

https://dspace.org/

The creation of a mass movement: Strikes and defiance, 1950-1952

Lodge, Tom

1981-08
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/9046

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

A F R I C A N S T U D I E S I N S T I T U T E

African Studies Seminar Paper
to be presented in RW
4.00pm AUGUST 1981

Title: The Creation of a Mass Movement: Strikes and Defiance, 1950-1952.

by: Tom Lodge

No. 107

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

A F R I C A N S T U D I E S I N S T I T U T E

African Studies Seminar Paper
to be presented at Seminar in
RW319 at 4.00 p.m. on Monday,
10th August, 1981

THE CREATION OF A MASS MOVEMENT: *Strikes and Defiance, 1950-1952*

by Tom Lodge

During the 1940's under the stimuli of industrial action, communal protest and passive resistance and an increasingly repressive social and political climate, the African National Congress's leadership had reached the point of embracing a strategy based on mass action : the strikes, boycotts and civil disobedience entailed in the Programme adopted in Bloemfontein in 1949. The form this programme would assume was indefinite : the Programme of Action was a statement of principle rather than a detailed strategem. But the months following the December conference allowed little time for careful planning. In 1950 the Government began its first major offensive against organised African opposition : the Suppression of Communism Act was directed not solely at the Communist Party and left-wing multiracial trade union groupings; it sanctioned the persecution of any individual group or doctrine intended to bring "about any political, industrial, social or economic change ... by the promotion of disturbance or disorder, by unlawful acts" or "encouragement of feelings of hostility between the European and non-European races of the Union."[1]

The Communist Party, its leadership already affected by banning orders on J.B. Marks, Moses Kotane and Yusuf Dadoo announced at a "defend free-speech convention" held in Johannesburg on March 26th and presided over by Dr. Moroka that May Day would be marked by a stay-away from work in protest against the restrictions and low wages.

The May Day protest was not unanimously supported by the ANC despite Moroka's presence at the convention. A *Bantu World* columnist accurately summed up the feelings of many Youth Leaguers including Mandela and Tambo when he commented that the "People's Holiday" was "deliberately intended to divert people from the Bloemfontein Programme".[2] It certainly looked as if the Africanists had been upstaged as there had been up to that point no evident attempt to implement the Programme's call for "a national stoppage of

work for one day as a mark of protest against the reactionary policy of the government."[3] In fact the African National Congress in the Transvaal appeared to be sharply divided, the May Day protest being endorsed by Communists who were also important Congress members (Bopape, Marks, Thloome) and opposed in Johannesburg as well as Evaton and the East Rand by Youth Leaguers.[4]

Despite disagreements between political leaders the stay-away call evoked a significant response. Within the working class communities on the reef, experienced political and trade union organisers of the calibre of Marks, Bopape, and Thloome had at that stage probably greater local standing than the young intellectuals of the Congress Youth League. Nearly 2 000 police were put on duty in anticipation of the event and in the course of clashes between police and crowds in Alexandria, Sophiatown, Orlando and Benoni, eighteen people were killed. Police and newspaper reports, describing the events tell us very little about their real character. We know something about some of the victims. Of the eleven people who died, five were under the age of twenty-one, three of them school-children, two were suffocated in a cinema which had been set alight, one man was looking for his child and another returning from work. Most of the dead and wounded were under the age of thirty.[5] But the composition of the crowd and the motives of those who were out on the streets that day are difficult questions to answer. It is likely they varied in detail in each centre. In Sophiatown there was a well- established tradition of street violence spearheaded by gangsters. In Orlando, violence only developed later in the day when police were escorting workers home who had ignored the strike call. In Benoni, the police were on the offensive, breaking up a large political meeting with bayonets, then firing on the apparently infuriated crowd which threatened to encircle them. While the conservative *Bantu World* was inclined to view most of the violence as due to the action of "groups of vicious youth"[6] the stay-aways' support from the working class population of Sophiatown and the East Rand townships suggests that street actions did not merely involve an anti-social minority. Loathing for the police had a wide constituency - especially in the Western Areas - for long the haven of those living on the edge of legality. On the Rand, the period of 1948-1949 was marked by a sudden tightening of the pass and liquor laws (and a 25% increase in conviction under them)[7] which would have had an especial impact in the "open" freehold locations such as Alexandria, Sophiatoan and Benoni. It was not merely that controls on mobility had tightened, they were also implemented in an increasingly brutal fashion. From 1948 in Johannesburg, there evolved a new blanket technique of police raiding, the effect of which:

> "appears to be, not to trace and trap known criminal gangs, but to conduct what resembles a punitive expedition against the entire location population."[8]

These raids were to become especially frequent in the early months of 1950 after protracted and bloody battles betweed police and supporters of a municipal tram boycott in the Western Areas. The tension of the crowds on the Reef that May Day is best understood in the context of this sudden intensification of official harrassment.

The May Day strike was succeeded by a series of discussions between nationalist and left-wing African leaders culminating in a decision by the ANC National Executive to call for a national stay-at-home in protest against the shootings and the Unlawful Organisation Bill (subsequently the Suppression of Communism Act). The "Day of Protest" would be on June 26th. In the intervening period, in anticipation of the Suppression of Communism Act, the Communist Party dissolved itself. But much of its membership remained politically active - in the case of its 1 500 African members many already had positions within the ANC hierarchy.[9] The preliminaries to June 26th included discussions with Indian Congress leaders who were to call out their own followers that day. A committee to co-ordinate the activities of both organisations was established with Walter Sisulu and Yusuf Cachalia as joint secretaries. The Transvaal Youth League issued a fiery statement supporting the protest and stirringly concluding "Up you Mighty Race".[10] Unlike the May protest, June 26th could be viewed as unequivocably nationalist assertion : the day itself (apparently chosen at random) had no distracting working class or internationalist connotations.

The second 1951 stay-at-home was considerably more decorous than the first. To avoid confrontations with the police, people were told to "remain quietly at home and think seriously about the plight of their people."[11] The most noticeable effects of the Day of Protest were in Durban and Port Elizabeth where even the hostile *Bantu World* admitted there was a "most effective" stay-away by African workers. On the Rand the organisers at the time were to claim in the face of hostile press reports important successes, though the ANC's National Executive report at the end of the year conceded that response to the strike call in the Transvaal was very poor.[12] In Port Elizabeth, campaigning before the stay-away centred as much around the Native Urban Areas (Amendment) Bill as the impending restrictions on political organisation. The amended Urban Areas Bill appeared especially threatening in Port Elizabeth, by 1950, the only major urban centre exempt from the provision of influx control (see below).[13]

In Port Elizabeth, the Communist Party had an adherence both within the trade union movement and sections of Congress leadership. As we shall see later, local developments in the preceding decade had provoked the most extraordinary transformation in a population which "had earned the reputation for loyal behaviour in response to considerate municipal policy."[14] On Monday, June 26th, much of the unskilled labour was withdrawn from industry and especially seriously affected were the harbour, commerce and services which drew most of their labour from the African population.[15]

In Durban where, because of the provincial presidency of the aged ICU leader, Champion, political influence had been linked with labour organisation, a bitter personal conflict between Champion and his provisional secretary, Selby Msimang, had stimulated local Congress organisation. Champion was later to complain of Msimang building" Congress branches in every hostel and street-corner in Durban with a view to organising factions hostile to me."[16] Here, too, the Natal Indian Congress as a result of the passive resistance movement and the wartime development of working class consciousness within the Indian population, had developed into a radical mass movement. The Congresses were to claim a 60% abstention by the workforce, affecting 70 factories. Municipal workers were especially affected by victimisation dismissals, and the Council, despite its dismissal of 115 African workers warned that in future it would discriminate against Indian as opposed to African labour in its employment policy - apparently the absenteeism rate was especially high in the Indian workforce.[17]

The level of participation between different urban centres in these mass political demonstrations was beginning to fall into a pattern which would characterise organized Black opposition in urban centres for the rest of the decade. We will be looking at the background to the outstanding feature of this pattern, that is the consistently strong response to Congress campaigns in the Eastern Cape, as well as variations elsewhere, later in this chapter. But a brief digression is needed here to make a few points about the stay-at-home tactic which since 1950 has remained the most important political weapon in Black protest politics The emergence of the stay-at-home should be related to the realisation amongst Black politicians of the potential strength of Black workers discussed in the last chapter. The Programme of Action had called for a protest strike and this was to characterise Congress's approach to the stay-away throughout the decade. General withdrawals were intended as demonstrations of strength; they were not in themselves direct attacks on the power of the state or employers. Only in isolated and localised instances would the stay-aways be called for an indefinite period and assume the characteristic

of a classical general strike. The organisation of the stay-at-home took place mainly in the townships, through open air meetings and door-to-door canvassing. South African urban geography holds certain advantages for the organisation of such protests : Black people are concentrated in crowded and isolated housing complexes. Because of their compact nature and few points of communication with the rest of the city, mobilising or immobilising their inhabitants is relatively easy. The township based stay-at-home tactic had legal advantages as well : formal prohibitions on African Industrial strikes were inadequate counter-measures to the stay-aways. Organisation at the workplace was considerably riskier, though it had advantages. When Congress local leadership had strong links with trade unions (as in Port Elizabeth) the stay-at-home would have the most dramatic affect, worker solidarity being greater in the factory than at home.

The stay-at-home appeared a useful and appropriate means of protest. But it had disadvantages. As the events in the 1950's were to demonstrate police action against a township as opposed to a factory-based strike was considerably simpler. Moreover, the stay-away left certain workers untouched : when there were no controlled compounds or hostels the effects of such strikes would be much more widespread. Here again Port Elizabeth was exceptional.[18]

* * *

In the two years between the June 26th strike and the first acts of civil disobedience in 1952, there was little organised political activity outside the Western Cape. For the African National Congress, nevertheless, they represented a crucial phase. The adoption of the Programme of Action and the movement's involvement in political strikes did not signify a thorough-going transformation from an elitist to a popular movement. The period which followed the Day of Protest was characterised by conflicts concerning both strategic and ideological questions. The two main issues were the position of the left within Congress and the question of collaboration with non-African organisations. Until there was a degree of unanimity within Congress's leadership over these , further implementation of the Programme of Action would have to wait. Of the five members of the "Council of Action" appointed in early 1950, by the end of 1951, one had withdrawn from political activity and two had identified themselves with a dissenting ANC faction, the National Minded bloc.

The Simons's remark, that with the dissolution of the Communist Party on June 20th, 1950, and the absorption thereafter of its activists in the affairs of Congress, "the class struggle had merged with the struggle for liberation".[19]

This was precisely what Youth Leaguers had feared, with their belief in the oppression of Africans "by virtue of their colour as a race" [20] rather than through their position as a class. Some Youth Leaguers were to join older conservatives within the Transvaal Congress to oppose the successful election of J.B. Marks as president of the provincial organisation in November 1950. However, the most bitter opposition to Marks came not from those who opposed "imported" ideologies and "obscure" influences but rather from people who looked back with nostalgia to an era when politics was more socially exclusive:

> "Congress wants a leader with simple methods of teaching the masses how to live; a man who has himself proved a success in life as apparent from their economic, social and political well-being."[21]

The similarities between the conservative and Youth League opponents of Marks were superficial. Both stressed race-pride in their popular appeal. But the former placed their main emphasis on the virtues of African upward social mobility[22] - a major concern being opposition to Indian trading activity within Black residential areas. The latter saw an ethnically derived nationalism as the key to mass mobilisation. For a time the conservatives, banded together as the "National Minded bloc" appeared a serious threat. In the first months of 1951, J.B. Marks and other Transvaal leaders devoted much energy to establishing their authority at public meetings, in the Johannesburg and Reef locations.

The Youth League was going through an important transition. Collaboration with other National Executive leaders modified the Africanist position of Mandela and Tambo (the older and less ideologically dogmatic Sisulu was a key influence). Youth League spokesmen began to pay more attention to class based analyses. Dilizantabe Mji, president of the Transvaal Congress Youth League from early 1951, was a good example with his reference to:

> "foaming racialist slogans that have perverted the minds of their fellow white men ... driving the white workers away from the ranks of the toiling masses .. the ordinary white man must be forgiven ... he is not an oppressor ..... the people never to be forgiven are those who build round the lives of simple people this facade of a Black peril."[23]

Mji's position was not shared by everyone - in 1952 his re-election took place despite criticism of his "ideological unreliability".[24] In the early 1950's the League was to divide into two camps : one was to promote in the words of J.C. Matthews, "a healthy, democratic, non-racialist, anti-colonial, anti-imperialist nationalism".[25]

The other was to adhere to Africanist orthodoxy. The former camp was closer to the decision-making levels of Congress. Its leaders tended to have greater professional status and hence economic independence than the latter, many of whom were teachers, and hence less politically active. For the time being, the Africanists were to content themselves by issuing ephemeral newsletters from their centres in Orlando and East London.

African Communists were often ideologically rather eclectic and hence in 1950-1952 a more sensitive issue than their presence in Congress's leadership was that of co-operation with the Indian Congress.

Anti-Indian sentiments were not confined to African businessmen. In 1948, the Newclare Youth League passed a resolution calling on the Minister of the Interior to tighten African/Indian residential segregation.[26] In Benoni, in July 1952, Indian shopkeepers were attacked and their stores looted after one of their number had fatally beaten up an African boy he suspected of stealing.[27] Conservative opponents would often accuse the ANC leadership of being under control of Indians. However, though co-operation between Indian and African organisations would remain a sensitive issue in some quarters, several factors by the beginning of the decade made it considerably easier than before. First of all, like the ANC, during the 1940's, the Indian Congresses in Natal and the Transvaal became more popularly oriented. This reflected the increase in the size of the Indian industrial working class and its corollary, the spread of Indian trade unionism, the development of a professional non-commercial middle class, the spreading influence within these groups of the South African Communist Party, and finally especially in the Transvaal, the growing vulnerability of small retailers threatened both by legislation and Afrikaner nationalist trading boycotts.[28] In 1946, in protest against the new Asiatic Land Tenure Act, the Indian Congresses embarked on a two-year campaign of civil disobedience in which over 2 000 volunteers were arrested, usually for illegal crossing of provincial borders or the occupation of selected sites in "white" areas of Durban. By the late 1940's, there seemed less to be gained than before from isolating Indian struggles from those of other Blacks, but in any case, the new Marxist leaders of the Indian Congress for moral and ideological reasons were eager to form links with other communal struggles. This was achieved at a symbolical level with the "Joint Declaration of Co-operation" signed by A.B. Xuma, G.M. Naicker, and Yusuf Dadoo, which promised a combined struggle by Africans and Indians against all forms of discrimination, as well as by the participation of a small band of African volunteers in Germiston in one of the final acts of civil disobedience.[29]

A more firm commitment to alliance with the Indian Congresses by the end of the decade was stimulated by the Durban race riots, which while doing nothing to improve everyday relationships between Africans and Indians, helped to persuade leaders of both communities of the dangers of their polarisation and the virtues of collaboration. The Defiance Campaign itself would tangibly demonstrate the benefits of communal co-operation; small traders apparently provided an important financial contribution[30] and newly independent India's influence at the United Nations helped to attract international attention to the campaign.' Two other factors served to bring the movements closer. In both the African and Indian Congresses by the end of the decade, Marxists had become influential at the level of leadership. In both, the influence of well-established (and hence competitive) groups of businessmen had lessened with the adoption of a mass-based strategy. In the case of the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses this came with the withdrawal in 1946 of the Indian High Commissioner in South Africa and hence the end of the favoured tactic of the wealthy, lobbying.[31] In the case of the ANC, the formation of the National Minded bloc in late 1950 was an important development. The bloc's influence was greatly exaggerated by the *Bantu World*, the editor of which, Selope Thema, was the bloc's president, but its emergence was nevertheless significant for this reason.

The above discussion helps to elucidate what were rather dramatic developments given the racial isolationism of young African politicians in previous years. The joint co-ordinating committee which emerged during the June 26th stay-away provided a precedent for the Council of Action's recommendations, presented to the ANC National Executive on the afternoon of a founding member's funeral, for a joint campaign with Indian and Coloured organisations against pass laws and stock limitation. On the 29th, 1951, a five man planning council was established consisting of Moroka, Sisulu, Marks, Dadoo and Yusuf Cachalia. The Council's purpose was to establish the appropriate strategy of mass resistance to six "unjust laws". Helping to strengthen the conviction of some of those who believed that conditions favoured a mass campaign as well as contributing to the emergence of the Congress Alliance were the events in the Western Cape where political disaffection among Coloured people was becoming more militant and assertive.

The radicalisation of Coloured politics began in the 1930's with the formation in Cape Town of the National Liberation League and later the Non-European United Front under the threat of segregationist legislation, which after demonstrations and riots in District 6 was postponed. The 1939 congress of the NEUF was attended by representatives of the

Cape ANC and the Communist Party.. Political organisation within the Coloured community was to receive a further impetus with the proposal in 1954 by Smuts to establish a "Coloured Affairs Council." In response an Anti-CAD movement was formed. Anti-CAD's main purpose was to deny any legitimacy to segregationist political institutions, and this with the fact that much of its following was among teachers who were prescribed from activist politics, meant it's major weapon was the electoral boycott. This was to create a initial distance between it and both the Communist Party and the ANC, both of which, through the 1940's made use of whatever political platform was available. The NEUM of which the All African Convention and Anti-CAD were the two most important affiliates was to gain a major following among Coloured intellectuals, while the Communist Party succeeded in bringing Coloured workers under its indirect influence through a few well-organised trade unions.

By the end of the decade the relatively privileged position of the Coloured population in contrast to Africans was being eroded. Between 1948 and 1951 prohibitions on sexual relationships and marriage between Whites and Coloureds, a humiliating system of racial classification under the Population Registration Act, Cape peninsula train apartheid, stricter residential segregation and the Separate Registration of Voters' Bill appeared as new threats to Coloured security and status.

Resistance to these measures was initially unpromising. When train apartheid was announced on August 13th, 1948, a large meeting was convened by the Communist Party in front of Cape Town's town hall. A Train Apartheid Resistance Committee was elected including Communists, Unity Movement leaders, and members of the African Peoples Organization - the oldest Coloured political organisation. Tensions within this Committee swiftly developed. The United and APO people were opposed to small-scale passive resistance.[32] The Communists accused the rest that their insistance on wide-scale organisation as a precondition for resistance was merely an excuse for inactivity.[33] A call for 2000 volunteers[34] to fill Whites Only coaches attracted 300 who succeeded in delaying the departure of one Cape Town train for thirty minutes.[35] The Committee broke up shortly afterwards, amid charges and countercharges of adventurism and cowardice.

However, by 1951 the focus of protest had shifted to something rather more important than first-class Railway Accommodation. In February, a conference was held in Cape Town attended by representatives of the African Peoples Organisation, the South African Indian Congress, the ANC, the local community groups and trade unions, to discuss the opposition to the removal of Coloured voters from the common roll. Out of this meeting grew the Franchise Action Committee.

FRAC, as it was known, was a curious alliance involving both left-wing trade unionists and some of the most accommodationist Coloured politicians including supporters of the state-sponsored Coloured Advisory Council. Though the alignment of such diverse figures as Sam Kahn, one of the leading figures in the Communist Party, and George Golding of the National Convention, attracted the derision of the Unity Movement, it was nevertheless quite effective in organising well-supported protests. Speeches at FRAC meetings give some idea of the tension and anxiety underlying these. As one speaker pointed out:

> "If you lose your votes you will become like the African people. You will be placed in locations ..... you will be judged by Coloured Commissioners ..... if you lose your votes, you will lose everything you have."[36]

In April, a FRAC conference resolved in favour of a "political strike" which was eventually called for May 7th. The strike affected Cape Town industry quite seriously though *Torch* claimed, in many cases, that employers and workers had prior agreements to work on a public holiday instead. It was supported by both Coloured and African workers. At a conference in June 1951, 233 of the delegates were from FRAC factory groups.[37] Despite the amorphous nature of its leadership FRAC had become an effective force among working-class Coloureds who were most affected by new White worker protractionist policies. Coloured political volatism was dramatised when a mainly Coloured crowd, responding to the insurrectionary flavour of a Torch Commando demonstration began to converge on the House of Assembly only to be violently repulsed by police.[38]

Though Coloureds were responding to the threat of losing privileges which socially differentiated them from Africans, nevertheless these events served to strengthen the argument of those who advocated a multiracial campaign. The Joint Planning Council reported in November 1951. The report recommended that an ultimatum be presented to the Government to repeal the "unjust laws" by the end of February. If the ultimatum was not met a campaign should begin either April 6th (van Riebeeck's Day) or June 26th. The struggle would involve the courting of arrests by trained volunteer corps of selected laws and regulations. In the first stage, the campaign would be limited to the major urban centres, in the second the number of corps and centres would increase, and finally the struggle would "assume a general mass character" in both the town and the countryside. In towns, ANC volunteers would defy the pass laws and in the countryside people should be persuaded to resist stock limitation. In the case of SAIC members, provincial barriers, the Group Areas Act, apartheid regulations at railway stations, post offices and so forth would be

the main targets. FRAC volunteers would also oppose the Group Areas Act and apartheid regulations.[39]

The report also considered the possibility of strike action but concluded that it should not be a major strategic component until possibly later in the campaign. The report's authors were concerned to make the campaign attract as wide a range of participation as possible. Limiting it to various forms of industrial action would, first of all, miss the opportunity of involving, for example, the large number of people affected by the Separate Registration of Voters Act who were not industrial workers. The importance accorded to rural action reflected the increasingly bitter struggle in the reserves against Government rehabilitation schemes. In particular, the Witzieshoek disturbances of 1950-51 had helped to draw the attention of African politicians to rural problems. The personal inclinations of the Council members would have helped shape their recommendations. Moroka, himself, as a country African doctor in Thaba Nchu, was considerably more influenced by rural disaffection than his predecessor, Xuma. Yusuf Cachalia was, of the five, the nearest to being a Gandhist and both he and Dadoo brought to the Council their own experiences in the 1946-1948 passive resistance campaign. However, it was the former Africanist, Walter Sisulu, who was the first to elaborate a civil disobedience strategy.[40] And notwithstanding the misgivings of some of his colleagues, the campaign was not inconsistent with an Africanist strategy; mobilisation was to be along communal rather than class determined lines and only in exceptional cases would "mixed" volunteer units be formed.

The underlying motives of the plan's authors and those who adopted it are difficult to determine. The apparent divisions in White politics (it was only in 1952 that the Nationalist Party consolidated its control over the electoral process) and the evidence of militantly expressed dissent within the Black communities may have persuaded some that civil disobedience would provide a strong enough challenge to change Government policy. Such considerations may have helped to influence the choice of civil disobedience which, while it challanged the moral authority of the law, did so in a way which neither threatened nor seriously inconvenienced the White population. It is unlikely that many subscribed to Gandhi's notion of Satyagraha in which the suffering of those punished for disobedience would activate the inherent goodness of the rulers. More generally it was hoped that the campaign would succeed in disorganising authority by filling to capacity the prisons and the courts.[41] Some leaders saw the Defiance Campaign simply as a means of enhancing the following of the nationalist movement.[42]

The Joint Planning Council report was endorsed in December by the delegates at the ANC's Annual Conference, over half of whom, according to Joe Matthews, were people "closely

connected with the trade unions." [43] A National Action Council composed of four ANC and three SAIC leaders was set up to direct campaigning. The only expression of dissent was from the Natal Provincial organisation. This was now led by Chief Albert Lutuli, after a bitter struggle between the old incumbent, A.W. Champion, and the Youth League. For various reasons, Congress was in disarray in Natal and Lutuli and other delegates doubted the organisation had the capacity to mount a mass struggle in that province. The provincial secretary, Selby Msimang, in the following month was to publicly condemn the joint African/Indian leadership of the campaign as being especially inappropriate in the Natal context of communal tensions.[44]

In January, 1952, an ultimatum signed by Dr. Moroka and Walter Sisulu, calling for the repeal of six "unjust laws" was sent to the Prime Minister. The laws singled out were in themselves a telling reflection of the additional pressures Black people had been subjected to since 1948. First there were the Pass Laws, a longstanding grievance, but recently enforced with new vigour. Stock limitation and the Bantu Authorities Act were fiercely contested attempts by the state to restructure the local economies and politics in the reserves. The Group Areas Act imposed a national uniformity in residential and occupational segregation and in particular, threatened those who owned property or operated a business in a "white" area (though it threatened many other groups as well). Included in the six laws were two affecting political rights : the Voters Representation Act and the Suppression of Communism Act. To nobody's surprise the ultimatum was rejected in a letter from the Prime Minister's secretary.

On May 31st, encouraged by the success of huge rallies organised on April 6th in protest against the van Riebeeck tercentenary celebrations, the ANC, SAIC, and FRAC executives decided the Defiance Campaign would begin on June 26th. The Campaign was to be the most sustained and in terms of number of participants the most successful organised resistance the ANC was ever to initiate. Because much of the scholarly analysis on Congress campaigns emphasises bureaucratic inadequacies as the key to understanding their shortcomings, it is worth looking at the state of Congress organization at the inception of the campaign. For judged by narrow bureaucratic criteria the ANC was in no state to organise a major campaign. Its 1951 executive report mentioned financial crisis and the difficulties caused by Natal and Transvaal leadership disputes. The organisation could afford only one full-time paid official, Walter Sisulu. Though membership was on the increase (7 000 on the eve of the campaign) it was concentrated in a small number of active branches : 25 in the Transvaal, 14 in the Cape, 17 in a Free State, and an unspecified number in Natal.[45] A plan to break the provincial organization into less cumbersome and geographically more logical units had only just begun to be implemented.[46]

Clearly if the campaign was to be successful it would have to rely on informal channels of communication and local initiative.

Despite these difficulties the campaign's programme was remarkably consistent with the JPC recommendations. It opened in the main urban centres on the Reef and Port Elizabeth on June 26th. In Boksburg, 50 people, led by the veteran passive resister, Nana Sita, walked through the gates of the African location without the appropriate permits and were arrested. That night 52 men, including Mandela and Cachalia, broke the curfew laws in central Johannesburg. In Port Elizabeth, thirty walked through the "Europeans Only" entrance of the New Brighton Railway Station. The day afterwards, nine volunteers opened the campaign in the Western Cape, standing at the white counter of Worcester Post Office. Worcester was a small town, but a logical starting point for the Western Cape resistance, being an important centre for the canning industry and hence the centre of activity for one of the largest and most militant Black trade union organisations, the Food and Canning Workers' Union and its African sister union. The opening actions set the pattern for the campaign : until the police actually tried to prevent acts of defiance they were warned well in advance so they could be present. Volunteer groups remained small and easily manageable. Their defiance was watched by a much larger crowd of supporters and was often preceded by meetings and street processions. The regulations disobeyed were very minor ones : use of white facilities at Post Offices, Railway Stations and on trains, the breaching of curfew regulations, and other pass laws, and entering African locations without a permit. Despite the imposition of increasingly heavy sentences by magistrates (including flogging for young people) almost without exception volunteers opted to serve prison sentences which could last two or three months rather than pay the alternative fine.

Infusing the resistance, especially in the Eastern Cape but elsewhere as well, was a mood of religious fervour. The campaign opened and was accompanied by "days of prayer", volunteers pledged themselves at prayer meetings, to a code of cleanliness, love and discipline. Manyanos wore their uniforms and accompanied Congress speeches with solemn hymn singing, and even at its tense climax in Port Elizabeth, despite the syndicalist undercurrent of a political strike call people were enjoined on the strike's first day to:

> "conduct a prayer and a fast in which each member of the family will have to be at home."[47]

Thereafter they were to attend nightly church services. A few Congress spokesmen, especially in Johannesburg, where the Youth League provided an important leadership component spoke in the strident idiom of Africanism :

"To you who are young and whose blood is hot, we say catch the bull by its horns, Afrika".[48] But more typically the verbal imagery of the campaign involved ideas of sacrifice, martyrdom, the triumph of justice and truth. J.B. Marks' speech made in anticipation of his arrest for breaking a banning order just before the campaign opened set the tone for much of what was to follow. Referring to the ANC as the real Noah's Ark he went on to announce: "This is the hour now. I am being crucified and I feel the weight of the cross".[49]

By the beginning of August, the campaign had spread from its original centres to East London, Uitenhage, the West Rand, and Vereeniging, Pretoria, Grahamstown, and Cape Town. Already it was apparent that the most dramatic levels of participation were in the Eastern Cape towns. One one early morning in August, for example, between 12.01 a.m. and 8.15 a.m., eleven groups broke Railway apartheid regulations at New Brighton and the Main City stations with 245 volunteers being arrested.[50] There were other regional variations as well. The pattern on the Rand was for groups to travel out from a main Congress centre and break the law in an outlying township. Consequently location permit requirments were the regulation most frequently broken by the Transvaal defiance. In the East Cape, on the other hand, much more dependence was placed on local initiative: people were encouraged to defy in their home areas.

The campaign reached its peak in September, 2,500 resisters being arrested that month in 24 centres which included both Bloemfontein and Durban. It received a fresh impetus at the beginning of October when India successfully moved that South Africa should become the centre of a UN General Assembly debate. The campaign leaders, most of them now facing charges under the Suppression of Communism Act, called for a broadening of the campaign in response. By October it had drawn volunteers in every major town in the union and in addition had attracted some rural support: most dramatically in Peddie in the Ciskei, but also from 31 Eastern Transvaal farm workers who had been organised in a farm workers' union by the ANC leader, Gert Sibande, since the late 1930s. In the Eastern Cape the campaign had appeared to have reached the first stage projected by the Joint Planning Council. By mid-October nearly 2,000 had volunteered. They had on several occasions managed to fill to capacity the city's smart new jail, and police re-inforcements had to be drafted in from other parts of the country.[51] The more generalised resistance envisaged in the projected stage of the campaign appeared to be taking place in the Eastern Province: in Peddie several hundred people were under arrest for breaking curfew regulations and there were reports of especially wide hostilities and lack of co-operation with cattle-dipping measures. In Port Elizabeth, from quite early on, despite injunctions by a section of the ANC leadership, strike action was combined with civil disobedience.

Volunteers returning to work, having served their prison sentences, would be refused re-employment. Workers, with the encouragement of ANC activists, would then empty the factories. In three weeks six strikes involving 850 workers took place.[52]

Between October 18th and November 9th, the campaign virtually ground to a halt there being less then 300 arrests thereafter. In its two main centres, where in any case, resistance seemed to be losing its momentum, the movement was paralysed by events surrounding the outbreak of rioting, on October 18th in Port Elizabeth and on November 9th in East London. The riots will be discussed later. They essentially arose out of the increasingly tense relationship between Blacks and police the campaign had generated. The Port Elizabeth riots were succeeded by bans and curfews, which quite apart from the inhibiting affects of the violence and deaths which occurred in the riots, made political activity very difficult. In reaction to both the police's and the City Council's actions, Port Elizabeth Congress leadership called for a workers' stay-at-home which, like the bus boycott which had followed the introduction of armed police on Railway buses after the riots, enjoyed almost total support from the African workforce and was backed by many Coloured workers as well. Left-wing activists had wanted the strike to be indefinite, but they were overruled. The strike was limited to a one-day demonstration. Its success appeared to have set the pattern for future development of the campaign. By February, rank and file feeling at both the Cape and Transvaal provincial conferences were in favour of continued "industrial action". This was prompted by two recently enacted laws, the Public Safety Act (enabling the Government to declare a state of emergency) and the Criminal Law Amendment Act which set the seal on any further civil disobedience efforts by imposing a three-year imprisonment and/or flogging on any violation of the law "by way of protest against the law". The strike call, though accepted in principle by the Congress National Executive, was never to be implemented. In 1953 bans on political leaders and organisational confusion caused in part by the immense expansion of the movement as a result of the campaign served to immobilise resistance.

* * *

Out of this necessarily cryptic account[53] of the campaign several questions arise which the rest of this chapter will attempt to answer. These are: How does one account for the extraordinary response in the Eastern Cape? What was the connection between the campaign and the riots? Why was participation in the campaign in Natal so limited (300 arrests and none outside Durban)? What were the achievements of the campaign? We will begin by considering the background to events in the Eastern Cape.

A variety of factors said to have existed in the Eastern Cape in a unique combination are usually put forward to explain the strength of Congress's following there during the 1950s. These include the ethnic homogeneity of the local population; the deep historical roots of modern political culture; the more relaxed legal environment - the absence in Port Elizabeth of influx control; the greater sense of deprivation as the Eastern Cape after 1948 was brought into conformity with the harsher segregationist policies of the north; the persistence of attitudes generated during a bloody phase of primary conflict; the strength of trade unionists and the existence of a large concentration of industrial Africans in Port Elizabeth; the stability of family life; the extent of conversion to Christianity; the lack of divisive Communist influence in African politics.[54] However, such hypotheses need testing in a more detailed examination of their local context if they are to provide a convincing explanation. With the exception of ethnic homogeneity most of these factors would have been operative in the Rand where a major proportion of the African population had several generations acquaintance with "modern" political activity, trade unionism and Christianity, and where important centres had only recently been subjected to the full rigours of influx control under the Urban Areas Act.[55] There is little evidence that ethnic or linguistic differences either within the African community or between Africans and Indians inhibited political response in the Transvaal. Only a detailed consideration of the Eastern Cape political environment and local antecedents of the campaign can provide an understanding of its course in this area. Therefore, let us look at its two major centres, Port Elizabeth and East London.

Port Elizabeth is one of South Africa's oldest industrial centres, the town's prosperity being initially based on its importance as a port as well as the local leather industry. In the 1920s it was the obvious site for South Africa's fledgeling motor industry - both its port facilities and its central position between major population connurbations made it the logical choice. In 1923 work began on the Ford assembly line. The major behicle manufacturers were followed by components industries as well as clothing and food processing factories. By the 1930s Port Elizabeth's population was the most rapidly increasing in South Africa.[56] The Second World War halted the rate of industrial expansion though it stimulated the existing factories to diversify their output. The late 1940s, however, was a period of unprecedented industrial growth with the establishment of two tyre factories, a Ford and a Volkswagen plant, stainless steel, canning, metallurgic and electronics concerns and many others.[57]

Much of the initial industrial activity was to depend on White and Coloured labour and it was only the late 1930s and 1940s that Africans began to be drawn into manufacturing in large numbers. Nevertheless for a long time Port Elizabeth

had been an important centre of African employment: an official brochure in 1937 was to include the availability of an "inexhaustible" supply of cheap labour as one of the city's main attractions.[58]

In 1951 over 60,000 Africans lived in Port Elizabeth.[59] This population was structured in the following way. Just half of it was female: unusual in the context of South Africa's urban black population, which was usually preponderantly male because of the migrant labour system. Unfortunately the 1951 census figures do not include occupational statistics. We know that in 1946 when the population was 42,000, less than 3,000 were employed in manufacturing - about 21% of the work-force. Approximately 2,250 were involved in commerce and another 2,000 in transport, mainly as dockers and railway workers. The rest worked in service industries and as domestics.[60] Expressed as a proportion of the working population, the proportion involved in manufacturing was not especially high: it was much higher for example in many towns of comparable size on the Rand - Roodepoort, a politically quiescent town in the 1950s would be a case in point. It was also, in contrast to the Rand, fairly recently involved - many of Port Elizabeth's key industries up to the war had drawn their labour principally from Whites and Coloureds. What is more significant however than the size or experience of the African industrial population was the relative ease, compared to other centres, of organising it. There were fewer internal linguistic barriers than in other towns: 95% of Port Elizabeth's African population spoke Xhosa and possibly more important, none lived in the controlled environment of hostels, compounds or barracks. This made Port Elizabeth, with East London, among large South African towns, unique. Most workers in Port Elizabeth lived with their families in the various townships and locations. A final demographic feature of the population was that it was increasing rapidly - in the fifteen years between 1936 and 1951 it more than doubled though this was a contemporary characteristic of many other urban Black populations in South Africa. And despite this expansion (and this was unusual) because of industrial growth, unemployment could not have been a major problem - city councillors, as late as 1948, were complaining of difficulties in obtaining domestic servants because of the local aversion to this type of work.[61]

Port Elizabeth's Black population originally lived in five inner-city locations demolished at the beginning of the century on the insistence of the Plague Board. The inhabitants of these slums trekked over the municipal boundary to Korsten which by the 1930s was a huge over-crowded, rack-rented, shanty village - a place arousing considerable official disapproval, because of its overcrowding, consequent disease, a high crime rate and the effects of all these on surrounding suburbs. In the late 1930s with the aid of a state loan work began, five miles from the city centre, on the huge

municipal housing complex of New Brighton. The 9,000 African inhabitants of Korsten (where the poor of all races lived) began to be evicted and expropriated and rehoused in the new township.[63] By 1941 New Brighton had a population of 20,000 living in tidy rows of bungalows. However, Korsten's African population was still 8,000 as people continued to pour into the town seeking work. Another 4,000 lived on employers' premises.[64] Building continued in New Brighton: by the end of the war it accommodated 35,000.[65] In contrast to municipal townships elsewhere, New Brighton's population lived with relative freedom from official restrictions: there was no curfew, no pass regulation, no registration of employment and even domestic brewing was allowed.[66] Not surprisingly, because of these freedoms, the city had the lowest Black crime statistics in the country.[67] Port Elizabeth's industrial employers favoured a relatively skilled workforce with a low rate of turnover and this was what the city fathers were efficiently providing.

During the late 1940s, municipal policy began to change. In Port Elizabeth's hinterland, other towns nearer the African reserves, began to close themselves off from a rural population hit by an increasing degree of land shortages and a savage series of droughts. The number of desperate men and women seeking shelter and work in Port Elizabeth grew larger as opportunities elsewhere shrank. By 1948, Korsten's African population was bigger than it had been ever before, many of its inhabitants renting out miserable rooms constructed from packing cases in which motor-car parts had arrived. Such dwellings were being built at a rate of 60 a month, with one 9' x 7' room housing as many as thirteen people.[69] The problem worsened as farmers began to evict squatters and workers' dependants from their land.[70] The Council attempted to check this growth by sudden demolition orders but this achieved only more overcrowding. More effective were the terrible fires, weekly occurrences which could destroy hundreds of shelters at a time. In 1946, a local survey showed Port Elizabeth to have out of six major centres, the poorest African population.[71] By 1949, it was reckoned that Port Elizabeth shared with East London the worst tuberculosis rate in the world.[72] Within the Council liberalism began to appear anachronistic. In 1949, "foreign" (non-Cape Province) Africans were told to register with the municipality if they wanted to remain in Port Elizabeth.[73] At the end of 1950 such controls were being seriously contemplated for the "local" African population.[74] And in early 1952 a labour bureau was established by the City Council. Work seekers were no longer allowed to remain in Port Elizabeth for an unlimited period.[75]

To summarise: in 1952 Port Elizabeth's Black population, despite municipal paternalism, was almost universally poor and frequently ill-housed. Relatively few had directly

benefited from the city's industrial boom, most being employed in the tertiary sector. A large proportion had recently escaped from the desperate poverty which characterised much of the rural hinterland of the Eastern Cape (see below). They did have certain freedoms, compared to Africans elsewhere and these were to be crucial in determining their response to local conditions. But in 1952 it was clear that existing freedoms would shortly be eroded.

Local concerns apart, to understand popular responses of the early 1950's, one should keep in mind the general political climate of the 1940's, a decade of dramatically shifting political expectations. This was reflected in, perhaps a little exaggeratedly, a series of trials involving officials of an "African Legion." The Legion was led by a self-styled "Prince of Abyssinia". He and his "Knights of the Grand Cross" had toured Port Elizabeth and East London locations at the beginning of the war, warning of a coming catastrophe and raising money to build an army which would with the aid of the Japanese overthrow the Europeans. People were encouraged to buy "trademarks" of a firm "Prince Yusuf" claimed to represent.[76]

Fortunately, charlatans and dreamers did not predominate in the efforts to organise Port Elizabeth's Africans. With the wartime expansion of the African industrial workforce came the first serious efforts at trade unionism since the collapse of the ICU fifteen years before. The initial organisation was done by A.Z. Tshiwula, a protege of the Friends of Africa.[77] Tshiwula's approach was hardly militant : in 1945 W.G. Ballinger had to chide him for signing a letter to the Railway Systems Manager as "your obedient servant".[78] However, he was responsible for establishing two years earlier the first union for Port Elizabeth's African Railway workers.

In 1941 in a second liberal trade union initiative, the Institute of Race Relations sent a Trotskyite, Max Gordon, to Port Elizabeth. Unlike Tshiwula, Gordon had the support of the local Trades Council and was able, during his short visit, to organise seven unions among cement, soft drinks, food and canning, engineering, leather and distributive workers.[79] It was these unions which were to provide the backbone of industrial struggle in the 1940's. During the war, they were to be taken over by officials who were members of the local Communist Party branch.[80] The Communists were also successful in reducing the influence of Tshiwula among Railway Workers, by 1944 the latter had to content himself with leading a white collar staff association.[81] The following year Tshiwula's opponents were active amongst domestic workers.[82] In 1945 the nineteen Port Elizabeth affiliates of CNETU claimed a membership of 30 000.[83] This was obviously an inflated figure given the size of Port Elizabeth's workforce, but obviously the extent of trade unionism amongst Port Elizabeth's African workers was unusually great.

The strength of trade union consciousness in Port Elizabeth was evident in the laundry workers' strike in April 1948 when 200 blacks walked out of city laundries after 2/6d. weekly pay increase had been refused. During the strike, which lasted a month, the six dry-cleaning and laundry establishments affected, were picketed by large crowds, delivery vans were stoned and set alight, blacklegs and police fiercely attacked in pitched street battles. Thirteen strike leaders, some of them Communists, were arrested under the Riotous Assemblies Act though charges were later dropped when the strike was legalised by the Department of Labour. Trades and Labour Council support was crucial to workers' resistance : all strikers received a weekly strike pay. Large mass meetings were arranged by the New Brighton Communist Group to publicise the strikers' demands and win communal support.[84]

A vital characteristic of organised popular resistance in Port Elizabeth was the inter-penetration of the trade unions and political movements of those years.[85] Both Communist Party, and more untypically for the 1940's, ANC office holders were trade unionists. Raymond Mhlaba, a laundry worker until his dismissal after the 1948 strike, was secretary of the local Communist Party branch and ANC chairman in Port Elizabeth from 1947 to 1953. A.P. Mati, organiser of Railway and distributive workers was also a member of the Communist Party district committee and an ANC branch chairman in the 1940's. Caleb Mayekiso, president of the local textile workers' union, was to become an important ANC leader in the early 1950's. Gladstone Tshume, who led the 1946 dock workers' strike, was another important ANC leader as well as the Communist Party candidate in the 1948 Advisory Board elections. Frances Baard was secretary of both the Food and Canning Workers' union and the ANC Womens' League. There is no need to go on: while Congress in other centres was led by a professional elite, in Port Elizabeth because of the relative strength of trade unionism, working class leaders dominated African politics. Nor was their position under serious challenge from Youth Leaguers. In the Cape, Youth League organisations began in late 1948 with the establishment of a branch at Fort Hare.[86] One year later a branch was formed in New Brighton, but in June 1950 its membership was still very small.[87] The Youth League tended to draw its membership from young professionals: university students, teachers, lawyers and articled clerks and doctors. Such a group was small enough in Johannesburg, in Port Elizabeth it was infinitisimal : excluding soldiers, the 200 or so members of Port Elizabeth's African "professional" class listed in the 1946 census was mainly composed of teachers, policemen and priests. The city had one African doctor, did not have a university, and there were no Black lawyers, or legal workers. For its size, the town also had a very small number of African traders (half the number of East London, a smaller town).

In this context the popular orientation of local political leadership was understandable.

Of the local Youth Leaguers only one was to play a really prominent role in Eastern Cape politics. This was James Njongwe, one of the first medical graduates of the University of the Witwatersrand. Dr Njongwe joined the Youth League in Johannesburg and served on its National Executive before returning to the Eastern Cape to open his practice in New Brighton in 1947. Njongwe was already a politician of some stature and he immediately assumed a leading role in the local affairs of Congress. A gifted speaker and brilliant organiser, to him and Robert Matji, the branch secretary, belong much of the credit for establishing the basis of a local mass organisation.

In Port Elizabeth popular political participation was an established tradition by 1952. In contrast to other centres local leaders had successfully bridged the gap which existed elsewhere between direct community action ("the politics of the poor") and more self-conscious organised forms of protest. They helped to set a particular local style: the crowded meetings, and massed street processions through the city centre which developed during the 1945-47 rent and food shortage protest: the preference for direct action as opposed to lobbying and negotiation. This was partly a consequence of the municipal political climate. Because the authorities were themselves reputedly liberal there were fewer intermediaries between them and the crowds. The militancy of local leadership was demonstrated especially in the 1949 bus boycott, itself the curtain raising act of the drama which was to develop in following years.

The Port Elizabeth bus boycott lasted nearly four months, from April 19th to the first week in August. Transport between New Brighton and the city was controlled by South African Railways which operated both a train and a bus service. On April 1st without warning, the 3d fare was raised to 4d. In the month before the boycott, the New Brighton Advisory Board had been informed it could expect a general 7½% increase in South African Railway fares, and the disproportion between this and the one third rise in bus fares appeared extremely unjust. The fare rise, which represented an extra 4 shillings a month for every commuter in the household came at a time when the real value of household incomes were dropping: school attendance in New Brighton was reported to have sharply fallen in 1949 because parents could not afford clothes or school fees for their children. As well as the fare rise there were other longstanding grievances voiced by the people who attended a mass meeting on Sunday 17th April in the township. The bus service was erratic and unreliable: passengers had sometimes to wait for two hours after work before boarding a bus to take them home and unsheltered bus queues could stretch half a mile away from the bus terminus in the city. Not

content with being inefficient, bus drivers and conductors were also arrogant and abusive, departing from the scheduled route when it pleased them to do so, driving off with only half their complement of passengers, and on occasions depositing them outside the police station where they would be subjected to humiliating searches. The buses themselves had become less convenient: the older models had plenty of space for parcels but these were being replaced with vehicles with no room for luggage. This was especially annoying for the large number of female food vendors who travelled into town each day to sell their wares to workers during the lunch hour.

The meeting resolved to mount a boycott of buses on Tuesday 19th April (the 18th was Easter Monday which gave plenty of time to publicise the boycott). The meeting also elected an Action Committee which consisted of twenty eight people. The Committee was led by Raymond Mhlaba and its membership included a large contingent of left-wing Congressmen, as well as James Njongwe and W.M. Tsotsi, the president of the All African Convention. On the 19th the SAR buses travelled to and from the township empty and 15,000 people used alternative transport to work. Many went on the trains but several thousand were to make use of the services provided by entrepreneurially minded vehicle owners in the township. At first a free lift service was run by white (?) sympathisers. Meanwhile the Committee telegrammed A.B. Xuma and the parliamentary Native Representatives requesting them to make representations on their behalf. Mrs Ballinger did suceed in gaining an interview with the Minister of Transport who, claiming that SAR made a loss of £20,000 a year, implied that the Ministry would welcome a takeover of the route by private enterprise.

Thereafter the boycott committee was to canvass the idea of an African initiative in this direction and many of the speeches at subjsequent meetings contained a strong theme of economic nationalism. As it turned out nobody within New Brighton appeared to have the capital resources for such a venture and negotiations with the rural King Williamstown-based Organised Bantu Partnership Bus Service were unfruitful. On May 8th a mass meeting resolved to organise a train boycott calling on people to walk to work on the 16th and on the Chamber of Commerce to refrain from victimising late comers. This seemed to jolt the local authorities into responding: in the week between the meeting and the proposed train boycott members of the Action Committee met Council officials and began discussing the possibility of the municipal Tramway Company taking over the route. Meanwhile the bus boycott continued, though by the beginning of June it required fairly energetic picketing to enforce it and many people were being picked up by the Railway buses outside the borders of the township and hence away from the pickets. However later that month the boycott received an extra fillip when the Cape ANC

held its provincial congress in New Brighton and national leaders of the standing of A.B. Xuma and Z.K. Matthews spoke at a mass meeting in support of the boycott.

At the end of the month the Action Committee announced the boycott was suspended pending the outcome of negotiations between the Committee and the Transport Committee, then holding its hearings in Port Elizabeth. The Commission recommended a subsidy scheme in which the Municipality and private employers should reimburse the transport operator, according to the number of their employees, with the loss that pegging fares at 3d would incur. Infuriatingly it is at this point that the press reportage ceases: presumably the boycott ended (despite a popular sentiment that employers should subsidize all buses, not just one company, thus allowing African operators to compete). The only other shred of information we have is a letter written to the left wing pro-Congress newspaper, *Advance*, in 1954 by G.X. Tshume describing the takeover of Port Elizabeth's African transport from the SAR by the Bay Transport Bus service. For the first time there would be African bus drivers and conductors, and this was seen as a tremendous victory, the news being greeted with shouts of 'Mayebuye' at joyful township meetings. Tshume, a member of the 1949 Action Committee, traces this achievement back to the 1949 struggle, 'which failed to bring immediate results'.[89] So it would appear that the people of New Brighton had a long wait before they could savour the taste of victory.[90]

The development of the Defiance Campaign in Port Elizabeth reflected this rich heritage of protest. The strategic formulations of the Joint Planning Council were reinterpreted in the light of local traditions. This was evident, for example, in the series of lightning strikes which developed after employers had refused to reinstate volunteers. At a New Brighton meeting in July, one G. Simpe, told his audience they "could force an election tomorrow if they stayed away from work for thirty days". Dr Njongwe opposed such moves, criticising those who wished to drag "side issues ... into the defiance of unjust laws campaign".[91] Njongwe, who during the campaign presided over the Cape ANC in the absence of Professor Z.K. Matthews, was also to find himself at odds with the local branch leadership over the question of the duration of the November stay-at-home. The strike was originally called in Njongwe's absence by the local leaders, and was intended to continue until "God Almighty has changed the hearts of the City Councillors" who had just imposed a curfew and ban on meetings.[92] The strike call was enthusiastically accepted at a series of open-air meetings in New Brighton, Korsten, Veeplats and Walmer held on Sunday, November 2. Njongwe, however, succeeded in re-asserting his authority on his return. The stay-away lasted only a day. He owed his success to the outcome of negotiations with the mayor who, in return for a token strike, promised the

reduction of the curfew to three months and lifting of the meetings ban after a month.[93] But the Council's conciliation was only tactical: in January 1953 it decided the city would be proclaimed under the Urban Areas Act thus enabling the Native Commissioner to "weed out the tsotsi, vagrant and 'won't work' element".[94]

Njongwe, however, was not insensitive to the particular dynamics of local politics. Advising the Durban defiance leaders he recommended that:

> resisters should also start defiance at their own places and not come to Durban to defy away from home ... the spiritual aspect of the resistance movement must be exploited. Whenever resisters go into action they must first go to church for prayer and dedication.

This strategy was followed in the Eastern Cape where branches tended to act autonomously of any central direction acting on a well-established pattern of popular political involvement. This contrasted with the more structured and centralised organisation attempted in the Transvaal.[96]

To recapitulate: the Defiance Campaign succeeded in arousing massive support in Port Elizabeth for the following reasons. Swift expansion of its African population in the 1940s introduced socio-economic tensions which were beyond the capacity of a paternalistic local administration to alleviate. Industrialists who were the powerful voice in the local economy favoured an urbanised workforce and a floating pool of labour. Great poverty, comparatively few restrictions and a sizeable African industrial workforce led to the development of a powerful African trade union movement which deliberately concerned itself with issues well outside the scope of conventional economistic trade unionism. By 1950 politics was in the hands of working class leaders to an extent which distinguished Port Elizabeth from any other centre. With increasing restrictions on African mobility being imposed elsewhere in the Cape, Port Elizabeth in the last years before the campaign became more crowded and life more intolerable. In 1952, there appeared the new threat of municipal influx control. Drawing on a well-established local tradtion of mass protest, the African community was able to link parochial concerns with more general political ideas: popular politics transcended the normal subsistence anxieties which predominated in everyday life.

We will return to Port Elizabeth in a moment to consider the riots. East London shared some of Port Elizabeth's characteristics, being a port with an industrial sector which had grown quickly during the war recruting African labour to replace whites involved in the war effort. In common with Port Elizabeth, there were no compounds or

hostels. Demographically the African population displayed similarities: an even ratio between the sexes, linguistic homogeneity and so on. But in some respects the towns were very different. In East London attempts to strictly enforce influx control dated from the early 1930s. The majority of workers in East London returned every weekend to the Ciskei to visit their families. The municipal authorities constructed no housing at all between 1926 and 1940, and when money became available after the city's proclamation under the Urban Areas Act, progress on the first sub-economic scheme of Duncan village was so slow that in the main location, four-fifths of the population lived in privately constructed wood and iron shacks.

As we have said, despite the balance between the sexes, East London's African population was largely one which oscillated between working in the town and visiting their families over weekends. Eighty-six percent of the population was rural born,[97] and surveys made in the early 1950s indicated that the majority of men between the ages of 30 and 50 spent several years of their adult lives as peasants before coming to East London.[98] Philip Meyer found in 1955 that just less than half the male working population could be categorised as "Red": that is having a preference for traditional clothing and ancestor beliefs as opposed to Christianity. In East London, then, a large proportion of the population was strongly influenced by an indigenous rural culture and more still maintained family links with the countryside. Christianity and schooling, not surprisingly, would affect political and social aspirations. Meyer's survey found with "Red" workers, a detached attitude to white South African culture prevalent: "I like nothing about the white man being quite satisfied with what I am myself". Among "school" people an assertion of ommon cultural identity combined with resentment at white social exclusiveness was more common.[99]

It was a population characterised by dreadful material poverty. The 40,000 inhabitants of the location on the East Bank of the Rooikrans River lived mainly in corrugated iron tenement buildings, honey-combs of crudely constructed rooms, each usually opening on the yard which itself could be dotted with low keenel-like structures, used as kitchens by day and as sleeping quarters by night for poorer families. Even these were lucky in comparison with the alchoholic bush community, some hundreds of men and women who led a terrible existence shivering under sacks each night in the surrounding scrubland. The location itself had an ugly social complexity arising out of access to property. At its social apex a small group of owners, often themselves based in the countryside, supported by rents paid by lodgers, the rents themselves sometimes being high enough to necessitate the lodger sharing his or her room with sub-tenants. Within each room this structure would be reflected in sleeping arrangements: the official lodger perhaps having a bed by the window, his first

sub-tenant, probably an age-mate, a blanket on the floor next to it, the least privileged and least comfortable corner. For such accommodation people paid on average nearly a pound a month - approximately 10% of their wages.[100]

There were indications that conditions were sharply deteriorating in the late 1940s. East London's population, to an extent paralleled only by Durban, would have been sensitive to rural conditions. The Ciskei, East London's rural hinterland was hit by a terrible series of droughts from 1945 to 1951.[101] They burnt up crops and pasture, killed large numbers of cattle - for many people their only source of economic security. For example, in 1949, a quarter of the cattle population was lost - four years earlier it had been double the size. For people living in the countryside, when the nearest water could involve a seven-mile walk, who had lost their animals and crops (that is if they were not among the growing number who had lost all access to land), even the misery of East London's locations would have offered a ray of hope. Reader, working in the early 1950s, reported that "relative to the size of the city, the Bantu offer themselves for work, probably in larger proportions than in any comparable centre in this Union".[102] Resultant low wages, unemployment, the increasing dependancy of rural dependents each intensified the horror of location life. In 1945 six out of every ten African babies born in East London died in their first year.[103] The comparable figure for whites was less than one in a hundred. In 1953 there were still only thirty communal lavatories serving a population of forty-odd thousand.[104] According to the official census an extra 10,000 people had been squeezed into the location between 1946 and 1951. The 1951 census was apparently particularly inaccurate in the case of East London. An independent survey in 1955 concluded that the location housed over 55,000,[105] 141 people to each acre. Unlike Port Elizabeth this was a population under constant harrassment from irregularly administered, often savagely effective influx control measures.

In the absence of first-hand oral testimony one has to use one's imagination to recapture the feelings of rural people, forced out of the countryside by starvation and land shortage (or in the case of the squatters and labour tenants by white farmers), confronted with the glaring discrepancy between urban white affluence and black poverty. And bringing with them a world view in which the only whites were representatives of a bitterly resented officialdom. It comes as no surprise to find that the most vigorous political group in the location was a branch of the Youth League which set itself apart from national leadership as early as 1952 with the adherence to an Africanist political philosophy. Gerhart has argued how the intellectual evolution of Africanism was influenced by the peasant background of its original exponents. Certainly its emphasis on racial dichotomy, cultural self-sufficiency and a heroic past would have found a special resonance in

in the bitter antecedents of many of East London's proletarians. The East London Youth League was exceptional in the history of political groups in the town in that it brought both "Red" and "school" people together.[106] The Cape Youth League was unusual in that it developed first in a rural context, round Herschel (the home of A.P.Mda) thereafter spreading to the coastal towns. Many of its original nucleus at Fort Hare had initially been close to the AAC,[107] whose leadership looked to the peasantry for their political base. Accordingly young student Youth Leaguers in the Cape had begun by organising literacy classes for farm labourers and peasants.[108]

The Youth Leaguers would have had less influence if other political groupings had not been so weak in East London. In particular there was missing that organic link between trade unions and politics which distinguished Port Elizabeth. Congress was split from 1947 as the result of personality differences into two factions, Congress A and Congress B. Congress B's dominant figure, V.M. Kwinana, a secondary school teacher, was despite his collaboration with Communists in the 1946 Advisory Board Elections[109], rather a conservative figure. He led the opposition at the 1949 Cape ANC Conference to the adoption of a boycott strategy and Congress B was to be at best luke-warm in its attitude to the Defiance Campaign.[110] Relations between the Youth League activists, many recent graduates of nearby Fort Hare University College, and Kwinana were poor. In 1950 the latter complained of Youth League insubordination and ignorance of procedure.[111]

Communists had succeeded in building a substantial trade union movement, and in 1944 a disparaging witness allowed that they had as many as ninety African members in the location.[112] Communist influence was based on the war-time industrialisation of the African workforce. A local trade unionist working in 1941 observed that "Africans here are clamouring to be organised and we are being forced, by their insistence, to form more unions than we can take care of at present".[113] African trade unionists were responsible for the rejuvenation of Advisory Board Elections, until the early 1940s the concern of a very limited number of people. Black East Londoners were obviously receptive to trade union organisation: even allowing for exaggeration, the 1945 CNETU figure of 10 unions and 15,000 workers was impressive. So why did local Communists not have the same degree of success as their comrades in Port Elizabeth in reorienting local politics? There seem to have been three reasons. First, strictly enforced curfew laws made political activity in the township difficult, particularly for a party with a multi-racial leadership. Secondly, the nature of the location and its population made it more difficult to build political support through subsistence issue protest. Unlike Port Elizabeth, the main landlords were not the municipality, but absentee Africans, the location being close to the city centre, transport costs were not a serious problem, and the

lodger status of many location inhabitants meant that many saw their homes as being in the countryside. Workplace organisation was possible and Communist activity centred on the factory-gate meeting. Community mobilisation was hampered by the incoherency of location society. Thirdly, Congressites and Communists had to compete with the residual influence of Clement Kadalie's independent Industrial and Commercial Union which because of the still charismatic local presence of its founder, retained a surprising degree of vitality.

During the war the ICU had enjoyed a revival recapturing some of the élan it had lost in 1930. Then an 80% effective nine day general strike had failed to gain widespread wage increases and Kadalie himself was accused of misappropriating funds.[114] However, by the 1940s, Kadalie's prestige had risen, especially amongst the well-to-do educated population (who had, in any case, dominated local ICU leadership). Stimulated by the Communist successes and his own deep antipathy to Communists, he tried to compete with them in organising railway and harbour workers[115] and in 1947 200 workers at a textile mill came out on a wildcat strike to reinstate an ICU shop steward.[116] But most of Kadalie's and his lieutenants' energies were concentrated on location affairs: the securing of more lavatories, raising local subscriptions to build a community hall. His popularity remained high.

Om 1950 the enervation of local Congress politics was demonstrated in the disputes that broke out between conservatives and left-wing leaders over the question of participation in the June 26th stay-away. Congress leaders eventually decided to ignore the strike call despite a well-attended outdoor meeting voting in favour of participation.[117]

Established political leaders in East London had, then by 1950 lost much of their authority. Kadalie was dying and the old Congress discredited. It was this political vacuum which explains the unusual importance of Youth Leaguers who played the really decisive role in shaping the campaign in East London. Of the various local factors determining the high level of participation of the campaign in East London, the most important was a peculiar combination of rural and urban popular preoccupations and the ability of local politicians to respond to them.

The inter-relationship between town and countryside in East London helps us to understand the dramatic impact of the campaign in the Ciskei. Social discontent was especially widespread in the Ciskei where the effects of land shortage and landlessness took their most acute form.[118] Government rehabilitation measures had been the object of deep resentment and at times violent opposition. Members of the Ciskei Bunga in 1952 were to complain of "younger men taking control of the districts", of an "ugly spirit of hostility and

antagonism" manifested in hut burning, assaults on government employees and the destruction of fences.[119] Resistance to cattle culling dated back to its initial implementation in 1939, Ciskei being the first area in the country where stock limitation measures were taken.[120]

Of course, though it could be argued that the Ciskei was an extreme case, as we shall see rural dissatisfaction was pretty general in 1952. But it was only here that Congress managed to penetrate rural society and obviously the social relationship between East London and its hinterland was very important in this. In the Transvaal the ANC was cautious in its approach to rural organisation, still reluctant to alienate the chiefs. In consequence it recruited on an individual basis and attempted to retain friendly links with traditional authorities. This contrasted with the considerably more combative attitude of Eastern Cape leaders :

> "Your duty is now to go and spread the message of freedom to the people in the reserves. They know what oppression is, what it is to have their cattle killed. They know what has been done to their chiefs and they are ready. They have been ready for years waiting for you. Even your trade union movement in the towns becomes futile because of the scab labour they can get any time in the reserves. Organise the reserves and there will never be any scab labour."[121]

The Riots of Port Elizabeth and East London can only be briefly discussed here. Each arose out of a specific incident involving the police. In Port Elizabeth in the afternoon of October 18th, a Railway policeman attempted to arrest two men disembarking at New Brighton whom he had been informed had stolen a tin of paint. The men resisted arrest gaining sympathy of other passengers on the platform. In the course of a scuffle, the policeman fired his gun into the crowd, killing one man and wounding two others. Rumours of what was happening circulated swiftly : in a few minutes a large crowd gathered outside the police station and arriving police reinforcements were stoned. The police fired on the crowd killing several people. The crowd turned away from the station and entered the location. A white lorry driver who was unfortunate enough to be in its' path was killed and his lorry destroyed. Thereafter in a series of attacks on white-owned property including a cinema three other whites were killed. In the course of suppressing the riot, the police killed seven Africans.

In East London the initial incident which sparked off subsequent events was more sinister. In reaction to events in Port Elizabeth all public meetings had been banned but

local ANC officials managed to obtain permission to hold a Sunday prayer meeting. The police maintained that on their arrival at the meeting it was indistinguishable from a political gathering and that it refused to obey their orders to disperse. Its organisers disputed this, contending that the police actually arrived while a hymn was being sung. Before people had a chance to leave, the police charged the crowd with bayonets. What seems indisputable is that the police who had acceeded to the initial request for a meeting were extraordinarily well-prepared for a fight. They arrived heavily armed in three troop carriers and subsequently their commanding officer admitted they were "expecting trouble."[122]

The meeting was thus broken up to the accompaniment of plenty of shooting, its participants being driven at gunpoint into the location. In the course of their retreat, two whites, including a Dominican nun were brutally killed. The police surrounded the location with a tight cordon and the sound of gunfire from the location was to trouble nearby white suburbs until midnight. At least eight people died as a result of police action. Municipal buildings, a dairy depot, the Roman Catholic mission school and church were set alight and gutted.

The evidence is too fragmentary for a satisfactory assessment of the cause of these outbreaks. Obviously the local impact of the campaign was a factor in explaining the extraordinarily aggressive behaviour of the police and the heightened popular sense of injustice which lay at the heart of the original incidents. The murder of the unfortunate white bystanders was the inevitable consequence of the crystallization of fear, frustration and anger which the police behaviour had stimulated. In such a situation normal social inhibitions and moral restraints would have had little force.In any case, on both occasions, young teenagers played a disproportionate role in the disturbances, a large number of whom it was shown on subsequent investigation came from the most disrupted and deprived social surroundings. With the worsening overcrowding and unemployment the size of such a group would have significantly expanded in recent years. Social restraints would have had only a limited significance in such despairing and hopeless circumstances. White lives and white property were symbolic targets, chosen spontaneously in a mood of collective irresponsibility generated by police violence. We know too little about the faces in the crowds to attribute to them a more rational set of motivations. That they represented the most socially alienated seems likely given the local reaction to events : in the case of East London mass migration to the countryside and political stagnation (though both these were also the result of repression and fear of the authorities).

Turning from the Eastern Cape a few brief points must suffice for an explanation of the limitations of the Defiance Campaign in Natal.

In Natal Congress had traditionally enjoyed a strong following in the smaller rural centres. This was now being disrupted because of evictions of peasant communities established outside the 1936 land delimitation.[123] Leadership conflicts had weakened the African National Congress. Indians had already participated in one passive resistance campaign which had failed to obtain any concessions from the authorities. But more important than these was the spirit of caution with which African and Indian leaders had approached the campaign. In 1949 inter-communal riots in Durban had brought to the surface a whole complex of tensions arising out of the conflict-ridden relationship between Africans and Indians in the sphere of commerce, transport, housing and jobs, in which Indians were popularly perceived as exploiters or unfair competitors. They had resultd in 142 deaths (including 50 Indians and 87 Africans).[124] Despite the willingness of some local Indian and Congress leaders to try and effect communal reconciliation through political collaboration not even the most optimistic of these pretended that this would be popular. Consequently in Durban, the Congresses were cautious and kept a tight rein on defiance actions, eight of the total of thirteen volunteer batches being arrested at Berea Railway Station in the central industrial district. Organisational unreadiness, predicted at the 1951 conference by Natal's ANC provincial president, Albert Lutuli, helped to inhibit the spread of the campaign to smaller centres. Nor was the Natal Indian Congress any better equipped. In 1952 it had only two active branches.[125]

* * *

The Defiance Campaign's main success was in gaining for the African National Congress widespread popular support. By the end of the campaign ANC leaders claimed a following of 100 000.[126] However, membership estimates were to fluctuate wildly in the coming years. Paid up subscriptions on which such figures were based were hardly an accurate guide to the movement's degree of influence. In the inactive years following the campaign, paid up membership dwindled to 29 000.[127] More striking was the proliferation of Congress branches, especially in the Cape, from a total of 14 on the eve of the campaign, at the 1953 provincial conference, 87 branches were reported to be remitting subscriptions to the provincial treasurer - many of them in the countryside.[128]

Congress had also succeeded in jettisoning some of its more conservative spokesmen : in the rather uncharitable words of Robert Matji, it had rid itself of "pleading, cowardly and hamba-kahle (go slow) leaders."[129]

This is not to say that it had been transformed into "the revolutionary party of workers, peasants, intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie" envisaged by the communists in 1950.[130] Passive resistance, though adopted as much for tactical as ideological reasons,was in itself hardly revolutionary, especially when clothed in the Gandhist rhetoric of sacrifice, martyrdom and individual morality. The conflict between Njongwe and the left-wing leadership in Port Elizabeth is illustrative of the limitations of mainstream Congress radicalism. In the negotiations with the City Council (in which an Institute of Race Relations representative played an important intermediary role [131] there was still evident a preference for compromise as opposed to confrontation. Nevertheless, the re-orientation in leadership was very real : Lutuli's election as national president at the ANC's 1952 annual conference marked this change. Albert John Lutuli, teacher, methodist lay preacher and chief of a small reserve in Natal was a man of a very different stamp from his urbane, wealthy, and cosmopolitan and somewhat remote predecessors. A man of great dignity and courage, he was immediately at home in the world of popular politics combining eloquence with personal warmth. His experiences as a local administrator gave him an insight into the parochial worries and concerns of ordinary people. His religious faith and training brought to his politics a principled belief in non-violence and a remarkable optimism of white capacity for a change of heart. For him, passive resistance, even on a mass scale, held no fears :

> "It is not subversive since it does not seek to overthrow the form and machinery of the state but only urges for the inclusion of all sectors of the community in a partnership in the government of the country on the basis of equality." [132]

For those like Lutuli, who still hoped for the peaceful transformation of South Africa into a harmonious multi-racial society, optimistic conclusions could be drawn from the campaign. Despite crippling restrictions placed on political activity (legislation followed by a series of banning orders) supported by the official parliamentary opposition there were some encouraging demonstrations of support from within the white community. Especially important in this context, was one of the final acts of defiance, in Germiston on December 8th, when a group of volunteers broke permit regulations. Their number included several whites, one of them the son of a war-time Governor General, Patrick Duncan. Duncan's participation in the campaign seemed especially important, for unlike his fellow volunteers, he came neither from a radical nor even a liberal background. His social origins

were the nearest to what could be termed aristocratic in a white South African context, his natural conservatism reinforced by education at Winchester and Oxford and membership of the colonial service in Basutoland.[133] Another of the Germiston defiers was Manilal Gandhi, son of the Mahatma, and initially reluctant to identify himself with an African passive resistance movement. Exponents of a common society could also be comforted by the absence of bickering during the campaign between Indian and African leaders as well as the first significant involvement of Indians in an African-led campaign. Direct involvement apart, the campaign itself inspired a regroupment of the white left - both socialist and liberal, out of which developed the small Congress of Democrats, officially allied to the ANC, as well as the Liberal Party. In retrospect, hopes inspired by such movements were based on false premises. At the time they appeared to have great symbolic importance and significantly contributed to the ideological formulation of African politics.

* * *

NOTES

1. Hellman, E., and Lever, H., *Conflict and Progress*, Johannesburg: SAIRR, 1979, p.87.

2. *Bantu World* (Johannesburg), 8 4 1950.

3. Karis, T., and Carter, G., *From Protest to Challenge*, Stanford: Hoover, Volume II, 1973, p. 338.

4. *Bantu World*, 29 4 1950.

5. List of 'May Day Victims', SAIRR papers, AD 1189 (unsorted), University of the Witwatersrand.

6. *Bantu World*, 6 5 1950.

7. First, R., 'Newclare - sign of revolt', in *Freedom*, (Cape Town), 1 3 1950, p.2.

8. *The Guardian*, (Cape Town), 12 2 1948.

9. The Communist Party of South Africa reformed in the early 1950s as the South African Communist Party and according to a recent article in the *African Communist* (London), most former CPSA members rejoined it. There is little evidence of any serious activity during the 1950s by the SACP nor of its members acting as a self conscious and united caucus within the Congress movement at that time.

10. Karis and Carter, *op cit*, p.445.

11. Minutes of the annual conference of the Cape ANC, 24/25th June 1950, Karis and Carter microfilm, (UNISA), Reel 8A, 2 DA 17: 30/10.

12. Draft National Executive Report to ANC annual conference, December 1950, Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 8A, 2 DA 14: 30/42.

13. *Eastern Province Herald*, (Port Elizabeth), 29 5 1950.

14. *Ibid.*, 19 1 1950.

15. *Ibid.*, 27 6 1950.

16. *Bantu World*, 17 5 1952.

17. Johnson, R.E., *Indians and Apartheid in South Africa*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Connecticut, 197 , and *Eastern Province Herald*, 1 9 1950.

18. Many of the points made in the above discussion are drawn from: Webster, E., 'Stay aways and the Black working class since the Second World War', University of the Witwatersrand African Studies Seminar paper, April 1979, and Socialist League of Africa, 'Ten years of the Stay-at-Home' in *International Socialism*, (London), number 5, 1961.

19. Simons, H.J., and Simons, R.E., *Class and Colour in South Africa*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1969, p. 608.

20. A.P. Mda to C.M. Pitje, 24 8 1948, SAIRR papers, AD1189, ANC III.

21. *Bantu World*, 21 10 1950.

22. *Ibid*, 3 11 1951.

23. *Ibid*, II 10 1952.

24. *Ibid*, 29 3 1952.

25. *ANCYL Journal*, (Johannesburg), no. 2, 1953.

26. R.M. Nkopo to A.B. Xuma, 13 8 1948, A.B. Xuma papers, University of the Witwatersrand, ABX 480813.

27. *Bantu World*, 12 7 1952.

28. Pahad, E., *The Development of Indian Political Movements in South Africa*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Sussex, 1972, pp. 234-243.

29. These do not appear to have been ANC members. See *Passive Resister*, (Johannesburg),

30. Carter, D., 'The Defiance Campaign' in University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, *Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa*, Volume 2, 1971, p. 92.

31. Pahad, *op cit*, p. 253.

32. *The Torch*, (Cape Town), 27 2 1954.

33. *Forum*, (Johannesburg), 11 II 1948

34. *Rand Daily Mail*, (Johannesburg), 9 9 1948.

35. *Forum*, 11 9 1948.

36. Brian Bunting quoted in the Union of South Africa,

Report of the Select Committee on the Suppression of Communism Act, SC 10-1953, p.33.

37. *The Torch*, 12 6 1951.

38. Fridjohn, M., 'The Torch Commando and the Politics of White Opposition', African Studies Institute, *Papers presented at the African Studies Seminar*, University of the Witwatersrand, 1977, pp. 188-189.

39. Karis and Carter, *op cit*, p. 458-465.

40. Benson, M., *South Africa: the struggle for a birthright*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1969, p. 134.

41.

42.

43. Quoted in *Peoples' World*, (Cape Town), 9 10 1952.

44. *Bantu World*, 5 I 1952.

45. National Executive report to ANC annual congress, December 1951, Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 2A, 2 DA 14: 30/43.

46. *Bantu World*, 5 I 1952.

47. *Advance*, (Cape Town), 6 II 1952.

48. Kuper, L., *Passive Resistance in South Africa*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1956, p.18.

49. *Bantu World*, 14 6 1952.

50. *Eastern Province Herald*, 20 8 1952.

51. Union of South Africa *Annual Report of the Native Affairs Commission for 1952*, Pretoria, UG 48-1955, p.37 and *Forward*, (Johannesburg), 15 8 1952.

52. *Eastern Province Herald*, 13 8 1952.

53. The above summary of the campaign is based on accounts in the following newspapers: *Bantu World*, *Eastern Province Herald*, *Clarion* (Cape Town), and *Peoples' World*, as well as Carter, *op cit*, and Kuper, *op cit*.

54. See Lewin, J., *Politics and Law in South Africa*, London, Merlin, 1963, p.47, Carter, *op cit*, pp. 76-77, Kuper, *op cit*, p.123, Karis and Carter, *op cit*, p.420, and Williams, D., 'African Nationalism in South Africa', in *Journal of African History*, XI, 3, (1970), p.373.

55. For example, Benoni.

56. Port Elizabeth Publicity Association, *City of Industry and Commerce*, Port Elizabeth, 1937, p.59.

57. Schauder, R., 'Industry revitalises Commercial Life' in *Commercial Opinion*, (Cape Town), March 1948, p.352.

58. Port Elizabeth Publicity Association, *op cit*, p.56.

59. Union of South Africa, *Population Census*, 1951, Pretoria 1954, UG 61-1954.

60. Union of South Africa, *Population Census*, 1946, Pretoria, 1954, UG 41-1954.

61. *Eastern Province Herald*, 30 I 1948.

62. *Ibid*, 2 2 1946.

63. R.P. Hannan to R. Jones, 10 8 1937, SAIRR papers, B Boxes, AD 843 B 26 8, University of the Witwatersrand.

64. Memo. on economic, health, social conditions of natives in urban areas, 1941, Rheinalt Jones Papers, Ja, 2 6, (Labour Port Elizabeth), University of the Witwatersrand.

65. *Eastern Province Herald*, 6 2 1945.

66. *Ibid.*

67. *Ibid*, 6 2 1948.

68. *Ibid*, 7 7 1948.

69. *Ibid*, 9 4 1949.

70. *Ibid*, 3 3 1949 and 11 5 1949.

71. National Building Research Institute Survey in File A, 410/B 2 5 1946, M. Ballinger papers, University of the Witwatersrand.

72. *Eastern Province Herald*, 15 7 1949.

73. *Ibid*, 9 8 1949.

74. *Ibid*, 28 II 1950

75. *Advance*, 16 4 1953.

76. Daily Despatch, (East London), 10 10 1946 and *Imvo Zabantusundu*, King Williamstown, 19 6 1943.

77.

78. William Ballinger to A.Z. Tshiwula, 23 8 1945, M. Ballinger Papers, A 410 B 2 8 20.

79. Statement by Eastern Province Trades Council on the activities of Mr Max Gordon, Rheinalt Jones Papers, File Ja (Labour) 2 6.

80. Hirson, B., African Trades Unions in the Transvaal, unpublished seminar paper, p.30.

81. Tshiwula to W. Ballinger, 14 8 1944, M. Ballinger Papers, A 410, B 2 8 20.

82. Kwaza to M. Ballinger, 9 10 1945, M. Ballinger Papers, A 410, B 2 8 20.

83. Minute on African Trades Unions, Rheinalt Jones Papers, File Ja, 2 II.

84. *Eastern Province Herald*, reports: 24 4 1948-4 6 1948.

85. Soudein, D.Y., *The Food and Canning Workers' Union*, B.A. Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1981, p.26.

86. A.P. Mda to G. Pitje, 24 8 1948, SAIRR Papers, AD 1189, ANC III.

87. *Inkundla ya Bantu*, (Durban), 27 8 1949.

88. Minutes of the annual conference of Cape ANC, 24/25th June 1950, Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 2B, 2 DA17: 30/10.

89. *Advance*, 6 II 1952.

90. This section based on press reports in *Bantu World*, *Eastern Province Herald*, *Inkundla ya Bantu*, and *Guardian*.

91. *Eastern Province Herald*, 14 8 1952.

92. *Advance*, 6 11 1952.

93. *The Torch*, 11 11 1952.

94. *Advance*, 22 1 1953.

95. Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Natal ANC, 2 11 1952, Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 3B, 2 DA 19 I: 30/1.

96. Carter, D., *op cit*, p. 80.

97. Reader, D.H., *The Black Man's Portion*, Cape Town. Oxford University Press, 1961, p. 47.

98. Mayer, P. and Mayer, I., *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1974, pp. 68-69.

99. *Ibid*, pp. 62-65.

100. Reader, *op cit*, p. 141.

101. Union of South Africa, Native Affairs Department, *Annual Reports*, 1944-1951.

102. Reader, *op cit*.

103. *Daily Despatch*, 2 5 1946.

104. *Advance*, 16 4 1953.

105. Reader, *op cit*, p. 42.

106. Mayers, *op cit*, p.81.

107. *Inkundla ya Bantu*, 23 7 1949.

108. *Ibid*, 7 5 1949.

109. *Daily Despatch*, 16 2 1946.

110. Reader, *op cit*, pp. 25-26.

111. V.M. Kwinana to ANC (Cape) H.Q., 31 7 1950, Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 2B, 2 DA 16: 41/39.

112. Clement Kadalie to Rev. Alex Kadalie, 9 11 1944. Photocopies of Kadalie correspondence held at the University of the Witwatersrand African Studies Institute.

113. Rose Behr to A.R. Saffrey, 22 10 1941, Rheinalt

Jones Papers, Ja 2 I. I am very grateful to Mrs Rose Schlacter (nee Behr) for information on politics and trade unions in East London.

114. Hunter, Monica, *Reaction to Conquest*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 193 , pp. 69-70.

115. C. Kadalie to A. Kadalie, 22 2 1943.

116. C. Kadalie to M. Ballinger, 29 7 1947, M. Ballinger Papers, A 410, B s 14 5.

117. *Eastern Province Herald*, 27 6 1950.

118. See Union of South Africa, *Report of the Witwatersrand Mine Natives' Wage Commission*, UG 21 1944, pp. 146-149.

119. *Ciskeien General Council Proceedings*, 1952, pp. 47-70.

120. *Ibid*, 1945 special session, p.2.

121. Dr J. Njongwe quoted in Kuper, L., *op cit*, p.140.

122. Excerpt from trial record, Karis and Carter microfilm Reel 3B, 2 DA 24: 96/7.

123. See Minutes of 37th Annual Conference of the ANC, 15/19th December 1949, Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 8A, 2 DA 14: 30/47.

124. Webster, E., 'The 1949 Durban 'Riots'; a case study in Race and Class', unpublished seminar paper, University of Durban.

125. Johnson, R.E., *op cit*, p. 85.

126. Karis and Carter, *op cit*, p. 427.

127. National Executive Report to the ANC Annual Conference, December 1953, Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 8A, 2 DA 14: 30/47.

128. Cape ANC, circular letter to branches, 7 1 1954, Karis and Carter microfilm, Reel 2B, 2 DA 17: 40/13.

129. Karis and Carter, *op cit*, p. 426.

130. Report of the Central Committee of the CPSA, 18 1 1950, reproduced in Union of South Africa, *Report of the Select Committee on the Suppression of Communism Act*, SC 10 1953, p. 214.

131. SAIRR, Report by the Director on visits to Port Elizabeth, East London, and Kimberley in connection with the Riots, RR 9/53, 12 1 1953, para. II.

132. Luthuli, A.J., 'The Road to Freedom is via the Cross' in Karis and Carter, *op cit*, p. 488.

133. This episode of the campaign is best described in Driver, C.J., *Patrick Duncan, South African and Pan African*, London, Heinemann, 1980, pp. 91-100.