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STRUCTURE AND EXPERIENCE IN THE MAKING OF APARTHEID

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SEFELA SA LETSAMAYANAHA (1) - THE WARTIME EXPERIENCES OF POTLAKO KITCHENER LEBALLO.

"Oh no! Don't be a child man! I don't mean that! What I mean is that if they won't believe the truth, then you must tell them a lie."
Cell-mate to Monare in "Blanket Boy's Moon" (2)

For over a decade now social historians in South Africa have done a commendable job of inserting the common man and woman into history. Instead of painting exaggerated pictures of famous individuals, the emphasis has been on the lives of ordinary people.

Up to a point this paper reverts to the methodology that has fallen into disfavour. It focuses primarily on the life of a single individual - who to this day maintains a position of reverence, albeit precariously, in the pantheon of South African radical names.

In spite of this ostensible relapse, the intention is similar to that of contemporary, popular social history. The purpose is to contribute to the demystification of history, to emphasise the importance of a shift away from rulers, governors and leaders, including leaders of social struggles.

This is a brief and incomplete account of the war experiences of Potlako Kitchener Leballo - an individual who is widely regarded as a hero of resistance, but who is simultaneously a parody of leadership and at times its traducer, invaluable to historians and to history because of the way in which he constantly betrayed the absurdity, the hypocricy and the staggering human frailty of the modern leader.

In later years Leballo gained reknown, not only as a controversial leader, but also as a mesmerising orator. It is evident, too, that he was a man who loved to dramatise, to command the centre of attention, to captivate listeners with impassioned stories. Having grown up in a world of oral culture it is not surprising that he expressed himself best in the spoken rather than the written word. Leballo's favourite subject was himself - as is the case with most human beings, especially those with the kind of exaggerated self-esteem which makes them feel entitled to lead others.

Leballo's autobiographical sketches, which have been recorded piecemeal by numerous authors, are festooned with exaggerations, misinformation, ambiguities. However, he was an intelligent fabricator of information, with a talent for fitting a story into

its appropriate social context. This alone makes him an exciting subject for a social biography, since the reconstruction of his life and its links to the social structure provide stiff tests for the sleuthing and analytical skills of the researcher.

Potlako Kitchener Leballo was born in Lesotho (Basutoland) on 19th December in the early 1920's. It is one of the many inconsistencies in Leballo's recorded life history - this one rather innocuous - that the day and month of his birth can be established with certainty while much vagueness surrounds the year of his birth.

If there is uncertainty about the precise date of Leballo's birth, by contrast there is reasonable clarity about the broader social conditions into which he was born. By the 1920's Lesotho was well on its way to being incorporated into the wider capitalist economy of the subcontinent, in what to this day remains its characteristic form: as a labour pool for the mining industry. Changes in social formations, however, tend to be prolonged painful affairs. (3)

During the years of Leballo's childhood the community in which he lived was an uncomfortable amalgum between two competing modes of production. If capitalism was beginning to gain a decisive upper hand, with agricultural commodity production and migrant labour being the ascendant forms of social relations in Leballo's little village of Lifelekoaneng (near Mafeteng), pre-capitalist traditions, values, cultures nevertheless exerted a powerful psychological force. Not that they operated free of competition. They were engaged in a constant war of attrition with rival ideological imputs that were quite clearly imperialist and capitalist in origin and inclination. Perhaps the major rival ideological force at the time was the christian religion.

This conflict between rival traditions was played out within Leballo's immediate family. His father was an Anglican catechist who taught at St. Paul's Mission in Tsikoane. (4) Potlako however was the youngest of fourteen children, and it comes as no surprise that he was estranged from his absentee father. As was often the custom in Lesotho households Leballo was raised by his extended family, his father's two older brothers being the most influential figures in his young life.

The one uncle, Motsoasele, remained a pagan until his death in 1947. In his latter years he earned a fearful reputation in the neighbouring districts as a traditional healer of considerable power. Motsoasele had fought and lost an eye at the Battle of Qalabane in the Gun War of 1880. His proto-nationalist sentiments did not subside with the defeat of Mokoanyane his chief, and forty years later he spent a while in jail for defying the colonial administration.

By contrast the other uncle, Nathaniel Leballo, was an austere pastor who had studied at an Anglican school in the Eastern Cape. Nathaniel exerted a heavy-handed discipline on his nephew, and it

was probably at his bidding that Leballo himself received a rigorous christian education first at St. Saviour school in Hlotse, and then after being expelled, at Masite Institution, near Morija. Hannah Stanton, the well-known missionary at Lady Selborne gave a firsthand description of the Spartan conditions and ascetic atmosphere that pervaded this mountainside retreat:

> And so here in Masite in the middle of Southern Africa there is this small centre of intensive prayer and sacrifice. Here there is reconciliation and reparation, in the sense of the crucified life of complete self-giving lived out here on earth ... (5)

Motsoasele, however, was able to console himself with the knowledge that the westernised influences on Leballo were being offset by the especially close relationship that had developed between himself and the child. From a practical point of view Motsoasele was able to notch up as a triumph the fact that he succeeded in abducting his nephew from his school and smuggling him to an initiation lodge (called "mophato" in Sesotho) at Pitseng in the Leribe area. This is actually what cost Leballo his position at St. Saviours. It was mission policy to refuse to re-admit pupils who had run away to go to initiation school ("lebollo"). (6)

Leballo claimed never to have made any practical use of the ceremonies he underwent or the teachings he received at initiation school It is both impolite and methodoligically unsound to gainsay one's informant, but as this very contravention will show, it is essential to subject all Leballo's statements to vigorous processes of verification.

To this day initiation ceremonies in Lesotho are shrouded in extreme secrecy. However, one important aspect of "lebollo", which is particularly relevant to this paper, has been well documented by a number of anthropologists. Some time during the ceremony every initiate must give a solo recitation known as "lithoko tso makoloane" - male initiation praises. (7) Charles Adams has described these praise poems in the following words: "These praises build personal images of identity; rather than report historical facts, they are imaginery and wishful constructions directed at what the intiate feels will influence his future life." (own emphasis) (8) Coplan elucidates: "These compositions do not ... focus on real events persons or places, but locate the composer as prospective hero in the midst of circumstances that in Basotho social experience are very real indeed." (9)

Undoubtedly there were other psychological and practical forces at work that were to compel the adult Leballo to be deliberately obscure or inflate when it came to recounting certain events in his life. However, it would appear to be too much of a coincidence that the specific form of this centrepiece of Basotho oral culture - "likotho tso makoloane" - is identical to the form that Leballo's later fabrications were to take.

The family is the major conduit through which decisive historical processes must pass before they are assimilated by the psyche of the average modern child. Thus it was because of Leballo's deep emotional attachment to Motsoasele and the experiences he shared with the old patriarch that the militant populism of a backward-looking Africanist ethos was instilled in the boy. At the same time the devout christian values of his other uncle, Nathaniel (and of his parents), with their emphasis on restraint and humiliation, were to have a countervailing effect on the young mind.

On the one hand, cultural pride, proto-nationalism, a spirit of independence, a mood of defiance. On the other hand, imitation of the white man's customs, rejection of the past, reconciliation to social and economic inferiority, resignation to suffering. These contrary influences, relatively inert in themselves, like potassium and water, were bound to be explosive when mixed.

Most children growing up within a capitalist social order are deprived and unsettled. Growing up in a family caught in the transition from pre-capitalist to capitalist social orders, wooed and cajoled by their conflicting values, is even more traumatic, especially when this transition is telescoped into a single generation and is accompanied by an erosion of material and social standing.

The 1920's and 1930's were hard times for agricultural commodity production in Lesotho.

The late 1920's can be pigeonholed as the "take-off" period for manufacturing and agricultural capital in the Union of South Africa. The Pact coalition which came to power in 1924 insistently nurtured their development. Among others things the new government committed itself to boosting maize production on white farms. This was done artificially by means of preferential subsidisation and by placing prohibitive tariffs on foreign products. For the Lesotho economy the results were disastrous, since it effectively cut off the territories agricultural producers from their primary markets. (10) The predicament was worsened by the global depression of the early 1930's which saw a slump in wool and maize prices - the two principal commodities of Lesotho's agricultural production. Southern Africa's perrenial cycles of drought added to the burden, with almost 50% of Lesotho's livestock dying in 1932-33. (11)

These negative factors combined to accelerate a downward social and economic spiral, with distressing consequences for all social strata within the territory. The smaller and poorer households were the first to succumb to this negative economic pressure. Between 1921 and 1936 the number of Lesotho men working as migrant labourers in the Union more than doubled - from 47,141 to 101,273. (12)

Although Leballo's family appear to have been involved in

primary production and must have enjoyed a reasonable amount of material security (at least two of its male members were able to study at christian institutions in the early 1900's), by the late 1930's their economic standing seems to have declined. There is no direct evidence to substantiate this, but it can be confidently inferred from the rapid deterioration of Lesotho's rural economy in the ensuing decades, and from the financial difficulties Leballo and his dependants suffered in the immediate post-war years.

Leballo was in fact to claim that he was personally swept up in the rising tide of labour migration. In an interview with Bernard Leman he claimed that as a young teenager he did two stints of three months each as a "picaninny" to white miners, first at the Paul Mitkuil gold mine in Springs, then at Venter's Post Mine in Randfontein.(13) This would appear to be chronologically impossible unless Leballo interrupted his schooling at Masite, where he completed a teacher's course in 1936 and then worked as a standard six teacher until the end of 1939.(14)

The circumstantial evidence weighs against Leballo having ever been a child migrant. Leballo's inclination to treat his interviews as variants of "likotho tso makoloane" suggests that although Leballo was not a child migrant, he was quite aware of the appalling conditions such unfortunate children endured. The discontinuity of migration, coupled with life in a compound and arduous labour, was difficult for most adults to bear. Adjustments were made at staggering personal costs. It takes little imagination to realise how much damage the severe deprivations of living in unfamiliar, insecure and chaotic environments had on the psyche of children and young adolescents. Add to this trauma the institutionalised and all-pervasive racism of South Africa and it becomes painfully simple to perceive that such a fate was especially grim. If Leballo did manufacture such an experience into his own childhood then it was because he realised that it would enhance his standing in the eyes of his listeners. At the same time Leballo succeeded in drawing attention to one of the most heinous aspects of Southern African commodity production.

Leballo's early childhood is not central to this paper. I have devoted these introductory pages to an overview of that time of his life, because without it an understanding of his later contradictory activities would be impossible. Examination of the formative years of life provides us with a clear picture of the profound significance of both ideology and material circumstances in the production of personality. If one is to attempt to understand the character and behaviour of an individual, to make sense of his/her actions or opinions, it is necessary, first and foremost, to examine the material conditions of that person's existence. The point is not to simply induce attitudes or intentions from certain material circumstances. Needless to say there is no such general correspondence between being and consciousness, but one cannot begin to understand the state of

mind of the individual without considering his/her material existence.

From his earliest years Potlako Leballo found himself face to face with the corrosive tendencies of capitalism. The ossified social structure into which he was born, and from which he took emotional and psychic succour, was crumbling around him. Under these conditions he had to draw on his own resources, materially limited and mentally considerable as they were, in order to survive. It should be expected that his actions and their consequences would sometimes be contradictory and ironic.

The contradictions appear to have remained dormant during those years when Leballo lived in Lesotho. The security of his home environment and the relative territorial and political integrity of the Basotho nation helped to soften the impact of being born in a generation that bridged "traditional" and "modern" ways of life.

But by the late 1930's Leballo's life began to change, and the contradictions of his early conditioning began to manifest themselves. Though he was to escape proletarianisation (in sharp contrast to hundreds of thousands from his generation) he was to respond to the lure of South Africa's burgeoning cities. By the 1930's very few Africans were able to make the leap from rural homestead to segregated urban township without dropping into the yawning chasm of wage labour. One of the most dependable tightropes across this abyss was studying to be a school-teacher. Leballo's family, like many African families of similar socio-economic background, had unswerving faith in western education. Seduced by the new patterns of consumption that were neither available in rural Lesotho nor affordable on a migrant labourer's wage, they determined to pay for Leballo's further schooling. In early 1940 he became a boarder at Lovedale College near Alice in the Eastern Cape and a student at the prestigious institution's (teacher) Training School.

This induction into the austere and rather reified grounds of Africa's oldest and most venerated mission school was to be the young teenager's rite of passage into South Africa's rapidly industrialising and intensely racist society. It was to prove to be an initiation far more lasting in its impact than the rituals Leballo had undergone a few years earlier at Pitseng.

Not that Leballo absorbed much of the institution's self-satisfied pedagogy in his first, brief sojourn there, but rather, with his enrolment at Lovedale, Leballo permanenently broke the ties that bound him to the rural Lesotho community of his childhood; a community in which historical consciousness and culture were still relatively intact. The cultural and ideological baggage of a pre-capitalist, pastoral society accompanied him on this great migration. In a paradox, easier to fathom than the paradox that was the man himself, it was to become the fulcrum of Leballo's psychic make-up.

But it must have been the competing influences of the christianised, "modernised" side of Leballo's upbringing that made him respond to a call by a white man for Africans to enlist in a white man's army in order to fight in a white man's war.

During the latter half of 1940, Jan Hofmeyer, then minister of finance in Smuts's cabinet, came to Lovedale College to deliver a speech concerning World War 2 and the South African governments decision to commit troops to fight in it.

Leballo, who had been at Lovedale for about half a year, was one of the students who heard Hofmeyer speak. He was sufficiently impressed with the Minister's description of army life and the glory of being a soldier that he decided to forsake his comparativley boring existence as a student.

Leballo's decision to enlist in the Union Defence Force (U.D.F.) was quite out of line with the general response to the war by people of his social standing. Most of the educated Africans of the times had strong anti-war feelings. The awkward loyalty to "King and Empire" that had prompted many schooled, westernised Africans to serve in World War One (15) had not survived the political and economic shocks of the intervening years.

Many Africans had learned from bitter personal experience that the great western traditions of freedom and democracy that Hitler was threatening in Europe, and that the white S.A. state was exhorting them to defend, were being denied to them on a daily basis inside South Africa itself. This lucidity often found angry expression. That the agitated critique frequently highlighted the material basis and repercussions of these denials of political rights is a clear indication that South Africa's black petty bourgeoisie was well aware that the racial component of South African capitalism was slowly pushing them as a class towards either destitution or proletarianisation.

Some influential, educated blacks argued that there seemed to be no practical reason for a black man to defend the interests of a country where "everything worthwhile is a privilege of the white man." (16) This private comment by the President of the African National Congress (ANC) was not only more astringent than the official position of the organisation but also more perceptive of the links between race, class and social status. At a meeting of the ANC and the All African Convention (AAC) in Bloemfontein in August 1940 the two organisations issued a joint statement to the effect that: "Since the chiefs, who are the rulers of the African people, have already informed the government that African people are loyal to the King of England and the Union Government, we too affirm that declaration, but we say that the Africans be accepted as citizens in this country, and be granted citizenship rights, like other citizens." (17)

Although other factors played a contributory role, financial matters were the main cause for poor responses to calls for

recruitment by members of the schooled, upwardly aspiring but downwardly mobile African petty bourgeoisie. As two of the elder statesmen of this social class explained: " While pay is by no means attractive even for the 'mine boy' type of recruit, it is positively discouraging to the superior type of recruit." (18)

It is therefore not surprising that educated Africans enlisted in proportionately small numbers. Officially recruitment of soldiers into the Union Defence Forces (UDF) was voluntary. However the majority of Africans who enlisted were either forced to do so out of material need or by the pressure brought to bear on them by co-opted tribal chiefs.(19)

It is quite unlikely that Leballo was subject to either of these pressures. What is more, the Europeanised aspect of his upbringing had been offset by strong Basotho proto-nationalist feelings which were also an integral part of his childhood. Although the belligerent Pan-Africanism for which he was to become reknowned in later years was still dormant, it is unlikely that loyalty to King or Union had much to do with Leballo's decision to enlist in the UDF.

Bernard Leeman (20) who has written the most detailed (and most partisan) biographical notes on Leballo has argued that Leballo was inpsired by Hofmeyer's speech to enlist in order to fight against Nazism. (21) This too appears to be a rather dubious explanation for Leballo's motives. Rather it is likely that this was the ironic tack that Hofmeyer chose to take when trying to convince African youths at an an educational institution to sign up for the war. It was not uncommon for recruiting propaganda to urge Africans to fight for freedom and against racism in Europe with a cynical lack of concern for the spectacular conditions of class and race oppression inside South Africa. (22)

Nonetheless Hofmeyer's speech appeared to have triggered a strong wanderlust and desire for adventure in the young Leballo's mind. The fact that Leballo's father had served in a Basotho contingent in World War 1 (23) provided his naive sense of heroism with further positive reinforcement.

Realising that if he was to try to enlist in the tiny town of Alice he would probably be recognised and sent back to school, Leballo used a sum of money sent to him by his sister to seek out the anonymity of the big city.(24) He travelled by train to Johannesburg and then made his way to Krugersdorp where, on the 18th October, 1940, he was attested into the recently created, Africans only, Native Military Corps (NMC) of the Union Defence Force (UDF). (see Appendix 1.)

In later years Leballo's prominence in the formation of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa (PAC) resulted in various historians paying passing attention to his life experiences. Roux (1964), Benson (1963), Walshe (1973) and Karis and Carter (1974) provided brief biographies of the man described by Ngubane as "the most interesting character in the PAC". (25) All of them

devoted a few sentences to Leballo's army experiences. More recently Gerhart (1977), Lodge (1984), Leeman (1985) and L. Grundlingh (1988) have re-assembled much of the same information that the earlier scholars had provided.

These official versions of Leballo's wartime experiences are a delicious fraud. As always, Leballo, who was the original source of much of this personal history (26), and having grown up in a culture in which embellishment was an accepted poetic conceit of the autobiographer, chose to embellish and exaggerate. But being the astute and knowledgeable dramatist that he was, he made sure that his stories would stand up to the kind of uncritical scrutiny to which they would be hastily subjected by sympathetic and conscience-stricken white academics.

This is perhaps what makes Leballo's personal pathology so interesting. In his ego-driven narration - and oratory according to those who heard him make his rousing speeches (27) - Leballo had the gift of being able to transform the drudgery of daily survival into the heroic. He took the humble events that comprised the ensemble of his experiences, and made them the foundations for passionate autobiography and for a sweeping and provocative social commentary. Leballo's account of his wartime adventures is a clever (although sometimes sloppy) fabrication, but every incident is based on fact. In more ways than one Leballo was the producer of his own history.

I have chosen to describe Leballo's army career as it most probably occurred, not as he represented it and others dutifully recorded it . In part this is to set the record straight, but it is also to show that the everyday experiences of a black man in South Africa's armed forces were formidable enough on their own (28). They did not need acts of extraordinary heroism testifying on their behalf.

The experiences of black soldiers (African, Coloured and Indian) provides a clear example of the intimate connection between the modern army and the development of generalised labour.

Beneath the grotesque conterfeit of the heroic soldier (of which Leballo's legend is but one tiny reflection) lies a sobering reality. Armies are not arenas of great men and great deeds: these are merely exceptional and incidental by-products. Rather armies are extortionately cheap and extremely perilous forms of wage labour. As such they mirror the social relations of the societies that spawn them.

Thus the South African army was run, not only on hierarchical lines, but on strictly segregated ones as well.(29) Black South Africans were recruited to perform the same back-breaking and menial tasks in the theatre of war as they were required to do at home.

Many did end up on the frontlines. Some even were eventually armed - usually with captured enemy weapons - in spite of the

absurd but revealing injunction forbidding black S.A. soldiers to carry weapons other than assegais or knobkierries. This does not mean that they were regarded as fighting forces. They ended up at the frontlines because that was where their labour as orderlies, cooks, road builders, drivers, and stretcher bearers was needed.

Hand in hand with the social and economic function of the hard labour of black recruits went the internal organisation of the army. Living arrangements and conditions, for example, were identical to those in South African mining compounds. There too Africans were forced to obey orders, accept the ignomies of rank, command structure and authoritarian discipline. Also in the mines Africans were placed in life-threatening situations and subject to constant physical danger with neither adequate compensation nor personal protection.

In the mines, as in the army, Africans were housed in barracks. In fact the compounds of several mining companies were leased to the NMC during the war years in order to accomodate African soldiers who were undergoing basic training before being sent to the frontlines.

By the time Leballo attested in Krugersdorp seven compounds, able to accomodate 7750 "natives", had been leased from mining companies (30). As we shall see in a moment this was not the only cozy arrangement that the mining industry made with the army.

Leballo was trained as a lorry driver at one of these compounds; Kaffirskraal near Zonderwater, owned by Consolidated Goldfields. In the racist lexicon of South Africa, accomodation at Zonderwater "wasn't fit for a white man", as the high command of the NMC attested, but with predictable euphemism:

> On reviewing the matter of accomodation for European (sic) personnel, it is regretted that (Consolidated Gold Fields) is unable to lease to the Government any suitable premises for occupation by Europeans... (31)

Needless to say it did not cross their minds that the available accomodation was not suitable for Africans either. One "native " recruit, with the impressive name of W.S. Mcwabeni Mphahlele, wrote an angry letter to ANC President A.B. Xuma in which he gave expression to commonly held grievances. "We are only supplied with two blankets," he wrote, "even though it be winter." One of the blankets was used as a mattress for no such article was supplied. As for the food, Mphahlele felt that there "are times when I'd give the lunch we are supposed to eat to pigs." (32)

In the memorandum of agreement drawn up between another gold mining company, West Vlakfontein, and the Union Defence Department an inventory of the compound buildings was listed.(33) The compound comprised 40 rooms, three without bunks. It was designed to accomodate 800 men. For these 800 there were twenty-nine stoves, fourteen without lids and five without doors. If the cooking arrangements were inadequate they were princely compared

to the bathroom facilities. There was only one bathroom on the compound, with twelve showers, half of which had showerheads. The outside hand water pump and the two washing troughs probably did more to add insult to injury than to alleviate the chronic overcrowding. The list was rounded out with a cheery mention of the ubiquitous beer room, equipped with 3 wooden beer vats, and an outside bioscope frame and screen.

The measely, but certainly not inflated, twenty-five pounds per month that West Vlakfontein received from the government did little more than add to the petty pre-occupations of their accountants. They certainly were not in it for the money. The rental was merely a token to make the gift conform to the legal requirements of a business transaction. Partners in exploitation, this mutual back-scratching between the mining industry and the government, sustained and nourished an intimate relationship.

To get a vivid picture of this symbiosis it is necessary to examine the policies governing African recruitment into the armed forces and the renumeration offered to black -especially African- recruits.

At a recruiting conference held in June 1941 Colonel E.T. Stubbs, the commanding officer of the Non-European Armed Services (NEAS), urged his subordinate officers to "work unostentatiously" in order not to "embarrass General Smuts politically". The instruction from parliament was tabled before the meeting: "The authorities want the recruiting of (non-Europeans) done as quietly as possible." (34) This was a curt reminder to the military personnel that the decision to declare war upon Germany had sparked a parliamentary crisis in South Africa, and that those who had vociferously opposed the decision - the "neutral" Hertzogites, Malan's "purified" nationalists, Pirow's New Order and the Ossewa-Brandwag - were rapidly gaining white support because of their outspoken commitment to a policy of racial discrimination.

This political sensitivity to white electoral fears and prejudices was matched by an economic sensitivity to the labour needs of South African industrialists, especially those who dominated agriculture and mining. Thus the recruiting of Africans had to be conducted within perimeters clearly defined by the interests of the ruling political party on the one hand and of local industry on the other. It was in part because of these considerations that the recruiting of Africans was done by the Native Affairs Department (NAD) and not by the army's Directorate of Mobilisation.

The NAD came to an amicable agreement with the mining industry soon after the Native Military Corps (NMC) was created in June 1940. The NAD undertook to do all its recruiting in co-ooperation with the mines. As a result active recruiting was pursued only in areas of the country from which the mines did not draw substantial supplies of labour. (35) In ordér to prevent desertion from the Witwatersrand goldfields it was arranged that

Native Commissioners and magistrates based in Johannesburg would not take any active steps to increase recruitment (36). (Hence Leballo attesting in Krugersdorp after detraining in Johannesburg).

To make doubly sure that there was to be no excessive siphoning off of cheap wage labour from the country's most entrenched industry, the NAD pegged the rates of pay for "native" privates at 1s 6d per day. By contrast "European" troops were paid 3s 6d per day and Indian and "Coloured" troops 2s 6d. (37) Although there were one or two African recruits who found that this meagre wage was sufficient inducement to desert (38), it compared very favourably, from the employers point of view, with the shockingly low wages paid by the mining industry.

This policy to dovetail recruiting with the labour requirements of established industries sometimes backfired. Whenever this happened it was the NAD that made the concession. In the Winburg area of the Orange Free State, for example, the prospect of permanent employment convinced itinerant sheep-shearers to enlist in the NMC. Rather than have the local sheep farmers suffer from a labour shortage during the brief sheep shearing season, the NAD suspended recruiting in the area.(39)

More significantly, even when faced with abysmal responses to their recruiting drives, the NAD neither increased the rate of pay nor expanded their operation to those densely populated rural areas from which the mining industry drew most of its local labour. (40)

Private labour organisations were quick to anticipate a potential windfall. Several of them wrote urgent letters to the headquarters of NEAS offering their services as expert recruiters of labour. One such enterprising gentleman was E.P. Bennet who wrote:

> Kindly let me know if there are any vacancies for young native recruiters. Send me full particulars about their pay etc. How much do I get for each native recruit? (41)

It was certainly not out of any concern about the tendency of labour recruiters to extort money from their recruits and even to force or hoodwink people into service that made Lt. Col. Mockford, 2IC of NEAS, decline this and all similar offers. His reply to another wishful volunteer is revealing in its candour.

> I am afraid there is nothing I can do which might have the effect of curtailing the recruiting operations of the mining organisation. (42)

Having saved the "natives" from the labour recruiters in the interests of the mining industry it remained for the army to save the raw recruits from their "inherent immorality" in the interests of discipline. The prominence given in the training

camps to order, regimented neatness, uniforms, respect for rank, rules against all forms of autonomous thought and action constituted a typical bureaucratic attempt to impose a wartime variant of the South African working class way of life on African troops. This obsession with total social control even made itself felt beyond the barbed wire fences of the compounds so generously leased to the army by the mines.

It would be surprising if a gathering of men in single-sex barracks would not have attracted liquor-selling and prostitution. Most mining compounds spawned small communities within walking distance of their gates. The principal commercial activities in these blighted environments was the peddling of home-brewed beer and sex. When the white officers of the NMC marched their new recruits into the premises provided by the mining companies they immediately inherited what they regarded as an irksome problem. The patrons of these entrenched underground commercial activities, who in the pre-war years had serviced the miners, were soon doing a brisk business with their new clientele.

One such "den of iniquity" rubbed shoulders with Kaffirskraal, the barracks to which Leballo had been detached shortly after attesting. It was the duty of one 2nd Lieutenant Weller, together with the fifteen men under his direct command, to patrol the areas immediately outside the camp. He noted with pious indignation that "at all times there was a constant flow of natives, there never seemed less than between 40 to 50 native visitors in the area." (43) To make matters worse, white soldiers from the 1st SA Tank Corps who were stationed in the vicinity also made regular use of the amenities.

In passing it should be mentioned that it is highly unlikely that Leballo ever set foot into this area during the five weeks that he was stationed at Kaffirskraal. Since he was then a devout and puritanical christian and a teetotaller he would neither have sought out the comfort of some or other "home girl" who had fallen on hard times in the city of gold nor chosen to drink of the vile urban potions that substitued for home brewed beer.

Four months after attesting in Krugersdorp Leballo, now a corporal, travelled by road convoy to Nairobi. Practically all black South African troops who served in the Abyssinian campaign were made to endure this arduous overland safari, while white soldiers sailed in troop carriers from Durban to Mombasa (44) The official explanation for the road transportation of troops was that it was necessary "to harden them to the rigours of battle conditions."

Leballo's convoy arrived in Nairobi on 17 March, 1941. He was immediately detached to Ist Division Headquarters. Many years later, when Leballo had become famous enough to grant interviews, he volunteered very little information about his East African experiences. His rather bald military service record fails to provide additional information.(Appendix A.) However it is quite

likely that Leballo as an M.T. (motorised transport) driver attached to the 743rd Recce Batallion of the Ist SA Division saw his share of action.

Leballo's arrival in Kenya coincided with the routing of the Italians in East Africa and Abyssinia. They had already been pushed out of Kenya, Egypt and the Sudan. On the very same day that the convoy which carried Leballo rolled into Nairobi the allied forces re-captured Berbera, the capital of British Somaliland.

By the 28th March the two ancient Ethiopian cities of Keren and Harar had been captured. During the first week of April Addis Ababa fell. White South African soldiers were amongst the first to march into the capital, paving the way for the triumphant return of Emperor Haille Sellasie, head of state of what, until the Italian invasion of 1936, had been one of only two internationally recognised independent black African countries. Enroute to Addis Ababa the South Africans had covered over a thousand miles in less than three months.

The Eritrean Campaign was an engineering and logistical triumph as much as a military one. In the annals of South Africa's war history the East African offensive is singled out as an unparalleled success. There certainly were frequent and ferocious clashes with the retreating Italians, but the campaign was won so convincingly because of the formidable efforts of South African engineers, road construction workers and M.T. drivers. Not unlike the commercial world, where the planning and expertise of management is credited for the windfalls accrued from the exploitation of labour power, in the Eritrean campaign it was the elite Engineering Corps, especially the university-trained officers who received the lion's share of the accolade. One must look to the footnotes and the parentheses of South Africa's war histories to find tributes to those many "non-Europeans" who made a superhuman effort to build roads and bridges under horrendous conditions and in inhospitable terrain.

In order that the Ist SA Infantry Brigade could enter Addis Ababa in triumph, and that Prime Minister Jan Smuts could make pious speeches about the bravery of South Africa's fighting forces, roads had to be carved out of bush and over high mountain passes, while bridges that had been dynamited by the retreating Italians had to be reconstructed.(45)

A Brigadier of the British Engineering Corps remarked:

> Only those who knew the lava belt region on the Wajir road last July, when it murdered transporting, can appreciate the miracle of the present road. Where one crawled along at 5 miles per hour it is now possible to to do 80. The South Africans built a first class road at the rate of 120 miles per month. In the bush they cleared rough roads for the advancing troops at the rate of ten miles a day. (46)

Ever since Napoleon failed to heed his own maxim that an army marches on its stomach, military strategists have paid considerable attention to an army's lines of supply and communication. In the East African campaign the South African forces advanced over vast distances in a very short space of time. One of the most remarkable feats of the war was the way in which South African combat forces were kept supplied with food, fuel and ammunition during their lightning drive.

In all probability Leballo was one of the "non-European" M.T. drivers who, often under enemy fire, ferried up and down the roads that had been built by the hard labour of his fellow troops; the largest proportion of whom were black and voteless South Africans like himself. Their accomplishment is all the more remarkable when one considers the intense heat (up to 140 degrees F in the shade), the choking dust and the torrential downpours of the East African summer.

One did not have to belong to a combat unit or see action or carry a rifle in order to be exposed to race/class relations which were stikingly different from those that were definitive aspects of the social structure in the Union of South Africa.

Even in colonial East Africa South Africans of all races were startled to discover that skilled labour (and to a lesser extent wealth and social status) was not the exclusive preserve of "Europeans". The mere sight of Africans in Nairobi "driving engines, working cranes", and holding down white collar jobs "drove a broad wedge" into their parochial minds.(47)

This was one way in which the historical events of the time interacted with Leballo's personal biography. A yearning for adventure, inspired in part by the bellicose past of his ancestors and the experiences of his father in the South African Native Labour Contingent (such was the extent to which the glory of war lost its lustre in a single generation of proletarianisation) prompted Leballo to enlist in the NMC. As a result Leballo was able to witness, experience and be profoundly influenced by social contexts and sequences that had been stucturally thwarted in South Africa by the region's social and political development. These sequential contexts must certainly have helped shape Leballo's views and behaviour.

By June 1941 the South African offensive in Abyssinia was over, and the triumphant 1st Division was sent to North Africa to bolster the allied defences in preparation for Rommel's pending offensive.

On 11th July 1941, Leballo disembarked in Suez, after a tortuous journey by sea from Mogadishu. Accomodation in the hold, crowded conditions, vile food, endless inspections, the boarding up of portholes in accordance with "black out regulations", combined to turn the voyage into a nightmare.

Leballo claimed that the ship carrying his contingent was sunk between Alexandria and Crete, that he was rescued by a Turkish ship and somehow returned to the South African Army (48). This is a surprisingly inaccurate extravagation for Leballo, who as a general rule tried to provide his exaggerations with a touch of credibility by being faithful to historical, chronological and geographical detail.

Leballo certainly did not travel by boat beyond Suez, and his disembarkation was evidently quite routine (see Appendix 1.) However on numerous occassions Leballo personally experienced the terror of a Luftwaffe air attack. The months of July and August 1941 saw almost daily blitzkriegs on the Egyptian towns of Suez, Alexandria and Cairo. The high explosives and the incendiary bombs caused heavy casualties, almost all of them being Egyptian nationals who were unfortunate enough to have been born and to have lived in one of the third world cities that the axis powers and the allies had turned into a battleground. (49)

Having endured this fiery introduction to the brutality and carnage of the North African theatre of war, Leballo was detached to the 3rd SA Recce Battalion. This was an extremely hazardous posting because at the time this battalion was scouting behind enemy lines (50). It would appear that after enduring this situation for almost two months the ever-resourceful Leballo, already battle-weary from the East African campaign and the bombings at Suez, made up his mind to arrange a safer posting. This is the most plausible explanation for Leballo's sudden request to be reverted to the ranks (51). Exactly two weeks after again becoming a private Leballo found himself posted to the NMC general list and stationed in the somewhat safer environment of Cairo (see Appendix 1). It most certainly would have been neither the first nor the last time that he managed adroitly to avoid abusive and degrading predicaments.

The hardships Leballo endured and the brutality he witnessed in the months since his flight from Lovedale had presumably sharpened his perceptions. No longer likely to be taken in by the cant of ministers or of generals, and increasingly cynical about the avowedly just ends of the war, Leballo lost interest in the concepts of honour and heroism and in the bloody battle cries that they inspired. In the months that preceded the rapid troop build-up in the desert in response to the assault on the Gazala line by the Afrika Korps, Leballo kicked his heels in the canal region. Somehow he had managed to survive the bombardments of cant as well as shells. With the exception of a two week stint at the South African Vehicle Re-creation Park in Geneifa (see Appendix 1) he spent six months in the vicinity of Suez and Cairo.

It was here that Leballo would have come into regular contact with soldiers from other allied countries. The comparatively comradely treatment that he received from some of the British and Australian troops must have stood in sharp contrast to the kind of treatment he had been conditioned to expect from people with

white skins.

That this relatively colour blind atmosphere had a significant impact on most South Africans can be discerned in the hysterical responses of some of the white South African troops. In a letter that was opened by the army censor a white soldier gave vent to his offended racial arrogance.

> They (black South Africans) tell us there is no colour bar up here. We have to be very careful how we speak to the bastards, but they can talk as they like to us... The Tommy is to blame for being friendly with them and telling them all kinds of b.. s.. (52)

But what threatened many white South African soldiers most of all and drove the repressed and the reactionary in the Union into paroxyms of moral frenzy was the fact that the fleshpots of cities such as Cairo, Alexandria and Jerusalem were available at the going market prices to all soldiers, irrespective of race. Thus black South Africans "were allowed to drink in the same canteens, also in bars in Cairo, and when they get back they will want to take out our women just as they do here." (53)

Although it is possible that Leballo still foreswore women and wine, (the heavy-handed Anglican influence of his childhood making him deem such sinful distractions as being taboo for all men) the racial and national polyglot of allied occupied Cairo made a lasting impact on his psyche.

Given his skilful avoidance of combat and the consciousness raising contradiction of being racially oppressed in an army that was ostensibly fighting for freedom, Leballo was the quintessential anti-heroic hero.

However it is a peculiarity of the current era that the myth of the sweetness of sacrifice, of death in the name of a cause, has found a new priesthood to peddle it - the leaders and the cadres of national liberation movements. Thus Leballo, an anti-hero of World War 2, was to be transformed into pseudo-hero by Leballo the famous political leader. The man who managed to avoid going to the front, no matter how hard history tried to nudge him there, was to be transformed by the man himself into "that fool of a Herostrate, ... (who) set fire to the temple of the goddess at Ephesus, merely in order to get his name into the ... school reading books." (54)

In contrast to the reticence Leballo showed when it came to discussing his personal experience of the Eritrean campaign, he was expansive about his participation in the desert war of North Africa. Never one to miss the opportunity to embellish the humdrum tapestry of everyday life with vivid embroidery, Leballo reconstructed his North African adventure with characteristic grandiloquence. In interviews with prominent researchers Leballo insisted that he was twice taken prisoner, first at Sidi Rezegh and then again at Tobruk, and that he was court-martialed and

given a death sentence (commuted by General Alexander) for leading a revolt against discriminatory practices in the UDF (55).

These two claims are so startling that they warrant close examination, but before that can be done some elaboration is necessary.

If one reconstructs Leballo's personal account from the interesting items that are scattered in numerous sources (56) the following colourful picture emerges. Leballo was captured at Sidi Rezegh, after a German tank had flushed him out of the foxhole in which he had been hiding. Fortunately for Leballo, though, this imprisonment was brief, since he was released almost immediately by an allied counter-attack. He was recaptured at Tobruk, was sent to an Italian Prisoner of War camp in the desert and from there to Germany where he was held in a camp near Dresden. After Dresden Leballo was sent to Hamburg, where he remained until the end of the war. After being debriefed in England he sailed back home to South Africa (57).

It is tempting not to violate this Lithoko Tso Makoloane, to neither gut the poetry nor pare away the poetic license. What is of relevance here are the general social events the story bears testimony too, and not the life of the individual, embossed as it is by these appropriated experiences.

The naked facts, though not nearly as flattering to Leballo, bear equally eloquent social testimony.

By the end of the war some 1,600 members of the NMC had been taken prisoner by the enemy. 1264 of them, along with 8960 whites, 380 "coloureds" and 118 Indians were captured at the fall of Tobruk on the 21st June 1941. The Germans raised the ire of some of the white non-ranking soldiers by incarcerating them in the same pens as their "non-white" countrymen. Quite clearly recalcitrant in regard to the official ideology of the Nazi state, the German soldiers scornfully dismissed a request from white South Africans for racially segregated lock-ups. This was perhaps one of the most unequivocal incidents of racial equality between black and white South African soldiers throughout the war.

In many prisoner of war camps, whether in the Libyan desert or in Europe, bugs, fleas, lice and rats were indiscriminate in their infestation of barracks and the spreading of discomfort and disease. The constant shortage of food, compounded by the frequent delay or non-arrival of Red-Cross parcels resulted in death being a constant menace for many prisoners of war. If anything those black South African prisoners who were housed in particularly miserable camps were in graver risk than their counterparts. This was in part because the UDF spent only 9d per day on Red Cross-organised ration allowances for African prisoners of war in comparison to 2s for "Europeans" (58) In notorious camps such as Babenhausen and Chartes numerous soldiers

guns and 3120 rounds of ammunition had disappeared (77).

Theft of ammunition most frequently coincided with acts of collective resistance. At least fifteen incidents of rioting were recorded in a single year - from November 1942 to October 1943.(see appendix 2). This is a startling statistic, given the repressive conditions in army barracks, the limited resources available to potential mutineers, the isolation of the different units and the brute force at the disposal of loyal troops. In quite a number of the incidents that occurred in 1942/1943, the commanding officers of the rioting troops had to call for outside assistance, which, without fail, arrived in the form of white infantry-men backed up with tanks.

Such was the case at Palmietkuil South, on 20th January, 1943 when NMC details, having failed to break into the armoury, used their assegais to hold the commanding officer and one other officer hostage. This incident ended without death or injury, but with heavy-handed punishment for the rioters. By contrast the first of three riots that year at Zonderwater camp, resulted in 23 troops from the Cape Corps being admitted to hospital with serious injuries. In protest against the arrest of one of the members of the battalion by the military police a large group of soldiers threw stones at their white officers and then later at an armed guard that had been posted at the main gate. Injuries would have been more extensive and evenly distributed between rioting black soldiers and order-restoring white soldiers had the former been armed.(78)

The second riot at Zonderwater on 13th June, 1943, was triggered when an entire company refused to parade for guard mounting. Things soon turned nasty. The men's canteen and the sergeants' mess were set ablaze. The fire detail that was sent to put out the fires was pelted with rocks and bottles. In the supression that followed, after "European" military police had arrived, two European officers were injured. Twenty-nine rioters were admitted to hospital, three of them in critical condition. (79)

The compilers of these records, normally the commanding officers of the disaffected troops, wasted little time in trying to discover the root causes of these grievances. Their devotion to discipline and routine ensured that their sole pre-occupation was to break the riots as quickly as possible. The ignomy of being the officer in charge of rioting troops was assauged by a prompt and efficient return to order, not by any tortuous exegesis of delinquent behaviour.

That was left to the high command. Stubbs was convinced that the primary reason for this epidemic of disturbances was "the inadequacy from a point of view of suitability" (80) of white officers. As the administrator of what he himself called "the cindarella of the Services", Stubbs had to settle for lording it over white officers between the ages of 40 and 60, none of whom were "in the A medical category" (81). He appears to have confused this slight to his self esteem with the material

conditions that gave rise to these "increasing incidents of insubordination".

Nor was Colonel Stubbs one to avoid the occassional comment on ethnology. In another letter to the Adjutant General, also devoted to the riotous behaviour of black soldiers, Stubbs ventured to postulate about "the inherent grave defects" of the "coloured" people of South Africa, " which can only be partially overcome by careful handling." He added:

> Their reknowned addiction to alcohol, spirits especially, has revealed the existence of short-comings in their racial and individual character. This fundamental flaw ... has inevitably affected their moral attitude, producing in its wake, lawlessness and arrogance ... (82)

The wife of one Cape Corps soldier suffered too much from material deprivation as a result of her husband's low wages to bother about bridging the conceptual domains of race and individual character. In a letter to her husband she wrote:

> "We women", mothers and wifes has found that it is not worth that you men should ever have joined up because the government is not fair to us ... You know here are 1000's of coloured men who does not want to join because of the little pay ... I often wonder what does a wife with 6 or 8 children do. I only got 2 and find it a struggle." (83)

The return from the slightly less fettered social environment at the frontlines to the deep-seated disaffection in the Union camps must have pushed Leballo's mind towards political maturity. It is interesting to note, however, that Leballo, who was to become a founder and leader of South Africa's most militant and dogmatic nationalist organisation, made no mention of his post 1943 army experiences. Instead he seduced his biographers with praise-poems. After all, that is probably what he thought they wanted to hear.

It would be mistaken to accuse Leballo of lying, although like most humans he sometimes did. Rather Leballo selects, re-arranges and reconstructs. The symbolical interpretations with which he endows certain episodes in his life create a somewhat distorted picture of the major social forces at work in the contexts he describes. To reject Leballo's mythological re-arrangements of his life-experiences on the grounds of their inaccuracy would be to close off a potentially fruitful line of exploration into social process and the dialectical relationship between material events and individual consciousness.

By digging through the topsoil of fabrications, the social researcher eventually reaches the bedrock of experiences from which they have evolved. Thus Leballo's extensively documented responses to his own life (as I hope I have shown) combine to

form an intricate maize which leads to a sober confrontation with actual social conditions. In turn it is only once one has come to grips with the relevance of the intricate web of variables that made up life in the NMC during World War 2 that one can begin to understand the myriad of meanings embodied in Leballo's "lithoko".

The cliche which likens life to a drama evokes a fact so obvious as to need no discussion. There is widespread confusion between play-acting and real life. In the arena of political protest it is the demagogues in particular who fuse organised appearances with real life. They reify lived experience at the same time that they give it popular expression.

It was primarily as an orator that Potlako Leballo was to achieve political prominence. His talent for manipulating language and dramatising actual events earned him - and eventually cost him - the leadership of the PAC. It is therefore appropriate for a social historian to stack his frequently manufactured achievements against the real experiences of common people. In the process one is able to show that in order to become great men or women, leaders frequently step beyond and stoop below the reality of the smallest individual life.

APPENDIX 1

RECORD OF SERVICE

Leballo Potlako Kitchener. N4826.
Dependants: Wife, child, sister, grandmother.
Pre enlistment occupation: Scholar Lovedale College.

18.10.40	Attested Krugersdorp NMC General List.
1. 2.41	Promoted to corporal
12. 2.41	Detached to Ist S.A. Tank Corps (Kaffirskraal)
17. 3.41	Arrived Nairobi by road convoy
21. 3.41	Detached to 1Div HQ
26. 5.41	Reprimanded for contravention Sect 15(2) Military Disciplinary Code *
11. 7.41	Disembarked Suez Detached 743 Rec. 1st Battalion. SA Division
12. 7.41	Posted to 3rd SA Recce Battalion
6. 9.41	Reverted to rank of private at own request
19. 9.41	Posted to General List NMC
14. 4.42	Detached South African Vehicle Recreation Park **
29. 5.42	Posted 204 Motorised Transport Company (Reserve) Promoted to Corporal
22. 8.43	NMC General List
14.11.43	Returned to Union (Undesirable)
25. 2.44	NEAS Pretoria
1. 8.44	Awarded African Service Medal
1.11.44	On strength G.S.C./NEAS Pretoria
23. 4.45	Detached to NMC Pretoria
1.12.45	Promoted to Sergeant
14. 1.46	Asks to be detached
19. 1.46	Last day in UDF
19. 1.46	Left dispersal depot

EFFECTIVE SERVICE: 1917 days
DETENTION: Nil
NOT A PRISONER OF WAR
NON-CLAIMANT OF PENSION
CAMPAIGNS: MEFUNION
RECEIVED: 1939-1945 Star; Africa Star and 8th Army clasp; The War Medal (1939/45); Africa Service Medal;Defence Medal ****

RESEARCHER'S NOTES;

*	Absent from duty without official leave
**	Linked to SA Technical Services Corps, based at Geneifa, 20 miles north of Suez
***	attached to 1st SA Division, 8th Army, based at Tahag, moved between Gazala and El Alamain
****	Awarded to all troops who were in the theatres of war.

COMPILED FROM LEBALLO'S RECORD OF SERVICE AND OTHER DOCUMENTS IN HIS PERSONAL FILE. (SADF PERSONNEL. PRETORIA.)

APPENDIX 2

LIST OF REPORTED RIOTS, NMC, NOVEMBER 1942 - OCTOBER 1943.

DATE	PLACE	OFFICIAL CAUSE
25/11/42	Port Alfred	Public Violence.
30/11/42	Okavango (Bechuanaland)	Misbehaviour, recruits.
23/12/42	Boschpoort (Warmbaths)	Hunger Strike, defiance
10/ 1/43	Matatiele	Clash with black civilians.
14/ 1/43	Woodbrook (E. London)	Living Conditions.
20/ 1/43	Palmietkuil South	Took OC hostage.
4/ 2/43	Zonderwater	Stone Throwing.
7/ 3/43	Border Location	Clash with black civilians 3 dead, 14 injured.
9/ 3/43	Lenz (Kliptown)	Clash btwn Owambo & Sotho.
17/ 3/43	Boschpoort	"Faction Fight"
3/ 4/43	Walvis Bay	Public Violence.
28/ 4/43	Remount Depot (Standerton)	Stone Throwing. Strike
13/ 6/43	Zonderwater	Riots. Arson.
28/ 6/43	Eshowe	
25/10/43	Zonderwater	Rioting. Public Violence.

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8) quoted in Coplan. op.cit. p4.
9) ibid. p5
10) see Colin Murray. Keeping House in Lesotho. Cambridge 1976.
11) Sir Alan Pim. Financial and Economic Position of Basutoland. London 1935. p147.
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13) B. Leeman. op. cit. p67.
14) see Leballo's letter to Bull in Leballo/Shepherd correspondence. The Lovedale Riots. Cory Library.
15) Albert Grundlingh. Fighting their Own War. Ravan. 1987.
16) A.B.Xuma Papers ABX 42030b. UCT. pamphlet entitled "The ANC Deputation at Cape Town."
17) The Guardian 15/8/1940
18) D.D.T. Jabavu and Z.K. Matthews "Africans and the War." quoted in Louis Grundlingh: The Recruitment of South African Blacks for Participation in the Second World War. in D.Killingray and R. Rathbone (eds): Africa and the Second World War. Mcmillan. 1986.
19) ibid. 80% of all Africans who served in the Non-European Armed Services (NEAS) during World War 2 were recruited in rural areas.
20) B. Leeman op. cit. p68.
21) Leeman has drawn on Jordan Ngubane's "An African Explains Apartheid" (1963) p102 for this interpretation. Ngubane, who was one of Leballo's contemporaries in the ANCYL and then in the PAC in the 1940's, claimed that Leballo had "left school, volunteered for service, and fought courageously by the side of the white man to destroy colonialism."
22) Many recruiting posters conveyed this message. see NMC NAS A4 Boxes 12,14.
23) B. Leeman. op. cit. p67.
24) various researchers have argued that Leballo had to lie about his age in order to enlist. Hence the discrepancy about his birth. Most writers have suggested that Leballo was actually born

in 1924. Had that been the case then he would have been 12 years old when he received his teachers diploma at Masite and 13 when he taught standard six there. This is quite implausible. Benson has suggested that he was born in 1922, while some of his contemporaries argue that he was probably born even earlier than that. Interviews with Godfrey Pitje (Nov 1988) and Gabriel Setiloane (Feb 1989 and Nov 1989)
25) J. Ngubane. op. cit. p102.
26) Karis & Carter, Gerhart and Leman all interviewed Leballo - none of them thoroughly.
27) Pitje interview. Novemeber 1988.
28) Black women who tried to volunteer were turned away. "The A.G. has ruled that at present it is not deemed advisable to employ non-European females in the Army or any other military services." (South African Defence Force (SADF) Archives NAS 3141. NMC 2)
29) The United States Armed Forces were also racially segregated. Blacks served in "all-Negro" units, commanded by both black and white officers. Often this pre-occupation with racial separation was taken to extremely ridiculous conclusions. The American Red Cross, for example, had a policy to process Negro blood separately "so that those receiving transfusions may be given plasma from blood of their own race." see A. Russel Buchanan: Black Americans in World War II. Clio 1977.
30) SADF Archives. War Diaries. W31a40
31) SADF W31a40 SW/1/2/10
32) W.S.M. Mphahlele to A.B. Xuma. Xuma Papers UCT. ABX. 420316.
33) SADF. NAS 3141. NMC 30 35/1/2
34) NMC 2376 NAS 3/4/1.
35) NMC 5672 NAS 38/4/2 memo from the office of the director NEAS 20-11-1940
36) ibid.
37) A.B.Xuma papers ABX 430226c.
38) NAS 3/4/1. NMC 43 letter from Transvaal Chamber of Mines to NAD.
39) NAS 3/4/1. NMC 43. letter from Stubbs to Winburg magistrate 7 July 1941.
40) L. Grundlingh op. cit.
41) NAS 3/4/2 NMC 1 letter dated 28-4-41
42) NAS 3/4/1 NMC2 letter from Lt. Col. Mockford to labour recruiter 14-7-41
43) report submitted by 2/lieut Weller, 2-11-42 NAS 8/36/1 A3 NMC 29.
44) conditions for the soldiers on these ships were appalling. By contrast officers travelled in luxury. see Michael Vane: Snobbery Under Arms. Springs Advertiser 1943.
45) By an ironic twist of history, back in South Africa Italian PsOW were put to work building roads over similarly impassable areas. While the Italian prisoners laboured, they were guarded by soldiers from the Cape Coloured Corps and the NMC, armed with assegais and knobkierries.
46) Cape Times 19/3/41.
47) Maurice Broll. Mud, Blood and Laughter. Cape Town 1943. p20
48) B. Leeman op. cit. p67.

49) In August there were a reported 177 civilian deaths as a result of blitzkriegs in Egypt's canal zone. See Cape Times August 5th - September 2nd 1941
50) for positions of various battalions see Orpen. War In The Desert. Cape Town. 1971.
51) This demotion meant a 50% reduction in basic pay; from 2s 9d to 1s 6d per day.
52) Middle East Censorship Summary. NAS 6/42.NMC 22
53) ibid.
54) J. Hasek: The Good Soldier Schweik. Signet 1963. pxv.
55) see Karis and Carter Vol 4. and Gerhart.
56) see Lodge, Leeman, Karis and Carter, Ngubane, Gerhart. Also interview with Prof. J.W. Macquarrie. (April 1989).
57) B. Leman op. cit. p68.
58) SADF. AG(POW) b117 113
59) AG(POW) box 119 D(1)B 12/1 (8149)
60) An African Soldier's Experiences as P.O.W. by L.Cpl Nzamo Nogaga. S.A. Outlook 1/10/45. p151.
61) AG. POW box118
62) see AG (POW) 119 letter from the Directorate of Demobilisation of Non European Armed Services (DDNEAS) to UDF Administrative Headquarters. Dec 1942.
63) ibid.
64) There is no mention of it in his service record, but note the 15 month gap in the record from April 1942 to August 1943.
65) B. Leeman op. cit. p67
66) ibid.
67) After 18 months of perseverance this writer was finally granted permission by the SADF to access Leballo's personal file. It was a disappointment as well as a revelation to discover that in what is perhaps the most authoritative text on a soldier's official conduct there was no mention of mutinies, court martials or reprieves.
68) B. Leeman op. cit. quotes a military adviser of the Indian High Commision in London as saying that there was evidence to corroborate the fact that such an incident did take place.
69) NAS 3/36/4 N28 A1. letter from Col. Stubbs to General Beyers dated 15-3-1943.
70) NAS 3/36/1 N28 memo to AG dated 1st June 1943.
71) NAS 3/36/1 N28 "secret" letter from OC NEAS recp. camp to Lt. Atkins OC, UDF(MI)PW Interrogation. 31 Oct., 1944.
72) see NAS 3/36/1 N25. letter from 107 S.A. Res M.T. Coy. to Sub Area Commander, Dire Daua dated 26-5-1941.
73) NAS 3/36/4 N28 A1. letter to Col. Stubbs from Native Commissioner, Sekukuniland, dated 26 Jan. 1944.
74) ibid.
75) AG(POW) Box 153.
76) NAS 3/36/4 N28A1. letter from Col Stubbs to Gen. Beyers, dated 15-3-1943.
77) NAS 8/36/1 N26.
78) NAS 8/36/4 D.A.G. (O)x/647
79) NAS 8/36/1 N29 A4.
80) NAS 3/36/4 N28 A1 Stubbs to Beyers, 15-3-1943
81) ibid.
82) NAS 8/36/1 N29. Letter from Col. Stubbs to Gen Beyers.

23-8-1943.
83) NAS 8/1/7. NMC 22. Letter from Winie Van Harte to I. Van Harte. 4-3-1942.