

## Chapter Five

### **The Failure of an Elitist Struggle: Swazi Intellectuals and their Anti - Discriminatory Campaign, 1945 - 1959.**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

Paul Gordon Lauren has recalled that at the beginning of the twentieth century, Du bois, predicted that those who had suffered various forms of exploitation because of the darker colour of their skins would, “contest white domination, demanding justice and using whatever means might be available to them, including armed violence if necessary, to obtain their freedom and equality”.<sup>1</sup> Commenting on the impact of the Second World War on racial inequality, Lauren further observed that, “The war diminished not only the power but also the self-confidence of Europeans to rule their colonial possessions. In doing so, moreover, it revolutionized the myth of white invincibility and superiority among native peoples”.<sup>2</sup>

Jerry Perkins noted that, “Swazi soldiers participated in the Second World War as equals to other Allied soldiers and many of them served with distinction”.<sup>3</sup> Frederick Cooper has likewise pointed out that, “Most important, one needs to understand how the cracks that appeared in the edifice of colonial power after World War II gave a wide range of people .... a chance to articulate their aspirations”.<sup>4</sup> This chapter explores not only the manner in which the Swazi educated elite reacted when presented with the opportunity to articulate their aspirations but also how they fared with the question of racial discrimination in their country immediately after the Second World War to the end of the 1950s. The chapter will focus largely on the struggles mounted by the Swaziland Progressive Association (SPA) to fight discriminatory legislation and practices in

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Gordon Lauren, *Power and Prejudice: The Politics and Diplomacy of Racial Discrimination* (Boulder: West view Press, 1988), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>3</sup>F. J. Perkins, “A History of Christian Missions in Swaziland to 1910”, PhD Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1974, pp. 8 - 9.

<sup>4</sup>F. Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 4.

Swaziland during this period. As an organization of the educated elite, the SPA's struggles will be taken as representative of that section of the society. More limited attention will also be given to the Swazi National Council (SNC) mainly because the data of this institution (in relation to this subject) is very thin. Despite this disposition the SNC's relation with the SPA from the early 1930s begs for some examination of the role it played in the fight against racial discrimination in the country. This is particularly because while the SNC represented traditional interests, most of its standing members were educated Swazis including its presiding Chairperson *Ingwenyama* Sobhuza II, a graduate of Lovedale College in South Africa.

The educated elite in Swaziland could be broadly divided into two main categories namely; the traditional and progressive. This categorization was at times blurred by the close interactions between the two. SNC members fell under the first category while those under the auspice of the SPA fell under the second. Interestingly, the SNC at times recruited members of the SPA as councillors. This was the case for example, with John June Nquku who was the second president of the SPA. This chapter therefore, traces the manner in which Swazi intellectuals under the auspices of both the SPA and SNC confronted discriminatory legislation and practices in Swaziland. The chapter will examine the strategies used by Swaziland's educated elite in tackling discriminatory legislation and practices before and after the Second World War in the country as well as assess their effectiveness.

### 5. 1 Swazi ex - servicemen and political consciousness

A brief explanation on why Swazi ex - servicemen were not the ones to play an important role in the fight against racial discrimination after the Second World War may be necessary at this point. The participation of black Africans in the Second World War exposed them to different experiences. Scholars have, as a result, offered different explanations and conclusions about the political consciousness acquired by ex-servicemen in different parts of the continent. In the case of East Africa, for example, O. J. E. Shiroya and J. G. Liebenow have argued that black ex - servicemen developed a new political consciousness and consequently played a key role in demanding political changes in their countries.<sup>5</sup>

In contrast Louis Grundlingh has argued that in the case of South Africa, the majority of black ex - servicemen showed no signs of having been politically conscientized by the war as shown by their re - absorption into their traditional societies and non-participation in nationalist politics after the war.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Hamilton Simelane has argued that the majority of the Swazi veterans did not reflect a new political consciousness after the war.<sup>7</sup> He attributed this situation to their limited exposure to new ideas as well as the ideological control exercised by their Paramount Chief, Sobhuza II, over them during and after the war. Simelane has also pointed out that, “After the war Sobhuza further

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<sup>5</sup>See, O. J. E. Shiroya, “Development of African Politics in Kenya after 1945: The Contribution of ex - soldiers”, *TransAfrican Journal of History* Vol. no.2 (1979) and J. G. Liebenow, *Colonial Rule and Political Development in Tanzania: the case of the Makonde* (Nairobi: Macmillan, 1971). Though a similar argument has been advanced in the case of West Africa, it has been successfully questioned by some scholars.

<sup>6</sup>Louis Grundlingh, “Soldiers and Politics: A study of the Political Consciousness of Black South African Soldiers During and After the Second World War”, *Historia* vol. 36 no. 2 (1991), pp. 55 - 66. For more details on the participation of South African blacks in the war, See, Louis Grundlingh, “The Participation of South African blacks in the Second World War”, D. Litt. et Phil Thesis, Randse Afrikaans Universiteit, 1986 and Louis Grundlingh, “The Recruitment of South African Blacks for Participation in the Second World War in D. Killingray and R. Rathbone (eds.) *Africa and the Second World War* (London: Macmillan, 1986).

<sup>7</sup>See, H. S. Simelane, “Veterans, Politics and Poverty: The Case of the Swazi veterans in the Second World War”, *South African History Journal* vol. 38(May 1998), pp.144 – 170, H. S. Simelane, “Labour Mobilization For the War Effort in Swaziland, 1940 - 1942”, *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 26 no. 3(1993), pp. 567 - 568. For more details on Swaziland’s involvement in the war, See, H. S. Simelane, “War, Economy and Society in Colonial Swaziland, 1939-1945”, PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1991.

increased his control over the veterans by co-opting them as functionaries in the traditional power structure”.<sup>8</sup> In the mid- 1950s when the *Tinkhundla* (traditional politico-administrative centres’) system was being developed, Sobhuza, for example, pointed out at a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Swazi National Council meeting that he had appointed mostly ex - servicemen as officers in charge in these centres by design. He explained to the Committee that

In the army our young men turned deserts and jungles alike into habitable places with good roads; they saw the wonders of farming by irrigation and other forms of peasant life. It was these and many other experiences, in addition to army discipline, which among other things inculcated into them the value of time. It was because they would pass these values to us here that I call them the malt with which we will turn the Swazi mass of porridge into wholesome beer. It is not by accident, therefore, that officers in charge of Tinkhundla are mainly ex - servicemen. We want to benefit from their experience and I would like everybody, particularly the Chiefs to take advantage of their guidance. These men have learnt what hard work and determination can do. I have asked them to put the same, or even more effort in order to uplift their mother-land.<sup>9</sup>

By occupying positions in the traditional power structure, the veterans strengthened Sobhuza’s initiatives of enhancing traditional institutions that ensured that loyalty was focused on the monarchy. Simelane has further remarked that, “Loyalty to Sobhuza and the traditional political structure tended to determine most of their actions”.<sup>10</sup> These factors at least, explain why Swazi veterans did not, as a group, play an important role in demanding political changes in their country. Instead, in the case of Swaziland, it was the educated elite that came out to openly challenge white political domination and racial discrimination. It is the activities of this elite section that this chapter seeks to explore.

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<sup>8</sup> Simelane, “Labour Mobilization ...”, p. 568.

<sup>9</sup>SNA, File 3012 V, Tinkhundla Committees, Extract from a report By The Secretary of the Standing Committee of the Swazi National Council of a Speech by the Paramount Chief, 1955.

<sup>10</sup>Simelane, “Labour Mobilization...”, p. 568.

## 5. 2 The Formation of the Swaziland Progressive Association and Racial Discrimination

The racial system that was initiated in Swaziland in the nineteenth century, as it has been shown in the two previous chapters, placed Whites in a dominant position while it subjugated Coloureds and Blacks in almost all spheres of life. The discrimination practised within this system was not only manifested through the attitudes and behaviours of many white persons in the country, but also came to be formally entrenched through the legislation of colonial Swaziland. Such discrimination manifested itself in various spheres of life in the country. The educated Swazi under the auspices of the Swaziland Progressive Association (SPA) played a major role in the fight against discriminatory legislation and practices. It was in this context that from 1945 to the end of the 1950s the SPA vigorously campaigned for the formal abolition of racial discrimination in Swaziland.

The SPA was a social and political movement formed in Bremersdorp, on 21 January 1929. According to Alan Booth, the Association was initially joined by Euraficans who also later in that year formed an association of their own interest group.<sup>11</sup> The headquarters of the SPA was in Mbabane. The initiative to form the Association came from T. Ainsworth Dickson who was Swaziland's Resident Commissioner from 1928 to 1935. Dickson was known to many Swazis as Msunduza<sup>12</sup>, meaning "the swerver". This name was probably given to him because he had the reputation of being able to get things done his way. Hilda Kuper explained that the "Swazi nicknamed him Msunduza– one who pushes something forward, an innovator, or one who pushes something out, in reference to his promotion over the head of the unpopular government secretary".<sup>13</sup> Umsunduza hall and township in Mbabane were probably named in his honour.

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<sup>11</sup>Alan. R. Booth, *Historical Dictionary of Swaziland*(Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow, 2000), p. 104. See also, Swaziland National Archives(hereafter, SNA), File RCS / 300, Constitution of the Swaziland Bantu and Coloured Peoples Welfare Association.

<sup>12</sup>See for example, Killie Campbell Africana Library(hereafter KCAL), File 100, KCM2307, Resident Commissioners. Material from this Library is from the Allister Miller Collection unless otherwise stated.

<sup>13</sup>H. Kuper, *Sobhuza II: Ngwenyama and King: The Story of an hereditary ruler and his country*(London: Duckworth, 1978), p. 103.

The first president of the Association was Benjamin Nxumalo, and its secretary was Fynn Franklyn Sepamla. Both were founding members of the SPA. Nxumalo was a close relative of *iNdllovukazi* Lomawa Nxumalo and a trusted advisor of *iNgwenyama* Sobhuza II. Sepamla arrived in Swaziland from South Africa in 1908. He was the first African clerk from 1909 until his demise in 1949. From its inception up to the late 1950s the organisation played a very important role in the social and political history of the country. The official name of this organization was “The Swaziland Progressive Association- ‘Inqubela Phambili’ ”.<sup>14</sup> “Inqubela Phambili” roughly translated, means, “a vehicle for taking issues forward”. One of my interviewees, who was a civil servant at the time explained that “Inqubela Phambili” was a Zulu name given to the Association to capture the manner in which it took issues up with the colonial administration”.<sup>15</sup> A Mozambican national who arrived in Swaziland at the beginning of the 1960s also remarked that Nquku and his Association, “were dealing with the educated and the colonial officials. Ordinary people did not know much about their movement”.<sup>16</sup> The SPA subscribed to a moderate approach when tackling issues of concern. In one conference the president said to the members, “Let me remind you that in our rank and file the agitator or extremist has no room, because it is only sensible leadership that will crown our efforts with success”.<sup>17</sup> This was a liberal movement that desired to move Swazi society towards non-racialism.

A newspaper reporter relating the history of the Association recalled that, “It was started as a government institution”.<sup>18</sup> Quite recently, Balam Nyeko has also observed that the Association “did not emerge ‘from below’ ” but was rather formed in 1929 as a direct

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<sup>14</sup>See, SNA, File 3311, Swaziland Progressive Association, Swaziland Progressive Association, “Inqubela Phambili” Constitution.

<sup>15</sup>Interview, Zechariah Masuku, Mbekelweni, 3 November 2004.

<sup>16</sup>Interview, Jackie Nobela, Sichelwini, Manzini, 31 October 2004.

<sup>17</sup>Times of Swaziland (hereafter, TOS), “Swaziland Progressive Association”, 20 December, 1945.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

result of an initiative ‘from above’ ”.<sup>19</sup> In this respect, Nyeko contrasted the Association with the Basutoland Progressive Association (BPA) which was formed by a “group of mission - educated commoner Basotho”.<sup>20</sup> At the time of the formation of the Association Dickson said “My main object in asking for this meeting is to gauge enlightened Native opinion in the problems of this Territory”.<sup>21</sup> The Association was also described as, “a safety valve through which the views of the leaders of the Swazi give voice to real or assumed racial inequalities”.<sup>22</sup>

The aim of the Association was to act as a vehicle for communicating the views of the educated Swazi in the running of the country in various spheres of life. In its constitution the SPA declared that, “The main object of this association is to encourage, work for and foster peace, goodwill and practical co - operation between various sections and races of the population of Swaziland”.<sup>23</sup> In an attempt to spell out the mandate of the Association at its second annual conference, Dickson declared to the members that, “Your function in the national community is to endeavour to think intelligently and assist by sound advice the Administration of the country in governing the Swazi people”.<sup>24</sup> Alan Booth described the SPA as “An association of educated Swazi founded in 1929, for the purpose of furthering the interests of the nascent Swazi middle class”.<sup>25</sup> This elitist feature of the SPA distinguished it as an organisation of a particular class in Swazi society.

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<sup>19</sup>B. Nyeko, “Political and Social Movements in Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Southern Africa: Lesotho and Swaziland”, *Democracy, Transformation, Conflict and Public Policy in Swaziland: Ossrea Swaziland Chapter* (2003), p. 31. For a brief but comprehensive history of the Basutoland Progressive Association, see, S. Rosenberg, R. F. Weisfelder, and M. Frisbie - Fulton, *Historical Dictionary of Lesotho*(Lanham, Maryland, and Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, 2004), pp. 37- 40.

<sup>20</sup>Nyeko, “Political and Social Movements”, p. 29.

<sup>21</sup>TOS, “The Swaziland Progressive Association”, 27 December, 1945(as cited by J. J. Nquku).

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup>SNA, File 3311, Swaziland Progressive Association Constitution.

<sup>24</sup>TOS, “The Swaziland Progressive Association”, 27 December, 1945(as cited by J. J. Nquku).

<sup>25</sup>Booth, *Historical Dictionary*, p. 307.

The formation of the SPA from the onset raised certain concerns among the country's traditional leaders. Sobhuza's worry was

Why was it necessary to form separate associations? Might they not create a gulf between the educated and uneducated? Wasn't it rather the duty of the educated, or those who considered themselves educated, to influence others by mixing with them and by discussing matters with them, rather than by talking only among themselves?.<sup>26</sup>

According to Kuper, "Sobhuza's doubts about the value of the Swaziland Progressive Association were somewhat allayed by the support it received from Benjamin Nxumalo, whose loyalty could never be questioned and whose political skills had been developed in the hard school of South African politics".<sup>27</sup> It would appear that it was Nxumalo's involvement with the Association which made Sobhuza tolerate it.

From 1929 when the SPA was formed it submitted its concerns to the government through the Resident Commissioner, Dickson. Dickson sought to have Sobhuza recognise the SPA as a body able to make legitimate representations on behalf of "educated natives" directly to the *Ngwenyama* and the Resident Commissioner. Sobhuza refused to sanction the SPA, as in this period he was trying to centralise communication to the administration in his own hands and to strengthen his power over chiefs while strengthening theirs under him.<sup>28</sup> He, for example, objected to chiefs meeting directly with District Officers and having authority over their territories.

In a 1933 meeting with the deputy Resident Commissioner, Sobhuza and royal *ndvuna* Mandanda Mtsetfwa, Resident Commissioner Dickson finally abandoned his mission to have the SPA secure direct access to the Paramount Chief and Resident Commissioner. He now came to the view that, "It was a mistake for the Society (i.e. SPA) to get direct access to the Paramount Chief and Resident Commissioner ... any political business they

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<sup>26</sup>Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, p. 103.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.* For an extended study on the overlap between Swaziland and South African Politics, see, Christopher, C. Lowe, "Swaziland's Colonial Politics: The Decline Of Progressivist South African Nationalism and the Emergence of Swazi Political Traditionalism", PhD Thesis, Yale University, 1998.

<sup>28</sup>Chris Lowe, e-mail communication, cross-posted to the author from H - Africa, 30 September, 2004.



had should be submitted through the ordinary Swazi channels”.<sup>29</sup> This arrangement tended to affect the progress of the Association since many of its messages to the government disappeared between it and the Swazi National Council (SNC).

The relationship between the SPA and the SNC was further complicated by the overlap in the membership of the two bodies. Benjamin Nxumalo, for example, who was the first president of the SPA was also a member of the SNC. This pattern could also be observed in relation to Nquku who was to be the second and last president of the SPA from 1945 to 1960. When he came to Swaziland in 1930 he became an active member of the SPA and in 1940 he also became a member of the SNC. He finally assumed the presidency of the SPA in 1945. Hilda Kuper explained that, “In 1940, when Nquku resigned his position with the government due to the racist ill treatment he received from a man appointed above him, Sobhuza gave him the position of a national advisor to the Swazi National Inner Council, with particular responsibilities for education and church affairs”.<sup>30</sup> He and other members of the SPA became involved in the activities of the two organisations until the early 1960s. For Nquku this was an acknowledgement of the significant place that his organisation held in the country. Undertaking a review of the organisation’s progress two years after he had assumed presidency, Nquku remarked that

At Lobamba on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 1945 for the first time this Association was given a definite place and our members played a leading role in all the activities of the Swazi National Council, and even at the moment our members are at the vanguard of the nation and are spokesmen of the Council.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>SNA, RCS 810 / 33, Notes of a Meeting held at Mbabane between Dickson, Sobhuza, Marwick and royal Ndvuna Mandanda Mtsetfwa, 3 April, 1933.

<sup>30</sup>Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, p. 104.

<sup>31</sup>UWL / William Cullen Africana Library, Historical Papers, AD 843 / B 18. 4.1. SAIRR, Swaziland, Swaziland Progressive Association Annual Conference, Mankayane 4 - 6 October , 1947: Presidential Address, Full Review of Work from January 1945 to October, 1947.

The SPA submitted a wide range of issues to government after its inception. These issues centred on the discrimination practised towards Africans and other related concerns. Booth has summarised the issues as follows;

With Dickson the SPA raised a number of middle - class issues, and each of them got a fair and often sympathetic hearing from him. Early agenda items included discriminatory treatment at hospitals and on South African Railways and Harbours and Road Motor Transport buses: a request that educated Africans have access to agricultural loan funds, and that they be allowed to purchase crown lands and urban business stands (especially eating houses and hotels); a query about increasing the number of African clerks employed by government; and a petition that SPA members sit on educational advisory boards. Later concerns were education and tax policies, and labor conditions.<sup>32</sup>

The SPA appears to have been initially active during the residency of Dickson (1929 - 1935). However, in the period between 1936 and 1945 the organization appears to have lain dormant. Balam Nyeko goes further and notes that the SPA, “From its launching in 1929 until 1945 when J. J. Nquku assumed its presidency, it was more or less dormant”.<sup>33</sup> During the annual conference of the SPA in 1945, Nquku himself commented on this condition and said “The purpose of this conference is to revitalize and resuscitate the Association that has apparently been dormant for a number of years and was becoming defunct”.<sup>34</sup> The period of dormancy was to be transformed into activity during the presidency of Nquku. Upon assuming office the new president began engaging in various activities to re - activate the Association. In addition to holding rallies in the urban centres Nquku travelled extensively all over the country to mobilise membership for the Association and to spread the message that it was the only vehicle through which the Swazi would realise political and economic freedom.<sup>35</sup> New branches were also established at Gege, Mbukwane, Hluthi, Mooiplaas, Lobamba and Mtsambama.

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<sup>32</sup>Booth, *Historical Dictionary*, p. 307.

<sup>33</sup>Nyeko, “Political and Social Movements”, p. 32.

<sup>34</sup>TOS, “Swaziland Progressive Association: Annual Conference”, 20 December, 1945.

A major problem that seemed to paralyse the efforts of the SPA was the middle role played by the SNC with regard to its communication with the colonial administration. While almost all of the issues raised by the SPA required a direct response from the government they had to pass through the SNC. This tended to stifle the process of communication between the SPA and the Government. A concern regarding this frustration was also raised by, F. F. Sepamla, the Secretary of the SPA in a meeting of the SNC and government officers in 1941. On this occasion Sepamla complained that

Since the abolition of the annual meetings of the Resident Commissioner with the Swaziland Progressive Association on the amalgamation of our Association with the Swazi National Council when we were instructed to forward our resolution to the Council which we did for two successive years when they were either destroyed or shelved as we heard nothing more about them. This amalgamation has proved to be the strangulation of our Association and has caused a deadlock in the functioning of our Association. We have repeatedly asked for the release of our Association from the ties of the Swazi National Council as our Association represents the Poll Tax payers and Sir Alan Pim in his report recommended that this Association should be allowed to function until such time as the Swazi National Council shall be composed of educated chiefs. Our association deals with matters concerning our class of people and therefore we ask that our Association be put back to its former state.<sup>36</sup>

Nquku who had joined the SNC the previous year replied saying he “could not understand how the amalgamation with the Swazi National Council could cause a deadlock to the Progressive Association as the Swazi National Council is even of higher status than the Progressive Association”.<sup>37</sup> Nquku’s position may have been influenced

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<sup>35</sup>For details, see, UWL / William Cullen Africana Library, Historical Papers, AD 843 / B 18. 4. 1. SAIRR, Swaziland, Swaziland Progressive Association Annual Conference, Mankayane 4 – 6 October, 1947: Presidential Address, Full Review of Work from January 1945 to October 1947.

<sup>36</sup>SNA, File 3012 D, Meetings between Administrative Officers and Paramount Chief, A Record of Minutes from Secretary of the Swaziland Progressive Association to the District Commissioner, Northern District, Mbabane, 31<sup>st</sup> October 1941. What Sepamla was referred to as an “amalgamation” was in fact, the cooptation of some members of the SPA into the SNC.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*

by a desire to prove his loyalty to the SNC. However, when he became the president of the SPA his attitude changed, as he desired direct communication with the government. J. J. Nquku was elected to the presidency of the SPA during the annual conference of the Association in 1945. Christian Potholm provides the following plotted biography of the president;

Mr. John June Nquku, a Zulu originally from South Africa ... was born in Pietermaritzburg in 1899 and was educated at St. Chad's College in Natal. On arrival in Swaziland he became a principal and then an inspector of African schools in the territory. He wrote several pamphlets ... After resigning from the educational administration in 1940, he became a member of the Swazi National Council.<sup>38</sup>

An official of the colonial administration offered a similar but slightly different biography of Nquku which reads as follows;

Mr. Nquku arrived in Mbabane at 4. p.m. on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1930. He served as supervisor in the Education Department until 4. p.m. on the 23 January 1940. He started the "Izwi Lama Swazi" in 1934 and ran it until it was taken over by the Bantu Press... has played an important part in the Swazi National Council; has been a member of the Governing Body of the Swazi National Schools for a long time and is a member on the Board of Advice on African Education. Mr. Nquku played a large part in establishing the Joint Council of Race Relations in the Territory.<sup>39</sup>

The election of Nquku as president brought a new lease of life to the Association. In some minutes of the Association he was praised as "most courageous, enthusiastic and patriotic, and capable of infusing its sense of duty to the nation".<sup>40</sup> In addressing the conference at the end of 1945, Nquku boldly declared that:

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<sup>38</sup>Christian P. Potholm, *Swaziland: The Dynamics of Political Modernization*(Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), p. 51.

<sup>39</sup>SNA, File 3311, Swaziland Progressive Association, notes by a colonial official in the 1950s.

<sup>40</sup>TOS, "The Swaziland Progressive Association", 27 December, 1945.

My Executive Committee has decided, with your full support to launch a vigorous campaign to re - organize and make the Association a representative body worthy of the name. The Association must function as a living body, doing its duty for which it was originally founded or if it doesn't it is high time it perishes or is substituted by some organization which will be of some inspiration to the people.<sup>41</sup>

In Nquku, the Association had found a man who was to lead it for the next fifteen years before it would turn into a political party. Nquku seemed determined to do anything in his power to make the SPA realize the goals for which it existed. In pledging his commitment to the cause of the Association and the mobilisation of membership support, he declared that

In this struggle for existence and the liberation of our race from economic enslavement of any kind, I assure you all that by all means at my disposal I shall leave no stone unturned and I give you assurance that I shall contribute my full share to the future growth of the Association and the welfare of my people generally. It is apparent that the success of our endeavours depends largely upon well seasoned leadership fully backed by determined followers who stand behind it as a solid mass.<sup>42</sup>

Nquku believed that the educated African had a crucial role to play in the development of the Swazi society. He implored members of the SPA energetically to assume this role saying

You, the intelligentsia and enlightened African, are a vanguard of the nation whose fate and future lie in your hands. Today your actions and decisions will re-act after you for generations to come, and so I call upon you to be cautious, alert and on guard to refuse to make compromise on anything that tends to be injurious to the nation and its coming generations. I wish to exhort you, urging you to do your duty for the country and fellowmen. I urge you to be

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<sup>41</sup>TOS, "Swaziland Progressive Association: Annual Conference", 20 December, 1945.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*

broadminded in studying most carefully all the problems that affect the nation socially, economically, educationally and politically. The Swazi tax payer has educated you for that purpose. If you feel incompetent to do your work you will have failed to do your duty to God, the country and your fellow men.<sup>43</sup>

The struggle against racial discrimination took a more direct and organized form from December 1945. Around this time the UNO had brought into existence its Charter. And, as Paul Lauren has maintained, “The first human rights provisions in the United Nations Charter were placed there because of race”.<sup>44</sup>

While the SPA was organising itself to confront policies and practices which had subjected Africans racial discrimination since the establishment of colonial rule in Swaziland the issue of the incorporation of Swaziland lingered on. However, prominent English-speaking settlers such as Allister Miller stood opposed to the idea. Miller’s position which had embraced since the 1910s was articulated during the annual conference of the SPA where he had been invited as a guest speaker to address himself to the subject. As he was still against the idea of Swaziland’s incorporation into Union of South Africa, he argued that blacks together with whites had nothing to gain from such incorporation. In concluding his argument, Miller cautioned,

Now, if you consider incorporation in the Union will be to your advantage you can probably have it for the asking. But before you venture on the request I will advise you to study Union legislation, consider politics in the Union, the fight for a Republic, the adoration for Germany, Ossewabrandwags, Pirow’s enthusiasm of Fascism, Broederbond, the Colour Bar, and the finesse with the Bantu franchise once legislatively defined in the Old Cape Colony under the Colonial Office administration. Remember that if a Republic is once established in the Union your allegiance to the King / Emperor will be transferred to a political prime minister in Pretoria. All

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<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup>Paul Gordon Lauren, *Power and Prejudice*, p. 4.

these dreadful things may or may not happen. Make sure you think before you take the plunge...<sup>45</sup>

Miller also listed some pieces of legislation which he, considered would be repressive to the blacks if the country were to come under the government of the Union. It appears that the SPA itself did not consider Swaziland's incorporation into the Union as an alternative for attaining better working and living conditions for the black population. Instead the Association envisioned a better life for blacks in a sovereign Swazi state with improved socio-economic conditions. Above all, it advocated for the participation of the black educated elite at government level. It was against this background that at the end of the conference the Association adopted resolutions that demanded for the outlawing of discriminatory legislation in Swaziland.

As the educated elite under the auspices of the SPA were at the vanguard of the struggle against racial discrimination under Nquku's presidency the Association did not waste time in dealing with the issue. From 1945 to 1959 the aspects of discrimination raised by the Association revolved around legislation, land, prospecting and mining rights, education, wages, social services and other related concerns.

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<sup>45</sup>KCAL, File 167, Ms Mil 1.08.38, "Swaziland and Incorporation", A Paper Read by Allister Miller at the Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association, 17 December, 1945, p. 3.

### **5.3 Post - World War II Economic Development and the 1947 Memorandum**

The 1947 Memorandum submitted by the SPA to the Socio - Economic Committee protesting discriminatory policies in Swaziland highlights certain aspects of post-World War II economic developments not only in the country but also in British Africa. In explaining the post-World War II economic developments Frederick Cooper has presented an analytical framework through which colonial Africa at the time might be understood.<sup>46</sup> Cooper points out that Empire in early twentieth - century France and Britain was characterised by the rejection of “development” plans that would have entailed the use of metropolitan funds. Critics argued that money was best invested at home, but also that too much economic change in the colonies risked upsetting the state’s unsure hold over African populations.

However, in the case of British Africa, Cooper shows that the outbreak of strikes and World War II led to the Colonial Office in London reconsidering undertaking programmes of “economic development”. As a result, the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 was used in allocating metropolitan resources for programmes aimed at raising the standard of living of and other social projects mostly geared towards workers as well as infrastructure and directly productive projects. The idea was that better services would produce a healthier and more efficient workforce and above all a more predictable and less combative one.

In the case of Swaziland, Hamilton Sipho Simelane has similarly argued that economic relations were largely determined by the nature of British colonial policy. He has pointed out that for three decades after the imposition of colonial rule the country was characterized by economic stagnation. From the 1940s, however, it experienced an influx of development capital that fundamentally changed the country’s economic landscape. This capital came from funds that were issued through the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. About the Act, Simelane observes that

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<sup>46</sup>Frederick Cooper, *Africa*.



Whatever ideology lay behind the Act, it indicated a new direction in Britain's colonial policy. For the first time in its history, the Colonial Office had a large pool of funds to finance development schemes. This was important for the Swaziland colonial government. The Act provided it with funds to finance Swazi peasants. Failure to initiate development projects became more an issue of lack of political will than financial impediments. As a result of the Act, Britain spent more money on projects in Swaziland over a period of five years than it had in almost three decades. By 1944, over a quarter million pounds had been spent in Swaziland. Of this, about 54 per cent were spent on the Land Settlement Scheme.<sup>47</sup>

The Act authorized the issue of funds, "not only for schemes involving capital expenditure necessary for colonial development, but also for helping to meet recurrent expenditure in the colonies on certain services such as agriculture, education, health and housing".<sup>48</sup> Joan Scutt, for example, observed that from the time of passing the Act the amount of money spent on education in the country increased and there was rapid development in that sector.<sup>49</sup> Improvements were also noted in agriculture, health, mining and infrastructure. Other Acts were passed in 1945, 1950, 1955, 1959 and 1963. By 31 March 1966 approximately £ 7, 000 000 had been allocated to Swaziland by way of free grants.<sup>50</sup>

It was, therefore, in the context of such developments that in 1947 the Swaziland Progressive Association submitted the fourteen-page document to a committee which was

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<sup>47</sup>H. S. Simelane, *Colonialism and Economic Change in Swaziland, 1940-1960* (Manzini : JanNyeko, 2003), p .48. For further discussions of post-war economic developments, see, also, T. J. Fair, G. Murdoch and H. M. Jones, *Development in Swaziland: A Regional Analysis*(Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1969), pp. 32 - 38, G. S. Kunene, *British Colonial Policy in Swaziland, 1920 - 1960*, PhD Thesis, York University, 1992, pp. 239 - 275.

<sup>48</sup>UWL / William Cullen Africana Library, Government Publications, *Swaziland Development Plan Proposals, 1965 - 1968* (Mbabane: Swaziland Government, 1966), p. 10.

<sup>49</sup>J. Scutt, *The Story of Swaziland*, 4<sup>th</sup> rev. ed. (Mbabane: Websters, 1983), p. 104.

<sup>50</sup>UWL / William Cullen Africana Library, Government Publications, *Swaziland Development Plan Proposals, 1965 - 1968* (Mbabane: Swaziland Government, 1966), p. 10.

established to carry out a socio-economic survey in Swaziland.<sup>51</sup> This document was similar to one that was published by the African National Congress (ANC) in 1943.<sup>52</sup> Both documents were termed “Africans’ Claims” and motivated by the provisions of the 1941 Atlantic Charter. Among some of the essential issues, the charter demanded the end of colonialism and promised independence and self - determination to colonial peoples. Eight main points of the Atlantic Charter were captured and applied to Swaziland’s context. Seven of these points touched directly on black and white relations in the country and pointed out that in many spheres of life blacks were discriminated against in relation to whites. The document also reflected that to some extent, blacks were also discriminated against in relation to Coloureds.

This document which was entitled, “Africans’ Claims in Swaziland” stated in its preface, that, “It sets out in a concise form claims of the Africans (Swazis) and their disabilities, and in a most dynamic way directs the attention of the public locally and abroad, to the African position and status in this land of his birth”<sup>53</sup>. The document captures African aspirations with regard to playing a central role in influencing development in the country. It explained that

We want both the local Administration and the British Government to know the full aspirations of the Africans of this Territory and disabilities under which they labour, so that their point of view will also be known to the world at large. We want England to know and act in the light of our interpretation of the Atlantic Charter which guarantees to

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<sup>51</sup>SNA, File 1216 III, Socio - Economic Survey-Collection of Data, A copy of the Memorandum on African’ Claims in Swaziland, Submitted to the Socio - Economic Survey in Swaziland in 1947 by the Swaziland Progressive Association, p. 1.

<sup>52</sup>See, WUL / William Cullen Africana Library, Historical Papers, AD 2186 / HA 25, Congress Series No. 11, Africans’ Claims in South Africa, 1943.

<sup>53</sup>SNA, File 1216 III, Socio - Economic Survey– Collection of Data, A copy of the Memorandum on African’ Claims in Swaziland, Submitted to the Socio-Economic Survey in Swaziland in 1947 by the Swaziland Progressive Association. .

the peoples of the world irrespective of colour or creed the four freedoms.<sup>54</sup>

This charter served as a basis for the Declaration of the United Nations which was signed in January 1942 and the UN Charter which came into force in December 1945. The UN charter also upheld the principle of non-discrimination. The principle upheld in these documents brought to the fore the question of white domination in colonial settings.

These developments inspired the SPA to use the Atlantic Charter to draft a memorandum through which it challenged racial inequality in the country. In contextualising this memorandum Ackson Kanduza observed among other issues that it is necessary to recognise that British Government had commissioned a Socio - Economic Survey in Swaziland as a basis for its Ten Year Development Plan and in order to guide investments from the Colonial Development and Welfare Funds.<sup>55</sup> The context within which the memorandum was framed presented the SPA with the opportunity of submitting a wide range of socio-economic and political issues. These issues as will be shown below included discriminatory legislation, governance, land, education, commerce and labour.

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<sup>54</sup> WUL / William Cullen Africana Library, Historical Papers, AD 2186 / HA 25, Congress Series No. 11, Africans' Claims in South Africa, 1943, p. 2.

<sup>55</sup> Ackson Kanduza, "Intellectuals in Swazi Politics", *Democracy, Transformation, Conflict and Public Policy in Swaziland* (Manzini: Ossrea, 2003), p. 60.

#### 5.4 Discriminatory Legislation

Discriminatory legislation was a widespread phenomenon in colonial Swaziland. It was probably the awareness of the mechanisms and strategies used to achieve this position that led my interviewee, Arthur Khoza, to observe that, “racial discrimination in colonial Swaziland was by design”.<sup>56</sup> The SPA protest against racially discriminating legislation took a more direct and organized form from 1945 onwards. In that same year when Nquku was elected President, the SPA adopted a major resolution to call on Government to remove the colour bar and to abolish all discriminating legislation.<sup>57</sup> During its Special Conference held in Bremersdorp<sup>58</sup> from 15 - 17 December 1945, the SPA, among other things, resolved to communicate to the government its position with regard to racial discrimination in colonial Swaziland. Resolution number six of the Conference declared, “That the Association deplores the existence of the Colour Bar in a British Territory and thus petitions for a whole sale abolition of the same in matters of Education, Mining and Prospecting, Restrictions placed in the Trading of Africans in the Townships and Discriminatory Legislation”<sup>59</sup>. This resolution marked the launching of the SPA’s campaign against discriminatory policies and practices in the country.

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<sup>56</sup> Interview, Arthur Khoza, Selection Park-Mbabane, 4 January, 2005.

<sup>57</sup>SNA, File 2048, Abolition of Colour - Bar and Discriminatory Legislation in British Territory, Extract From Resolution of Swaziland Progressive Association Special Conference: Bremersdorp, 15 - 17 December, 1945.

<sup>58</sup>Bremersdorp is present-day Manzini. For details on the change of name see, Swaziland National Archives (hereafter, SNA), File 3013 B / 17, Bremersdorp– Change of name to Manzini.

<sup>59</sup>SNA, File 2048, Abolition of Colour-Bar and Discriminatory Legislation in British Territory, Extract of Resolutions of the Extraordinary Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association held at Goedegun on the 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1946.

Some notes at the back of the petition which contained this resolution reflect the thinking of some colonial officials on the issue. One official noted that, “The Association does not give much detail of their complaint”.<sup>60</sup> Offering his opinion on how the petition was to be received, the official stated that, “I think they might be asked to develop and elaborate the respects in which they detect discrimination”.<sup>61</sup> Exactly what this official thought of racial discrimination in Swaziland is unclear, but it seems likely that he considered it a potentially, a hot potato, as suggested by his second comment, “it may be well to leave the matter alone”.<sup>62</sup> Alternatively, he and other colonial officials in Swaziland may not have considered the issue of racial discrimination to be a problem at all. Another official whose signature appears on the document submitted the opinion that, “I think the resolution may be allowed to drop”.<sup>63</sup> Whatever the official thinking may have been about racial discrimination in the country, evidence suggests that it was an issue for serious deliberation at different periods.

The stance taken by the SPA in condemning racial discrimination persuaded others in the administration to cast the Association in an agitator role. At least one official thought the SPA had to be banned. After being invited for comments, he wrote, “My advice would be to ban the activities of the Progressive Association and leave the Swazi in his native state in Swaziland”.<sup>64</sup> According to this official, in this state, “the Swazi would enjoy peace which appeared absent in other countries where similar societies are allowed to

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<sup>60</sup>SNA , File 2048, Abolition of Colour - Bar and Discriminatory Legislation in British Territory, Extract from Resolutions of Swaziland Progressive Association Special Conference: Bremersdorp, 15 - 17 December, 1945.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*

flourish unchecked”.<sup>65</sup> The response finally agreed upon was that the Association was to elaborate and show the specific laws it considered discriminatory. The SPA responded accordingly and submitted a list of laws it considered discriminatory to black people in Swaziland. After government had asked for more details on the matter, the Association held an extraordinary conference the following year to elaborate on, and re-iterate its stance.<sup>66</sup> A list of numerous discriminatory laws was presented to the colonial Administration.<sup>67</sup> Included in this list was discrimination in the areas of prospecting and mining, education, employment and legislation.

The overall reaction of the colonial Administration to the issue of racial discrimination seems to have been to ignore it as it had the potential of being explosive. In writing to the Government Secretary some what later in 1951, the treasurer of the Swaziland Government admitted that, “Theoretically, in Swaziland there is no officially recognised ‘apartheid’ or colour bar but there are nevertheless very real and very strong social barriers between the African, European and Eurafican groups in the territory which will take countless ages to break down– if they ever will be abolished”.<sup>68</sup> A number of discriminatory pieces of legislation had been in place in Swaziland since the early colonial period. In a memorandum in which the SPA condemned discriminatory legislation and practices it maintained that, “whatever, laws were proclaimed were a leaf from the Old Transvaal Laws”.<sup>69</sup> These laws went a long way to reinforce discriminatory

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<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup>SNA, File 2048, Abolition of Colour - Bar and Discriminatory Legislation in British Territory, Extract of Resolutions of the Extraordinary Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association held at Goedgegun on the 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1946.

<sup>68</sup> File 3206, Coloured Welfare Association, Memorandum from Treasurer of Swaziland Government to Government Secretary, 13 / 04 / 1951.

<sup>69</sup> For a list of these laws, see, SNA, File 2048, Abolition of Colour - Bar and Discriminatory Legislation in British Territory, Extract of Resolutions of the Extraordinary Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association held at Goedgegun on the 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1946.

tendencies towards the Swazi. It was in respect to this development that Hilda Kuper observed, if not mildly stated that, “Taken on the whole the mass of legislation in Swaziland benefits the European settlers at the expense of the Swazi, and maintains a gulf between them”.<sup>70</sup> Though colonial officials admitted that discriminatory practices prevailed in the country, they accepted them as part and parcel of the social order and did not consider that an alternative path was to be adopted as demanded by the SPA. In preparation for the Special Conference of 1946 the President of the SPA requested the Secretariat saying, “Please for the information of our members ... may I ask you to supply me with a list showing legislation (proclamation or law) affecting Natives in the Territory”.<sup>71</sup> On behalf of the Secretariat, J. R. Stebbing replied that, “I am to say that you may see our Proclamation books at any convenient time. It is not possible to supply the list you require as this would involve a great deal of work”.<sup>72</sup> Stebbing also added that, “In regard to legislation which is under discussion I am to say that you already have details by virtue of your office as Councillor”.<sup>73</sup> This is one case in which the issue of overlap in the SPA / SNC membership may be seen to be interfering with the operations of at least one of either bodies. This official’s response to the Association seems to have been governed by a number of considerations.

Firstly, they were evidently unwilling to supply ammunition to the Association: it would have to dig out details of legal discrimination without their help. Secondly, they privileged the more conservative traditional authorities represented by the SNC. Thirdly, they saw discriminatory policies and practices as minimal compared to those of South Africa. Hence, the lack of political will to deal with the issue. Through the 1947 memorandum an appeal was further made by the SPA for the repeal of discriminatory

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<sup>70</sup>H. Kuper, *The Uniform of Colour: A Study of White - Black Relationships in Swaziland*(Johannesburg : Witwatersrand University Press, 1947), p. 64.

<sup>71</sup>SNA, File 148, Swaziland Progressive Association, Letter from the President of the Swaziland Progressive Association to B . A. Marwick, Esq. , 4 September, 1946.

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*, Letter from J. R. Stebbing for Government Secretary to the President of the Swaziland Progressive Association, 16 September, 1946.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*

legislation and the colour-bar in the country. This memorandum which was firmly rooted in the provisions of the Atlantic Charter stated that

We do maintain that the road to permanent tranquillity, prosperity and racial goodwill to this dear land of ours, will come about if only the principles of the renowned Atlantic Charter are fully applied without exception and to the betterment of the entire community irrespective of colour. We urge that as a prelude to full participation of the Africans in the affairs of this country, their just claims to freedom, democracy and human decency must be granted.<sup>74</sup>

The SPA received no responses from government who argued that the document had not been submitted through to the SNC, which was an established procedure. In this regard, Kanduza has explained that, “The Memorandum saw an early and quick demise because the Government Secretary advised the Resident Commissioner that the Memorandum of the Swaziland Progressive Association should be ignored because it had breached procedure”.<sup>75</sup> The few members of the public who were aware of the submission responded to the SPA’s memorandum with hostility.

One letter to the editor of the *Times of Swaziland* remarked on how the Association had by passed the SNC and had produced a document similar to the one produced by the African National Congress in South Africa in 1945. It nevertheless, affirmed that, “We are all agreed that discriminatory laws and other injustices must be fought”.<sup>76</sup> Another writer to the same newspaper complained that the 1947 document was a serious misrepresentation of Swaziland’s situation, namely that; there was no statutory colour-bar. Both reactions were in one sense articulating the stance already adopted by government. The first reaction acknowledged the issue of discriminatory legislation

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<sup>74</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup>Kanduza, “Intellectuals ...”, p. 60.

<sup>76</sup>TOS, “Swaziland Progressive Association” 24 December, 1947, the article contains a letter to the editor signed by a correspondent under the name, “Owasekhaya” meaning “the one who belongs here at home. Such a name must have been chosen to stand in contrast to the position of the Association’s President, J. J. Nquku who was originally a South African. As per the design of the author of the article, Nquku was to be perceived as, “the one who did not belong here at home”. This was probably because Nquku was originally a Zulu from South Africa.



raised by the SPA but failed to show a way forward. The second reaction tended to diminish the problem as it existed in the country by comparing it with the situation in South Africa. Despite being criticised the SPA continued its fight against racial discrimination.

It appears that the main ground on which the document was ignored had to do with communication procedure. The issue of the SPA's direct representation to Government remained unresolved and often affected the Association's progress. In September 1949, for example, the Government Secretary challenged the Association about direct representation to government and Nquku's reply was that "This Association has had direct contact with government ever since 1945 and the correspondence in your office will suffice to prove this point".<sup>77</sup> In 1953 when the government suggested that the issues raised by the Association should be taken to the Swazi National Council, Nquku, who viewed this as a strategy to muzzle public opinion argued that, "The late Mr. T. A. Dickson on the 21<sup>st</sup> January, 1929, formed this Association for the sole purpose of probing enlightened African opinion and in our opinion it is desirable that this position be maintained".<sup>78</sup>

Perhaps the main reason behind suppressing the document lay in the prevailing attitude of the colonial Administration concerning racial discrimination in the country. The extent of discriminatory legislation and practices in Swaziland were often downplayed by colonial officials, who maintained that what pertained in Swaziland was negligible when compared to South Africa's racist principles and policies. J. R. Stebbing, who the Secretary of the Swaziland Government sometime in the 1950s produced a study for Oxford University in which he depicted race relations in Swaziland, Basutoland and Bechuanaland.<sup>79</sup> Such an approach, tended to treat the experiences of countries such as

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<sup>77</sup>SNA File 3311, Swaziland Progressive Association, Memorandum from J. J. Nquku to Government, 2 November, 1953.

<sup>78</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup>R. Stebbing, "Race Relations in the Union of South Africa and their Impact on Race Relations in the High Commission Territories", B. Litt. Thesis, Oxford University, 1953.

Swaziland as peripheral with regard to issues of racialisation. As it tended to ignore local realities, this attitude effectively led to the perpetuation of discriminatory policies and practices in such spaces.

Regardless of the tendency by colonial officials in Swaziland to avoid facing issues of discrimination head on, the SPA forcefully declared in its 1947 memorandum that, “We, the Africans of the Territory regard as fundamental to the establishment of a new order in Swaziland, the abolition of all enactments which discriminate against the African on the ground of race and colour”.<sup>80</sup> The stance adopted by the SPA was bent on dealing with discriminatory matters as they existed in colonial Swaziland.

Despite the stance adopted by the SPA in dealing with issues of discrimination, there were instances when it diplomatically depicted race relations in the country as harmonious. This was the case, for example, when the Association was looked forward to celebrating its Silver Jubilee in 1954 together with the White community in Swaziland. A memorandum addressed to the Swaziland Government Secretary in that year read, “The Swaziland Progressive Association notes with great satisfaction the harmonious race relations which have existed in Swaziland since the arrival of Europeans in this country over a hundred years ago, and which continue in spite of tension in other parts of Africa”.<sup>81</sup> The general tone of this memorandum unlike others before, and after was calm, and celebratory. My guess is that this was deliberate on the part of the Association which did not want to antagonise the white community whose co-operation it sought in celebrating its Silver Jubilee in that year.

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<sup>80</sup>SNA, File 1216 III, Socio - Economic Survey– Collection of Data, A copy of the Memorandum on African’ Claims in Swaziland, Submitted to the Socio - Economic Survey in Swaziland in 1947 by the Swaziland Progressive Association, p. 13.

<sup>81</sup>UWL / William Cullen Africana Library, Historical Papers, AD 1947 / 47. 6. 4. 6. 1. 2, Protectorates and High Commission Territories: Swaziland: Correspondence, Resolutions from the Swaziland Progressive Association, Memorandum from Swaziland Progressive Association to Swaziland Government Secretary signed by the President and the General Secretary of the Association, 18 August, 1954.

The president of the Association had expressed the view a year or so earlier that, “The association proposes to celebrate the Jubilee as if it was a centenary celebration of contact of the Swazi with the European”.<sup>82</sup> In essence, what can be drawn from the SPA’s attitude during this celebration is that while the general pattern of race relations placed whites in an advantageous position it was not absolutely disadvantageous to blacks. Certainly, there were benefits too that accrued to blacks as a result of their interactions with whites. This perception of racial harmony in the case of Swaziland moreover, became reinforced when it was considered against the background of other African countries where violent conflicts erupted between peoples of different races. However, two years later the Association had returned to its previous attitude. A 1956 memorandum showed that the Association had resolved that

Discrimination is practised against the Africans in Swaziland. That the African people as such regard as fundamental to the establishment of a new order in Swaziland the abolition of all discrimination against the African on grounds of race and colour. That we condemn and reject the policy of segregation in all aspects of our national life in as much as this policy is designed to keep the African in a state of perpetual tutelage and militates against his normal development. That we request the abolition of discrimination on the grounds that it is irreconcilable with Christian, Democratic and civilized standards and is contrary to human decency.<sup>83</sup>

This position had been been vigorously articulated by the SPA since 1945 and was largely maintained throughout the 1950s. The protest launched by the SPA against discrimination was ignored by the colonial administration mainly because it considered that there were no socio-economic nor political benefits to be secured by focussing on the question. Moreover, South Africa’s more formidable racist principles tended to overshadow discriminatory realities prevalent within the country.

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<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.* , Jubilee year of the Swaziland Progressive Association, Memoranda from the President of the Swaziland Progressive Association to the Government Secretary, 17 December 1952 and 11 February 1953.

<sup>83</sup>SNA, File 3311, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions Passed unanimously at the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association held at Swazi National School, at Matsapha, Swaziland on the 4th to 6th August, 1956.

## 5.5 Governance

In its 1947 Memorandum the SPA also protested that executive power rested with the white Government and a few Europeans. The Association observed that, “In Swaziland the Government and the Europeans alone have the absolute and executive power over the Africans who are denied full citizenship *rights* on the land of their origin”.<sup>84</sup> In response the Association called for political reforms with representation along racial lines as the case was, for example, in Kenya and Central Africa. In the case of Kenya, Donald Rothchild has shown that the attempt to move towards deracialisation was a product of negotiations between Europeans, Africans and Asians.<sup>85</sup> The approach adopted by the SPA similarly followed this path and sought for racial equality on separate rather than integrated planes.

In as far as the governance of the country was concerned, the SPA submitted that, “We ask that the present Government should be reformed and thus afford the citizens of the country to choose their form of Government which will be a ‘Government of the people by the people, for the people’”.<sup>86</sup> By contrast, the SPA observed, the current Government was “only a Government of the officials and is directly in contrast to the intentions of the renowned British Magna Carta ‘No taxation without representation’”.<sup>87</sup> This was a complaint against being asked by the administration to contribute towards generating the revenue base of the country while being excluded from making decision about how it was to be run. Further requesting a bill of rights the SPA noted that, “The Africans are denied

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<sup>84</sup>SNA, File 1216 III, Socio - Economic Survey– Collection of Data, A copy of the Memorandum on African’ Claims in Swaziland, Submitted to the Socio - Economic Survey in Swaziland in 1947 by the Swaziland Progressive Association. The emphasis is mine.

<sup>85</sup>See, D. Rothchild, *Racial Bargaining in Independent Kenya: A Study of Minorities and Decolonization* (London: OUP For the Institute of Race Relations, 1973).

<sup>86</sup>SNA, File 1216 III, Socio - Economic Survey– Collection of Data, A copy of the Memorandum on African’ Claims in Swaziland, Submitted to the Socio - Economic Survey in Swaziland in 1947 by the Swaziland Progressive Association. The italics indicate my insertion.

<sup>87</sup>*Ibid.*

all the elementary rights of citizenship in the land of their birth and domicilium and are being looked upon as hewers of wood and drawers of water for the foreigner”.<sup>88</sup>

The Association also went further and submitted that, “The Africans of the Territory urgently demand granting to them full citizenship rights such as are enjoyed by the Europeans”.<sup>89</sup> The Association submitted the view that the Africans desired the “Abolition of political discrimination based on race and direct representation in the government of the country, the European Advisory Council, the Urban Committees and the Chamber of Commerce”.<sup>90</sup> The Association also expressed its grievance with regard to the administration of justice towards Africans and demanded a series of citizenship rights for Africans living in Swaziland.

The demand by the SPA that Africans should be included in the running of government was probably inspired by circumstances that had unfolded during and after the Second World War. From 1944 onward the colonial administration in Swaziland began issuing a series of proclamations aimed at enhancing the power of the Swazi monarchy to act as its agent in the perpetuation of indirect rule. “Native authorities” proclamations had previously been promulgated in Bechuanaland (1934) and Basutoland (1938), and the intention was to model the 1944 Native Administration Proclamation in Swaziland on them.

Booth noted that, “the *Swazi* king effectively manipulated the process to secure and improve his position”.<sup>91</sup> Under the monarchical set up which was being developed the educated elite were offered no distinct space. Apparently, this exclusion motivated the

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<sup>88</sup>SNA, File 1216 III, Socio - Economic Survey– Collection of Data, A copy of the Memorandum on African’ Claims in Swaziland, Submitted to the Socio - Economic Survey in Swaziland in 1947 by the Swaziland Progressive Association.

<sup>89</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup>Alan R. Booth, *Swaziland: Tradition and Change in a Southern African Kingdom*(Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1983), pp. 32 - 33. The italics are Booth’s. This proclamation has already been dealt with in detail in Chapter Three.

SPA to canvass for such space in the governance of the country. Post - war developments similarly encouraged the Association to fight for reforms that would accommodate its constituency in government. As South Africa intensified her racist policies after the National Party victory, Britain stopped entertaining the idea of Swaziland's incorporation into South Africa and started preparing for the transfer of political power to the Swazi. In this respect, Booth observed that

Events leading to ... independence extended back to the end of World War II, when it became increasingly evident that South Africa's racial policies precluded the kingdom's transfer to the Union. Following the 1948 Nationalist victory in the Union, the British implemented a series of measures aimed at devolving power to a systematized local administration in Swaziland.<sup>92</sup>

Despite the enthusiasm with which the SPA's proposals were submitted they remained confined since they were speaking only for the educated Swazi. The spaces for which the organisation spoke suggested that it was more concerned with the educated elite without any consideration for the uneducated classes of Swazi society. In this case the Association was unable to envisage the role that would be played by the rest of the Swazi society. This largely owed to the elitist approach of the organization and meant that it was handicapped as a vehicle for managing the new dispensation it was seeking since it was unable to submit how "the led" would practically be represented in the proposed government. Moreover, nothing suggests that any thoughts were being given to the role that would be played by whites who would continue residing in the country. Including these questions in the campaign for a new social order would have given a better picture of the kind of society envisaged by the SPA under a new political dispensation.

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<sup>92</sup>*Ibid.* , p. 63.

## 5.6 Land

As pointed out in the second chapter, the issue of land in Swaziland had been central in the conflict between whites and blacks since the era of the concessionaires. Evidence suggests that the SPA considered land allocation to be at the root of discrimination against Africans in Swaziland. This emerged clearly for example, in the documents of the Association in 1947 and 1956.

Submitting evidence to the Socio-Economic Survey in 1947 the SPA stated unequivocally that, “Of all problems affecting the Africans in Swaziland the land question is the worst one. It is an unhealing sore in the hearts of the Swazis”.<sup>93</sup> In this memorandum the Association lamented that the Swazi had been forced from the distant past to contest their right over the land of their birth. It also went on to list the deputations that had been sent to London to present the Swazi case from 1894 up to 1941 when *Ingwenyama* Sobhuza II presented a petition to the king in Parliament. The Association cited extensively from blue books to show that despite efforts by the Swazi to have their land restored to them, they found themselves virtually confined to one-third of their country while the remaining two-thirds was reserved for whites.

The feeling of the SPA was that all the land in Swaziland had to be brought under the authority of the Native Authority. The Association would not propose their preferred land tenure system and how the educated Swazi would benefit from it. This position tended to favour the traditional authority. This was regardless of the fact that African workers lacked adequate housing and were deprived of property rights in urban areas. What might have compromised their position was the overlap in the membership of the SPA and SNC— in this case Nquku the President of the SPA was an SNC member. To illustrate the scarcity of land among Africans, a general survey in 1955 reported that,

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<sup>93</sup>SNA, File 1216 III, Socio - Economic Survey— Collection of Data, A copy of the Memorandum on Africans’ Claims in Swaziland, Submitted to the Socio-Economic Survey in Swaziland in 1947 by the Swaziland Progressive Association, p. 8.

“Approximately 20 000 Africans still live as squatters on European-owned farms. Their position is very insecure, however, for they have no permanent rights and are liable to eviction at any time”.<sup>94</sup> In the SPA’s resolutions of 1956 the land issue was given a top priority. In its Annual Conference the Association resolved that

The land question in Swaziland is the gravest problem which jeopardises the chances of permanent peace and as such greatly affects race relations. That this problem must now be reviewed to find a just solution satisfactory to both sections of the community in the Territory. That the Swazi contends that the European acquired land rights, concessions and monopolies very often in very questionable ways and very often for inadequate consideration and all these transactions were negotiated between the advanced adventurers and the illiterate Swazi Kings who did not realise the full implications involved in such dealings ... That this discontent of the Swazis as far as land is concerned is proved by deputations sent overseas in 1894, 1898, 1907 and 1922 and up to the present time the Swazi maintains that this grievance should be remedied.<sup>95</sup>

It appears that on the issue of land the SPA were strongly behind their traditional authorities as they offered no original proposals in how the problem might be solved except to cite previous efforts to regain land up to Sobhuza’s 1941 petition. Their submissions on land should however, be credited for the emphasis it placed on the issue. In this respect the SPA should also be seen to be complementing the efforts of the SNC. During and after the Second World War significant changes took place with regard to the land policy in Swaziland. Land was purchased through Colonial and Welfare Funds and more land was made available to Swazi peasants.<sup>96</sup> Such changes however, did not affect urban areas where the educated elite looked forward to acquiring personal property rights.

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<sup>94</sup>UWL / William Cullen Africana Library, Historical Papers, AD 843 / RJ /Q4.1, Protectorates: Swaziland, SAIRR, Swaziland: A General Survey, 1955.

<sup>95</sup>SNA, File 3311, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions Passed unanimously at the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association held at Swazi National School, Matsapha, Swaziland, on the 4th to 6th August, 1956.

<sup>96</sup>For more details, see, Simelane, *Colonialism*, pp. 43 - 54.



### **5.7 Prospecting and Mining**

One of the earlier discriminatory laws in colonial Swaziland was Proclamation no. 28 of 1907 which concerned prospecting and mining. This piece of legislation was discriminatory by nature since it excluded Africans from the right to prospect and to conduct mining operations. A counter argument might be raised that during this period no African in the country was in a position to raise mining capital. Whatever weight such a claim may carry the objection still remains to the principle of discrimination inherent in the legislation. It might equally be claimed that not all European persons entering the country around this time possessed capital to carry out mining operations. However, in principle they were not excluded from either prospecting or mining.

In reality, whether the whites had capital or not, was not the issue. By virtue of their European identity which was assumed to be superior in relation to that of Africans, they lawfully possessed the right to prospect and mine. This arrangement, was part and parcel of the white supremacist ideology that placed blacks in the servanthood category when it came to the white / black, master / servant relationship.

## 5.8 Race and Drinking

In colonial Swaziland Africans were legally prohibited from imbibing liquor. The Liquor Law no. 42 of 1936, Section 8 (a) conferred the right to drink liquor in the country on all, “other than the native”. This attitude indicated a colonial racist discourse and white prejudices with regard to the drinking of liquor by Africans. To drink liquor was an exclusive privilege of whites. Blacks had to obtain a special permit to be able to purchase liquor from a European bar or bottle store. Even when buying the African had to stand outside the bottle store and use external outlets. Africans were also not permitted to sit and drink together with whites. A member of the Swazi National Council related a story during one session of the Council of an African man who forced his way to sit in a bar where there were white people. When this man was denied the right to purchase his beer, he inquired from the bar operator, “Why shouldn’t I drink? There’s no apartheid in Swaziland”.<sup>97</sup> This instance was a highlight of the discontent underlying the racialised nature of beer and liquor drinking in the country. The SPA felt that to avoid discrimination in this issue the phrase “other than native” had to be removed from the proclamation. It submitted that

The Association knows well the disastrous effects of drinking but recognises that prohibition through legislation the world over has completely failed. The Association does not advocate wholesale granting of this privilege to Africans but it does necessarily object and strongly deplores a discriminatory law of this nature which tends to make innocent and self-respecting Africans criminals to be locked behind prison bars, encouraging and teaching them thieving contrary to one of the Ten commandments– “Thou shalt not steal”.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup>The statement was uttered by a Swazi man who was refusing to leave a European bar at Stegi, See UWL/ William Africana Cullen Library, Historical Papers, A4 10/ E2.37, Sobhuza’s reaction to Harold Macmillan’s “Winds of Change Speech” in an address to the Swazi National Council, colonial officials and a missionary, 23 April, 1960.

<sup>98</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Extract of Resolutions of the Extraordinary Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association held at Goedgegun from 5 to 7 October ,1946 (Original File no. 148) and SNA, File 1216 III, Socio-Economic Survey– Collection of Data, A copy of the Memorandum on African’ Claims in Swaziland, Submitted to the Socio-Economic Survey in Swaziland in 1947 by the Swaziland Progressive Association, p. 13.

Equally the Liquor Law declared it an offence for anyone to be found consuming or in possession of fermented traditionally brewed beer. The first mine brewery and beer – hall was established at New Amianthus Mine which later known as Havelock Asbestos Mine in 1940. This was as a result of the mine’s attempt to stabilize and control its workforce.<sup>99</sup> To curb drinking habits that interfered with the productivity of its workforce, the management resorted to the brewing and selling of beer to its employees. In applying for permission from the colonial administration to erect a brewery at Havelock, Mr. Roland Starkey, a manager at the mine, had some two years earlier, written:

Our native labour supply is far from satisfactory and I am of the opinion that the best way to influence native labour to stay and work in the territory is to give special attention to general amenities and especially rations, in which I include kaffir beer as a ration and also to have it on sale at a low rate– any profit derived from such sale to be set aside for assistance to native welfare and sports requirements.<sup>100</sup>

The permission to establish a brewery and erect a beer-hall was granted by the colonial Administration in August 1939.

Consequently, beer became available at the mine for Africans to drink. Sometime in the 1950s the mine management pointed out that, “the mine brews native beer daily and a free issue is made to all African employees once a week”.<sup>101</sup> It was also stated that, “the hall is also used as a general meeting place for Africans who usually drink their beer here between 4 p. m. and 7 p. m.”.<sup>102</sup> The provision and sale of beer at the mine was a means of controlling the African labour force. Simelane and Mamba have pointed out in this

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<sup>99</sup>For details, see, J. S. Crush, “The Construction of Compound Authority: Drinking at Havelock, 1938 - 1944”, in Jonathan Crush and Charles Ambler (eds.) *Liquor and Labour in Southern Africa*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1992).

<sup>100</sup>SNA, File RCS 966 / 32, Application to establish a Brewery at Havelock Mine, letter from Havelock Mine Manager, Roland Starkey to the Acting Resident Commissioner, 7 September, 1937.

<sup>101</sup>SNA, File 3015s, Havelock Mine General Correspondence, Schedule relating to African Employees of Havelock Mine, Emlembe, Swaziland, 17 November, 1956.

<sup>102</sup>*Ibid.*

regard that, “beer was, therefore, seen as an important instrument of labour control and stabilization”.<sup>103</sup> The establishment of beer-halls for African drinking became a countrywide phenomenon while whites consumed their liquor mainly from bottle stores and bars.

In his response to the complaint put forward by the SPA with regard to African drinking, the Government Secretary pointed out that, “the matter had already been raised by the Swazi National General Council and has been submitted to the High Commissioner for consideration”.<sup>104</sup> Beyond that however, the SPA criticized Government’s position that beer-halls had to be established for the selling of “kafir beer”. In 1949 the SPA stated that, “this association is totally opposed to the establishment of beer-halls in this Territory and strongly believes that no Christian Government would countenance or tolerate such an iniquitous proposal which would ultimately result in the total ruin of the nation morally and financially”.<sup>105</sup> The SPA seems to have been opposed to the commercialisation of beer because it would avail the drink to Africans continually unlike when used for customary purposes occasionally.

An association of missionaries known as the Swaziland Missionary Conference also raised concerns probably in the early 1950s concerning the sale of “kaffir” beer. This Association was a body representative of all Protestant Christian Missions working in Swaziland. In one of its conferences the Association resolved that the sale of traditional beer was a movement towards the commercialization of a commodity that was used for customary purposes. The Council submitted that:

Looking at the best interest of the native people, without desiring to interfere with their personal habits, this Association earnestly requests the Government to make illegal the sale of kaffir beer throughout the Territory. Its

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<sup>103</sup>H. S. Simelane and J .S Mamba, “Mining Capital, Beer and Labour Unrest in Swaziland: The Case of the Havelock Mine Strike of 1944”, Unpublished Paper, undated, p. 14.

<sup>104</sup>SNA, File 148, Swaziland Progressive Association, Letter from the Government Secretariat to the General Secretary of the Swaziland Progressive Association, 19 May, 1947.

<sup>105</sup>S NA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions Passed at the Annual Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association held in the Courthouse at Mbabane on the 30 July, 1949.

desire to point out that this method is a new thing in the Territory, and is far removed from the old custom of hospitality that has obtained in the past. The Association points out that a vested interest is growing up— that many abuses are already apparent and if the sale is allowed to continue and grow the future will exact heavy retribution from the Government and the people.<sup>106</sup>

The Association may have felt justified to react in this manner because it considered that one of its major duties was “To watch over the interests of the Native Races”.<sup>107</sup> In registering the above concern the Missionary Council therefore felt it was operating within the parameters of its constitutional mandate.

For nearly a decade the issue of beer-halls were absent from the resolutions of the SPA. However, when the issue eventually re-emerged in the Annual Conference of the association in 1959 its point of view was restated in a strongly worded and elaborate style. In this conference the SPA resolved that, “the Progressive Association as it did in the past still protests very strongly against the commercialisation of the national drink of the Swazi, that is *utshwala*”.<sup>108</sup> On this occasion the SPA came out sharply against the attempt to regulate the drinking of Africans which prior to the establishment of beer-halls had proceeded without any imposed restrictions. The submission went further to outline the basic uses of *utshwala* among the Swazi as follows;

The drink is a basic social custom of all the peoples of Africa and in particular the Swazi for the following reasons: (i) It is a drink used on sacred occasions to commemorate those days connected with the living and their ancestors in a form of worship. (ii) It is used in blessing the establishment of a new home, a libation is poured on the main pillar of the construction. (iii) It plays an important part in marriage negotiations. (iv) It is a means of getting communal labour in weeding building and other domestic jobs. (v) The principalities of the Swazi

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<sup>106</sup>SNA, File RCS 118 / 54, Resolutions of Swaziland Missionary Association Conference, undated.

<sup>107</sup>SNA, File 792, Swaziland Missionary Conference, Letter from David Hynd, President of the Missionary Conference to Resident Commissioner, 14 August, 1944.

<sup>108</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions of the Swaziland Progressive Association Passed at its 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Held at Kwaluseni, Bremersdorp, 1 to 2 October, 1959.

Nation are maintained by means of a free flow of beer. (vi)  
In fact in all several affairs such as birth, *lobolo*, marriage,  
beer takes the prerogative.<sup>109</sup>

In conclusion to its submission on beer - halls the SPA maintained that

This Association feels therefore, that the selling of beer in halls and the issuing of licences for such is an instrument of destroying whatever good is left in the social life of the people. It strongly protests against beer halls. This Association looks upon the British as protectors who will in every manner keep their vow and sacred trust of protecting the Swazi from the danger of degradation and poverty, as has been witnessed in the adjoining territory where beer – halls have wrought havoc and ruin, and where people have taken upon themselves the evil by means which bring chaos and disturbance to race relations.<sup>110</sup>

Beer and liquor drinking were issues of concern in colonial Swaziland because of the nature of the prevailing race relations. The beliefs and regulations around drinking habits in the country were racially informed. These beliefs and regulations, for example, led to the prescription of different drinking habits for the different races. That the SPA was concerned with African drinking and never dared to mention European drinking or question the exclusion of Africans from liquor drinking may be an indication that it had accepted that drinking was informed one's racial orientation. This attitude had underlying implications for the separate development of the white and black communities.

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<sup>109</sup>*Ibid.* For similar customary uses of beer among the Swazi, also see, J. Crush, "The Construction of Compound Authority: Drinking at Havelock, 1938 – 1944" in J. Crush and C. Ambler, *Liquor and Labour in Southern Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1992 ), p. 370.

<sup>110</sup>*Ibid.*

## 5.9 Education

The situation for European education in colonial Swaziland was markedly different from that of Africans. European education was supported through the allocation of substantial resources. This factor among others motivated the SPA to protest the manner in which education was administered in the country. In particular the Association decried the discrimination suffered by African education in terms of its administration and the allocation of resources.

Advertising Swaziland to overseas prospective British settlers, Allister Miller, a pioneer settler had much earlier written that

Primary education throughout the territory is free, and Government Schools are established in all towns and villages. A Secondary School, St Mark's, at Mbabane, the Council of which is presided over by the Bishop of the Diocese, passes scholars through to matriculation, charging a low rate for Swazi pupils. This school is a centre of education for British children living in the adjoining districts of the Transvaal and in Portuguese territory. In the South, a large hostel and school provides for children of that neighbourhood, who are mostly Afrikanders.<sup>111</sup>

The free and compulsory education advertised by Allister Miller in this brochure was only available to white children and not necessarily to their African and Coloured counterparts. Kuby pointed out that, "Primary education was compulsory and free of charge for European children, but neither required nor free for the Swazi".<sup>112</sup> The education system of Swaziland was set on racial lines as early as the early 1900s. There were separate schools for blacks and whites which came to be complemented by those of Coloureds from the mid - 1910s onwards.

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<sup>111</sup>KCAL, KCM 65481, Land Settlement in Swaziland, The Mushroom Land Settlement, Swaziland: Past and Present.

<sup>112</sup>D. J. Kuby, "Elitism and Holiness in Swazi Conversion", PhD Thesis, University of California, 1979, p. 38.

Anderson Nxumalo, a lecturer at the University of Swaziland whose expertise is in the sociology of education observed that in colonial Swaziland, “The education system tended to be developed along racial lines”.<sup>113</sup> Further explaining the influence behind the racialised system of education, Nxumalo contended that

When the country was colonized by the British in 1902 the models used in the education system were those of South Africa. They got them from Pretoria and Natal. Things tended to be modelled along that of South Africa where Whites, Blacks, Coloureds and Indians went to their respective schools.<sup>114</sup>

In addition, he pointed out that, “Swaziland being a small country easily followed patterns of South Africa. In fact it had been anticipated that Swaziland would eventually be incorporated into the Union”.<sup>115</sup> As a result of the unequal allocation of resources and facilities, “White schools were the best followed by those of Eurafricans and blacks”<sup>116</sup>. Kuby has also emphasized that, “legislation and funding favoured European education over that of the Swazi”.<sup>117</sup> By way of illustration he noted that, “Between 1933 and 1938, only a third of the school budget went to the Swazi majority with two thirds for the European minority”.<sup>118</sup> By the end of 1947 European education was compulsory up to standard V III.

Colonial Swaziland was characterised by white domination in almost all spheres of life, and African education was no exception. To intensify this dominance Proclamation no. 6 of 1940 which placed African education under European control was issued by the administration. This was part of white discriminatory mechanism whereby the African

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<sup>113</sup>Interview, Anderson Nxumalo, Manzini, Coates Valley, 14 November, 2004.

<sup>114</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup>Kuby, “Elitism and Holiness...”, p. 38.

<sup>118</sup>*Ibid.*



was to be provided a type and level of education that was in line with the role he was expected to play in the political and socio - economic organization of the country– that of a provider of labour. When I drew Nxumalo to comment on whether the administration of education by whites in colonial Swaziland reflected the prevailing discriminatory attitudes, he responded, saying,

I am afraid it did; indirect if not purposeful. The excuse made was that the blacks did not qualify but we know of Whites who were experts in Agriculture, for example, but were made leading educationists. They were given positions irrelevant to their training because they were white. If they were serious about promoting Africans, they should have made crash courses for Africans to take leadership positions but, they did not I would therefore, say this was discrimination.<sup>119</sup>

Nxumalo further backed up his position by referring to certain developments at independence. Emphasizing the discriminatory attitudes of some whites with regard to the administration of education by blacks he reflected that

Even at independence the immediate reaction by most whites was to take their children to the Republic of South Africa. Their belief was that education was going to be poorly administered with a black government in power. The change was not abrupt. It took some time and was slow. Some whites were unable to leave including Coloureds. But the current situation shows that great strides have been taken towards integration.<sup>120</sup>

The provision of resources and facilities for educational purposes tended to favour white children to a large extent. It is partly with this in mind that in 1947 the SPA expressed the view that, “We protest very strongly against the discrimination shown to African education”.<sup>121</sup> Two other related concerns which they raised pertained to African control

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<sup>119</sup>Interview, Anderson Nxumalo, Manzini, Coates Valley, 14 November, 2004.

<sup>120</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup>SNA, File 1216 III, Socio - Economic Survey – Collection of Data, A copy of the Memorandum on African’ Claims in Swaziland, Submitted to the Socio - Economic Survey in Swaziland in 1947 by the Swaziland Progressive Association, p. 11.

over education and to the status of African educationalists. Articulating these concerns the SPA observed that

We ask that the direction of the educational system of the Africans must fall more and more in the hands of the Africans themselves, and therefore we demand increased representation in all bodies pertaining to African education. We ask for equal treatment for all employees of the Education Department irrespective of race. We ask for the status of the African supervisors of schools to be raised to that of inspectors of schools on equal terms with Europeans. In Bechuanaland the African supervisors have a new designation 'Assistant African Education Officers'.<sup>122</sup>

In that same year in its Annual Conference Mankayane the Association raised a concern about the discriminatory manner in which African teachers were treated by Government. This pertained to a circular that stated the Government's non-commitment to the paying of teachers' salaries up to the end of the year. Circular no. E / 11 / 79 / 4 of 12 September 1947 issued by the Director of Education partly read, "Owing to the shortage of funds the Administration is not at present in a position to accept the commitment of paying teacher's salaries up to the end of December, whether or not they return to the schools for the following terms".<sup>123</sup> In response the SPA submitted the argument that

The Association is so perturbed by this discriminating circular that it pleads for its removal. From enquiry made it was ascertained that European Teachers in the Territory were not treated in this manner and even the Civil Servants of this country receive full salary payments up to the end of December.<sup>124</sup>

In its memorandum submitted to the Socio-Economic Survey in 1947 the SPA demanded that

We ask for the Africans equal opportunity to engage in any occupation, trade or industry and in order that this objective might be realised to the fullest extent, facilities must be

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<sup>122</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>123</sup>SNA File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Swaziland Progressive Association Annual Conference, Mankaiana, from 4 to 6 October, 1947, p. 1.

<sup>124</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 2.

provided for technical and university education for Africans so as to enable them to enter skilled, semi – skilled occupations, professions, Government service and other spheres of employment.<sup>125</sup>

In a memorandum submitted to the Government of Swaziland in 1948 the SPA pointed out that, “When we examine the expenditure on European and Eurafrican education we discover that serious discrimination has been used against African education and great prejudice is shown towards its development”.<sup>126</sup> Drawing from the Swaziland Education Report of 1944 the Association showed that the expenditure on European education was £ 9,728 effectively spent on 9 schools and 473 pupils. On Eurafrican education £ 670 was spent in this case on 2 schools and about 100 children. In the case of African children only £ 9, 045 was spent on 100 schools and 6 355 pupils.

Regarding the conspicuous differentiation on expenditure the Association lamented that, “This injustice is inflicted on a people (Swazis) who are heavily taxed directly and indirectly and whose wages are hopelessly low and who live beyond the bread line”.<sup>127</sup> Commenting on this development, Margaret Ballinger observed that, “The regular expenditure on European education in Swaziland is considerably more than the whole receipts from European direct taxation in that territory”.<sup>128</sup> The table below shows a further breakdown of the expenditure;

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<sup>125</sup>*Ibid.* , p. 11.

<sup>126</sup>UWL / William Cullen Africana Library, Historical Papers, AD 843/B / 18.4 SAIRR: Protectorates: Swaziland: Memorandum on African Education in Swaziland submitted to the Government of Swaziland on 31 January, 1948 by the Swaziland Progressive Association.

<sup>127</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup>*South African Outlook* 17 July 1935 quoted in *Ibid.*

**Table 2: Budget Allocation for Swaziland Schools, 1944.**

<b>Institution / Course</b>	<b>Allocated Expenditure</b>
European schools maintained by Government	£ 20. 25
St Marks European Aided School	£ 22. 58
Swazi National Schools	£ 5. 57
Native Schools maintained by Government	£ 1. 74
Native Schools Aided by Government	£ 1. 1
Eurafrican Schools Aided by Government	£ 5. 15
Training Course for African Teacher	£ 28. 23

**Source:** UWL / William Cullen Africana Library, Historical Papers, AD843 / 18. 4 / SAIRR: Protectorates, Memorandum on African Education in Swaziland submitted to the Government of Swaziland on 31 January 1948 by the Swaziland Progressive Association.

In its Conference resolutions of 1949 the Association focussed on other issues and was silent on education.<sup>129</sup> This position had not been substantially altered in the subsequent two years.<sup>130</sup> However, in 1953 the issue of discrimination with regard to African education was forcefully brought back to table by the Association as communicated to Government that

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<sup>129</sup>See, SNA, File 3311, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions Passed at the Annual Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association held in the Court House at Mbabane on 30 July to 1 August, 1949.

<sup>130</sup>See, for example, SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions of the Swaziland Progressive Association Passed at its Annual Conference at Stegi on the 1 to 4 August, 1952.

The education of the African in Swaziland is a matter of national importance requiring state effort for its proper realisation. The right of the African child to education like all children of other sections of the local Community must be recognised as a state duty and responsibility. The views repeatedly stated and set out by the Association to the Government have in the past clearly shown defects which obtain in the present system of African education in this and other countries where white and black live side by side. That there is dissatisfaction among Africans about the treatment of their education in this country is apparent and the Association insists and strongly recommends that a commission of inquiry be appointed forthwith.<sup>131</sup>

However, the resolution did not suggest any terms of reference for the enquiry. In a meeting close to the end of the year discussions underlined the fact that Government was far from adopting a policy of compulsory education for African children. During the meeting the Government Secretary pointed out that there had been significant improvements with regard to African education. He pointed out that enrolment had increased over recent years until then when 40% of Swazi school aged children attended schools. He also pointed out that existing institutions could cater for an additional 4, 000 children in the higher classes. The Government Secretary felt that the Association needed to encourage children in this category to remain at school. He was not entirely convinced on the virtues of compulsory African education and felt that

It was much more simple to provide the necessary facilities for a comparatively small group. The position in respect of a large group, beginning from nothing was most difficult. It called for in the first instance, a far larger expenditure for the necessary buildings and equipment. There was also the personnel difficulty— the recruitment of teachers. In addition there was a need not only to provide the necessary facilities but to educate parents about the sacrifices they themselves had to make in order to make compulsory education practical politics.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>131</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions Passed at the Annual Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association held in the Central School at Hlathikulu on the 1 to 3 August, 1953.

In 1959 the School Board, a statutory body established to advise the Resident Commissioner, recorded its awareness of the reality that, “proportionately, considerably more money is being spent on European than African schooling”.<sup>133</sup> In its 1959 resolutions the SPA presented an elaborate history of education in Swaziland from the establishment of the first National school at Zombodze up to 1950s when the Union of South Africa refused to admit all Swazi nationals in its schools. The blame for lack of progress and advancement in education was put on Government.

Because of dissatisfaction about the manner in which African education was managed in the country the Association called for a revision of the education system which would see its management under African authorities. Again the Association demanded, “the immediate appointment of a Commission of Enquiry into the whole system of education in Swaziland”.<sup>134</sup> The Association’s main complaint was that the system of education in Swaziland frustrated Swazi aspirations to occupy technical and key posts in the labour market.

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<sup>132</sup>*Ibid.* , Notes of a Meeting with the Executive of the Progressive Association at Mbabane, 11 December, 1953.

<sup>133</sup>SNA, File 3133/20, European Advisory Council 8th Session of 3rd Reconstituted Council, November 10th and 11th , 1959, Note on the Proposal by the School Board that an Education Levy be Imposed on All European Taxpayers.

<sup>134</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions of the Swaziland Progressive Association Passed at its 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Held at Kwaluseni, Bremersdorp, 1 to 2 August, 1959.

## 5. 10 Working and Living Conditions of Swazi Labour

The SPA vigorously took up issues to do with the working and living conditions of workers of all kinds in Swaziland from 1945 to 1959. The Association's main contention throughout this period was that the difficult conditions to which African workers were subject were a product of the political and socio-economic conditions in Swaziland which favoured whites as they were considered superior, and therefore entitled to preferential treatment.

In its 1945 Special Conference the SPA challenged Government to improve the working conditions of African Civil Servants in Swaziland. The Association insisted that the conditions of African Civil Servant needed to be greatly improved. Resolution no. 5 read, "That the Association resolved that it was high time that the status of African Civil Servants were well defined and that it would be appreciated that a copy of the document embodying the conditions would be supplied to the Association".<sup>135</sup> In its Extraordinary Conference of 1946 the SPA submitted that, "The Association deplores and strongly objects to the placing of the African Civil Servants on different conditions and status of other nationalities in the Civil Service of the Administration of this Territory. That the Association on behalf of the African Civil Servants asks for equal pay for equal work".<sup>136</sup> In its memorandum to the Socio-Economic Survey in 1947 the SPA went further and submitted that

We ask for the Africans equal pay for equal work, as well as equal opportunity for all work and for the unskilled workers in both rural and urban areas such minimum wage as shall enable workers to live in good health, happiness, decency and comfort. The Association deplores the policy which because of colour places the salary or wages of an uneducated European higher than that of a better or highly

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<sup>135</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Swaziland Progressive Association Special Conference Held at Bremersdorp from the 15th to the 17th December, 1945.

<sup>136</sup>SNA, File 2048, Abolition of Colour-Bar and Discriminatory Legislation in British Territory, Extract of Resolutions of the Extraordinary Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association held at Goedegun, 5 to 7 October, 1946 (Original File no.148).

educated African or because of colour a highly educated African is placed under an illiterate European.<sup>137</sup>

Among other things, the SPA called for the “statutory recognition of the rights of African worker to collective bargaining”.<sup>138</sup> In its submission the Association went on to petition that, “the African worker shall be insured against illness, unemployment, accidents, old age and for all other disabilities arising from the nature of their work; the contributions to such insurance be borne directly by the Government or the employer”.<sup>139</sup> Finally the Association asked for the, “The extension of all industrial welfare legislation to Africans engaged in Agriculture, domestic service and in public institutions or bodies”.<sup>140</sup> In 1952 the SPA claimed that despite the rise in the cost of living African wages had remained low. Expressing its discontent, the Association intimated that

Whilst the cost of living has soared high the wages of a majority of the African manpower in the Territory have remained low, the Association feels that in order to give the African workers a medium of representation to their employers a trade union must be formed.<sup>141</sup>

In its 1956 Annual Conference the SPA focussed more on wages paid to Africans and concluded that they were low, as a result of the prevailing discrimination in the country. Framing its resolution on wages the SPA remarked that, “surveying wages paid to Africans in Swaziland we come to the conclusion that the Africans are economically strangled. That discrimination exists in the payment of wages and salaries and that all citizens irrespective of race be paid a living wage and remunerated according to their

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<sup>137</sup>SNA, File 1216 III, Socio - Economic Survey – Collection of Data, A copy of the Memorandum on African’ Claims in Swaziland, Submitted to the Socio - Economic Survey in Swaziland in 1947 by the Swaziland Progressive Association, p. 11.

<sup>138</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>141</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions of the Swaziland Progressive Association Passed at its Annual Conference at Stegi from the 1 to 4 August, 1952.



skill”<sup>142</sup>. Discrimination against Africans employed by government in this respect was pronounced at the Public Works Department. Prince Masitsela was documenting a long established practise when he submitted before the Legislative Council in the 1960s that, “There is a very big difference in the salaries received by the Swazis and the Portuguese. The Africans employed in the Public Works Department have always complained about this”.<sup>143</sup>

On a slightly different but related issue the Association demanded that, “all labourers irrespective of race, be entitled to all workers’ benefits and proper and adequate housing”.<sup>144</sup> Presenting the case of farm dwellers in the same year, the SPA maintained that, “The positions of Africans in the European farms in Swaziland whether they be tenants or labourers must be investigated because it is our belief that if the investigation is made it would reveal the startling conditions in which they live”.<sup>145</sup> Indeed in a recent collection that explored the situation of blacks in Southern African colonial white farms, Jonathan Crush published a chapter describing the situation and reactions of black farm labourers in Swaziland.<sup>146</sup> Focussing on the 1930s and 1940s, he observed that blacks laboured on white farms in Southern Swaziland in servile positions and under brutal conditions. Crush unveils certain protest forms and documents the resilience of workers under this regime but does not suggest in any way that they might have been connected to broader social movements within the country.

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<sup>142</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions of the Swaziland Progressive Association Passed unanimously at the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Held at Matsapha, Swaziland from 4 to 6 August, 1956.

<sup>143</sup>UWL / William Cullen Africana Library, Government Publications, Swaziland Legislative Council: Official Report of the Debates, 28 March, 1966, p. 141.

<sup>144</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup>J. Crush, “The Colour of Civilization: White Farming in Colonial Swaziland, 1910 – 1940” in A.H. Jeeves and J. Crush (eds.), *White Farms, Black Labour: The State and Agrarian Change in Southern Africa, 1910 - 1950* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1997), pp. 214 - 227.

Clearly, the consciousness of the Swazi living on farms exposed them to a particular variant of white racism but did not directly feed into the campaign against racial discrimination in the country. Despite the SPA's awareness of the plight of farm labourers no attempt was made to co - ordinate their protest activities to those of the Association largely because of its elitist approach. The SPA from its inception considered itself an "enlightened" class of the Swazi society which was at the vanguard of the nation and a "mouthpiece" of the masses.

The SPA was more concerned with the living conditions of urban Africans in Swaziland. In 1946, for example, the Association bitterly complained about the deplorable conditions under which 9 workers, all of whom were government employees, lived. The secretary of the Association attached a list of the names of these workers as well their departments of employment to a memorandum that was submitted to the District Commissioner of Mbabane and remarked that

On behalf of the following local employees who are living under the most intolerable conditions and who have been banking hope on the new Location Government scheme; the prospects of which seems to be very remote, the Progressive Association humbly requests that the Government may favourably consider allowing these workers to put up temporary wattle and daub huts on a piece of Crown Land on the South-east of Msunduza Location for the time being until such time as the Government housing scheme shall materialise.<sup>147</sup>

By 1952 the SPA still believed it had to knock harder on government's door with regard to the living conditions of Africans in urban areas. Among the 5 resolutions agreed by the Annual Conference of the Association in this year the second one read, "That this Association is greatly perturbed by the insecurity of the urban Africans in the Territory and therefore, reasonably demand that in all urban areas the Africans should be granted security of freehold land tenure in their land of birth".<sup>148</sup> Two years later, the SPA still maintained its position on this issue. It again pointed out that

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<sup>147</sup>SNA, File 148, Swaziland Progressive Association, Letter from Secretary General of the Swaziland Progressive Association to District Commissioner of Mbabane, 18 July, 1946.

This Association is deeply concerned about the deplorable conditions under which urban non- Europeans live in the urban areas of Swaziland. As they have no security of tenure, they live in constant fear of being deprived of their homes. In the interest of continued harmonious relations it is incumbent upon the authorities to make the lot of the urban non - Europeans as such that they will be enabled to live their lives free from fear, want and frustration.<sup>149</sup>

From 1952 the SPA's communications with government were toned down as they celebrated the white advent in Swaziland in preparation for the Association's Silver Jubilee. Despite this disposition, the issue of discriminatory treatment of Africans in urban areas was forcefully put forward. In 1956, for example, the Association emphasized that "all labourers irrespective of race be entitled to ... proper and adequate housing".<sup>150</sup>

In 1958 the need for raising the wages for African workers was also registered among others, by Rev. D. S. Arden, an Anglican missionary and educator who was about to open a secondary school at Usuthu Mission where he was Director. In justifying the opening of the school that would usher in the Swazi to technical training, he observed that, "Well-paid jobs are at present filled entirely by whites, whose monthly wages average £50 to £120 compared with £ 2. 10. 0 to £ 8 per month for Swazis".<sup>151</sup> Arden advocated the education of African children as a major means to close the gap between the wages of Europeans and Africans. Here Arden is to be seen as forming part of the liberal white community which believed that the educated Swazi had a key role to play in the development of the country. In a sense this group complemented the SPA.

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<sup>148</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions of the Swaziland Progressive Association Passed at its Annual Conference at Stegi, 1 to 4 August, 1952.

<sup>149</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions of the Swaziland Progressive Association, Submitted to the Government Secretary on 18 August, 1954.

<sup>150</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions Passed unanimously at the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association held at the Swazi National School, Matsapha, Swaziland, 4-6 August, 1956.

<sup>151</sup>SNA, File 3019 F II, Native Education, St. Christopher's Secondary School, Usuthu Mission, Swaziland: Some Facts and Figures, compiled by Rev. D. S. Arden, March 1958.

In 1959 the SPA focussed on the issue of job opportunities for the young Swazi which it claimed were being given to South African whites. Part of the resolution on wages contained in this year's memorandum read, "The Nation would like to train its technicians, because through lack of education there has been continuous infiltration of Europeans from the Union of South Africa, filling in key posts which could easily be taken by Swazi youth".<sup>152</sup> In the same conference the Association reiterated its long held position that, "A start be made forthwith to set up the machinery for the operation of Trade Unions under the same conditions which obtain in all democratic countries".<sup>153</sup> Legislation was put in place for this purpose in 1942. However, no trade union was registered until 1962 since Swazi traditional leadership and the administration in the country preferred labour representatives who were appointed by the employers and the SNC.

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<sup>152</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions of the Swaziland Progressive Association Passed at its 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Held at Kwaluseni, Bremersdorp, 1 - 2 August, 1959.

<sup>153</sup>*Ibid.*

### 5. 11 Social services

In its 1947 memorandum the SPA pointed to two key areas in which discriminatory practices and attitudes were reflected in the social services towards the Africans. These were the Railway and Motor Transport and Postal Services. In expressing its feelings against racism in these services the SPA vigorously and succinctly declared that

We protest strongly against discourteous, harsh and inconsiderate treatment meted out to the Africans by the officials of the Railway and Motor Transport (R. M. T.) and Postal Services in Swaziland. Such obnoxious practices are irreconcilable with Christian, democratic and civilised standards and are contrary to human decency. In this connection we have resolved to ask that in these services African should serve African. For example, in the R. M. T. Service at least for the time being the Assistant be an African and in the Postal Services a separate counter for the Africans must be provided and with due safeguards an African be should be appointed to the post of serving his own people.<sup>154</sup>

The protest of the SPA as captured above is one case that shows some contradictions in its fight against racial discrimination. This is reflected, for example, by the Association's condemnation of racial discrimination and segregation against Africans while at the same time it advocated representation along racial lines.

In 1947 the SPA also submitted to the Socio-Economic Survey Committee, the request that, "We ask for equality of treatment with any other section of the population in State Social Services, and the inclusion on equal basis with Europeans in any scheme of social security".<sup>155</sup> Four years later, the Association expressed the view more clearly if briefly that

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<sup>154</sup>SNA, File 1216 III, Socio-Economic Survey– Collection of Data, A copy of the Memorandum on African' Claims in Swaziland, Submitted to the Socio - Economic Survey in Swaziland in 1947 by the Swaziland Progressive Association, p. 13.

<sup>155</sup>*Ibid.*

In the opinion of the Association there is not adequate provision for social services for the Africans and this alone has greatly retarded the progress of the indigenous population. The Association asks that in the Annual Estimates of the Territory, the Government make ample financial provision for these services.<sup>156</sup>

This the SPA was requesting in the light of Britain's post-war "development" policies. In a meeting that was held just before the end of the year to discuss resolutions passed by the Association a few months earlier, the Government Secretary, Mr. H. D. G. FitzPatrick informed the meeting that, "The Resident Commissioner was particularly interested in providing adequate social services for the Africans. However, the shortage of funds curtailed activities in this direction. With increasing prosperity, there is no doubt, that more and more funds would in future be set aside for this purpose".<sup>157</sup> The attitude of the colonial Administration and some whites in Swaziland had been that the country would eventually be incorporated into the Union of South Africa. Hence the lack of interest in the country's general development. Despite very little being achieved in Swaziland in the direction of providing social services for Africans, in 1954 the SPA stated that

This Conference of the Swaziland Progressive Association deeply appreciates the various development schemes in operation in Swaziland, and pledges its full support to all schemes which are for the welfare of Swaziland and its African, European and Eurafrican inhabitants.<sup>158</sup>

The mood captured in this resolution reflects the Association's all-embracing approach with regard to racial issues. It upheld the interests of all the major races in Swaziland though it did not necessarily promote a movement towards racial integration. The stance adopted by the Association in this particular conference diluted its usually strong voice with regard to its representation of African interests. The reason behind this posture may

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<sup>156</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions Passed at the Annual Conference of the Association Held at Hlatikhulu Central School, 1 to 3 August, 1953.

<sup>157</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Notes of Meeting with the Executive of the Progressive Association at Mbabane, 11 December, 1953.

<sup>158</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions from the Swaziland Progressive Association, 18 August, 1954.

have been as noted earlier, that the SPA intended in that year to celebrate its Silver Jubilee in the spirit of a centenary celebration for harmonious race relations in Swaziland. Co-operation from the white community would be an essential ingredient for such a celebration. Hence, the association's "deal" to avoid antagonistic as well as Afrocentric phrases in its resolutions. From 1955 to the end of the 1950s there is nothing in the minutes of the SPA that confirms positive developments with regard to the provision of social services to Africans: Only a glaring silence confronts the researcher. Instead, a survey on Swaziland in 1955 noted that

There is no department of social welfare. The Education and Medical departments, District Officers, the Red Cross, the Boy Scouts Council and the Girl Guides and the missionaries, the Joint Council of Europeans and Swazis, all assist in social services. Europeans are all in a position to help themselves and have established social clubs at almost all district headquarters. For Swazis, their age-grade system, which embraces both sexes from an early age, has always been the agency for giving them a social consciousness for teaching them not only their duties to their paramount chief and other chiefs, but also to their fellows ... A certain number of women's clubs have been started, getting their inspiration from the European side, but their appeal is practically limited to the literate or those strongly under European influence. Europeans have been very neighbourly in assisting in the establishment of wholesome sports and other recreation, but the Swazis are slow in taking up the burden of the tedious work entailed and supporting the institutions with subscriptions. There is too much spoon feeding in these sports.<sup>159</sup>

The aspirations of the Association to have the country move towards self-government were expressed equally clearly in subsequent communications to the Swaziland Government. The SPA now began to make demands concerning representation in the governance of the country. In its Annual Conference of 1952 the SPA, for example, resolved that

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<sup>159</sup>UWL / William Cullen Africana Library, Historical Papers, AD 843 / RJ / 0 4. 1, Protectorates: Swaziland, SAIRR, Swaziland: A General Survey, 1955, p. 8.

This Association feels that time is now ripe for the local administration to be revised as to grant the Africans the cherished right of being fully represented in all the Councils of State. This can only come about by the institution of a legislative Body in which all sections of the community would be democratically represented.<sup>160</sup>

The Association took its time during the conference to commend the harmonious race relations that prevailed at Stegi. Under a different resolution the SPA expressed that, “This Association was deeply impressed by the harmonious racial concord which is existing in Stegi today namely: (a) The removal of the Colour Bar in all public places, (b) The freehold land tenure which is extended to the Africans in the urban area”.<sup>161</sup> Explaining what in Siteki might have led to what, the SPA viewed as harmonious relations between the races, Dr. Samuel Hynd recalled that, “Most of the whites in Siteki had married African women and produced Coloured children”.<sup>162</sup> He further argued that “discrimination by these whites would have been targeted at their wives and children”.<sup>163</sup> The issue of self - government does not appear to have found place in the subsequent meetings of the SPA as the focus and emphasis became laid on other pressing issues.

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<sup>160</sup>SNA, File 3111, Swaziland Progressive Association, Resolutions of the Swaziland Progressive Association Passed at its Annual Conference at Stegi, 1 to 2 August, 1952.

<sup>161</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>162</sup>Interview, Dr. Samuel Hynd, Manzini, Hynd’s Private Clinic, 13 August, 2005.

<sup>163</sup>*Ibid.* George Wallis who was an influential European Advisory Council unofficial member from the 1940s to the 1960s. He lived in Siteki and had an African wife. He was once described by the Resident Commissioner in the 1940s as the spokesperson for the downtrodden.



## **5. 12 The SPA and the Multi - Racial Joint Council Movement**

The desire to establish a Multi - Racial Joint Council in Swaziland extended back to the 1930s.<sup>164</sup> Such Councils had been in existence in South Africa since 1921. When the SPA was re-activated in the mid-1940s its leading members involved themselves in the work of the Multi-Racial Joint Council in Swaziland. It appears that as a way of dealing with institutionalized discrimination the SPA subscribed to the notion of co - operation across the racial divide to foster racial harmony in Swaziland. This can be partly seen through South African Institute of Race Relations joint - partnership with the SPA in establishing Joint Councils in two of Swaziland's important towns. The first instance was in 1949 when the Association played a pivotal role in founding the Joint Council of Europeans and Non - Europeans in Mbabane. Some prominent members of the SPA such as J. J. Nquku, B. B. Shongwe and Obed Mabuza were very active in the establishment of this Council. The Mbabane Joint Council of Europeans and Non - Europeans when it started consisted of 38 members, 15 of whom were European, 22 Africans and one Eurafrican. Nquku became the Honorary Secretary of the Council.

A similar council was established in Bremersdorp two years later. On 17 February 1951 a number of Europeans and non - Europeans met in that town to consider the formation of a Joint Council. There were 22 Europeans, 28 Africans and 3 Eurafricans who attended, making up a total of 53. A joint Council of Europeans and non - Europeans was successfully formed. Thus, within a span of three years Joint Councils had been established in two important urban centres in Swaziland. A 1954 report on these developments read that, "The Joint Council movement started in Swaziland in 1949 and at present only two branches exist in at Mbabane and Bremersdorp respectively. The movement on the whole in its short life in the Territory has done praise worthy work".<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>164</sup>See, for example, UWL / William Cullen Africana Library, Historical Papers, AD 1433, Joint Councils Outside South Africa, Letter from a Private writer who was probably a member of the Johannesburg Joint Council to Dr. David Hynd and Letter from a Private writer to the Resident Commissioner, 6 September, 1934.

Explaining the broader aims of the movement, Dr. Samuel Hynd mentioned that, “The object was to initiate a process of

social integration so that the Swazi and Coloureds could access certain privileges from which they were barred by the racial system”.<sup>166</sup> Hynd, who became chairman and was instrumental in establishing the movement in Bremersdorp recalled that, “I was concerned when I saw the racial divisions in the society”.<sup>167</sup> He further stated that, “educated Swazis and some whites began to meet at the District Commissioner offices where present day Bhunu Mall stands”.<sup>168</sup> He also pointed out that, “since blacks and whites were not freely interacting I became a catalyst and with the assistance of the District Commissioner of Bremersdorp brought the races together to meet on points of mutual interests”.<sup>169</sup>

According to Hynd, “tension began to melt down between the races and the involvement of some government officials like George Murdoch helped to promote harmonious relations between the races”.<sup>170</sup> Explaining why the Multi - Joint Council movement was limited to Mbabane and Bremersdorp, Dr. Hynd explained that, “These were the two places populated with larger racial groups”.<sup>171</sup> These Councils were replaced by the

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<sup>165</sup>UWL / William Cullen Africana Library, Historical Papers, AD 1433, Joint Councils Outside South Africa.

<sup>166</sup>Interview, Samuel Hynd, Manzini, Hynd’s Private Clinic, 13 August, 2005.

<sup>167</sup>*Ibid.* Archival evidence, however, shows that David Hynd, father to Samuel Hynd had been in communication with some people working in South Africa about the establishment of a Joint Council Movement as far back as the 1930s. Perhaps, due to time constraint, Samuel could not bring forward the influence his father had on him in this field.

<sup>168</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>169</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>170</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>171</sup>*Ibid.*

Indaba Societies at the beginning of the 1960s in which educated blacks and whites continued to discuss matters of progress and development.<sup>172</sup> The Multi - Racial Joint Council Movement though short lived should be seen as having been instrumental in facilitating co-operation between black and whites in some urban spheres. The Movement was limited in that it only became established in these two urban centres and was not necessarily focused on the whole country. Moreover its aim like the SPA was not the integration of the black and white communities. In essence the movement was gradualist in dealing with discriminatory policies and practices. While in one sense it viewed persons of different races as distinctly different it also advocated co- operation over the racial divide as much as was possible. In this sense it can be looked at as having playing a certain role in promoting racial harmony in Swaziland.

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<sup>172</sup>The Indaba Societies were also quickly overtaken by the emergence of political parties in the early 1960s. For some deliberations under this forum, see for example, Manzini Indaba Society, Progress and Prosperity: how they may be ensured in Swaziland? Manzini: Manzini Indaba Society, 1962. See also TOS, "Indaba Society", 8 September 1961.

### **5. 13 African Hotel**

One site in which discriminatory treatment manifested in Swaziland was in hotels. Though hotels had been established in Swaziland since the 1880s they were reserved exclusively for European use. Within these hotels the Swazi were, as a matter of policy, not admitted. This motivated the educated Swazi to seek to establish a separate African hotel. In an SNC meeting of 1953 the issue of the establishment of a hotel for Africans was raised.<sup>173</sup> Mr. H. D. FitzPatrick, Government Secretary, reported to the Standing Committee of the SNC that the District Commissioner of Bremersdorp had received an application from the SPA for a stand in the Bremersdorp Township for the purpose of running a co-operative hotel. The feeling of the District Commissioner, as relayed by the Government Secretary, was that though there was a need for such a facility he doubted that the SPA was constitutionally empowered to trade. Moreover, he felt that such an application had to go through the SNC. This was another case among others, where the SPA can be seen to have sought for separate African facilities as opposed to an integrated social system. Such a posture raises questions about the “racial” society and order envisaged by members of this group.

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<sup>173</sup>For details, see, SNA, File 3012 D II, Meetings Between Administrative Officers and Paramount Chief, Notes for Office Purposes of Meeting of the Secretary for African Affairs with Members of the Standing Committee of the Swazi National Council Held at Lobamba, 16 October, 1953.

#### 5. 14 Kaffir, Use of the word

In both pre-colonial and colonial Swaziland, various racist slurs were used particularly by whites with reference to Africans. One such word, as already discussed in the second and third chapters, was the word “kafir”. Stephen Dlamini observed that, “Words like ‘Kaffir’ were strongly used by Boers”.<sup>174</sup> There is no evidence that the SPA specifically raised any objection to the usage of this word with reference to Africans in its fight against racist habits. This might have been a product of the fact that the SPA President was an SNC counsellor by this time. In its own right the SNC appears to have taken a strong stand with regard to the usage of the word in reference to Africans. In a 1950 SNC meeting some members of the Council openly expressed their resentment of the usage of this word with reference to the Swazi. Councillor Pica Magagula, for instance, expressed the view during the meeting that the tendency by Europeans to refer to the Swazi as “kaffirs” was insulting.<sup>175</sup> Some colonial officials unsuccessfully defended the white community arguing that the word had its origins in Mohammedanism which used it not in discriminatory terms but to distinguish Muslims from non-Muslims.

The explanation offered by these colonial officials was not accepted by members of the SNC. Councillor Charles Dlamini who was present at this meeting, for example, dismissed this explanation as a cover up for its racist use and maintained that the word as was employed by whites in colonial Swaziland was indeed an insult, which was not used innocently by whites.<sup>176</sup> The Postal Services and Railway and Motor Transport which were notorious for the harsh treatment against Africans were also not spared by members of the SNC when it came to pinpointing culprits in relation to the usage of racist slurs such as the word “kaffir”. Stephen Dlamini explained that, “Discrimination by whites was more pronounced in the bus railways. Boer bus drivers treated blacks harshly. Here, the word “kaffir”, was widely used and Africans were accommodated in the third class section. The accommodating Samuel Hynd reasoned that, “What you must appreciate is that these buses were South African. Our roads were very poor and no transport was

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<sup>174</sup>Interview, Stephen Dlamini, Matsapha, Logoba, 26 November 2004.

<sup>175</sup>SNA, File 1838, Use of the word, “Kaffir”, Meeting of the Swazi National Council, June 1950.

<sup>176</sup>*Ibid.*

operated locally”.<sup>177</sup> Hynd’s point is that the South African bus operators behaved the way they did because they knew that their service were crucial in the country. Hence, the extension of their country’s prevalent racist slurs. According to his view, since Swaziland did not provide transport services to the local population it could do very little about this situation.

In a 1951 SNC meeting where this issue was further deliberated and the Secretary for African Affairs reported that the Railway and Post Office authorities had been asked to see to it that their employees did not refer to Africans by the term, “kaffir”.<sup>178</sup> The Commissioner of Police was also updated about this concern and was instructed by the Resident Commissioner to take the appropriate steps if cases touching on the use of the word were brought to his attention. However, this step does not appear to have played any major role in ensuring that the use of the word was discontinued. Up to the early 1960s and beyond the word was still used in these spheres including farms and major industrial centres.

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<sup>177</sup>Interview, Dr. Samuel Hynd, Manzini, Hynd’s Private Clinic, 13 August, 2005.

<sup>178</sup>SNA, File 3012 D, Meetings between Administrative officers and Paramount Chief, 11 May, 1951.

## **5. 15 Conclusion**

Though the struggles of this Association were limited to paper protest, they served to inform the colonial Administration of the awareness of the educated elites about the system of racial inequality and racial discrimination prevalent in Swaziland up to this time. World War II and post – World War II events and politics in the wider world inspired these developments in Swaziland to a considerable extent. Though the paper protest launched by the SPA was not accompanied by corresponding protest action it served to raise a general awareness of the problem of racially discriminatory legislation and practices in Swaziland. The protest launched by the SPA was on some issues equally, upheld by the SNC. Unfortunately, these groups did not combine their efforts in their fight against racial discrimination as each pulled in a different direction in the struggle for power. The protest oscillated between issues that addressed discrimination of Africans and those that celebrated positive relations between blacks and whites in the country. This occasionally implied that the struggle was characterized by contradictory overtones.

Essentially, the struggle lacked strong and clear demands for racial integration and ironically made a case for political representation and provision of social and economic amenities along racial lines. As much as this struggle against discriminatory as well as segregatory legislation and practices served its primary purpose of exposing the evils associated with the domination of one race by another it was deficient in certain crucial aspects as a campaign to move Swaziland towards a new non-racial order. This can be seen among other things, for example, in the SPA's demand that African education be like that of the European instead of calling for racial and social integration in the education system of Swaziland. This observation can also be generally applied to numerous spheres of Swazi society.

Notably, the SPA due to its elitist nature failed to co - ordinate the concerns of the various sections of the Swazi population that were subjected to racial discrimination. This owed largely to the elitist premise on which the SPA operated as it perceived itself as a “mouthpiece” of the masses. This ultimately, led to its failure to translate pertinent concerns into a single national campaign against racial discrimination. This elitist approach, at best, rendered the SPA’s campaign against racial discrimination, a paper protest without corresponding practical and strategic protest action.