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THE NEW BRIGHTON ADVISORY BOARD c.1923-1952: ITS LEGITIMACY AND LEGACY

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The historical significance of advisory boards has been downplayed because of their contradictory role in urban African politics. This ambivalence is apparent in Alf Stadler's The political economy of modern South Africa. He states at one point that, "Because of their lack of power, the limited forms of African representation in local bodies [such as advisory boards]... seldom generated any substantial political support in urban African communities." Elsewhere, he notes that advisory boards "provided a locus for African political activity, and some significant community leaders used them as a power base".[1] It is usual that advisory board members are dismissed as 'lackeys' or 'sell-outs'. Bloch and Wilkinson, for instance, have contended that until the 1940s, the system of Advisory Boards were dominated by the 'most reactionary elements' of the African petty bourgeoisie, and "generally became the vehicles for the often narrow grievances and aspirations of a disconnected petty bourgeoisie".[2] But my contention is that despite the purely consultative functions of the Boards, participation in Advisory Board politics was an important channel of mobilisation in urban African communities until at least the Second World War. Thereafter the legitimacy of the boards was increasingly called into question, and the site of the struggle shifted from the 'dummy' institutions created by the government.

Although two little known papers have examined the advisory board system in general terms,[3] little attention has been paid to their role in particular communities. The only such study known to the writer is an account of the Bloemfontein Advisory Board between 1923 and 1948.[4] As far as New Brighton is concerned, M de Jongh has examined a number of meetings of the Advisory Board held after 1920 with a view to evaluating the behaviour of individual members.[5] But he does not provide sufficient historical background with which understand the context wherein the Board operated. This shortcoming is being addressed in my wider research project,[6] but in this paper I have undertaken a study of the New Brighton Advisory Board with particular reference to the question of the Board's legitimacy and its relationship with the local authority in the period between 1923 and 1952. Because its activities were primarily concerned with everyday issues such as living conditions, rents, transport, and so on, the Board needs to be examined as a platform for the mobilisation of a community in its own right. Secondly, it also needs to be evaluated as a locus of activity concerned with wider socio-political issues.

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It is often incorrectly assumed that Native Advisory Boards were first established in terms of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923.[7] In fact, both Ndadeni in Cape Town and New Brighton in Port Elizabeth which were established by the (Cape) Native Reserve Location Act of 1902 had Advisory Boards much earlier. The Native Reserve Location Act of 1905 enabled the Governor to proclaim regulations "providing for the establishment of Advisory Boards of Natives and defining their functions". Accordingly, Proclamation No. 297 of 1908 set out the regulations governing the nomination and election of candidates, the voting procedure, the procedure for

meetings, and so on. These regulations stipulated that only four of the six members would be elected by location residents, whilst the others would be appointed by the Governor-General acting upon the recommendation of the Native Affairs Department (NAD) which, in turn, followed the recommendation of the Superintendent of Natives. In the event of there being more than four nominations for the positions on the board, the Magistrate would have to call a public meeting at which four candidates would be elected by a show of hands - this was later changed to a ballot. Advisory board members and voters were restricted to male lease-holders whose rent was fully paid up. It seems self-evident that the Advisory Boards or Committees envisaged by the Natives (Urban Areas) Act was modelled on the Cape Native Reserve Location Act.

The 1913 Report of the Native Affairs Department noted that "there is no local government in the true sense [in the locations but that the boards] serve a most useful purpose as a connecting link between the Government and the residents of these locations".[8] It was assumed by certain local authorities that the advisory boards were a step in the direction of self-government for urban Africans. They were said to be an implicit acknowledgment of the permanent status of urban Africans. Even the Stallard Commission, which is well known for having advocated the doctrine of Africans as temporary sojourners in the cities, proposed the establishment of "an advisory committee representing all native residents in the area under a [superintendent's] jurisdiction".[9] Thus the administration of urban African communities was beset by an inherent contradiction. In spite of concessions to the notion of local urban African self- government, in terms of the 1923 legislation the advisory boards were nothing more than consultative bodies. Although the urban African population increased rapidly and stabilised in the period under discussion, the prospect of the advisory boards obtaining legislative powers remained remote.

The Native Affairs Department Report published in 1919 remarked (somewhat euphemistically) that the New Brighton Advisory Board had "assisted greatly in arousing interest and ensuring contentment in the administration".[10] However, the Location Superintendent, Evelyn Grattan, did not regard the Board as an unqualified success:

> There is... a section of the residents which regards the Board with suspicion and criticises it unmercifully. An Advisory Board, however, is an excellent institution and both individually and as a Board acts as a brake on the hot headed and is the means of bringing to light any grievances which residents might have.[11]

Years later, it would appear that New Brighton's experience of the advisory board system invited favourable comparisons with other centres:

> Generally the impression derived was that Boards, when comprised of the right type of natives, were helpful to the authorities. Several instances were quoted where difficulties were overcome through the agencies of such Boards. On the other hand, some centres, owing to the regulation confining the right of voting in an election to such residents who are not more than one month in arrear with rents, found they were unable to

get a Board elected.[12]
Municipal records indicate that the NBAB met regularly after 1923 and seldom did not have a quorum. The fact that it had commenced so much earlier than its counterparts elsewhere in the country, and the relatively stable nature of Port Elizabeth's African community undoubtedly contributed to this state of affairs.

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The New Brighton Advisory Board and the Local Authority

An amendment to the (Cape's) Native Reserve Location Act 40 of 1902 and Act 5 of 1908 (Act 49 of 1918) made provision for the transfer of New Brighton to municipal control in 1923. The Advisory Board regulations were amended to make provision for 3 members to be elected by residents and 3 to be nominated by the City Council.[13] In practice, this meant that the Superintendent's nominees were simply approved by the Council rather than the Magistrate, as had been the case whilst the location had been under the control of the central government. Whilst it had been customary to submit the Board's minutes to the SNA when the location had been under government administration, there was nothing in the New Brighton regulations which made it compulsory to submit the minutes to any authority. The procedure recommended by the Natives (Urban Areas) Act was that Advisory Board minutes should be submitted to the Committee dealing with Native Affairs for consideration. In the case of Port Elizabeth, the NAC was initially a sub-committee of the Finance, Works and General Purpose Comittee. However, after a crisis in 1925 when Superintendent Bellairs was made the scapegoat for the Council's inattention to New Brighton, he was replaced by JP McNamee,[14] and the NAC was upgraded to a separate standing committee which was directly responsible to the Council.[15] The Location Superintendent acted as a liaison betweeen the NAC and NBAB and made a monthly report to the NAC, which included copies of the Advisory Board minutes. Copies of the NAC's minutes were, in turn, attached to the agenda circulated to City Councillors who only acted on the recommendations of the NAC.[16] The Superintendent reported back to the NBAB on the recommendations of the NAC and the resolutions of the Council. However, the Board had little chance of appealing against the decisions of the local authority.

By 1923 a custom had arisen in New Brighton which provided a platform whereby public grievances could be aired and channelled to the authorities. A 'Chairman of Public Meetings' (or Location Chairman as he came to be called) was elected annually at a meeting especially summoned for the purpose. In the event of a section of the community desiring a public meeting for any purpose, application was to be made to the Location Chairman. Should he consider that no useful purpose could be served by holding a meeting, the application could be refused. Alternatively, if he considered that a public meeting was desirable he applied to the Superintendent for the use of the public hall. It afforded the residents an opportunity to discuss matters without the presence of officials, but it remained the Location Chairman's responsibility to see that the proceedings were conducted in an orderly manner.

Regulations made no provision for such an office, but Grattan and his successors recognised the institution as providing training in responsible leadership. When the SNA questioned whether the procedure of holding public meetings did not "derogate from the authority of the Superintendent", Grattan argued that the Superintendent remained 'the final authority' for the Location Chairman had not only to inform him of any proposed meeting, as well as its agenda, but report on the outcome thereof.[17] Consideration was periodically given to backing up the authority of the Location Chairman by way of regulation but the closest it came to this was when the procedure for calling public meetings was placed on record in 1922. [18]

Committees and organisations which rivalled the Advisory Board sprang up continuously in New Brighton. In 1927 a Vigilance Committee under the chairmanship of AF Pendla[19] was established and Councillors claimed that it was not representative of the people and was in fact self-appointed. It continued to function without the approval of the authorities or the Advisory Board whose members regarded it as a threat to the very existence of the Board. Towards the end of the following year, EC Mkumatela made representation on behalf of residents of the new sub-economic housing scheme known as McNamee Village. He contended that the occupants of the new houses knew nothing about an Advisory Board, that a request for a public meeting had been ignored by the Board, and that residents had previously been allowed to place their complaints before the NAC through the Superintendent without the intercession of the Board. In a reply to the complainant, the Superintendent conceded that, "residents, individually and collectively, have been allowed in the past and are still allowed to make representation direct to [himself], who may place such matters before the NAC". He warned, however, that it was "an entirely different matter when an unofficial body, styling itself the 'New Township Committee' comes into being and endeavours to usurp the functions of the properly constituted Advisory Board by dealing with matters of general interest".[20] There was thus persistent attempts by residents to find alternative strategies and channels of communication with the authorities when the Advisory Board was not deemed to be effective or representative.

In March 1929 the NBAB carried a motion that it should have representation on the Port Elizabeth City Council (PECC) rather than access via the NAC. In proposing the motion, HI M'belle was prepared to countenance a European representative if he was elected by the inhabitants of the Location. He wished it placed on record that his reason for the proposal was that "recommendations of the Board could be refused by the PECC and NAC and no reason given for such refusal, inhabitants being thus deprived of the knowledge with regard to the motives which led to the decision". McNamee pointed out that representation for New Brighton was not possible without amending the Municipal Ordinance which provided that only owners and occupiers of rateable property qualified to vote.[21] He might well have added that an alternative would have been to introduce tenure to New Brighton in order that residents might qualify as

ratepayers, and hence municipal voters. In fact, 'A Memorandum in Support of an Application by the Members of the Native Advisory Board for the Granting of sites of land under title to residents for the building of private dwellings' signed by five Board members was submitted to the Chairman of the NAC shortly afterwards.[32] The proposal that residents of New Brighton be accorded direct representation on the PECC was made periodically either by members of the NBAB itself, or sometimes by critics of the advisory board system.

On 15 July 1930, two Advisory Board members, namely AF Pendla and JM Dippa, were convicted of contravening Section 7 of the Native Reserve Location Act for not paying their rents. The Advisory Board Regulation No. 9 stipulated that "in case any member of the Board shall be convicted of contravention of the regulations, such members seat shall ipso facto be vacated". Questioning whether Section 7 of the Act could be construed into a regulation, the Location Superintendent sought legal opinion from the City Council's solicitors. He was advised that the regulations made no provision for the immediate suspension of Board members convicted of the contravention of those Regulations or Section 7 of the 1902 Act, but only those convicted of a crime and sentenced to imprisonment without the option of a fine. Upon further consideration, the legal advisers questioned whether the City Council could legally appoint members of the Advisory Board at all. Whilst provision was made in terms of Act 48 of 1919 that the words 'Municipal Council' were to be substituted for 'Governor' in the relevant sections of Act 40 of 1902 (as amended by Act 5 of 1908), the legal advisers continued that

> There appears to be no provision in the Act applying to the substitution of the Municipality for the Governor so far as the regulations are concerned, nor is there any provision in Proclamation 175 of 1923 whereby the Governor-General vested the control, administration and maintenance of the Location in the Council.

Not only did this opinion question the legality of the City Council dismissing Advisory Board members for the contravention of regulations, but it questioned whether it had had the authority to appoint such members in the first place. In other words, the legality of the appointment of two Board members annually since 1923 was being questioned for the Governor-General's authorisation had not been obtained at all. The legal advisers could only suggest that, instead of trying to enforce the resignations of the two Board members in question, that they be prevailed upon to resign their seats voluntarily.[33] In the event, Dippa resigned from the Advisory Board and paid all his outstanding rent when approached to do so by the Location Superintendent, but Pendla was not forthcoming.[34] Dippa subsequently sought to withdraw his resignation, believing he had done so 'under a misapprehension' [read 'misrepresentation by the Superintendent']. The NAC eventually resolved that Dippa be permitted to resume his seat, but the question of the legality of the appointment of Board members was left in abeyance pending the approval of new regulations drafted under the Natives (Urban Areas) Act.[35]

At a meeting of the NBAB on 16 October 1930, the Chairman drew attention to an article published in Imvo Zabantsundu the previous month under the name of EC Mkumatela which reflected poorly on members of the Board and alleged corrupt practices at the previous election.[36] Discussion of the matter was deferred to a special meeting of the Board a few days later, at which the Chairman read a letter from Mkumatela declining to meet the Board. After considerable discussion, during which members declared that such an article could not be allowed to go unchallenged, it was resolved that legal advice be taken with a view to forcing the writer to withdraw the article, and in the event of the article not being withdrawn, that legal proceedings be taken against both the writer and proprietors of Imvo.[37] Superintendent McNamee expressed the opinion that "the article is calculated to undermine his authority and be subversive to discipline in the location and, in addition, is entirely untrue". With the backing of the Mayor, the Superintendent asked the City Council's solicitors to take the necessary steps to secure a withdrawal and an apology by both the writer and newspaper concerned.[38] The City Council's solicitors subsequently obtained a retraction which was published in the 11 November 1930 issue of Imvo. It read as follows:

> We, Jabavu & Co., printers and publishers of the Imvo Zabantsundu newspaper at Kingwilliamstown, express regret owing to the error we have committed in publishing in the issue of 16 October 1930, a letter contributed by ES Mkumatela, alias EC Mkumatela, of New Brighton, Port Elizabeth, which letter contained grossly false and libellous statements regarding the names of the Superintendent of the New Brighton Location, Mr JP McNamee and members of the Advisory Board of New Brighton. As publishers of the said letter by EC Mkumatela as fictitious, and furthermore we add that to our knowledge we know nothing calculated to malign Mr JP McNamee and the members of the Advisory Board of New Brighton, or cause them to be regarded as mongers of falsehood and chicanery.

Mkumatela's motives for defaming the Superintendent and his supporters are obscure, but it might be that he was embittered by his failure to secure election to the Advisory Board in 1930.

Membership of the Advisory Board brought with it certain privileges not readily available to ordinary New Brighton residents and afforded members an opportunity to further their own interests. This assumed numerous guises such as providing entrepreneurial opportunities not readily available to others and access to accommodation which was invariably at a premium. Many of the longer-serving Advisory Board members obtained trading licenses (eg. AF Pendla) or became eating house proprietors (eg. PJ Nikiwe[39]). The allocation of houses was primarily the task of the Superintendent, who used it as a means of co-opting an aspirant middle class. At times representation was made, though, to the Board to interfere in the allocation of dwellings. When this occurred in 1931, McNamee warned Board members not to become involved in administrative functions and thereby 'let themselves in for a great deal of trouble'. He assured members that a record of all applications was kept, and that houses were allocated strictly on an impartial and first-come-first-serve basis.[40] Exceptions

were, however, periodically made in 'deserving cases' such as ministers, teachers and other members of the 'desirable classes' - people who were regarded as having an influence for the good on the lumpenproletariat.

The Advisory Board intervened in religious disputes and acted as a sort of 'board of appeal' in its attempt to eliminate any sort of 'factionalism' or unacceptable behaviour. One such dispute involved the followers of the Rev James Limba the head of the Church of Christ[31], and one Thompson Zamani,[32] who led a splinter group. The Board held a sequence of special meetings in November 1930 at which it listened to testimony from both parties but failed to resolve the issue. In 1932, by which time Limba had secured election to the Advisory Board, the matter again came to a head. It was noted that Zamani, who was preaching the gospel to the residents of New Brighton, had abandoned his wife and children and was living in adultery. The member who brought the matter to the notice of the Board stated that such a man who "set a bad example to the people by living in sin, was a menace to the welfare of the people and should not be tolerated". The Board resolved that steps be taken to eject Zamani from New Brighton. The Superintendent complimented the Board on "taking sufficient pride in their location and interest in the welfare of the people to ask for the ejectment of an undesirable".[33] The ejection of 'undesirables' such as rent defaulters and liquor traders - convicted or otherwise - was a fairly commonplace occurrence. The Advisory Board, in fact, saw itself as the guardian of public morality and an upholder of 'civilized' values in New Brighton.

In April 1932 the Superintendent reported to the NBAB that a considerable amount of trouble had been raised by a section of the inhabitants with regard to the refusal by the Location Chairman, AF Pendla, to sanction the holding of a public meeting. He understood that Pendla had refused because he did not consider the matter was one for interference by the public. The aggrieved persons had, consequently, appealed to the Mayor and consulted a firm of attorneys on the matter. Advisory Board members backed the view that the Chairman had been chosen for the position by the inhabitants at a properly summoned meeting and that, accordingly, his ruling should be accepted.[34] But when a public meeting the following year broke up in disarray, certain members of the Advisory Board considered that the time had come that the Superintendent or members of the Advisory Board should assume the sole responsibility for authorising and dispersing meetings 'not conducive to the welfare of the residents'. One councillor stated that he did not want to prevent residents from holding meetings as such, but to curtail the activities of 'Bolsheviks, communists and other agitators'. In the event, the NBAB resolved that the Superintendent draft regulations for the 'proper control of public meetings'.[35] The need for proper control of public meetings became even more apparent when, following a fracas at a further public meeting, Board members accused one another of setting a bad example to the uneducated residents by their unseemly public behaviour.[36]

New Brighton residents often sought to bypass the Advisory Board and take their grievances directly to the PECC when it was felt that the Board was neglecting their representations. On one such occasion, complaints by HL M'belle on behalf of the residents of the new brick-blocks were ignored when he sought to approach the NAC directly. These complaints included: (a) the rate of rentals in the new blocks; (b) prosecutions for non-payment of rents; (c) damp floors. Board members expressed the opinion that, with the NBAB functioning, the NAC could not possibly receive representation from any other body regarding the complaints. It was resolved that

> Mr M'belle be communicated with to the effect that the NBAB is always accessible to any section of the people, and is prepared to give a patient hearing to representatives of those persons residing in the brick-buildings.[37]

A deputation led by M'belle was given an audience at the following meeting of the NBAB and he took the opportunity to address the question of the right of residents to approach the PECC directly. He pointed out that white traders had dealt directly with the NAC without reference to the NBAB when making application for a reduction of rentals. Another member of the deputation, TM Zini,[38] argued that any section of the residents of New Brighton should have the right to make representations direct to the NAC or PECC. Following the withdrawal of the deputation, Advisory Board members made fairly predictable responses to the demand. Rev Limba stated that one of the principal reasons for the establishment of Advisory Boards was to provide a channel through which residents might bring their complaints to the City Council. WJ Frolick said that giving residents direct access to the PECC without reference to the NBAB would provide an opening for agitators. PJ Nikiwe argued that such a policy would lead to confusion, lower the prestige of the Board, which might as well then be abolished. The Board resolved unanimously that it was opposed to any representations being made to the Mayor, PECC or NAC by the residents of New Brighton with regard to matters of public interest, without such matters being first submitted to the NBAB.[39] Their response to the prospect of becoming irrelevant indicated the defensive and reactionary views of certain of the Advisory Board members.

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The provisions of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act were only applied to Port Elizabeth in 1933 when the City Council brought itself into line with the uniform system of administration of urban Africans then taking shape in the country. Act 21 of 1923 did not assign any specific functions to the Advisory Boards (or Committees), except that it stipulated that the local authority could not make or withdraw regulations for the particular location without consultation with the boards. The NAD had issued a set of 'model' regulations in 1924 to serve as a guide for local authorities, but they were left to qualify the details of regulations according to which advisory boards were instituted.[40] Advisory Board regulations were drawn up as part and parcel of the process and were periodically brought before the Board as stipulated in the legislation. At a meeting held on 16 October 1930, the NBAB had

proposed that amendments be made to certain Regulations pertaining to the Advisory Board drafted in terms of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act. These included the following proposals:

(1) increase number of elected members from 3 to 5;

(2) the Chairman to be elected from Board members on an annual basis and the Superintendent shall not be ex-officio chairman;

(3) fresh elections rather than the casting of lots in the event of a tie between candidates;

(4) members to hold office for two rather than one year and retire on a rotational basis;

(5) in accordance with increased numbers, 5 (and not 4) members would provide a quorum at Board meetings.

These recommendations of the NBAB were not accepted by the NAC and, as usual, no explanation for the decision was forthcoming. The NBAB subsequently resolved that "the Board's recommendations be sent back to the NAC with the request that they be given further consideration". But the effort was futile as the Board's proposals were in no way binding upon the NAC or PECC. The fact that the Board, ultimately, had no say in its composition, election procedures, and so on, reinforced its status as a purely consultative body with no real powers.

The role of the Superintendent in the administration of New Brighton also undermined the status of the Advisory Board. On one occasion, members of the Board questioned the wisdom of allowing a committee of women to interview McNamee. WW Jabavu was of the opinion that the women should place their affairs before the Board, whilst Zini considered that any person should have access to the Superintendent. McNamee explained that in his capacity as Superintendent he was always prepared to listen to the complaints or troubles of any section of the public or any individual member, man or woman. He added that "on no single occasion had any attempt been made by these people to usurp the functions of the Board".[41] McNamee saw himself as a type of father figure who was held in high esteem and regarded with affection by the residents of New Brighton. One informant, however, maintained that the apparent reverence in which officials such as the Superintendent were held was part of the learned experience of generations of servility to the white man.[42]

In June 1933 the NBAB called for quarterly meeting with the NAC because "such a procedure would lead to a better understanding".[43] At the first of such meetings three months later, Wilson Jabavu stated that the Board would like to be supplied with particulars of discussions which took place in meetings of the NAC as was the case in other centres. The Superintendent supported this request by explaining that the Board was often asked by the people to make recommendations, which were forwarded by the NBAB to the NAC, and Board members were merely informed of the latter's decision. He explained that the Board would like to be able to explain the whys and wherefores of NAC's decisions to the residents which could not be done without access to the deliberations of that committee. This the NAC refused to consider, and continued steadfastly to do so in the years that followed. Another request made repeatedly by the NBAB of the NAC,

was that the parent committee allow the minutes of the NBAB to be published in the local press in order to prevent misrepresentation of Board member's attitudes with regard to sensitive issues.[44] The NAC subsequently resolved to advise the NBAP that it's own minutes were not supplied to the press and that the Committee did not consider it advisable either from it or the Board's standpoint for the Board's minutes to be published in the press.[45] Notwithstanding this, the Superintendent could still glibly assert that all recommendations are given careful consideration by the NAC and where recommendations are turned down, the reasons are carefully explained to the Board by its chairman.[46] The fact that the NAC's decisions were not public knowledge, meant that the Board's accountability to the people for its actions was severely circumscribed by the PECC.

At its first meeting of 1935, the NBAB received a letter from AF Pendla, in his capacity as Location Chairman, which included the following delicately phrased passage:

> The residents feel that it is high time that the authorities were approached with a view to effect being given to what is the general desire of all the principal locations in the country that superintendents should not be placed in such an invidious position as servants of the local authority. There is no stigma cast on the present incumbent of that position who is admittedly, not only sympathetic but has a progressive native policy.[47]

The Board - which now included Pendla - recommended that the practice of the Superintendent of New Brighton acting as Chairman of the Advisory Board should be discontinued. This was not to be, but the NAC did make a concession later when it agreed that the Superintendent be instructed to take no part in discussions upon any political matters being debated by the NBAB.[48]

The position of the Location Chairman was also reviewed during 1935. In the course of the NBAB discussion on the matter, Jabavu expressed his dissatisfaction with the system and remarked that the Urban Areas Act made no provision for such a position. TM Zini (seconded by Jabavu) proposed a motion that "in view of the fact that the Superintendent was the chief official of the location and his presence would lend dignity to meetings and discourage disorderliness, the Chairman of the Advisory Board be ipso facto chairman of the location meetings". The motion, as well as one proposing that the matter be referred to the residents, was lost. The Superintendent reckoned that the recent trend whereby the Vigilance Committee had made a practice of adopting the Location Chairman as chairman of their own committee and in this way conferred upon itself what might be considered by some to be a semi-official standing complicated the situation still further. He also pointed out that public meetings called by the administration and the Advisory Board need not necessarily be presided over by the Location Chairman and that members of the Board were eligible for election to the position of Location Chairman.[49] Two months later, Zini and Jabavu proposed a similar motion, with the rider that any section of the people desiring a public meeting should obtain permission from the Superintendent and be allowed to elect

their own chairman. On this occasion a majority voted for the abolition of the position of Location Chairman.[59] In spite of the success of this proposal, the NAC obviously rejected it for the practice of electing a Location Chairman continued for some years to come.

As far as the municipal records reveal, the first major crisis involving McNamee and the Advisory Board followed the dismissal of Headman Ellias Ntsonga from his post. At the first meeting of the NBAB in 1936, Jabavu enquired whether it was right and proper that the dismissal and appointment of officials should take place without the Board being consulted. McNamee replied that according to law the only obligation placed upon the PECC to consult the NBAB was in relation to making, amending and withdrawal of regulations. He was of the opinion that the position would be an impossible one if the superintendent had to consult the board with regard the dismissal and appointment of officials.[61] At the following meeting of the NBAB, a letter presented by four members of the outgoing Board - TM Zini, WW Jabavu, M Zibonda and R Qalinge - called for the re-instatement of Ntsonga. The introduction of this letter into the proceedings sparked off a heated row with major repercussions for the continued functioning of the Board. The Chairman threatened to suspend Jabavu when he refused to comply with instructions to resume his seat after protesting that Nikiwe was interrupting a member of the deputation then occupying the floor and addressing members. McNamee sought to re-establish firm control over the proceedings using his position to call the meeting to order. He insisted that strict adherence to the rules governing the procedure of future meetings would be necessary with the 'present personnel of the board' and threatened to resign if Jabavu did not apologise for the 'uncalled for behaviour, insubordinate and deleterious expressions' levelled at him. He, further, considered it untenable that Jabavu should hold the dual position of Board secretary and reporter on account of his tendency to abuse the trust of the Board by the partial reporting of its affairs.[62]

At the following meeting of the Board, only two of the six members were prepared to confirm the minutes as an accurate reflection of the proceedings of the previous meeting.[63] Meanwhile, the four recalcitrant members of the new Board submitted a letter in which they requested an interview with the NAC with regard to Headman Ntsonga's dismissal and proposed a motion calling upon the Superintendent to withdraw a threat made against Jabavu at a previous meeting of the Board. It was noted that these issues affected the integrity of the chair and needed to be addressed before the NBAB could proceed with any further business.[64] A motion to the effect that the Chairman should withdraw his threat that he would report Jabavu's conduct to the City Council was ruled out of order by McNamee and no discussion on the matter was permitted.[65] When he came before the NAC, the Superintendent stated that he was quite within his rights to have acted as he did.[66] Whilst McNamee was able to defend his arbitrary and authoritarian actions to the NAC, there can be little doubt that he had damaged his credibility amongst even the more moderate leaders in the New Brighton community.

The controversy about Ntsonga's dismissal stemmed from allegations that accommodation was being made available to prospective tenants who undertook to pay the arrears rent owing by the previous tenant in order to take over their dwelling. The Superintendent wrote to the Magistrate to the effect that he would welcome an enquiry into the matter in order that the petty interferences with the administration would terminate, for he believed that Jabavu was in league with Tshiwula and Ntsonga in attempting to disrupt the administration of New Brighton.[57] There was no enquiry because the three men failed to produce one specific case to support their allegations of what amounted to irregularities against Superintendent McNamee and his staff. In 1938 Tshiwula published letters in the press which made renewed allegations against the administration with regard to the allocation of housing. McNamee repudiated the allegation that any tenant had been compelled to pay the rent of another. He maintained that in cases where payments had been made under certain circumstances, such payments were made voluntarily. Tshiwula himself claimed to have been a victim of such a transaction, but refused to answer the charges before the Board as he had submitted the matter for legal opinion and it was now sub judice.[58] The recriminations between McNamee and Jabavu were carried over to the next meeting of the NBAB. Jabavu objected to the Chairman's words reported in the minutes that he was 'as deep in the plot on this occasion as he was in the last' for it 'prejudiced him with the Council'. McNamee stated that he would stand by his words and the meeting was adjourned for a week 'in the hope that there would be a change of atmosphere'.[59] But the bitter wrangle between the Superintendent and Jabavu, Tshiwula and Ntsonga had by now assumed the shape of a clash of personalities.

A further episode illustrates the lengths to which certain Advisory Board members were prepared to go in order to secure their position. The Location Chairman, TM Zini, notified the PECC that two resolutions in respect of the NBAB had been passed at a public meeting held on 23 February 1936. These were:

(1) that the Advisory Board hold public sessions in the TC White Hall and that the residents be allowed to listen to the debates to enable them to make necessary representations whilst the motions are still under discussion;

(2) that the City Council amend the regulations as to make <u>all</u> Advisory Board members elective in order to make the vote of residents a sanction for the attitude of all members on matters affecting New Brighton.[60]

At the following NBAB meeting, the Board refused to consider the resolutions as certain members claimed that they had never been passed by any public meeting. Nikiwe and Pendla claimed to have been present at the said public meeting and held that it broke up in disorder before any resolutions were passed. Qalinge also claimed to have been present at the meeting and confirmed the statement made by Nikiwe and Pendla.[61] Zini then addressed another letter to the TC, accompanied by a sworn affidavit to the effect that the meeting had passed the resolutions.[62] The matter did not end there. Zini made certain allegations in which he questioned the integrity of members of the Advisory Board. This

followed an admission on the part of Qalinge that he had not been present at the meeting in question and a promise to make a correction at the next meeting of the Board. Zini alleged that Board members who did not recant do so because they counted on the security of their re-nomination to seats on the Board by the City Council. His sworn statement, especially in his capacity as Location Chairman, held greater weight than those made by Nikiwe and Pendla which had not been made under oath. Furthermore, it was obvious that the EP Herald had published the Board's version of events without fear of contradiction, but that if administrative staff were to be questioned or a public meeting were to be held, his account would be corroborated. Finally, he stated that if the truth were to be known "it would come to be regarded as an indelible blot on the civic administration of New Brighton".[93] Although the issue was not resolved one way or the other, it undermined the credibility of at least two Advisory Board members who never sought re-election but continued to serve as Council nominees. Whilst they undoubtedly each had a following of sorts, it is probably true to say that they had been co-opted by the administration.

There was always a question over the Council's nominated Board members claim to represent the people of New Brighton. Before 1933, two-thirds of the members of the NBAB had been elected annually by residents. Since New Brighton had been administered in terms of regulations under the Natives (Urban Areas) Act, the NBAB had consisted of six members - half of whom were nominated by the City Council. In 1940 the NBAB was enlarged from 6 to 8 members, with half that number still being nominated by the City Council.[94] One of the resolutions passed by the Location Advisory Boards' Congress which met in Durban between 18 and 20 December 1939, was that the residents of the Locations be allowed by the Municipalities to elect two-thirds of the members of the Native Advisory Boards, where such arrangements did not exist.[95] When considering the resolutions of the conference at a meeting of the Board the following year, considerable discussion ensued with regard to this proposal. Jabavu, who was supported by the other elected members, spoke very strongly in favour of the resolution. He said that the present nomination of four members by the Municipality caused considerable doubt in the minds of the residents, and they were invariably looked upon with a great deal of suspicion. The nominated members, who were not obliged to have their rents paid up to date, defended the status quo and favoured its retention, especially in light of the recent increase in its personnel. In the absence of one of the nominated members, however, the Board adopted the Advisory Boards' Congress resolution and recommended that it be adopted by the PECC and that the necessary amendment be made to the regulations.[96] The NAC stated that it was not prepared to depart from the existing procedure with regard to the election of Advisory Board members.[97]

At a meeting of the NBAB in November 1941, the Superintendent exercised his casting vote (the elected and nominated members were totally divided on the question) in favour of the resolution that two-thirds of the Board members should be elected and so the matter

could be referred back to the NAC.[68] When the issue came before the NAC again, the Superintendent emphasised that (in his mind) the best work on the Board had always been accomplished by the Council's representatives. The Mayor added that "the objection had come from the same number of agitators who had never attained anything which could be termed a credit to the natives". Upon this ill-considered reflection by the first citizen, the NAC resolved that it was unable to recommend any alteration to the existing system which was apparently working satisfactorily.[69] In 1943 the NBAB recommended, the NAC endorsed and the Council approved the enlargement of the Board to 12 members, six of whom would be elected by residents.[70] The following year, representation was made by the Civic Association that all Advisory Board members should be elected. The Chairman was of the opinion that the NAD did not consider the time ripe for the election of the Board by the people. One of the nominated members, Rev Molefe, expressed the view that the Council could appoint ministers and teachers to the Board, whose services might otherwise be lost to the public because they were not prepared to fight elections. He instanced the case of RH Godlo of East London, who was a member of the Natives Representative Council and Chairman of the Location Advisory Boards Congress of South Africa.[71] However, the central government requested that the proposed amendment to the regulations be held in abeyance given the NAD's appeal that war-time economising necessitated that only absolutely essential changes be made in the administrative system, and that there was the prospect of the regulations be revised in their entirety.[72] In 1948 that the Advisory Board was enlarged to twelve members, eight of whom were to be elected.

During 1944 frequent proposals were made to introduce direct representation on the City Council by New Brighton residents.[73] The proposal that a member of the City Council, instead of the Superintendent, act as Chairman of the Advisory Board, was motivated by the consideration that it would be a first step to have African representation in the City Council. An independent person who was not employed by the Council would, according to Rev Molefe, safeguard the position of the Superintendent and strengthen the status of the Advisory Board. Pendla countered that such a change should only take effect after the retirement of McNamee who was 'a man without reproach'. Nevertheless, a resolution was passed that the Board interview the NAC to discuss the amendment of the regulations so as to have a member of the City Council as Chairman of the Advisory Board.[74] At the meeting between the NAC and NBAB, the point was made that the failure of the PECC to appoint a Councillor instead of the Superintendent of Natives as Chairman of the NBAB was "one of the very few things in which the Council had not taken a lead in its native policy". It was also felt that the Superintendent was a servant of the PECC whilst the NBAB was more like trustees for the African living in the Location. If they had grievances either against the council itself or the administration, it would be very difficult for him to represent the issue without bias. The NBAB was, however, appeased with promise that the Board would be able to express its grievances in its periodic meetings with the NAC, without fear of recrimination.[75] It was not until

1948 that the NAC began to appoint a Chairman of the NBAB from its ranks on an annual basis.

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The Politicisation of the Advisory Board Elections

One of the issues in the 1933 election was the question of equitable representation for the different portions of New Brighton. As there was no ward system in operation, those candidates who secured the most votes - irrespective of where they lived in the Location - were declared elected to the Advisory Board.[78] At a meeting of the Board in December 1932, TM Zini pointed out that the residents of the brick-buildings, where rents were higher and defaulters more numerous, were being disenfranchised because, according to the regulations, qualifications for membership and the right to vote was reserved to those residents who had paid their rents up to date.[79] The Board was divided on the issue, but the NAC suggested that the Superintendent provide a list of nominees for the Board which was to include residents of both the old and new portions of the location.[80] Zini, a resident of the new brick-buildings, was nominated to the Board along with PJ Nikiwe and WW Jabavu[81] who both lived in the old portion of the location. One of the three elected members, namely Rev Limba, was also an inhabitant of the new portion of the location.[82]

The first of numerous claims of election irregularities were made by AZ Tshiwula[83] during the 1938 campaign. Having served on the Advisory Board in 1935, he was known to McNamee who described him as 'an agitator and trouble-raiser'.[84] Tshiwula probably had good cause to suspect the administration was plotting to prevent him from serving a further term on the Board. His name was deleted from the electoral roll although his nomination form was submitted timeously. In a letter to the Chief Magistrate, Tshiwula contended that the Returning Officer was "being influenced by the local administration to pin my name down [sic] because I am branded here as an agitator", and suggested that McNamee had personally intervened in the nomination process in a bid to try ensure that he did not appear as a candidate.[85] He also pointed to the discrepancy between the number of votes said to have been polled as announced by the returning officer and the figure which appeared on the notice board, which appeared to have some alteration or erasure. The latter figure was only arrived at following a recount of votes after the entry of McNamee into the polling station and his consultation with the returning officer.[86] McNamee, in response to these allegations of irregularities, considered that the City Council should not interfere in the dispute and that Tshiwula should be encouraged to seek redress in the law courts.[87] I could find no further reference to the incident, but it would seem that the election was not declared invalid and that Tshiwula had to wait another year before taking up a seat on the Board.

The procedure in operation during the NBAB elections lent itself to abuse because it was not a secret ballot in the normally understood sense of the term. Voting was conducted by means of the so-called

'ticket system' which enabled qualified voters to enter the polling station and verbally inform the returning officer of the names of the candidates for whom they wished to vote. Because a large percentage of voters were illiterate and unable to make their choice clearly, one of the groups contesting the election handed such persons slips with the names of their candidates, and these 'tickets' were handed in by the voter as containing the names of the candidates they wished to support.[86] Following the returning officer's objection to the 'ticket system' the previous year, the Advisory Board sought a ruling on its legality.[87] An objection lodged by the irrepressible TM Zini against the 'ticket system', was made in the hope that a correct procedure would be laid down for the future. He stated that to hand a slip containing the names of candidates either to the returning officer or to his assistants did not comply with the stipulation that voters name each candidate.[88] In the opinion of the City Council's solicitors, the procedure was not illegal in terms of existing regulations provided that the slip contained no more names than the number of candidates to be elected. However, they remarked that by this means interested parties would be able to impose themselves on ignorant voters who might be persuaded to simply hand in the slips rather than indicate their preferred candidates to the returning officer. The potential for abuse of the system would only be eliminated by the amendment of the applicable regulations or, failing that, if the returning officer were to assist the voter in casting his vote.[89]

Zini sought to have the 1942 election set aside as being irregular and constituting a breach of the procedure set out in the regulations inasmuch as the returning officer recorded votes in favour of candidates:-

(a) whose names appeared on tickets or papers handed in by electors, without the elector in any way naming the candidates in question.

(b) appearing on tickets handed in by electors, after having questioned them generally whether they (the electors) intended voting for these candidates whose names appeared on the tickets, without specifically naming or referring to such candidates individually.[90]

The Superintendent disclaimed any responsibility on the part of his department for the manner in which the elections were conducted, which was the duty of the returning officer who was appointed by the local Native Commissioner. He declined to comment on the accuracy or otherwise of the allegations made by Zini, and reminded the NAC that legal opinion obtained the previous year stated that the 'ticket system' was not contrary to the regulations. He recommended that Zini's legal advisers refer the matter to the returning officer as the City Council had no jurisdiction thereover.[91] In spite of some opposition to the 'ticket system', the City Council adopted the Superintendent's recommendation,[92] and so sidestepped the issue.

In 1943 the Council for Non-European Trade Unions decided to contest the forthcoming Advisory Board elections. Councillor Mohammed Desai, representative of Ward 7 (which included Korsten, Schauderville and Sydenham) and member of the Communist Party,

notified the Council in writing of his intention of actively canvassing on behalf of CNETU candidates. He stated that his activities would include the following:

(a) addressing election meetings with the candidates in New Brighton;

(b) canvassing electors;

(c) holding election meetings in private houses in the location together with candidates;

(d) house to house distribution of election manifestos.[93]

Meanwhile, CNETU's secretary, Phineas Sandla, [94] enquired of the Town Clerk whether there were any laws or by-laws of the PE Municipality preventing a 'non-African' from entering the location in his capacity as election organiser.[95] The Superintendent (and hence the Council) had no objection to Desai entering the location for the purposes stated in his letter.[96] However at its first meeting of the new year, the NAC sought to issue instructions to the Superintendent that no meeting be held in the location without his permission.[97] When it was subsequently pointed out that in terms of Section 23(3) of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act that public meetings may not be prohibited by the local authority, the Superintendent was requested to enforce Section 42 of the regulations which enabled him to exercise his own discretion in allowing persons entry to the location ~~instead~~.[98]

It was, in fact, the Advisory Board which had objected to Desai's involvement in the Advisory Board election. Pendla proposed a motion that the Board viewed with disfavour 'the interference of certain members of the City Council' in taking an active part in the Advisory Board elections.[99] Desai was asked to explain his actions to the NAC but no further steps were taken to prevent him from continuing his electioneering.[100] The Advisory Board raised a further objection as to the eligibility of one of the candidates who did not reside in New Brighton. It was stated that a[n unnamed] person who did not qualify to vote should not be permitted to stand as a candidate for the NBAB. The Board's worst fears were realised when certain candidates standing on the CNETU ticket were elected to represent the Board in 1944. In the last meeting of the outgoing 1943 Advisory Board further reservations were expressed about the election of a non-resident of New Brighton. Pendla insisted that his objections were not against the person as such but that it threatened the continued functioning of the Board. He pointed out that if the election of the person concerned was contrary to law, it would be possible for any person to challenge any resolution taken by the Board as being ultra vires. If a board was wrongly constituted, any resolution adopted by that board was invalid. Ntshinga posited the transparently hypothetical problem of the election of a 'well-known and undesirable agitator who did not live in the village being elected'. If the administration were to refuse such a person entry into the Location, it would be questionable how such a person would be able to attend a meeting of the Board. The Chairman explained that the NAC felt that it was for the defeated candidates to take the matter up in the courts of justice, if they were of the opinion that the election was irregular. Unphased by this advice, the Board resolved that the PECC take immediate steps to ascertain whether or not a non-resident of New Brighton was

eligible for election to the NBAB.[101] The ruling of the SNA on the matter was that the regulations did not restrict membership of the Board to persons residing in the Location. It was stated that a candidate for election as a member of the Board need only be resident within the area of jurisdiction of the Urban Local Authority.[102]

The question of the Council's nominees to the new Advisory Board also became a public issue. Desai raised objections to the re-appointment of Pendla on account of his criminal record - an allusion to his dismissal from government employ as far back as 1920 - and Rev Limba who was said to be 'exploiting' his people. He asserted that "there was a great deal of anti-worker sabotage and anti-worker propaganda going on in New Brighton and unless the Council changed its policy he felt there might be trouble here similar to what had occurred on the Rand". The Superintendent, however, recommended their re-nomination and he was backed by councillors who stated they were men respected by their own people who had rendered very valuable service to the community. Desai's objections were thus ignored and the PECC approved the nomination of Nikiwe, Pendla, Rev Limba and Rev GB Molefe.[103]

The publication of the Council's discussions regarding the appointment of Advisory Board nominees in the press provoked a warning by the Superintendent that such indiscretion might spark off 'trouble and bloodshed' in the local community. He added:

> As Chairman of the Native Advisory Board, I wish to state emphatically that to my knowledge there has never been any anti-worker sabotage or anti-worker propaganda evinced in any meeting of the Board. Members have expressed concern at the possible introduction of communism into New Brighton, but never has any sentiment been expressed, which could be construed as opposed to the worker or the workers' advancement.[104]

The NBAB sought to disassociate itself from statements alleged to have been made in the Council that there was general unrest in New Brighton which might lead to bloodshed.[105] Publication of the Council's discussion provoked a sequence of letters to the press. One writer stated that Desai had no right to claim to speak on behalf of the 'Port Elizabeth Native community which is under the influence and control of our Paramount Chief, Archie Velile Sandile, in the district of Kingwilliamstown'. The appeal to a more traditional authority went hand-in-hand with a defence of the PECC which "has always extended the hand of friendship to its Native community".[106] A further correspondent queried Desai's involvement in the affairs of New Brighton and suggested his turn his attention and activities to the welfare of the Indian community. His activities would prove counter-productive for the African community because they "can only alter the sympathetic attitude of the City Council for which it is famous".[107]

Other correspondents attacked the motives of trade unionists. One ridiculed the communists as having promised "the workers' candidates would bring higher wages, happiness and a future full of honey and sweet juice...". The writer also suggested that the

unregistered unions with which Desai was associated were open to corruption because there were no checks on the management of such unions and no auditing of funds obtained by way of workers' contributions.[108] The newspaper's editorial, under the heading 'Exploiting the Native', argued that attention needed to be paid to two points of view expressed by the writer:

> These are the extravagant but empty promises held out to the Native residents by an active band of agitators working under the aegis of the Communist Party, and the fact that there is apparently no check on the formation of unregistered so-called Native trade unions and contributions these extract from the pockets of the lowliest and lowest paid of our population.[109]

It was pointed out by another correspondent, that in spite of the Government refusing to amend the Industrial Conciliation Act to make it possible for African trade unions to be registered and obtain recognition, these unions had derived wage increases and other benefits for their workers.[110] But 'Ubulungisa' was, in turn, criticised for ignoring the fact that union deductions from worker's wages were grossly disproportionate to their earning power, and that it was the organisers - not the workers - who benefitted.[111]

The politicisation of the Advisory Board elections caused some consternation amongst the local authorities. Adolf Schauder, the current Chairman of the NAC and former mayor known for his liberal views, expressed his regret that "for the first time politics were being introduced among the Natives of Natives of New Brighton, and at the recent election there was a ticket of four Communists".[112] The Advisory Board candidates did not actually stand as communists but on a progressive trade union ticket and their manifesto contained not promises but demands. They knew only too well that nobody can promise anything from a Board that has no executive or administrative powers.

The NBAB's fear of being tainted with the brush of communism is illustrated by its handling of the anti-pass campaign of 1944. This issue posed real problems for the Board on account of the PECC's 'progressive' image which stemmed, in part, from the fact that it had not instituted a repressive system of pass laws. In 1934 Section 5(6) of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act had been proclaimed,[113] but the provisions could not readily be enforced in Korsten and elsewhere where Africans lived illegally. Insofar as New Brighton was concerned, the Location regulations made provision for controlling the entry and residence of people therein. Aside from central government and the local health authorities, pressures for the introduction of influx control measures emanated from local (white) ratepayers and the police. However, the interests of merchants and the manufacturing sector which were well represented in Council chambers, sought an abundance of labour and resisted such controls. Superintendent McNamee's own objection to pass laws was not so much a matter of principle but of the knowledge that their implementation would be resisted by Cape Africans.[114] Certainly, the NBAB repeatedly made known its strong opposition to any form of pass laws when the matter was periodically brought before the Council. But when communications from the PE District

branch of the Communist Party called upon the Board to lend its support to the anti-pass campaign, certain councillors wished to ignore the request for fear of being associated with the Party. Sandla, however, pointed out that it was the contents rather than who was responsible for forwarding such communication that mattered.[116] Once the Board had received similar requests from various other bodies, they were prepared to give their whole-hearted support to the anti-pass movement.[118]

A debate by the NBAB with regard to participation in the demonstration against rent increases in New Brighton in 1945 illustrates graphically the Board's dilemma in trying to 'serve two masters' - the PECC on the one hand and, on the other, the African community of New Brighton which it claimed to represent. When Rev Mbopa wished to know whether Board members would take a lead in the demonstration, Rev Molefe responded as follows:

> ... the demonstration was the voice of the people, not of the Board. This movement was not started by the Board, although that particular body sympathised with the people in making this form of protest... The masses therefore should carry on and this Board should await the City Council's reply.

Jabavu expressed the opinion that the Board should participate in the demonstration as representatives of the people. Molefe replied that members of the Board could participate as individuals only for it was now the turn of the masses to speak. Sandla pointed out that the Board members were the first people to raise the matter with the Council and that the masses had followed in the footsteps of the Board. It was finally resolved:

> That the members of the Native Advisory Board of New Brighton, as individual residents of New Brighton, participate in the demonstration to be held on Saturday 27 January 1945, as a protest against the increase of rentals.[117]

What concerns us here is not whether the demonstration was successful or not, but how Advisory Board members perceived their standing viz-a-viz the community. It would appear that Molefe thought that the Board should take a 'backseat' rather than try hijack this expression of the popular will. Clearly, certain councillors saw themselves merely as a channel for representing legitimate grievances to the authorities, whilst others saw themselves as being at the cutting edge of popular protest. Neither of these views were particularly realistic assessments of the status of the Board within the community.

With the protracted resistance to rent increases during 1945, relations between the Advisory Board and the City Council deteriorated markedly. Board members objected to the fact that the Council had imposed the increases without consulting it. Rev Molefe complained that there was no co-operation and if the Board was to serve as an effective link between the people and the Council, it would have to be appraised of Council's intentions before making final and binding resolutons. Jabavu stated that the Council was showing a dictatorial attitude and making high-handed decisions without consultation with members of the Board. When the Board asked to meet with the NAC to discuss the rentals issue, the latter resolved to take no action. The NBAB thereupon requested copies of

the minutes of the NAC in order to try fathom out the reason for the NAC's obduracy, but the council committee refused to accede to the request.[118]

Before the 1940s local PE branches of the ANC had, as in the rest of the country, been moribund. The suspension of AF Pendla as President of the Cape African Congress by the national President, Dr AB Xuma in September 1942,[119] made way for the emergence of a more progressive leadership at both the provincial and local level. Trade unionists supplanted traders and middle-class professionals in the ANC leadership in Port Elizabeth.[120] Raymond Mhlaba, who arrived in Port Elizabeth about this time and became a committee member of the local branches of both the Communist Party and the ANC, testified that the latter organisation was very weak at the time. But within a few years it had been built up from ground level into a pivotal position in the provincial organisation. He relates that virtually everyone was a member of the ANC and that it was relatively easy to get residents to join the unions.[121] There was thus a large degree of overlap between the membership of the ANC, SACP and trade unions in New Brighton.

In the 1949 elections Mhlaba and a number of ANC colleagues won seats on the Advisory Board despite misgivings about its legitimacy. If nothing else, participation would discredit the system as it could show that there was nothing to be gained by membership of the Board. He is on record as having stated that "the people are beginning to realise that the Advisory Board is useless because the Council is not prepared to act on the recommendations of the Board".[122] Mhlaba retained his seat in 1950, but early the following year he decided to resign from the Advisory Board. He acknowledges as having been influenced by the debate which the Programme of Action had precipitated about participation in 'dummy institutions'.[123] Although he claims to have been given no directive by the national executive of the ANC to resign, his decision coincided with the refusal of Congress to recognise the Advisory Board.[124] However, it is worth noting that none of his ANC colleagues resigned their seats on the Advisory Board. No doubt he arrived at the decision after having been convinced by his own experience that participation in separate institutions was a futile exercise. Mhlaba's letter of resignation cites, amongst other things, the fact that the Advisory Board had no executive powers and that its recommendations were ignored and disregarded by the local authority as reasons for its powerlessness. He noted that as long as Africans had no real legislative powers, their struggle would be an ex[tra]- parliamentary one.[125]

Mhlaba's resignation in 1951 foreshadowed an even greater crisis of confidence for the NBAB which followed a tragic sequence of events set in motion by the Port Elizabeth riots of 18 October 1952. Subsequently, the ANC called for a general strike on 10 November to publicise the campaign to boycott 'differential' institutions such as advisory boards, Native representative councils, and the existing form of parliamentary representation. The PECC dismissed all of its workers who heeded the stayaway call and refused to reinstate them or re-engage them without prejudice. During this

crisis, neither the City Council nor the Ministers of Justice or Native Affairs, who made fleeting visits to the city, deigned to meet the Advisory Board. Consequently, all eight elected members as well as one nominated member, tended their resignation from the Board. They stated that:

> It is ... our considered opinion that it would be dangerously treacherous to continue to serve on a segregatory institution in which the African people throughout the Union have ceased to repose any confidence.[126]

Although the Board was re-constituted the following year, it enjoyed little credibility especially as it had come to be regarded as nothing more than a sham. The misplaced hope that certain members of the New Brighton community might have reposed in the PECC was dashed as it increasingly fell in line with the Nationalist Government's repressive policy of apartheid.

Tom Lodge holds that political mobilisation in Port Elizabeth in the 1950s was exceptional both in the quality of its achievement and in the conditions which facilitated it. Part of the reason for this success (according to Lodge) was that PE represented an easier environment for African political organisation than other centres. He attributes this to the following factors: the groundwork done by trade unions in the 1940s, with certain trade unionists holding political office and, in particular, dominant in the local ANC leadership; the very rapid industrial growth with labour shortages persisting into the late 1940s; the linguistic homogeneity of the workforce; the relatively relaxed administrative framework, which included an absence of influx control and compounds. Lodge concludes that the the ANC was able to establish itself in the highly administered terrain of New Brighton.[127] The obvious inference to be drawn from the fact that most of Port Elizabeth's African population lived in New Brighton - a point that Lodge makes in a different context - is that it could be organised as a community. And the Advisory Board had provided some sort of testing ground for political mobilisation of a constituency around everyday issues before 1952 in spite of the problem of the Board's legitimacy.

Notes and References

[1]A Stadler, The political economy of modern South Africa (Cape Town, 1987), pp. 112, 116.

[2]R Bloch and P Wilkinson, 'Urban Control and the Popular Struggle: A Survey of State Urban Policy 1920-1970', Africa Perspective, 20 (1982), p. 18.

[3]R Bloch, '"Using the Institutions of the Oppressor": African Advisory Boards 1923 to 1948', unpublished paper, University of Cape Town (UCT), 1979; TRH Davenport, 'Urban African Self-Government: the First Abortive Phase', unpublished paper presented to the Cape Town History Workshop, UCT, 1981.

[4]CJP le Roux, 'Rol van die Naturelle-adviesraad op plaaslike

bestuursvlak in Bloemfontein, 1923-1948', Contree, 25 (April 1989), pp. 5-11.

[5]M de Jongh, 'Interaction and Transition: A Study of Conciliar Behaviour in a Black South African Township', PhD Thesis, Rhodes University, 1979. The earliest minutes examined by the writer date from 1911. See Central Archives (CeA), Native Affairs Department (NTS), 2443 4/291.

[6]'A History of Port Elizabeth's African Community, with particular reference to New Brighton, 1902-1952' (PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1989).

[7]Stadler, pp. 106, 112.

[8]UG 10-13, p. 12.

[9]Stallard Commission Report 1921, p. 52 and p. 95, Appendix VII.

[10]UG 7 - 19, Report of the Native Affairs Department for the years 1913 to 1918, p. 17.

[11]FA Saunders, Municipal Control of Locations (Grahamstown, 1920), p. 14, Letter from E Grattan to Dr FA Saunders, 28 April 1920.

[12]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/5/1, Special Report on Conference of Managers and Superintendents of Urban Native Affairs, Johannesburg, 9-11 November 1927.

[13]Cape Archives Depot (CAD), Archives of the Town Clerk, Port Elizabeth (3/PEZ), Correspondence re Locations, 1/725, Letter from the SNA to the Town Clerk (TC), PE, 19 February 1924.

[14]John Patrick McNamee was a Catholic of Irish descent who spoke Xhosa fluently. He had previously been Superintendent of Natives at Grahmstown. He had been favoured for the New Brighton position in 1923 but Bellairs, who was retired, could take up the positon immediately whereas McNamee was required to give three months notice to the Grahmstown Municipality. He was nicknamed 'Gilifatyi' (literally 'he who kicks over the vats') on account of his supposed habit of destroying the produce of illegal brewers rather than using the evidence to bring them to court. He retired from the post - by which time it had been renamed Manager of Native Affairs - in 1945.

[15]J Robinson, 'Progressive Port Elizabeth: Liberal politics, local economic development and the territorial basis of racial domination, 1923-1935', unpublished typescript, University of Cambridge, 1990, pp. 4-6.

[16]CAD, 3/PEZ New Brighton Location Departmental (1/1276), Minutes of the NBAB, 21 July 1927 and Memo from Superintendent to NAC, 28 July 1927.

[17]CeA, NTS 2443 4/291, Letter from SNA to RM, PE, 15 April 1922 and Letter from Superintendent of Natives to RM, 27 April 1922.

[18]Saunders, Municipal Control, pp. 14-15; CeA NTS 2443 4/291, Minutes of the NBAB, 23 March 1922.

[19]Andrew Frank Pendla was a prominent figure in New Brighton from the early 1920s until the early 1940s. He was labelled an 'instigator' in the 1920 disturbances as a result of which he was dismissed from his position as a postal official by the Government after five years service. Superintendent Grattan failed to have him reinstated, and when Bellairs approached the Council for his reinstatement following representation by the Advisory Board, his effort was also blocked. He was subsequently employed as a senior clerk and interpreter by an attorney, JH Spilkin. He applied for a trading stand as a general dealer and butcher in 1923 but was refused. He was elected to the Advisory Board in 1925, 1928 and 1930, and served as a nominated member during the years 1935 - 1944. Superintendent McNamee when defending his retention as a Council representative on the Board in 1944, stated that Pendla was "the most capable board member - nominated or elected - that I have ever worked with"(CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/18, Report of the Supt, 15 January 1944). By 1929 he had become a eating house proprietor but this venture was unsuccessful. In 1940 he obtained a trading licence and erected a store. He married twice and had only one child by his second wife. His widow applied for transfer of Pendla's trading licence upon his death on 25 October 1944. In the opinion of PJ Nikiwe [see below], "Pendla has never in any way used his influence against the authorities in any shape or form." An interviewee ascribed Pendla's popularity to his being a descendant of a sub-chief and another that he came from 'good stock'. See below and T Karis & G Gerhardt, eds, From Protest to Challenge, V. 4: Political Profiles (Stanford, 1977), p. 126.

[20]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1277 and 1/3/2/5/2, Report of the Location Superintendent to the NAC, 6 September 1928.

[21]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/3, Minutes of the NBAB, 14 March 1929.

[22]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/3, Report of the Location Superintendent, 17 October 1929.

[23]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1497, Letter from Messrs McWilliams & Elliott to TC, PE, 30 July 1930 and Letter from TC to McWilliams & Elliott, 14 August 1930; 3/PEZ 1/666, Report of Location Supt, 8 August 1930.

[24]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/666, Minutes of the NAC, 11 August 1930.

[25]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1497, Minutes of the NAC, 13 November 1930.

[26]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1279, Minutes of the NBAB, 16 October 1930.

[27]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1279, Minutes of the NBAB, 20 October 1930.

[28]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1279, Letter from TC, PE to Messrs McWilliams &

Elliott, 31 October 1930.

[29]Prince John Nikiwe was the principal of the United Higher School and served as circuit steward in the Wesleyan Church. He was the longest-serving member of the New Brighton Advisory Board. He was an elected member between 1922 and 1928, and served as a nominated between 1929 and 1963 except for the years 1947-9. He represented the Cape Native Congress in giving evidence to the Godley Committee in Port Elizabeth in 1920 and was active on the executive of the local branch until the 1940s. In 1930 he became a proprietor of an eating house which catered for the single men's quarters, but the venture collapsed within two years. Attended numerous Location Advisory Board Congresses as representative of New Brighton, and was elected as Vice President in 1933 - a position he held for a number of years. He only retired from the Advisory Board in August 1963 because he had gone blind and infirm. He outlived both his wife, Lily and an adopted son.

[30]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1280, Minutes of the NBAB, 12 November 1931.

[31]Rev Limba claimed to be head of the Church of Christ in the Union and to have been ordained minister-in-charge of all branches in the Cape Province by Charles Sigxabayi who was then head of the Church. He was appointed bishop after Sigxabayi was deposed at a mass meeting in 1925 after a rift occurred. He was called to the PE District in 1926 and built a church in New Brighton in 1937 (CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/5/2/4, Minutes of a special meeting of the NBAB, 27 October 1930). He subsequently built up a large following and his congregation was called the most 'law-abiding' and 'prosperous' in the community. He became involved in numerous commercial undertakings and apparently used some of the proceeds to finance the building of his church. According to one informant, he lived in style and was fond of big cars (Interview with Attorney JH Spilkin, Port Elizabeth, 23 January 1990).

[32]Zamani (alias John Mala) had joined the Church of Christ (Isi-Gxabayi) in East London and claimed to have been requested by followers of Sigxabayi to preach in New Brighton (CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/5/2/4, Minutes of special meetings of the NBAB, 27 October 1930 and 6 November 1930).

[33]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1280, Minutes of the NBAB, 4 August 1932.

[34]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1280 and 1/3/2/5/5, Minutes of the Advisory Board, 21 April 1932.

[35]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1280, Minutes of the NBAB, 2 March 1933

[36]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1280, Minutes of the NBAB, 11 August 1933.

[37]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1280, Special meeting of the NBAB, 1 November 1932.

[38]Thomas Zini was an interpreter in the Magistrates court at the time of this episode and in the years that followed (1933-4) served

as a nominated member of the NBAB. Superintendent McNamee regarded him as "a man of good character, steady and reliable" (CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1280, Report of the Superintendent, 27 February 1943). After his retirement from public service in April 1943, Zini applied for a general dealers licence and established the Masikaze Co-operative Trading Co. He also applied to establish a servant's registry at the same premises, which served as a labour bureau.

[39]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/7, Minutes of the NBAB, 1 December 1932.

[40]L Reyburn, The Urban African in Local Government: A Study of the Advisory Board System and its Operation, S.A.I.R.R., Johannesburg, 1960, p. 4.

[41]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1280, Minutes of the NBAB, 11 August 1933.

[42]Interview with Mr Meyer Kaplan, Milnerton, 2 January 1990.

[43]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/7, Minutes of the NBAB, 20 June 1933.

[44]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/8, Minutes of the NBAB, 12 December 1933.

[46]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Minutes of the NAC, 12 January 1934.

[48]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Memo by the Supt included in letter from TC, PE to Sec Native Welfare Society of Matabeleland, 20 March 1934.

[47]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1281, Letter from Pendla to Sec, NBAB, 18 October 1934 included in Minutes of NBAB, 31 January 1935.

[48]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Minutes of the NAC, 4 December 1936.

[49]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1281, Minutes of the NBAB, 17 May 1934.

[50]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1281, Minutes of the NBAB, 19 July 1934.

[51]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Minutes of the NBAB, 31 January 1935.

[52]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Minutes of the NBAB, 28 February 1935.

[53]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Minutes of the NBAB, 28 March 1935.

[54]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Letter from AZ Tshiwula, E Ntsonga, W Jabavu and WJ Frolick to the TC, PE, 8 April 1935.

[55]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Minutes of the NBAB, 25 April 1935.

[56]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1281, Minutes of the NAC, 7 June 1935.

[57]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/9, Letter from Supt to RM PE, 12 July 1935.

[58]Intermediate Archives Depot (IAD), Port Elizabeth, Town Clerk's Files, 25/104 Native Advisory Board, No. 3, Minutes of the

NBAB, 28 February 1939.

[59]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/13, Minutes of the NBAB, 30 March 1939

[60]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/10, Minutes of the NBAB, 27 February 1936.

[61]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Minutes of the NBAB, 3 March 1936.

[62]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Letter from TM Zini to TC, PE, 25 March 1936.

[63]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Letter from TC Zini to the TC, PE 11 May 1936.

[64]Adopted by the City Council on 9 August 1939 and published in the Government Gazette, Cape Provincial Administration Notice No. 323, 4 July 1940.

[65]IAD, 25/104, Resolutions of the Location Advisory Boards' Congress, Durban, 18-20 May 1939 circulated by SP Mqubuli.

[66]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Minutes of the NBAB, 16 May 1940.

[67]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Minutes of the NAC, 28 May 1940.

[68]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Minutes of the NBAB, 20 November 1941

[69]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/15, Minutes of the NAC, 2 December 1941.

[70]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Minutes of the NBAB, 24 August and 4 November 1943; Minutes of the PECC, 29 September, 20 October and 10 November 1943.

[71]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/18, Minutes of the NBAB, 27 July 1944

[72]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Letters from the SNA to the Prov Sec, 2 February 1944 and letter from the Prov Sec to the TC PE, 14 February 1944.

[73]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/18, Minutes of the NBAB, 23 March 1944

[74]CAD, IAD 25/104 No. 3, Minutes of the NBAB, 20 June 1944.

[75]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/18, Minutes of meeting between the NAC and NBAB, 13 October 1944.

[76]It is generally difficult to assess the support for Advisory Board elections where no figures are available of the number who qualified as voters. The numbers of votes polled by individual candidates is, in itself, not an indicator of the credibility enjoyed by the NBNAB.

[77]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1280, Minutes of the NBAB, 1 December 1932.

[78]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Minutes of the NAC, 17 February 1933.

[79]Wilson Weir Jabavu was the son of DDT Jabavu and brother to John Tengo and Davidson. Formerly a resident of Korsten, he applied for and obtained a dwelling house in New Brighton in 1929 (CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/5/2/3, Minutes of the NBAB, 25 July 1923). In 19?? he was nominated to the Advisory Board in the place of the deceased Rev JW Gqamlana. He was further nominated in the years 1933-? and in 1935 was appointed to the Executive Committee of the Advisory Boards Congress. In the same year he fell out with Superintendent McNamee when he crossed swords with the official over the dismissal of Headman Ntsonga [see below]. He was subsequently elected to the Board in the years 1937-42 and 1945. McNamee later referred to him as one of "a small clique [the others being AZ Tshiula and E Ntsonga] who... have endeavoured to interfere with and frustrate the work of the administration and its officials in every possible way". He was a journalist and a professional photographer who reported for Imvo Zabantsundu and Umteteli wa Bantu.

[80]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Minutes of the NAC, 19 May 1933.

[81]Alfred Z Tshiwula served on the NBAB in the years 1935 and 1939. He was an organiser for the Council of Non-European Trade Unions (CNETU) in Port Elizabeth in the 1940s and an adviser to Margaret Ballinger, Native Representative for the Cape (Eastern) district in Parliament.

[82]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/9, Letter from Supt to Magt, PE 12 July 1935.

[83]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Letter from AZ Tshiwula to Chief Magt, 15 November 1937.

[84]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Letters from AZ Tshiwula to the Returning Officer, Magistrates Office, PE, 23 and 29 November 1937.

[85]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1498, Letter from Supt to TC, PE, 26 November 1937.

[86]Section No. 11 of the Regulations for the New Brighton Advisory Board read as follows:-

> The returning officer, after satisfying himself that the person desirous of recording his vote, is entitled to do so, shall ask him for which of the canidates nominated he wishes to vote, and shall record the votes given by any such person, being not more than the number of candidates to be elected, by placing a mark opposite the name of each candidate named by the elector on a list of names of the nominated candidates. The returning officer shall thereupon mark such person's receipt to show that a vote has been recorded in respect thereof.

See also IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Letter from TC to Messrs McWilliams & Elliott, 13 June 1941.

[87]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Minutes of the NBAB, 29 May 1941.

[88]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Letter from TM Zini to the Returning Officer, Native Commissioner's Office, PE, 10 December 1941.

[88]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Letter from McWilliams & Elliott to TC, 19 June 1941.

[89]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Letter from S Kaplan & Julius Lax to the TC, PE, 23 December 1941.

[91]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Report of the Supt, 10 January 1942.

[92]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/16, Minutes of the PECC, 13 January 1942.

[93]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Letter from MM Desai to the TC, 1? October 1943.

[94]Phineas M Sandla was elected to the NBAB as a CNETU candidate in the years 1944-7. He was convicted dagga dealer. Mhlaba called him an 'opportunist' who used his political connections in the ANC to further his business interests (Interview, 11 and 12 January 1990).

[95]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Letter from PM Sandla, Sec, CNETU to the TC, PE, 12 October 1943.

[96]IAD, 3/PEZ 25/104 No. 3, Letter from TC to MM Desai, 1? October 1943.

[97]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1846, Minutes of the NAC, 18 January 1944.

[98]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1846, Minutes of the NAC, 8 February 1944.

[99]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Minutes of the NBAB, 4 November 1943.

[100]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Minutes of the NAC, 16 November 1943.

[101]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/18, Minutes of the NBAB, 13 December 1943.

[102]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Letter from SNA to TC, PE, 8 February 1944.

[103]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/18, Minutes of the NAC, 2 February 1944; EPH 3 March 1944.

[104]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Report of the Supt, 5 February 1944.

[105]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/18, Minutes of the NBAB, 15 February 1944.

[106]EPH 11 February 1944, p. 4, Letter from TW Nconco.

[107]EPH 21 February 1944, Letter from Daniel Ngnonu.

[108]EPH 15 February 1944, p. 4, Letter from 'Pro Bono Public'.

[109]EPH 15 February 1944, p. 4, Editorial.

[110]EPH 24 February 1944, p. 4, Letter from 'Ub ingisa' (Rightoeusness).

[111]EPH 2 March 1944, p. 6, Letter from 'Vexed'.

[112]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/1846, Minutes of the NAC, 18 January 1944.

[113]Government Gazette, Proclamation No. 25 dd. 8 February 1941.

[114]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/9, Report of Supt to Committee on Natives in Urban Areas, 25 September 1935.

[115]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/18, Minutes of the NBAB, 20 April 1944.

[116]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/18, Minutes of the NBAB, 27 April 1944.

[117]CAD, 3/PEZ 1/3/2/15/19, Minutes of the NBAB, 25 January 1945.

[118]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Minutes of the NBAB, 29 May and 23 July 1945; Minutes of the NAC, 3 and 31 July 1945.

[119]Church of the Province Archives, University of the Witwatersrand, AB Xuma Papers, Letters to AF Pendla of 15 Janury, 27 January, and 28 July 1942; T Karis & G Gerhardt, eds, From Protest to Challenge, V.4: Political Profiles, p. 126.

[120]T Lodge, 'Political mobilisation during the 1950s: an East London case study in S Marks & S Trapido, eds, The Politics of Race, Class & Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa (London, 1987), pp. 312-3.

[121]Interview with Raymond Mhlaba, New Brighton, 11-12 January 1990.

[122]IAD, 25/104 No. 3, Minutes of the NBAB, 28 July 1949.

[123]Interview with Raymond Mhlaba, 11-12 January 1990.

[124]IAD, 25/104 No. 4, Letter from Supt CT Boast to TC, 14 February 1951.

[125]IAD, 25/104 No. 4, Letter from Mhlaba to Sec, NBAB 24 May 1951.

[126]IAD, 25/104 No. 4, Minutes of the NBAB, 28 October 1952.

[127]T Lodge, 'Political mobilisation during the 1950s: an East London case study' in S Marks & S Trapido, eds, The Politics of Race, Class & Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa (London, 1987), p. 318.

APPENDIX B

Members of the New Brighton Advisory Board

Year	Elected Representatives	Nominated Representatives
1909	George Nxokwana Lewis Mtubi Joseph Ngqolobe Peter Siko	Stephen Tarf Mliva Thomas Mnikina
1910	George Ngxokwana Thomas Mnikina Ben Njokweni Rev Stephen Mdliva	John Yokwe Walter Nobatana
1911	George Ngxokwana Walter Nobatana Charles Mtimka Isaac Mlamla	Rev H William Mcanyangwa John Yokwe
1912	Thomas Mnikina George Ngxokwana Charles Mtimka Isaac Mlamla	Rev H W Mcanyangwa John Yokwe
1913	Isaac Mlamla Charles Mtimka George Ngxokwana Thomas Mnikina	Rev H W Mcanyangwa J Yokwe
1914	J Rula N Stokwe P Nguna Z Teya	Rev H W Mcanayangwa J Yokwe
1915	J Rula N Stokwe P Nguna Z Teya	Rev H W Mcanyangwa J Yokwe (resigned - replaced by Peter Funde)
1916	N Stokwe P Nguna J Ngqolobe Z Teya	Rev H W Mcanyangwa P Funde
1917	J Ngqolobe Z Teya P Nguna N Stokwe	Rev H W Mcanyangwa (replaced by Rev James Wallace Gqamlana) P Funde
1918	Zenzile Teya Nicholas Stokwe Peter Nguna Alfred Mlotana	Rev J W Gqamlana P Funde

1919	P Nguna Z Teya A Mlotana M Dubula	Rev J W Gqamlana P Funde
1920	? Mayekiso P Nguna N Stokwe M Dubula	Rev J W Gqamlana P Funde
1921	P Nguna N Stokwe ? Mayekiso M Dubula	Rev J W Gqamlana P Funde
1922	Mathew Dibula Prince Nikiwe John Frolick Mongameli Mquqo	Rev J W Gqamlana Peter Funde
1923	P J Nikiwe MJ Dubula M Mquqe S Njokweni	Rev J W Gqamlana P Funde
1924	Matthew John Dubula Saba Njokweni Prince John Nikiwe Mongameli Mquqe	Rev J W Gqamlana Peter Funde
1925	Matthew John Dubula Saba Njokweni Prince John Nikiwe Andrew Frank Pendla	Rev J W Gqamlana Peter Funde
1926	Prince John Nikiwe James Mamela Dippa Matthew John Dubula Robert Daza Nkontso	Rev J W Gqamlana Peter Funde
1927	James Mamela Dippa Prince John Nikiwe Matthew John Dubula Albert Mbongwe	Rev J W Gqamlana Charles Mtimka
1928	Prince John Nikiwe Andrew Frank Pendla Attwell Madala Douglas Cola	Rev J W Gqamlana Matthew John Dubula
1929	Horatio M'belle G Magqaza E C Mkumatela Felton Mokwena	Rev J W Gqamlana Prince John Nikiwe
1930	A Njoli James Mamela Dippa Andrew Frank Pendla Felton Mokwena	Rev J W Gqamlana Prince John Nikiwe

1931	S S Ngqonga	Rev J W Gqamlana
	Horatio M'belle	Prince John Nikiwe
	Rev James Limba	
	W J Frolick	
1932	Rev James Limba	Rev J W Gqamlana (succeeded
	S S Ngqonga (resigned)	by Wilson Weir Jabavu)
	W J Frolick	Prince John Nikiwe
	Robert Qalinge	
1933	Manuel Zibonda	P J Nikiwe
	Rev James Limba	W W Jabavu
	Robert Qalinge	Thomas Zini
1934	M Zibonda	P J Nikiwe
	R J Qalinge	W W Jabavu
	W J Frolick	T M Zini
1935	W J Frolick	P J Nikiwe
	E Ntsonga	W W Jabavu
	A Z Tshiwula	A F Pendla
1936	Robert Qalinge	P J Nikiwe
	Rev James Limba	A F Pendla
	Manuel Zibonda	Rev J J Jolobe
1937	Wilson Jabavu	P J Nikiwe
	Robert Qalinge	A F Pendla
	Manuel Zibonda	Rev J Jolobe
1938	Robert Qalinge	P J Nikiwe
	Wilson Jabavu	A F Pendla
	James Ntshinga	Rev James Limba
1939	J Ntshinga (resigned)	A F Pendla
	W W Jabavu	P J Nikiwe
	A Z Tshiwula	Rev J Limba
1940	G Dubula	A F Pendla
	W W Jabavu	P J Nikiwe
	N Nguna	Rev J Limba
	T Zokufa	Rev G B Molefe
1941	W W Jabavu	A F Pendla
	Ndyebo Nguna	P J Nikiwe
	Tamplin M Zokufa	Rev G B Molefe
	Robert M Tutshana	Rev J Limba
i942	W W Jabavu	A F Pendla
	N Nguna	P J Nikiwe
	T M Zokufa	Rev J Limba
	R M Tutshana	Rev G B Molefe
1943	A Ntshinga	A F Pendla
	T N Ranuga	P J Nikiwe
	P P Mati	Rev G B Molefe
	P J B Kwaza	Rev J Limba

1944	I M Mfuku	A F Pendla (succeeded
	Phineas M Sandla	by Rev D N Mbopa)
	A O Malakane	P J Nikiwe
	A Ntshinga	Rev J Limba
		Rev G B Molefe
1945	I M Mfuku	P J Nikiwe
	P M Sandla	Rev J Limba
	W W Jabavu	Rev G B Molefe
	A O Malakane	Rev D Mbopa
1946	I M Mfuku	P J Nikiwe
	P M Sandla	Rev J Limba
	W W Mabija	Rev G B Moefe
	A Nkaphuka	W B Ntshekisa
1947	W W Mabija	Rev G B Molefe
	P J M Sandla	Johnson Marwanqa
	I M Mfuku	W B Ntshekisa
	M Nkosinkulu	Rev J Limba
1948	C M Singapi	Rev G B Molefe
	A Ntshinga	W B Ntshekisa
	W W Mabija	J B Marwanqa
	D Mtiya	W W Mabija
1949	A Ntshinga	Rev G B Molefe
	W Ximiya	W B Ntshekisa
	P J B Kwaza	J B Marwanqa
	D L Mtiya	W W Mabija
	W W Jabavu	
	T J Tladi	
	A Z Tshiwula	
	R Mhlaba	
1950	A B Ntshinga	Rev G B Molefe
	Raymond Mhlaba	J B Marwanqa
	W Mgijima	W B Tshekisa
	Rev A Tsekeletsa	P J Nikiwe
	P P Mati	
	M Bookholana	
	W M Norongo	
	Wilson Ximiya	
1951	R Mhlaba (resigned)	Rev G B Molefe
	P P Mati	P J Nikiwe
	A A Tsekeletsa	J B Marwanqa
	W F Ximiya	W Ntshekisa
	S Sigetye	
	H Ntshinda	
	J Nozewu	
	P Serapelo	
1952	P P Mati	W Ntshekisa
	W F Ximiya	Rev G B Molefe
	A A Tsekelitsa	J B Marwanqa
	J Tsikila	P J Nikiwe
	W F Tuta	
	W M Stemele	
	S Sigetye	
	H Mabamba	