee to one side or the other. Invariably they would flee to the side that offered them better protection.

Bergville is a small farming town in the foothills of the Drakensberg and is surrounded by a tribal area falling under the IFP-supporting chief Maswazi Hlongwane. The area became a strong Inkatha enclave. An attempt by some ANC youths to launch an ANC branch in February 1993 was aborted after IFP supporters allegedly intimidated them. A second attempt was made to launch a branch on 20 June 1993. The ANC organisers sought permission from the magistrate to hold the gathering at the Woodforde soccer stadium and were issued with a permit to do so. They also informed the Bergville SAP station commander and peace monitors of their intention to hold a rally to launch a branch. When the ANC members began arriving at the soccer stadium for the launch, they found a group of IFP supporters gathered nearby. The IFP supporters were armed with traditional weapons and guns. It was clear to all that a confrontation was looming.

The police spoke first to the group of IFP supporters and then to the ANC leaders. They told the ANC to disperse, saying that the gathering was illegal because they had not received permission from Chief Hlongwane. After much deliberation and negotiation with the police, the ANC decided to disperse. While they were dispersing, gunshots and shouting filled the air. The ANC soon discovered that IFP supporters had barricaded all the access routes from Woodforde. Despite the presence of the security forces, six ANC members were killed. That
night a number of homes were torched and as many as sixty ANC-supporting youths fled the district. It was several months before they were able to return to their homes.

There were sporadic cases of violence in the northern Natal township of Ezakheni during 1992 and 1994. The bulk of the incidents took place during 1993. At this time, the township was largely ANC-dominated, with the exception of C1 section which was said to be IFP. Residents of C1 section had to pass through E section to catch taxis and buses to and from the township, and were frequently attacked.

The Killing of Thula Nhlabathi and Baloni Msimango

On 31 October 1992, a group of IFP supporters attacked mourners attending the funeral of a prominent ANC member. Two mourners, Thula Alson Nhlabathi and Baloni Richard Msimango, were shot and stabbed to death and a number of houses were set alight and looted. The docket was closed as ‘undetected’ on 15 November 1993.

On 9 July 1993, after weeks of mounting tension, IFP supporters attacked E Section before dawn, killing ten ANC supporters, injuring at least eleven others and burning houses. The attack lasted a few hours and bodies were found over a two-kilometre radius. The raid appeared to be in revenge for the attacks on IFP commuters passing through E Section. The incidence of violence increased in the months following the massacre. Scores of houses were burnt down and hundreds of residents forced to flee. The Ndakane High School, situated between C1 (IFP) and C2 (ANC) Sections, was temporarily closed because of conflict between staff and students coming from different sections of the township.

As with other areas in the Natal Midlands, the political conflict in the Richmond area flared up in the latter half of the 1980s and was largely characterised by conflict between ANC and IFP supporters, although there was a strong element of faction fighting. The communities worst affected were Patheni, the IFP stronghold led by local IFP leader Mbadlaza Paulos Vezi, and Magoda and Ndaleni, ANC strongholds led by Sifiso Nkabinde. The conflict was alleged to have been further fuelled by a ‘third force’, said to include local right-wing farmers and certain members of the Richmond SAP. This ‘third force’ not only fuelled the conflict between the two parties but split the organisations internally, pitting former allies against each another.

The IFP–ANC conflict escalated in 1990, erupting into full-scale violence in January 1991. The fighting culminated in the so-called ‘Battle of the Forest’ on 29 March 1991, in which twenty-three IFP supporters, including women and children, were killed and the ANC regained control of the major portion of Ndaleni area. A number of prominent IFP leaders in the area were attacked and/or killed: Ndodi Thusi, IFP leader of Ndaleni and family members were killed; Chief Dingiziwe Ndlovu, KwaZulu Legislature member was killed in Ixopo and Chief Majozi (IFP leader) was attacked several times. On 21–23 June 1991, groups of heavily armed IFP supporters attacked ANC supporters in Ndaleni, Magoda and Townlands. Fourteen people were killed and nine others injured in attacks on seven homesteads in Ndaleni.

According to a Richmond IFP member who took part in these June attacks he and five other IFP supporters had been hand-picked by local IFP chief Mzwandile Majozi in May 1991, and sent to undergo paramilitary training at the Amatikulu camp in KwaZulu. The training lasted one week and was given by IFP member Phillip Powell. On completion of their training,
Mzimela, the Secretary of the KLA, issued them with G-3 rifles from the Chief Minister’s Department. Three weeks after their return from Amatikulu they launched the attack on Ndaleni. The same IFP member also alleged that policemen from the local Richmond SAP station supplied them with ammunition.

In addition to the many lives that were lost, an estimated 20 000 people were displaced during 1991 in the so-called Richmond war.

Although the Richmond violence was portrayed as solely ANC–IFP conflict, the security forces played a role in fomenting the violence. Former Riot Unit constable Nelson Shabangu exposed the police collusion with IFP elements in Richmond. He also accused the police of ignoring cases implicating IFP officials and thus allowing them to take the law into their own hands. Also in 1991, AWB slogans started appearing in Richmond and the first rumours emerged of AWB training taking place on local farms.

On 26 March 1992, nine IFP supporters were killed, several others injured and many homes burnt down in an attack on the Gengeshe community. Two ANC supporters, Mandlenkosi Tommy Phoswa and Mafuka Anthony Nzimande, carried out the attack. Both were serving fourteen year prison terms for the attack.

In Umlazi, fifteen women and three children were killed and twenty-eight other people injured in an attack on the ANC-supporting Uganda informal settlement on 13 March 1992. Two of the children were still toddlers; one was decapitated. The attackers included a large number of KZP members and IFP supporters from the Unit 17 hostel complex in T Section, Umlazi. Residents reported that a large contingent of KZP members was seen escorting hundreds of Inkatha supporters to the pre-dawn attack. The attackers withdrew after the SAP arrived on the scene. This was the third such attack in two months by hostel-dwellers and the KZP in U-section, Umlazi, though the casualties in the previous incidents had not been as high.

At this time, conditions were particularly volatile on the lower South Coast where IFP supporters were the targets of violent attack. At Bomela, twelve IFP-supporting youths were massacred on 4 September 1992 at the home of the local IFP Women’s Brigade leader, Thokozile Dlamini, on the eve of an IFP Youth Brigade conference in Ulundi. Children had gathered at the Dlamini home to rehearse songs they were intending to perform at the conference. At about 19h00 or 20h00 a group of armed men wearing camouflage stormed the Dlamini home and opened fire on the children, who fled in all directions. At the time, Dlamini was sitting outside her house listening to the children singing. There have been no prosecutions in connection with the massacre.

At Folweni, in the Umbumbulu district south of Durban, twenty IFP supporters were killed in an attack on a religious ceremony on 26 October 1992. A group of fifteen unidentified assailants armed with AK-47 assault rifles attacked predominantly IFP-supporting persons attending a sangoma’s (traditional healer’s) party at the homestead of IFP member Mbonwa Sabelo. The assailants, wearing SADF uniforms and balaclavas, opened fire on people in two huts in the Sabelo kraal. Eighteen people were killed in the attack and two died in hospital. Another thirty-three people were injured.

Several chiefs from the coastal areas were forced into exile following attempts on their lives after they had refused to adopt certain IFP and/or KLA policy decisions. These chiefs
included Chief Jabulani Mdlalose of Mondlo, Chief TE Xolo of KwaXolo near Margate, Chief B Shinga of KwaNdelu, near Umzumbe, and Chief E Molefe of Nqutu on the North Coast.

In 1992, following the Bisho massacre, the ANC stated its intention to march on Ulundi in support of its demand for free political activity. Chief Buthelezi responded by calling on all young men from KwaZulu to be sent by their indunas for training as warriors to resist the ANC invasion. In the Nqutu district on the North Coast, a meeting of indunas was called which was also attended by Prince Gideon Zulu, who allegedly said they would search for and kill traitors in the Nqutu area as had happened at Isandlwana. Many of the indunas under Chief Molefe failed to comply with the call to take up arms and were threatened with punishment and fined.

A few weeks later, on the night of 8 November 1992, a group of armed men attacked several homesteads under Chief Molefe’s jurisdiction. At least three people were killed, including Molefe’s senior induna, and several huts burnt to the ground. Police were called, but made no attempt to detain the attackers. Two people were subsequently arrested, including the younger brother of one of the deceased. He was kept in detention without charge from 9 to 30 November and on his release laid charges against police for wrongful arrest.

On the night of 7 November 1993, eleven ANC-supporting youths were killed and a number of others injured in an attack on Chief Molefe’s homestead. A large ANC rally had been planned for that day and was to have been held in the Nqutu stadium. However, during the week preceding the rally the ANC said it had received information that the IFP was stockpiling weapons and planned to attack the gathering. The rally was called off. That same night, sixty to eighty gunmen wearing balaclavas attacked Chief Molefe’s homestead, killing the eleven youths. One of the chief’s sons, Tsepo Molefe, was among the deceased; the chief escaped with injuries. He subsequently fled the area and to this day has not returned to his home. He is now destitute. To date, no one has been charged in connection with the massacre.

**Self-defence units (SDUs)**

Sifiso Nkabinde, the person responsible for the establishment of one of the largest self-defence units in the country, was recruited by the SAP Security Branch in 1988 as a registered source. He was recruited by Captain J T Pieterse and his task was to monitor political activists and inform the police about the movements of Umkhonto we Sizwe cadres. His previous handler, prior to his exposure as a Security Branch informer and subsequent expulsion from the ANC in 1997, had been security policeman Shane Morris. An extract from a Security Branch file on source SR 4252 outlines information obtained from Bhekumusi Gabriel Nkabinde, which is Nkabinde’s full name. The source is registered under the name of Derrick Nene. Sifiso Nkabinde’s SDU structure allegedly became one of the most powerful in the Natal Midlands. This is borne out by criminal trials in which its members were alleged to be conducting offensive operations against the IFP in areas beyond the boundaries of Richmond, such as in Ixopo.\(^{52}\)

Sifiso Nkabinde mobilised support in areas further afield, including Impendle, Bulwer and Mooi River.\(^{53}\) It is alleged that Nkabinde garnered support by providing weapons to ANC members in these areas.\(^{54}\) In response, his counterparts in the IFP, namely Ndadlazi Paulos Vezi (IFP leader, Patheni), David Ntombela (IFP leader, Pietermaritzburg), Phillip Powell (KwaZulu Natal urban representative, Midlands, and later IFP senator), Dumisani
Khuzwayo (IFP organiser, Ixopo) and Gamantu Sithole (IFP leader, Ixopo) began to mobilise IFP supporters. Violence in these areas flared.

Simultaneous allegations were made that the police were assisting the IFP in its struggle against the ANC. These allegations were levelled as early as 1989 and were aimed in the main at Major Deon Terreblanche (now deceased) of the Riot Unit, and its members. In addition, community members have consistently alleged that police were involved in attacks. One notable instance occurred on 23 June 1991 when sixteen ANC-aligned persons were killed and their bodies mutilated. Witnesses claimed that police 4x4 vehicles had been used to offload the attackers and one survivor claimed that the attackers wore police camouflage jackets and were speaking English.

From about 1991, the SDUs in Richmond were torn by internal conflict, the culmination of which were the killings of a popular leader in the area, Mzwandile Mbongwa and others, allegedly by SDU members mainly from the Magoda area. On the surface, the conflict appeared in part to turn around a power struggle in the SDU and a battle for resources (such as weapons) between units of the SDUs in different areas in Richmond. The alleged justification for these murders was that Mbongwa and others were police informers.

During 1990 and 1991, the ANC in Richmond sustained heavy casualties in Ndaleni and Magoda areas when large groups of IFP supporters from Nkobeni and Patheni crossed the borders, burnt houses and killed people. The IFP supporters managed to take occupation of a house in Magoda, which they used as a base from which to launch attacks. As a result of the violence, approximately 20,000 people left the Magoda and Smozomeni areas and took refuge in town.

With the development of the SDUs, however, the tide began to turn against the IFP in the area, culminating in the so-called ‘Battle of the Forest’ mentioned earlier. Owing to the violence in the area, the Richmond SDU was established earlier than other SDU structures. According to a member of the SDU’s intelligence wing, Nto Zuma, Mzwandile Mbongwa (Richmond ANC Youth League leader), Sifiso Nkabinde (ANC Chairperson, Richmond) and Harry Gwala (Natal Midlands ANC leader) formed the SDU in 1989. The Richmond SDU eventually had at least six members per area (10 areas). In addition to this, it had undercover members (or reservists) which brought the total to about twelve to thirteen members in each area.

Conflicts arose within the SDUs owing to the perceived favour given to the Magoda SDUs, the area in which Nkabinde had his home. Initially the conflict revolved around the fact that Magoda members were sent on training whilst other areas were not given this opportunity. In addition, in 1990 the SDUs had access to a limited supply of AK-47s and R-4s, which had to be shared amongst areas. This created conflict within the structure. The weapons were held by people from eMaswazini, who were deployed to other areas to defend them from IFP attacks. It was decided that, in under-resourced areas such as Ndaleni, R50.00 would be collected from each household to purchase firearms. The evidence places Nkabinde at the centre of this project. Money was collected and a number of AK-47s were purchased.

Throughout the early 1990s, conflict between the Magoda SDUs and other Richmond SDUs arose over a variety of issues. At the end of 1992, Nkabinde called a meeting to discuss tensions within the SDU. SDU members complained that Nkabinde’s bodyguard and senior SDU member, Bob Ndlovu, dispensed ammunition only to the Magoda area and that
Nkabinde visited only Magoda and not Ndaleni and Isomozomeni. A further complaint was that Nkabinde helped Magoda SDU members to get released when arrested, but did not do this for other SDU members in Richmond.

The question of refugees from the IFP stronghold of Patheni also led to conflict within the Richmond SDUs. At a meeting with Nkabinde, it was stated that the Patheni refugees would be safe in the area. After this meeting, however, the Magoda SDU held their own meeting and decided that they would forgive all the refugees except their leader, Zsomwakhe Nzimande. The latter was subsequently killed in Richmond by Magoda SDU members. According to witnesses, Nkabinde stated that he agreed with the murder of Nzimande. As a result of this internecine conflict, a number of senior SDU members were killed, primarily by Magoda SDU members.

Zmokwakhe Sibongiseni Mfana Phungula was the Richmond SDU commander and outspoken in his criticism of Nkabinde. He suspected that Nkabinde was a police informer because the Magoda SDU members walked around town openly displaying their firearms and, when they were arrested, Nkabinde would secure their release by speaking to the police. Phungula was killed, together with M L A Mhlongo, by an informal ‘people’s court’ on 8 October 1993.

Shortly afterwards, Julius Mkhize, the newly appointed chairperson of the Richmond ANC branch, was forced to flee to Georgetown where he was killed, allegedly by SDU members. It is not clear whether the killing was an internal operation by members of an SDU unit, or carried out by unknown persons opposed to the ANC.

SDUs were also responsible for the killing and attempted killing of an unknown number of policemen, an unknown number of ANC members suspected of being police informers and an unknown number of ANC leaders who allegedly posed a threat to Nkabinde’s leadership.

Mnandi Phoswa was murdered on 29 December 1993 by Bob Ndlovu and others, and Mzwandile Mbongwa was murdered on 20 March 1994 along with Musi Ximba, Mzo Mkhize and Mfaniseni Latha. A pamphlet circulated beforehand accused Mbongwa of being an informer for military intelligence. SDU members alleged that Nkabinde and Bob Ndlovu were responsible for the planning of the murder.

In March 1998, Nkabinde’s chief bodyguard, Bob Ndlovu, was given three life sentences in connection with the killing of three Pietermaritzburg policemen in Richmond in 1996. The presiding judge, Justice Galgut, found that Ndlovu and his five co-accused (all Richmond SDU members) had acted in common purpose to ambush and kill the policemen, who were following up on cases in Richmond. In passing sentence, the judge said that the SDUs had conducted a reign of terror in Richmond and that the local residents had lived in fear of their lives. Even the police were not safe. Nkabinde was charged in 1997 with fifteen murders and acquitted on all charges on a technicality in April 1998.

Self-protection units (SPUs)

From the mid-1980s to the April 1994 general election, Inkatha supporters were trained by their leaders and/or by the KwaZulu Government in weapons handling and paramilitary tactics. Many terms were used to describe these trained fighters, including community
guards, tribal policemen and amabutho. Their training venues included the Amatigulu and Mlaba Camps, both owned by the KwaZulu government.

The SPU training project was initiated in September 1993 at the Mlaba Camp, near Mkhuze in Northern Natal, overseen by a former security policeman and IFP member Phillip Powell. According to Powell, the training was lawful and was intended to protect members of Inkatha from unlawful attacks by members of the ANC/SACP/COSATU. The deputy camp commander, Thompson Xesibe, was also an IFP member and a ‘Caprivi trainee’. KZP members, former SAP and SADF members, askaris and operatives from Vlakplaas were all involved in giving instruction and training at the camp. These included Vlakplaas Commander Eugene de Kock and Vlakplaas operative Lionel ‘Snor’ Vermeulen (see amnesty application and De Kock’s evidence in mitigation of sentence at his trial). Many of the KZP members who were seconded to Mlaba were former ‘Caprivi trainees’, and were specifically hand-picked for this purpose. The logistical side of the Mlaba Camp fell under Captain Leonard Langeni, who had previously been associated with the Caprivi training and the operations of KZP and IFP hit squads.

Training at the Mlaba camp included ambush and counter-ambush techniques, booby traps, camouflage, house penetration, hostage taking, fire and manoeuvre techniques, patrol formations, combat formations, raids and offensive tactics. A musketry course was also included. Training was given in the handling and use of AK-47s, Uzi sub-machine guns, shotguns, G-3 rifles, 9mm pistols, and hand grenades. In addition, the trainees were taught how to manufacture and use petrol bombs. Shooting practice took place in the Mlaba riverbed.

Israel Hlongwane participated in the training at Mlaba Camp. He said that, at his passing-out parade, the trainees were addressed by the KwaZulu Minister of Justice, the Reverend Celani Mthethwa, who told them that “the purpose of this training was to guard the Chiefs, to eliminate the ANC and to stop the people from going to vote in the April 1994 elections.” Mthethwa told the trainees that there were no other duties assigned to them besides killing ANC members. As a leader of his platoon at Mlaba Camp, Hlongwane was appointed leader of Inkatha in his area.

In April 1994, 1 000 of those who had graduated from the SPU training were recalled to receive further training as special constables. It was intended that those who received the special constable training would be incorporated into the KZP’s ISU. On 15 March 1994, a secret memorandum was presented at a special KwaZulu Cabinet meeting. It proposed that a “battalion/regimental sized paramilitary unit be set up within the KZP immediately which would enhance the role of the KZP ISU”. The unit was to include 1 000 selected graduates of the KwaZulu government SPU training project appointed as special constables, 100 KZP members who had been trained by the SADF in the Caprivi during 1986 and a small group of professional advisors drawn from former SADF or SAP officers. Powell denied that the memorandum was his.

However, the training of these would-be special constables was brought to a halt with a joint SAP/TEC raid on the Mlaba premises on 26 April 1994, the day before the national election. The police raid was planned after information came to light in early 1994 that illegal weaponry was being kept at Mlaba and being used in the training of the SPUs. When the trainees observed an officially marked police helicopter over the camp, they acted aggressively and attempted to stone it. There was therefore a delay before General Van der
Merwe of the SAP ISU could arrive at the camp. In their search of the camp, police found a large quantity of weapons and medical supplies in the rondavels, including twenty-six M-26 hand grenades, five rifle grenades, seventy-six G-3 rifles, forty-nine shotguns, eleven cases of 7.62mm rounds of ammunition, twelve cases of shotgun rounds and one big box of 9mm ammunition. These were seized by the SAP, together with a number of documents.

A search of Phillip Powell’s vehicle revealed boxes of ammunition, a Ruger semi-automatic firearm and a 9mm pistol. A home-made shotgun was found concealed under the front seat, which was not volunteered by Powell. Natal Attorney-General Tim McNally declined to prosecute Powell on any charges arising from these incidents. In its report, the TEC Task Group found that the discovery of hand grenades and spent AK-47 cartridges pointed to unlawful military training having taken place at the camp. It called for an investigation into the training, the stockpiling of weapons and the conduct of the security forces in failing to prevent the departure of trainees without processing by the police.

The Case of Thulani Myeza

SPU member Thulani Myeza of Mpumaze Reserve, Eshowe, was responsible for three killings and an attempted murder committed between November 1993 and April 1994 in Gezinsila and Umlalazi. Myeza underwent SPU training at the Mlaba camp during 1993. On completing his training, he said that he was given a certificate signed by Phillip Powell, commander of the SPUs. Myeza said that Powell gave orders to the graduated SPU members to kill ANC leaders. Myeza said that, as an SPU member, he received a bi-monthly salary of R2 800 and that Nyawose supplied him with food and clothing.

According to Myeza, Dlulani Nyawose, the driver of the then KwaZulu Minister of Pensions, Prince Gideon Zulu, had convened a secret meeting of SPU members in Ulundi during 1993. At this meeting Nyawose told the SPU members that they were to kill all the ANC leaders in Eshowe, Esikhawini, Mtubatuba and elsewhere. Myeza said the motivation for killing these ANC leaders was to ensure that the ANC did not win the elections in April 1994. He said KZP members had provided the SPUs with weapons and vital intelligence needed to carry out attacks on the local ANC people. On one occasion, the KZP had transported the SPU members to the scene of an attack in a KZP Hippo (armoured vehicle). He claimed that all three killings were committed under orders from senior IFP leaders and in furtherance of his organisation’s objectives.

On 1 December 1993, nine ANC supporters were killed in the Bhambayi informal settlement, Inanda. Sosha Mbhele, the area commander of the Lindelani/KwaMashu SPU, claimed responsibility for the massacre. Initially Patrick Dlongwane, chairman of the Returned Exiles Committee, had claimed that the armed wing of his group was responsible for the killings.

Forced recruitment

During the 1990s, with violence now endemic in many communities, men were often required to attend night ‘camps’, to participate in patrols and to attend all political gatherings convened by the party in whose stronghold they resided. People who failed to participate in these activities were suspected of being supporters of the opposing party and were frequently attacked as a result. The term ‘camping’ was used to refer to the gathering of men at a vantage point to keep watch and protect their area from attack by supporters of the opposing party. While the men ‘camped’, the women and children often congregated at a number of
houses where they would sleep for the night. A number of men who had refused to attend such ‘camps’ were targeted.

Peter Maphumulo’s father, Gcina Geoffrey Maphumulo, an ANC member from Murchison, went to visit his wife who lived in an IFP stronghold. He was confronted by IFP members who wanted him to join their ‘camp’. He refused and was killed.

The Killing of the Gumede Family

On 11 September 1992, six members of the IFP-supporting Gumede family were shot and burnt to death when their home in Gobandlovu reserve, outside Esikhawini, was attacked. Earlier, a group of IFP members patrolling the area had stopped at the Gumede home and asked why their nephew Tholithemba did not join their patrols and ‘camps’. They then started burning the Gumede’s house. When Jameson Gumede confronted the IFP leadership about their supporters’ conduct, the group returned and attacked the whole family, killing Gumede, his wife Joyce and their four children Gugu, Sindisiwe, Thokozani and Nomusa. Six-month-old Thabile escaped death but was seriously burnt on her face and upper body. Now five years old, she has lost her left ear and the use of her left hand, and is badly disfigured. Two local IFP leaders were arrested in connection with the attack but were later released without being charged.

The Attack on Makhosezwe Mthethwa

Makhosezwe Mthethwa from Murchison was shot in June 1992 and left for dead after he stopped attending the night ‘camps’. Mthethwa said that he had become tired of the ‘camps’ and decided he was no longer going to attend. One of those who allegedly shot him was the IFP member who organised the ‘camps’ in the area.

Internal party conflict

Internal party conflict developed in both the ANC and IFP in KwaZulu and Natal and resulted in several deaths. The causes of these internal divisions included leadership struggles and suspicions that one or other party member was a spy or traitor.

The Killing of Bafana Kunene

On 4 January 1990, Bafana Julius Kunene, an IFP supporter in the Mphophomeni area, was found hacked to death after being fetched from his home to attend a night ‘camp’ of the IFP. According to his widow, N Kunene, shortly before this event, Mfana Kunene had attended a night ‘camp’ meeting at which “they were given some orders that in the time of war they must distinguish between the ‘comrades’ and the IFP people”\(^66\). At the meeting, he was told to kill his brother, who was a ‘comrade’. Kunene felt that he could not do this and left the meeting. The following night, he and his wife were woken up by men telling him that he must go with them to attend an Inkatha ‘camp’. He dressed and went out to join them. He never came home at all that night. The next morning his wife found his badly mutilated body.

Conflict broke out in Bhambayi, an informal settlement at Inanda, north of Durban, in December 1992. The conflict, triggered by competition for limited resources in the settlement, divided the community into two ANC-supporting factions, which came to be known as the ‘Greens’ and the ‘Reds’. In time, the smaller ‘Green’ faction felt itself being
increasingly marginalised by the local (Bhambayi) and regional (Durban) ANC leadership. As a result of the high level of conflict, an ISU base was set up nearby and there were continuous ISU patrols in the settlement. As the ‘Greens’ were in the minority and occupied a small area in the heart of the settlement almost completely surrounded by the ‘Reds’, the ISU tended to position itself on the border between the two factions. This led to accusations from the ‘Reds’ that the ISU had sided with the ‘Greens’. In addition, there were numerous allegations that ISU members themselves were carrying out attacks on the ‘Reds’. These allegations of collusion only served to heighten the division between the two factions and further to marginalise the ‘Greens’.

In April or May 1993, the ‘Greens’ made approaches to the IFP and, a while later, people living in the ‘Greens’ section began identifying themselves as IFP supporters. In August 1993, an IFP branch was launched. Nine people were killed, eleven injured and eighteen houses burnt down on the day of the launch. From that time, the conflict in the community was perceived as an ANC/IFP conflict. By July 1993, monitors estimated that as many as 200 Bhambayi residents had died violently.

**The Killing of the Zulu Family**

On 4 September 1991, the home of James Zulu in Port Shepstone was attacked and four members of his family massacred. At the time, Zulu was a respected community leader and an ANC member, although he had fallen out with some of the younger activists. The police’s main suspect in this case, ANC activist Alson Ngwazi, was killed on 25 May 1992.

**Revenge attacks**

A former IFP youth leader from Izingolweni, inland of Port Shepstone, applied for amnesty in respect of fifteen murders and eight attempted murders committed between 1991 and 1992. Goodman Muswakhe Ngcobo was convicted in September 1993 on ten counts of murder and four counts of attempted murder and sentenced to death six times. His death sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment. Ngcobo began his killing spree after his mother was killed on New Year’s Day 1990. He believed that ANC supporters had killed his mother and set out to avenge her killing. His first victim was an ANC youth, Dan Cele, who Ngcobo held responsible for his mother’s death. However, some of the other killings or attempted killings appear to have been random attacks on ANC supporters with whom he crossed paths, as opposed to targeted attacks. He told the Amnesty Committee that he viewed all ANC members as his enemies.

**Arson/burnings**

There were a number of arson attacks on homes, business premises and vehicles. Most of the victims of arson attacks subsequently fled the area and had never returned to their homes. The majority of these people are now living in shack houses in informal settlements. Many of them also lost their jobs as a result of having had to flee. The large-scale burning of homes, particularly in the rural areas, was used by political groups as a way of forcing their opponents to leave an area, and thereby consolidating their political power base. Hundreds of thousands of people were displaced during this period. The incidence of house burnings increased noticeably in many areas in the run-up to the 1994 elections as party supporters attempted to expand their constituencies. While there was hardly a community not affected in
this manner, the areas worst affected were Eshowe, Ndwedwe, Sundumbili/Mandini and Izingolweni.

**Commuter attacks**

A common tactic used by supporters of both parties during the 1990s was to ambush vehicles transporting supporters of the opposing party. Attacks on buses, minibus taxis and trucks transporting people to or from party strongholds occurred across the length and breadth of the region. Buses were attacked whilst transporting people to work or to a political rally, as well as reports of armed attacks on commuters waiting at bus stops or taxi shelters.

The violence in the Midlands town of Estcourt and its satellite township, Wembezi, was dominated for a time by such commuter attacks. By 1993, both the township and the town was demarcated into ANC and IFP sections. IFP supporters used the taxi rank in Alexander Street in the IFP part of town or faced the risk of losing their lives. Similarly, ANC supporters had to use the rank in the ANC part of town. Frequent drive-by shootings occurred on these taxi ranks. There were also many attacks on taxis and private vehicles transporting residents from Wembezi to Estcourt and back.

**Attack on School Bus**

On 2 March 1993, six schoolchildren were killed and seven others injured when unknown armed ANC supporters ambushed a bus transporting children from an IFP area to school.

**Revenge Ambush of a Bus**

In a revenge ambush by IFP supporters on 5 March 1993, ten people were killed and six others injured. IFP members Nkanyiso Wilfred Ndlovu and Mabhungu Absalom Dladla took part in the second attack. Both were convicted and sentenced to over sixty years’ imprisonment for their roles in the attack. Ndlovu and his fellow IFP attackers had in fact ambushed the wrong vehicle. They had intended to ambush a particular vehicle transporting ANC supporters, but the vehicle they attacked was carrying IFP supporters as well. Five of the ten deceased were IFP supporters.

**Alusaf Smelter Bus Attack**

On 22 July 1993, ten men were killed by unknown IFP supporters in a planned attack on a bus transporting employees of the Alusaf smelter. The employees were all from KwaMthethwa, considered an ANC stronghold. It was further alleged that all employees of Alusaf were COSATU members and therefore ANC supporters. The bus was stopped in Enseleni, an IFP stronghold, by men in balaclavas who boarded and chose ten men from amongst the passengers. They took them outside, made them lie face down on the ground and shot each one in the back of the head. One of the deceased, despite being from KwaMthethwa, was an IFP supporter.

**Children**

Many children were victims of gross human rights violations in Natal and KwaZulu. While some of these children were caught in crossfire, or were victims of large-scale indiscriminate attacks on party strongholds, some of them were deliberately targeted.
The home of Frances Khanyisile Mabaso from the Matshana tribal authority, North of Empangeni, was attacked in March 1992 while she and her young children were sleeping. Mabaso woke up in the middle of the night to find people pouring petrol on her house and setting it alight. While she was waking her children, telling them to flee the house, she was shot twice, in the arm and in the back. She fell to the floor and could not move. She could hear her children’s screams and the attackers outside saying that they were going to kill the whole family because they were ANC. Her children came back for her and dragged her outside. They watched their house burn to ashes. It was then that Mabaso discovered that her four-year-old daughter was bleeding profusely from her head where she been hacked with a panga, and that her sixteen-year-old son Njabulo had been shot in the eyes.

Lawrence Fanizani Dladla of Mpumalanga had four UDF-supporting sons who were killed in succession. The first was Molo (18) who was killed in November 1988. Five months later, in April 1989, a second son was killed. In September 1989 and April 1991, two other sons were killed. To his knowledge, there was not one prosecution in respect of any of his sons’ killings.

IFP supporter Nomusa Shandu had seven children and grandchildren killed just metres away from where she was hiding. The incident occurred in Umgababa on 20 July 1990. She believes that the attackers were ANC supporters. The Shandus had recently moved to Umgababa from KwaMakhutha. She had been led to believe that Umgababa was free of political tensions. Only once they had moved did she discover that they were living in an ANC stronghold. However, she did not expect that they would be victimised for being IFP supporters, since they attended all the ANC meetings in the area. Within a day or two of arriving in Umgababa, their house was attacked by ANC supporters and burnt to the ground. Shandu was paralysed with fear when she heard the attackers coming. She wanted to close the door, but could not move. She managed to crawl into hiding from where she heard her three children and two grandchildren being killed, one by one. The following people, all ANC supporters, were convicted in respect of this incident: Sibusiso Cele, Nkosi Mseleku, Ronny Bheko Luthuli, Nke Zikhali, Goodman Luthuli, Dumo Petros Mfeka, Ba Cyril Mseleku, Dumisani Sibiya, Qinisele Mbatha, Rickman Simo, Jet Gumede, Sipho Mkhize, Michael Luthuli and Sinqbile Gumede.

Women

The majority of women who were victims of gross human rights violations were not deliberately targeted but were caught in crossfire or were victims of indiscriminate attacks on party strongholds. The majority of victims in massacres of households were women. However, a number of women were specifically targeted for their political activism, their relation to male activists or in order to strike terror into the heart of communities. Both ANC and IFP supporters were guilty of extreme violence against women. A significant number of women were sexually abused in the name of politics.

Sixteen-year-old Bajabulile Nzama from Inanda was abducted by ANC ‘comrades’ during 1990. Although she was non-partisan, her captors accused her of sympathising with the IFP because IFP supporters used to congregate near the bridge outside her house. She was taken to a house in B Section, Inanda, where she was raped. Bajabulile was kept locked up in the house and raped repeatedly over a period of one month. During this time, her captors told her to point out buses transporting people to IFP areas. One day they told her to point out the
house of a certain well-known IFP supporter. That was the day she managed to escape. She reported the matter to a policeman with whom she was acquainted. Her case went to trial in 1992 but, according to Bajabulile, the judge didn’t accept the argument that she was raped.

In the rural area of Ndwedwe, not far from Inanda, forty-two year old Bongini Besta Mbathe was attacked by ANC supporters on 20 October 1991. They were looking for her nephew Sipho Langa, an IFP member. When they could not find Sipho, they attacked her instead, and she was shot.

Doris Ngubane was raped by four members of the AmaSinyora gang during March 1992. Ngubane and her husband Meshack had been married for thirty-two years and had seven children, one of whom, Xolani, was an active UDF/ANC member. They lived in K Section, KwaMashu, where there was a great deal of conflict at the time, with people being killed, houses set alight and residents fleeing their homes. On one such day in early March, Ngubane (41) witnessed a group of IFP, KZP and AmaSinyora members attacking her neighbour’s home and killing a young man who lived there. The next day Ngubane and the two children who still lived with her left their home and joined the many other residents who had taken refuge at the Tholemandla School. Meshack Ngubane refused to leave the house, wanting to stay to look after their possessions. The following day Ngubane returned home to collect bedding. As she was entering the yard, she was approached by four youths, one of whom was known to her as KZP member Justice Nkwanyana. The four youths were the same age as her youngest child. They pushed her inside. Meshack Ngubane came out to see what was happening and the couple was pushed into the bedroom where they were repeatedly assaulted. Ngubane was then forced into a chair. Ngubane was then raped in front of her husband. The others stood next to Ngubane and, when he averted his eyes or bowed his head so that he could not see what was being done to his wife, they hit him and forced him to watch.

After Nkwanyana had finished raping her, he poured a jug of water over her vagina. The youths then took turns raping her, pouring water over her after each one had finished. When they hurt her and she cried out, they stabbed her and hit her all over her body with implements. They told her that they were doing this to her because her son was a UDF supporter. She eventually lost consciousness. The group then left, taking with them chickens from the yard. Ngubane left his unconscious wife and ran to get help. Their son Xolani arrived home and when he discovered what had happened to his mother he rushed to the Polyclinic to get an ambulance. The ambulance service refused to drive into K Section, but said that they could collect her from Malandela Road. Ngubane, Xolani and four of Xolani’s friends together carried the unconscious woman to Malandela Road to meet the ambulance.

When Ngubane regained consciousness in the hospital, she discovered that the doctors had had to perform a hysterectomy. She remained in hospital for three weeks. On being dismissed, she went to lay a charge at the KwaMashu police station. The sergeant who attended to her refused to take a statement or to lay a charge.

**Pre-election violence**

In July 1993, the TEC announced that South Africa’s first non-racial general elections would take place on 27 April 1994. On hearing the announcement, the IFP expressed its opposition. IFP National Council member Walter Felgate was quoted in the national media as threatening that the IFP would “make it impossible for an election to take place, by embarking on a
campaign of mass action, street action and disruption” (Natal Mercury, 10 September 1993). On 19 April 1994, with less than a week to go, the IFP announced that they would be contesting the elections.

In the months leading up to the elections, KwaZulu and Natal experienced the worst wave of political violence in the region’s history. The incidence of politically motivated human rights violations rose dramatically following the announcement of the election date. IFP supporters are alleged to have launched attacks on the party’s opponents in KwaMakhutha, Umlazi and KwaMashu. In KwaMashu, Umlazi and Mondlo, opponents allegedly occupied stadiums reserved by the ANC, resulting in heightened political tensions and violent conflict in these areas. Voter education efforts were disrupted, leading to violent deaths (see below).

On 25 August 1993, the KLA took a resolution to establish an SPU training project financed by the KwaZulu Government. In October 1993, such training began at the Mlaba camp, near Ulundi (see above). Between October 1993 and April 1994, approximately 5000 people were trained at Mlaba camp and at a second camp known as Emandleni Matleng, in remote areas of the KwaZulu homeland. Training at Emandleni-Matleng began on 14 January 1994, to accommodate an overflow of trainees at Mlaba. Between December 1993 and April 1994, a third training project was run at the Dinizulu camp near Ndumo in Northern Natal.

Mlaba camp commander Philip Powell, an IFP member and former security policeman, was placed in overall command of the SPU training project. Under his command, training was carried out in part by members of the KZP, former Vlakplaas Commander Eugene de Kock, former Vlakplaas operative Lionel ‘Snor’ Vermeulen, former political commissar of the ‘Caprivi trainees’, Daluxolo Luthuli, and a number of other ‘Caprivi trainees’. Weapons training was conducted using unlicensed weapons and ammunition which were not KZP issue, including Z88 9mm, Scorpion, AK-47, Makarov, RPG-7, HMC and Uzi firearms; explosives included M-26 hand grenades, rifle grenades and limpet mines. These weapons derived from a consignment of weaponry, ammunition and explosives that Powell had requested from Eugene de Kock in September 1993.

On 1 October 1993, De Kock facilitated the transfer of a large quantity of weapons, including AK-47 rifle ammunition, rifle grenades, hand grenades, rocket propelled grenades, mortars, detonators and explosives. These weapons were loaded onto four KwaZulu government trucks and thereafter returned to Ulundi where Powell stored the weapons at his residence. On 20 October 1993, a further large quantity of similar weaponry was loaded onto two KwaZulu government trucks at the premises of Mechem in Johannesburg and transported to Powell’s house in Ulundi. The weaponry was hidden in buildings in the residential complex where Powell lived. In the latter part of 1993, certain KwaZulu/Natal IFP leaders engaged in arms smuggling. Former Security Branch members Izak Daniel Bosch, Wouter Mentz, Willie Nortje, Lionel Snyman, Dries Van Heerden and Eugene de Kock supplied arms to Inkatha between 1990 and 1993. These arms were allegedly sent to Themba Khoza (the IFP leader in the Transvaal) and to Philip Powell in KwaZulu/Natal.

On 18 February 1994, fifteen ANC youths were massacred in the rural Mahehle village near Creighton in the Natal Midlands. Earlier that day they had been involved in putting up posters announcing a voter education workshop. Four prominent IFP leaders, Mbadlaza Paulos Vezi, Dumisani Khuzwayo, Gamuntu Sithole and Thulani Dlamini, were arrested in connection with the massacre. They were later acquitted due to conflicting evidence given by the state witnesses.
On 20 March 1994, the ANC booked the Princess Magogo stadium in KwaMashu for an ANC election rally. IFP supporters, mainly from the KwaMashu hostel and the neighbouring settlements of Lindelani and Richmond Farm, began occupying the stadium the day before the planned rally. In an attempt to avoid clashes, the ANC held their rally in the adjoining street. Conflict erupted nevertheless and continued for two weeks, resulting in the deaths of over fifteen people. Up to 3 000 residents were forced to flee their homes.

In an attempt to end the violence that had engulfed the township, the local ANC leadership approached their IFP counterparts and scheduled a peace meeting for 29 March 1994. On that day, the ANC delegation went to the house of an IFP leader in the IFP-supporting KwaMashu hostel complex where their meeting was to take place. They were initially locked in the house, then taken by minibus to another section of the hostel complex where five of them were executed. The chairperson of the KwaMashu Hostel IFP branch, Themba Alton Khanyile, was subsequently found guilty on eight charges of kidnapping, five of murder and two of attempted murder and was sentenced to twenty years’ imprisonment. His three co-accused, Charles Mavundla, Khulumethule Msomi and Themba Zulu, were acquitted after one state witness, who had allegedly been threatened, changed his testimony and was declared a hostile witness.

On 12 April 1994, nine employees of a private company were distributing IEC pamphlets in the Ndwedwe area north of Durban when they were confronted, accused of being ANC supporters and severely tortured. Eight were executed; the ninth managed to survive the attack and took three days to crawl to safety. Five IFP supporters were arrested in connection with the massacre. One of these, Qaphela Dladla, induna and leader of the amabutho at Ndwedwe, was subsequently convicted. The other four were acquitted because of contradictory evidence.

On 17 April 1994, ANC canvasser Muzi Mchunu was shot dead in the Ulundi KZP station by a KwaZulu Correctional Services member, Thokozani Alvation Sithole. The KZP originally claimed that Mchunu had committed suicide, but post mortem results showed that he was shot in the back at an angle and from a distance that ruled out suicide. Sithole was charged and convicted for the murder. In his plea for mitigation, he claimed that his brother-in-law had been killed during the so-called Shell House shootings the previous month.

**Civilian right wing**

Overt right-wing violence first emerged in KwaZulu and Natal during the 1990s. An informal alliance between the right wing and the IFP emerged after the formation of the Concerned South Africans Group (COSAG) in 1993 and was reflected in weapons smuggling and paramilitary training (mostly on white farms and KwaZulu nature reserves). There were a few cases where IFP members and right-wingers took part in joint attacks. The most notable of these was the bombing of the Seychelles restaurant in Port Shepstone. Christo Brand, Morton Christie, Harry Jardine, Patrick Pedlar, Roy Lane and Andrew Howell participated in the bombing of the Seychelles restaurant in February 1994 and of the attack on the Flagstaff police station in the Transkei, also in February 1994. Prominent South Coast IFP leader James Zulu was involved in both of these attacks. They had conspired to bomb the Port Shepstone offices of both the NP and the ANC, but had abandoned these plans because of the commotion caused by the bombing of the Seychelles restaurant.
James Zulu was a major focal point for the investigation of political violence in the lower South Coast region. Zulu had close links with the local and regional SAP as well as with senior members of the white right wing, and he used these links to his full advantage in his campaign to extend his own power base and to rid the area under his control of anti-IFP elements. His extremely aggressive and abrasive public personality contributed substantially to instability and violence in the greater Port Shepstone region.

Three AWB members from Richards Bay, Eugene Marais, David Botha, Adriaan Smuts, carried out an attack on the 9 October 1990 on a Putco bus in Duffs Road near KwaMashu and Inanda. Two people were killed and dozens of others injured. The perpetrators claimed that the attack was in revenge for an alleged Pan African Students Organisation (PASO) attack on the Durban beachfront in which one person was killed.

IFP member Allan Nolte added cyanide to the water system in Umlazi. He named six other right-wingers whom he alleges to have been party to the poisoning.

**Resistance and revolutionary groupings**

**PAC/APLA**

On 30 November 1993, APLA member Nboba Mgengo carried out a bomb attack on a bus in central Durban.

On 16 January 1994, the PAC announced that it had suspended the armed struggle that had been conducted by its armed wing, APLA, for the past thirty years. On 17 January 1994, three men were killed in a shoot-out with policemen in Pine Street in central Durban. Two of the deceased were allegedly attackers; the other may have been a bystander. The police alleged that the SAP satellite office at the Pine Street parking garage was attacked on that day by APLA members armed with AK-47s, 9mm pistols and a grenade. The SAP had allegedly received prior warning of the operation and had therefore deployed a number of policemen ready to counter the attack. One of those killed in the ensuing shoot-out was Mosheen Jeenah, a student at ML Sultan Technikon and an alleged APLA member. The PAC denied involvement in the incident.

Evidence led at the inquest alleged irregularities in the initial investigation carried out by Warrant Officer Van Biljon and state pathologist, Dr Book. Two policemen who had been present during the shooting claimed they were fired on first and only then did they return fire. However, no AK-47 or handgun bullets (alleged to have been fired by the deceased) were found in the Pine Street satellite office. Further, the weapons used by the police who fired on the deceased were not sent for ballistic testing.

One APLA and two PAC members, Bongani Golden Malevu, Andile Shiceka and Walter Falibango Thanda, participated in the attack on the Crazy Beat Disco Club in Newcastle on Valentine’s Day 1994. Gerbrecht van Wyk was shot dead and several others injured during the attack. The cadres alleged that they had been sent by their commanders in the Transkei to Newcastle to ‘identify areas where whites gather’. They said they targeted the disco because it was frequented by white patrons. All three were serving prison terms for their involvement in the attack. Thanda and Shiceka were both involved in several APLA attacks in the Cape Town area.
POTENTIAL KWAZULU-NATAL LIBERATION HERITAGE SITES

A. Examples of sites for monuments, memorials and heritage trails

Shaka Memorial

As a young man, Shaka, a son of King Senzangakona, displayed leadership skills and military strategy that was to make him one of the greatest military leaders in history. Shaka spent his youth with the Mthetwa clan under Inkosi Dingiswayo, and it was here that his military skills were honed. Following the death of his father, he returned to take on the leadership of the small Zulu clan. With the backing of the Mthetwa, the Zulu soon became a powerful regional force. After the death of Dingiswayo King Shaka extended the boundaries of the Zulu Kingdom even further, incorporating numerous clans into the Zulu nation.

He developed and built up his army and introduced new weaponry such as the short stabbing spear as well as effective new fighting tactics, known as the ‘bull’s head’ attacking formation. For a decade his army set about conquering vast areas, throughout what is now KwaZulu-Natal, Swaziland, Mozambique and Mpumalanga.

King Shaka built his capital, Dukuza, in the Stanger area and it is here, on 22 September 1828, that he was killed by two of his brothers Mhlangana and Dingane, who became King. His body was buried in a grain pit at Dukuza and a monument erected by the Zulu nation in 1934 marks the site. The spelling “Tshaka” reflects the spelling of the time.

Ncome Museum and Monument
The museum is a cultural historical site. It gives a narration of the 1838 confrontation between the Zulu and the Boers (battle of Blood River). The site witnessed a major confrontation between the Voortrekkers and amaZulu on 16 December 1838. The Voortrekkers fought under the skilful leadership of Andries Pretorius while King Dingane’s impi was led by Ndlela kaSompisi.

The Site is named after a nearby river known as Ncome in isiZulu and Bloedrivier in Afrikaans. To the east of this river is the Ncome Monument and Museum Complex. The Blood River Monument and Museum Complex is located west of the river. These monuments were erected through the years to commemorate a significant battle in South African history.

Some Historians differ from the researched version of the events leading up to the 1838 Battle of Blood River ("Slag van Bloedrivier" or Impi yaseNcome). The site is therefore unique in that it is the only one in South Africa where two institutions are present on one battlefield.

A visit to both monuments and museum complexes on the Ncome-Blood River Heritage Site gives one a more complete view of the events that took place before, during and after the 1838 Voortrekker-Zulu confrontation.

The Blood River Monument is a tribute to the battle of Blood River (1838), a focal point of the Afrikaners’ cultural heritage. The granite Jaw-bone Monument was designed by Coert Steynberg and the bronze wagon laager was built on the original site of the 1838 wagon laager.

It consists of 64 replica Voortrekker wagons cast in bronze and situated just as they were on the day of the famous battle. Also on display are replicas of the three cannons that proved so decisive in halting repeated Zulu charges against the laager.

Ncome Museum was officially opened in November 1999. Architecturally, the museum is unique. It takes its shape from the Zulu war horn formation. The Zulu King, Shaka kaSenzangakhona, initiated the formation.
The museum offers a re-interpretation of the 1838 battle and Zulu culture in general. The rich symbolism of the Zulu language is captured through items on display. In the Museum grounds are a Zulu war horn formation display, isisivivane (cairn) and a reed “garden”.

The museum is surrounded by a historical landscape directly relating to the 1838 battle. The Ncome-Blood River Heritage Site is located 43 km from Dundee, 24 from Nquthu and 72 km from Vryheid.

**Talana Museum**

The Talana Museum, set in a 20-acre heritage park, on the outskirts of Dundee, encompasses 10 buildings. Fascinating exhibits trace the history of the area, from the early San hunter-gatherers to the rise of the Zulu nation, the extermination of the cannibal tribes of the Biggarsberg, and, finally, the vicious battles of the South African War. The museum stands on the site of the Battle of Talana (October 20, 1899), the opening skirmish in the South African War, and two of the museum buildings were used by the British as medical stations during the battle. The military museum here is an excellent starting point for the Battlefields Route, along which you follow in the footsteps of the Zulus, Brits, and Boers as they battled it out for territory and glory.

**Isandlwana**
The Battle of Isandlwana, on January 22, 1879, was a major defeat for the British army. Coming as it did at the very beginning of the Zulu War, the defeat sent shudders of apprehension through the corridors of Whitehall and ultimately cost Lord Chelmsford his command. Chelmsford was in charge of one of three invasion columns that were supposed to sweep into Zululand and converge on Cetshwayo’s capital at Ulundi. On January 20 Chelmsford crossed the Buffalo River into Zululand, leaving behind a small force at Rorke’s Drift to guard the column’s supplies.

Unknown to Chelmsford, the heart of the Zulu army—20,000 men—had taken up a position just 5 km (3 mi) away. Using Shaka’s classic chest-and-horns formation, the Zulus swept toward the British positions. The battle hung in the balance until the Zulus’ left horn outflanked the British. The fighting continued for two hours before the British fled the field, with the Zulus in triumphant pursuit. About 1,000 Zulus perished in the attack, as did 1,329 British troops. Today the battlefield is scattered with whitewashed stone cairns and memorials marking the resting places of fallen soldiers. The visitor centre houses a small but excellent museum of mementos and artifacts, following the course of the battle in detail.

For years the site contained memorials to British soldiers, but nothing existed there to commemorate the Zulu warriors who won a decisive victory over the British in 1879. A small bronze sculpture was commissioned by the KwaZulu Monuments Council to commemorate the anniversary of the battle of Isandlwana. The sculpture portrays King Cetshwayo not as a gloating victor, but as the monarch who, lamenting the many lives lost in the battle said, “Alas, a spear has been thrust into the belly of the Nation”. Another monument was created to honour the fallen Zulu warriors. The “isiqu” or necklace of valour seemed an appropriate symbol: deserving Zulu warriors were permitted to wear a necklace which they generally carved themselves. Thus the main feature of the monument came to be a bronze necklace that evokes the powerful image of a warrior of exceptional bravery laying down his weapons to engage in a cathartic task of some intricacy requiring different skills and a reflective attitude.

For aesthetic purposes, the stylized necklace differs from the traditional ones by the use of uncharacteristically ornate beads and the introduction of lions claws that were reserved for royalty and officials of high rank. Thorn-like spikes were included to give energy to the low-lying sculpture and because some warriors included thorns with blunted tips in their necklaces. The necklace is mounted on a circular base that symbolizes unity and is reminiscent of Zulu kraals and huts.

Set into the stone-clad perimeter wall of the base there are four unique bronze headrests representing the four Zulu regiments deployed in the battle. These headrests, with their...
obvious connotation of rest, reinforce the theme of the cessation of violence. As symbols of the departed warriors and of contemplation, sleep and the dreamworld, the headrests honour the ancestors who play an important role in Zulu culture. It is customary for the souls of departed Zulus to be ceremonially “swept” to their appropriate resting places with branches of a specific type of thorn tree, a specimen of which was planted near the monument.

The monument is carefully positioned on the battlefield so that it blends in with the rocky strata of the sphinx-like Isandlwana hill. Moreover, the placement of the necklace on its concrete platform simulates the movement of the regiments who attacked in the traditional “buffalo head” formation. The group of claws at the top of the stairs in the base signify the “head” or “chest” part of the formation, the main body of the warriors. The warriors in the left “horn” were engaged in heavy combat at the base of the hill. This is depicted by the inward curve of the left-hand section of the necklace. The right-hand section of the necklace opens out towards the hill, echoing the movement of the right “horn” of the warriors around it to outflank the British soldiers retreating to Rorke’s Drift.

When mounting the steps the visitor is confronted with the claws that elicit acknowledgement of the dignity of the Zulu nation that was robbed of its sovereignty by the British invaders. The visitor is able to walk along the left-hand perimeter of the base and into the centre of the monument. Here, encircled by the advancing troops, he or she is invited to identify with the slain warriors and to contemplate the tragedy and futility of war.

Rorke’s Drift

Rorke’s Drift is by far the best of the Zulu War battlefields to see without a guide. An excellent museum and orientation center retells the story of the battle, with electronic diagrams, battle sounds, and dioramas. From the British perspective this was the most glorious battle of the Zulu War, the more so because it took place just hours after the disaster at Isandlwana. The British force at Rorke’s Drift consisted of just 141 men, of whom 35 were ailing. They occupied a Swedish mission church and house, which had been converted into a storehouse and hospital. The Zulu forces numbered some 3,000-4,000 men, composed of the reserve regiments from Isandlwana. When a survivor from Isandlwana sounded the warning at 3:15 pm, the tiny British force hastily erected a stockade of flour bags and biscuit boxes around the mission. The Zulus attacked 75 minutes later, and the fighting raged for 12 hours before the Zulus faltered and retreated. To this day, historians cannot figure out why the Zulus failed to press their huge advantage. When the smoke cleared, 500 Zulus and 17 Britons lay dead.

A pile of 50 bronze shields guarded by a life-sized leopard sculpture now commemorates for the first time the Zulus who fell at the battle of Shiyane/Rorke’s Drift on January 23, 1879. An opening has been left on top of the memorial for the planting of an umLahlankosi (buffalo thorn) tree, because of its cultural significance. Nearby, on one side, a cattle byre has been constructed to symbolise a traditional burial. The bronze shields evoke how the dead men were covered with shields by their comrades on the battlefield. Many were later buried in two marked mass graves. A total of eleven Victoria Crosses was awarded to the defenders of Shiyane/Rorke’s Drift, the most for any battle in British history.

Bambatha Memorial
In 1905 the Colony of Natal imposed a Poll Tax of one pound that was to be collected from each unmarried Zulu man. While some paid there were several Amakhosi who refused to pay and amongst them was Inkosi Bambatha Zondi. There had been sporadic skirmishes when police tried to arrest those refusing to pay the tax and as a result two Natal Mounted Police had been killed.

Bambatha refused to pay tax and fled his home in the Greytown area and went to King Dinuzulu’s home at uSuthu. It is not clear what was said between the two men but it is suggested that the king encouraged Bambatha to lead a rebellion.

Leaving his family at uSuthu he traveled back into Natal and gathered a party of followers numbering about 150. On April 4, 1906 they attacked a police patrol killing four men. Thereafter followed sporadic violence that prompted the deployment of about 100 troops to quell the uprising. What had become known as the Bambatha Rebellion ended on June 10, 1906 when Bambatha and his followers were trapped in Mome Gorge and Bambatha himself was killed.

Over 2300 people had died during the rebellion and 5000 Zulus were brought to trial. King Dinuzulu’s role was unclear but he was charged with treason (for a second time) and sentenced to four year’s imprisonment. He was eventually released and allowed to live in the Transvaal where he died in 1913.

**Ulundi Battlefield**

The Battle of Ulundi took place on July 4, 1879 after the British forces crossed the iMfolozi River as they marched on the Zulu capital Ondini. Today the site is marked by a stone monument that pays tribute to the Zulu and British soldiers who fell during the short but pivotal battle.
The British marched in a hollow square formation and halted on a low hill just 3 kilometres from Ondini. Their force of 5124 troops included 958 black volunteers was confronted by several Zulu regiments numbering around 15000 men.

The 12 artillery pieces and two Gatling guns of the British cut through the Zulu advance and after half an hour the Zulu forces retreated, allowing the British to march on Ondini. On reaching the capital the British set fire to the many buildings forcing King Cetshwayo to flee and seek refuge in Ngome forest. Two months after the battle the king was captured and exiled to the Cape.

The Ceza Caves

The Ceza Caves, on Ceza Mountain, were the scene of the final act in Dinuzulu’s resistance against the British annexation of Zululand. After the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, Zululand had been partitioned into 13 sections which were parcelled out to individual chiefs. To stem the chaos which erupted, Cetshwayo was restored as Paramount Chief, but civil war broke out in Zululand and his son Dinuzulu, succeeded him after his death in 1884. The young king was placed in the care of the Usuthu faction who established a refuge for him in caves located in the Ceza Forest. Dinuzulu eventually defeated his rival Zibhebhu with Boer aid and was installed as king. The Boers then claimed the land they had been promised for their services and, Dinuzulu believing they wanted too much, appealed to the British for help. Instead, the British annexed the whole of Zululand and Dinuzulu retaliated in 1887 by mounting attacks against Zulus loyal to Britain and trying to drive white traders and missionaries out of Zululand.

The authorities in Natal appealed to the Cape for help and, in 1888, 2000 British troops were sent to Eshowe to mount operations against Dinuzulu, who was besieging a fort at the mouth of the iMfolozi River. Six hundred men under the command of Major McKean, of the 6th Royal Dragoons, and a young officer called Robert Baden-Powell, marched to relieve the fort, which occurred with little trouble. Baden-Powell was detailed to track down Dinuzulu and eventually found him and his followers sheltering in caves on Ceza mountain. They Zulus managed to escape during the night before the attack and fled into the Transvaal Republic. Dinuzulu realised that he could not win against the British and surrendered to them some time later.

JL Dube Legacy Project

This project to commemorate the contribution of JL Dube to the liberation struggle involves the restoration of John Dube’s grave site and the unveiling of a Dube statue at the Dube Tradeport at King Shaka International Airport. The development of the Dube grave site will include the construction of an interpretative centre and a Tower of Hope dedicated to the first president of the African National Congress (the South African Native National Congress when it was formed).

Featuring prominently in the developments around Dube’s legacy will be the philosophy and the value of self-help espoused by his mentor, the Tuskegee Institute’s Booker T Washington. On his return to South Africa after several years in the United States, Dube put many of Washington’s ideas into practice when he founded what was later to be known as the Ohlange Institute.
The interpretive centre, to be located in what was Dube’s house, will focus on his role in politics, education, culture, economics and religion. This will be captured in an exhibition that will be installed in the interpretative centre.

The Inanda Heritage Routes

Inanda Township in the eThekwini municipality is the birthplace of John Dube, the site where Nelson Mandela cast his first vote in the democratic South Africa, and the location of the Gandhi settlement. It is also the site of the oldest schools for girls in South Africa – Inanda Seminary. Various other monuments in the township include life-size statues of John Dube and Nelson Mandela. John Dube’s Ohlange Institute is also found in Inanda. The Inanda Heritage Route takes visitors to a number of historic sites, including the Gandhi settlement, the Ohlange Institute, John Dube’s memorial, and Inanda Seminary School.

The Phoenix Settlement, established by Mahatma Gandhi in 1904, is situated on the northwestern edge of Inanda, some 20 kilometres north of Durban. Sita Gandhi writes “my grandfather’s farm … was fifteen miles away from the city, and in those days around us were plantations of sugar cane fields. Over 100 acres of land was called Phoenix Settlement. It was the most beautiful piece of land, untouched by the then racial laws.”
The Settlement, devoted to Gandhi’s principles of Satyagraha (passive resistance) has played an important spiritual and political role throughout its long history, promoting justice, peace and equality. Gandhi established the settlement as an communal experimental farm with the view of giving each family two acres of land which they could develop. He believed that communities like Phoenix which advocated communal living would form a sound basis for the struggle against social injustice. His granddaughter Ela Gandhi points out that Gandhi used the Settlement “to train political activists called satyagrahis as well as house their families, while they were engaged in the campaigns against unjust laws”. Her sister Sita describes the Phoenix Settlement as a lively, bustling community, a veritable kutum. Market gardens were established, their diary supplied milk to all the homesteads on the settlement as well as the neighbourhood, and they produced their own butter and ghee for domestic use. Everybody on the settlement had to participate in communal activities, such as the daily prayers and singing of hymns which Gandhi himself had instituted.

The Ohlange Institute was founded by John Langalibalele Dube in 1900. Dube was a founder member and first president of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) which was renamed as the African National Congress (ANC) in 1923. The idea of the school was conceived when Dube returned to the United States of America (USA) in 1897 for further training. Upon arrival he enrolled at the Union Missionary Seminary in Brooklyn, in New York and in March 1899, Dube was ordained as a priest by the Congregational Church.

During this visit Dube was profoundly influenced by Booker T Washington, an African American educator who propagated of self-reliance. Washington’s ideas dominated Dube’s educational and political thoughts. Both Dube and Washington were inspired by the motto ‘learning and labour’, which Oberlin College had adopted. Both men were considered civil rights activists, educators and writers. Washington encouraged his students at Tuskegee to
become self-reliant by teaching them skills such as printing, farming, shoemaking, and cooking, amongst others. Dube increasingly saw education as a means for Black social and economic advancement. This inspired him to develop a similar kind of initiative aimed at advancing the rights of Black people in South Africa.

Upon his return, Dube established the Zulu Christian Industrial Institute on 8 August 1900. The land on which the school was built was donated to Dube by Chief Mqhawe of the AmaQadi. The institute became the first Black-directed institution and emulated Washington’s Tuskegee Institute. On its launch a collection of funds $275.00 was raised. A small group of Whites, including, George Hodson, American Board ministers, SC Pixley, CW Kilbon, Mr Pugh and William Cullen Wilcox, the missionary who had first taken Dube to the United States of America in 1887.

On 20 August 1900 the school opened with 63 male students, half of whom lived on the campus. Within three weeks the school had close to 100 pupils. The institute was renamed the Ohlange Institute in 1901. Ohlange functioned as a school where African children obtained education. For the first few years of its existence the institute was supported by the American Board of Missions. In addition, students paid tuition of $12.00 for a term of four and a half months.

At first the school had only four instructors: Dube, his wife Nokutela, Pipile Msweli and John Mdima. One of the funders, Pastor Robert J Kent, agreed to discuss Dube’s appeal for funds with sympathetic members of his church. A number of the members of the local congregation agreed to help raise money for the establishment of a Christian Industrial School for the benefit of Zulus.

The school subscribed to the stern social Darwinist concept of ‘survival of the fittest’. Dube stressed to his students that they ‘honour the man who works’ and he was convinced of the ‘demise the idler’. Through the institution, he sought to create a class of independent and educated entrepreneurs who would represent the political and economic ideas of a specific class of Blacks in South Africa. This class was to be an educated, self-sufficient ‘kholwa’ elite – the word ‘kholwa’ was coined to refer to an African Christian bourgeoisie.

Local white officials were sceptical of Dube’s motives, but the reputation of the school spread far and wide and by 1910 he succeeded in getting the support of a substantial group of influential whites. Upper class sectors such as the educated and affluent kholwa, the missionaries, influential sugar planters and liberal white politicians publicly supported Dube’s institution, claiming it played a reforming and constructive function.

The first four years of Ohlange’s operations were the most difficult. The students’ tuition fees was not enough to pay for the teachers’ salaries and Dube’s salary as pastor from Inanda Congregation Church was scarcely enough for his family’s needs. The school’s intake increased to 103 boys who boarded at the school and 56 day scholars. By the end of 1902, 118 boarding pupils and 111 day scholars attended the school. To make room for more students, some scholars slept on mats on the school’s floors, while others slept on the floors of two unfinished buildings.

Fortunately, in 1905, American Committee member Emaroy June Smith donated thousands of dollars to allow Ohlange to construct a men’s dormitory. New instructors included Thomas Koza, an African educated at St Albans College in Pietermaritzburg; Mrs Reynolds L Scott
(Scott’s African bride), who obtained her education at Inanda Seminary; and Inanda graduate Mrs D Dludla. All seven teachers taught English, Mathematics, General Science and Industrial Work.

By 1914, the school had 220 pupils. They paid £6.00 to attend classes for the nine month school year, although they were required to work on the premises for three hours every day. By now the staff of Ohlange consisted of Adelaide Dube (wife of Charles Dube - John Dube’s brother) who served as the standard seven teacher; Robert Fredericks, standard six teacher; K Blackburn, Commercial training and Bible classes; David Opperman, standard five teacher; Merian Opperman, standard four teacher; Nikani Ngcobo, standard five teacher; J Cele, standard four teacher; L Mtembu, standard three teacher; and M Mapumulo, standard two teacher.

The Industrial Education Department was made up of: J Mchunu (Carpentry), J Nswelling (Shoemaking and Leatherwork), V Mootho and C Tshabalala (who directed the printing shop and trained students to work on the Institute’s newspaper), W Dimba (Agriculture), J Mselu (Masonry and Building) and K Kanoo (Blacksmithing). Nokuteela Dube instructed classes in music and assisted her husband in running the school. Charles Dube served as teacher and headmaster.

In 1917 a girls’ dormitory was opened at Ohlange and the school initiated a teacher-training course primarily for women. By 1918 Ohlange was the first to offer the Cape Junior curriculum, later called the Junior Certificate course.

In 1924, Charles T Loram, Superintendent of Education, asked William Wells, a White teacher, to take up the position of headmaster at Ohlange. The Natal Education Department recognised Ohlange for the purposes of financial assistance and began to subsidise teachers’ salaries.

On 24 February of the same year, the new Ohlange Institute Trust was empowered to direct the management and conduct of the school. In 1926, a tailoring course was introduced. By 1929 Ohlange students took Humanities and Social Science courses which prepared them for the Junior Certificate examination of the University of South Africa. The course could also serve as an entrance qualification for the University College of Fort Hare. Students studied for three years after reaching the standard six level.

In 1930, the Zulu choir of the Ohlange Training Institute, Phoenix, Natal, under the conductorship of Mr RT Caluza, a teacher at Ohlange, visited Great Britain for the purpose of making phonographic records for His Master’s Voice Gramophone Company. The choir of 10 members also sang to large audiences in public halls. In 1950 the ‘Mafukuzela Day’ was instituted at Ohlange. In time, this became ‘Mafukuzela Week’ with figures such as the Zulu king in attendance.

The imposition of apartheid had a negative impact on the school. In 1953 the government passed the Bantu Education Act which had a negative impact on Ohlange School resulting in its decline. When apartheid eventually collapsed and the first democratic elections were held in 1994, Nelson Mandela chose to cast his vote at Ohlange.
Inanda Seminary was founded by the American Board of Missions (ABM) in 1869. Situated 25 kilometres north west of Durban, it became the first secondary school exclusively for African girls in southern Africa. Its reputation grew rapidly and the school soon attracted students from across the continent.

The Rev. Daniel Lindley and his wife, Lucy, came to South Africa in 1835, as one of six couples sent by the ABM to start mission work in the country. Working at first in what is today the North-West Province, the Lindleys joined the Grout and Champion families who had opened ABM stations in Natal. By 1847 the Lindleys had established themselves near Chief Mqhawe’s kraal in the Inanda area to work among the Ngcobo people who had been dispossessed of their land and threatened with massacre by King Dingane’s impis. Other Zulu clans also moved into the area and were settled in “reserves” that extended from the Tugela River in the north to the Umzimkulu River in the south under the protection of the colonial government.

Daniel and Lucy Lindley and their 11 children moved onto the Inanda Mission in 1858. The mission house, still standing and currently used as the Seminary’s general office, was built by Daniel Lindley with home-burned bricks. In 1869 they opened a school to train girls to be teachers and “good wives” for the young men being trained at Adams College in Amanzimtoti. The AMB voted 50 pounds to the project and Inanda Seminary opened as a boarding school with 19 girls being admitted initially. Mary Kelly Edwards, a 40-year-old widow from Ohio, was appointed as the first principal of the Inanda Seminary, continuing her association with the school until she died at the age of ninety-eight.

In 1873 the Lindley family, with the exception of one daughter who remained at Inanda as a teacher, left the Mission after establishing the Inanda Seminary, a church and several “kraal schools”. These were entrusted to the Rev. James Dube, half brother of Chief Mqhawe and father of Dr John L Dube (who established the Ohlange School a short distance away from Inanda in 1901).
It was not until the 1970s that the government dismissed the ABM missionaries and teaching staff, by refusing to renew their residence permits. The United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA) attempted to uphold quality education at Inanda but by 1997 the Seminary was on the verge of closure.

The property and buildings had deteriorated and international support for the school had declined. The alumnae requested permission from the church to take over the running of the school in order to prevent its closure and to restore its role in society. They reversed a partnership that the school had entered into with the State (where Inanda had temporarily become a state-aided institution) and this returned the school’s status to that of an independent school. The alumnae generated monetary support with the assistance of former president Nelson Mandela who secured corporate sponsorship from Sappi in 2000. This resulted in the renovation of several buildings, the establishment of a maintenance trust fund, and staff development.

Judy Tate, the current principal of Inanda Seminary emphasises the importance of a holistic education programme that upholds Christian values and includes a daily chapel service, while also embracing African traditions as well as independent thinking and the freedom of expression. Today more than 70% of the matriculants continue their education at higher education institutions.

The vision statement of the school includes the empowerment of learners (affectionately known as “members”) to play a role in the development of the nation and become future leaders. The school’s alumnae include Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang; her former deputy Nosizwe Madlala-Routledge; Baleke Mbete, the Speaker of the National Assembly and ANC executive chairperson; and many other distinguished South Africans.

The core values of the school are honesty, loyalty, self-discipline, respect, sociability and responsibility. These values form the foundation of all that is offered and accomplished at the Seminary. “Leaving the school with these six core values is of more importance to us than six distinctions,” says Judy Tate. The school continues to face enormous challenges – similar to those of a century ago – with regard to finances and facilities. There is, inter alia, the need to refurbish Edwards Hall, built in 1888 and gutted by fire in 1993. The plans are for it to provide more classrooms and a media centre. There is also an urgent need for renovating of hostels, a new dining hall and the maintenance of heritage buildings.

Cato Manor

Cato Manor was granted to George Christopher Cato, the first mayor of Durban, in 1865 and was sub-divided in the early 1900s and leased to Indian market gardeners. Black Africans started moving into the area in the late 1920s and renting land from the market gardeners so that, by 1932 when Cato Manor was incorporated into the Borough of Durban, over 500 shacks had been built on the land.

Cato Manor grew in leaps and bounds during World War II when there was a boom in Durban’s economy and a vastly increased demand for labour. By the end of the war, there were about 30000 shack dwellers in the area and, during the 1949 riots, Indian landlords and traders were replaced by black traders and shack lords. The municipal beerhall in Cato Manor was the focus of much ill feeling, particularly among the women, who felt that it was stealing their livelihoods.
Resentment concerning impending forced removals to KwaMashu and the beerhalls came to a head on 17 June 1959, when women, who had gathered outside the Cato Manor beerhall, forced their way inside, beating the men drinking there and wrecking the place. Four people died and seventy nine were injured during the riots, which spread throughout Durban, but things did calm down for a time after that.

The resistance to the forced removals continued and reached a climax on 23 January 1960, when nine policemen were killed by a mob in Cato Manor. The incident was so horrifying that it took the heart out of the resistance and the last shack in Cato Manor was demolished on 31 August 1964.

**KwaMuhle Museum**

The KwaMuhle Museum is housed in the former premises of Durban’s Native Affairs Department which was charged with, among other functions, the control of the influx of Black migrants into the city. Migrants arriving in Durban had to report to the building where they waited in queues to see if they would be issued with passes to allow them to remain in town. The unsuccessful applicants would be forced to return to homes in the country or else risk staying in town illegally and living with the constant threat of arrest during a police raid.

The Durban System, as it was known, became the blueprint for apartheid in later years. The KwaMuhle Museum has many displays documenting the Durban System including a very illuminating one on just how the municipality managed to get the system to pay for itself through a municipal monopoly of brewing and selling sorghum beer. Another display concerns the Cato Manor riots which were largely the result of that monopoly.

**The Mandela Monument**

The site is a small, unassuming brick monument, but it’s really the magnitude of what happened here that’s remarkable and noteworthy. After 17 months on the run, Nelson Mandela was arrested, despite being disguised as a chauffeur, on August 5, 1962, outside Howick, on his way from Durban to Johannesburg. He was convicted of incitement and illegally leaving the country and sentenced to five years in jail before being prosecuted in the Rivonia Trials that led to his incarceration on Robben Island. From the N3 take the Tweedie Interchange and get onto the R103; the monument is just outside Howick.

**The Chesterville Four**

Vlakplaas operatives killed four members of the Chesterville Youth Organisation in an undercover operation using askaris in May/June 1986. The deceased were Russell Mngomezulu, Muntuwenkosi Dlamini, Russell Mthembu and Sandile Khawula. In the November 1989 inquest into the deaths of the four men, a Durban magistrate found that the police, who had fired between sixty-seven and eighty-eight rounds at the victims, were acting in reasonable self-defence. Vlakplaas operatives Willie Nortje, Izak Daniel Bosch and Colonel Eugene de Kock were responsible for their deaths.

**The Quarry Road Four**
On 7 September 1986, members of the Security Branch in Quarry Road, Durban, killed four men believed to be part of an MK cell in Durban: Blessing Mabaso, Thabane Memela, Percival Luvuyo Mgobhozi and Mbongeni Zondi. A quantity of illegal weapons was found in the vehicle in which the four deceased were travelling. The police claimed the four deceased were responsible for an attack on a home in KwaMashu on the previous day as well as an AK-47 and hand-grenade attack on a home in Umlazi on 22 August 1986, in which Evelyn Sabelo, wife of Inkatha member Winnington Sabelo, was killed and her four children injured. Durban inquest magistrate, F M Vorster, found that police were justified in killing the four men.

The Midlands war

After the strike and killings of COSATU members in Mphophomeni in 1986, local areas in and around Pietermaritzburg became increasingly polarised. The tribal areas surrounding Pietermaritzburg had been strongly Inkatha-supporting, governed by Inkatha-supporting amaKhosi and indunas. However, in the latter part of the 1980s, many young people began rebelling against tribal authorities and openly expressing sympathy with the UDF. Many adults also renounced their Inkatha membership. Inkatha was in retreat in the Vulindlela Valley. Rumours spread that chiefs and indunas had fled for their lives.

During 1987, as a result of their waning support, Inkatha embarked on a substantial recruitment drive in the Edendale and Vulindlela valleys, bordering on Pietermaritzburg. They were assisted by a number of ‘Caprivi trainees’ who had been deployed in the area from late 1986. UDF supporters rigorously resisted Inkatha’s attempts to make inroads into their areas. The conflict escalated dramatically from 1987 and came to be referred to as the Midlands War. At around this time, some 300 Inkatha recruits were trained and deployed as special constables in the greater Pietermaritzburg area in order to bolster the presence of Inkatha, particularly in the Edendale Valley, KwaShange and other sections of Vulindlela. Conflict initially broke out in the Edendale Valley (which included Imbali, Ashdown, Caluza, Harewood) and then spread into the Vulindlela valley. Strong allegations emerged of collusion between Inkatha and the SAP in attacks on UDF supporters. UDF members were detained in their hundreds while, at most, a handful of Inkatha supporters were detained.

The Trust Feed massacre

Trust Feed is a town in Umgungundlovu District Municipality in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. On 3 December 1988, a group of people, mostly women, gathered in the Sithole homestead for the wake of a man who had died of natural causes. They were unexpectedly attacked at 3 am, by assailants who kicked doors and randomly shot at anything that moved or talked in the house. The attack, later dubbed by the press, the “Trust Feeds Massacre” left 11 people dead and two seriously wounded. The youngest victim was a 4-year-old boy and the oldest a 66-year-old woman.

Trust Feed was, and still is, a tiny, black rural settlement situated amid sugar cane farms near New Hanover. Historically, the land belonged to 18 black landowners. Under apartheid legislation of 1948, the area was declared a “black spot”. Residents had since lived under the threat of forced removal. Then, in 1986, the Trust Feed Crisis Committee was formed. It successfully resisted government plans for forced removal and negotiated with the Natal Provincial Administration for the area to be developed. By December 1988, a clinic was nearing completion, water supply had been improved, and roads had been upgraded.
A government report leaked to the press revealed that the then KwaZulu homeland, headed by Mangosuthu Buthelezi, had been “attempting to have the South Africa government put Inkatha officials in control of Trust Feed in direct conflict with the wishes of the people of Trust Feed”. And so an operation was planned at the highest level – the government’s Joint Management Committee headed by the security police. The first step was to set up, as opposition to the elected residents’ group, a “landowners’ committee” represented by local induna and Inkatha leader, Jerome Gabela. Then came the covert security operation, early in December 1988.

The investigation that followed the massacre was hampered by silences or unco-operativeness of police witnesses, unwilling to tell the truth about their colleagues, who had gunned people affiliated with the very organization they were clandestinely supporting: Inkatha. Eventually, in October 1991 seven members of the then South African Police, who had operated under the command of Captain Brian Victor Mitchell stood trial on eleven charges of murder and eight of attempted murder. The significance of this case at the time was that Mitchell was the first senior policeman during the anti-apartheid struggle to be tried and sentenced to death for a part in initiating and maintaining the endemic political violence rife in South Africa since 1984. It was a landmark trial in that it revealed that this violence was co-ordinated and sponsored by state structures, the mysterious ‘third force’, and not the organizations repressed by the state (e.g. ANC) and their enemies (e.g. Inkatha).

In a closely followed and world publicized trial lasting six months, Mitchell finally admitted to having given orders to attack the Sithole homestead, “on the spur of the moment”. The evidence given by Mitchell was contradictory and illogical. On 30 April 1992 Mitchell was sentenced to death eleven times, which was later commuted to 30 years imprisonment. His accomplices each received an effective 15 years imprisonment for their role in the attack. Mitchell subsequently applied for and, to the surprise of many, was granted amnesty from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Mitchell and the special constables first torched a shop belonging to the chairman of the crisis committee. They then set off for house TF83 – a simple wattle and daub dwelling – where a group of people were holding a candlelight vigil for an old man, Zé Sithole, who had died of natural causes. Around 3am, the police hit-squad knocked on the door, and then opened fire through the open windows and doorway. Two of the special constables and Mitchell then moved through the room turning bodies over with their feet, shining a torchlight on the writhing survivors. The only survivors, two women and a 12-year-old child, were saved by bodies having fallen on top of them.

The Seven Day War

From the 25–31 March 1990, the communities in the lower Vulindlela and Edendale Valleys, south of Pietermaritzburg, were subjected to an armed invasion by thousands of heavily armed men from the rural, Inkatha-supporting areas higher up in the valleys. Over seven days, 200 residents in the lower valley were killed, hundreds of houses looted and burnt down and as many as 20 000 people forced to flee for their lives. The communities most seriously affected were Ashdown, Caluza, Mpumuza, Gezubuso, KwaShange, and KwaMnyandu.

The Nquthu massacre memorial
Tombstones have been erected at the graveyards of the victims of the Nquthu massacre which took place a few months before the first democratic elections in April 1994. Local traditional leader Inkosi M Molefe, who survived the massacre at his father’s house, described how a meeting that was held at his father’s house on November 7, 1993 to discuss the postponement of a planned rally turned into a bloodbath. The shooting lasted for at least 20 minutes with two gunmen systematically moving from one room of the house to another killing anyone they found. Sixty to eighty gunmen wearing balaclavas attacked Chief Molefe’s homestead, killing the eleven youths. One of the chief’s sons, Tsepo Molefe, was among the deceased; the chief escaped with injuries. He subsequently fled the area and to this day has not returned to his home. He is now destitute. To date, no one has been charged in connection with the massacre.

B. Prominent individuals around which legacy projects could be developed in the form of declaring their homes, graveyards, etc. as heritage sites and/or establishing some other form of commemoration

Chief Langalibalele

While inhabiting the area near present day Estcourt in the Drakensberg foothills, Langalibalele – a hereditary chief of the Hlubi – was summoned to Pietermaritzburg for failure to register firearms. The Hlubi had received these firearms as a form of payment from the owners of diamond mines.

After refusing to go to Pietermaritzburg, a force was sent against Langalibalele. He subsequently fled the colony, but three of the colonial troops were killed in a clash on the Bushman’s River Pass. Deemed to be in rebellion, the Hlubi chief was captured and sent to Pietermaritzburg where he was put on trial by a kangaroo court which consisted of substantial procedural irregularities.

Lieutenant-Governor Sir Benjamin Pine punished the Hlubi by breaking up their location, confiscating their cattle, and imprisoning Langalibalele on Robben Island. Langalibalele was therefore one of the first Black activists to be banished to Robben Island, nearly a century before Nelson Mandela and numerous other activists were imprisoned there.

Chief Bhambatha
Chief Bhambatha (sometimes spelled Bambada) was born in Mpanza near the town of Greytown, Natal Colony. He was the son of Chief Macinga of the abakwa Zondi chieftaincy, and his mother, principal wife of Macinga, was the daughter of Chief Pakade of an important Zulu chieftaincy, the Cunu.

From early childhood, chief Bhambatha became renowned for his athletic skills, the use of assegais, and running. He was nicknamed Magadu meaning “one who took a duiker for his model”. His other names were kaMancinza, kaJangeni, kaMangenge, kaNomashumi, kaNondaba, and kaTetane, KaGasa.

Bhambatha became his father’s successor, following his death and that of Bhambatha’s uncle, at the age of 25. He quickly established himself as a popular chief and earned the respect of the elders in his traditional council. However, he was occasionally in trouble with the law. He was fined for 500 pounds for cattle theft, which was repaid by his people. He also borrowed heavily from his White neighbours and failed to pay them back. As a result, he was repeatedly before the Natal courts to face various fines.

In 1905 he was convicted of faction fighting; a conviction that lead to a group of White people in his area trying to pressurise the Natal government into deposing him as Chief. However, the Natal government was reluctant to do so.

After the introduction of the Natal Poll Tax, the Natal government suspected that he had joined other Chiefs in the region who had voiced their discontent and rejection of the tax. The magistrate of Greytown, Mr. J W Cross, summoned Chief Bhambatha to Greytown.

Bhambatha, fearing arrest, did not attend the meeting; instead he sent his elders to meet with him on his behalf. In the meantime, his headman Nhlonhlo openly rebelled against the tax and vowed to fight if the government attempted to collect the tax by force. Chief Bhambatha’s attempt to dissuade from open rebellion failed.

Realising that the Natal government was determined to crush dissent and had mobilised a force under Major W J Clark of the Natal Police and 170 Natal Mounted Police to arrest him, on 11 March 1906, Chief Bhambatha fled to Zululand and was given shelter by King Dinuzulu who advised him to return to Mpanza. On his return, he learned that he was deposed and replaced with his uncle, Magwabagwaba. He took refuge at Nkandla forest. From here other chiefs and their followers joined his force and the rebellion was fought out.

The rebellion was crushed in June 1906 and a government spy who had managed to infiltrate his forces reportedly killed Chief Bhambatha in the forest. However, some of his loyal supporters maintained that he escaped to Mozambique and lived in hiding there until his natural death around the 1920s. However, the Natal forces asserted that the man killed in Nkandla Forest was him and the head shown to the public was also his. DNA Laboratory tests conducted from DNA extracted from a lock of hair found in one of the Natal officers’ belonging failed to conclusively prove whether the hair belonged to Chief Bhambatha.

Dr John Langalibalele Dube
John Langalibalele Dube was born at Inanda Mission station of the American Zulu Mission (AZM) in Natal on 11 February 1871 to James and Elizabeth Dube. ‘Langalibalele’, his middle name, means ‘bright sun’. Dube’s grandmother, Dalitha became the first convert of the Lindley Mission Station in Inanda, in the late 1840s. She wanted a clear separation from the traditional AmaQadi way of life. The Christian way of life was perceived and associated with ‘freedom, education and civilisation’. Consequently, James Dube (John Dube’s father) himself became a religious minister and became a leading figure in the Amakholwa (converts) section of the AmaQadi tribe.

Dube’s mother, Elizabeth, was from the Tshangase chiefdom and her traditional name was Namazi Shangase – she was given the name MaShangase after her children were born. Dube had seven siblings: Nomagugu (the first-born, a daughter), Victoria, Esther, Hleziphi, Africa (the first-born son), William and Thupana.

Rev James Dube (who died in 1877) was also one of the minor Zulu chiefs of the AmaQadi tribe and one of the first ministers ordained by the AZM. Thus, John Dube was born of royal lineage, and by right was a chief of the AmaQadi tribe. It was only because Dube’s father was converted to Christianity by the early missionaries that he did not rule over his AmaQadi people. There was conflict between the introduction of western education by the missionaries and the traditional African society’s way of life.

He spent his early schooling years at Adams School at the Inanda station, where his father James Dube served as a Congregational Minister. Missionaries played an important role in shaping the social and political scene in South Africa. The missionary influence was both positive and negative, and Dube stands out as a typical example of both influences. While mission education helped Dube develop a strong grasp of the English language, missionaries also attempted to culturally indoctrinate their indigenous subjects. This is evidenced by Dube’s generally critical view of his ‘native land’ later in his life.

While he was at school, on one occasion, Dube got into some trouble with other boys at his school, and the school’s Reverend Goodenough approached his colleague, William Wilcox, who was based at Inhambe, to come and have a talk to the boys. From this encounter, Dube and Wilcox developed a relationship.
Dube asked Wilcox if he could accompany him to Oberlin College on his return to the United States. Wilcox agreed, but warned Dube that he would have to earn money to pay for his education. Dube claimed to have saved some money while working as a miner, although it is believed that his mother gave Wilcox a total of thirty gold sovereigns to take Dube to the United States. This amount of money was however not sufficient to sustain Dube during his stay in the US. Consequently, Dube earned money doing outdoor labouring jobs, but after expressing his dissatisfaction, Wilcox introduced him to Mrs Frank H Foster, who used her connections in Oberlin to find more suitable work for the student.

During 1887 and 1888, Dube worked at the Oberlin College as a cleaner, and did odd jobs for the students. From 1888 to 1890, Dube enrolled at the Oberlin preparatory school to study the sciences, mathematics, classical Greek works, and a course in oratorical skills. Throughout this period, Dube experienced great difficulty maintaining a steady job while studying at the same time. Although Dube never received an official degree from Oberlin College, the skills, connections and worldly perspectives which he cultivated during these years laid the foundations for his later accomplishments.

Wilcox left Oberlin to take up the position of a pastor in New York, and invited Dube to visit him there. During this visit Dube assisted Wilcox in printing a pamphlet entitled *Self support among the kaffirs*. The pamphlet emphasised Wilcox’s belief that industrial education was the best way to uplift the native people of Africa. The concept had a profound influence on Dube, to the extent that it would result in the founding of the Ohlange Institute ten years later.

While in the US, Dube was given the opportunity to lecture while accompanying Wilcox on his lecture tour. He lectured from 1890 to 1892, delivering talks throughout Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York. Dube succeeded in raising a sum of money which was later used to start a school in South Africa. During this time Dube published a book called *A Familiar Talk Upon My Native Land and Some Things Found There*. The work reflected the conflict Dube experienced as a mission-educated indigenous person struggling to find a balance between his traditional ethnic roots and Christian teachings. But the publication also reflected Dube’s motivation to produce literature and exhibited his writing skills, which would serve him well in leading indigenous people in articulating the battle for their rights.

A chronic illness forced Dube to return to South Africa in 1892, a year after Wilcox had returned to work at a mission station at Groutville. On his return, Dube taught at his former high school in Amanzimtoti, where he met Nokutela Mdima, who he later married. Again, Dube and Wilcox found themselves working together, but Dube became increasingly unhappy with the structure of traditional mission education. In 1894, Dube was encouraged by Wilcox and Nokutela to establish his own mission. This spurred him on to establish a small day school in Incawadi Village in the Umkhomazi Valley, where he taught English and mathematics. In an attempt to transform and Christianise the village, Dube built two churches between 1894 and 1896. Dube’s school differed from other missionary schools: the learners were encouraged to read in their own language as well as to concentrate on practical aspects of the curriculum.

In 1897 Dube returned once more to the US for further training, this time accompanied by his wife. He enrolled at the Union Missionary Seminary in Brooklyn, in New York. In March 1899, Dube was ordained as a priest by the Congregational Church. During this visit Dube was profoundly influenced by Booker T Washington, whose ideas dominated Dube’s educational and political thoughts. Both Dube and Washington were inspired by the motto
‘learning and labour’, which Oberlin College had adopted. Both men were considered civil rights activists, educators and writers. Washington encouraged his students at Tuskegee to become self-reliant by teaching them skills such as printing, farming, shoemaking, and cooking, amongst others. This inspired Dube to develop a similar kind of initiative aimed at advancing the rights of Black people when he returned to South Africa. In August 1900 he established the Zulu Christian Industrial Institute which was renamed the Ohlange Institute in 1901. The institute functioned as a school where African children obtained education.

Perhaps, more importantly, on his return, Dube established links with like-minded leaders to form the Natal Native Congress (NNC) in July 1900. This was the beginning of his commitment to political action. The aim of the NNC was to find a way whereby black peoples’ feelings, aspirations, and grievances could be brought to the attention of the colonial government. The concerns of the NNC centred around the following issues:

- Unobstructed land ownership
- Education
- Parliamentary representation
- Free trade
- Freedom from enforced labour

The Congress became the main political organ of the Black people throughout the period that Natal remained a separate colony. Through the NNC, Dube advocated equality and justice for all. He hoped to close the widening gap between the Whites and Blacks of South Africa. He played a leading role in Black resistance to the Union of South African states, from whose legislature Blacks were to be excluded.

The skills of editing and publishing that Dube developed, while working at a local printing firm in the US, were put to good use when he established the first indigenous Zulu newspaper, *Ilanga Lase Natal*. Officially launched in April 1903, Dube’s aim in establishing the newspaper was for it to be a mouth-piece for the black population, and to propagate the idea of a united African front.

*Ilanga* expanded on Washingtonian ideas of self-sufficiency and self-segregation. Dube used his newspaper to expose injustices and evil deeds from all quarters and made black people aware of their rights and privileges. Initially the paper was printed by International Printing Press in Durban, but from October 1903 (the 25th edition) it was printed at Ohlange itself.

*Ilanga* was financed from donations and funds which Dube received from associates and friends in the US. There was little evidence of any influence from the American Zulu Mission in the newspaper. Occasionally he would feature editorials and articles in English which were intended for the white settler community, the department of Native Affairs and the Natal Government. Dube hoped in this way to keep them connected to black opinion at the time. As time progressed, black people used the newspaper to criticise government policies. At one stage Dube was accused by the authorities for inciting resentment against the government.

*Ilanga Lase Natal* focussed on issues pertaining to:

- Land controversies (including taxes and land ownership);
- Laws and acts, such as the poll tax;
- Reports such as those of the South African Native Affairs Commission;
• Political and social developments.

When Dube returned from the US in 1905 (after his third visit), tensions arose between him and the white missionaries. *Ilanga lase Natal* attacked the missionaries’ views on land allotment on the Reserves, the Mission Reserve rent, the social aloofness of missionaries and their lack of trust for the converts, inadequate selection of African officers and failure to defend African interests. By September 1906, Dube was calling for a meeting of the Transvaal, Cape and Natal congresses and ‘welcoming signs that tribal antagonisms are dying down as indications of progress’.

In 1906 the Bambatha Rebellion broke out. It was triggered largely by an introduction of new taxes, and also the encroachment of white settlers on land owned by Africans. Dube had followed the debate regarding the poll tax in Parliament and was extremely aggrieved that the government had not consulted with kholwa spokesmen or chiefs on the matter. He noted in his newspaper that the economic situation of Blacks would not allow them to pay the tax without considerable suffering. He argued that the tax was unfair as Blacks were not represented in Parliament.

Despite his opposition to the tax, Dube did not support the rebellion. He wanted to avoid violence at all costs and wanted the government to know that the kholwa would always remain loyal to the government and that they had no reason to rebel. In Dube’s own words: ‘the loyalty of the natives is beyond dispute’. He made it known that the kholwa still identified with the values of the White man and wished to be seen as equals to Whites.

However, Dube bitterly opposed the arrest and trial of Dinizulu in connection with the rebellion and actively assisted in raising funds for his defence. Dinizulu, son of the last Zulu king, was for Black people in South Africa the symbol of their former independence and their identity as a people. Dube, with his recollections of and pride in his African past, understood the significance of Dinizulu and his place in Zulu history. Dube publicised Dinizulu’s arrest. The Natal government attempted to suppress *Ilanga Lase Natal* before and during the Bambatha Rebellion – the newspaper was the object of constant suspicion.

Dube tried to use his influence during the rebellion by visiting and talking to Zulu chiefs to get their people to keep the peace. Dube had no desire to end British rule and the spread of Christianity, and Bambatha represented the heathen way of life, something Dube had no desire to return to.

Another reason for Dube’s endorsement of the colonists’ reaction to Bambatha was based on the economic and the political status of Blacks throughout Natal. Some colonists saw the rebellion as an opportunity to grab the land of Blacks who supported Bambatha and ousting the people who lived on this land. Dube’s programme of self improvement rested upon the precondition that educated kholwa would be able to purchase land. Many of the influential kholwa openly endorsed the war and actively participated in the suppression of the rebels.

During the rebellion, the White press generated extreme hostility towards the Black population and exaggerated threats of terror. White authorities also became increasingly critical of the activities of the kholwa class and the missionaries who trained them. Dube defended the behaviour of the Black elite during the rebellion and refused to take responsibility for the violence.
Kholwa chief representatives distanced themselves from the disruptive activities of Bambatha. The rebellion had an direct effect on the Ohlange school as a number of students remained at home due to rumours of violence. Dube blamed the government for the conflict and argued in his newspaper that if the government halted the collection of the poll tax it would be seen as showing weak.

Dube also used the rebellion to encourage the kholwa community to collect funds to send representatives to Britain to demonstrate against the unfair poll tax, the pass laws and the oppressive compulsory labour system. This prompted Governor McCallum to demand a public apology from Dube.

In 1908 he resigned from the pastorate of Inanda. The tension between Dube on the one hand and the government and missionaries on the other subsided in 1907 but he was constantly warned that he was ‘playing with fire’. But in the columns of Ilanga and as part of many delegations of kholwa he protested and petitioned the government against proposed legislation.

Nevertheless, ideologically, Dube had accepted the missionary gospel. It could be argued that generally the impact of missionaries on African culture and value systems had been superficial in Africa, but for Dube and subsequent generations the ‘psychological conversion’, if not ‘psychological colonisation’, was near complete.

At the same time numerous meetings were held by Africans, Coloureds, and Indians to protest the whites-only nature of the constitutional discussions that took place from 1908 to 1909. Dube was part of a delegation that left South Africa in 1909 to present a petition by Blacks to the English House of Commons in London against the Act of Union of 1909, but the deputation was unsuccessful. These activities culminated in a South African Native Convention in March 1909, where delegates called for a constitution giving ‘full and equal rights’ for all Blacks, Coloureds, and Indians.

Political agitation against the Natives Land Act continued, and preliminary drafts of the Act were debated in 1911. Not long after, several hundred members of South Africa’s educated African elite met at Bloemfontein on January 8, 1912, to establish the South African Native National Congress (renamed the African National Congress in 1923). In 1912, Dube accepted the Presidency of the ANC in spite of the pressures put on him by his preoccupation with education. In 1912 Dube addressed a group of Africans in Zululand to explain the new movement (the ANC) and appeal for unity.

The SANNC had a newspaper called Abantu-Batho from 1912 to 1933, which carried columns in English, isiZulu, Sesotho, and isiXhosa. It became the most widely read South African paper at the time. During this time Dube advocated a need for the congress to work closely with the Coloured people and succeeded in his attempts to get representatives of the congress to meet at least once a year with the African Political Organisation (APO), under the leadership of Dr Abdullah Abdurahman. Dube also urged unity amongst the black population through the affiliation to the congress and the removal of provincial bodies, which functioned as separate entities.

Dube was instrumental in improving the status of black women, especially those involved in the domestic work sector, and acted as a mediator in women’s dealings with the Department of Native Affairs.
In 1913 the Natives Land Act affected every strata of African rural society, which spurred the SANNC. In 1914 Dube was one of the delegates in London to protest against this legislation, but this delegation caused some controversy within the SANNC. It was believed that Dube had made some compromises on the principle of segregation. The bone of contention within the SANNC was the Land Act, and Dube was ousted from the presidency of the SANNC in 1917 and was succeeded by Sefako Mapogo Makgatho. From this time onwards Dube concentrated his activities in Natal.

In the 1920s, like some of his generation (and the strata of mission-educated Africans) he became involved in a series of liberal attempts to establish ‘racial harmony’ between Blacks and Whites, such as the Smuts Native Conferences established under the 1920 Act (which Dube quit in 1926 on the grounds that they were powerless), the Joint Councils and many missionary conferences. In 1926 he was one of the South African delegates to an international conference at Le Zoute in Belgium, a visit he also used to raise funds for Ohlange. He was involved in replacing Josiah Tshangana Gumede, who was considered left-wing, with Pixley ka Seme as president of the ANC in 1930, and in 1935 Dube became a member of the All African Convention. He represented Natal on the Native Representative Council from 1936 until his death, in 1946, when he was replaced by Chief Albert Luthuli on the Council.

One of Dube’s controversial episodes came in 1930 when he openly considered supporting Hertzog’s bills in the hope that they might provide some additional funds for development. It should be remembered that Dube was ousted from the presidency of the ANC in 1917 for his apparent acceptance of the principle - if not the contemporary practice - of segregation. Dube forged an alliance with the segregationist, Heaton Nicholls, and he toured the country soliciting the support of African leaders in Johannesburg, Kimberley, Bloemfontein and the Eastern Cape for a bill on Land Settlement promoted by Nicholls. This provided for the allocation of seven million morgen of land, to be added to the already scheduled areas, and the provision of adequate funds. The problem was that, like Hertzog’s proposals, Heaton Nicholls coupled his land schemes with an attempt to end the franchise of the Cape Africans. This scheme also envisaged the representation of Africans in the senate but this never materialised.

However, this did not discredit Dube. In 1935 he was elected to the Executive of the All African Convention. He became disenchanted with the government’s schemes. At a meeting of the Natal Debating Society in 1935 he launched a sharp attack on the government’s policies, which Jabavu printed as a pamphlet: *Criticisms of the Native Bills*. In it Dube expounded his nationalism and his rejection of African inequality and his belief in the principle of African representation. In 1935 a 50% share of *Ilanga laseNatal* the paper was bought up by Bantu Press and Dube’s control of the paper waned.

By 1935, Dube founded the Natal Bantu Teachers’ Association, today known as the Natal African Teachers’ Union (NATU) for professional Black teachers. He still remained active particularly in the in 1940s after Albert Xuma persuaded him to participate in the movement nationally, but with limited success.

Dube was successful in his endeavours in contributing to the political and socio-economic development of Blacks in Natal. He fought against the injustices against Black people and tried to gain a sense of equity through his lifetime. On 11 February 1946, Dube passed away.
Vil-Nkomo summed up his life when he wrote in Umteleli wa Bantu on February 26 1946 that Dube: “has revealed to the world at large that it is not quite true to say that the African is incompetent as far as achievement is concerned”. To commemorate Dube’s achievements, the school held a special ‘Mafukuzela Day’ in 1950. In time, this became ‘Mafukuzela Week’, with figures such as the Zulu king in attendance.

**Publications by John L Dube**

- Dube first published an essay in 1910, in English on self-improvement and public decency. The work that was to earn Dube the honorary doctorate of philosophy was the essay *Umuntu Isita Sake Uqobo Lwake* (A man is his own worst enemy) (1992).
- He went on to publish a historical novel that has proven to be popular and influential in the Zulu canon, titled *Insila kaShaka* (Shaka’s Body Servant) (1930). *Insila ka Tshaka* was translated into English as *Jeqe, the Bodyservant of King Tshaka*.
- Dube also embarked on writing biographies of the Zulu royal family, especially that of King Dinizulu, making him the first biographer in African literature.
- There are numerous other works of less significant literary quality such as the essay *Ukuziphatha* [On Behaviour] (1910).
- *Isitha somuntu nguye uqobo Iwakhe* (1922; The Black Man Is His Own Worst Enemy)

**Mahatma Gandhi**

Mohandas Gandhi was born to a Hindu family in 1869 in Porbandar in the Indian state of Gujarat. His parents belonged to a merchant caste. He was educated in India, from where he went to read law in London, England. He qualified as a lawyer in 1891 and instead of returning to India to fight the imperial rule he took no interest in politics and established himself in the legal profession in Bombay.

Initially Gandhi failed dismally, his practice collapsed and he returned home to Porbandar. It was while he was contemplating his seemingly bleak future that a representative of an Indian business firm situated in the Transvaal in South Africa offered him employment. He was to work in South Africa for a period of 12 months for the handsome fee of £105.00.

In 1893 he arrived in Durban where he remained for a week before leaving for Pretoria by train. He purchased a first-class ticket, boarded the train and started work on his lawsuit. During the journey a white passenger complained about sharing a compartment with a ‘coolie’ and Gandhi was asked to move to a third-class carriage. On his refusal he was
forcibly removed from the train at Pietermaritzburg Station. Here he spent the night and later he described the event as the most prominent influence on his political future.

At the period of Gandhi’s arrival in South Africa the growing national anti-Indian attitude had spread to Natal. The right to self-government had been granted to Natal in 1893 and politicians were increasing pressure to pass legislation aimed at containing the ‘merchant menace’. Two bills were passed in the following two years restricting the freedom of Indians severely. The Immigration Law Amendment Bill stated that any Indian had to return to India at the end of a five-year indenture period or had to be re-indentured for a further two years. If he refused an amount of £3 annual tax had to be paid. The bill came into law in 1895. A Franchise Amendment Bill also made an appearance in 1894. It was designed to limit the franchise to Indians who had the vote. Although there were only 300 of them, in comparison to 10 000 white voters, the Bill caused outrage among Indian leadership. They decided to contest the measure by any means available to them.

Mohandas Gandhi played a prominent role in their planned campaign, as he was a talented letter-writer and meticulous planner. He was assigned the task of compiling all petitions, arranging meetings with politicians and addressing letters to newspapers. He also campaigned in India and made an initially successful appeal to the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Ripon. The formation of the Natal Indian Congress on 22 August 1894 marked the birth of the first permanent political organisation to strive to maintain and protect the rights of Indians in South Africa.

By 1896 Gandhi had established himself as a political leader and undertook a journey to India to launch a protest campaign on behalf of Indians in South Africa. It took the form of letters written to newspapers, interviews with leading nationalist leaders and a number of public meetings. His mission caused great uproar in India and consternation among British authorities in England and Natal. Gandhi embarrassed the British Government enough to cause it to block the Franchise Bill in an unprecedented move, which resulted in anti-Indian feelings in Natal reaching dangerous new levels.

On his return to South Africa Gandhi and 800 fellow passengers were kept from disembarking for nearly a month as a result of daily dockside demonstrations and government quarantine regulations. White hostility against Indians was verging on the violent outbreak and on leaving the ship Gandhi was assaulted by a group of protesters. The intervention of the Durban police commissioner’s wife saved him from serious injury and he had to be smuggled from her home disguised as a policeman in order to prevent further incidents.

The British government, alarmed at the uproar, allowed the passing of the Franchise Bill on condition that Indians were not specifically mentioned in the provisions. The Bill was rushed through parliament in 1896 followed by two more bills aimed at ‘Passenger’ Indians. The Immigration Restriction Bill and the Dealers’ Licences Bill stated that prospective immigrants had to possess £25, and had to speak and write English, and also empowered municipal authorities to refuse trading licences on the ground of ‘insanitation’. Authorities began refusing any Indian applicants licenses and many merchants accused Gandhi of pushing authorities too far.

In 1901 Gandhi returned to India after serving as the leader of an Indian corps of stretcher-bearers on the side of the British forces in the South African War. He believed that the merchants in Natal had lost the battle to conduct their business unhindered. He returned to
South Africa in 1902 after an unsuccessful attempt at winning a leadership position in the Indian nationalist movement and in 1903 founded the 'Indian Opinion' newspaper. The publication played a prominent role in the spreading of the philosophy that resulted in the passive resistance campaign. Gandhi was also responsible for the opening of the Phoenix self-help settlement scheme near Durban.

The political campaign Gandhi embarked on was the British Indian Association (BIA). The movement was to prevent proposed evictions of Indians in the Transvaal under British leadership. According to Arthur Lawley, the newly appointed Lieutenant Governor under Lord Alfred Milner, whites were to be protected against Indians in what he called a ‘struggle between East and West for the inheritance of the semi-vacant territories of South Africa’.

In 1906 the Transvaal Government passed a law making it compulsory for Indians over eight years of age to carry a Pass bearing their thumbprint. This caused outrage among the Indian population and it was decided at a mass meeting attended by more than 3000 people that no Indian would apply for registration and that attempts to enforce the law would be met with passive resistance. Gandhi travelled to London to further his protest and Lord Elgin, the Colonial Secretary, agreed to withdraw the Act. Unfortunately the Transvaal was granted self-government in 1907 and the Pass Law (Act 2 of 1907) was reintroduced.

On 28 December 1907 the first arrests of Asians refusing to register was made, and by the end of January 1908 2000 Asians had been jailed. Gandhi had also been jailed several times, but many key figures in the movement fled the colony rather than be arrested. Eventually Gandhi and the leader of the Chinese population in South Africa, Leung Quin, reached agreement with Jan Smuts, Transvaal Colonial Secretary, whereby the Act would be repealed if everyone registered voluntarily. He was severely criticised for the compromise and even offered to be the first to register. Smuts denied any promises made to Gandhi and on his way to the registration office he was assaulted. In June 1909 left for London after having defended his position as leader of the Transvaal merchant community.

Gandhi returned to South Africa in December 1909 to find that his fellow members of the Natal Indian Congress(NIC) were openly plotting against him. He was fighting for his political survival and withdrew to Tolstoy, a farm he had purchased in 1910 to support the families of jailed resisters. Gandhi only came under the public eye again in 1912 as a result of a visit to South Africa by Indian statesman Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Here he was accused of preventing opponents of his policies to speak with the visitor and finally, on 26 April 1913 Gandhi and his rivals in the NIC went their separate ways.

On 13 October 1913 a new campaign was initiated in Newcastle, Natal, in protest to the £3 tax imposed on ex-indentured Indians. The aim was to gain the support of the working classes and the mobilisation of Newcastle merchants by Thambi Naidoo, a chief lieutenant and leader of the Johannesburg based Tamil Benefit Society. The support of railway workers and miners was gained next and on 16 October 1913 the strike began. Two weeks later between 4000 and 5000 miners had downed their tools. In order to spread the action Gandhi began leading strikers over the Transvaal border along the Durban/Johannesburg railwayline on 29 October 1913.

During the march Gandhi was arrested and let out on bail three times, but the march continued. Later, P.K. Naidoo and other leaders were also arrested, but still the people
marched on. In Standerton where marchers stopped to rest and eat, Gandhi was approached by a magistrate who stood quietly at his side until he finished dishing out food informed him that he had come to arrest him. Gandhi turned to him calmly and said, ‘It would seem I have received promotion in rank, as magistrates take the trouble to arrest me instead of mere police officials.’ He was arrested and imprisoned in Vaal police station. In court, Gandhi found that five other marchers had also been arrested. They were kept in prison but Gandhi was released on bail of 50 pounds. After his release Gandhi joined the march again, but before they reached Balfour he was re-arrested, this time by the chief immigration officer. The workers continued the march. They arrived in Balfour, to find that there were three trains waiting to deport them back to Natal. The attempt to court arrests failed as Smuts opted to wait, a successful strategy, as most strikers were ready to return to work by November.

A spontaneous strike back in Natal altered the situation radically. Here violent confrontation ruled and several strikers were killed and injured in clashes with the police and more protesters joined. By the end of November 1913 produce markets in Durban and Pietermaritzburg had come to a standstill, sugar mills were closed and hotels, restaurants and homes were left without domestic workers. Reports in India relating the arrest of Gandhi and police brutality caused an uproar and the British government was forced to form an agreement with the strikers.

Gandhi was released in order to negotiate with Smuts over the Indian Relief Bill, a law that scrapped the £3 tax on ex-indentured workers. The law was scrapped.

Around this time Gandhi left South Africa to return to his native India. Here he led his country to full independence after 30 years of opposition to British rule. Nagar sheth of Jetpur Shri Nautamlal B. Mehta (Kamdar) was the first to use and bestow “Mahatma” for Shri Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi on January 21, 1915 at Kamri Bai School, Jetpur, India. From then on, Gandhiji was known as Mahatma Gandhi and was recognised as Mahatma, literally meaning ‘a great soul’.

In 1948 a Hindu fanatic who thought him too tolerant towards Muslims assassinated Mohandas Gandhi. Millions of people around the world mourned with India and contributed to creating the legend of the Mahatma

Josiah Gumede

Josiah Tshangana Gumede was born on 9 October 1867 in Healdtown Village, Fort Beaufort in the Eastern Cape. His father, John Gumede, and his mother were Christians and, according to their grandson Archie Gumede, were only the third Ngwane couple to be married into the Christian (Wesleyan) faith. There is very little known information about Josiah’s mother and his early childhood. Josiah had a younger brother, William, and three or more sisters, two of them named Mina and Joyce. It seems they were all given Christian first names, while Josiah was given his father’s middle-name, Tshangana, in honour of their Zulu ancestry. Josiah Gumede’s ancestry can be traced back to Chief Khondlo.

Khondlo’s son Phakathwayo succeeded him, followed by Vezi, Makhunga and John Tshangana, Josiah’s father. Since not much is known of Josiah’s childhood years, he probably started his elementary schooling at the Healdtown Wesleyan Mission station at Fort Beaufort, where he was exposed to the British education system. The Wesleyan missionaries were leading the way in fighting for gender equality, with policies in place to educate and
liberate African females. One of Josiah’s fellow-pupils was Charlotte Makanya, who later became the President of the ANC Womens Congress. Both Josiah and Charlotte came from Fort Beaufort and rose to greater heights as leaders in the ANC and in the politics that shaped South Africa.

On completion of his schooling, Gumede went on to attend what was called the ‘Kaffir Institute’ in Grahamstown, in either 1882 or 1883. During this time, Josiah’s parents and sisters had moved to Queenstown. Run by the Anglican Church, the institute was a sister school to the white St Andrew’s College. Josiah wanted to qualify as a teacher, and gaining admission to the institution was not easy: candidates had to be baptised, literate (in English as well as their native language), and older than 13 years of age. The institution attracted intellectually-inclined Black youth, many of whom later became prominent ANC members, among them Thomas Mapikela and Samuel Masabalala. The curriculum at the institution was dominated by religious education, although industrial training – such as carpentry, wagon-making, blacksmithing, tailoring, shoemaking and printing – also featured prominently. Gumede’s intellectual development grew at the institute, as did his political consciousness.

Gumede began teaching at Somerset East in the Eastern Cape, where African interest in formal education was growing. He soon took up a new teaching post in Natal while his parents remained at Queenstown, and his interests turned to politics in Zululand. Together with another Wesleyan convert, Martin Luthuli, whom Gumede befriended, the pair acted as indunas (advisors) for the young Dinizulu. While Luthuli was fleeing from creditors in Durban and thus looking for sanctuary, it is not clear why Gumede opted to become involved in the ‘tumultuous almost no-win politics of a ravaged post-civil-war Zululand’.

It is likely that Gumede was committed to the cause of the Zulu royal house, and that he was somewhat ambitious. Dinizulu was heir to the Zulu kingdom, and Luthuli and Gumede must have taken pride in their prestigious appointments.

Zululand was undergoing a period of historical transition. Following the death of Cetshwayo in 1883, the British High Commissioner in South Africa, Garnet Wolseley, divided Zululand into 13 independent chieftainships, each ruled by chiefs he appointed. Wolseley’s chiefs were perceived by many to have little legitimacy, causing tremendous turmoil. A period of civil wars proved disastrous for the political status of the Zulu royal family and the idea of Zulu national unity.

Supporters of the Zulu royal house, the Usuthu, were dealt their heaviest blow by the appointment of two disaffected chiefs of royal lineage, Hamu and Zibhebhu, to rule as chiefs over Zululand’s northern regions. Hamu defected with his followers to the British side during the Anglo-Zulu war. His district included the personal homestead of the Buthelezi leader Mnyamana, who had been Cetshwayo’s principal adviser. To the east of Hamu, Zibhebhu was awarded a district that included the core of the Usuthu, including Cetshwayo’s son Dinizulu. In May 1884 Dinizulu, with the help of the Transvaal Boers, drove Zibhebhu out of his district.

Having assisted Dinizulu in defeating Zibhebhu in June 1884, the Boers claimed nearly 3 million acres of land in the upper belt of Zululand, stretching to the natural harbour of St. Lucia Bay. This was an exorbitant demand on Dinizulu’s land resources. More than 800 Boers were demanding compensation where only about 100 had assisted in the actual fight.
Gumede with other Usuthu leaders protested the Boers’ demarcation of their so-called ‘New Republic’. They appealed to the British for support but this fell on deaf ears. Dinizulu tried desperately not to lose his head kraal of Ondini (today Ulundi) to the Boers and appointed Gumede to take charge of the tough negotiations with the Boers.

Eventually the British intervened and annexed the territory when they realised that the Boers would have access to St Lucia and a harbour. This resulted in Gumede’s services as Dinizulu’s induna coming to a close. However, Dinizulu and Gumede’s friendship would last until the former’s death in 1913.

Gumede’s involvement in Zululand politics undoubtedly refined his political philosophy. His entry into Zululand politics at times endangered Gumede’s life as he gained firsthand experience of the reality of the Whites’ coercion and dispossession of the Zulu’s land. He experienced the frustrations and difficulties which confronted the Zulu royal house after the Boer occupation of nearly five-sixths of the Zulu territory. The experience instilled a sense of bitterness towards the Boers, but he also realised how little the British cared about the disintegration of the Zulu polity. Indeed, Britain’s unwillingness to intervene on behalf of the Zulus confirmed their determination to bring an end to the Zulu monarchy. Consequently, Gumede never approved of the British annexation of Zululand, claiming that it had opened up the territory to further White settlement. History has shown that Gumede’s fears were well-founded. The 1890s saw a marked increase in the pressure to open Zululand to White settlement, despite the continued protests and resistance of Zulu spokespersons such as Harriette Colenso and Gumede.

On his return to the Bergville/Klip River Division, Gumede was warmly received by his chief Ncwadi of the Ngwane. Towards the end of the 1880s Gumede accepted a temporary teaching post at the Amanzimtoti Institute (Adams College). At the time of Gumede’s appointment, the college had built up a good reputation with three teachers of high calibre: John Dube, Albert Luthuli and Mavuma Nembula.

An event of significance for Gumede was the visit to Natal of a Black American troupe of Virginia Jubilee Singers in 1890. The group also visited Adams College. Inspired by the group’s performances and international success, Gumede, together with Saul Msane and a group of 12 singers, formed the ‘Zulu Choir’. His involvement in the choir ended Gumede’s teaching career at Adams College. The Zulu Choir became very successful locally, and they embarked on a tour of England. But this did not last as the choir split up after some disappointments. Gumede then returned to South Africa, settling in Rookdale with little, if any, finances.

On 30 June 1894, Gumede married Margareth Rachel Sithole, a teacher by profession and a devoted Wesleyan who also came from the Bergville district.

In 1895, Gumede was employed by his chief Ncwadi as an induna. During this period the chief’s authority over his community was constantly being challenged by David Giles, a European magistrate. Gumede, convinced that Giles’s acts constituted a violation of the Shepstonian principles of African Administration, supported his chief. This led to a bitter struggle between Gumede and Giles.
Ncwadi chose Gumede as his official spokesperson because of his formal schooling and teaching credentials and his involvement in Zulu Politics. This battle revealed his leadership skills and provided Gumede with a lesson in political and legal strategy which he would use again in the future.

Some reports indicate that Gumede also spent a short period working on the gold mines on the Rand, and the Gumede family’s financial prospects appeared to improve. In 1898 and 1899, the first two of Josiah and Margareth’s five daughters, Edith Beatrice and Tabita Sarah, were born.

In 1900 Gumede joined the British military to fight in the war against the Boers. Gumede was one of the first Blacks to be recruited and trained by the Natal Intelligence Department even before the war started in October 1899. He was appointed Headmen over a group of Basotho scouts. Gumede’s hopes that the British victory in the Anglo-Boer war would result in the removal of the oppressive features of White rule in Natal, in particular the Pass Laws, was short-lived as the British failed to deliver on promises they made.

At this point, Gumede, like many other missionary-educated Africans, were looking for outlets to voice their objections against oppressive new laws, resulting in the establishment of many European-style organisations. In 1888, Gumede aligned himself to the Funamalungelo (demand civil rights) Society headed by John Khumalo, but the organisation failed to develop into a strong political movement. Gumede, Martin Luthuli and other Black leaders in Natal then realised that there was an urgent need for a more effective organisation. With the assistance of Harriette Colenso, the Natal Native Congress (NNC) was officially inaugurated on 8 June 1900. With John Dube and others, Gumede was a founder member of the NNC, and for some time he served as its secretary and vice-president. The main aims of the Congress were to cultivate political awareness amongst Blacks by educating them about their rights under the prevailing system of government and laws, and most importantly, to act as a forum for airing grievances.

In 1905, Gumede took up a position as a land agent with the firm of Thackeray Allison and Albert Hime solicitors, a position he held for the next 14 years. During this time, Gumede assisted in the investigation of the land claims of two Sotho tribes, namely the Bakhulukwe and Batlokoa in the new Orange River Colony. Gumede played a significant role in their legal struggle and the drawing up of their petitions to the British government in London to regain land taken away from them before the war. Gumede supported Chiefs Lesisa, Moloi, and Lequila, and accompanied them on their deputation to England to petition the British government to support their land claim. Unfortunately, this deputation was not successful. To add to the insult, Gumede was arrested on his return home in May 1907, charged with wrongfully and unlawfully leaving the Colony of Natal without the pass or permit prescribed by one of the laws of the Colony of Natal. Gumede was found guilty and fined 10 pounds for this ‘crime’.

It was particularly apparent that Gumede saw the need to maintain Zulu culture and traditions by supporting the chiefs while at the same time understanding the political and social needs of the emerging kholwa. Many chiefs regarded Gumede as their spokesman and had a high regard for his intellectual abilities. According to Van Diemel, Gumede moved with ease between these two very different worlds.
In 1907, Gumede involved himself in Iliso Lesizwe Esimnyama, an organisation formed by Wesleyan Methodist converts and chiefs from the Dundee and Newcastle areas in Natal. He served as secretary for the organisation during 1908. The aim of Iliso Lesizwe Esimnyama was to unite the Black people of Natal-Zululand and to advance their prosperity.

The publication of the draft constitution of 1909 signalled to Gumede that Africans’ interests were being ignored. Although the revised draft of the South Africa Act received the overwhelming approval of Whites, nearly all politically conscious Africans denounced it. Despite all the odds, Gumede was still determined to continue to press the issue that Africans’ aspirations be addressed.

Throughout 1909 and 1910, the plight of the two Sotho tribes took up most of Gumede’s time. Unfortunately, following the failure of the African deputation to England in 1909, Iliso had ceased to meet on a regular basis and the organisation soon faded out of existence.

In 1910, Gumede rejoined the Pietermaritzburg branch of the NNC. Disappointingly, there was no working relationship between the Pietermaritzburg and Durban branches due to personal differences between Gumede and Dube, who was part of the Durban NNC branch. The two only unified when the South African Native National Congress(SANNC), the precursor of the African National Congress(ANC), was formed in 1912. Dube sought closer co-operation between the branches, realising the need for unity.

In 1912 Gumede became a founder member of the SANNC (renamed the ANC in 1923) and contributed to the drafting of its 1919 constitution. He was also a member of the 1919 SANNC deputation to the Versailles Peace Conference – which was held after World War I (1914-1918) – and the British government. The deputation, however, failed to ensure a better dispensation for South African blacks.

Gumede was appointed to the newly-elected executive council and joined a deputation elected to present their grievances to the Inspector of African Schools in Pietermaritzburg on 15 April 1913. The delegates were against regulations placed on Black school learners and teachers in Natal which came into effect on 1 April 1913. These regulations placed new restrictions on the age limits of African pupils in the lower classes as well as on the employment of African teachers in the higher classes. Yet again the deputation was unable to persuade the inspector to amend the revised regulations.

Even though the Native Land Act of 1913 signalled the end of any equality for Blacks in the union, Gumede remained optimistic that all was not lost. He believed the Act would strengthen the cause of the two Sotho chiefs to regain their land. Thus, when the call came for a deputation to be sent to England to protest the Bill and appeal for help against it, Gumede strongly opposed the move, believing that it would antagonise the new Parliament and alienate support from the missionaries and more liberal whites. Not surprisingly, the deputation was a failure. Gumede also failed in his attempts to secure the land of the Sotho tribes, deepening his antagonism towards the unsympathetic Union government on the issue of Black land claims.

The Native Administrative Bill of 1917 further deepened this antagonism. Taking a strong stand against it, Gumede understood that the Bill would enhance the powers of the Native Affairs Department.
The victory of the allied forces during World War I brought about renewed hopes in the SANNC that an appeal to the British government would bring about the removal of the colour bar franchise. Gumede supported a proposed deputation to England to petition the Governor General to take their grievances directly to the king. Gumede’s change of heart regarding this deputation – compared to the 1914 deputation – came because he was convinced there was no way of securing any sympathy from the Union government for the plight of Black people.

Before his departure, Gumede was summoned to testify in the trial of David Jones and H Greene, Bolsheviks charged with inciting the public by distributing a pamphlet in favour of Bolshevism. During his testimony, it was clear that Gumede held strong anti-communist sentiments.

Gumede’s visit to England together with Sol Plaatje was full of disappointments. The Colonial office in London received Gumede and Plaatje with much antagonism. Gumede addressed several audiences in England, including many of London’s Black organisations, in order to solicit support for the cause. Gumede and Plaatje presented their grievances to members of the House of Commons in July 1919 in the hope that they would be addressed at their next meeting. The pair also addressed various other organisations sympathetic to their cause. One such organisation was the League of Universal Brotherhood led by Dr Charles Garnett. Much of this lobbying turned out to be in vain as the colonial office was sticking to its policy of non-interference in colonial affairs.

Gumede went further by addressing a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury for a meeting to address their grievances. This meeting also turned out to be disappointing as no concrete support was forthcoming. During this visit, Gumede was extremely disappointed to be present at a meeting of The International Brotherhood Congress, held from 13 to 17 September 1919, where Lloyd George praised the ‘noble character’ of General Louis Botha. These views were in direct contrast to those held by the SANNC delegates. Throughout his stay in England, Gumede tried to influence public opinion by means of meetings and newspaper coverage. Gumede also kept his constituency in Natal informed of all the deliberations abroad.

Towards the end of November 1919, the Gumede and Plaatje were finally able to secure a meeting with Prime Minister Lloyd George. An extensive account of African disabilities in South Africa was presented to him but the Prime Minister only promised to communicate with General Smuts to ascertain what could be done to address the grievances of the Black population of South Africa. George was still very reluctant to interfere in the affairs of the colony.

Gumede made another appeal to the Prime Minister by way of a manifesto asking for the franchise for the Black people and for the reinstatement of land to the tribes and chiefs who had lost land to the Boers. But still nothing came of his appeals.

Ironically, Gumede and Plaatje managed to secure the allegiance of two socialist organisations, the Independent Labour Party and the Union of Democratic Control. The pair travelled throughout Scotland trying to rally support and even though most of their meetings were held under the auspices of the two socialist organisations, Gumede remained loyal to the ideas of liberalism.
The next year went by with Gumede still in England, addressing meetings and seeking support for the cause of the SANNC. Gumede felt that returning home would be to accept the failure of his mission.

In January 1921, Gumede had the opportunity to meet with Bankole Bright and other delegates from the National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA). The aim of this delegation was to secure a greater share in constitutional government and administration for the African people in the British West African Colonies. Gumede realised that this delegation had a lot in common with the South African cause. Gumede and Plaatje returned to South Africa disillusioned over the lack of official British intervention in South Africa.

Throughout the 1920s members of the Natal Natives’ Congress found themselves in conflict with each other. Dube and Gumede disagreed over the former’s attempts to keep the congress as independent as possible from the national ANC. Instead Gumede founded the Natal African Congress, which officially affiliated with the ANC. In 1921 Gumede was appointed as full-time general organiser of the SANNC, with the task of touring the country in search of financial support.

Gumede continued to oppose John Dube and his two sympathisers in the NNC, W Ndlovu and William Bhulose, and the trio were not re-elected to the executive at the annual meeting in April 1924. Gumede was elected as the new president of the NCC, but he was excluded from the annual Native Conference in Pretoria on 27 October 1924. Instead, Dube was invited to Pretoria by the government.

Following the failure of the deputation to the British government in 1919, Africans were forced to concede to the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923, which further curtailed possession of land by Blacks. From 1924 Gumede openly lamented the increase in segregatory measures, and he became more militant as he questioned the Pact government about its racial and class legislation, and its limiting of education and employment opportunities for the Blacks.

Gumede, accompanied by James la Guma of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), was elected to represent the ANC at the first international conference of the League Against Imperialism in Brussels, Belgium. The pair departed from Johannesburg on 12 January 1927. From Brussels he travelled to the Soviet Union (USSR). Gumede wanted to use this opportunity to address the plight of the Africans, but also to gain first-hand knowledge of Communism in Russia. At the Brussels Conference, Gumede met Communists, left-wing Socialists and radical nationalists, enlarging his political perspective.

After the Brussels Conference, Gumede was invited to Berlin, Germany, by the German Communist Party. On arrival there on 17 February 1927, Gumede was warmly greeted by some 10 000 German Communists. He attended the World congress of the “Friends of the Soviet Union” from 10 to 12 November 1927, in Moscow. The visit coincided with the 10-year celebrations of the Bolshevik revolution. Gumede was becoming more convinced and attracted to communism, and developed a more radical critique of British imperialism. He realised that communism could play a vital role in liberating Africa, and his new ideas helped give birth to the alliance between the ANC and CPSA. The highlight of his visit was his meeting with Joseph Stalin.
On his return to South Africa on 17 February 1928, Gumede was given a hero’s welcome in Cape Town at a combined ANC-CPSA mass meeting held in Waterkant Street. He affirmed their alliance, as both parties had at the top of their agenda ‘African liberation’. Said Gumede:

‘When I left South Africa I was under the impression that in Russia people were not safe. But what I saw there surprised me. I saw a new Jerusalem. I found people happy, contented and prosperous. The Government of Russia is the Government of the working classes. Today in Russia the land belongs to the people.’

Referring to the position of the Church in Russia, Gumede repudiated claims common in South Africa to the effect that the Russian people were opposed to all forms of religion. Gumede praised the USSR as a country where racism was negligible, if at all existent. Contrary to his previous anti-Bolshevist stance, he now pronounced that the white communists in South Africa were the only group who fully supported Blacks in their struggle for equal rights.

Gumede began to support an alliance with communists. Van Diemel puts forth the argument that Gumede’s initial hostility toward communism stemmed from his perception that it threatened Zulu traditions and the status of African property owners, of which he was one. His disappointment with Britain eventually disposed him to reach out to other potential allies, including communists. Finally, having once supported legal means of protest, Gumede began to push for mass action. He was ahead of his time in many ways, both because he realised the futility of constitutional protest and because he recognised the need to build a united front in the struggle against South Africa’s system of racial segregation.

The CPSA increasingly turned its attention to Gumede – and to the ANC – after the communists were expelled from the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU). Besides his pro-communist inclination, Gumede’s support for Afro-American leader Marcus Garvey – who argued for racial separation and the emigration of Afro-Americans to Africa – was apparent in his speeches. It was probably under Gumede’s influence that a resolution to request the United States of America to release Marcus Garvey – who was imprisoned on charges of fraud – was passed during the July 1927 conference of the ANC. The ANC national executive and the Convention of Bantu Chiefs, held under the auspices of the ANC in April 1927, received these pro-communist pronouncements with little enthusiasm. Gumede, however, succeeded in having a proposal which condemned the ties between the CPSA and the ANC withdrawn. Despite ANC criticism of the pro-communist tendencies that often surfaced in Gumede’s public rhetoric at that stage, he was elected as president-general of the ANC during its annual congress in July 1927, succeeding Zaccheus Richard Mahabane.

In 1929 Gumede was elected as chairperson of the South African branch of the League Against Imperialism when it was founded by the CPSA. At the end of that year, when the CPSA launched the League of African Rights, he also became its president.

Gumede’s three-year term as president-general of the ANC was characterised by disputes and dissension – although it did introduce new strains of radical thought into the ANC. It was an unhappy chapter in the history of the organisation. Gumede was accused of being more concerned with communism than the affairs of the Congress and of not improving the already weak financial position of the organisation, rendering him an ineffective administrator.
Moreover, antipathy towards Gumede’s association with communism and his alleged neglect in circulating information increased sharply. Objections were also made against the ANC’s affiliation to the Communist-backed League Against Imperialism. This shattered Gumede’s dream of creating a closer union between the two parties.

Matters came to a head when the anti-communist faction of the national executive committee of the ANC took a majority decision to resign en bloc and Thomas Mapikela took over as acting president-general. At the annual ANC conference in April 1930, Gumede lost his position as president general and was succeeded by Pixley ka Seme. Gumede lost his Presidency largely because his alliance with communists had generated so much opposition within the Congress.

The move ended his role as a prominent figure in South African politics, but it did not end Gumede’s passion for politics – he continued as editor of the ANC mouthpiece Abantu Batho, through which he circulated Garvey’s political ideas. Gumede also continued to participate in the activities of the Black trade unions, and in May 1930 he was elected as a delegate to the International Conference of Negro Workers, which was to take place in July 1930 in London – but he was refused a passport to travel to England. He continued to advocate defiance of the Pass Laws and addressed several meetings held by the ICU.

In March 1931, Gumede was called to give evidence before the Native Economic Commission on the condition of Africans in the country. His evidence spurred him on to become more involved with African politics in Natal.

Gumede returned to Pietermaritzburg in 1932 and attempted to introduce a more militant approach in the NNC. In June 1932, it was decided that all future NNC meetings would be held under the auspices of the Natal African Congress (NAC), thereby aligning itself closer to the ANC. Gumede was appointed chairman and Dube was appointed President. At the next meeting, Gumede was elected president of the NAC.

For a short period in 1933, Gumede became involved with the ICU but the relationship soon faded.

Gumede continued his political agitation when Barry Hertzog introduced his notorious African Bills in 1935. In his letters to Black newspapers, Gumede called upon Black people to reject the bills. He attended the All African Convention (AAC) in December 1935, where the call was made to reject the Bills. However, the AAC failed to halt the Bills and during its second congress, members decided to support the Native Representative Council (NRC) in the hope of improving the situation from within. Opposition to the Bills breathed new life into the ANC.

Gumede, although nominated for a seat on the NRC, failed to secure a seat. This by no means signalled the end of the road for Gumede as he continued to assist chiefs in putting their land claims before the Native Affairs Commission.

During 1942, Gumede again tried to secure a nomination to the NRC, but failed. Accepting defeat gracefully, Gumede continued to assist Black workers who were unfairly dismissed from their jobs.
The highlight of Gumede’s career came in December 1943 when he was honoured as Life President of the ANC at the annual meeting of the ANC in Bloemfontein. At this very same meeting, the historic resolution was passed for the formation of the ANC Youth League. Resolutions passed in the October 1946 Congress calling for more militant methods of protest signalled the end to the peaceful and constitutional methods embarked upon thus far. For Gumede this signalled the long-awaited militant path that he hoped the Congress would follow. Fortunately, he lived to see these resolutions passed just before his death on 6 November 1946.

Throughout his political career, Gumede spoke out against the intolerable policies against Black people. Described as a man seldom angered or harsh in judgement, who accepted criticism as the expression of opinion that people were entitled to, he believed in the power of the pen. His passion to serve his people surpassed his need to gain material wealth.

**Allison Wessels George Champion**

Allison George Champion was born on 4 December 1893 at Sans Souci School near the mouth of the Tugela River in Natal. His father had been adopted by American Body Missionary and was given the surname, Champion. His original surname was Mhlongo. He attended the Amanzimtoti Training Institute, which later became Adams College, but was suspended for rebelliousness in 1913, before completing standard seven. Champion left the school that year and was employed as a Native constable in Johannesburg. He retired from service after acting as a plain-clothes constable in Dundee, Natal, in 1915. From 1917 to 1925 was engaged as clerk on the Crown Mines. He also had a brief stint at diamond digging in Kimberley. Elected president of the newly formed Native Mine Clerks’ Association in 1920, Champion soon gained noticed as an African spokesman and became associated with the of the Joint Council of Europeans and Natives, Johannesburg, and Bantu Men’s Social Centre.

In 1925 Champion met Clement Kadalie and, seeing a wider scope for his organising talents, he joined the Industrial and Commercial Workers’ Union (ICU) as its Transvaal secretary. He was posted to Durban later that year as Natal secretary, where he rapidly demonstrated his abilities as a leader by building up the largest and wealthiest branch of the ICU. Second in command to Kadalie, and strongly supporting him in ousting Communists from the organisation in 1926, Champion became acting ICU national secretary during Kadalie’s trip to Europe in 1927. The following year, after Kadalie’s return, the ICU began to break up. Champion sought local control as a leader of a now independent and the powerful ICU yase Natal. Following a period of unrest and rioting in Durban, he became the first person to be exiled from the whole of Natal and Zululand under the notorious Riotous Assemblies Amendment Act of 1930, by the Minister of Justice, Oswald Pirow, on the 24th of September.
1930. He then found employment in Johannesburg until 1933. When his ban was lifted he returned to Durban.

During J.T. Gumede’s presidency of the African National Congress (ANC) in the late 1920s, Champion held the post of “minister of labour” in the ANC National Executive. When Pixley Seme succeeded Gumede as president in 1930, Champion lost his position in the inner councils of the Congress; but his influence among Natal Africans could not be ignored, and in 1937 he came back onto the ANC executive where he remained for the next 14 years.

He was elected to the Native Representative Council in 1942, and was re-elected in 1945 and 1948. A long time rival of the powerful John L. Dube in Zulu politics, in 1945 Champion, with the aid of Selby Msimang and Jordan Ngubane, captured the provincial presidency of the ANC from A.S. Mthimkulu, the ailing Dube’s designated successor. The national head of the ANC, A.B. Xuma, welcomed this political coup and increasingly sought Champion’s cooperation, finally making him acting president-general of the ANC during his own absence abroad in 1946-1947.

Within the ANC Champion exerted a powerful conservative influence, vehemently opposing the Youth League and its radical activism, which he regarded as a product of brashness and inexperience. Increasingly hostile to cooperation with the Johannesburg headquarters of the Congress and seemingly intent upon promoting the Natal-Zulu patriotism that had marked his earlier career, Champion eventually goaded his critics in the Natal Youth League too far. In 1951 they engineered his defeat by Albert Luthuli in the elections for the Natal president.

After resigning from the Congress, Champion concentrated on local advisory board politics and his business affairs, including the running of a general store in Chesterville location in Durban. As a long-time chairman of the Durban Combine Location Advisory Boards and Urban Councils, he was a conservative and influential figure in Natal. He had strong links with the Zulu royal family and many of the chiefs in Natal, and he occasionally advised Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi. In 1968 his daughter married the deputy Prime Minister of Swaziland. Champion died in 1975.

**Chief Albert Luthuli**

Chief Albert Luthuli, who became Africa’s first Nobel Peace Prize Laureate in 1960, was President-General of the African National Congress (ANC) from December 1952 until his death in 1967. Luthuli was the most widely known and respected African leader of his era. A latecomer to politics, Luthuli was nearly 50 when he assumed the leadership of the ANC. Over the course of his political career his approach became increasingly militant. Yet, there is
still no consensus about whether he approved of the ANC’s transition from a peaceful organisation into one committed to armed struggle.

Luthuli was born in 1898 near Bulawayo in a Seventh Day Adventist mission. His father died when he was an infant, and when he was 10 years old his mother sent him to the family’s traditional home at Groutville mission station in Natal. Luthuli then lived for a period in the household of his uncle, Martin Luthuli, who was at that time the elected Chief of the Christian Zulus inhabiting Umvoti Mission Reserve around Groutville.

On completing a teaching course at Edendale near Pietermaritzburg, Luthuli took up the running of a small primary school in the Natal uplands. Becoming seriously conscious of his religion for the first time, he was confirmed in the Methodist Church and became a lay preacher. The language of the Bible and Christian principles profoundly affected his political style and beliefs for the rest of his life.

In 1920 he received a government bursary to attend a higher teachers’ training course at Adams College, and subsequently joined the training college staff, teaching alongside Z.K. Mathews, who was then the head of Adams College High School. At this stage Adams College was reputed to be one of the best schools in southern and central Africa. Luthuli was offered a scholarship to study at the University College of Fort hare but declined it. He opted to stay as a teacher hoping that the £10 monthly salary would help provide for his aging mother. He appears to have had fond memories of Adams College, once commenting that it “was a world of its own… one in which we were too busy with our profession to pay more than passing attention to what happened elsewhere”.

Despite their almost privileged and insular lifestyles, some students at the College struggled to make ends meet. Anton Lembede, who was to become founder of the ANC Youth League, is known to have worn shabby clothing. The “Amakholwa”, considered the “middle class” of the time, found life difficult. Teachers’ salaries were low and few other professions were open to black people at the time. Luthuli showed empathy with working people’s concerns, joining the Natal Native Teachers Union, and in 1928 was elected its secretary. He accrued valuable political experience by organising boycotts and acting as a negotiator with white authorities.

The American Board Mission’s support of the idea of “muscular Christianity” and the value of a “healthy mind in a healthy body” provided an ideal environment for the meeting of western and indigenous cultures. Football was the school’s most popular sport and as a young faculty member, Luthuli became secretary and supervisor of Adams College Football team, Shooting Stars. By his own admission, Luthuli was not a sport enthusiast, except for an occasional game of tennis.

The American Board Mission had established other football teams, including Ocean Swallows of Umbumbulu (established in the 1880s), Natal Cannons of Inanda (1890s), and Bush Bucks of Ifafa (1902). This institutional support and promotion of sport is consistent with, and lies at the heart of, Victorian England’s rational recreation movement.

Luthuli’s success in popularising sports as a vehicle for good living can be seen in how the idea spread throughout Natal and the Transvaal. Many former Adams students went on to become players and officials in football leagues and clubs in the two provinces. The Witwatersrand District Native Football Association was founded by the “mabalanes”, or
Zulu-speaking clerks. Structured along ethnic lines, these clubs were encouraged by mine management, who saw in them the potential “to keep Natives wholesomely amused”. Membership to the clubs not only occupied their leisure time and emphasised their elite status but also promoted an ethos of loyalty to the mine.

Luthuli and the Mabalanes expressed a “profound cultural ambivalence” about their identity, which straddled traditionalist and modern experiences. It was while Luthuli was steeped in this hybrid world of Western values and traces of traditionalist existence that he was called upon to become chief in his ancestral village of Groutville. Initially, he resisted the appeal by village elders to take up the chieftaincy. Succumbing to pressure from the elders of his tribe, Luthuli agreed in 1935 to accept the chieftaincy of Groutville reserve, and returned home to become an administrator of tribal affairs. For 17 years he immersed himself in the local problems of his people, adjudicating and mediating local quarrels, and organising African cane growers to guard their own interests.

In the early years of his chieftaincy, Luthuli became immersed in the struggles of the cane growers in his chiefdom. At this stage the South African Cane Growers Association, established in August 1927, dominated the production and marketing of sugar cane. Various other associations were established to represent the interests of African, Coloured and Indian sugar cane growers. It is possible that Luthuli became involved with African cane growers, defending their interests. During this period in South African history, the process of land dispossession was largely piecemeal, with Africans resisting total expropriation by finding creative ways of securing access to land. However, by the middle of the 1940s, many African growers had been marginalised, and the government had turned on Indian growers.

The Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, 1946 (Act No. 28 of 1946) was a legislative measure adopted by the government in an attempt to reduce Indian growers to wage labour. The ANC, the Transvaal Indian Congress and the Natal Indian Congress resisted the new measure. In what became known as the “three doctors Pact” Dr. AB Xuma, President of the ANC, Dr. GM Naicker, President of the Natal Indian Congress, and Dr. YM Dadoo, President of the Transvaal Indian Congress, signed a joint declaration of cooperation on March 9, 1947 in a bid to mobilise support for a campaign aimed at resisting these measures.

Through minor clashes with white authority Luthuli had his first direct experience with African political predicaments. Travel outside South Africa also widened his perspective during this period; in 1938 he was a delegate at an international missionary conference in India, and in 1948 he spent nine months on a church-sponsored tour of the United States.

At this stage Luthuli was being gradually eased into a political involvement transcending his role as a chief. Sensing that the ANC in Natal was moribund, and aware of the leadership vacuum created by the illness and the death of John L Dube in 1946, Luthuli became actively involved in strengthening the organisation. Beginning his career in national politics, Luthuli defeated Selby Msimang in a by-election for a successor to Dube on the Natives’ Representative Council (NRC). Luthuli was returned unopposed to the semi-defunct council in 1948. With the backing of the Natal ANC Youth League and Jordan Ngubane in Inkundla ya Bantu, he advanced another step onto the national stage in early 1951 by narrowly defeating AWG Champion to become the Natal provincial president of the ANC.
His public support for the 1952 Defiance Campaign brought him finally into direct conflict with the South African government, and after refusing to resign from the ANC, he was dismissed from his post as chief in November 1952.

During the Defiance Campaign Luthuli was actively involved in soliciting and recruiting volunteers. He was particularly active on the East Rand where, along with Oliver Tambo, he addressed numerous meetings on different occasions. He made numerous trips to the East Rand during the campaign, visiting Katlehong, Tokoza and Tsakane outside Brakpan. The Defiance Campaign in these townships coincided with numerous popular protests such as bus boycotts, squatter movements and industrial strikes. These interactions brought him into contact with leading trade unionists in the region, and helped raise his profile as a potential national leader.

In response to his removal as chief of Grouville, Luthuli issued “The Road to Freedom is via the Cross“, perhaps the most famous statement of his principles a belief in non-violence: a conviction that apartheid degrades all who are party to it, and an optimism that whites would sooner or later be compelled to change heart and accept a shared society. The notoriety gained by his dismissal, his eloquence, his unimpeachable character, and his demonstrated loyalty to the ANC all made Luthuli a natural candidate to succeed ANC President James Moroka, who at his trial during the Defiance Campaign tried to dissociate himself from the other defendants.

At the annual conference of December 1952, Luthuli was elected ANC president-general by a large majority. Bans, imposed in early 1953 and renewed in the following year, prevented him from giving direction in the day-to-day activities of Congress, but as a country-bred “man of the people” combining the most inspiring qualities of Christian and traditional leadership, he became a powerful symbol for an organisation struggling to rally mass support. He was re-elected president-general in 1955 and in 1958. Although bans confined him to his rural home throughout his presidency, he nevertheless was able to write statements and speeches for presentation at ANC conferences, and occasionally circumstances permitted him to attend conferences personally.

In December 1956 he was included in the treason arrests, but was released with 60 others in late 1957 after the pre-trial examination. He was subsequently called as a witness for the defence and was testifying in Pretoria on the day of the Sharpeville shooting in 1960. He enjoyed a period of relative freedom between his release at the end of 1957 and May 1959, when a new ban confined him to the Lower Tugela district for five years.

During this lapse in restrictions, he made a number of highly publicised speeches to whites and mixed audiences, climaxied by a tour of the Western Cape. His polished speeches and balanced appeals for reason in race relations earned him the praise of many whites. Reactions were not all sympathetic. At one meeting in Pretoria he was assaulted and knocked off the platform by a group of young Afrikaners.

Almost from the beginning of his presidency, Luthuli was confronted by critics warning that he was allowing himself to become a tool of the ANC’s left wing. Due to the circumstances of his restrictions, he was unable to closely supervise the activities and movements of other ANC leaders, but he was realistically aware of the problems and hardly the naïve figure that some critics said he was. His reply was always to defend the right of people of all ideological persuasions to play their part in the struggle for African equality and to support the
multiracial Congress Alliance as the foundation of a future integrated society. In ideological terms, he personally expressed a preference for socialism of the type espoused by the British Labour Party.

Until recently, it was widely assumed that Luthuli launched the armed struggle upon his return to South Africa after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. It has since become apparent that he was ambivalent in his support for the transition to armed struggle. According to Scott Couper, it is because of his “domestic and international prominence and impeccable moral character that liberation struggle icons, political parties and politicians justify, in part, their past actions and their contemporary relevance upon a contrived historical memory”. Couper argues that Luthuli did not support the initiation of violence in December 1961 because “his political career proved to be “bound by faith.

Johnny Makatini

Johnstone “Johnny” Mfanafuthi Makhathini was born in Durban on 8 February 1932. He attended school at Adams College in Durban where he trained as a teacher before teaching in Mzinyathi in the Inanda area. When the apartheid government imposed Bantu Education he resigned from teaching and went on to pursue further studies part time at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Makhathini joined politics and devoted his time to organizing the people as an activist of the African National Congress (ANC). He became a key youth organizer in and around Durban and rural Natal. For instance, Makhathini was instrumental in organizing the ANC’s Pietermaritzburg Conference of March 1961. His political activism resulted in his detention by the police several times. He was deeply involved in spreading the message of freedom internationally and advocated the anti-apartheid movement.

In 1962 Makhathini left the country with a group of the first uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) recruits from Natal for military training. He was stationed in Morocco where he became the ANC’s chief representative receiving and overseeing groups of trainees. His stay in Morocco enabled him to learn French which he used to advance the ANC cause in not only English speaking countries but also French speaking countries.

After the independence of Algeria in 1963, the ANC opened a mission in that country and Johnny Makhathini was transferred to join the then Chief Representative, Robert Resha. Makhathini became the ANC Chief Representative in Algeria in 1966. From Algeria,
Makhathini visited Western European countries lobbying against apartheid. In 1974 Makhathini became a member of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the ANC. He was considered to be “the articulate champion of the cause of the oppressed masses of South Africa.”

After his appointment as Head of the ANC mission to the United Nations (UN) in 1977, Makhathini pushed the agenda of the struggle against apartheid in the UN and the Organization of African Union (OAU). Makhathini interacted with members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and diplomats who supported South African liberation movements. He aimed to make the global community aware of the wrongdoings of apartheid South Africa. On 30 October 1985 Makhathini addressed the UN General Assembly on this subject.

His experience in international affairs led to his appointment as Head of the ANC’s Department of International Affairs in 1983. After the National Consultative Conference of the ANC held in Kabwe in 1985, Makhathini returned to Africa to give personal attention to his departmental responsibilities and was based in Zambia.

In 1988 after being admitted to the University Teaching hospital in Lusaka, Zambia, with complications arising from a diabetic condition, Makhathini died on 3 December. In 2010 the South African government engaged the Zambian government to exhume Makhathini’s remains and he was reburied at Heroes Acre Cemetery, Kwa-Zulu Natal, where Moses Mabhida was also reburied, on 27 February 2010.

Dr. Kenneth D Kaunda, first President of the Republic of Zambia referred to Makhathini at his memorial service in 2012 at Woodburn Stadium as “an immensely gifted pan-Africanist with a rare sense of fairness and unfailing courtesy to the others, attributes, which earned him immense respect not only among his comrades but also among other people with whom he interacted.

Dr Monty Naicker

Gagathura (Monty) Mohambry Naicker was born the eldest son of Papiah Gagathura Naicker, a well-to-do businessman, and his wife Dhanalutchmee Pillay. The Naiker family arrived in South Africa when Monty’s grandfather came from India to South Africa as a contract labourer. Monty matriculated at the Marine College in 1927. In 1928 he left for the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, to study medicine. He qualified as a medical doctor in 1934 and then returned to South Africa.
In 1935 Naicker established a medical practice in Durban and in the same year he founded a Hindu Youth Movement, which concentrated on the social and sporting activities of the youth. His medical practice attracted a large number of poor Indians. He became involved with their social and economic problems. In 1940 he joined the Liberal Study Group, a multiracial organisation, and was exposed to radical ideas. To a great extent this group laid the foundation of his later political direction.

Naicker’s active political involvement started in 1941 when he became involved in the Indian trade union movement and associated himself with several strikes between 1941 and 1945. In 1943 he participated in Indian opposition to restrictions on their right to own land, which were imposed by the Pegging Act (Trading and Occupation of Land (Transvaal and Natal) Restriction Act of 1943). The ensuing modifications to the act that the government agreed to did not satisfy Naicker.

In 1944 he was the co-founder and first chairperson of the Anti-Segregation Council and joined in the increasing opposition to the moderate leadership of established Indian politicians such as A. I. Kajee and PR Panther. By 1945 Naicker had built up a great Indian support for his programme of complete equality. When in October 1945 he and like-minded people gained the upper hand in the Natal Indian Congress (NIC), he was elected as president, an office, which he held until 1963. Since 1946 he was an active participant in the Natal Indian Passive Resistance Campaign against the government’s restrictive legislation, including the so-called Ghetto Act (Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act no.28 of 1946) which on the one hand restricted Indian land ownership and residence to specific areas in Natal, and on the other hand tried to soften the drastic effects by offering political representation to Indians through white members of parliament. Several times during the campaign his actions led to his arrest and imprisonment. In 1947 he served a six months’ sentence for occupying land reserved for whites, and in 1948 he was again sentenced to six months’ imprisonment for leading a group of resisters into the Transvaal at Volksrust.

Dr. Naicker called for a “United Democratic Front” as early as 1948, soon after the apartheid regime came to power. Speaking at a mass meeting to welcome him on his release from prison, he declared:

“Our struggle has lit fire in the hearts of other oppressed people and unshackled their bonds to unite with all oppressed people of South Africa. We have reached a stage when we can no longer think in terms of the Indian people alone. We must form a United Democratic Front and challenge any force that will lead the land of our birth to the fate of fascist Germany or Japan.”

When he went to prison in the passive resistance campaign, his medical practice suffered. So did the finances of the NIC after a while. Dr. Naicker then put almost every penny he had at the disposal of NIC. While in prison, he even arranged the sale of his car to raise money for the NIC to organise the campaign. Those who thought he was a figurehead as President of NIC, chosen by young militants, were mistaken.

Naicker was in favour of co-operation between Indians and Africans against the prevailing government. This led to the alliance between the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), and the so-called Doctors’ Pact of March 1947 in which the intention to co-operate was clearly spelled out, the signatories being Naicker, Dr.
Y. M. Dadoo (President of the Transvaal Indian Congress) and Dr. A. B. Xuma (President of the ANC). Shortly afterwards he and Dadoo visited India to recruit support for the endeavours of the South African Indians, and received official recognition from Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru and Jinnah. In September 1948 they were prevented from attending the United Nations session when their passports were confiscated by the government. In January 1949, a day after the beginning of the bloody clashes between Indians and Africans in Durban, he and A.W.G. Champion, the president of the Natal ANC, made an appeal for peace and an end to violence.

In September 1952 Naicker became involved with the Defiance campaign when he and the new president of the Natal ANC, Albert Luthuli, addressed a mass protest meeting in Durban. After the meeting Naicker and 20 black volunteers walked to the Berea railway station in Durban where they deliberately went into the waiting room for whites, and were arrested. He served a month’s prison sentence for this infringement of the law.

During the 1950s Naicker was president of the SAIC for at least two terms. In 1953 he was restricted and forbidden to attend gatherings. However, he remained president of both the SAIC and NIC in name. Naicker was one of the accused in the Treason Trial of 1956-1961 but the charges against him were withdrawn in 1958. Between 1956 and 1968 he was served with several banning orders, the last of which expired in 1973. These restrictions in effect brought an end to his political activities although he headed the Anti-SAIC in 1977 and began a campaign against apartheid institutions created by the government. In 1966 he was forced to evacuate his house in Percy Osborne Road in Durban in terms of the Group Areas Act.

Naicker married Mariemuthu Apavoo of Port Elizabeth in 1936; she also led demonstrators in the Defiance Campaign. She took part in the Passive Resistance Campaign and on occasion was also arrested and imprisoned. They have a son and a daughter. His hobbies included reading, golf, snooker and table tennis. His historical synopsis of Anti-Indian legislation in South Africa was published in 1945. In his political convictions and conduct he was a follower of Gandhi, and remained aloof from Marxist doctrine.

He was a believer of non-violence and was a follower of Mahatma Gandhi right to the end. He was also a close friend of Chief Albert Luthuli. His life was dedicated to service and he was greatly respected for his sacrifice and integrity. He died on January 12 1978, at the age of 67 after a short illness. People of all racial origins attended his funeral. He loved life, and at his funeral, Alan Paton described him as “jollity personified”.

Moses Mabhida

Moses Mbheki Mncane Mabhida was born in Thornville near Pietermaritzburg on 14 October 1923, into a poor family which was later forced off the land. Mabhida could not pursue his studies because of the financial constraints experienced by his family. His formal education
was perpetually interrupted and ended when he finished the ninth grade in 1942. After leaving school, he worked as a waiter and manual labourer.

Mabhida’s two early political motivators were his father, a dedicated member of Clements Kadalie’s Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU), and Harry Gwala, a young teacher in Mabhida’s last year of school, who introduced his students to socialist ideas. Mabhida was drawn to trade unionism and joined the Communist Party in 1942. After many unionists were banned in 1952-1953, his colleagues in the newly revived underground party urged Mabhida to undertake full-time union work. In the next decade, he organised scores of workers in Natal. He was a central participant in the development of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) and was elected a vice-president at its first congress in 1955. He also served as secretary of the ANC’s Pietermaritzburg branch in the mid-1950s, and had a close working relationship with Chief Albert Luthuli. Mabhida became a member of the ANC’s National Executive Committee (NEC) around 1956, and in 1958-1959 was acting chair of the Natal ANC.

A week after the declaration of the 1960 state of emergency, Mabhida was sent abroad by SACTU to represent the organisation internationally. For the next three years he organised international solidarity activities in Prague with the World Federation of Trade Unions, and with the developing African trade union federations. In 1963, however, following his re-election to the NEC at the ANC’s Lobatse conference in October 1962, he was asked by Oliver Tambo to devote himself to the development of the ANC’s armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Mabhida then underwent military training, as MK commissar became the chief political instructor of new military recruits, and later served as the commander of MK. Mabhida’s repeated re-election to the NEC, his appointment to the Revolutionary Council on its creation in 1969, and later to the Politico-Military Council which replaced it, reflected his popularity among ANC members and his close friendship with Tambo. Throughout his years in exile, Mabhida enjoyed wide respect for his practical wisdom and earthy style.

After Morogoro he was instrumental in setting up the ANC’s department of Intelligence and Security, and in 1979 he served on the elite Politico-Military Strategy Commission that produced the Green Book, a landmark policy document. A strict Marxist-Leninist and loyal supporter of the Soviet Union, he was elected general secretary of the Communist Party in November 1979, replacing Moses Kotane who had died the previous year. In his travels across Africa, Mabhida came into contact with Frelimo leader Samora Machel at Kongwa, the first training camp that the Tanzanian authorities allocated to Frelimo and ANC. Both were leaders in the camps of their respective movements.

In the 1980s, Mabhida continued his work of political and logistical planning for MK, based at various times in Lesotho, Mozambique, and Swaziland, where his strong attachment to Zulu culture and history is said to have earned him the affection of the aged King Sobhuza. In 1985, while on a mission to Havana, Mabhida suffered a stroke, and after a year of illness, died of a heart attack in Maputo and was buried there in March 1986.

In a eulogy at his state funeral, Oliver Tambo observed that Mabhida had been educated in “the stern university of mass struggle.... It is rarely given to a people that they should produce a single person who epitomises their hopes and expresses their common resolve as Moses Mabhida did. In simple language he could convey the aspirations of all our people in their magnificent variety, explain the fears and prejudices of the unorganised, and sense the feelings of even the most humble among our people.”
Following his death his friend and fellow revolutionary, Machel, said: “We shall be the guardians of his body. Men who die fighting, who refuse to surrender, who serve the people and the ideals to the last breath, are victors. Mabhida is a victorious combatant”. His body was embalmed with the hope that one day it would be transferred to the liberated South Africa to be reburied. Indeed this hope was realised when his body was exhumed from Maputo’s Lhanguene cemetery and repatriated to a liberated SA in November 2006, twenty years after his death.

The exhumation ceremony was attended by ANC Deputy President Jacob Zuma, Mabhida’s family members, members of the Kwa-Zulu Natal provincial government, Premier Sbu Ndebele and Finance and Economic Affairs MEC Zweli Mkhize and South African High Commissioner to Mozambique, Thandi Rankoe. Members of the Mabhida family broke down with emotion during the exhumation, saying they had always longed to bury him in South African soil.

“This is a moving moment for us. The tears that you see are not tears of pain but tears of joy, because for years we have been trying to get our father reburied in South Africa,” said one of Mabhida’s daughters, Nokuthula Mabhida. “The last time I saw him alive was when I visited him in Mozambique in 1980,” she said.

The transport of his body gave occasion for stop-over rallies in Piet Retief in Mpumalanga, KwaDukuza, Mkuze, Empangeni, Durban Curries Fountain Stadium and he finally came to rest in government Heroes’ Acre at Slangspruit, Pietermaritzburg, in his native province of Kwa-Zulu Natal on 2 December 2006. In 2002, President Thabo Mbeki posthumously awarded the Order of the Baobab to Mabhida, for having played a significant role in the liberation struggle as an exiled leader of the SACP.

Harry Gwala

Politician and teacher Harry Gwala, known as Munt’omdala or The Lion of the Midlands, grew up in the Pietermaritzburg area. After completing his teacher’s diploma at Adams College, Amanzimtoti, he taught at Slangspruit, in the Pietermaritzburg area.

Among his students was Moses Mabhida secretary, who later became a prominent figure among SACP members in exile. Gwala joined the South African Communist Party (SACP) in 1942 and the ANC Youth League two years later. It was during this time that he began organising workers in the chemical and building industries and established the Rubber and Cable Workers’ Union in Howick. However, as many of the workers were migrant labourers, it was difficult to maintain permanent structures. In 1950 he was one of the organisers of the
national stay-away of workers. He was consequently listed under the Suppression of
Communism Act in 1952 and was served a two-year banning order.

He found employment at the Edendale Hospital, but was dismissed for recruiting hospital
workers to become members of the South African Council of Trade Unions (SACTU). After
the banning of the ANC in 1960, Gwala became active underground until his arrest in 1964
for sabotage and for recruiting members for Umkhonto We Sizwe. He was sent to Robben
Island for eight years. He was released in 1972, but was restricted to Pietermaritzburg. As a
result he could not pursue his teaching or trade union activities. He then ran a laundry
collection business in the area.

Despite the restrictions he was subjected to, he remained at the forefront of attempts to revive
SACTU, which at the time was dormant, owing to the many detentions and bannings. He was
detained again in 1975 and towards the end of 1976 Gwala and a number of other ANC
stalwarts were arrested as a result of their involvement in a workers’ strike that took place in
August of that year. In 1977 he was sentenced to life imprisonment at Robben Island. Gwala
became known for his Marxist-Leninist teachings, particularly among the youth while at
Robben Island. While he was in prison his wife, Elda, passed away, but he was not allowed to
attend the funeral. In the 1980s a motor neuron disease robbed him of the use of his arms,
leading to his release from prison in November 1988.

This disability did not deter him from working for the cause and despite all these hardships he
continued to inspire many people in the struggle for democracy, peace and justice. Gwala was
elected the first Chairperson of the ANC in the Natal Midlands after the unbanning of the
movement in 1990. He became a member of the Internal Leadership Core and in 1991 he was
elected to the ANC National Executive, in which capacity he served until 1994. He was
nominated to the SACP Central Committee in 1994, but was suspended in the same year. He
nonetheless remained a loyal member of the SACP until his death.

Gwala was sometimes described as too blunt and too emotional about issues. He was also
regarded as a harsh warlord because he was unremittent about when it came to the need to
defend people. These negative aspects could, perhaps, be attributed to his single-minded
dedication to the struggle. He was a great political teacher who taught generation after
generation. He became known for his teachings at Robben Island, which was often referred to
as ‘our university’. He introduced members of the younger generation to Marxist theory and
communism.

Among others, he mentored Terror Lekota and William Khanyile of SACTU. He was also an
ardent and strident theorist who believed that everything could be explained in theoretical
terms. He read voraciously although he had no academic background. At Robben Island he
used the Bible - the only book provided - to teach communism. He loved history, both local
and international, and hardly ever answered any questions without referring to history. On the
occasion of the 80th anniversary of the ANC on 8 January 1992, Gwala was awarded the
Isitwalandwe, the highest honour bestowed by the ANC on members for dedication, service
and selfless commitment. President Nelson Mandela said in his address at Gwala’s funeral
that it was ‘precisely because of the recognition of Mphephethwa's tenacity that the ANC
awarded him this honour’.

After the April 1994 General Election Gwala was nominated as a provincial member of the
KwaZulu-Natal legislature, where he also served as Chief ANC Whip. Gwala and his wife had three daughters, Mfana, Linda and Lindiwe.

Dorothy Nyembe

Dorothy Nomzansi Nyembe was born on the 31st of December 1931 near Dundee in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Her mother, Leeya Basolise Nyembe was the daughter of Chief Ngedee Shezi. Dorothy attended mission schools until Standard Nine, and at the age of fifteen gave birth to her only child. She joined the African National Congress (ANC) in 1952, participating as a volunteer in the Defiance Campaign in Durban and was imprisoned briefly on two occasions. In 1954 she participated in the establishment of the ANC Women’s League in Cato Manor and becoming Chairperson of the “Two Sticks” Branch Committee. She earned a living as a hawker. She was one of the leaders against the removals from Cato Manor in 1956, and also one of the leaders of boycotts of the government controlled beer hall. The beer halls were perceived to destroy traditional beer brewing, the only viable source of income for women in the townships. In the same year, Dorothy was elected as Vice-President of the Durban ANC Women’s League and a leading member of the Federation of South African Women.

On the 9th of August 1956, she led the Natal contingent of women to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against the introduction of passes for women. In December of that same year she was one of the 156 people arrested and charged with high treason, but the charges against her and sixty others were dropped on 18 December 1957. In 1959 she was elected President of the ANC Women’s League in Natal, and was active in the potato boycott, called in protest against the use and treatment of prison labourers on potato farms in the Transvaal.

In 1961, Dorothy was recruited into Umkhonto we Sizwe and worked closely with the likes of Chief Albert Luthuli, Moses Mabhida, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Oliver Tambo. In 1962 with the ANC outlawed, Dorothy became President of the Natal Rural Areas Committee where she participated in the organisation of anti-government demonstrations by rural women, including their refusal to fill cattle dips. The campaign became known as the Natal Women’s Revolt. In 1963, Dorothy was arrested and charged with furthering the aims of the banned ANC and she was sentenced to three years’ imprisonment.

Following her release in 1966 Dorothy was served with a five-year banning order restricting her to the magisterial district of Durban, however she carried on with her underground activities. In 1968 she was detained with ten others and charged on five counts under the Suppression of Communism Act. In January 1969 she was found guilty of harbouring members of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC, and was sentenced to fifteen years’ imprisonment.
She was released on 23 March 1984, and became active in the Natal Organisation of Women (NOW), a community organisation fighting against rent increases, transport costs, poor education and lack of child care facilities. Dorothy was awarded the Soviet Union’s greatest awards, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) People’s Friendship Award. In 1992 she was awarded the Chief Albert Luthuli prize for her commitment and dedication to the liberation struggle.

In 1994 after the first democratic elections, she was one of the pioneer Members of the National Assembly and one of the founding mothers and fathers of the South African democratic constitution. Dorothy Nyembe may rest in peace now. Dorothy died on the 17 December 1998. “She will rest in peace for she died a day after our heroes whose remains lie strewn along the sacred Ncome River were finally recognised and honoured. She will rest in peace for she knows that the struggle continues and must continue for her colleagues - Florence Mkhize, Tryphina “Mamboxela” Njokweni, Gladys Manzi and Alzina Zondi remain at the helm of the struggle”.

**Florence Mkhize**

Mkhize, widely known as ‘Mam Flo’, was born in 1932 in Natal. At a young age she decided she wanted to fight against apartheid and the oppression of women, and so joined the Congress Movement. She participated in the Defiance Campaign in 1952, which led to her being banned. She did not give up, and continued to communicate with her comrades through the sewing factory where she worked.

The next project with which Mkhize got involved was the Freedom Charter, where she was appointed as a volunteer to participate in writing the Charter. However, on the way to Kliptown her bus was stopped by police and sent back. She next planned to participate in the Women’s March in 1956 in Pretoria, but was once again sent home after her bus was stopped by police. The liberation of women was always high on Mkhize’s agenda, and she worked underground with the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) together with - and among others - Helen Joseph and Dorothy Nyembe. In 1957 she participated in the Potato Boycott against the sale of ‘Ons Land’ cigars. In June 1968, Mkaize was banned for five years under the Suppression of Communism Act.

After the banning of the African National Congress (ANC), Mkhize continued in the struggle as a member of the South African Communist Party (SACP) and an organiser of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) until these structures were suppressed too.

During the 1970s Mkhize led the Release Mandela Campaign in Natal. In the 1980s she led the people of Lamontville during the education and housing crisis and was among the founding members of the United Democratic Front in 1983. She also worked with the Natal Organisation of Women (NOW) in an attempt to get support from women from other racial groups. In thanks for all her work, Mkhize received the Bravery Award from the ANC Women’s League in 1998, and a Military Gold Medal from Nelson Mandela at the MK Military Veterans Conference in 1999. She died in July 1999.
Eleanor Kasrils was born in Scotland in 1936. She came to Durban as an infant. In March 1960, Ronnie Kasrils, later, her husband, visited Durban, to visit his relative Jacqueline Arenstein, a member of the Communist Party of South Africa, when he first met Eleanor. Eleanor joined the underground SACP in the late 1950s. She was among the first women to join the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) the ANC’s armed wing in 1960. She was part of a Natal MK network that included the late Billy Nair and Eleanor’s future husband, Ronnie Kasrils. She joined the Congress of Democrats in 1960 after the Sharpeville massacre.

In 1961, Eleanor was working in a bookstore in Durban when Ronnie got her to help him distribute ANC pamphlets in Durban against the Nationalist Government’s declaration of South Africa as a republic. By 1961, Eleanor as part of the MK team comprising Ronnie Kasrils, Billy Nair, Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim et al assisted in identifying sites in Durban where dynamite was being stored. She secured a key which Ronnie was able to use to get into a storage facility at a local quarry to steal dynamite. Eleanor drove the getaway car, after Ronnie and his unit had attached the dynamite explosives, in the first MK sabotage acts in Durban in December 1961.

Together with Phyllis Naidoo, Theo Kloppenberg and others Eleanor was involved in assisting banished persons in Natal. When Rowley Arenstein, a Communist Party member, received a dusk-to-dawn house arrest order, Eleanor, Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim and Barry Higgs (amongst others) staged a solidarity demonstration outside his house. They were arrested and fined for causing a public disturbance.

Once, in 1963, when Ronnie was under house arrest, the Security Police went to their house at 2 a.m. in the morning. Eleanor helped Ronnie escape through a trapdoor, under their bed, into the floor of their bedroom. Eleanor was instrumental in setting up an underground base for Ronnie and other MK cadres in Kloof when they were forced to go underground. The late MP Naicker sent Eleanor to Johannesburg to obtain funds for Ronnie’s group. In Johannesburg, Eleanor reported to Bram Fischer, the Communist Party leader.

The unit then moved to another safe house in Kloof. Eleanor, on her way back from Johannesburg, again on another errand for Ronnie’s unit, learnt of the arrest of Bruno Mtolo, a member of the unit. She then drove the unit to Pietermaritzburg to another safe location. By now, Eleanor was the unit’s only link with the outside world.

Her comrades in Durban thought she was at risk and wanted to send her out of the country. In the wake of the Rivonia arrests, Bram Fischer, asked her to consider remaining in Durban where she could play a role in the reconstruction of the underground movement. Eleanor agreed to this request. The Communist Party then ordered Ronnie to move to Johannesburg. In 1963, Eleanor was detained under the 90 Day Act, the second White woman to be detained under the Act. She was held in solitary confinement at Durban Central Prison and interrogated daily. She eventually managed to escape from the Security Police by getting herself admitted to Fort Napier, a mental asylum, she feigned a mental breakdown. From there she smuggled out a letter to Ronnie warning him that Bruno Mtolo had broken under...
interrogation. Later Bruno would be used by the Security Police as an expert witness in political trials.

Eleanor planned and executed her escape from Fort Napier and the police. The police set up roadblocks around Pietermaritzburg in the wake of her escape but she was not recaptured. She made her way back to Johannesburg disguised as a boy where she reunited with Ronnie. Eleanor and Ronnie escaped into Bechuanaland (now Botswana). Babla Saloojee, later murdered by the Security Police in Johannesburg, drove them to the border. Eleanor was disguised in a traditional Muslim outfit and Ronnie as an Indian businessman. In October 1963, with Julius First, who was brought to the border by Molvi Cachalia, the trio made their way safely across the border. They were granted political asylum in Bechuanaland.

They later departed for Tanzania in a six-seater aircraft. Their first stop was at Kasane, on the banks of the Zambezi River. They were forced to spend the night in the police cells as the District Commissioner ‘could not guarantee their safety’. They eventually arrived in Dar es Salaam where Eleanor and Ronnie worked in the ANC office. At the end of 1964, Eleanor and Ronnie married in Tanzania. In June 1965, suffering from repeated malaria attacks she was sent to England for treatment. She was also expecting a child. In August, the ANC leadership sent Ronnie to join Eleanor in London. Their son Andrew was born soon after his arrival. Then on 25 April 1974, after almost 11 years of separation Eleanor was reunited with her daughter from her first marriage, Brigid. Eleanor’s parents had taken care of Brigid when Eleanor was forced into exile.

In 1978 Ronnie left for the MK camp in Angola. In 1979, The International Year of the Child (IYC), Dulcie September was elected as chairperson of the IYC Committee of the ANC Women’s Section in London, Eleanor was among other members who served on the Committee. This Committee researched and compiled a booklet to inform the international community of the plight of children under apartheid. The booklet was published on 16 June, in commemoration of Soweto Day.

By the end of 1989, Eleanor was living in London with the children while Ronnie had been working for the ANC from its Lusaka headquarters. She was active in Operation Vula, and was particularly involved in preparing disguises for comrades about to be deployed into the underground. Eleanor also worked for the late ANC President Oliver Tambo from 1990 until his death in 1993 when she returned to South Africa.

In November 1992 press reports claimed that she had been the link between the ANC and the Irish Republican Army. These allegations had been previously made against her in the British House of Commons by Andrew Hunter, a Conservative Party Member of Parliament. The allegations made in a court of law in South Africa referred to statements made during inquest proceedings into the death of the late Bheki Mlangeni, claiming Eleanor had been a link between the ANC and the IRA. She was prevented from instituting proceedings to protect her reputation as the statements were privileged. Eleanor had reason to believe that the allegations were made in documents emanating from the South African Defence Force that had been leaked to newspapers. She then instructed her attorneys to investigate and if necessary commence defamation proceedings against the persons responsible for those documents. Eleanor said that the allegation that she was a link between the ANC and the IRA was false and defamatory.
In the first democratic elections in South Africa, Eleanor, Ronnie and their son, Andrew, cast their votes in Duduza, east of Johannesburg. In May 2001, the Amnesty Committee of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Cape Town granted Eleanor and Ronnie Kasrils amnesty for: the destruction of electric pylons near Pinetown with David Ndawonde; damage to property; bombing of the Central Post Office in Durban in 1962; and bomb explosion at the offices of the Security Police in Baker Street Durban. She also applied for amnesty for theft of dynamite near Marionhill and destruction of electricity pylons near Pinetown between 1962 and 1963. Eleanor Kasrils died on 8 November 2009 at the age of 73 at the Constantiaberg Medi-Clinic in Cape Town.

Mahomed Moosa (Chota) Motala

Motala was 83 years old when he died, after a long illness. Born in Dundee on 14 June 1921, he matriculated at Sastri College in Durban in 1938. He studied medicine in India, after stowing away on a ship at the age of 18 to get there. Motala returned to South Africa in 1948 and immediately became involved in politics having arrived from India, fresh from the struggle to end British rule. He had been loosely involved as a student activist in the Indian National Congress. So our house became a meeting place for all race groups interested in fighting apartheid.

The house was in Boom Street and Motala, the second black doctor to set up a practice in Pietermaritzburg had his rooms in Retief Street. He was one of the 156 accused in the famous 1956 treason trial in Johannesburg. He was first locked up in the Fort Prison with other treason trialists, including Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu who became firm friends. During the duration of the trial, he lived with various activists in Johannesburg and travelled once a month with other trialists from Natal. The charges against him were dropped in 1959. He returned to his practice and continued to care for patients in the surrounding coloured, Indian and African townships. He once said it was the shocking conditions under which his patients lived that both galvanised and sustained his political activity.
Motala revived the Pietermaritzburg branch of the Natal Indian Congress and was elected chairperson in 1953. With other Indian Congress members he began forging close ties with the local branch of the ANC. He was elected joint chairperson with Archie Gumede to lead the campaign to collect the views of people of the Natal Midlands on what should be included in the Freedom Charter. In June 1955 he spoke on behalf of Chief Albert Luthuli at the farewell function for the Durban delegates going to Kliptown where the Freedom Charter was drafted. Motala once described Luthuli as a very important mentor in his life.

The year after his release from the treason trial, Motala was charged with incitement for his role in the strike by local leatherworkers. He was also detained during the 1960 State of Emergency and was banned from 1963 to 1968. During this time and through the seventies he continued being involved in community activities and quietly mentored young activists. By the eighties with the revival of the Natal Indian Congress and the United Democratic Front (UDF) he became politically active again, often being seen at the front of political marches and speaking from podiums during the various campaigns for community rights. He was detained again briefly during the 1986 State of Emergency.

When the ANC was unbanned in 1990 he was elected chairperson of his branch. Motala declined nomination to serve as an MP but could not refuse when his old friend Mandela asked him to become ambassador to Morocco. Mandela was a frequent visitor to Motala’s Boom Street residence and had had lunch there shortly before he was arrested in Howick in 1962.

Motala was tireless in his service to the community; he never gave up on his medical practice. Younger political activists Yusuf Bhamjee and Yunus Carrim who are now both national parliamentarians, recall his treating scores of victims of political violence. They say that, during the Seven Day War of 1990, it is estimated that he and his partners treated over 2,000 victims of violence.

In 1997 the Pietermaritzburg Municipality awarded Motala civic honours for improving the quality of life for the sick and the poor in the city and for his role in community affairs and the liberation struggle. The citation of his activities seemed endless including his role in many campaigns from the Freedom Charter, the Potato Boycott, the Group Areas Act, opposition to the Bantu Education Act and the Tri-cameral System. He was also a member of the Indian Centenary Trust and the Gandhi Memorial Committee. Together with Dasrath Bundhoo, he was instrumental in arranging for a statue of Mahatma Gandhi to be erected in the Pietermaritzburg city centre.

Joe Mkhwanazi - PAC stalwart and former KZN MPL

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33 Mayibongwe Maqhina
Joe Mkwanazi was a PAC stalwart who served as a Member of Parliament in the KZN legislature. He died at the age of 84 year in Johannesburg in January 2013. Mkhwanazi, popularly known as “Khwani”, was born on March 8, 1928, at Mandlanzini in the Empangeni district. He cut his political teeth in the ANC Youth League and became a founding member of the Pan Africanist Congress. After completing his teaching diploma at Adams College, he taught between 1949 until 1963, including as headmaster of Hlophekhulu Senior School in KZN.

After the Sharpeville massacre and the banning of the PAC and ANC, Mkhwanazi went into exile in 1963. His job as an executive of Coca Cola in Swaziland offered the perfect cover for his political activities. He was the link between the PAC underground and exiled leadership. However, Mkhwanazi’s cover was blown in the lengthy Bethal trial, in which several PAC leaders were charged, prosecuted and convicted of the instigation, organisation and the execution of the 1976 Soweto youth uprising. Under intense pressure from South Africa, including threats of cross-border raids, PAC leaders in Swaziland, including Mkhwanazi, were rounded up, arrested and detained. They were declared persona non grata and their political asylum and refugee status revoked. After six months in solitary confinement, Mkhwanazi was released in 1978 and immediately deported to the United Kingdom, where he was granted asylum. In 1982, the PAC redeployed Mkhwanazi to Dar es Salaam, where he served under then acting PAC president Potlako Leballo as administrative secretary. He was also part of the PAC’s military commission, the body with oversight over the Azanian People’s Liberation Army and its high command. On his return to the country after the unbanning of the PAC and ANC, he continued in his role as administrative secretary and later served as the party’s national chairperson.
Mkhwanazi was part of the PAC’s team at the Codesa multi-party negotiations, which paved the way for South Africa’s first democratic elections. He became the PAC’s sole MPL in the KZN legislature after the 1994 democratic election and later become its councillor in eThekwini.

**Rusty Bernstein**

Rusty Bernstein was an anti-apartheid activist and political prisoner who played a major part on the committee which organised the Congress of the People rallies at which the Freedom Charter was adopted on 26 June 1955. Rusty Bernstein was born in Durban. He was orphaned at eight years old, and brought up by relatives, after which he was sent to finish his education at Hilton College. After matriculating, he worked at an architect’s office while studying part-time at Wits University. After qualifying in 1936, he worked full-time as an architect.

In 1937 he joined the Labour League of Youth. Later, he joined the SA Communist Party. In March 1941, he volunteered for the SA Army and later served as a gunner in North Africa and Italy. He was repatriated and discharged from the army at the beginning of 1946. During the strike of black miners in 1946, he produced the strike bulletin. After the strike both he and his wife Hilda were arrested together with others and charged with sedition. They were ultimately convicted of aiding an illegal strike and received suspended sentences.

In 1950, the SA Communist Party was disbanded and SACP members became subject to restrictions, including a ban on being published. After this, Bernstein took part with others in forming an underground Communist Party. He was prominent in forming the Congress of Democrats, an organisation for whites that could co-operate with the ANC, which at that time was restricted to black membership only. This Congress Alliance drew in radical trade unions, and many other non-racial political organisations.

In 1954, the ANC called its allies to a joint meeting in Natal. This included the SA Indian Congress, the Congress of Democrats, the SA Congress of Trade Unions, and the Coloured Peoples’ Congress. It was at this historic meeting that it was decided to convene a “Congress of the People” where a Freedom Charter would be adopted. Bernstein played a major part on

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34 [http://www.yworld.co.za/day_in_history/](http://www.yworld.co.za/day_in_history/)
the committee organising the Congress, and worked closely with Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Oliver Tambo.

At the end of 1956, Rusty and 150 others were arrested and charged with Treason. The Treason Trial lasted for more than four years after which all the accused were found not guilty and discharged.

In 1960, the Sharpeville massacre took place, and he and his wife were both among those arrested and detained. He was not released until five months later when the state of emergency was lifted. In 1962, he was again placed under house arrest. His covert ANC and Communist Party activities led up to the police raid on Liliesleaf Farm, Rivonia, where he and 10 other prominent ANC leaders were arrested on 11 July 1963.

At the end of the trial, the remaining men were all found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment. Rusty was the only one found not guilty and he was discharged. He was immediately re-arrested while leaving the dock and later released on bail. Shortly after his release, the police came to arrest his wife, Hilda, but she escaped from their home and went into hiding.

The Bernsteins fled to Botswana on foot and eventually made their way into Zambia. They travelled overland to Tanzania and then to England, where their children joined them one by one. Rusty worked as an architect in London. In 1987, he conducted a series of seminars for the ANC in Moscow, on the history of South Africa’s liberation struggles. He also spent a year in Tanzania setting up a political science school and teaching the history of the freedom struggle to young exiles. He returned to South Africa for four months in 1994 for the first post-apartheid elections and worked in the ANC press office.

In 1998 both Rusty and Hilda were awarded honorary degrees from the University of Natal for their role in helping to bring democracy to South Africa. This followed the publication of Rusty’s acclaimed book on the unwritten history of South African politics between 1938 and 1964. Rusty Bernstein died at his home on 23 June 2002, aged 82.

**Rowley Arenstein**

Rowley Israel Arenstein was born in 1919. Arenstein was a prominent Durban attorney and a leader of the Congress of Democrats (COD). He joined the Communist Party in 1938, becoming an organizer for the Durban and District branch. In 1947, he withdrew from active politics in order to concentrate on his legal practice, but he did participate in the Durban branch of the COD in the 1950s.

In 1950, following the Suppression of Communism Act, the South African Communist Party (SACP) decided to disband (though an underground SACP was soon set up). Arenstein worked closely with Chief Albert Luthuli and Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi. Buthelezi had been expelled from Fort Hare University for his African National Congress (ANC) activities and had come to work at the Durban Commissioner’s Court, the administrative experience being thought useful to the future chief. Arenstein and Buthelezi became close friends. Buthelezi became one of Rowley’s articled clerks. When the chieftaincy of the Buthelezi clan was offered to him, Rowley helped Buthelezi defeat an early challenge to his chieftaincy and became his legal adviser.
Arenstein was first barred from political activities in 1953 when he banned. During this period he was active in organizing opposition to the new laws enforcing apartheid and in establishing labour unions in Durban. Arenstein suffered the longest period of banning (33 years) in South African history and endured the longest house arrest (18 years), with his wife Jackie not far behind: she was house-arrested for six years, banned for 19. His wife, Jacqueline Arenstein, a journalist, was a defendant in the 1956 Treason Trial. Though banned, he continued to defend persons accused of political offences.

Among the ANC activists with whom Buthelezi mingled at the Arenstein house were Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu – who always visited Rowley when they came down to Durban to visit Luthuli. Rowley found himself becoming increasingly critical of the autocratic style of the Johannesburg-based Communists who ran the underground SACP and, through it, the ANC.

In 1960 with the Pondoland insurrection against the Government-imposed Bantustan policy, the Pondos were fiercely suppressed and turned to the Arenstein for help. At least 11 people were killed and 60 wounded. Four months after the dead were buried; their remains were exhumed at his insistence after he challenged police claims that fewer than 11 people were killed. Arenstein was barred from leaving the magisterial district of Durban on 1 October 1960 and subsequently could not represent his clients. He had to go to Pondoland to defend them – many of the Eastern Cape Communists had been detained. When he got back to Durban, a delegation of Pondo leaders came to see him requesting that he facilitates a purchase of guns. Arenstein was able to convince them otherwise and dissuade them from embarking on a violent course. In 1961, he led the legal fight for the release of Anderson Ganyile and other leaders of the Pondoland revolt who had been seized in Lesotho by the South African Police (SAP).

He was vociferous in opposing the move to the armed struggle, predicting that it would bring catastrophe to both the SACP and ANC. During this period, Arenstein claims that he resigned from the Party, although the party insisted that he was expelled.

Arenstein was detained without trial in 1964, and went on hunger strike and was released. When Bram Fischer went underground in 1965, one of the first things he did was to re-establish links with Arenstein, in Natal and Fred Carneson in Cape Town. In 1966 he was sentenced to four years’ jail under the Suppression of Communism Act for furthering the aims of Communism. The prosecution failed to pin a charge of belonging to the SACP. In jail, he developed a strong friendship with the SACP leader Bram Fischer whom he held in very high esteem.

In 1970, Arenstein emerged from jail to find that the ANC had been so utterly smashed that it had effectively ceased to exist within the country. When the Government offered Buthelezi the post of Chief Minister of KwaZulu he sought Arenstein’s advice, and that of the exiled ANC. Both agreed that he should accept – but refuse to take independence.

In 1971, Arenstein remained struck off the official list of attorneys – a punitive measure by the Government which had been in force for twenty years – and was forced to practise from modest offices disguised as a ‘business adviser and consultant’. Although he remained banned he assisted the Defence in the Pietermaritzburg trial of 13, charged under the Terrorism Act. He was later banned from practicing law and placed under house arrest in Durban. He spent the early seventies as an adviser to trade unionists when moves were being
made to build up a black labour organisation. He was also a legal advisor to the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).

In 1988, despite the vehement protests of the Government, Buthelezi nominated Arenstein as one of his negotiating committee with Pretoria. Thus, Arenstein also served as a legal advisor for the Inkatha Freedom Party.

When Winnie Mandela was denounced for her association with the Mandela United Football Club, Arenstein offered to help her, an offer which she accepted. After Mandela was released Arenstein phoned him and told him that the political violence between the ANC and Inkatha in Natal had to be stopped, and that to achieve this he had to meet Buthelezi. Mandela agreed and told him to arrange such a meeting. The Inkatha stronghold of Taylor’s Halt was chosen as a venue. However, the meeting did not take place but eventually, Mandela and Buthelezi met. The Arensteins had two children and lived in Durban. Arenstein died in 1996.

Fatima Meer

Fatima was born in Grey Street (Durban) on 12 August 1928, the daughter of Moosa Meer, editor and publisher of *Indian Views* [1914-1965], and Rachel Farrel. Fatima was the second of nine children and their upbringing was not ordinary, and certainly unlike that of most contemporary Muslims. Her mother, Rachel, was an orphan of Jewish and Portuguese descent, but she converted to Islam and took the name Amina.

Her father, Moosa, was born in Surat, Gujarat and came from the small Sunni Bhora community. Although not formally trained in Islamic theology, he was widely-read and highly respected for his immense knowledge of Islam, Hinduism and Christianity. He passed on his love for language, scholarship, religious tolerance and tireless opposition to discrimination to Fatima and her eight brothers and sisters. Moosa was also the editor and publisher of *Indian Views*, a weekly publication aimed at the Gujarati-speaking Muslim community of Southern Africa. The paper’s primary focus was on the struggle against white minority rule but it had a strong anti-colonial stance as well, particularly drawing attention to the Indian struggle against British imperialism, framed within a pan-Islamic perspective.

Fatima also came from a large extended family. It was a household that reflected a strong Gujarati-Indian and Muslim cultural ethos against a background of a first generation immigrant family struggling to survive in a racist society. Fatima’s father Moosa presided over his large extended family in a liberal Islamic atmosphere, one highly conscious of racial discrimination and the international struggle against colonialism. Many of the men in Fatima’s extended family played leading roles in the Natal and South African Indian Congress. From a very young age Fatima started doing odd jobs for the production of the family-owned newspaper, the *Indian View*. She learnt the power of the written and spoken word at an early age, and over the years she developed a strong command of the English language that helped her career as an academic, writer and Human Rights and political activist.

Moosa valued education and ensured that all his children received formal education. Fatima was educated at Durban Indian Girls’ High School and subsequently completed her Bachelor’s and Masters degrees in Sociology at the University of Natal - a remarkable achievement for her time, because very few black, let alone Muslim, girls attended high schools and only a handful of Indian women went on to graduate from University. Fatima’s political activism started early. In 1944, when she was 16 years old, she helped raise £1000
for famine relief in Bengal. Though short and petite, Meer became a powerful public figure. She was poised, intelligent, quick-witted, intense, strong willed and energetic. These characteristics meant that Meer did not suffer fools and almost always got her way and no matter what the circumstances she expected no favours on the basis of gender.

Fatima’s political activism was ignited again in 1946 when the Passive Resistance campaign was inaugurated, this was while she was still at Durban Indian Girls High School. Fatima, like thousands of Indians, was swept up by the 1946 Indian Passive Resistance Campaign, which was the most dramatic show of militant anti-government action in South African history. Fatima established the Student Passive Resistance Committee to support the campaign and this propelled her into the public eye. She was invited to speak at some of the mass rallies and shared the platform with the prominent anti-apartheid leaders, Dr Yusuf Dadoo and Dr Monty Naicker.

At least four of Meer’s close family members also joined the campaign and served various prison terms as a result. Two such family members were; Miss Zohra Meer and Ismail Meer - Fatima’s future husband - who was one of the leaders of the Campaign. In 1949 Durban and the country were shaken by the outbreak of Indo-African race riots. Shortly after the Riots, Fatima threw herself into community work to improve race relations between Indians and Africans in Durban. She helped organise Indian and African women under the banner of the Durban and District Women’s League. She became Secretary of the League and Bertha Mkhize (president of the ANC Women’s League) became the Chairperson. This was the first women’s organisation with joint Indian and African membership. The League organised a crèche and distributed milk in the large shanty town of Cato Manor. The race riots was one of the turning points in Fatima’s life, and she spent the better part of her life working tirelessly to improve race relations, promoting justice, reconciliation and non-violent action.

Meer married in 1950. She married her first cousin, Ismail Meer, a practice not uncommon amongst the Sunni Bhora community. Fatima’s political involvement increased with the establishment of the Congress Alliance in 1950 and with the mounting of the Defiance Campaign in 1952. In 1952 she was amongst those banned under the new Suppression of Communism Act for a period of three years and confined to the district of Durban. The banning order prohibited her from attending all public gatherings and from having her work published.

The role that Fatima and her husband played in cementing the relationship between the Indian and African National Congress and with people such as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo and Chief Albert Luthuli, is one of the enduring stories of the liberation movement that was eloquently told in IC Meer’s autobiography. The Meer’s friendship with Nelson Mandela and his family is one that has endured over the years. Fatima had a close working relationship with Winnie Mandela because of their involvement in the Black Women’s Federation; they also served six months in detention together. Mandela’s trust and confidence in Meer’s writing ability was affirmed when he agreed to her doing his first authorized biography titled, ‘Higher than hope’.

In 1955 Meer became a founding member of the Federation of South African Women, the Women’s organisation that organised the famous Anti-Pass March on the Union Buildings in Pretoria in 1956. In 1956 Meer started to lecture in Sociology at the University of Natal. She was the first Black woman to be appointed as a lecturer at a white South African University.
She was on the staff of Natal University until 1988 and was the only banned person who was ever granted permission to teach at any educational institution.

After the Sharpeville Massacre in March 1960, the South African government declared a State of Emergency and detained large numbers of people without trial. Meer’s husband was one of the Natal leaders arrested and held at the Durban Central Police Station. Meer organised weekly vigils outside the Durban prison, and played a central role in organising some of the families of the detainees to provide food and support for the prisoners and their families. The group was arrested for demonstrating outside the prison and for organising a march to the mayor’s office; they were released shortly after their arrest. Meer was also involved in organising a week-long vigil at the Gandhi Settlement in Phoenix, which brought together Africans and Indians in prayer and fasting; the vigil was led by Sushila Gandhi, Mahatma Gandhi’s daughter-in-law.

During the 1970s, Fatima was one of the leading anti-apartheid voices in the country. At this time – even though she faced strong opposition from her family and Indian Congress colleagues – she began to embrace the Black Consciousness ideology of the South African Student Organisation (SASO), led by Steve Biko.

In 1972, Fatima founded the Institute of Black Research (IBR) which became the leading Black-run research institution, publishing house and educational and welfare NGO in the country. The IBR became, for the next three decades, Fatima’s principal channel for the dissemination of a wide range of her activities as academic, writer and community activist.

In 1975, for her outspoken public criticism of apartheid, Meer was served with another five years’ banning order. On 19 August 1976 Meer’s son, Rashid, was detained in the wake of the 1976 student revolt. Nine days later, Meer was also detained along with 11 other women. Sections of her six month detainment without trial were done in solitary confinement. Meer was detained with Winnie Mandela and other members of the Black Women’s Federation at Johannesburg’s notorious Fort Prison.

Shortly after her release in December 1976, Meer survived an assassination attempt when her house was petrol-bombed and a guest was shot and wounded by apartheid agents. This did not dampen her spirit and she continued to write and publish under pen names often of family members and co-workers. Meer was charged twice for breaking her orders. This was a difficult period for Meer as her teenage son Rashid was forced into exile. She did not see him for over a decade.

In 1979 Meer, in contravention of her banning order, established the Tembalishe Tutorial College at Gandhi’s Phoenix Settlement. The college was established to train African students in secretarial skills. Meer also established a Crafts Centre at the Settlement where unemployed people were taught screen printing, sewing, embroidery and knitting. The College and Crafts Centre were closed in 1982 when Fatima was arrested for contravening her banning order. Her ‘crime’ was that she was supervising work that was outside the Durban’s boundary.

With the help of the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Meer arranged for a number of African students to get scholarships in India to study medicine and the political sciences and under her leadership, from 1986-88, the IBR addressed the low pass rate among African matriculates by organising tutorial programmes in science and mathematics. In 1986 Meer
started Phambili High School for Africans; 3000 students enrolled. In 1993 Meer founded the Khanyisa School Project as a bridging programme for African children from informal settlements, which assisted underprivileged learners who required preparation for formal schooling. Meer also founded the Khanya Women’s Skills Training Centre in 1996, which trained 150 African women annually in pattern-cutting and sewing, adult literacy and business management.

In 1992 Meer founded the Clare Estate Environment Group in response to the needs of shack dwellers and rural migrants, deemed by the government to have no rights in urban areas; she drew attention to the fact that they were without clean water, sanitation and proper housing. Years of fighting against Apartheid and repression bore fruit when South African’s voted in their first democratic election in 1994.

In 1994, Meer declined a seat in parliament because of her interest in non-governmental work. However, she served the ANC government in a number of capacities; she was the adviser to the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology; she was on the National Symbols Commission and the National Anthem Commission; she was a member of the Advisory Panel to the President; she was on the Film and Publication Board, and on the Board of the South African Broadcasting Corporation.

In May 1999, Meer helped found the Concerned Citizens’ Group [CCG] to persuade Indians not to vote for white parties as many had done in 1994. During her visits to the predominantly Indian working class townships of Chatsworth and Phoenix, she was appalled by the levels of poverty, and responded to the plight of those facing eviction for failing to pay rates, water and electricity accounts due to unemployment. She organised successful interdicts against unlawful eviction, and won reprieves with costs. Meer continues to be actively involved with these communities. She was also an active participant in marches on the American Consulate during 2001 and 2002 to protest against the oppression and murder of Palestinians and against the war in Afghanistan. Meer is also patron and founder member of Jubilee 2000, formed to lobby for the cancellation of Third World debt.

The past few years have been difficult for Meer. She lost her son, Rashid, with whom she was reunited after almost two decades, in a tragic car accident. She lost her husband, Ismail, companion and comrade for five decades. She has suffered several heart attacks and strokes, but through all this, the remarkable 80 year-old Meer remains a fighter and unflinching champion of the under classes. In immersing herself in liberation politics, education, social work, poverty alleviation and health care, Fatima has been an exemplary human being, propelled by her unequivocal faith in Islam, to improve the lot of her fellow people. Her immense contribution to the under classes; Blacks, women and the poor, has played an important role in portraying Islam and Muslims positively in South Africa.

Meer, a woman of great personal courage, drive, determination and enthusiasm is highly respected by most South Africans. She seems as comfortable in the presence of dignitaries like Nelson Mandela as she is with traditional Ulama (Muslim Priests) or the homeless. Meer’s personality and work has dominated our political history for over six decades and nowhere is this more evident than in the place of her birth, Durban.

Meers’s academic achievements are impressive. She was on the staff of the University of Natal from 1956 to 1988 and during this time she acquired an international reputation. Meer
has produced over forty books, some as author, some as editor and some as publisher. This achievement has not been matched by any other academic or activist in the country.

As an academic and political activist, Meer had been invited to numerous academic and other conferences, where she fearlessly spoke against the country’s apartheid policies. Her lectures and conference papers made a major impact on international audiences and enhanced her international reputation as one of the country’s most articulate black spokespersons. She has, over the years, been the recipient of numerous honours and awards, conferred on her by governments, and institutions at home and abroad.

She married Ismail in 1951 and they had three children, Shamin, Rashid and Shehnaz. She died in a Durban hospital on 13 March 2010 at 81. She was buried at the Brooke Street Cemetery in Durban.

**Joseph Mdluli**

Joseph Mdluli was born in 1925 in Ingwavuma, Northern Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal), the only son in the family. He grew up looking after his father’s cattle and goats. As a young boy, he was very adept at stick-fighting, often emerging triumphant in these fights with friends. Mdluli earned his a living as a hawker. He joined the African National Congress (ANC) in 1952, the year of the Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws, inspired by the heroism of the volunteers who defied arrest. As a result of political activities, Mdluli was arrested in 1966 and subsequently sentenced to one year three months imprisonment. Upon his release in 1968, he was banned for two years. Despite this, Mdluli never tired to serving and fighting for the oppressed people.

Between November and December 1975, the security police arrested several members of the ANC’s underground in the Natal midlands. After obtaining information on the Durban network they added Mdluli as a co-conspirator moved to arrest him. On 18 March 1976, members of the Special Branch took Mdluli from his home late night. The following day he was reported dead. It was at the trial of his comrades, the ‘Pietermaritzburg Ten’ trial that the significant role played by Mdluli in the struggle against apartheid became known.

It was alleged that he attended meetings of the ANC in Durban and had paid for the transportation of a number of young militants to Swaziland. This was part of a detailed plan to overthrow the government by bringing in trained guerrillas into South Africa through the coast and forming them into a sabotage force. He was also alleged to have incited people in Lamontville to undergo military training outside South Africa.

Two days after his death a post-mortem examination was held from which a private pathologist engaged by the family was excluded. The family lawyer, Griffiths Mxenge, demanded that a second post mortem be held. This was refused. On 24 March Mxenge was himself detained.

On 12 April, the Minister of Justice denied that there was any attempt to cover up the death of Mdluli. Then on 13 May, the ANC released photographs of Mdluli’s corpse at a press conference in London and charged that he had been tortured to death. The photographs showed extensive injuries subsequently found to include a fractured cartilage and severe bruising to the neck, extensive bruising on the forehead, temporal area and back of the scalp, abrasions in numerous places, deep bruising near the rib cage, three broken ribs and
numerous bruises and abrasions on the body and limbs. The brain was congested with haemorrhages although the skull was still intact. The lungs were blood congested and waterlogged.

In an unprecedented move on 11 June, following international protest, the Minister of Justice announced that four Security Branch policemen were to be charged with the culpable homicide of Joseph Mdluli. The trial that followed proved farcical and merely continued to conceal the responsibility for Mdluli’s murder.

The four accused policemen. Captain D. F. van Zyl, Lieutenant A. R. Taylor, Detective Sergeants M. P. Makhanya and Z. Ngobese, did not even give evidence. Instead the prosecutor produced an agreed statement of facts, thus avoiding a potentially revealing cross-examination of the accused. According to the police explanation, Mdluli was arrested on 18 March at about 10 p.m. and attempted to escape from the Durban Security Branch headquarters at 10 a.m. the following morning, was restrained and a fierce struggle ensued. After the struggle Mdluli was calm and made no complaint of any injuries. This incident was reported to Major Coetzee who satisfied himself that Mdluli was not injured. Mdluli’s interrogation continued with occasional breaks until about 8.30 p.m. when he suddenly got up, held his head, staggered and, complaining of dizziness, fell with his chest or neck on to the back of the chair. The chair toppled and Mdluli fell against the door. Shortly after this, at 9.55 p.m. he was dead.

This explanation could not begin to explain the extensive injuries found on Mdluli. Giving evidence, state pathologist Dr. van Straaten said that he was called to Fisher Street at about 11 p.m. and shown the body of Mdluli covered by a blanket. Photographs were taken and Dr. van Straaten examined the body shortly after midnight. An officer demonstrated to him how Mdluli had fallen over and died, although he made no mention of Mdluli hitting a chair. Dr. van Straaten stated that his first reaction on examining the corpse was ‘here is a man who could have been dead for anything up to 12 hours. I did not take the body temperature as there was the cream of police society telling me that the man had collapsed and died in their presence’.

When Dr. van Straaten conducted the post-mortem, he found numerous injuries, which could not be accounted for by a single fall on top of a chair. He found that there had been more than one application of force to the area of the neck on which the fatal injuries appeared. Professor I. Gordon, the chief state pathologist in Durbin, corroborated Dr. van Straaten’s evidence. He examined the body on 22 March at the request of Dr. van Straaten, who pointed out his findings. They decided to change the description of the cause of death from strangulation to ‘the application of force to the neck’. He confirmed all the injuries and said, ‘it seems that the application of blunt force took place at separate times and not in continuity’.

Acquitting the accused, Mr. Justice James found that the case against the four policemen had not been proved. ‘If police evidence was to be accepted at face value the four accused were not responsible for the death of Mr. Mdluli... it was clear from the doctor’s evidence that Mr. Mdluli died almost immediately after receiving the neck injuries. If he had died of these injuries in the morning after a scuffle with the four accused, all the policemen in the building would have had to enter an elaborate conspiracy to conceal his death until evening. I consider the probabilities overwhelming that the accused did not give Mdluli the fatal injuries to his neck that morning. As this was the only occasion on which it is alleged that they assaulted Mdluli, it follows that they were not responsible for his death. It then follows that whatever
view one may take of what occurred, all the accused are entitled to an acquittal on the charge they face’.

The judge found their story open to ‘very considerable doubts’. He concluded ‘I need hardly say that the problem of how Mdluli met his death is one that should be solved and it is one of great importance’. The judge in the trial, Mr. Justice Howard, dismissed the testimony of the accused that they were tortured, but in a section of his 15-hour judgement stated that the injuries that caused Mdluli’s death in detention could not have been self-inflicted nor caused accidentally. The judge found that most, if not all, of the injuries on him were inflicted by one or more unidentified members of the Security Police. ‘We are satisfied that Mr. Mdluli sustained the injuries while he was in the custody of the Security Police. There is no evidence of how he suffered the injuries or in what circumstances. That is a matter peculiarly within the knowledge of the persons in whose custody he was at the time and none of them has given evidence’, said the judge.

These remarks absolve the judge of any responsibility and refer investigation of the death back to the police. In February 1977, the Natal Attorney-General announced that the investigation into the death of Joseph Mdluli, ordered by Justice James, had been completed. No new evidence had become known, he said, and no further prosecutions would take place. Through the family’s relentless efforts, they succeeded in having four security branch police officers charged with culpable homicide arising from the death of Mdluli. The court ruled that Mdluli had committed suicide. Mrs Mdluli sued the Minister and the four policemen for R 30 000. In 1979 the widow of Mdluli was paid R15 000 by the Minister of Police in an out of court settlement.

Hoosen Haffajee

Hoosen Mia Haffejee was born on 6 November 1950. Haffejee grew up in Pietermaritzburg and completed his primary schooling at St. Paul’s School and Marion School. He finished his secondary schooling at Woodlands where he matriculated in 1965. In 1966, he relocated to India to undertake his tertiary education. Haffejee enrolled for inter-science at the Bhavan’s College in Bombay and thereafter went Nagpur to study Dentistry.

While in India, Haffejee participated in sporting activities representing his university in hockey. Perhaps more importantly, he was elected as the Student Representative Council. Before returning to South Africa in 1976 he travelled to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey and London. Securing employment after his return proved to be difficult and he opted for an internship at Durban’s King George V Hospital.

His political affiliation is unclear but according to his older brother Yusuf Haffejee, he was politically active whilst he was in school and played an instrumental role in organising a number of student protests in Northdale. It seems Hafeeje continued his political activism on his return from India and thus he was under police surveillance. On the morning of 3rd of August 1977 he was arrested by the Special Branch under the Terrorism Act on suspicion of being a trained saboteur and of plotting to overthrow the state. The police found him in possession of “subversive documents” advocating a revolution to establish a socialist people’s republic. He was dead within twenty hours of his arrest.

The 26-year-old dentist was found hanging from his trousers from a grille door at Durban’s Brighton Beach police station on 3 August 1977. An inquest into his death ensued. Captain
James Taylor and Captain P.L. du Toit, the two Security Branch policemen, who made the arrest and interrogated Haffajee denied that they had tortured him during interrogation. The pathologist reported that the death was consistent with hanging. Yet, the report also stated that Haffajee sustained multiple injuries and that approximately sixty wounds covered his body - on his back, knees, arms and head. On the 15 March 1978, Mr Blunden, the inquest magistrate concluded that Haffajee died of suicide by hanging and that the injuries were unconnected and collateral to his death. Blunden claimed that:

“...submissions that other injuries found on the dentist’s body were due to third degree methods, were pure speculation unsupported by evidence.”

However, Dr. Haffejee’s death was symptomatic of the brutality employed by the security police during Apartheid. His tragic death devastated his family whilst at the same time raising their political consciousness. In a letter to the Natal Witness, penned in 1978, Haffajee’s mother wrote:

“I think the time has arrived for us, the blacks, to pray that God will open a door to protect our destiny from the cruel injustice of the South African Security Police. I hope our prayers are answered before it’s too late for us all. As a grieving mother I cannot forget this terrible ordeal. My heart will always cry for my son.”

In the 1990s, Dr Haffajee’s death in detention came before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Evidence before the Commission suggested that Haffajee in all probability died as a result of torture. Former Security Branch policeman Mohun Deva Gopal gave evidence before the Commission and informed them that he was present whilst Haffajee was interrogated, assaulted and tortured. Gopal maintained that Captain Taylor initiated the assault. Haffajee was stripped naked, Captain Taylor then proceeded to slap and punch him when he refused to divulge any information. Captain Du Toit joined in later and the assault became more vicious lasting many hours.

Haffajee was steadfast in his silence. The perpetrators then prepared their stories Du Toit instructed them to say that Haffajee had tried to escape and in so doing, had hit his body on the car. Captain James Taylor was subpoenaed to appear before the TRC but denied all allegations of assault and continued to maintain that, at the time of his death, Haffajee was in the custody of members of the uniformed branch. Taylor did not apply for amnesty in this regard.

Harrison Dube

On 25 April 1983, Lamontville councillor and JORAC chairperson Harrison Msizi Dube was shot dead after returning from a JORAC meeting. Dube’s death sparked outrage. His community went on the rampage, attacking councillors’ homes and buildings belonging to the PNAB and killing three alleged police informers. The violence quickly spread to the Chesterville township. In Lamontville, five people, including the Inkatha-aligned mayor, Moonlight Gasa, were arrested on 22 June 1983 in connection with Dube’s killing. All five were subsequently convicted of the murder. Vakuthethwa Yalo, Ebenezer Mngadi and Julius Mngadi were sentenced to death (later commuted to life imprisonment). Bangu Mbawula was sentenced to eight years’ imprisonment and Moonlight Gasa to twelve years’ imprisonment.

Mewa Ramgobin
Mewa Ramgobin was born on 10 November 1932 in Inanda, Natal. He was President of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) that was founded by Gandhi in 1894 and is married to Ghandi’s granddaughter, Ela. During his life he has done much to honour Gandhi, including establishing a Gandhi museum and library, organising the Annual Gandhi Lecture and educating people from different race groups on Gandhian thought. He also played a role in training leaders of the struggle.

Ramgobin started becoming aware of the political situation in South Africa when he was a teenager and he saw the difference in how he was treated compared to the Pondo children. This idea was strengthened when he finished Primary School, but could not get a space in the only Indian school in Natal. The Natal Indian Congress (NIC) stepped in and started a new school. It was at this point that Ramgobin became aware that there was an Indian Congress and that as an Indian he could not do as he liked. When he was seventeen, a bus driver of one of his father’s busses was killed by a group of blacks. After this his father moved them from the area, and Ramgobin found it difficult to be separated from his Pondo friends. It was at this time that he began to realise that he could not complain about discrimination towards Indians if he discriminated towards blacks.

When at the University of Natal he became more politically involved. He was active in NUSAS, headed the non-European SRC and in 1960 joined the fast at the Phoenix Settlement. In 1965 he received his first banning order, but this did not affect his political involvement. In 1970 his banning order expired and he founded the South African Committee for the release of Political Prisoners, and began to work towards the a revival in the NIC. By the end of the year he was president of the NIC.

In September 1971 Ramgobin was banned again after he organised a petition for clemency to political prisoners. He remained under house arrest until February 1973. In March 1973 he received a parcel bomb, the first time in South Africa, which exploded in his office in Durban. The government then restricted him, meaning he could no longer work in Durban, so he moved his office to Verulam. In 1975 he was banned for another five years, but was unbanned in 1983.

In 1983 he became the treasurer of the United Democratic Front (UDF), and was arrested in 1984 and released after 19 days. He went in hiding after his release, and sought refuge in the British consulate, but was arrested again on 6 October and accused of high treason after the 1984 people’s riots. He was acquitted in December of 1985. He continued his work with the UDF. He is presently a Member of Parliament for the ANC and Chairperson of the Phoenix Settlement Trust. He has also written and published some books.

Professor Jerry Coovadia
Professor Hoosen Mahomed “Jerry” Coovadia was born in Durban, in 1940. His grandparents had come to South Africa around the 1880’s. They were part of the second wave of emigrants from India to South Africa. His grandfather had owned property, in a rural area in Gujerat State, on the north West Coast of India. His mother was also from a well off Indian merchant family from who lived near to the area in which his father grew up. His grandmother was divorced from his grandfather very early on. His grandfather, an authoritarian businessman, raised his daughter by himself. She was his only daughter and he took her around wherever he went, and together they travelled to Europe, a rare event in those days. According to Coovadia, his mother, an avid reader, had a great influence on him.

For most of his young life, Coovadia lived in Wills Road, part of the Warwick triangle, near the Indian market. His father manufactured clothes and had a wholesale business in Pine Street, Durban. His mother and father married his when they were teenagers. The couple did not have a child many years. As a result, his grandfather insisted that Coovadia’s father take a second wife. Despite the protestations of his mother and her family, he remarried. Coovadia’s stepmother had a child, and soon after his own mother had him. He grew up in a household with two mothers and four stepsiblings and his own three siblings. Jerry attended St. Anthony’s, a Catholic school in Durban. He attended Bible classes and grew up learning the Bible as well as the Koran. He completed standard six, and then went on to complete his high school education at Sastri College.

At Sastri College, Jerry’s interest in the English language grew. Whilst at high school, he frequented the Brook Street library. His uncle was the first librarian there. After matric, he attended Medical School, at the University of Natal. The university had started this medical school mainly for Africans but as there were not enough African applicants in the first year, they took in Indians and Coloureds too. At the time, the University of Natal was racist in the extreme - they had separate buildings for White and Black students. The medical school for Black Students was situated at an army barracks next to the Wentworth Oil Refinery. It was not conducive to learning. Coovadia did not stay there for long, and decided to continue studying medicine in Bombay, India.

It was quite a culture shock coming from South Africa. He had to enroll for a two-year science course and then had to compete with other students to enter medical school. Fortunately, the Government of India had reserved some seats for South Africans of Indian origin, and had scholarships for Africans. Coovadia was admitted to Grant Medical College at the University of Bombay. The British had established this College. At College, he became politically conscious. The Communist Party of India had a major influence in their lives and it was the period just after Gandhi and the great Indian Congress leaders like Krishna Menon,
Nehru and others. Yusuf Dadoo also met and addressed these students. They formed an overtly political body called the South African Students Association. They would invite Indian politicians to speak about independence and invite the African National Congress (ANC) to address them.

Coovadia obtained an M.B, B.S degree in 1965 and moved back to South Africa to work at the King Edward Hospital in Durban. At the time, the hospital hierarchy was entirely White. He specialised in paediatrics at the University of Natal and became a Fellow of the College of Paediatricians of the College of Medicine of South Africa in 1971. He then went to the United Kingdom and in 1974 he obtained his MSc in Immunology from the University of Birmingham.

Returning to South Africa after his studies in the UK, he rejoined the Department of Paediatrics at the University of Natal and began to work on the immunology of measles in children. This research led to the award of an MD in 1978, the year in which he was appointed Principal Paediatrician and Senior Lecturer. In 1982 he was appointed Associate Professor and in 1986 Ad Hominem Professor. He has made a substantial contribution in paediatric diseases, including the definitive work on nephrosis in South African Black children, malnutrition and immunity, and measles; particularly the effect of a Vitamin A supplement on children with measles and other infections.

In 1990, he became Professor and Head of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of Natal, until the end of 2000. During that time, he created a strong and vibrant department held in high regard for its teaching, clinical excellence and research. After retiring from this position, Professor Coovadia was appointed the Victor Daitz Chair in HIV/AIDS Research, and Director of Biomedical Science at the Centre for HIV/AIDS Networking (HIVAN) at the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine, University of Natal. He is the scientific director at the Doris Duke Medical Research Institute at the Nelson Mandela School of Medicine at the University of KwaZulu Natal.

In the seventies, Mewa Ramgobin and others revived the Natal Indian Congress (NIC). Jerry joined the Overport branch of the NIC. He was drawn into speaking at NIC meetings and then into the leadership of the Natal Indian Congress. He was subsequently elected vice-president. Jerry credits his colleagues in the Natal Indian Congress and the United Democratic Front (UDF) as well as the former banned South African Communist Party member, Roley Arenstein, for being hugely influential in his political life. He was also a prominent member of the United Democratic Front and was on the Executive of NAMDA (the National Medical and Dental Association), which was set up by progressive doctors after the revelations of complicity by doctors in the security police torture an subsequent death of Steve Biko.

Like most political activists, the police harassed him. The security police placed limpet mines at his home in Overport. His wife, son and daughter were at home at the time. Fortunately they were not injured when the house was bombed as they lived at the back of the house and the bombs were placed at the front of the house. It was at the time when his friends, political activists, Griffiths Mxenge and his wife, Victoria, were murdered. Jerry was in the UK attending a nutrition conference. All his friends back home were being arrested and the police were looking for him. It was a very traumatic period for him, so he decided to remain in London for a few months. Whilst in the UK, he met Thabo Mbeki, Essop and Aziz Pahad, Oliver Tambo, Manto Tshabalala, Nkosazana Zuma and other ANC members.
By this time, the UDF was well established. Back in South Africa, he worked closely with activists such as Archie Gumede and Mosiuoa Lekota and many other activists. In the 1980s, he was part of a delegation to meet the ANC in Lusaka before the organization was unbanned. He took part in the preliminary discussions and negotiations at Congress for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA). In the post CODESA period when ANC branches were being formed Jerry’s career took a totally different trajectory. He left politics, more or less altogether, and he went back to medicine where he concentrated on the work that he had neglected, mostly research.

Rick Turner

Turner was born in Cape Town on 25 September 1941. He grew up in Stellenbosch and completed an Honours degree in philosophy at the University of Cape Town in 1963. He married Barbara Hubbard in 1964. In 1966 he earned a doctorate at the Sorbonne with a thesis on the political philosophy of Jean Paul Sartre. Observing the nascent French student movement convinced him that students could wield genuine power. He returned to South Africa and took up a series of teaching posts before moving to the University of Natal in 1970. The year 1970 also saw the end of his first marriage and the beginning of his second, to Foszia Fisher. This second marriage, according to Muslim rites, was not legally recognised in South Africa. A passionate lecturer pioneering the teaching of radical political philosophy and an advisor to the National Union of South African Students, Turner encouraged activism by whites in the aftermath of the 1969 departure of blacks from NUSAS. With the help of Harriet Bolton and others, he assisted white students to get involved in the organisation of black workers, spurring the formation of the NUSAS Wages Commissions. A moving force behind the Institute for Industrial Education and the South African Labour Bulletin* during and after the Durban strikes of 1973, he helped to recruit and train many future labour organisers.

Turner’s friendship with Steve Biko and others in the Durban-based black consciousness movement enabled him also to act as an effective interpreter of black thinking to politically conscious whites. Though he converted to Islam in 1970 to marry his second wife, Turner maintained a continuous dialogue with students in the University Christian Movement and other church-based activists. As a contributor to the publications of the Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society (SPROCAS), he compelled his colleagues to consider more
radical recommendations than those prescribed by traditional liberalism. In an influential response to the final report of the SPROCAS Political Commission in 1973, he wrote the utopian The Eye of the Needle, in which he envisioned a decentralized socialist society.

The “Durban Moment” of intellectual excitement centring on Turner ended when he was banned along with seven national NUSAS leaders in March 1973. He continued informally to advise unions and remained in contact with student leaders, but it became illegal for him to teach, publish or be quoted. A brief respite from his non-person status occurred when he testified as a defence witness during the 1975-76 trial of “the SASO Nine.”

The University of Natal showed its support of Dr. Turner by keeping him on the academic staff, although he could not teach in terms of his banning order. In 1976 the government denied him permission to take up a prestigious Humboldt fellowship in Germany. Shortly after midnight on 8 January, 1978, two months before his ban was due to expire, Turner was shot through a window of his suburban Durban home and died in the arms of his 13-year old daughter, Jann. Following four months after Biko’s death in detention, Turner’s murder created a public outcry. Predictably, police investigations turned up no clues, and his killers were never identified.

Vish Suparsad

Born of indenture stock, Vish Suparsad, hails from Plessislaer (Pietermaritzburg) where his grandfather began market gardening shortly after the expiration of his term of indenture. His mother was a source of inspiration to him. In the 1980’s she called for the Release of Nelson Mandela. “An old lady in a white sari, standing with this banner in the middle of a highway (it) was quite a sight”. This is how Vish saw his mother, a tower of strength who helped “to shape us in terms of our values and our commitment”.

Vish’s first act of Defiance was in 1966 when he protested against the Republic Day Festival by distributing pamphlets and stealing the school bell. After his matriculation, Vish went to London and Canada and while in (Edmonton) Canada formed the Free Southern Africa Committee to raise awareness about the atrocities of Apartheid. While there, he hosted the ANC, Yusuf Dadoo and Freni Ginwala all of whom helped to publicise events in South Africa.

He came back to South Africa in 1976 ‘to engage in the revolution’ and was thereafter steeped in intelligence work for the ANC. He first underwent political training under The National Youth Leadership Training Programme and thereafter was employed by the Tongaat Child Welfare Society. Even though the ANC was banned, Vish worked underground affiliating to the Natal Indian Congress. During this period he embarked on the OCMS program [Organisation, Consciousness-building and Mobilisation] in Tongaat. He helped form the Tongaat Youth Club which became active during the Soweto Uprisings of 1976 and thereafter. During this period relationships with the Black township of Hambanati was forged through the establishment of a joint civic structure called JORAC- all of which culminated in the formation of the UDF (United Democratic Front) component of the Tongaat area.

The role of civic organisations was critical in establishing networks and this period (1980’s) saw the establishment of DHAC (Durban Action Housing Committee) and the Community Research Unit (CRU), which were used as starting points to reach out to communities in their efforts to conscientise people through door-to-door visits.
and surveys. Vish talks extensively of the activities leading up to the formation of the UDF and the ANC involvement in this process.