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# James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party in the development of local politics in Soweto

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## CHAPTER 5 : THE A.N.C. MOBILIZING, RENT WAR, THE FALL OF THE SOFASONKE PARTY, THE BOYCOTT COLLAPSES AND THE SOFASONKE PARTY RETURNS, 1950 - 1960.

> "The year 1950 was a turning-point in the political history of the African people in this country. It was marked by a number of events which took place from the beginning of the year.
>
> These events indicated a new political outlook ... and showed quite clearly that the conditions under which the African people live have become intolerable and that the masses are marching ahead of the leadership. The gravity of the developments is no doubt a serious one to the leadership of the African poeple."
>
> A.N.C. Annual Report, 1950. (1)

During the 1940's it was the Sofasonke Party more than any other organisation which spearheaded the direct mobilization of the massess in the Orlando area. Now under state repression and with some of the short-term gains achieved, the Sofasonke Party confined itself to mainly Advisory Board politics. The Communist Party which had also begun mass organisation focussed more on industry than on the community. They too had suffered severe repression. But given their broader organisational base and ideological commitments, while they may have been slower to respond in the short term, they had the staying power and endurance to still be a militant force in 1950 and to still have secure links with the masses. Added to this was the reorganised A.N.C. with Youth Leaguers in significant positions and committed to a course of action that would require popular mobilisation. It was these larger political organisations which were begninning to take up the mantle of the organisers of the massess as the decade of the 1950's opened. The A.N.C. had decided on May 1st as the date for the one day stay away planned after acceptance of the programme of action.

But in Orlando East itself it was not only the Sofasonke Party that was resting on its laurels. In Orlando East the A.N.C. branch was almost non-existent, in spite of the fact that many prominent A.N.C. members lived there.

> "We have, however, for some time been searching with a torchlight for a National Congress Branch in Orlando ... Orlando is a breeding place of that deadly disease - complacency, and a man of steel is required to awaken the people. Will he do it?" (2)

As people were moved across from the Orlando shelters to Jabavu, Mpanza still took an interest in their affairs referring to them as 'some of my people.' He had written to the Manager of NEAD and sent copies to the Native Commissioner and Town Clerk, that people at Jabavu had complained that they were not being given houses.

He said the Council had replied that if people were not on the offical waiting list, they should immediately apply for houses.

> "I maintain that the date of the issue of lot permits to these people amounts to a formal application for a house; I submit that it is only fair that the dates of these permits be considered and the people given houses like all those whom the officials have on their list. I do not advocate that these people be given priority or that they be given houses over the other people's needs.
>
> I am deeply concerned about this misunderstanding and the people have asked me to take the matter up with the Government if satisfaction is not obtained in this case."

He explained that the Government had ordered that people could only be removed from the shelters on condition that they were given alternative accommodation.

Mpanza quoted the Urban Areas Act extensively with particular reference to housing. He claimed that the wording of the Act had been changed at the request of the local authorities themselves to read not that the local authorities <u>might</u> afford housing the the poeple but rather that they <u>shall</u> do so in terms of the 1945 Consolidated Act.

Mpanza was also pursuing his interest in racing. He spoke of his desire to organise separate black horse racing.

> "'Many Africans own thoroughbreds and now that Apartheid is being applied to horseracing meetings, as we saw in the local dailies, the Ladysmith incident offers further ground for us to get together.'

> He said that since the segregation policy is being applied in many ways, it was necessary for the Africans to arrange on their own, for their good, similar undertakings and do away with causing irritation to other sections." (3)

There were still brief attempts at squatting although on a decreasing scale. 100 squatters were arrested on 13th February near Kliptown at 'Lawley Village' close to the Potchefstroom Road. (4)

Housing schemes were progressing at Jabavu and the new housing scheme, called White City, had a population of over 1 000 people. (5)

The breeze-block shelters continued to be reoccupied as they were vacated. (6)

The boycott of 'dummy institutions' continued to be propagated by the A.N.C. At a Youth League meeting in Sophiatown Mandela explained to the meeting the function of the N.R.C., the Bhungas and Local Councils, the Advisory Boards and the Representation of Blacks in Parliament. He said that because of the failures of these bodies Congress demanded a full boycott of them by all blacks and a direct say in the State.

The Council of Action was already working out plans, he continued. Blacks would be offered Congress branches and approved Vigilance Associations in place of the present bodies. (7)

The A.N.C. was preparing for the day of protest. For once, however peripherally, Mpanza found himself involved with the national movement, and the Communist Party. (8)

> "Things looked promising when, in March, Dr. Moroka paid his first visit to Johannesburg as President General. He was greeted with ovations, and driven through the streets in a coach drawn by Sofasonke Mpanza's white horses, with J.B. Marks riding alongside. This was all part of a Defend Free Speech Convention, organised by the Transvaal A.N.C. and the Communist Party."

The Convention had been organised by the Communist Party and had considerable A.N.C. involvement. When the Convention began to direct events and call for 'Freedom Day' mass protests on May 1st, the Transvaal A.N.C. withdrew.

While opinions differed within the Transvaal Congress, it was commonly felt that this had been yet another Communist Party manoeuvre designed to detract from the Programme of Action in order to check the growth of African Nationalism and capture for the Communist Party the role of organising blacks. So Freedom Day went ahead without official Congress support. (9)

> "But no sooner was this successful occasion over, than the Youth League found that the Communists had virtually taken over the A.N.C.'s call for May 1st. Their anger was intense. This was to have been the first such national demonstration that the A.N.C. had ever called for. In a series of furious clashes the Youth League broke up Communist meetings. At one, Mandela and Tambo defeated a move by Marks to prevent their speaking and forcibly took over the platform to tell people to disregard the May Day call. The Youth League's new bulletin, African Lodestar, equated the doctrines of the Communist Party with the Ossewabrandwag, the Broederbond and the Sons of England - a rejection of all foreign ideologies. It declared that since the workers were Africans and were oppressed primarily because they were African and secondarily because they were workers, 'it is clear that the exotic plant of communism cannot flourish on African soil.'" (10)

In spite of the dissension within the black community the Government took the plans for the stay-away very seriously. Ten loudspeaker vans were sent into the townships throughout the Witwatersrand and Vereeniging on the afternoon of Saturday the 29th April, urging the workers to go to work and promising in English, Afrikaans, Zulu and Sesotho to give 'police protection'.

They also said that

1. All meetings on the 30th and 1st were forbidden by law and warned blacks not to take part in meetings or processions on those days.

2. May 1st was not a general holiday and that unless workers had permission from their employers, they must go to work as usual.

3. There would be special police protection against intimidation on the 1st.

And that was not all.

> "In order to engage the peaceful attention of as many Natives as possible, sports meetings have been organised in Native locations by the Manager for Native Affairs." (11)

On the day, Monday 1st, the stayaway was largely successful in terms of numbers. Only about 20% of the black workforce went to work.

Street parades were held in Cape Town, Durban Bethal and Bloemfontein. (12)

On the Rand violence broke out between the police and demonstrators.

The rioting started in Benoni when police charged 500 blacks with fixed bayonets. There was also stone throwing and shootings in clashes with the police at Alexandra, Orlando, Moroka, Brakpan, and Sophiatown in which 18 people were killed and more than 24 wounded. (13)

At Orlando fighting started in the afternoon. When people started returning from work they were attacked as they were getting off the trains. The trains were stoned. The boycotters anger reached amazing new heights of militancy and police were not only stoned but were also the target of gunfire from the protesters.

Standing on the roof of the Orlando shelters, youths pelted passing trains with stones, forcing the police to stop the trains at Mlamlankunzi and Nancefield, on either side of Orlando, while they ran along the line to chase away the stone throwers. Two men were wounded by police fire.

Shortly thereafter more people gathered at the station and after a scuffle police attacked again and wounded a man.

When more passengers returning home were stoned the police intervened again and were stoned and fired at once more. They returned fire and their attackers fled.

At about 8 p.m. police were escorting more workers home when they were fired on and stoned again. They shot two people in their return fire. Ambulances from Baragwanath and the Non-European Hospital drove through the shelters and collected wounded men during the exchange of fire. (14)

During all the action Sisulu and Mandela were almost shot while rushing around Orlando trying to persuade people to go home. (15)

It certainly appears that the police were not too discriminating in their shooting. Among those who died on that day were three school-children, a man who was looking for his child and another returning from work. (16)

The Orlando mimeographed journal at the time, The Voice, reported the following;

> "Police Protection. It is time that our people realised that there is nothing like police protection for Africans. It is foolishness to cherish this protection of the oppressor's weapon of oppression. Those of us who saw the police prance about at Orlando station, taking aim at imaginary targets to show off and strike terror into the onlookers, knew that they would be sorry to miss the opportunity of shooting down a few Africans." (17)

Mpanza, too, was alarmed at the police action and hurried to the Commandant of police in Johannesburg where he is reported to have said;

> "Sir, hurry go and stop your police. You had sent them to go and quell some trouble but now they are shooting indiscriminately." (18)

Two funerals followed in Orlando, one being organised by the local A.N.C. branch, with the Rev. Mooki as priest.

The Orlando Advisory Board held a meeting in the township and residents sent a delegation to interview the Chief Native Commissioner, with Mpanza at its head and K. Mosenyi, a Congress member as part of it. They requested the Chief Commissioner to come to Orlando for an inspection in loco. He had helped the relations of the victims recover the bodies of their dead for burial. (19)

Paying tribute to those killed, The Voice said,

> "the rememberance of their death on this day shall always be ar inspiration to us in the continuance of our fight for freedom in the course of which they died."

Criticising the disunity in the leadership The Voice continues,

> "The effect of all these counter instructions and suggestions which intimiated the people unduly was particularly noticeable at Orlando, where the residents are ordinarily notorious for their yellow-livered cowardice." (20)

The support shown by the masses on May Day revealed that the militancy of the 1940's had remained.

The results of police repression on that day were to have far-reaching political effects on the national political movements.

> "The common sorrow and rage decided the A.N.C. Youth League to join with the Communist Party in a demonstration of mourning and protest. There were other hard-headed factors: laws intended to drive people apart were in fact driving them together ... but above all there was the Suppression of Communism Bill which, as the Youth League immediately realised, was in fact directed at a far greater target than the two thousand odd communists; its objects was to crush the struggle for liberation." (21)

Moses Kotane, the General Secretary of the Communist Party invited the Youth League to meet with the Communist Party to discuss their differences. Mandela was one of the Youth Leaguers who felt that they had not been justified in believing that the Communists worked to subvert their policies. (22)

For the State this was the pretext it needed to ban the Communist Party. In May it was announced that powers would be sought to outlaw them and the Suppression of Communism Bill was given its first hearing. (23)

With the initiative having fallen to the Communist Party for the May Day demonstrations and the new Bill going through, the A.N.C. hastened to respond and called on the 4th June for another stay-at-home on the 26th June as a National Day of Protest, mainly against the Suppression of Communism Act. (24)

Speaking at the monthly meeting of NEAD and the Johannesburg Joint Advisory Boards in June, Pela an appointee on the Orlando Board said that the police protection on May Day had been adequate for workers going to work but it was a different story when they returned that evening. Protection had then been sporadic. Pela thought that instead of offering poor protection, the police should not have intervened and should rather have let things take their course. Then many people would have stayed at home and trouble would have been avoided. He also complained about lawless elements.

Referring to their role on May Day, Board members stated that they were not in a position to counter decisions taken by political organisations. The Boards, they said, were non political and concerned themselves solely with activities confined to their own areas. (25)

The Suppression of Communism Act was passed and the Communist Party dissolved itself on the 20th June. The Communists were absorbed into the Congress Movement.

> "The class struggle had merged with the struggle for liberation." (26)

The A.N.C. stay-at-home on the 26th June, although well-supported in Durban and Port Elizabeth, was not a success in the Transvaal. (27) But it did consolidate further the relationship between ex-Communist Party members, the S.A. Indian Congress and the A.N.C. (28)

The two stay-at-homes also served to raise political consciousness nation-wide and promoted activism on many levels which permeated other bodies as well.

The Advisory Board's Congress, for instance, was encouraged to take up the issue of the endorsement out of the urban areas of blacks who had

lost their jobs. They called on the N.R.C., their Congress and the local Advisory Boards to take this up. (29)

On a regional level, in Johannesburg the Joint Boards flatly refused to support proposed rent increases for municipal hostels and the Mai-Mai bazaar trading sites. (30)

In something of an attempt to appease the situation and probably also to gauge feelings, H. Verwoerd as Minister of Native Affairs met with representatives of residents in Orlando Location in early November where they openly discussed their grievances with him. He offered no concessions. (31)

He also met with the various Advisory Boards in Johannesburg. The Boards wanted greater representation. The Reverend Mooki of the Orlando Advisory Board spoke, saying,

> "it can be said that the African people are in a turbulent mood today. Perhaps very largely because we find none in the Government who will hear us and speak to us ... But we want to make it clear that we cannot co-operate in our subjugation. Men can co-operate as equal partners but not in a master-servant relationship." (32)

Verwoerd dismissed as 'higher politics' the demand for direct representation in the councils of state. (33)

In the N.R.C. there was strong united dissension when they were repeatedly refused the right to discuss a speech by Verwoerd. They adjourned to get a court order. (34)

As can be seen the attacks on 'dummy bodies' was clearly having its effects on these bodies and forcing them to take a more militant stance. The Orlando Board did not escape this criticism. Said the Voice of Orlando:

> "The 'isibonda' is referred to with contempt these days, but there are men who would lift heaven and earth to become 'isibonda' for a few concessions for themselves while they gain nothing for the people." (35)

With the Communist Party now out of the way and increasing scepticism about the boards, Mpanza's opposition was reduced. There was still, however, a fairly high poll in Orlando when elections were held on December 17th, as can be seen from the numbers voting. The Sofasonke Party won a sweeping victory with the same team. Their results were Mpanza, 1 628 votes; Mooki, 1 497; L. Kumalo, 1 490; and Masupha, 1 485. Their opposition was the Residents Association whose results were Moema, 728 votes; Butshingi, 733; Malefane, 733; and Maseko, 682. (36)

But despite the growth of militancy, the Orlando Advisory Board continued to put forward limited reformist demands, although adopting the tactic of refusal within certain constraints.

At a Board meeting on the 15th January, they passed a resolution that in view of the ever-increasing deficiency in the Native Revenue Accounts, caused largely by the high wages paid to whites attached to the NEAD,

> "This Board shall in future refuse to sanction the estimate of revenue and expenditure unless steps are taken to give more employment to educated Africans to do the work at present done by Europeans in the Townships." (37)

Then on the 13th February, following a dispute with the Council over allocation of housing, the Orlando Advisory Board adjourned after passing a resolution that it would deal only with the Government in future and not with the Council. (38)

The growing general activism was, however, promoting the formation of other organisations such as the Orlando West Women's Residents Association. They were concerned with housing conditions, rents and improvements in township facilities.

In March, misfortune struck the aging Mpanza, now 62 years old, when as he returned from a successful race meeting at Ficksburg, the car in which he and four others were travelling overturned at Steynsrust. The driver was killed.

When news was heard that he had been involved in a serious accident at the weekend, a stream of his followers came to his house to find out what had happened. They heard that he had received only minor injuries to his hand and parts of his body.

On his return, at a gathering, many speakers thanked God for saving the life of Magebula, their father. (40)

The Orlando Advisory Board met again on 22nd May and refused to discuss the estimates and expenditure for 1951-1952, in terms of their resolution on January 15th. (41)

In June they agreed to meet a deputation of illegal squatters and to arrange for the Board and the deputation to see the Manager of NEAD in order to try and arrange permits. (42)

In another channel of growing popular resentment, the proposed rent increases again provoked opposition at a public meeting at Denver Hostel in Johannesburg on June 16th. Residents decided to forward a petition to the Council opposing the increase. (43)

The proposed increase was by 100% as from the 1st July, affecting 10 000 people. Many residents stated that they would refuse to pay the increase as they could not afford it. (44)

When July 1st came, the rents did not go up. The Council said this date had been a mistake. (45)

In Orlando Mpanza became involved in a tribal clash when members of a body called the Dingaka Association came to him to act as an arbitrator in an internal dispute. Mpanza objected to abusive language used by one of the parties during the hearing which was held at his house. He rose and said he would not listen to the case until this man modified his language.

The man, a Mosotho, then assaulted Mpanza. It took 30 Dingakas to stop the fighting that followed. Mpanza said the incident created a great feeling of tension and animosity between Basothos and Zulus. He said he

had been threatened by the Basotho's and Zulus were ready for them if they attacked him.

He explained this incident by saying that in the past most of his supporters at Board elections had been 'Basothos' and this had angered other Basothos who had failed to gain seats in the elections. They therefore had an interest in fostering tribal tensions to take this support from him as he was a Zulu. (46)

Mpanza generally struggled against tribal division and sought to achieve black unity in the Sofasonke Party. One of the party's favourite songs was 'Zulu, Sotho, Xhosa - Unite!' He would also often have his speeches translated into Sotho. But the party did have a fairly strong Zulu character. (47)

At the Advisory Board meeting on August 14th the disagreement was debated between a township ruling and customary law, over whether a woman who had lived with a man as his wife under a customary union, should lose rights to the house if he later discarded her in favour of another woman. The Board felt that if he had lied to the authorities about the first woman to show married status in order to get a house, a man could not then shake off his obligations to the first wife. NEAD was asked to lay down this principle.

Pela objected to a Christian marriage being given validity over a customary marriage if the latter preceded the Christian marriage.

Said Mpanza,

> "The chamelion was sent to the people that they should not die. But the chamelion stopped to eat on the way, and took so long that God at last sent the lizard to tell the people that they should die; the lizard was no sluggard; he easily passed the chamelion and got there first, and delivered his message; that's why sooner or later, everybody dies."

Mpanza was saying that the first ruling was not necessarily final; meaning that the regulations could be changed. He said that in tribal law a site was allocated by the chief to a couple. The right was not therefore vested only in a man. (48)

Discussing the problem of hooliganism in White City, Orlando, at the August 25th Orlando Advisory Board meeting, Mpanza said that he himself had started a Parents Court but White City had never patronised it. Although he had been congratulated by the principal of the Orlando High School for disciplining some youngster, he complained;

> "You from White City said it was an outrage that children should be thrashed on the soles of their feet."

They did not object to it if they did the thrashing themselves, he continued, but they objected to somebody else doing it when they neglected it. (49)

The Parents Court was an adaptation by Mpanza of the tribal courts called Magotla which he tried to use to maintain discipline in an urban context. Sofasonke women would also hold regular meetings of the Parents Court while the men were away at work. In these meetings they discussed family affairs and helped each other with other problems. (50) The Parents' Court was to gain widespread notoriety.

Still seeking popular mobilization in terms of the Programme of Action, the Congress Youth League held a rally in Orlando on the 25th August, where speakers said that a new concept of leadership was called for as the time of deputations, resolutions and speeches had to be replaced by action.

> "The only language which the African people understand is the language of action." (51)

For the people of Orlando, the last time they had heard this kind of talk was five years before coming from Mpanza. Now they were hearing it again. But this time Mpanza was being seen as part of the problem.

Pitje, the leader of the Youth League, added that the only way of reaching the people was to get rid of those who stood between the leaders and the masses. (52) Amongst the latter, were the Advisory Board members.

But the strength of Mpanza's position, even during this period of relative inactivity, should not be ignored. Meeting in early September the Johannesburg Joint Advisory Boards discussed the issue of permitted home-brewing as opposed to licensed establishments for retailing beer by blacks in the townships. Arguments in favour of licensed establishments were being presented by various board members. Always ready to defend grassroots interests, Mpanza was furious with this attitude. He continually interrupted speakers and ignored repeated calls to order from the chair when speakers said that if home-brewing were permitted it would give an impetous to illicit liquor traffic and crime would increase.

Daring those who opposed home-brewing to express their feelings at public meetings where they would certainly be stoned to death, Mpanza said that Orlando residents would brew at home, and, if necessary the people would submit to arrest for this. He said it was part of their ritual to drink home-brewed beer. He was in favour of controlled official permitted home-brewing.

P.Q. Vundla, Advisory Board member from Western Native Township and member of the ascendant A.N.C. at the time, opposed Mpanza's point of view. The exchange reveals interesting contrasts in political leanings. Said Vundla;

> "We hear much about kaffir beer forming part of our 'Native customs': but we do not want these 'Native customs' because our townships being part and parcel of the town, we have to follow the white way of living."

Vundla's appeal is to a Westernised urbanised educated sophistication which he takes as representative of the direction leadership should take. Mpanza on the other hand, with his consciousness very much rooted in the masses, relied on the masses as his final authority. (53)

To combat the growing lawlessness in the township, symptomatic of heightened social tensions, the Orlando Action Committee was formed. G.G. Xorile who had been prominent in the Shantytown Committee and as a member of the African Democratic Party and who was also an Advisory Board member in 1945 and 1946, was the acting chairman. The Committee resolved to establish their own protective guards and notified the police and

municipality of their intention. (54) The Orlando Vigilance Association supported the idea and called for a meeting on the 30th September. (55) There were similar bodies in Jabavu, Sophiatown and Western Native Township. (56)

When they met on the 30th, the gathering of Orlando residents discussed the problem of combatting crime. They were addressed by Xorile. The NEAD, the Superintendent, the S.A.P. and the Advisory Board were invited to attend. Of these only the S.A.P. turned up. Several speakers attacked the Advisory Board for not showing an interest in such an important matter and for failing to attend a meeting which had been called by their electors. (57) Dissatisfaction with the Sofasonke Party's complacency was beginning to find a voice.

The Transvaal A.N.C. noting the popular interest in the issue of crime, issued a statement saying that the cause was the lack of adequate housing, lack of school accommodation for children and lack of employment. (58)

In the Joint Boards, the debate over home brewing continued with Jabavu, Moroka, Orlando and Eastern Native Township in favour of it, and Western Native Township and Pimville for licensed premises. The Manager of NEAD, W.J.P. Carr suggested municipal beerhalls as an alterantive, with the Boards having a say in how the profits were spent. This led to further disagreement and debate: (59)

With Advisory Board elections around the corner, A.N.C. supporters in Jabavu unleashed an attack on some members of the Advisory Board. It was noted as unusual for the A.N.C. to take an interest in Advisory Board affairs. (60)

In Orlando Mpanza said he was confident of winning. He was to be opposed again by Moema's group which issued the following statement;

> "The present system seems to hold no appeal for most educated Africans in the townships; they are, in fact, dissatisfied with many board members elected each year. But the chief cause for disinterest in the board elections springs from the clamour voiced over a number of years for direct representation on all councils of state, province and town." (61)

Beginning to notice the mounting independent opposition, Mpanza launched an attack on the Orlando Vigilance Association at the Advisory Board meeting on the 20th November. He took strong exception to their operating civic guards patrols. Some years ago, he said, the Board itself had initiated patrols. The very people who had then opposed the system had now begun patrols of their own. They were usurping the Board's prerogative. A board member, L. Kumalo, said that he himself had been stopped and searched. An appointee on the board, Mdingi suggested the board should summon the Vigilance Committee and co-ordinate the efforts to keep crime down jointly.

Pela, the other appointee, said that some people who were going to contest the coming election had wrested the initiative from the board by setting up patrols. Board members should be bigger men than to resent pinpricks. Instead he suggested, the sensible thing to do would be to ignore these patrols and if the Vigilance Committee did not get its members elected their activities would probably just come to an end.

At the time the Vigilance Committee was also involved in arrangements for a monument for victims of the Orlando train disaster of the previous year. The conflict between them and the board was being played out in a struggle over the place and time of a meeting between the two bodies to make arrangements for the monument. (62)

The Minister of Justice was not in favour of independent voluntary home guards in the townships. Refusing to permit them, he said there would be more black policemen on duty in future. (63)

The Orlando Advisory Board elections on 23rd December, were contested by 3 parties. These were the Sofasonke Party with the same candidates again, the Moema group, with Chief L. Molapo, S.J. Malefane and L. Mavimbela, and the Xorile group, with H. Butshingi, J. Mnqibisa and K. Mosenyi. (64)

The Sofasonke Party won by a bigger margin than any previous year with Mpanza, 2 240 votes; Kumalo 2 050; Rev. Mooki, 2 063 and Masupha, 2 082. The highest vote received by the opposition was Moema, 591 and Butshingi, 94.

Voters went to the polls as early as 6 in the morning and when the office doors were opened at Orlando East and West thousands of Sofasonke Party supporters were waiting at the gates together with supporters of the other two groups.

> "As early as 3 in the afternoon it was clear that the Sofasonke Party had won the election. Interviewed an hour before the results were announced Mr. Mpanza said 'We have definitely won this election,' and his words proved true.
>
> There was a tense atmosphere at 5 p.m. when all the candidates were asked to report to the returning officer. As they went one by one, thousands of supporters were singing their victory songs. 'Sofasonke nayo ingwevu bosala benibusa' was sang at length by Mpanza's group led by his wife in marvelous uniform. Opposite them were the Molapo Moema supporters also singing their song.
>
> There was dead silence as the returning officer appeared in front of the Communal Hall accompanied by interpreters and the Senior Superintendent of Orlando with all the candidates. Using his hand as a signal Sofasonke who was in a fighting election mood, indicated that his party had won again.
>
> What would have been a serious clash between Sofasonke supporters and Chief Molapo's group was stopped by police intervention. Two of Mpanza's supporters were injured." (65)

Two days later a fight erupted between Zulus and Basothos at the Orlando Shelters in which ten men were killed. The fight was a sequal to the clash at the election. (66)

During 1951 no houses for blacks were built in Johannesburg. The Government made its subsidy conditional upon acceptance by the Council of the Site and Service scheme. There was a deadlock for a while when the Council opposed this.

The Government also took a step towards solving the housing problem by introducing the Bantu Building Workers Act in 1951, allowing for black builders in black areas. This reduced housing costs as black builders were paid less. (67)

1952 marked the beginning of a new campaign embarked upon by the A.N.C. and the S.A. Indian Congress. By January they had recovered from the repercussions of the two one-day stay-at-homes of 1950 with a broader base and greater experience. An ultimatum signed by Dr. Moroka and Walter Sisulu was sent to the Government demanding that unless discriminatory laws were repealed by February 29th, protest demonstrations would be held, to be followed by a Campaign of Defiance of injust laws. They were warned by the Prime Minister not to go ahead. (68)

Meeting on the 26th January the Orlando Advisory Board agreed to ask the Minister of Native Affairs to institute a judicial Commission of Enquiry to determine the causes of the riots in the township on 25th December.

Mpanza also complained about the actions of the civic guard patrols run by what he called 'minority parties', without the authority of the Advisory Board. He felt this had led to the Christmas day clash and that their continued activities were leading to further troubles.

Pela disputed that the clash had been between Zulus and Basotho, but was rather a tsotsi element which was responsible. (69)

With the rent increase still pending, representations were made by the Joint Advisory Boards, the Institute of Race Relations and the Labour Party to the authorities to lower the increase. Instead the Council's Finance Committee was in favour of ejecting the 'ringleaders' of those who refused to pay the increase. (70)

In Orlando the continued friction between the rival groups of voluntary civic guards, resulted in the Orlando Vigilance Association, withdrawing their group, which was the first to form. The new body was called the Joint Action Committee Civilian Guards. (71)

They claimed to have 200 volunteers on active duty plus 100 reserves, as against the Vigilance Association's 30. (72) Both were independent of the Sofasonke Party and Advisory Board.

At an Advisory Board conference on the proposed urban Bantu Authorities Bill which would replace Advisory Board's, the Advisory Boards called for direct representation in the local council and the enfranchisement of women and opposed any ethnic administration of the urban population.

The Orlando Advisory Board meeting on the 25th February endorsed this resolution but wanted the Act and the functions defined by it to be automatic and not permissive at the option of the local municipality. (73)

The Council had indicated its desire to reorganise the NEAD. In response the Orlando Advisory Board submitted memorandum saying that the Advisory Board system was inadequate and that each black township should be represented by an elected City Councillor who would automatically become a member of NEAC.

They recommended;

> "That all Advisory Board members be elected in future;
>
> that the ward system, as it is operated at Moroka-Jabavu be introduced throughout all the city's African townships;
>
> that increased executive powers be given to Advisory Boards;
>
> that a qualified official be detailed to attend Board meetings when estimations of revenue and expenditure are to be considered, so that the account may be explained;
>
> that conferences between the Board and the NEAC of the Council be held at least once a quarter;
>
> that the chairman of the Board be elected from a panel of names submitted by each Board to the NEAC;
>
> that the minutes of the Board be placed before the relevant committees of City Council. (74)

The civic guards continued to be an issue for the Orlando Board. It was basically a struggle for domination within Orlando, whereby Mpanza sought to maintain control over the social events in the township. The A.N.C. with its policy of boycott was not interested in the Advisory Board so was not seen as a threat to Mpanza's position. The same did not apply to the organisors of the Joint Action Committee.

When the Board met again on the 18th March, there was much interruption and heated exchange about the Committee operating patrols without the prior blessing of the Board. Mpanza insisted repeatedly that if any patrol operated in Orlando it must be run by the Parents' Court and no other name was to be tolerated. Anyhow he said cats would never let mice run their own police force.

> "'If I should ask the cat whether the mice might form their own police to look after the mice (laughter and interruptions) ... Do you think the cat would agree to it?' demanded Mr. Mpanza."

In a statement that showed the degree of his compromise since 1944 Mpanza also said that if people have a complaint about lawlessness they should press the Government to take action and not take action themselves as the Committee had done. This was unnecessary he assured as the Board had formed the Parents' Court and parents were controlling the township.

Failing to gain the support of the Board, one of the delegates of the civilian guards said that some members of the Board were not there in the interests of the township. Mpanza made him withdraw the remark.

The delegates said that the full title of their group was the Joint Action Committee for Southern Areas which covered Orlando, Jabavu, Moroka and Pimville.

This placed the Sofasonke Party outside this broader co-ordinated body. Mooki concluded that the Board had still to see the Police Commandant and the Manager of NEAD about the guards and would consider the matter. (75)

A further delay in the building of black houses occurred in early April with the Government announced that the loan from National Housing Commission was subject to a family income limit to quality for sub-economic housing, which was a maximum of 15 Pounds per month. The Council queried this and began negotiations with the Government to raise this figure to 20 Pounds.

April 6th saw peaceful meetings throughout the country protesting against discriminating laws and apartheid as planned by the A.N.C. to precede their Defiance Campaign. Resolutions were adopted for selected volunteer passive resisters to oppose the operation of certain laws. (76)

Most of this took place over the Sofasonke Party's head. The Orlando Advisory Board meeting on Tuesday 14th discussed the protection of a deserted wife's right to her house; a resident's request to keep his house while still working in town; the selection of sites for offal stalls and milk shops; the slaughter of animals for ritual observances; the erection of verandahs not to exceed six feet wide at the shelters; and the employment of juveniles as golf caddies.

Mpanza pleaded on behalf of the deserted wife to retain tenancy of the house. Could women not be registered as a tenant? he asked. He appealed to the Manager of the NEAD for clarity. (77)

At the Board's Tuesday meeting on the 13th May the Orlando Board expressed opposition to the agreement between the Government and the Council to remove the so-called 'black spots'. They saw the move as calculated to take free-hold areas away from blacks.

Mpanza also suggested that Orlando residents be allowed to buy their houses and that the revenue would make it unnecessary for the Council to borrow money from the National Housing Committee. This would circumvent the conditions attached to loans such as the necessity to conduct an incomes census for the income limitation on the proposed new houses. (78)

Encouraged by the success of the nationwide huge rallies organised on April 6th, the organisers of the Defiance Campaign decided it would begin on the 26th June. (79)

On the 8th of June, in defiance of his banning order, J.B. Marks, the President of the Transvaal A.N.C. addressed a meeting at the Donaldson Orlando Community Centre, at which he declared;

> "I give my life and breath to the A.N.C. - an old Congress, but under new and bright leadership."

He said he was doing this under instruction from the A.N.C. He entered the hall accompanied by Nelson Mandela, then National President of the Congress Youth League. As Marks spoke a man stood quietly holding the flag of the A.N.C. He went on;

> "This is the hour now. I am being crucified and I feel the weight of the cross."

He then left and was arrested by plain-clothes detectives waiting for him outside. While many people sang, volunteers were signed up for the Defiance Campaign. (80) This was followed a week later with a well-attended A.N.C. meeting at Moroka-Jabavu, where there was a good response to calls for volunteers. (81)

By contrast the Orlando Board meanwhile had a 'breakthrough' in its sturggle to secure home ownership in the township when they received a letter accepting in principle the sale to residents of municipal houses in Orlando. The Board was ecstatic, taking this as an indication of security of urban life for blacks. Said Kumalo;

> "If we buy our houses, our people cannot be sent out to work on the land ... we shall have our own land here!"

The letter reminded the Board that there must be a certain delay and immediate results were not to be expected. (82)

When the Manager of NEAD filed his annual report for the previous year he said that the Orlando East population was then 95 300 and that it was hoped to transfer the shelter tenants to housing as soon as possible. He saw the shelters as the cause of the prevailing unrest in the Orlando area. (83)

The Defiance Campaign was launched on 26th June. It began a series of activities involving the breaking of discriminatory laws and strikes right across the country.

The campaign was to be the most sustained and most successful organised resistance initiated by the A.N.C., in terms of numbers. In Johannesburg that night 52 men, including Mandela and Yusef Cachalia of the Indian

Congress broke the curfew laws in central Johannesburg courting arrest. (84)

Mpanza too was soon in Court, but not as a volunteer. He was the successful appellant in the Pretoria Supreme Court on July 7, against a judgement of the Vanderbijl Park Magistrate in the District of Vereeniging. He had been found guilty of obstructing a traffic policement in the execution of his duties, last year.

Mpanza had been travelling in his car to a race meeting at the Vaal Course in Vereeniging when two traffic inspectors in plain clothes stopped him. All his passengers were ordered out as the inspectors wanted to test the brakes of his car. Mpanza asked for their identification documents before letting them test his car. The traffic inspectors were annoyed and, refusing to produce their documents laying a charge against him for obstruction. During the prosecution the Vanderbijl Park Town Council engaged an attorney for a "watching brief". Mpanza was found guilty by the Magistrate but appealed on the grounds that the judgement was bad in law in that it was against the weight of evidence that the court should have ascertained whether the traffic police were in uniform at the time they stopped his car and that during the trial a second crown witness was present in court when the first gave evidence. The appeal was upheld. (85)

Black housing development in Johannesburg took a leap forward when a 3 million Pound loan to the Council was arranged. It was intended to build 5 000 houses a year on the site and service schemes. The scheme was agreed to on condition 2 000 of the houses built per year be made available to blacks living illegally in the proclaimed areas of Johannesburg (86)

Yet another issue erupted in Orlando when 3 teachers at the local high school, Z. Mothopeng, E. Mphahlele and I. Matlare, all members of the Transvaal African Teachers Association were summarily dismissed.

A meeting of 500 Orlando residents was held on the 10th August to protest against this.

> "Speaking at this meeting, Mr. N.R. Mandela, National President of the A.N.C. Youth League said it was common knowledge that the dismissed teachers had done a great deal to arouse the social consciousness of their fellow teachers as well as of the African people as a whole. 'Theirs is a clear case of political victimisation by the Government through the agency of the T.E.D.' The meeting demanded their reinstatement and authorised the Parents' Protest Committee to call for the withdrawal of children from school if this was not complied with within seven days." (87)

On the 17th August a reception organised by the A.N.C. was held in the Donaldson Orlando Community Centre (D.O.C.C.) for the first batch of volunteers from the area to go into action. These were in the first Reef group arrested at Boksburg with Walter Sisulu as their leader.

Sisulu addressed the meeting and said to Orlando residents in particular that he was appealing for more support, that the township lagged behind other centres with volunteers for the campaign. Ten volunteers signed on at the meeting and that afternoon a batch of volunteers left to cries of 'Afrika!' for action in the campaign elsewhere. (88)

The boycott of Orlando High School on the 25th August was not a success. The three teachers appeared in Court on the 8th September charged with incitement to public violence. They were said to have told some children to prevent others from going to school. They were acquitted when it was found that the state witnesses had been forced to give false evidence by the police. (89)

At the Orlando Advisory Board meeting on the 14th October, Mrs. C.L. Mampuru speaking for the Orlando Women's Association, caused an uproar when she complained of the lack of properly controlled milk depots in Orlando. She complained that the milk was diluted, unhygienic and curdled. It was Mpanza who defended the producers. He took her to task for an article which had appeared in the press shortly before in which she asked the Council to provide a proper milk distribution scheme or alternatively to set up milk depots where controlled milk could be distributed. (90)

Mrs. Mampuru was proved correct when a team of journalists bought milk from five Orlando dairies and found with tests that all five samples were heavily watered. (91)

A big mass meeting was held by the Sofasonke Party at the Orlando shelters on the 19th October on the open square facing the clinic. Mpanza and Kumalo spoke about the coming elections. The Shelters were the stronghold of the Sofasonke Party who, unlike other sections of Orlando, usually turned out in full force for elections. (92)

A 1 000 new houses at Orlando West were nearing completion in October 1952. These were the houses to which the maximum income of 15 Pounds would apply for sub-economic rents. (93)

The Defiance Campaign had reached its peak in September and ground virtually to a halt by the 9th November, there being very few arrests thereafter. (94)

On November 30th misfortune struck when a tornado swept through Albertynsville Township killing 20 people, leaving 150 in a serious condition and completely demolishing 500 houses. (95) Quick to capitalise on this Mpanza sent the following message to the victims.

> "I am deeply moved by the spontaneous and prompt action of those who rushed to the scene of the tragedy to render voluntary help to the afflicted. On behalf of Orlando residents I wish to extend our deep-felt sympathy to the families of those who lost lives and property and who have had to go homeless as the result.
>
> I fail to express sufficiently the deep gratitude we feel towards those Europeans who, untouched by this world of race frictions, went out of their way to give their best in aid of our people in their direst need. It is such manifestations of the innate spirit of brotherhood of mankind which really matter in the long run, and should make our country an infinitely better place to live in.
>
> I cannot but feel that the extent of the tragedy would not have been so great if these people lived in better houses. The residents of Albertynsville, though in the Roodepoort area, are Johannesburg's own workers who were forced to squat in that area by circumstances over which they had no control." (96)

In December the Government imposed a ban in rural and urban locations against the holding of meetings in response to the increased unrest

resulting from the Defiance Campaign. (97) Banning of political leaders was to follow contributing to organisational confusion and the temporary immobilization of resistance. (98)

But organisational confusion was not just due to the bannings. The Campaign had served to rapidly expand membership beyond what the leadership could cope with in the short term. This expansion was its main success. Membership at the end of the campaign was claimed to have increased from 7 000 to 100 000. There had also been a rapid increase of Congress branches from 14 before to 87 after. The new tactics also served to encourage within the leadership the more active members and remove the conservatives. (99) It left in its wake a greatly more politicised black population.

> "The year 1952 stands out as the year of this upsurge of national consciousness." (100)

1952 had also been the year in which the Government introduced the Bantu Services Levy Act to charge employees a monthly levy which was paid into the Services Levy Fund of the City Council. It was to be used to provide township services. (101)

This in addition to the site and service scheme becoming State policy, made 1953 the year of the breakthrough in black housing in Johannesburg. (102)

There was little interest in the Advisory Board elections in Orlando this year. Without any opposition the Sofasonke Party did little campaigning but were prepared to meet any last minute opposition. (103)

The Council announced in December that the NEAD had managed to get the income limit for sub-economic housing raised from 15 Pounds to 17 Pounds 10 Shillings. The Orlando Advisory Board meeting on the 9th said they were not impressed with the raised income limit. They insisted that the income limit must be removed altogether as the limit meant that people who have been on the waiting list for years would not get houses because they earn too much. (104)

In summary, 1952, following on from the 1950 activities had seen a nation-wide upsurge in national politics. Although Orlando with its reputation for inertia was not quite as active as some areas, there had also been a definite increase in A.N.C. activity in the township. This had changed the mood of Orlando people and provoked some shifts and new developments. At the same time as there was increased national consciousness, there was also decreased interest in the Advisory Board leaving it uncontested in the hands of the Sofasonke Party. This must have been at least partly due to the A.N.C.'s policy of boycott which served to discredit these bodies further as the A.N.C. gained support and interest. The Sofasonke Party had continued to focus on local administrative issues and although still rooted in its rank-and-file base, was content with Advisory Board debate to bring grievances to the attention of the authorities. By and large, though, the national movement was by-passing them.

In January 1953, Rev. Mooki of the Orlando Board and Sofasonke Party was voted by a large majority to the position of President of the Locations Advisory Board Congress. The pervading issue at the conference was the pressure for more power for the boards. (105)

On the 10th February, the Eastern Native Township Advisory Board made a decision which was to spark off major and recurrent debates on the boards and reflected the raised political consciousness of the time. They rejected an invitation from the A.N.C. and Transvaal Indian Congress to join a protest against the Public Safety and the Criminal Law Amendment Bills then before Parliament.

> "We are here as an Advisory Board to advise on matters between the Township residents and the City Council. This thing is higher politics; it's entirely out of our scope." (106)

The Orlando Board took up the debate on the 17th February. Pela felt that the regulations made it possible for the local authorities to extend the powers and functions of the boards therefore politics was not beyond its scope. Pela said that some officials try to contain and channel the boards towards their own ends.

> "They forget that every matter is bound up with the political life of the country. Wherever you look, you have to deal with the political isues - even the Bantu Authorities Bill. You can't run away from it."

He added that some officials objected to criticism of apartheid. Mpanza expressed his support for Pela's speech. (107)

The next week the Board questioned the superintendant's right to deal with issues relating to customary laws. The Board members and the Joint Action Committee in a letter to the Board, felt that Board members should deal with these issues as they understand them better. Mpanza wanted the Board to have the right to request the retention of the services of any superintendent about to retire. (108)

On the 1st March the Orlando Branch of the A.N.C. elected 14 members to a new executive at the Donaldson Orlando Community Centre. Included among these were the ex-squatter leader Schreiner Baduza and a new man, Duma Nokwe.

The outgoing chairman, Maseko, said that although there had been a certain measure of success in organisation, not enough was achieved to mobilize the forces and create a strong link of the struggle at Orlando. By sheer weight of numbers Orlando, the biggest township in the country could force attention to the demands of the people. (109)

The A.N.C.'s boycott of the Advisory Boards was not being carried out uniformly. A section of the Youth League were to quarrel bitterly with the leadership over this which they saw as a breach of the 1949 resolution. (110)

With newly-enacted labour bureau regulations due to come into effect in July, the Senior Superintendent wishing to explain these to Orlando residents, was forced to postpone public meetings twice due to poor attendance at these. He tried again for the 30th April. (111)

At this meeting, the highly-charged political mood of a large section of the huge gathering changed the meeting to the passing of a resolution urging residents to have nothing to do with the regulations and not to submit names for the register until there is consultation with the people concerned. The meeting was roudy throughout. (112)

By March the Orlando Advisory Board was still waiting for the Council to clear up the issue of the sale of municipal houses to Orlando residents. At the Board meeting on the 5th March they expressed impatience with the delayed progress on this. The Manager of NEAD, W.J.P. Carr said the matter was still being investigated. Mooki reminded him that negotiations on the matter began in 1938. He called for a date to reach finality on the matter. The Council promised a decision by the end of June.

The Board again opposed the income ceiling on the new houses. Mpanza asked the Board to press the Council to provide immediate accommodation for the people on the waiting list who would be excluded by the limit. He hinted that the Board may have to institute a law suit to make the Council comply with its obligations to provide accommodation. (113)

It is interesting to contrast Mpanza's attitude in 1953 with that of 1944. The Council having partly complied with housing needs had taken the edge of the militancy attached to the housing shortage. Mpanza was only representing the case of those who earned more than the maximum income limit at this meeting. For some of these there was also the option of the Dube housing scheme where they could build for themselves. These concessionary steps by the Council disorganised opposition. They had also introduced new legislation which made the organisation of squatting movements, even if the higher income group could be persuaded to do so, unfeasible. But then there was also an Mpanza now nine years older and engrossed in a wider range of local administrative issues in the Advisory Board, over which he had a fair degree of influence and say. Preoccupation with these issues and an historical distance from the A.N.C. made him less likely to take up issues on the basis of mass organisation as he had before.

At the Orlando Advisory Board meeting on 26th May Mpanza again asserted that the Urban Areas Act required the Council to provide housing for blacks legally employed in Johannesburg and therefore should provide housing for those with incomes above the declared limit. (114)

The obligation of the Council to provide black housing was denied by the

Chairman of the Council's Finance Committee. He challenged those who disagreed to take the matter to court. (115) Mpanza did not take up the challenge.

In July the the Orlando Advisory Board was invited by the Council to choose a name for the new suburb at Orlando West. But it was strongly 'advocated' that they should choose nationally significant names rather than purely local ones. This caused considerable debate. The Sofasonke Party had held a crowded public meeting at which they were given a unanimous vote for 'Mpanzaville' as the name for the new suburb. The Board felt they should be allowed to request whatever name they wished. (116) The suggestions were ignored by the Council.

AT the end of the June in the Annual Report of the Manager of NEAD for 1952/53, he said that the high rent which would probably become necessary for economic housing was a source of worry to the Department as the number of people in an economic position was strictly limited. Payment of high rents in addition to the relatively high transport charges to the Orlando areas would constitute a severe strain on the occupants.

He also expressed relief at the passing of the Defiance Campaign.

> "At one time it seemed that the Defiance Campaign would assume most serious proportions, but happily the movement virtually petered out in consequence of the resolute action on the part of the Government." (117)

The report, however, made no mention of the agreement tos ell municipal houses at Orlando, and contrary to the Council's promise, June 30th came and went without a decision being made. (118)

With the Government having stated its intention to remove all blacks from the freehold area of Sophiatown to the Government owned townships of Meadowlands and Diepkloof near Orlando, the A.N.C. joined in the organised resistance to the removals. Speaking on behalf of the African Anti-Expropriation Ratepayer's Association, Dr. A.B. Xuma said that it was ironical to hear of the Minister of Native Affairs, H.F. Verwoerd and the Johannesburg City Council agreeing to render homeless another 20 000 black families while they had failed to solve the problem of thousands of blacks living in Shantytowns and shelters. (119)

The Orlando branch of the A.N.C. meanwhile was struggling to reorganise. They launched a fund-raising drive at the Orlando community Centre with a concert and dance. (120)

Meanwhile the Orlando Board was being criticised for inactivity. In a letter to the press, an Orlando resident writes:

> "Personally, I have in the six years of residence in Orlando, followed elections here each year, and I have also in turn also expected to see something substantial done for the people through the board's efforts. I have yet to see what that something achieved by this board can be.
>
> Throughout this year, I have not known this board to call a public meeting to permit residents to air their grievances ...
>
> P.M. Mannle, Orlando." (121)

Mpanza once again raise the home-brewing issue at an Advisory Board meeting on 1st September. As he had borrowed from the A.N.C. in its adjournment resolution of 1946, without really understanding the motivation behind it, so now did he borrow from the example of the Defiance Campaign.

> "I move that this board send an ultimatum to the City Council pressing for the relaxation of the prohibition on home-brewing within thirty days. Failing to get satisfaction at the expiration of that period, we shall have no alternative but to organise the whole Orlando community to defy the prohibiton." (123)

But Mpanza was missing the beat. With Sofasonke Party extra-Advisory Board activity declining and being taken up primarily by the A.N.C., Mpanza was being drawn increasingly into a compromised position in a compromised institution.

At a public meeting towards the end of September attended by several hundred people, he was asking people to be patient and not be hasty in their desire to move from Orlando East as the board was securing home-ownership. It appears that there has been some indication from the Council that Orlando East houses would be sold at 600 Pounds each.

In his opinion, he continued, it was short-sighted of those people who wanted to lay claim to ground rights and he questioned the number of people who would be able to buy Orlando East houses at 600 Pounds if it was decided that they would be sold with sites at about 300 Pounds.

Mpanza's contention was that in buying a house, the tenant could only be rejected if he were responsible for some obvious failure to meet his part of the contract.

At questiontime, one member of the audience urged that the houses at Orlando East be offered at 100 Pounds and 80 Pounds (for three and two-rooms respectively).

Mpanza replied that he had argued on the same lines with the authorities but he had dropped the matter when told that the same two-room houses would fetch anything up to 300 Pounds if offered on auction.

Criticism of the way the members of the Board were handling the subject of housing at Orlando East was made in interjections, and Mpanza replied that the morning's report had been based on advance information and that fuller details would come to hand later.

> "Discussion is still going on and it should be remembered that no one is forced to buy these houses."

This antagonised the audience further and the meeting abruptly ended after further dissatisfaction with the work of the board was expressed. (123)

In spite of dissatisfaction with the Orlando Board there was no opposition in the elections.

> "With election fever mounting, Orlando township, noted for its civic consciousness is remarkably quiet.
>
> The reason is probably to be found in the fact that, although these civic elections are fought on party lines, a tendency has been growing which has had the effect of making the contests more a clash of personalities than anything else.

> The African is essentially a hero-worshipper, and a single heroic deed in a man's lifetime is not readily forgotten. Such is the case in Orlando, where Mr. James Sofasonke Mpanza, leader of the Sofasonke Party, reigns supreme.
>
> Mr. Mpanza has been in the local board since 1936. He is remembered, among other things, as the stormy leader of the first exodus of whole families from overcrowded Orlando in what was the first practical protest against overcrowded conditions in Johannesburg townships.
>
> Since then attempts to unseat him have been so soundly defeated that they have been mainly sporadic in recent years, but last year they were for all practical purposes what can be described as 'dead and buried' - there was no election at all.
>
> Observers see this as an unhealthy development for a township which has shown great interest in its civic affairs. It is said that there should at least be election opposition lest the Advisory Board degenerates into a Sofasonke Party farce in which board members may rest on their laurels." (124)

Disinterest in Advisory Board politics must also account for the fact that Mpanza and the same Sofasonke Party team were returned unopposed for the second year. (125)

The A.N.C. beginning to re-organise, passed a motion at its 41st annual congress at Queenstown on the 21st and 22nd December, instructing its national executive to organise a congress of the people of South Africa, to work out a 'freedom charter'. (126)

The issue was also raised at the Queenstown Congress as to whether or not the A.N.C. should allow its members to stand for election to such Government-recognised bodies as Advisory Boards and Bhungas. The issue was referred to the provinces for discussion.

A row erupted in the Orlando A.N.C. branch at a meeting to discuss this where it was argued that if the A.N.C. was to sponsor candidates, it must first reverse the previous decision to boycott 'dummy institutions'.

In reply it was argued that the view had been expressed that participation in these bodies was necessary for tactical reasons, and that it would not amount to a change of attitude to these bodies. It was agreed by all that they were hopeless.

Speaker after speaker condemned the very idea of the reversal of the boycott decision and the Advisory Board system, but no resolution was adopted and the issue was postponed to a special meeting.

The debate was particularly pertinent to the Transvaal where it was said that not only had ordinary members of Congress stood for election to Advisory Boards, but highly-placed officials stood in a recent election in the name of Congress.

On the 5th January the Locations Advisory Board Congress was held at the D.O.C.C. where Mooki was returned unopposed as President. Reflecting the rising political tide Mooki said there was confusion about the role of this body arising from the repeated assertion that issues which were deemed to be 'political' were outside the sphere of the Locations' Congress.

Such issues included Government measures and legislation dealing with all sorts of matters affecting the black people. Although the Congress was not a political organisation any more than a congress of town councils could be, these matter, either political or non-political, were of such a nature that the organisation dared not close its eyes to them.

Mooki quoted from the Native (Urban Areas) Act which he said defines the scope of Advisory Boards to report on,

> "any matter specially affecting the interests of Natives in the urban area, upon which the board may consider it useful or desirable to report."

While this meant that the board was to decide, many authorities erred in trying to decide for the board. The Council must respect the other parties' views. He said this also applied to some Advisory Boards.

Mooki's speech was loudly cheered. But Vundla pointed out that he had not spoken of the western areas removal scheme or the Bantu Education Act.

One of the final resolution of the conference was to request the Government to take immediate steps to repeal the Bantu Education Act. There was also a resolution against endorsement out of unemployed and against ejectment of widows who could pay their rent. Also that no-one should be moved from where they live

> "until the most adequate provision has been made for him in conditions of tenure not less favourable than those he now enjoys." (127)

The conference's discussion of broader and political issues was a reflection of a higher degree of politicisation of the masses which was beginning to have its effect on this previously fairly conservative body.

With the growing mobilisation of the masses to back such an initiative, Fighting Talk, then the organ of the Congress Movement, saw the progressive potential of the Locations Advisory Board Congress.

> "Given the right leadership and policy, this body could become a force to be reckoned with in the civic and political life of the community."

But hanging over the heads of the delegates, was the threat of the Minister of Native Affairs to a delegation that interviewed him, that if they dabbled in politics, contrary to the purpose for which the boards were established he would close their conference.

But the writer argued that, with a few exceptions, the members of the conference were quite obviously out of touch with the masses of people whom they purported to represent and they showed a clear inability to grasp the fundamental issues that were at stake at that moment in the country. They had been reluctant to pass a resolution condemning removals.

> "Should the A.N.C. not decide to contest Advisory Board elections, and influence voting in a more healthy direction? This course is essential if we are to avoid a clash between the leadership of Congress and this group of men who wield much influence in the towns whether we like it or not." (128)

Problems within the Orlando A.N.C. erupted at a meeting when the Africanist Donald Maseko and others were expelled from the organisation by the Transvaal Executive Committee. (129) It was the beginning of a long period of tensions between Africanists and the non-racial democrats within the Orlando Branch.

With the directive to the local authorities from the Department of Native Affairs to charge 'economic rents' where household incomes exceeded 15 Pounds going ahead as from 1st July, there was some anxiety from the Council's NEAC. They complained of the almost impossibility of the Council getting accurate information about wages. (130)

The association of Southern African municipalities, the United Municipal Executive, was also apprehensive about attempting to implement the increases due to the administrative difficulties, the income limit being too low and the possible reaction from the community. (131)

Back in the Orlando A.N.C. with the Maseko clique out of the Branch, this was not the end of the Africanists. Meeting in March the Branch unanimously rejected the reversal of the 1949 boycott resolution. This included the boycott of Advisory Boards. While the policy of boycott was not exclusive to the Africanists, a principled adherence to this resolution was a hallmark of their policies and was the basis of the decision at this meeting. This contrasts with Walter Sisulu's position when he said that for the A.N.C. the boycott was a tactic and was not elevated to a principle. A second unanimous decision elected the Africanist P.K. Leballo as chairman of the Orlando Branch of the Youth League. (132)

With the Sophiatown removals still going ahead, Mpanza wanted to ask the Supreme Court for an interdict to stop the Minister of Native Affairs from moving these people into the new houses at Meadowlands. But his reasons were very different from those of the A.N.C. He wanted the court to rule that the people of Moroka and the Orlando Shelters had first claim on any new houses. He said with indignation;

> "'My people have lived in the worst slums in the world for ten years. They have been promised houses for ten years. Now, instead of building houses for them, the

> Government wants to demolish houses in Sophiatown - I call them mansions - and take the people from these mansions and put them in new houses.'
>
> Mr. Mpanza's explanation was so energetic that it startled his thoroughbred dogs and made them bark under the window." (133)

People interviewed that the Orlando Shelters supported Mpanza's view.

> "Yes, we want those houses at Meadowlands; we are tired of living here. Magebula will get them for us. He knows what he is talking about." (134)

At Advisory Board meetings Mpanza continued to ridicule the Council using simple traditional analogies which the ordinary people could take up. Referring to the Shop Hours Ordinance which the Board had attempted to get suspended before without a clear response from the Council, he complained of the Council's failure to fulfill their role as a go-between for approaches to higher authority.

> "I am the Bridegroom, but where is my bride?"

The Board wanted the Ordinance suspended for Orlando as people arriving home in the evenings were not able to buy food because the shops had to be closed.

> "As the go-between was unsatisfactory the thing to do was to tread upon it (which he illustrated by stamping repeatedly on the floor) and kick him out."

He proposed that the Advisory Board appeal to the Government to take over from the Council. (135)

The Johannesburg Joint Advisory Board, meeting in June unanimously rejected ethnic grouping in the townships which was being propagated by the Secretary for Native Affairs. They felt it would lead to tribal clashes.

Mpanza saw ulterior motives in the proposal. He said there was nothing to be gained from ethnic separation. it was asking for intertribal fighting. It was impractical and dangerous. Why did the Government not separate whites, he asked?

Pela said that city blacks no longer attached any importance to a man's tribal origins and the whole concept was totally unacceptable. (136)

As usual their advice was not taken by the Government but their warnings were to be seen to have been wise.

The Johannesburg Council was doing all it could to prevent the obvious conflict that would arise out of the increased rents. They had been subsidising sub-economic rents but were finding the cost increasingly difficult to bear. Their plea that the income limit be raised to 20 Pounds resulted in the increase being postponed from July 1st until after a conference in Pretoria in August or September. (137)

By July 1954 the number of people at Dube Township had increased to 3 000 although the township was not very developed.

When Dube held its first election that month, Mpanza lent his support to one of his supporters of old, Edward Kumalo of the Nkabinde group. He brought with him to Dube a special team of women campaigners wearing bright traditional regalia. Mpanza marched at their head wearing an 'outsize garment' of colourful animal skins.

By midday Mpanza knew that his men were fighting a losing battle. 'They are novices,' he said in disappointment. (138)

The intention behind ethnic grouping in the townships was made clear when the sub-committee of the Native Resettlement Board, which was responsible for Meadowlands and Diepkloof said that there had been some mixing of ethnic groups in urban areas.

> "In certain areas this has resulted in the creation of a formless urban conglomeration of people which in turn has become a happy hunting ground for the leaders of subversive organisations and movements." (139)

Put more simply it meant that where people were divided they were easier to dominate.

The pending rent increase was attracting intense interest in Orlando. It threatened to have a tremendous impact on their lives. It was no wonder then that when W.J.P. Carr the Manager of NEAD came to address a meeting on the subject at 8 pm on the 17th August in the Orlando Community Hall, he found the hall densely packed from wall to wall, in the aisles and onto the platform. A large proportion of the audience was women. They were in a serious mood and orderly. Nevertheless with the noise and lack of loudspeakers the meeting was postponed for a daytime meeting so that more could attend and hear. On the platform with Carr, were Mpanza, Xorile, Masupha and other well-known Orlando people. (140)

The attendance of the crowd and their mood at this meeting were a clear indication of the significance of the rents issue to the Orlando people. It was clear too that strong leadership was called for to deal with the situation.

The second meeting was held on Sunday 22nd August. An even bigger crowd was in attendance. About 5 000 people turned up to hear Carr explain the new rents. When he spoke there was a certain amount of jeering from the crowd. Mpanza went up onto the stage and attempted to speak. But the crowd was in no mood to listen to Advisory Board members. He was shouted down and booed until he left the meeting.

Then Kumalo was given the same treatment and Pela was also shouted down.

Carr quietened the crowd and explained that in the Government scheme sub-economic rents would be for those with an income of less than 15 Pounds. From 15 Pounds to 20 Pounds there would be an increase of 3 Shillings in the rent for every 10 Shillings of income. Over 20 Pounds would pay economic rentals. The Council, however, had agreed to work with an income limit of 20 Pounds, i.e. no sliding scale from 15 Pounds to 20 Pounds. He explained that the city would go bankrupt unless caution was exercised.

Speaking on behalf of the residents, G.G. Xorile, referred to as a well-known sportsman, said the rent increases would be an intolerable burden on a helpless people, and that the entire subject of rent increases was an unpopular one.

> "You have taken great pains to explain the whole position carefully and to point out how much harder it might be if the first rent schedule is forced on the City Council.
>
> We should like to ask the City Councillors present at this meeting to go back and tell the City Council that Orlando residents find it difficult to even consider it. We thank you for having come here, but we say 'No thank you.'"

An Orlando Congress leader, J. Molefe, put a motion to the crowd condemning,

> "the alarming, shocking and cruel decision of the Government to raise rents from sub-economic to economic levels.
>
> In calling upon residents to fight against this decision, we demand a minimum wage of 1 Pound a day, better houses, especially for people living in conditions of filth and squallor in the Orlando Shelters, and the installation of electricity throughout the township."

The motion was carried.

Amid great acclaim Potlaka Leballo made a fiery call to the people to refuse to pay a penny more. (141)

The next day Xorile and others formed the Orlando Rent Protest Committee to fight the rent increases. (142)

This was just the start. With the Congress of the People already planned, political energies dispersed since the Defiance Campaign now coalesced in an outburst of protest and organisation.

Walter Sisulu under a banning order, wrote to the Council in early September saying he fully supports the decision of the Orlando residents taken at the meeting on the 22nd August not to pay the increase and that he would refuse to pay it when it fell due at the beginning of the next month.

At the same time in Eastern Native Township there was a big rent protest meeting at which it was decided not to pay the increase. (143)

Startled by these developments and with October drawing nearer the NEAC hurriedly began arranging for an emergency meeting with the Joint Advisory Boards about the increases. (144)

The Advisory Boards made a last minute attempt to have the increases postponed on Sunday the 26th September. P.Q. Vundla spoke on behalf of the boards to Council representatives.

> "The people have no money. They have sent us to say so. The Advisory Boards ask you to speak to the Government on our behalf."
>
> The Council's reply was to urge that there be no resistance and that the Advisory Boards get the people to co-operate." (145)

Yet another meeting, called by the A.N.C., was held on the 26th September at which about 500 residents from Western Native Township, Newclare and Sophiatown decided to pay only the old rents. (146) If the offer was refused they would post the amount to the Council by registered letter. If the Council sent the money back, the matter would be taken to court. (147)

Another body to fight the rent increases was formed called the Johannesburg Anti-rental Co-ordinating Committee under the chairmanship of Peter Langene. Members of all Advisory Boards were said to be on this Committee. There were six representatives from each black township.

Money began pouring in for the fight against the new rents. It was proposed to take the fight to the courts and lawyers in Johannesburg were busy preparing the case.

All the Rand townships were in support of the boycott.

On the 30th September Orlando residents packed the D.O.C.C. for a meeting on the increases. They had been locked out at the Communal Hall. Several speakers emphasized that the campaign against the rent increases must be peaceful. A speaker severely reprimanded people who were reported to have made threats against all who paid the increased rents the next day.

The Orlando Rent Protest Committee also decided to fight the rents in court. A fund was started with every family asked to contribute 2s.6d. Hundreds of municipal rent forms had been handed over to the protest committee by residents who had not filled them in, although many had already been filled in and handed in at the Superintendent's office.

Showing solidarity the Transvaal Indian Congress issued a statement opposing the increases. (148)

Alarmed by the wave of unified opposition the Government wavered in its resolve and the 1st October came and went without the increases and without the increase having been promulgated in the Government Gazette. This was a first victory to the residents.

People who paid the higher rents were given change. The old rents were accepted without question.

But the increases had only been postponed. Notices in the township offices advertised the new date for the increases as the 1st November.

The Orlando Rent Protest Committee announced on the 4th October that they were to seek an interdict against the Minister of Native Affairs, Dr. Verwoerd and the City Council to restrain them from raising the rents. They maintained that the Minister had exceeded his powers under the Natives (Urban Areas) Act.

The protest was joined by 'coloured' residents at Coronationville on 4th October. (149)

By mid-October the increases had still not been gazetted. Lengene said that the lawyers could not start work until this happened. The Orlando Committee, however, had already instructed its lawyers to go to court and was to ask the court to stop payment of the increases until it had been decided in court. (150)

Facing growing opposition, at 65 years old Mpanza had announced that he was retiring from politics. With elections in sight again, however, he changed his mind. He decided to stand again for Advisory Board elections because he was angry with the people who attacked the Advisory Board on the question of rents.

> "I'm going to stand to spite them. I'll continue the good fight."

His solution to the rent problem was that blacks should be employed in the NEAD in place of whites so that its funds would not be drained, because costs would be lower. (151)

Mooki speaking as the President of the Locations Advisory Board Congress held a similar position to Mpanza. He recommended 'positive apartheid' as a means to reduce rents, which meant allowing blacks to build houses for blacks and replacing whites in the township administration. (152)

Also in October, an angry meeting in Kliptown decided to boycott buses if the fares were increased. (153)

Transport was also the topic of a long debate in the Orlando Board on the 26th October when rail passenger fares to and from the township and the question of more buses to relieve the railway overflow were discussed. Reflecting a militant mood in the townships Pela said that if the railways insisted on increased fees, then people would protest. They might decide to walk to and from work every day for a week, he ventured. (154)

The rent increases were gazetted on 1st November giving many until the 7th to pay. NEAD claimed to have received 60% of the completed rent information forms of the 18 500 sent out. The rest had been given to the anti-rents committees or torn up. (155)

The 1st also saw the start of the Kliptown bus boycott. Workers walked to the station some kilometres away to and from work. (156)

Opposition to the increased rentals continued to mount. The Transvaal region of the Federation of South African Women (F.S.A.W.) called for a special conference on the rentals for the 14th November. The regional secretary, Helen Joseph said,

> "These rent increases are something which all women should get together to oppose. They affect the health and future of our children and our families. Most Africans cannot afford even the present rents; they are living below the bread line."

A mass meeting was held outside the D.O.C.C. in early November. Speakers explained the legal proceedings on the rents case. When the Johannesburg Anti-rental Co-ordinating Committee was first established, Xorile had been a member of the Committee. He had since resigned and was working with the Orlando Rent Protest Committee which was conducting its own case. Serious dissatisfaction with this was expressed at this meeting, at his 'dividing the peoples struggle' (157)

The F.S.A.W. conference was held in the Trades Hall in Johannesburg. Over 100 women delegates attended. Township representatives from the Anti-Rental Committees were present as were church organisations. In addition 16 branches of the Women's League of the A.N.C., the A.N.C., T.I.C., S.A.C.P.O. and five branches of the C.O.D. were also there said to be representing 15 000 people. (158)

The conference was opened by Father Trevor Huddleston. The meeting was addressed by an Orlando resident, Lillian Ngoyi.

> "They say that if we don't pay the increased rents in the townships which the Government has gazetted, we will be ejected. Why should be worry. We are ejected everyday already.
>
> We can afford to eat only as much as birds, yet they tell us how to eat; that we must have vitamins, that we must have starch, proteins and fats. It would be nice to eat like that. But we can only afford porridge.
>
> Our babies are sick with malnutrition while we are pregnant and before they are even born."

Helen Joseph added

> "If the Government and the City Council insist on higher rentals they will be taking food out of the children's mouths." (159)

Xorile's application was received by the Supreme Court in Pretoria on the 18th November. His petition said his committee represented 5 000 members from Orlando. (160) The case began the next day. (161)

Vundla had made application on behalf of the Anti-Rental Co-ordinating Committee and his case was due to be heard in Pretoria on the 30th November. (162) It was to be presented by Joe Slovo instructed by attorneys Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo. (163)

With Advisory Board elections less than a month away, there was little interest from the townships. This was attributed to rent increases. Again as political conflict heightened interest in the advisory boards decreased. It was usual for it to be clear by November who would be standing for the various parties. But by then the opposition groups were still deciding on their candidates. The Sofasonke team, however, was unchanged. (164)

Still ignoring the importance of the rents issue at the last Advisory Board meeting in November, Mpanza called for medical and postal facilities and public conveniences in the new suburb of Elizabethville. He said there were not enough ambulances.

Mooki and Pela supported Mpanza's motion and Pela moved that the board hold up the approval on a financial vote until four new additional ambulances were provided. The Board agreed. (165)

On the 30th November Xorile won his case in the Supreme Court in Pretoria when the rent increase was declared invalid. It was dismissed as it did not state clearly how income was to be understood and determined.

Vundla's application was being heard in another court and he won his case by consent on the outcome of the first. (166)

Amidst the jubilation, in a statement that showed an advanced level of political consciousness, T.E. Tshunungwa on behalf of the A.N.C. Working Committee, warned that the struggle against rent increases was by no means over.

> "We want to emphasize the need for united action to link the Rent Question with other oppressive measures and to put the people on the alert against any tendency to think that the Rent Question has been done away with. The Government and local authorities will not rest until they have devised a method of re-imposing the rents.
>
> In supporting the legal action, we made it clear and we want to make it clearer still that it is mass action on which we depend. We must therefore prepare and use all our resources to defeat the Government once more on its cruel measures." (167)

Adding his voice to this, Moretsele, the President of the Transvaal A.N.C. sent his congratulations to the Anti-Rent Co-ordinating Committee with a similar message.

> "But the people must not rest on their laurels." (168)

On the 12th December at a public meeting in Johannesburg attended by representatives of the A.N.C., members of church organisations, women's organisations and local Advisory Boards, the Anti-Rents Increases Co-ordinating Committee was reconstituted. It was expanded to represent all tenant protection associations in the Transvaal. (169)

With Xorile's success and a steady build-up of opposition over the years, Mpanza found himself in troubled water when election time arrived. It was clearly going to be the biggest election battle Orlando had seen for years. Mpanza's tough opponent was his old ally from the Shantytown Committee, 'the hard hitting sportsman,' George Xorile.

Soon after the official announcement of nominations, Xorile challenged Mpanza to meet him in a same-platform 'showdown'. Mpanza took him up. They met in a packed Communal Hall on Sunday the 12th December.

> "There was an animated verbal dual. Mr. Mpanza reminded his audience of his invaluable service to the people of Orlando in twenty years of public life.
>
> But the old man seemed to have lost his stinging punch, showing signs of nervousness as he wound up the unapplauded speech.

> His followers seem to have been taken unaware by the unexpected clash with a big crowd of Xorile followers.
>
> An explanation why there were two cases was made at Orlando last Sunday. The Orlando Rent Protest Association had taken the initiative in forming a Co-ordinating Committee, a spokesman said. The association had already started a fund to help fight the rent issue in court. But some members of the Co-ordinating Committee thought other means to fight the court case could be found.
>
> The Orlando men pointed out that already they had briefed Counsel. In any case, the said, the Co-ordinating Committee was preparing different grounds on which the fight the case.
>
> Xorile's followers are confident. Observers are wary of forecasts.
>
> During the clash at Sunday's meeting, Mr. Mpanza and his followers walked out in a defiant attitude.
>
> 500 hands went up for a motion of confidence in Xorile. There were no hands against."

Mpanza was fielding the same team. Xorile's party consisted of some old names in Orlando politics, S.J.J. Lesolang, H.M. Butshingi and S.M. Moema. (170)

Finally, the Orlando Advisory Board responded at a meeting on the 17th December to reject the proposed increase in rent for houses. They felt that if there should be any increase it should be on the clear understanding that some portion of the increased rent should go to the purchase of the houses. (171)

But for Mpanza the writing was on the wall. Candidates on the Anti-Rent Increase Platform won sweeping victories in all the Johannesburg Advisory Board elections.

In Orlando the highest poll in the history of the Advisory Board was recorded when Xorile's Orlando Rent Protest Committee crushingly defeated the Sofasonke Party. Xorile himself defeated Mpanza by 4 398 votes to 941. (172)

Xorile said he would advocate ownership of houses, and overhaul of the transport situation and the reticulation of electricity both for street lighting and for use in houses in Orlando. (173)

Although Mpanza had not supported the rent increase his party was felt to not have shown sufficient concern. Xorile had fought the issue right through and was shown the residents' appreciation by being elected to it. (174)

Mpanza had clearly misread the mood of the people. His strong roots in the masses had been his strength and power in the 1940's. Now he appeared to have drifted away and the masses were giving their support to other parties. It was these which won the elections.

A follow-up meeting was held shortly after the election where speakers congratulated Xorile and Vundla in their successful rent cases.

Amidst the happy speeches Vundla expressed concern that Xorile had taken separate action and urged united action in future.

The Co-ordinating Committee reaffirmed its broadened area of activity to fight rent increases.

The Council had already begun to reapply for an increase and had referred the proposal to the Advisory Boards. (175)

Mpanza's defeat meanwhile had caused a sensation. It was a topic of conversation in the homes, the buses and the trains. His old supporters from the Shelters who had been moved to Jabavu, looked back to Orlando in amazement at the outcome of the elections.

Mpanza was unhappy with the result. He decided to take action.

> "Mpanza urgently telephoned for a reporter from the Bantu World to come to the headquarters of the Sofasonke Party in Orlando East.
>
> Inside were several women speaking all at once. They were arguing about election results.
>
> 'We are not satisfied. Something must be wrong' said the women.

Seated in a chair with his back to the wall and a table spattered with receipts sat Mpanza. He was listening to the angry women before him. All wore the badges of the Sofasonke Party.

'We ask you to do something, go to court, our party is angry,' the women repeated again and again.

When Mpanza finally spoke he looked like an injured lion. His face was tense and lines showed on his forehead.

'Yes, my children,' he told the women, 'we shall go to court. The election must be examined by the judges of the Supreme Court.'

It was full five minutes before Mpanza recognised our reporter. Then he addressed the women again. 'Look here is a Bantu World reporter. I want him to take what we have discussed. He must tell the whole world that Mpanza is going to the Supreme Court about the election.'

The reporter was given a seat near Magebula.

'On what grounds do you wish to challenge the elections, Mr. Mpanza?'

The old man smiled. 'A good question, my son,' he said.

He gave the following grounds:

(1) From early in the morning to closing time in the afternoon the Shelters voting booth was packed with voters. All these were members of the Sofasonke Party and they numbered thousands. How now does it turn out to have been only 941?

(2) Early when the voting started I called Mr. Xorile and both of us saw the Returning Officer, Mr. Cleverly, to discuss the point of identification. I suggested that every voter produce his identity book with his receipt. This was to stop people voting more than once.

(3) Many voters at the Shelters had receipts marked for instance, 'paid for July-December, October-January' but with the word NOvember omitted. They were returned to obtain a certificate that November had been paid.

(4) Here are receipts of people who did not vote. They finally were locked out at closing time.

> (5) Even though there were two assistant returning officers at the Shelters the movement of the queue was slow. Many people had to retire without voting because of the hot sun.
>
> 'These are some of the points,' the old lion said, 'and there may be more. But my lawyers are very busy with the case.'" (176)

On Monday the 3rd January, nearly 1 000 supporters of Mpanza brought receipts to the Sofasonke Party head office claiming they were not given a chance to vote for him.

Mpanza was upset about reports that he had supported the rent increases. He said he had fought the increases throughout. He was fighting the election result as a matter of principle as he would normally not mind who won the elections at Orlando. (177)

The A.N.C. in the wake of the rents struggles and with the Bantu Education Campaign, the Western Areas Removal Campaign, the Anti-Pass Campaign and the Congress of the People in the offing was beginning to pick up momentum again. (178)

There was still confusion over the A.N.C. boycott policy. Although there was a decision in September 1954 to put foward Congress candidates for the N.R.C., a conference in Durban confirmed the boycott resolution in December of that year, and asked Congress members to refrain from standing. (179)

1955 was also the year that the Johannesburg black housing shortage was finally starting to come under control with the start of the Government backed site and service schemes. Said the Department of Native Affairs;

> "The solution of the Bantu housing problem has now reached a stage which we can call the end of the beginning. Improved houses are being completed every day. During the next ten years hundreds of thousands of Bantu will be properly housed for the first time." (180)

With housing no longer being the immediate problem of the communities, rents were now clearly on the agenda.

The upsurge in Congress politics once more had its ripple effects on other bodies. The Locations Advisory Board Congress was held in early January at which they called on the Government to immediately repeal the Bantu Education Act. They called on Advisory Board members to enlighten parents on the implications of Bantu education. For the first time, they decided to work with other black organisations. Reflecting this growing politicisation, Mooki was replaced by a Congress veteran from East London, R.H. Godlo. (181)

Back in Orlando Xorile's Orlando tenant's protection association celebrated the rent victory on Sunday the 9th January with a feast at the association's expense. Xorile was referred to as the 'Mayor'.

Father Huddlestone addressed the people saying that they faced the choice of a determined struggle for freedom or servitude for all time. (182)

Mpanza had clearly been shocked at his defeat. Although his fighting spirit drew him to contest the election results, at 66 he seemed to be less sure of himself. He turned his attention to less controversial issues.

He told a meeting of about 800 of his followers that he planned a large bazaar to be run by a co-operative society. This was to be his last contribution to the welfare of the community. He was wildly applauded as he made the announcement.

> "'This will enable to you to obtain all the necessary commodities of life the cheapest possible way,' he said.
>
> In the hot sun Mr. Mpanza speaking with deep emotion, bared his head and said a few words of supplication to God for the success of the project.
>
> 'There is no good reason why we as a people should be lagging so far behind other sections of the community economically.
>
> With faith and good guidance we can be as prosperous as any in the wealthiest suburb of Johannesburg.
>
> I am fully aware of the difficulties. But with everyone pulling his weight I should, in a few years time, die happy and satisfied.'
>
> People mobbed Mpanza and made offers for an immediate start." (183)

But having fallen from grace, Mpanza's popularity had taken a dive.

Driving through Orlando East with a friend named Zwane on the afternoon of 16th January, a group of children started shouting 'asinamali!' - we have no money, the slogan of the Xorile group and threw stones at his car, damaging it.

When he got out of his car to reprimand them he was tackled by adults who hit him with stones, sticks, bricks and an iron bar. They stopped when Zwane blew a whistle, and ran away leaving Mpanza with an open wound on the top of his head and another over his eye. Mpanza saw the assault as political.

He layed a charge at the police station but the other side lodged a counter-charge against him. (184)

In January the Council had covered some of the legal loopholes in their first attempt to raise rents and had re-imposed the increase. Rent arrears immediately began to accumulate as there was a fairly general failure to pay the new sub-economic rents. (185)

At a meeting on the 28th the Council decided to drop regulations for increasing sub-economic rents in the face of a general attitude of total opposition from blacks generally and from the Advisory Boards. Commerce and industry also indicated their fear that peaceful labour relations would be upset. The economic rent increase still went ahead. (186)

Local politics took a turn for the worse when on the morning of the 2nd February, Moema, the deputy leader of the New Orlando Advisory Board was decoyed and beaten up.

At half-past five in the morning he was urgently called out to settle a family quarrel. A woman told him that her husband had made her sleep out that night.

He went along with her to her home, but the woman was chased out the house and the man bolted the door behind him. Another man sprang out of hiding.

They attacked Moema with a big stick and an iron bar, accusing him of 'meddling'.

Defending himself, Moema overturned furniture. The noise attracted attention from neighbours. Somebody threw a brick which burst open the door. Moema escaped and was treated at Baragwanath hospital. He reported the incident to the Police. He said the thugs were political opponents.

With the risk of the situation degenerating even further, Xorile appealed at a meeting on the 31st for order and good behaviour. He asked the people of Orlando to show good citizenship and respect for each other. (187)

What the rise of the Xorile group in Orlando showed was that even with a change of party, the Orlando Advisory Board still tended to tread a separate path from the other townships. That and the particularly vocal Africanist tendency in the Orlando Branch of the A.N.C. indicated that there was somethig specific to conditions in Orlando which may have contributed. The selected class origins of the original inhabitants, and the filtering off of much of the later poorer and working class component, first through their moving into the squatter camps, and then their being moved to Jabavu, partially explains the particularity of Orlando.

Xorile's Advisory Board maintained this independant stand when he said that he supporte the removal of Sophiatown tenants to Meadowlands although he thought that the shelter problem should have been tackled first. The Government had begun moving people from Sophiatown to Meadowlands with the help of 2 000 police and army reinforcements standing by. Xorile thought however that the Sophiatown standholders should be defended but felt he could not help them because of the splits between them. It was reported that Mpanza had also wanted to help them but was prevented for the same reason. (188)

On the 20th February the NEAD warned that higher rents on the new sub-economic houses would soon be charged. Having divided opposition by successfully imposing the economic rent increase first, the Council was now gingerly feeling its way toward the full increase. The sub-economic rents would be charged for an income of 15 Pounds or less, with an extra

3 Shillings in rent for every 10 Shillings of income above the 15 Pound limit. (189)

The new increase was gazetted on the last day of February and the stage was set for another round in the rents battle. (190) The A.N.C.'s warning of the previous year had proved correct.

As news of the increase spread in the townships th slogan of 'Asinamali!' was taken up again.

The Council had asked the Advisory Boards to comment on the increases.

Public meetings called by the boards around the Rand were told by the residents to take the matter to court if necessary. (191)

By then Mpanza had submitted a petition to the Supreme Court alleging that the conduct of last December's election was irregular. He wanted the election re-run and was prepared to pay the costs of the action himself, provided that Xorile's group, now commonly known as the Asinamali Party, did not oppose the case in court. (192)

The Asinamali Party refused this offer and the case was heard on 15th March. The Supreme Court was packed with Sofasonke supporters, the women wearing the red sash and the men in traditional Zulu dress. Xorile's followers also turned up in large numbers.

Mpanza arrived in court wearing a smart grey English tweed suit and a light green shirt with no tie. He quipped;

> "Zulus don't wear ties. When they go out to fight there is always the danger that your enemy might grip your tie and expel your ghost."

Mpanza was conducting his own defence.

Xorile was shocked when the case began and Mpanza triumphantly produced a letter from the election officer to say that he was not opposing Mpanza's petition.

Xorile left hurriedly for further consultations and the case was postponed to the 22nd in the confusion that followed. (193)

When court was reconvened the large crowd spilled over into the white side of the court. Court orderlies, interpreters and police tried unsuccessfully to get them out.

When the Judge entered the court he ordered them to move which they did. The case was over in a few minutes when it was again postponed to April 12th.

During the trial a man was seen wiping some black grease on the rails of the public gallery. Someone whispered, 'It is muti.' (194)

Meanwhile in the A.N.C. the struggle with the Africanists continued with the expulsion of three Orlando Youth Leaguers from the Provincial Congress on the 13th at Sophiatown. (195)

Despite objections from the boards to ethnic grouping in the townships, the Council had continued to implement this policy. The Orlando Advisory Board objected to this and their 30th March meeting. Mdingi pointed out that because the new township of Mofolo was earmarked for Ngunis only, Basotho families would lose their turn according to the housing list. The Board asked the Council to stop this policy. (196)

On the 15th April Mpanza won his case over the elections which were declared invalid. The date for the new election was to be the 4th June. (197)

In Orlando the Advisory Board elections were warming up in early May. Meetings were being held by the Asinamali Party throughout Orlando. Mpanza invited the Asinamali Party to debate with him on the same platform but they did not accept the challenge. (198)

By the end of May the first 750 of the houses being built on the 3 million Pound loan, which was from the mining houses, were almost complete. The fruits of the housing struggle were finally being reaped. (199)

With Lengene still the chairman, the Anti-Rental Co-ordinating Committee was mobilizing 4 000 families in five Johannesburg townships to fight a 'rent war' with the Johannesburg City Council.

Opposition to the increase was widespread and independent initiatives were taken. Rent protesters had staged a march from the Krugersdorp location of Mansiesville to the town's centre at 5 o'clock in the morning on the 20th April. They were stopped and dispersed by police.

Lengene had made an appeal to the Supreme Court over the question of economic rentals. It was a test case based on a technical point. It would only be heard in November.

The Anti-Rents Co-ordinating Committee advised its members not to pay the higher rents, and not to fill in earnings assessment forms provided by the Johannesburg City Council. 13 846 families had already filled in the forms by mid-May, but 4 445 had not.

In response the Council issued an ultimatum that those who had not sent in the forms by the end of the month would be assumed to be earning over 20 Pounds a month and made to pay economic rentals or face prosecution.

Conducting the 'rent war' had been made more difficult by a ban on meetings of more than 10 blacks in the urban areas. (200)

At the Advisory Board elections on the 4th June the Asinamali Party was re-elected. There was a high percentage poll, the results being Xorile, 5 183 votes; Lesolang, 4 832; Moema, 4 822 and Butshingi, 4 802 for the Asinamali Party, and Mpanza, 1 656; Masupha, 1 409; Mooki, 1 416 and Kumalo, 1 449 for the Sofasonke Party. (201) It was very much the same margin of defeat although the total votes cast for the two parties was higher.

Against opposition the Information Officer of the Native Affairs Department in Pretoria claimed that there was no proof that ethnic group was a main cause of black riots. He said ethnic grouping led to better administration, control, and educational facilities. (202) What the

Information Officer did not mention was whose interests the administration, control and education served, and if he had no proof of the effects of ethnic grouping it would not be long before he did.

By mid-June there was still 2 000 families in Orlando and Jabavu who had not sent in income assessment forms. The Anti-Increased Rent Co-ordinating Committee agreed to pay for the legal defense of families not paying the higher rents. (203)

The A.N.C.'s plans for the Congress of the People materialised on the 26th June 1955. In spite of police intimidation 3 000 delegates of all races met at Kliptown. Most of the Johannesburg townships including Meadowlands were represented. (204) There the delegates drew up a Freedom Charter listing the demands of the people they represented for a liberated South Africa. In summary this reads;

> ". The people shall govern.
> . Every man and woman shall have the vote and the right to stand for electon to all bodies which make laws.
> . All national groups shall have equal rights.
> . The people shall share in the country's wealth.
> . The land shall be shared among those who work it.
> . All shall have equal rights before the law.
> . All shall enjoy equal human rights.
> . There shall be work and security.
> . The doors of learning and culture shall be opened.
> . There shall be houses, security and comfort.
> . There shall be peace and friendship."

The Charter concluded,

> "... let all who love their people and their country now say as we say here, 'These freedoms we shall fight for side by side, throughout our lives, until we have won our liberty.'"

It was an important event and in the words of Huddlestone six months previously, the 'people' had chosen the determined struggle for freedom over servitude for all time. (205)

But not everybody made it to the Congress of the People. Xorile had called an urgent meeting on that Sunday morning of the 26th. He apologised for the clash but said he could not do otherwise. (206)

The Orlando Advisory Board preoccupied with day-to-day issues met on the 28th June. The question of the sale of houses in Orlando was raised once again. The NEAD replied that the sale had been held up by the court decision in the test case on economic and sub-economic rentals as NEAD felt that the already built houses should be kept to rent and the new houses be put up for sale, so they said. (207) The Board once again opposed ethnic grouping in Mofolo. (208)

At Moroka the emergency camp had been cleared by July and all the people housed. (209) Meanwhile the Asinamali Party was opposing the removal of people from the Orlando Shelters to the site-and-service scheme at Moroka. The plan was that on the site-and-service scheme they would have to build their own houses within five years paying 30 Shillings rent per month for the vacant lot. This was exorbitant compared to rent of 17s4d for a two-roomed house in Orlando.

A mass meeting described by Schreiner Baduza as 'the biggest meeting I have ever seen in Orlando,' totally rejected the site-and-service scheme. (210)

The Council was on the offensive over rent arrears and charges against defaulters were mounting. (211)

In a political backwater, removed from major events taking place around him, for the first time in eleven years Mpanza struggled to have a share in the action, in ways sometimes that verged on the ridiculous.

> "The Sofasonke Party marched into the Orlando residents' meeting last week. They sang and blew whistles which made the hall echo again and again. The men carried sticks and women carried brooms. Mr. James Sofasonke Mpanza had come to read a letter to the authorities.
>
> The letter calls for a round-table conference on the future of the shelters. Mr. Mpanza wrote: 'The Johannesburg City Council has long availed itself of the segregation provisions of the Natives' Urban Areas Act.
>
> But it has failed to carry out its obligations under the same law - it has not provided sufficient accommodation for the Africans who were segregated.'

> Mpanza and Xorile had to help the interpreters from time to time who were struggling with the letter. Also there was so much noise that it was not easy to hear. Mr. Mpanza then put his case. Supporters of Mr. Xorile marched out. Others kept a barrage of noise and interjections.
>
> The sound of the whistles, singing and banging on the floor gave notice of the march out of the Sofasonke Party." (212)

The site-and-service scheme was becoming another rallying point for political opposition. It was condemned by the Congress ovement, the advisory boards, an the squatters in the Orlando Shelters and the shantytowns. (213)

Meanwhile in spite of increased acitivism on their part, the Joint Executives of the Congress Alliance agreed after sober thought,

> "that at no stage had they managed successfully to link the Congress of the People with the day-to-day struggles of the People; nor had they succeeded in interesting more than a handful of rural people, factory workers and miners." (214)

To do so would require new initiatives.

In Orlando, the Advisory Board passed a resolution opposing Bantu education in September and refused to nominate anybody to local school committees as invited to by the Native Commissioner. (215)

In an action reminiscent of the mid-1940's, on the night of Saturday the 10th September at 9 p.m., encouraged by widespread opposition to their removal to the Moroka site and service scheme, about 300 families trekked in hired trucks from the Orlando Shelters to some uncompleted houses at Westcliff, Orlando West. About 100 houses were occupied.

Every available policeman at the Orlando Barracks was mobilized to evict them. They scattered when the police arrived but locked the doors of the houses before they left. Police had to break in to remove their goods and three Council trucks were used to take them back to the Shelters.

There was some organisation behind it along the lines of the old squatter movements. It was in fact a protest for houses promised to the Shelters people in 1944. The Council prosecuted some leaders under the Illegal Squatting Act. (216)

Mpanza at the same time was back in the wa s. On his return in his car from Elizabethville in Orlando West he found people along the road near the Orlando Clinic. They were Vendas doing traditional dances in the road. He said he heard people shout 'Ho, ho,' when he approached. It occurred to him that they might be the Asinamali people and having had one bad experience with them he tried to get away, but his car fell into a small ditch. What also frightened him was that just two days before Lucas Kumalo had been assaulted near Phefeni station, in Dube, and had to to have stitches in his head.

They said he had driven straight at them, blowing his horn. As they scattered the car caught a little boy and passed right over without injuring him. The crowd thought Mpanza had killed the child and rushed at him when his car fell into the ditch. They pulled him out and beat him up severely.

He was injured and Municipal Police prevented the crowd from hurting him further. The 66 year old Mpanza was admitted to Baragwanath Hospital. (217)

On the 17th September, the Special Branch, alarmed at the potential threat of the Congress of the People, raided the homes and premises of some 400 persons and organisations, and confiscated vast quantitites of books, documents and other items. (218) These were kept by the police while they studied them.

The rent increased from the 1st November. (219) As an additional effort to persuade people to pay the increase, the NEAD arranged public meetings at the end of November to explain the regulation whereby rents had to be up to date before a tenant could vote or be eligible for nomination for the Advisory Board. The Advisory Boards met to draw up plans to deal with the situation.

It was expected that in spite of the rents boycott, the election would be the most contested election around the Rand for many years. This was because the A.N.C. had decided to put up its own candidates in some areas. (220)

For the first time in the history of the Advisory Boards system in the Transvaal the Reef Boards held a combined meeting on the 26th November to discuss common problems. There were 17 boards present. All boards called for a revival of the civic guard system. (221)

They complained about the competence of the officials of the Locations Advisory Boards Congress. For the whole year these had remained silent when burning issues were discussed. They had held no executive meetings and had not issued one statement to the press in their term of office. (222) Clearly the boards were looking for a more active and directed leadership.

At the A.N.C. Annual Conference in December, the Freedom Charter came under attack from the dissident Africanists. They objected to the clause that said South Africa belonged to all who live in it. For them South Africa belonged exclusively to the 'Africans'. They also objected that the A.N.C. was not carrying through the Programme of Action in that it had still not boycotted Advisory Boards. Matthews in reply said that the Freedom Charter was a development of the Programme of Action. (223) As the A.N.C. non-racial democrats took a softer line on the boards, the Africanists became more obsessive in their opposition to them. (224) Many A.N.C. members had already been banned and could not attend the conference. (225)

In Orlando the Asinamali Party was returned to the Board unopposed. (226)

The Locations Advisory Board Congress was held in Pietermaritzburg on the 10th January. Symptomatic of the growing politicisation of the Locations' Congress was the growing tension between it and the Native Affairs Department (NAD). For the first time in the 28 years of its existence the Department declined to send a representative to attend the Congress.

Said the Secretary, Sixaba,

> "relations with the Government have deteriorated to such an extent that the Native Affairs Department has declined to sent speakers. It would appear that the Department took exception to the demand by Congress that, inter alia, the Bantu Education Act be cancelled as passed at Uitenhage."

He read an extract from a letter from the Secretary of NEAD which stated the Government's objection to

> "discussion of national policy which does not fall within its scope of activities." (227)

In spite of this the Locations Congress felt pressed to condemn passes for women, re-iterate opposition to Bantu Education, object to the harshness of the influx control measures under section ten of the Urban Areas Act, and look at problems of both housing and juvenile delinquency.

This was in spite of the fact that already the Nelspruit delegates were not there because their town council refused to fund their trip to Pietermaritzburg and that Special Branch detectives watched the proceedings throughout.

Godlo said it was not their fault that

> "All Union politics are Native Affairs!"

The Transvaal members spoke out the strongers. A delegate said that according to democratic principles the majority in a country should govern. When opposition to pass laws for women was expressed there were cries of 'Afrika!'.

Although there was strong support for Xorile from the Transvaal, O.F.S. and Natal, Godlo was re-elected President for 1956.

By the end of the conference no municipality had offered to host the next Locations Congress as was usually the practice.

The Boards resolved to send a delegation to see the Native Affairs Department to discuss their differences. (228)

Mpanza had withdrawn from Advisory Board politics this year. Instead he concentrated on his horses. In February he spoke of plans to form the first African Turf Club in the country. By this time he owned seven pedigreed race horses.

He organised a demonstration horse race at Evaton in March. (229)

Meeting in mid-February the Johannesburg Joint Boards unanimously agreed to strong resistance to the rent increases. They felt it was the local authorities who wanted the increase, not the Government. They called a meeting in Orlando for the 17th March for residents of all Johannesburg townships to get a mandate for court action. There would be only one case this time. (230)

Joining in the protest the A.N.C. issued a statement demanding,

> "not rent increases, but the fixing of a minimum wage of 1 Pound a day for all workers." (231)

The wave of protest against the increases swept through the townships as the slogan of 'Asinamali!' was revived.

Meanwhile Mpanza was back in court. He was arrested on a charge of obstructing a traffic officer in the course of his duties. He was stopped by the officer who tested his car's brakes by accelerating then braking. Mpanza objected that he was damaging his car. The traffic officer was annoyed by this and arrested him. Mpanza was found not guilty and discharged. (232)

There was a great deal of speculation at this time about the Urban Bantu Authorities Bill which the Nats were trying to pass. It was expected that the Bill would replace Advisory Boards with ethnic based bodies. (233)

A deputation of five Johannesburg Joint Advisory Board members was sent to Cape Town to see Verwoerd, the Minister of Native Affairs, to plead against the introduction of the Bill. He refused to see them. (234)

Verwoerd had ordered them to stay in Johannesburg but they had refused saying the 'people' had expressed the wish that they left for Cape Town with or without his consent. (235)

Drawn to comment, Mpanza said he opposed the new Bill on the grounds that no one man could be supreme chief according to African custom, also that a chief was born and never appointed. The Governor-General would become 'Supreme Chief' under this Bill. A supreme chief could ot make laws for his people without the advice of the tribal elders.

When a new law was proposed it was first discussed in the Nkundla, or tribal gathering. It was not first made then brought to the people.

'No white man would ever qualify to become Supreme Chief of Africans.' He likened the measure adopted by the new Bill to that of the despotic Chaka. (236)

At a huge meeting to report back on the five man deputation that went to Cape Town, Pela said that Dr. Verwoerd had proved that he 'represents' the Black people only as their baas.

At this meeting Advisory Board members and Congress officials spoke out from the same platform against the Government in a significant demonstration of unity.

Lilian Ngoyi, the only woman speaker of the day, said,

> "Why should the A.A.C. fight the boards instead of fighting Dr. Verwoerd?"

Applauding the action of the Advisory Board delegation the Transvaal A.N.C. President, Moretsele said;

> "We of the A.N.C. want unity."

Resolutions adopted amidst loud applause condemned Verwoerd's refusal to see the Boards and urged further action by the Boards to fight the Bills. (237)

On the 3rd June over 100 Transvaal board members and observers met to discuss Verwoerd's Bill. The speakers pressed the boards to further outspoken opposition and action against the bill.

Vundla said the Boards must speak the language of the people, and that language was 'freedom in our lifetime.' Verwoerd had said in Parliament that the Deputation was composed of 'agitators' and that one was connected with Communism. Vundla denied this and said the group represented the views of the majority of blacks. The delegation had been W. Pela, P. Lengene, G. Xorile, P. Vundla and H.M. Butshingi.

The boards denied that they were Government servants as they were paid by the people through the Native Revenue Account. It was felt however that there should be another organisation financed directly by the people, so that it could represent the people without fear.

It was decided to convene an all-in-conference of boards and other orgnisations to decide on action against the laws. (238)

Graasroots activism in Orlando was beginning to achieve new heights. In June 400 women blowing whistles and singing Congress songs marched to the office of the Senior Superintendent of Orlando to protest against passes for women. They protested also against the permit system, Bantu Education and increased rents.

The superintendent said the women should have gone to the Advisory Board about all these matters. They responded by pointing out that neither he nor the authorities went to the Advisory Boards when the police wanted to raid, when they had trouble with their husbands, when the Bantu Education Act was introduced, when people from the Protectorates were deported. He spoke to them briefly and was greeted with shouts of 'Mayibuye' and the Afrika salute. (239)

The Council was alarmed by the sudden upswing in political activity in the townships. They imposed a ban on meetings in the townships of more than ten people.

The public outcry which followed cause the Council to postpone the ban. The A.N.C. said they saw the ban as being aimed directly at the rents issue to prevent organisation against the increase. (240)

It was in 1956 that the mining companies passed the loan of 3 million Pounds to the Council to build houses in the townships. Mpanza approved of the loan but still spoke for his supporters.

> "Residents of Shelters should have first priority. I say so because they have been made to live under slum conditions for twelve years while new townships have sprung up all around them.
>
> They should be rehoused near the shelters; they should not be moved miles away. When the houses are built, these people should be allowed to buy them; they should not be made perpetual tenants." (241)

In September there were moves by the Transvaal A.N.C. to open the organisation to all races. (242) This was of course opposed by the Africanists who were particularly strong in Orlando.

Support for the Africanists came from an unexpected source when the Department of Native Affairs said that the A.N.C. should be for blacks only. No Government Department would negotiate with it as long as it was 'international'. (243)

In the meantime the Government was persuading local authorities to cut municipal grants for delegates to the Locations Congress. This jeopardised the next conference.

The National Executive of the Locations Congress was displeased with the Johannesburg Joint Boards. They felt that the deputation to Cape Town had pre-empted the delegation from the Locations Congress which had been decided on. The Johannesburg Board's action was seen as a stunt calculated to discredit the National Executive. The Johannesburg Joint Boards passed a motion of no confidence in the National Executive. (244)

With rent arrears arrests and trials happening daily, Peter Lengene, chairman of the Johannesburg Joint Advisory Boards and acting achairman

of the Transvaal Advisory Boards announced moves to call a national conference of all black leaders to discuss the problems caused by the rent increases. (245)

Meeting in late October the Reef and Johannesburg Advisory Board declared war on the increases. A standing committee of board members was elected to convey the popular opposition to the authorities. They called on the Locations Congress to give an undertaking that in the event of failure to reach agreement with the authorities every single board member should resign in protest and offer himself for re-election. They passed a unanimous motion of no confidence in the Minister of Native Affairs. (246)

The intention of the Advisory Boards was to go ahead with the next Locations' Congress in spite of the Government's demand that no finance be given for delegates. They would pay their own way. (247)

Not satisfied with the response of local authorities to the efforts of persuasion, the Government sent out a circular to all municipalities forbidding them to pay for Locations Congress delegates from the Native Revenue Account, stating as the reason the Congress having exceeded its proper functions and introduced discussions of a political nature. (248)

But the political tide was not to be allowed to go on rising unchecked. On December the 5th the Special Branch, with over a year to prepare their case since the raids of 1955, arrested 156 political leaders and brought them to Johannesburg for trial. The preliminary examination lasted one year, after which most were released leaving only 30 to continue to face charges in the famous Treason Trial which lasted for another 4 years after that. (249) Although the charges were not upheld, the effect of the Treason Trial was to remove many prominent political leaders from active political life and to throw the developing cohesian into disarray.

The disruptive effects were further enhanced by the actions of the dissident Africanists. With senior A.N.C. leaders on trial less able replacements had to take their places. The senior leaders attempted to direct Congress affairs from behind the scenes. This led to some deviation from democratic practice manifesting in rigged elections and

other unconstitutional acts. The Africanists opportunistically exploited this to enhance their position at a difficult time. (250)

Despite the disruptive effects, however, in December 1956 the A.N.C. decided to go ahead with plans to capture control of the Johannesburg Joint Advisory Boards. They decided to field many A.N.C. candidates for the elections under names like the 'Freedom' party and others.

The A.N.C. was already in control of the Roodepoort, Dobsonville and Natalspruit boards, with A.N.C. in the Benoni board and Germiston being sympathetic. They were to put up candidates in the site-and-service areas, Western Native Township and Dube. (251)

The decision by the Transvaal A.N.C. to field candidates for the election was a signficant change in policy. Of course it became the object of attack from the dissident Africanists and of course there were the usual appeals to the 1949 Programme of Action. (252)

But the A.N.C. had gone a long way since 1949 and the Africanists had failed to adapt accordingly. The various campaigns they had conducted since 1950 had built up a large groundswell of politicisation and support for the A.N.C. The July assessment by the Joint Executives of the Congress Alliance which pointed to what the Congress of the People had not achieved, did not mentioned what it had achieved. In fact it was the limited success of the Congress of the People which made it possible to look at the failings and thus for the road ahead.

It was perhaps this assessment and growing mass support which made the leadership of the Transvaal A.N.C. decide to do what had been suggested by Fighting Talk in February 1954, to contest Advisory Board elections and influence voting in a more 'healthy' direction. This would make it possible for the A.N.C. to begin to use the Government-provided platform of the Locations Advisory Board Congress which had influence in the townships. It would take the A.N.C. a step closer to the 'day-to-day struggles of the people.'

The decision to do so was coming from a position of relative advancement. It was an achieved position born out of struggle and

growing support which made it possible to begin to look beyond earlier resolutions and tactics adopted in the process of struggle. This the Africanists could not see. Says Mandela;

> "The basic error in this argument lies in the fact that it regards the boycott not as a tactical weapon to be employed if and when objective conditions permit but as an inflexible principle which must under no circumstances be varied.
>
> In this stand there is also the failure to draw the vital distinction between participation in such elections by the people who accept racial discrimination and who wish to co-operate with the Government in the oppression and exploitation of their own people on the one hand, and participation in such elections, not because of any desire to co-operate with the Government but in order to exploit them in the interest of the liberatory stuggle on the other hand." (253)

The A.N.C. was beginning to articulate a similar position with regards to the boards as that the of Communist Party in the thirties and forties. The arrest of the leaders was to effect the A.N.C.'s Advisory Board election campaign as some of those arrested had been candidates. For example Ida Mtwana, who was standing in Western Native Township, another candidate from Dube and the A.N.C. Transvaal President, E.P. Moretsele who was also standing. (254)

Opportunist elements were also to take advantage of the arrests and attempt to cast a slur on A.N.C. candidates who were in jail, by referring to them as 'prisoners' implying they were criminals. (255)

The A.N.C. was to be opposed by pro-apartheid Bantu National Council candidates in the Reef elections. (256)

But as usual Orlando was on its own. The Asinamali Party which already had an established following kept the A.N.C. out. They stood on the same issues adopted by the A.N.C. in other townships but did not co-operate with the A.N.C. They thus monopolised on the A.N.C.'s potential support but for their own ends. Relations between the Asinamali Party and the A.N.C. had been strained since Xorile broke unity and resigned from the Johannesburg Anti-Rent Co-ordinating Committee which had been set up by the A.N.C. The Asinamali Party also resisted attempts by the A.N.C. to infiltrate. (257)

But this year the fighting Mpanza was back in the ring, with predictions of trouble for the Asinamali Party. Mpanza stood as a Sofasonke Independent. He said people had pressed him to accept nomination. He had agreed after much persuasion as the will of the people was the will of God.

Mpanza issued a challenge of elimination to Xorile. It was either Xorile or him, he said. His strategy was to collect all the Sofasonke Party votes and that way to be sure to win a seat. He said he was angry because the Asinamali Party had repeatedly misrepresented him by alleging that he had supported the rent increase. He emphatically denied this. (258)

But there were more problems for the Asinamali Party. Splits were beginning to emerge as former strong supporters broke away to start their own parties. Former squatter leader Oriel Monongoaha was to lead one and former Asinamali Party chairman T. Mokete attempted to start another. In the final event it was Monongoaha, Mpanza and K. Mnweba who led groups against the Asinamali Party.

The Asinamali Party had also made a slight reshuffle when they dropped S.J.J. Lesolang who did not seek re-election. He was replaced by M. Matsoetlane to join the previous year's team of Xorile, Butshingi and Moema. (259)

When election results were announced, the A.N.C. had won sweeping victories giving them a majority in the Johannesburg Joint Boards. An interesting development was that one of the winning candidates was SACTU Secretary, Leslie Massina.

The Bantu National Council candidates on the other hand were hopelessly defeated. (260)

In Orlando the Asinamali Party won all four seats. Mpanza was angry at his defeat and even more angry at the polling system which he blamed for his defeat. He expressed dissatisfaction with the appointment of location superintendents as polling officers. (261)

The local authorities were not uniform in their response to the Government's directive not to fund Locations' Congress delegates from the Native Revenue Account. Some agreed to pay the expenses from a different account.

When time for the Locations' Congress came, the Johannesburg Advisory Boards were not invited. The historical rift between these two bodies and the take-over of the latter by the A.N.C. was leading to a growing division in spite of recent shifts in the national body. Some of the Johannesburg boards planned to go to the Congress all the same. (262)

On 21st January, 1957, Moroka township began a boycott of buses, in sympathy with the boycott by Alexandra, Sophiatown and Pretoria against fare increases imposed that month. Moroka's support was virtually complete bringing another 20 000 into the boycott. (263)

Meeting at the end of January, W.J.P. Carr, the Manager of NEAD, presented to the Johannesburg Advisory Boards a motion condemning the bus boycott. The meeting was attended by the Chief Magistrate and others. They refused to pass the motion. (264)

The boards followed this by inviting boycott leaders to their meeting a week later. They eventually decided to support the boycott, whereupon Xorile and members of the Moroka Board departed from the meeting.

The meeting then resovlved to demand:

1. A reversion of the fare increases to the origianal level;

2. Direct talks with PUTCO, the bus company involved, and,

3. A general increase in wages.

Another resolution condemned the strong arm measures of the Government and police intimidation.

The boycott leaders welcomed the support of the Board. (265)

The boycott continued to grow. A meeting was held in Orlando on the 15th February addressed by the chairman of Orlando Transport Board, Oriel Monongoaha and his secretary. (266)

There was criticism of the Advisory Board system, and some of the Advisory Boards for not coming out in support of the boycott. There was also suspicion that some had conspired against the boycott. (267)

Mpanza, still a political outcast, was meanwhile running into problems again. Driving through Orlando he swerved to avoid a child in the road and stopped. The child fell of its own accord from 'shock'. Some people rushed at him and tried to force him from his car and assault him. A municipal constable approached and tried to handcuff him which he resisted. The constable then poked the old man in the right eye and he passed out.

Mpanza took the matter to court claiming 250 Pounds for unlawful arrest and another 250 Pounds for assault. (268)

On the 26th June the A.N.C. in spite of the arrests was still able to call a highly successful stayaway in protest against Apartheid and in support of the SACTU call for a Pound a day. (269)

From July 1957 people began to move from the Moroka shanties and Orlando Shelters into houses at Moroka and Jabavu. (270)

Meanwhile the rent increase which had been postponed, was due to come into effect in all Johannesburg townships from November 1st. There was a wave of meetings in the townships to discuss opposition. (271)

On the 8th September tragedy struck the south western areas when a clash between Zulus and Basothos in Meadowlands left 40 people dead and 100 injured.

The Johannesburg Advisory Boards met a week later and demanded a judicial enquiry into the riot. They asserted that ethnic grouping was to blame. (272)

The Advisory Boards had warned of this danger from years before but the authorities insisted they knew best. After all, it was not the authorities who would hve to pay the prices of their 'errors'. The incident showed the tragic consequences of the farce of having an 'advisory' board whose advice was ignored.

The A.N.C. added their condemnation of ethnic grouping.

> "It is the view of the A.N.C. that the Nationalist Government is to blame for the nasty and shocking happenings in Dube, Meadowlands and other African townships in the South-Western area of Johannesburg over the week-end.
>
> The terrible clashes between the Zulu and Sotho factions ... are a direct outcome of the Government's policy of apartheid and ethnic grouping."

The A.N.C. maintained that the real aim and purpose of ethnic grouping was to prevent and destroy understanding and unity among the various sections of the black people in the country. (273)

Chiefs from the Zulu and Basotho royal kraals met with the Advisory Boards at the Orlando Communal Hall on the 22nd September to try to avert further harm.

By October the co-ordinated anti-rental committee had broadened its scope to become the National Anti-Rent Committee. It was composed of representatives from all the Johannesburg townships.

Orlando residents, however were reserved about this body, stating that if it did not act decisively, Orlando would go it alone. (274)

As the deadline approached, Jabavu, Orlando, Western Native Township, George Goch, Kwa-Thema and Boksburg residents decided to boycott rent payments.

Faced with the problem of not being able to vote or stand in Advisory Board elections the common response was:

> "To hell with the elections. The boardsmen will also have to make up their minds sooner or later." (275)

Xorile was active again on the rents issue, addressing a large crowd at Orlando on the 31st October. (276)

As scheduled the rents went up on November 1st. People who paid the old rents had their balances carried forward by the authorities.

Evictions were a common sight in the townships.

Congress came out in full support for resistance against the rents. They said blacks were inhumanly underpaid and this caused the bus and rent boycotts. They called on the authorities to withdraw the rent increase and support the demand for wage increases and a Pound a day minimum wage. (277)

The rent prosecutions continued while the courtcase was adjourned. In Boksburg the local council was holding public auctions of household goods and furniture of families arrear in their rents.

Noting the increasing politicisation of the Advisory Boards, Verwoerd revealed on the 5th December that he planned to replace them with representatives of Chiefs in the rural areas in terms of the Bantu Authorities Act. He referred to the Boards as agitators. (228)

Speaking at this time Mandela said,

> "The present Government regards institutions such as the Advisory Boards as too advanced and dangerous ... through the Advisory Board and, if the right type of candidates are found, through Parliament, we can reach the masses of the people and rally them behind us." (279)

With the problems of how to face the elections, urgent meetings were called by the Johannesburg boardsmen to discuss the question of whether or not to pay the new rents.

There was some disagreement about whether to 'pay under protest' or not at all and be disqualified from the election. (280)

On Wednesday the 18th December, the rent struggle took a severe blow when the Joint Advisory Boards case against the high rents was dismissed with costs in the Pretoria Supreme Court. (281)

When Advisory Board elections were held in Orlando, Mpanza came back into the board with the highest number of individual votes. He replaced Matsoetlane leaving the remaining three Asinamali Party candidates. This was despite the fact that 1 421 families had been moved from the shelters.

Asinamali Party members explained that Mpanza had been elected because thousands of their supporters did not qualify to vote as they had not paid new rentals. Moema said the candidates themselves only paid sufficient rent in order to qualify. (282)

The Locations Congress was held in January, 1958 as usual, but with the absence of some boards. (283)

Faced with opposition and the poverty of the residents the Council agreed that those with incomes below 20 Pounds a month could continued to pay the old rents but on condition that income forms were submitted. This was the Council's first target to bring the situation under control. Its efforts to define policy were being hampered by the fact that only 3 340 had returned forms out of 16 091. (284)

The Joint Advisory Boards appealed against the finding of the rents case. The appeal was due to be heard on the 26th November. If the case were lost, arrears would date back to November 1st, 1957.

Some board members, among them Mpanza, advised their supporters to pay the new rentals under protest. Others were advising to continue paying the old rentals. The ban on meetings did not make uniformity easier to attain. (285)

Mpanza's case against the municipal constable who had poked his eye was finally settled in June. Mpanza defended himself in court and was awarded 70 Pounds damages and costs for wrongful arrest. The blow to his eye had caused permanent damage. (286)

The Dube Riots Commission reported in July recommending higher wages for blacks, the abolition of ethnic grouping and the abolition of migratory labour. It also thought that police protection in the townships was inadequate. Verwoerd rejected the report as being of no practical value. (287)

Feeling more confident at its court victory the Council took a harder line and decided to pick on bigger targets in the rent war. They issued summonses to 14 prominent Orlando leaders, among them Xorile, Moema and Butshingi, for rent arrears. The National Anti-High Rent Committee paid their legal costs. (288)

Xorile was also charged at the same time along with 11 others, for forming an illegal civic guard. They were ordered to disband the Orlando Civilian Guards, cautioned and discharged. (289)

Xorile said it sas necessary for the young people to go back to the churches and enrol as members of sporting bodies to keep out of crime.

Mpanza's solution was that for many years he had run the Parents Court. Here, he said, unruly youths were brought and their own parents inflicted corporal punishment on them.

He felt that strong representations to the Government by parents were necessary whereby parents should demand the full exercise of their natural right to discipline their children if they went wrong. He thought it was inconceivable for the law to refuse black parents the right to deal with their children. (290)

At the announcement by the Government that it would assist black traders in the rural areas, a meeting of disappointed businessmen was held in the Donaldson Orlando Community Centre on August 7th. Interviewed there, Mpanza said he had written to the Government a month ago asking for exemption of black businessmen and professional people from influx laws. He had not yet received a reply. (291) This interest in special privileges for richer blacks was a step away from the Mpanza who had organised the poorest and least privileged in 1944, and fought for home

brewing rights for the rank and file since then. Mpanza himself was considerably better off by 1958 and had entered a number of business ventures such as coal and milk distribution since the squatter days. He had also become the owner of pedigreed race horses. At the same time his proletarian base was being whittled away as the shelter dwellers were being moved out of Orlando to the houses in Moroka. These factors and his age would have contributed to his growing conservatism.

At the same time as he was talking about privileges for businessmen, Mpanza was talking of preaching total apartheid through the churches. He said apartheid was the law and should be carried out to the letter.

He felt that he should give up party politics and preach the word of God. But he did not want to belong to any particular church. Instead, he hoped that churches of all denominations would ask him to preach to them. His surmons, he said, would not be sectional. They would be the pure teachings of Christ.

His plan for total apartheid was that only blacks should be employed in every department concerned with Native Affairs. Blacks must hold all the posts, from the highest to the lowest.

In the churches, ministers must observe total apartheid. No white minister must preach to black congregations. In the same manner, no blacks must preach to white congregations.

The NEAD must be under black heads. Mpanza maintained that there were blacks who were sufficiently educated for these posts. They only needed training.

In the trains there must be black conductors and drivers, for according to apartheid, blacks must serve blacks.

In the pass offices, blacks must do all the work, from the highest post to the lowest. In every other sphere, in towns or rural areas the black must serve his fellow black with due training being given in as short a time as possible.

Mpanza pointed out that trust farms were supervised by white foremen.

This, he said, must cease as it is in conflict with the principles of apartheid.

Blacks must immediately be trained to take over these positions.

In hospitals catering for blacks, black staff must take over as soon as possible.

In education, blacks must hold positions of inspectors and even higher posts.

Mpanza pointed out that in certain departments which cater for blacks, there are better facilities for other races. At the Pass Offices, for example, a black will take a whole day to be attended to, but a white would not wait more than half and hour. (292)

As part of the assault on the rents campaign, Peter Lengene as one of the leaders of the National Anti-Rent increase committee was ordered to leave the Union by the Government. (293)

It was also at this time that at the Transvaal Provincial Congress in November, the Africanists split from the A.N.C. after a confrontation, stating their intention to form their own organisation. (294)

At election time T. Mokete had rejoined the Asinamali Party team and Matsoetlane who had lost his seat to Mpanza, stood as an independent. The other candidates were Mpanza, Simon Mokamu, Leonard Msimango, E. Sangweni and Jack Tshabala. (295) But the board was returned unchanged. (296) Mpanza's traditional support for the Shelters was now down to 1 000 families. (297) The election showed the lowest voting figures in years. Only those who paid under protest could vote. The candidates only paid their arrear rents at the last moment. (298)

On Monday the 15th December the townships received more bad news when the rents appeal was dismissed by the Supreme Court in Pretoria with costs. The defence was considering going to the Appeal Court at Bloemfontein. Jabavu and Orlando which had provided most of the support for the boycott had a huge rent arrears balance to pay. If an appeal was lodged then the arrears would fall immediately due. (299)

The Johannesburg Anti-High Rents Committee met shortly after and expressed the wish that the Lengene test case be taken to appeal in Bloemfontein, but were waiting to see what the lawyers decided. (300)

At a Joint Advisory Board meeting in January, Mpanza said that owing to incorrect information, the people had been ill-advised not to submit their assessment forms and consequently had fallen into arrears with their rent.

The chairman said the arrears totalled 86 000 Pounds. He said he would only stay prosecutions provided there was a substantial improvement in the submission of income assessment forms and payment of arrears during the next month. He added that those who were unable to pay immediately could come to some agreement with the Superintendent.

Xorile said he was shocked at the amount of arrears and assured the Chairman that he would have their co-operation in encouraging the people to come forward and pay their rents. (301)

Individuals were owing as much as 20 Pounds to 30 Pounds in arrears. (302)

The boycott was cracking by February 1959 as thousands of tenants began streaming into the township offices to ask for time to pay their arrears, now said to be 130 000 Pounds for the whole Johannesburg area. Most of this, 59 000 Pounds, was owed by Orlando residents.

The boycott organisors appeared confused with neither the A.N.C. nor the Africanists commenting. (303)

Mpanza who had never supported the boycott was now able to step forward once more.

Taking up the housing question again he moved at the February Orlando Advisory Board meeting that Noordgesig should become a township for blacks. He was suggesting the removal of 7 000 'coloureds' from the 1 059 houses. (304)

Said the Bantu World of the rents boycott;

> "The worst mistake ever made by the Johannesburg Advisory Board was to refuse wise old Mr. Mpanza's advice that residents should pay new rents under protest. Leaders at the meeting shouted 'Asinamali.' The people took up the cry.
>
> Now they are going to lose houses on account of hasty leadership. Had they paid under protest, they would not be faced with a mountain of debt."

Meanwhile the Council announced a 'get tough' policy with rent defaulters for March. They would have to pay up or be evicted. There was terrible poverty and people were having difficulty in paying small installments on their arrears. The Advisory Boards were persuading tenants to start paying their arrears and there was a widespread attempt to do so. (305)

But come March the Council did not go ahead with the 'get tough' policy. Those who continued to pay the old rent were not prosecuted. The Council had to wait for the results of the rents test case before it could act.

With two defeats and organisation breaking down the committee was having difficulties collecting money for the appeal case. (306)

Meanwhile on the National political front Orlando gave rise to yet another independent breakaway group, when on the 6th April 300 Africanists met in Orlando to form the Pan Africanist Congress pledged to 'overthrow white domination.' (307)

The rents war was going badly for the residents. Speaking of the 'get tough' threat the manager of NEAD threatened to reintroduce the system of early morning arrests by Municipal police unless there was an improvement in payments.

Mpanza said that the Superintendent should co-operate with the board and give them a list of defaulters so that a member of the board could visit the people concerned and explain the position to them. He said that he was willing to help the department if the Superintendent would supply him with a list of names and addresses. (308)

The Council extended its deadline for the 'get tough' policy to April 30th. Most of those in arrears were still not paying while waiting to see the outcome of the Lengene case. (309)

Meeting in May, the Johannesburg Joint Boards decided to ask the Government to support their demands for better jobs for blacks in NEAD. They said it was Government policy that blacks should serve their own people and the Council must carry out that policy. (310)

The Council had developed a 'three pronged attack' on rent arrears during the year. They had established a prosecutor's office in the south western townships close the the Magistrate's Court. They had appointed an increased number of municipal policemen to serve summonses. Finally they had a new formula to try to make the application of the rentals in the sub-economic houses 'less difficult to bear.'

The overall result was increased prosecutions, more rent collected and arrears decreasing. There was also criticism of the Council for its 'harsh action.' (311) People were being summonsed at a rate of 100 a month. (312)

The full horror of the implications of the shift from housing to rents as the major issue of struggle had dawned.

> "Houses instead of shantytown shacks are turning out to be stepping stones to jail for hundreds in Johannesburg and Reef townships.
>
> After 14 years the shacks of hessian, strips of corrugated iron, cardboard and home made bricks have made way for rows of little rabbit hutch houses in the vast new townships in the south west areas - but the rents are too high for the people to pay."

The new houses were obviously an improvement. But with less than subsistance wages, people who had paid 10 Shillings for rent in the Shelters simply could not afford rents of two or three times that in the houses.

Between March and August about 1 600 tenants had appeared in court for failing to pay back rent. (313) Suicides caused by backrent prosecutions were reported. (314)

The A.N.C. called for the suspension of the prosecutions at a meeting at the new township of Naledi in the south western townships and vigorously protested against—

> "the high-handed practice of the City Council of Johannesburg in victimising and prosecuting the voiceless people in municipal areas for failing to pay rents." (315)

But with the Anti Rents Committee in disorder, and no money being collected, Lengene was not being supported in paying the costs of the rents case. He appealed to the Johannesburg Joint Board for help. His property had already been attached by the Sheriff. (316)

Analysing the outcome of the rents struggles Walter Sisulu said:

> "The A.N.C. wisely pointed out in this campaign that the people should not rely too heavily on a legal victory but should depend more on the organisation of the masses themselves. It was pointed out that the main issue was a demand for a living wage, a minimum of 1 Pound a day and a general increase in wages.
>
> Xorile's case in the Supreme Court brought relief for about two years in some areas. This success, however, was not properly utilised. Instead of uniting the people further, it was associated with groups and individuals and the unity of the people was undermined.
>
> The authorities took advantage of this and imposed the economic rent on those areas which had hitherto managed to escape it. The second battle was unfortunately a purely legal action carried out by divided people. The result was that when the applicants lost in court, hundreds of people received summonses for arrear rentals resulting from the boycott campaign. Many people became disillusioned by this setback."

Apart from the importance of unity, Sisulu believed that,

> "an increase in wages is still the best possible method of meeting the burden of high rents." (317)

The rout of the rent boycott was complete when the Johannesburg Joint Boards met to discuss the funding of Lengene's case but found only confusion about who was holding what office in the Anti-High Rent Committee and what had happened to the minute book. (318)

With elections pending, there were so many people in Jabavu and Orlando owing rent that it was doubted whether half would qualify to vote.

Candidates were running up and down, checking in the municipal offices for names of tenants who had paid their rent up to date and approaching them at their homes to ask them to support their nominations. At least fifteen names were needed on a nomination form before it was accepted. The candidates were having difficulty finding 15 names.

The Asinamali Party candidates were worst affected. Their own supporters, because they supported the boycott, were eliminated from the election. Some of the candidates themselves owed large sums of money.

In Orlando East alone more than 300 had been summonsed for failing to pay rents. In Orlando West the figure was more than 150. (319)

Then on the 1st December the struggle took a new form when 200 chanting women besieged the Jabavu superintendent's office, sealing it off from anyone wanting entry. It was the third day of mass women's demonstrations at the same place. The women pickets told every caller that there would be 'no business' until the superintendent agreed to come out and address them concerning the payment of rent. They threatened to thrash anyone stubborn enough to argue with them.

The officials insisted on a delegation to talk to the superintendent. Six women were elected. They said they wanted the mass rent prosecutions to be stopped. They were dissatisfied with the records of the rent payments and claimed that mistakes had been made.

This was a brief resurgence of mass activism.

> "The people have turned to mass demonstrations because many of their leaders have run away, because Council officials will not see them, and because they have no means of negotiating with those in authority."

The World called on 'veterans like James Sofasonke Mpanza' to 'use the occasion', but said that the dangerous crisis should not be used just to win votes. (320)

For the first time since losing, the Sofasonke Party fielded a full team for the elections. Apart from Mpanza they were Esau Sangweni, T. Ramathibela and J.B. Hashe. With only 436 families left in the Shelters in June of that year and even less by December, the Sofasonke Party team faced a considerably different political terrain since they last contested the elections as a party. (321)

But in spite of the disadvantage, the Sofasonke Party were returned to control the Orlando Advisory Board after an absence of five years. The rent arrears of the Asinamali Party supporters and disillusionment with the leaders of the boycott, swung the majority of voters back to the Sofasonke Party but with an obviously low poll. (322)

The Jabavu women continued their picket of the Superintendent's office into its second week, from six in the morning to five at night. They said their complaints were not being attended to by the Superintendent and they were still unhappy about the book-keeping system. (323)

Finally after three weeks of picketing, W.J.P. Carr, the Manager of NEAD responded to their demonstrations by agreeing to inspect their homes and see for himself how they lived. 200 angry women, a strong force of police and municipal officials followed Carr around Jabavu.

But the women were not satisfied with this and said after the tour that they would continue the picket until Carr settled the dispute. (324)

Carr stopped further action against rent arrears, as a result of the protest.

With the lesson learned, 1 000 women demonstrated outside the superintendent's office in Tladi demanding an end to the arrears arrests. (325)

A slightly softer approach was adopted by the authorities with the Kliptown magistrate withdrawing cases if tenants agreed to pay by a certain date. (326)

But Carr still threatened them with paying economic rents or eviction if they did not fill in assessment forms. (327)

At a meeting on the 26th February the Sofasonke Party was back in full swing, drawing crowds and supporters to hear Mpanza and party leaders speak. Women supporters had become more prominent and expressed their dedication to their leader with a new militancy.

A man from the Society of Young Africans was beaten up when he went up to the platform and tried to talk to Mpanza. He refused to sit down after a sharp exchange between him and the chairman.

> "Waving sticks and chanting party songs, the women crowded round. One large woman carried an iron bar. The man's face was smeared in blood. Order was restored for a few minutes.
>
> A man elsewhere objected to a woman hitting a man with a stick. The women were up again and cracked him too. There was a free for all. Peace was again restored by Board members."

They were addressed by a Mac Donald Maseko on a proposal to form a federal committee to represent Orlando residents, but not all the organisations had yet decided to support it. (328)

Significantly, of the political organisations it was the P.A.C. which Mpanza invited to join his 'all-party committee', but they officially rejected the approach. A letter from George Diephoko, the secretary of the Orlando branch of the P.A.C. said the rejection was because

> "the Advisory Board is an institution of collaboration and inferiority." (329)

At a rents meeting in the Orlando Communal Hall early in March, the Sofasonke women were there again with sticks and kieries to silence opposition to Mpanza.

They cheered when Mpanza called for support for the appeal in the still continuing rents case at the Bloemfontein Supreme Court.

To the amazement of many, especially the Asinamali Party membrs, Mpanza not only gave 1 Pound towards the appeal fund but stood up to shout, 'Asinamali, asibadali' (no money, no pay).

He explained that his party was in full support of the appeal but had, in the past, warned the people not to stop paying rents.

Mpanza said he sympathised with Lengene who had given a report on the appeal to the meeting, because he had now been deserted by many in the township who were with him at the start of the trouble.

'You are no longer alone', he said as he turned to Lengene. (330)

Rising from the ruins of the rent boycott, Mpanza was now the hero, understanding and forgiving to those who had wronged him n the past but who now needed his help.

Mpanza achieved further recognition at an Orlando residents meeting convened by Mac Donald Maseko and W. Diniso of the Orlando residents all-party committee and the four elected Advisory Board members on the 17th March at the Communal Hall. Unanimous resolutions were passed that a James Sofasonke Mpanza Old Age Home be established, that blacks be appointed to positions of assistant superintendents of townships and other positions, that there be the same pay for black medical practitioners, adequate employ of black nursing staff, adequate ambulances and drivers, blacks appointed to health committees, black station masters and police station commanders. (331)

On the historic day of the 21st March, the P.A.C. began a mass anti-pass campaign when P.A.C. members destroyed their passes and offered themselves for arrest. A week before the P.A.C. decided to launch the campaign the A.N.C. had announced a similar campaign to start on March 31st. Competing with the A.N.C., the P.A.C. pre-empted them by starting theirs ten days earlier.

The country was shaken when news burst onto the headlines that police and opened fire on a peaceful demonstration at Sharpeville outside Vereeniging killing 69 and wounding 180. On the same day the tense

political situation was again transformed to bloodshed when two were killed and 49 injured at Langa, a township outside Cape Town.

On March 31st the Government declared a state of emergency, and on April 8th both the A.N.C. and P.A.C. were banned. (332)

A massive police clamp down followed throughout the country. In Orlando 300 policemen, supported by Saracen armoured cars, moved into Orlando Township on the morning of the 14th April and detained 100 people for questioning. 70 were detained for further investigation. This followed other raids on the Rand. (333)

More than 160 P.A.C. members in Johannesburg were charged on pass offences in April. (334)

In an attempt to look for avenues to make the hated passes more palatable, the Council asked the Johannesburg boards to assist in drawing up a memorandum on 'points of discomfort' in the pass laws. The boards refused to co-operate.

They had asked the Council the previous week to withdraw the system of reference books, but were told by the chairman that it was a national political matter and not for civic bodies. (335)

At an Advisory Board meeting in June, Mpanza submitted the Memorandum of the All Party Committee for discussion in his absence. Showing signs of dissent, Hashe said Mpanza should be present at the discussion as no such Committee existed and that no such memorandum was passed at the meeting of residents on the 17th March, at which he was present and joint chairman with Mpanza. He accused Mpanza of being in the habit of taking other board members' opinions for granted. (336)

While obviously the All Party Committee did exist, Hashe's statement was a sign of trouble in the Sofasonke Party.

On the 30th June the Manager of NEAD in his Annual Report, reported that,

> "However, the unfortunate occurence at Sharpeville (near Vereeniging) had no repercussion in the Native Townships under the control of the Johannesburg City Council."

He reported also that another 342 families were moved from Shantytown leaving 'a hard core of only 94 sub-sub-economic families, mainly widows or unmarried mothers with no means of support.'

Notwithstanding 'strenuous efforts' by the Department's officials, he reported the arrear rent figure reached a new peak of 10% higher than the previous year. This was explained by poverty, particularly where slum clearance involved higher rents. But he also saw it as caused by 'politicians who exploited grievances.' (337)

In July the Council announced its intention to demolish backyard shacks in Orlando as they were a 'health hazard'. The residents were angry and wanted to fight it in court. Mpanza backed the objections.

> "The Johannesburg City Council allowed the people to build these backyard sheds several years ago because of the lack of accommodation.
>
> Six or seven years ago the whole question was thrashed out in court and it was ruled tha the original sheds should be allowed to stand and that the new ones could be built, subject to approval by the health authorities.
>
> Now the people are not given permission even to add brick houses to their homes.
>
> The 2-roomed houses cannot be of any help to these families. It's no secret that people are forced to build the sheds for their married and grown up children.
>
> We are prepared to go to court if the demolition of these sheds is ordered.
>
> People should remember that Orlando is really for sub-economic wage groups. A lot of people who earn economic wages, however, are living in the township.
>
> If these moved out, there would be room for the sub-economic families and there would be no need for sheds." (338)

A split occurred in the Sofasonke Party in early July when Hashe, acting on his grievances led members in opposition to Mpanza.

At an Advisory Board meeting to discuss the question of the people still remaining at the old shelters, there were hot words between Mpanza and Hashe. Hashe said he had not come onto the board on a Sofasonke Party card.

After the meeting Mpanza and Hashe clashed again.

Mpanza said he was aware that his colleagues were working all by themselves.

> "I am now working on my own. I am attending to all cases that come to me and that is all."

T.J. Ramathibela was conducting his own evening 'court' in his house, attending to cases coming to him. He said he wanted to resign from the Sofasonke Party, but his followers had asked him not to until the end of the year.

Sangweni remained as his only support. (339)

Mpanza was again in court that month, charged with having defrauded a business partner in a blacksmiths, ferriers and plumbers shop in Orlando. As usual he defended himself and won the case. (340)

The Council was threatening once more to get tougher on rent defaulters in mid-July. (341) They also sought to arrange with employers stop-orders on the pay of those who owed rent. (342)

By October the Council's 'get tough' policy was back in full swing. Letters calling rent defaulters to the office were being delivered daily by the minicipal police. They were required to make agreements with the authorities as to how they were going to pay off their arrears. (343)

Finally, at the start of NOvember, the Orlando Shelters were at last cleared. Said a reporter,

> "Maghebula founded the shelters in a single night. it took the authorities sixteen years to remove them ...
>
> The putting up of the shacks in Orlando is a story not yet written down by anyone for posterity ...

> Maghebula Sofasonke Mpanza watched with a smile of many old memories as the last lorries moved out the last families from the historic Orlando shelters last week." (344)

Rank and file resistance to the Council's rent action continued to flare up occasionally. In mid-November hundreds of angry Mofolo residents, men and women, gathered around the Mofolo Township office to demand the immediate dismissal of the Superintendent. They were angered by the ejections from their homes and summonses to police stations for failing to pay arrears. (345)

As the elections approached it was clear that the major parties were the Sofasonke Party and the Asinamali Party still under Xorile's leadership. But the internal conflicts in the Sofasonke Party left the outcome unpredictable. There were still frequent quarrels since the mid-year tensions. (346)

The survival of the boards was in some doubt as they went into elections. Verwoerd had said in May that the Advisory Board system was useless, and now the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development told Johannesburg Boardmen that they were going to be replaced by the urban areas Bantu Authorities representatives. (347)

The Sofasonke Party won the elections again but with Hashe and Ramathibela dropped from the team. They were replaced by K. Mnweba and S. Molakeng. (348)

They said on election that they proposed the removal of all widows and workers earning less than 20 Pounds to sub-economic houses. (349)

The last decade then had seen an upsurge in national political activism spearheaded by the A.N.C. The resultant political climate at first reduced interest in the Advisory Boards and also pushed the charismatic locally oriented Sofasonke Party to the sidelines. In the mid-50's the A.N.C. was in a strong enough position to contest the Johannesburg boards and achieve widespread success. This showed an ebb in personality oriented politics at a time of greater militancy, although perhaps less so in Orlando. Mpanza meanwhile, during his period of deposition appears

to have concerned himself more with his horses and business interests. He gradually returned to politics as the rent boycott; which he had opposed, collapsed. This left him in a relatively strong position. But as he re-established himself on the board, his traditional power base, the working class families in the Shelters, were beginning to be removed from Orlando to the new houses in Jabavu. Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party were still able to re-capture the board however. In addition to the loss of the support from the Shelters was the fact that both with the banning of the A.N.C. and P.A.C. which resulted in antagonism toward the state and with the number of rent arrears due to poverty, fewer people were voting in elections. Not only were they fewer, but they were also those who were less politicised and were better off. This and Mpanza's increased interest in business indicate that the Mpanza of 1960 was socially a very different man from the Mpanza of 1944, and more precisely, and Mpanza more closely tied to petty-bourgeois interests.

The end of the decade saw the decline of all forms of political activity under the heavily repressive hand of the state, the return of the Sofasonke Party, and the country at a political crossroads. The 'people' were at a crossroad engineered by the state and it was a period of decisions as to which way to go.

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## CHAPTER 6 : MPANZA OPTS FOR THE U.B.C., the FIRST U.B.C. AND MPANZA'S DEATH, 1961 - 1970

Finally in March 1961 the Treason Trial came to an end with all the accused found not guilty.

Their release was met with jubilation.

> "Orlando sang last night as the acquitted African treason trial accused were feted from house to house through the sprawling township in a marathon celebration party which started at dusk and ended only at dawn. The usual tense stillness of the township was shattered by signing and dancing. 'Nkosi sikelele Afrika,' the African national anthem, reverberated between the long rows of houses flanking the narrow streets. 'Man, this is a night we won't forget in a hurry,' a beaming Mr. Duma Nokwe, former secretary general of the banned A.N.C., said. (1)

But the success of the trial did not lessen anger at the repressive action of the state.

With the state having smashed the popular organs of resistance, there was now increased hostility to state established bodies such as the Advisory Boards.

Sharpening their criticism of state bodies, the General Residents Association in Johannesburg accused some Johannesburg Advisory Boards of imposing fines of up to R6 on residents although they had no right to do so. They were also alleged to have assaulted people. These were usually for incidents involving disagreements between residents. (2)

In East London the Advisory Board resigned en bloc after fierce accusations at a public meeting that they were sell-outs and stooges of the Government. (3)

The state ignored protests and relentlessly continued with its clampdown on opposition. In pre-dawn raids the police swooped on 59 homes of former members of the A.N.C., P.A.C., C.O.D., T.I.C. and Liberal Party. (4)

In the townships the Council also took a harder line when 10 Jabavu women were arrested, tried and jailed for organising protests against higher rents. (5)

In protest against the 'Republic Day' on May 31st, remaining active leaders called for a three day stay-at-home for the 29th to the 31st May. The Johannesburg City Council joined in the concerted effort on the part of the state to break the stay-at-home.

W.J.P. Carr, Manager of N.E.A.D. called on the Executive of the Johannesburg Joint Boards to discuss the strike. He wanted information from them on what was going on in the township. They dropped the subject and refused to discuss it. It was reported that it was not the first time Carr had tried to break black struggles in the townships. During the Alexandra bus boycott of 1957 he called nightly meetings with members of the Advisory Boards. (6)

To organise against 'Republic Day' and All-in African Council of various black leaders met in Orlando and then in Pietermaritzburg. Mandela addressed the second meeting then went underground to organise.

The stay-at-home was only a partial success. The state responded by charging 11 of those who had attended the Orlando and Pietermaritzburg meeting. (7)

But the state's strategy, even in 1961, was not just pure repression. Even then the state knew that to control the masses it needed not only repression but also some kind of concession to disorganise and confuse the opposition. While it smashed with one hand, it beckoned with the other. But even though it gave, as usual it gave only on its own terms and for its own purposes. Having smashed the popular democratic organisations the state offered in exchange provision for a new body to take the place of the Advisory Boards. It was called the Urban Bantu Councils (U.B.C.).

The U.B.C. Bill provided for,

> "the establishment of partly elected, partly appointed councils in the African townships and the establishment of 'community guards' to enforce Government policies."

This would bring civil war to the townships, predicted the left wing New Age.

> "An Urban Bantu Council will exercise all the powers of an Advisory Board and in addition will administer such of the following matters as may be allocated to it by the urban local authority with the approval of the Administrator and the Minister:
> the layout of the area, the accommodation of the Africans not living under conditions of family life, the removal of persons unlawfully resident in the area (this covers the notorious endorsement out under section 10 of the Urban Areas Act), the unlawful occupation of land and buildings, the allocation of houses, the erection of buildings and the demolition of unauthorised structures, control of entry into the area, control of animals, provision of health, sanitary and medical services and 'the removal and social welfare of persons living in the area.'"

There were also other lesser provisions. (8)

Some people were taken in by the new act, both in the townships, but also in the ruling class. The Nationalist Party had to reassure Parliament that the Bill, although looking like a concession, was in fact only there to ensure control. Said a Nationalist M.P.;

> "I now want to state unequivocally that this Bill is a means towards achieving separate development ... This Bill must not be regarded simply as a separate little part of the overall policy of separate development, but as a very important part of that policy."

With still a fairly high degree of mobilization, leaders of the banned movements moved swiftly to attack the new Bill. Said Duma Nokwe of the M.P.'s statement;

> "This is a frank statement by a Nationalist M.P. of the true purpose of the U.B.C. Act, which some people have mistakenly regarded as a departure from the granite policy of apartheid, and as a significant concession by the Government.
>
> ... The U.B.C. Act is a skillful attempt by the Nationalist Government to sow division amongst the African people and to lure them into operating their own machinery of oppression." (9)

Following the wave of repression the Council was continuing its offensive against rent defaulters in the south western townships, with early morning arrests. (10)

With most other organisations banned, SACTU called a mass meeting for the 28th July to protest against the rent prosecutions. They urged that rent prosecutions be dropped and attention be focussed on the problem of low wages. (11)

A SACTU statement read,

> "The inability of the tenants to meet the high rentals cannot be overstated, as the wage level of the vast masses of non-white workers is far below the breadline. For City Councils to persist in this attitude is sheer economic exploitation."

The F.S.A.W. also called a meeting on the rents problem, for the 4th August. (12)

At SACTU's meeting a unanimous decision of delegates from resident's associations and trade unions was passed that the outcry against rent arrears in Johannesburg and on the Reef should take an organised form in militant action.

> "Deputations from each area will demand from their Mayor:
>
> The immediate ending of all criminal prosecutions for rent arrears.
>
> That the whole vast backlog of money owing be written off.
>
> That in future rents be assessed on a realistic basis in relation to wages."

If the deputations met with no success, an immediate boycott of all municipal beerhalls would be organised. (13)

By now both the A.N.C. and P.A.C. had gone underground. (14)

Wasting no time with the U.B.C. Act, the state announced that the country's first U.B.C. would start at Daveyton on the 1st September. (15)

The announcement was met with widespread criticism from the Advisory Board members and residents of Daveyton. A Daveyton Protection Committee was formed to oppose the U.B.C. Residents were holding small housemeetings and distributing leaflets calling on blacks not to co-operate in the establishment of the U.B.C. but to demand direct representation on the Benoni Council. The Special Branch attempted to prevent the spread of the leaflets by detaining people caught distributing. (16)

A residents meeting of several hundred in Emdeni, in the south-west townships, told their Advisory Board that they were opposed to U.B.C.'s for the city. The All-in African Action Council distributed a leaflet against the U.B.C.'s. (17)

Cautious at the widespread opposition, the Bantu Administration Department and Johannesburg City Council sought the opinion of the Johannesburg Joint Boards, to sound the situation out. Board members and chiefs' representatives were divided on the issue. Among those in favour of U.B.C.'s were Mpanza, Xorile, Rathebe, Mncube and several chiefs' representatives.

Mpanza said that he would accept U.B.C.'s on behalf of the people of Orlando even if the other board members were opposed. (18)

Of this C. Mampuru, close associate of Mpanza and wife of Orlando Advisory Board member Self Mampuru, says,

> "When it became evident that the Advisory Boards would come to an end and that the Urban Bantu Councils would be set up, Sofasonke called a mass meeting of the residents, his followers and the Sofasonke Party, to inform them of the pending change. He said; he had read the literature about the on coming Urban Bantu Council and because the Advisory Boards were a powerless machinery it deserved to die out. He predicted that even the U.B.C. will die out if it did not serve the needs of the people. He urged the residents to be progressive and to allow the change by giving U.B.C. a trial. He emphasized that the death of Advisory Board does not mean the death of Sofasonke Party." (19)

Speaking of Mpanza's politics, she continues,

> "Magebula never failed in all his civic activities to obtain a mandate from the residents. He was not a dictator. He would never proceed with any project without sounding the residents.
>
> ... he said a leader should always get a close connection with the people. He said a good leader must be a follower of the people." (20)

As the Sofasonke Party swallowed the bait of co-option the mailed fist was still falling all around them. At the end of October Walter Sisulu, Lillian Ngoyi and Alfred Nzo were all arrested in Orlando. Nelson Mandela's Orlando home was searched. (21)

Along with the arrests, the last remnants of the monument of Mpanza's early mass activism, the Orlando Shelters were completely cleared in November. The Orlando and Jabavu Advisory Boards assisted in finding accommodation for families which could not pay the relatively high rentals in the economic townships. (22)

Undeterred by criticism and assured of their 'mandate' Mpanza, Mnweba, Sangweni and Ramathibela, the Sofasonke Party team for the Advisory Board elections, asked the Johannesburg City Council to set up a U.B.C. for Orlando. They contended that given their request Advisory Board elections would contravene the U.B.C. Act. They applied to the Rand Supreme Court for an interdict to prevent the holding of Advisory Board elections in Orlando but without success. (23)

While Orlando Board members fought to have a U.B.C. introduced, a Dube Board member was arrested on December 16th after an explosion at the Dube municipal offices in which a man was killed. Benjamin Ramoutsi was found in possession of explosives, and alleged to be a member of Umkhonto we Sizwe - the Spear of the Nation, the newly formed military wing of the underground A.N.C. (24) The conflict of interests precipitated by the bannings of the organisations was polarising the black community, penetrating even the Advisory Board system in this extreme way.

Having failed in their attempt to have a U.B.C. introduced, the Sofasonke Party went on to successfully win the Advisory Board elections.

Mpanza now became to the focus of the struggle against the U.B.C. He was the only Johannesburg leader to openly advocate acceptance of the new body. (26)

> "Orlando is in an uproar because of the attempt of Advisory Board leader James Sofasonke Mpanza to force a Bantu Authority on the people against their wishes, and despite the fact that his own Board is deeply divided on the issue ...
>
> Mr. Mpanza mustered only 15 to 20 supporters at last week's public meeting of the Orlando Residents Association and so furious was the crowd at his back-hand deal that he had to call in the police.
>
> Mpanza first tried to deny that he had agreed that the Orlando Board be turned into an U.B.C. Then he changed tactics and shouted: 'I am not obliged to consult you. I am Verwoerd!'
>
> Mpanza was infuriated by the vote of no confidence in him. He told the meeting that while he was Verwoerd the people were like the United and Progressive Parties. 'The Nationalists when the want to pass laws do so without the approval of the people of South Africa and they tell the world that they have a mandate from the people.'
>
> That didn't help Mr. Mpanza's case one bit!
>
> Mpanza called his party, which won fame with its militant action in the days of the squatters' shantytown movement after the war, the Sofasonke Party (Let us all die together). If anything will kill his party it is this acceptance of a Bantu Council."

In spite of Mpanza's 'mandate' and Advisory Board election win, his pro-U.B.C. stance was clearly unpopular. As has been shown, not only was Mpanza's support base greatly reduced by the national political movements, but also there had been a reduction in the grassroots working-class base in which he had been rooted. This meant that of what was left of his working class support it tended to be more conservative. Furthermore with the widespread hostility to the Advisory Boards and public mobilization against the U.B.C.'s, Mpanza's mandate from the meeting which discussed the U.B.C. and his election win was not likely to have been very representative of popular feeling, even given the traditional conservatism and independence of Orlando residents. Thus while Mpanza may have got a mandate, his mandate had limited representivity. If the Sofasonke Party had spent most of the fifties in

a political backwater, when they followed Mpanza in pursuit of a U.B.C., they now followed him into a political desert.

Distrust started when Mpanza and his group walked out of an Advisory Board meeting in protest against the appointment of Butshingi as a nominated member. This meeting was due to have been addressed by the Commissioner of U.B.C.'s to explain the Council system. After the meeting Mpanza was reported to have gone to see the Commissioner alone and to have spoken with him for a long period.

He then requisitioned a meeting to discuss the U.B.C.'s, although this was opposed by the secretary of the board, Self Mampuru, who felt this would be improper. The meeting took place without Mampuru and Mpanza moved that the secretary be instructed to write to the U.B.C. Commissioner requesting him to implement the Act in Orlando.

This led to a public row when Butshingi, Mampuru and one of the elected members flatly opposed this leading to a deadlock in the six-man board.

The residents meeting decided to invite the U.B.C. Commissioner to come and witness the 'peoples' rejection of the Act. The demand was for black representation on the Johannesburg City Council instead. (27)

New Age (N.A.) interviewed Mpanza on the U.B.C. proposal. His answers show the extent to which Mpanza was out of his depth in the changed political environment.

"N.A.: Would you say the U.B.C. Act is good for the African people?"

M.: A law is a law, no matter what we think of it. There are many laws we do not like, for example the influx control. But they have been implemented. Our leaders, the chiefs, have accepted Bantu Authorities. I am following them.

N.A.: Isn't a leader a leader because of the people's confidence in him? Shouldn't he be guided by the people's interests in whatever he does?

M.: Once a chief has been appointed he can no longer be led, but must lead and see that the people do not go astray. The people can only advise and consult him.

N.A.: Can you be advised by the people?

M.: Yes! If I consider the advise to be genuine.

N.A.: Where do you draw the line between advice which is genuine and that which is not?

M.: From the argument. That is my yardstick. I have been elected to the Advisory Board consecutively for 26 years now. Do you think the people who elected me have been stupid all these years?

N.A.: But you have been out of the Board. You only got in when Mr. G.G. Xorile and his colleagues got out.

M.: Oh! Those just got out because of their 'Asinamali' stunt which could not hold for long. My child I will be 73 years old on May 15th. These people who oppose me were only born yesterday. They know nothing and when it comes to the push they run to New York and London, etc. During my Shantytown case I never fled the country. I am still here.

N.A.: What following have you got?

M.: All the people who elected me are behind me.

N.A.: Where are they now? Is it not true that an overwhelming majority of the people who attend meetings in the Communal Hall are against you?

M.: Listen here! You are not going to tell me anything! The people you talk about are my opposition. They are jealous because I was elected instead of them. Let them bump their heads into me. They will wear out. I am leader here. **I AM THE BLACK VERWOERD.**

N.A.: Are you granite?

M.: **THAT'S ME.**

N.A.: Will you go ahead with your request for the implementation of the Act even though your own Board members are divided on the issue?

M.: The four elected Board members voted unanimously for the U.B.C. Mr. Mampuru and Mr. H.M. Butshingi are just Council nominees and I cannot consider their views. The Coloured and the Indian people have accepted the same law. They are going to have their own Mayors. Why must we be left behind?

N.A.: Have they accepted?

M.: That is what the papers tell us."

A number of other leaders interviewed show the depth of opposition of Mpanza's decision. Among these were Paul Mosaka and a spokesman for the Union of South African artists.

The Joint Secretary of the F.S.A.W., Ruth Matseone, said:

> "I am sure that the great majority of women in South Africa are resolutely opposed to U.B.C.'s and will condemn Mr. Mpanza for accepting it."

Said the General Secretary of SACTU, Mark Shope:

> "The acceptance of U.D.C.'s by Mpanza is a tragedy. He has now lost the support even of those who admired him for the work which he had done during the Shantytown removals."

Most of the townships were opposed to Mpanza's move. The Secretary of the Co-ordinating Committee of Residents' Associations in the South Western areas, Obed Motsabi spoke against it:

> "I make an appeal to everybody in the South Western areas particularly to oppose Mr. Mpanza's support for Urban Councils."

J.B. Marks added his voice:

> "In the establishment of the Urban Council system, Mpanza sees himself appointed an active participant in the administration of the enslavement and exploitation of the African people."

With the campaign against the U.B.C. mounting, 20 000 leaflets were distributed in the South Western townships with the heading;

> "Oppose Bantu Councils. Beware of Traitors. Mpanza is preparing to sell the people." (28)

Frightened by the strength of opposition, at a public meeting in Orlando in early March, Ramathibela apologised to the crowd which had gathered to oppose Mpanza and said that the people had now made the issue clear to him.

Mpanza failed to turn up at the meeting and was found to be holding a private meeting of his supporters at his home. At this stage Orlando had the only board which supported the act. (29)

Speaking out again, Duma Nokwe attacked Mpanza with incisive analysis.

> "We should not be deceived. The U.B.C.'s, like Bantu Authorities are a national scheme of the Nationalists, in reply to the demand for democratic rights by the African people.
>
> The immediate targets of the campaign are the puny local stooges like Mpanza and Makapan. The fact that the wrath of the people is directed against persons who have only interested themselves in local politics, like Mpanza and Makapan, must not blind us from seeing the true perspectives and main target of the campaign. The Mpanzas and those of his ilk are the tentacles of the apartheid octupus; they are offering themselves as the remote control of apartheid on us, and we strike at them in order to strike at the body of apartheid." (30)
>
> Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party were forced to retreat before the wrath of the masses. The Advisory Board could no longer function as a result of hositility directed toward them. The weekly meeting that the board usually ran was taken over by the residents to discuss township affairs. (31)

Umkhonto was active again when on the night of 2nd September a bomb was thrown through the window of the Orlando East municipal offices. It exploded without injuring anyone. (32) Again, on the 7th October there were explosions, claimed by Umkhonto, in Johannesburg and one at Noordgesig, next to Orlando. (33)

In Durban popular resistance led to a boycott of Advisory Board elections there. (34)

> "Twelve feet - not six - under the earth. He has had his day,"

Orlando residents were saying about Mpanza. The Sofasonke Party were alone in their acceptance of the U.B.C. for Orlando. There was a move among residents to mobilize votes against him for the coming election. A vote of no confidence in the Sofasonke Party was passed at a meeting of residents in the Orlando Communal Hall in November. The Orlando Residents Association was elected in opposition to the Sofasonke Party. They in turn elected a Residents' Committee. Among these was ex-Sofasonke Party member, J.B. Hashe.

The Orlando Residents' Committee was to fight the elections on the principle that, —

> "a leader of the people must lead with the people behind him; that the people must be consulted before any major decision is taken."

They said that the Sofasonke Party did not get a mandate from the residents to accept the U.B.C.

They demanded instead direct representation in the Johannesburg Council. They were to try to take control of the Board to prevent the Board from approving the U.B.C. Act and legitimising the Council's possible action in this regard.

Hashe said that if Mpanza's grip was broken it would mean a real victory for all the people of South Africa. (35)

In another blow against the local state, the Residents' Association of Zola, also in the South Western area, decided in late November to boycott Advisory Board elections. They rejected the argument that the Advisory Boards could be used to 'fight from within.' They demanded direct representation in all Government institutions. (36)

But elections in Orlando produced a shock result. Despite widespread opposition to the Sofasonke Party the Residents' Association could not muster enough support on the 15th December to oust them from the board. The same Sofasonke Party team was returned with an overwhelming majority. This was seen by the ruling class media as a vote against 'sabotage, stay-at-homes, force and mass opposition policies.' (37)

Mpanza's win contributed to the demoralisation of national political opposition. With the organisations banned and many of the leaders too, it was difficult to sustain the campaign against the U.B.C.'s and the furore surrounding Mpanza's acceptance of the Councils died down. Mpanza was undaunted.

> "Where is the sense in condemning the contents of a coconut without first breaking the shell and tasting them?,"

he asked. He regarded the rejection of the U.B.C.'s as shortsighted and unrealistic. (38)

In a surprise development, an obstacle to Mpanza's plans arose, when in April the Rand Supreme Court rejected as impractical the plea by the four Orlando Board members that the Council be directed to establish a U.B.C. in Orlando. (39)

Pressing ahead regardless, the Orlando Board resolved at a meeting on the 28th May to demand in black and white an indication when the Council would implement an U.B.C. in Orlando East. (40)

Beginning to conceive of the south western areas as one administrative unit, the City Council called for suggestions for a name for the area, in June.

> "The City Council of Johannesburg staged a competition for a prize to be offered to anybody who would suggest the most suitable name for the area."

Mpanza's supporters wanted the township named after him.

> "Everybody who had known the struggle Sofasonke had put up to get adequate housing for residents, anticipated that the area would be called Sofasonke Township. But on the contrary, and all of a sudden the area was called Soweto - South Western Township." (41)

The Johannesburg Joint Boards were still wary of the U.B.C. plan and had not approved it by the end of 1963. Out of the 10 Soweto boards it was still only Orlando with the same board members which accepted it. (42)

The housing shortage continued into the 1960's as did the backlog in rents, which the N.E.A.D. were making 'strenuous efforts' to collect. Mpanza said the Housing Commission had funds to lend the Council so it could build houses for blacks, which the Council was not doing. The Soweto Advisory Boards launched a campaign in 1964 to have blacks employed as assistant location superintendents. They spoke of taking the Council to court in two test cases, one on the housing shortage and the other on ethnic grouping in Soweto. (43)

Presenting a new angle on the issue, Kaiser Mnweba, Sofasonke Party Advisory Board member, said at a meeting of the Joint Boards in September, that local Joint Boards were 'dummy' institutions whose resolutions went unheeded in official quarters. The meeting was called to discuss the establishment of a U.B.C. He said he wanted a U.B.C. instead, because,

> "under it you will have executive powers. The council will be forced to carry out your decisions."

He claimed that the Council had the previous year asked the Supreme Court for eight months to prepare itself to establish an U.B.C. when the Orlando Board's application had been rejected. More than eight months had lapsed since. The Orlando Board had threatened the Council with court action again, he reported.

With the political organisations now four years under the heel, the attitudes of those in the boards, although still hesitant, had softened toward the idea of a U.B.C. Lengene was in favour of an U.B.C., but another board member cautioned that it would be dangerous to ask the council to establish one.

> "We might be killed by residents who do not want it."

Finally they resolved to ask the Council 'to establish an U.B.C. if thought necessary,' but members would not specifically press for it, they said. (44)

> "Soweto residents were made to believe that under Urban Bantu Councils they would enjoy some form of self rule. Businessmen, intellectuals and even a former P.A.C. member became interested in the U.B.C. elections." (45)

They made their request for an U.B.C. for Soweto on the 9th September, 1964 saying they believed it had 'more powers than the system of Advisory Boards.' (46)

After as brief a delay as decency required for formal procedures, the Council hastened to agree to approach the Government for permission to establish a single U.B.C. for all the black townships and hostels under

its jurisdiction. This was slightly different from the Orlando Advisory Board's application for a U.B.C. for Orlando alone. (47)

It was noted in the press that there had been a noticeable swing among black leaders in favour of the U.B.C. (48)

There was again a low poll in the Advisory Board elections in Soweto at the end of the year. Only 20 000 of 470 000 residents voted. In Orlando the Sofasonke Party were returned with J.H. Langa taking the place of Diniso. (49) In most of the townships the sitting members were returned. (50) With little interest in the boards, the Sofasonke Party remained fairly statically in control from 1960 until the board was closed down. (51)

An official of the N.E.A.D. said he was disappointed that so few had bothered to vote. He added that there had been a steady decline of voters in the past ten years and that the Council was worried about this.

> "We do not know what the position will be when the U.B.C. is introduced ..." (52)

The start of the decline dated back to the hayday of A.N.C. mobilization in the Johannesburg townships and the withdrawal of funding to the Locations Advisory Board in the mid-1950's.

By 1965 the N.E.A.D. could report that rent payments were finally overcoming the huge backlog of the late 1950's.

The arrears as a percentage of annual rent, since 1962 were listed as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1962 | 8,4% |
| 1963 | 4,7% |
| 1964 | 3,1% |
| 1965 | 2,1% |

By 1966 this figure would be down to 1,4%. (53)

In October 1965, the B.A.D., having first gained the commitment of the Soweto Boards to a U.B.C., now began to call the tune on the terms for introducing the Council. The condition was that it would be on ethnic lines.

Mpanza and other board members now tried to oppose this. Their grounds were that blacks in Moroka and Jabavu had not been ethnically settled. (54)

In a tight spot the Johannesburg Joint Boards sought a way out in another carefully constructed Nationalist structure. In a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, he refused to grant their request that Soweto become a Bantustan. Instead, he said, there would soon be two U.B.C.'s in Johannesburg, one for Soweto and the other for the Native Resettlement Board's Townships, Meadowlands and Diepkloof. (55)

The elections at the end of 1965 were the dullest to be held for many years. There was very little enthusiasm. Mpanza who was the most popular candidate in Orlando, received only 1 000 votes compared to a peak of 6 000 in the past. There were two changes in the Sofasonke Party team.

Many saw these as the last Advisory Board elections before an U.B.C. would be introduced. (56)

The demand by the Johannesburg Boards that the U.B.C. be conducted on a geographical rather than ethnic basis, dampened 'hopes' that an U.B.C. would be introduced in 1966. The Johannesburg Boards pointed out that Advisory Board elections were geographically based. The Council handed their 'request' on to the Department of Bantu Administration in Pretoria. (57)

The position of the Boards towards the U.B.C. had changed considerably in the previous three years. From opposition, they now expressed disappointment in the delay. (58)

Mpanza did not do much to improve his popularity at a residents' meeting in November held to discuss the age-old question of the sale of houses, this time in Orlando West.

The residents started heckling Mpanza when he refused to accept their disapproval of the Council's proposed price list for the houses.

Mpanza read the list and when people complained that the prices were too high, he said:

> "I am not going to accept your suggestions. You have either to accept the Council's suggestions or the meeting should close."

The meeting became rowdy and Mpanza was booed. A walk-out from the meeting took place and Mpanza called the meeting off. (59)

In October it was heard that the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development had rejected the request that the Soweto U.B.C. be run on a regional or ward basis. (60) The board's objections were ignored and the Council announced that Soweto Council Chamber was to be built, and complete in a year's time. (61)

There was slightly more interest in Advisory Board elections this year although they were again seen as the last.

Candidates for the Orlando Board were Mpanza, Diniso, Mnweba, Mokoena, S.Q. Molapo, G. Khaile and E.P. Tshabalala. (62) It is likely that the retiring board consisting of the first four listed, was returned. (63)

With the hope of new powers and responsibilities, Soweto Board members began extending the scope of their activities in early 1967. They were warned by Carr not to do so and told that in future each member would only be allowed to represent residents in his own area. Lengene, the chairman of the Joint Boards, replied that all members would resign rather than yield to new restrictions on their activities. (64) The restrictions remained and no one resigned.

Mpanza still had his race horses and interest in racing. In April he appealed to the Department of Bantu Administration and Development for a racecourse for blacks, to be laid out near Soweto. His horses had recently won a number of races at Bloemfontein and made a big impression. (65)

With the time drawing nearer, in June, J.R. Rathebe called upon the Joint Boards to hold meetings about the composition and functions of the U.B.C. (66)

Plans were once again set back when the Joint Boards rejected the Council's proposal in August, that the initial powers of the Bantu Councils be limited. The Boards wanted full powers from the start. Said Mpanza,

> "The City Council want to give us half-a-loaf. If we accept their offer, we are going to remain where we were under the Advisory Board system."

The disagreement delayed plans to hold elections for the U.B.C. in January of 1968. (67) Instead Advisory Board elections were to be held in January instead of December. These were again seen as the last board elections. (68)

The Advisory Board system actually ended on the 31st December, 1967 and elections were for 'Bantu Advisory Committees' which would sit until the U.B.C. elections were held. (69)

Now 78 years old, Mpanza had not changed his ways. In November 1967, his followers trooped back into court in Orlando to watch Mpanza defend himself against a charge of threatening a traffic policeman. He had been arrested and kept in jail for the night. (70)

In December the Government announced that the next Advisory Board elections would be the last. This was welcomed by the Joint Boards. (71) The U.B.C. was to be established in March, 1968. But it would not have full powers. It would be little different in its authority and scope from the Advisory Boards. Several Board men complained. (72)

With the Soweto U.B.C. well on the way, the Government was tightening its stranglehold on urban blacks. A Government circular in February 1968 stated that blacks could no longer build their homes in urban areas or buy them from municipalities. (73) This was a sign of more to come.

The ban on home ownership had more immediate effect on the black middle class. Acting on their behalf, successful Soweto businessman, Richard Maponya, planned a deputation to the Government. (74)

The U.B.C. was to have 41 members elected by residents in the townships and hostels, and 17 selected from among the chiefs' representatives, making the total of 58 members. The elections attracted more interest than the Advisory Board had done. The last board election had had a 5 - 10% poll. It was contested by 5 parties and some independents. The parties were the Soweto Peoples' Party, composed mostly of the old Advisory Board members; the Sofasonke Party; the Masingafi Party; the pro-apartheid African Foundation for South Africa Party (A.F.S.A.); and the Lebowa National Party.

The A.F.S.A. was attacked by the Soweto Peoples' Party for using a helicopter to distribute election leaflets. They were suspicious of the A.F.S.A.'s source of money.

The A.F.S.A. claimed that the Sofasonke and Masingafi Parties had joined with it to form the All African United Front, but these two parties denied this.

Mpanza was one of four candidates for two seats in Ward 1, Orlando. (76)

As the elections approached, some candidates became more openly critical of the homeland policy. (77)

At an election meeting, Mpanza told a small group of his followers of threats from the underground A.N.C. These were type-written and sent to candidates.

> "The person or persons responsible for these letters has warned us to pull out or face reprisals for supporting the Government.
>
> But whoever it is, I want to reply: 'We shall never be intimidated, even though our lives and those of our children have been threatened. We shall go on.'"

Another candidate supported him in this. The Special Branch watched over the meeting. (78)

When the elections were held late in March, there was said to be a 35% poll. The Soweto Peoples' Party won 34 seats, 10 went to the Sofasonke Party, 4 to the Lebowa National Party, 3 to the Masingafi Party, and 2 to the A.F.S.A.

S. Moema was among the nominated members. (79) Mpanza polled the highest number of votes. (80)

There was some confusion when the U.B.C. met shortly after the election. There had been a previous meeting at which the Chairman of the U.B.C. had been elected. Mpanza had not been at that meeting as the notices inviting them to attend did not mention that the election would take place. It was also not clear whether that election had been final. Mpanza was thought to be a strong candidate for the position.

Mpanza argued, with some support from other members, that the election of F.S. Mncube as chairman was a practice election. Carr said it was a valid and binding election, but had been done before the offical opening of the Council so that it would go smoothly on the day. Mpanza jumped up to protest and after a heated exchange was ordered out of the chambers. (81) Many Councillors said they had also thought it had been a trial election. (82)

Mpanza said that he felt he should be given the position because of his long service to the Soweto residents as a member of the Advisory Boards.

> "I feel they should give me the position to honour me. But because I am old, I will then give it to a younger man."

As there had obviously been confusion about the election of chairman, the N.E.A.D. reluctantly agreed to hold it again.

Mpanza and his supporters appealed against the secret ballot but it was kept. Mpanza sat fixedly in his chair casting an indifferent glance around the chamber while votes were cast. When the results were announced he shook his head.

Mncube was re-elected, beating Mpanza by a clear majority of 12. The other candidate was Lengene.

But the most shattering defeat came when the deputy chairman was elected. By 35 votes to 7, J.R. Rathebe was re-elected as well.

Mpanza was deeply disappointed.

> "I polled the highest votes in the U.B.C. election and as such should have been honoured. I am also the father of the U.B.C. having fought right up to the courts for the system to be introduced in Johannesburg." (83)
>
> "I am disgusted at the way I have been treated by the Councillors. I fought for the establishment of the U.B.C. alone, after several of them had told the Johannesburg City Council that they did not want it. I expected that they would elect me leader." (84)
>
> "He came back from the election meeting disappointed and said, 'Jesus Christ was betrayed and crucified by the people he had served and loved.' ...
>
> 'The residents of Soweto will suffer when I die. The administrative power will fall into the hands of dictators and Nationalist oppressors who will play about with your minds and souls. When I die, you'll have to go back to Egypt.'" (85)

To add to Mpanza's unhappiness, on the 3rd May, he and his son William appeared in the Orlando court on a stock theft charge involving a valuable race horse. Mpanza was warned to behave himself in court. They were remanded in custody for three days. Mpanza's lawyer appealed for bail on account of his old age and poor health. But bail was not granted as the prosecutor said the State had information already that Mpanza had interfered with State witnesses over whom he had great influence. (86)

When he appeared again, his daughter led members of the Sofasonke Party to the court to support him. Mpanza claimed he had proof of his innocence.

> "There is a telegram from the complainant in which he states that he gave me the horses willingly." (87)

Mpanza and William were granted bail of R100 each and warned not to interfere with State witnesses.

His followers wearing Sofasonke Party colours, danced and sang when they heard he was being released. (88)

Two weeks later Mpanza and William were acquitted and the two state witnesses were detained at the Orlando court for giving false evidence. His followers went wild with joy. (89)

With the U.B.C. just over two months old, the Councillors were beginning to see what they had let themselves in for.

It had been normal under the Advisory Board system for board members to be approached by members of the community and then for the board members to represent their grievances to the Superintendent. Apart from Advisory Board meetings where they were supposed to 'advise' the Council and raise problems, this was the one really concrete task they could perform. it also kept them in constant contact with the ordinary people.

Now they were told that they no longer had the right to represent the residents. The Councillors were indignant. (90)

They continued to protest and complain when Carr sent letters to the residents saying they must take their problems to the Superintendent.

An infuriated Mpanza said:

> "Mr. Carr's letter, which is subjudice, tells the people (mice) to go to the superintendents (cats) with their problems. Have you ever seen cats speak to mice? They usually eat them." (91)

The issue of representation continued to be a source of dissatisfaction to the councillors.

Frustrated the aging Mpanza looked unrealistically for an alternative.

> "That Doyen of civic politics, Mr. Mpanza, has come up with a fresh one. If we are temporary sojourners in the urban areas he has asked that he be given a bantustan with his people in Zuurbekom outside Soweto. Zuurbekom is bare veld where Africans used to have the right to buy land and Mr. Mpanza argues that the Government has created a precedent by building bantustans outside towns at Pretoria and Hammanskraal. (92)

In November the Bantu Council complained again when train fares were increased without their being consulted. They protested against the increase. (93)

Toward the end of 1968 the Council was trying to move some people from Eastern Native Township. These people agreed to move on condition that they were moved to Noordgesig, the 'coloured' township next to Orlando. Mpanza supported this line of argument. He said the policy of separate development must be pursued to its logical conclusion. If one group of people were moved, the movement should not be one-sided. The 'coloured' people should also be moved. His protege, T.J. Makaya agreed. (94)

But Mpanza's health was failing. In January 1969 he took ill with pneumonia and was being nursed at home. (95)

He stayed in bed for almost 2 months. In February he was hospitalised for a week at Baragwanath Hospital following an attack of double pneumonia. He then returned to his bed at his home. (96)

When he returned to active politics, Mpanza took up the vexed problem of representivity. He wrote to the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development asking for his views on the question.

> "With all due respect to you, sir, I did not want to take up this directive by the local manager judicially until after having got your view of this directive."

He said he would take the Council to court if it did not relax the ban. (97)

It was arranged that a delegation of 6 members of the Soweto U.B.C. would see the Minister of Bantu Administration on September the 18th to discuss the problem of representation. Mpanza was included among them. (98)

With the delegation having gained little satisfaction, Mpanza made hazy appeals to law to ask the Johannesburg Council and Department of Bantu Administration and Development for increased powers for the U.B.C. as laid down in the U.B.C. Act. He said he could not see how the U.B.C. could continue to be advisory when it had succeeded the Advisory Boards.

> "For 43 years under the Advisory Board system in Johannesburg we acted in an advisory capacity. That was why we asked for the establishment of an Urban Bantu Council because in it we had seen statutory powers which could be vested in us.
>
> We left the Advisory Boards because we were satisfied they were inferior institutions." (99)

He continued,

> "Mr. W.J.P. Carr, the former Manager of N.E.A.D., frustrated us when he said that we shouldn't represent out people. I wonder why they should nickname us a council if we can't do anything for our people but just listen to what they tell us. The Act gives us powers and the City Council is usurping them. Only the court can settle this matter. But the foremost leaders are sluggish. I wonder what they think about the people who voted for them?" (100)

Mpanza had another court case on his hands in 1969 when he sued a weekend newspaper for R4 000 for exposing his Parents Court. Evidence was led against him that he conducted the Parents Court in the backyard of his home where he administered justice, fined residents and ordered corporal punishment for others.

Mpanza denied that he had ever conducted a court, but admitted that he acted at times on behalf of aggrieved parents, who, for instance, had been assaulted by their wayward children and he also dealt with youths who misbehaved themselves.

> "I am close on 80 years of age and I have dealt with such children and youths as a father would deal with naughty children."

he said.

His claim was dismissed and the newspaper was awarded costs. (101)

Being old and fragile Mpanza turned to quieter forms of expressing is public concern. In November he called on blacks to fast and pray on December 16th, the day of the Covenant. He said he believed that only by fasting could the black people cast out the

> "demon of inferiority which is holding us down as a people. Fasting and prayer saved me from the rope in Pretoria Central Prison."

Referring to his vision in jail and spiritual rebirth he said,

> "If God could do this for me in 1922, I cannot understand why he cannot do it for our African people today. Africans have in the past tried through various political organisations to get some recognition like other racial groups. But this has proved to be a failure which goes to show that there is a demon in our midst which must be cast out.
>
> So on December 16th, the Day of the Covenant, the white people of South Africa will be celebrating their historic victory. It is during this day that we Africans should be humble and in communion with God through fasting and prayer. If all can support this urgent call, I believe that sooner or later we will overcome this scourge."

Many well known figures in Soweto supported Mpanza's appeal. (102)

Mpanza was disappointed in the behavior of Bantu Councillors. Very much the senior member, he rebuked them in December for being 'too flippant and playful at meetings.' He said they wasted much time and talked 'trash' while major issues affecting Soweto residents were not being properly handled.

> "I have noticed at many meetings of this U.B.C. that members simply become very playful and inattentive." (103)

The day of prayer was organised by the Interdenominational African Ministers Association and Mpanza. About 100 people turned up at Mofolo Park for the prayer meeting.

In his speech Mpanza said Indians came to South Africa as sugar cane slaves but through praying and fasting they were no more slaves. (104)

Although sickly and fragile, Mpanza remained in the thick of the U.B.C. struggles. In July he was threatening legal action again following a municipal order abolishing all unauthorised extensions to Orlando East houses.

Annoyed and in a fiery mood, he claimed the Council had dishonoured an agreement between the old Orlando East Advisory Board and the former Manager of the N.E.A.D., Venables, that the extensions residents made to their houses would only be pulled down when the council built extra rooms onto the houses.

Hundreds of families in Orlando East had converted the verandahs on their houses into extra rooms to provide more accommodation in the small two-roomed houses.

> "I have documents to prove my case.
>
> Following representation I made, the Council agreed that converted verandahs should only be demolished when properly constructed rooms had been added to the Orlando East houses.
>
> I appeal to anybody who has been a victim of the latest order by the Council to get in touch with me. I will then take the necessary measures."

N.E.A.D.'s reply was that every case would be dealt with on merit. (105)

Mpanza's health was failing by late July and his voice was heard less and less in debates in the U.B.C. chambers. (106)

By August Mpanza was seriously ill and confined to bed. He was constantly cared for by his family. He often played a penny whistle and taught himself to play 'Nkosi Sikelel' i' Afrika' while lying in bed.

> "Sofasonke so loved music that he sang and tried to compose music in his death bed. Several times, during his illness, we went to see him. He would sing and refer to his Party."
>
> "The future of the Black Man will evolve from concerted action," he told Mrs. Mampuru. (107)

Although frail and weak, Mpanza flatly refused to be hospitalised, against his doctor's advice. (108)

With little money Mpanza still planned two court cases. In the one he wanted to get a legal definition of the powers of the U.B.C. and in the other he wanted to fight the Johannesburg Council's order that the spare rooms build onto stoeps in Orlando must be broken down.

He was losing his voice and whispered,

> "The people of Soweto still need me. I hope I might be spared to help them, with the help of their prayers."

Asked who had inspired him to become a human rights fighter, Mpanza answered;

> "It was Napoleon, that great French General. I have tried all my life to emulate him. I may not be a leader in some circles, but no man can sincerely say James Sofasonke Mpanza is not a battler."

He said that had he been made Soweto's first mayor, he would have reigned for only a day then resigned. (109)

It was evident that the end was near. He was worried about his successor and in the last two weeks looked for

> "a worthy young man to continue my good work."

The man he favoured was T.J. Makhaya. (110) Says Makhaya,

> "When I visited him early this week, the old champion whipped out an obituary, written in his own handwriting and said to me: 'Son, keep this until I die. This will keep the record straight when I'm gone. Now I'm sinking.'"

In his obituary, Mpanza wrote:

> "James Sofasonke Mpanza, Born : 15th May, 1989, and baptised by the Lutheren Church in New Germany, near Marianhill, Natal, by Rev. Gloucner on June 9, 1889. Mother born Mlotshwa. James Sofasonke was named by his father, Ventile Mpanza, known as Fentele. Sofasonke's sister was Miriam Ngcobo, mother to Reggie Ngcobo."

But Mpanza was sad in his last days.

> "I have helped so many and so few have turned up in my greatest hour of need."

He prepared himself for the end and was resigned when the time came. (111)

On the morning of 23rd September, 1970 Mpanza died peacefully in the arms of his wife and daughter. Doctors had tried desperately to save his life but without success. (112)

> "Mpanza 'Father of Soweto' is Dead,"

read the headlines.

News of his death spread around the townships in the Reef like wildfire. His house was a hive of activity as his supporters, members of his family and relatives continued streaming in.

When told of Mpanza's death, his brother Mbulawa James Mpanza a taylor, clutched the pair of scissors and coat on which he was working and said,

> "My brother has left us to struggle and since I cannot bear this I wish to die and follow him to the grave."

So saying he collapsed and died.

Hundreds of mourners were converging on the Mpanza home by late that afternoon. Julia and the family were waiting for other family members to arrive from Natal before making plans for the funeral. But it had been decided that Mpanza would have a civic funeral. There was to be a meeting on the 25th to arrange the funeral.

Said Percy Qoboza the editor of the newspaper, The World;

> "The U.B.C. may have let Mpanza down but the people of Soweto will always remember him for what he was: a gallant, plucky, witty, sharp tongued leader whose fighting spirit was amazing. I salute a great man. To me Magebula will always remain a hero." (113)

On the 25th September the U.B.C. adjourned their meeting in respect for Mpanza, after standing with their heads bowed. (114)

It was decided that Julia Mpanza would be the new leader of the Sofasonke Party and that she would be elected to take Mpanza's place in the U.B.C. (115)

Makhaya announced on the 27th September that a 'Sofasonke Monument Fund' would be launched so that a gigantic tombstone costing at least R2 000 could be laid on Mpanza's grave. (116)

Mpanza was buried on the 4th October in the biggest and most elaborate funeral seen in Soweto in many years. The ceremony lasted twelve hours.

From as early as 8 a.m. cars packed with mourners started converging on the small Orlando Communal Hall. The coffin left the Mpanza's home at 9 o'clock. The hearse flanked by members of the Sofasonke Party in their colourful uniforms and red sashes, was laiden with wreaths. They chanted their party's official hymn, 'We mourn our country.'

On several occasions traffic officers and party officials had to prevent women, overcome with grief, from hurling themselves in front of the hearse and cars carrying the family.

With cries of 'Sofasonke' the casket was carried into the hall by members of the football teams, Orlando Pirates and Moroka Swallows, who acted as pallbearers. Mpanza had maintained his interest in soccer throughout his life and had been a supporter of these clubs.

A woman mourner shouted.

> "Our trials are just beginning. Our homes are no more safe. We will suffer."

By 10 a.m. all available space in the hall was taken up as more than 2 000 people packed it out. In the hall were Soweto Urban Bantu Councillors dressed in their black robes, leading members of the Sofasonke Party, Zulu warriors in full ragalia, Boy Scouts, a brass band, a jazz group called the St. Souls, and many others.

On the stage was the Director of the N.E.A.D. and the senior superintendent of Orlando East.

Outside the crowd swelled into the neighbouring streets.

When the lid of the coffin was removed the congregation sang the Sofasonke Party version of the song 'Somlandela' - we will follow our leader. The crowd shuffled past the coffin.

A network of microphones conveyed the proceedings to those outside.

An old resident of Orlando, L. Gcinga said,

> "Soweto is a living monument to the man. Nothing describes him better."

The Orlando senior superintendent also spoke,

> "Soweto has lost a great friend and benefactor. You will never get another Mpanza. No longer have I a person who will tell me that the widows were promised this and Orlando children were promised that. The Lord help us in his absence."

Makhaya added,

> "The widows and orphans of Soweto have no say now."

The service was four and a half hours long. Speaker after speaker paid tribute to Mpanza.

Then the two-hour long procession to the grave began. It was led by Mpanza's six horses. More than 300 cars and 10 buses helped carry the mourners. Among these were cars sent by the Johannesburg Taxi Association. Hundred of others followed on foot.

As they filed out of the Communal Hall a sound from the buglers of the drum majorettes, signalled to the referee of a soccer game being played in the Orlando Stadium. He blew his whistle and players bowed their heads and knelt for ten minutes.

The route started from the place where the squatter camps had been, then went through Orlando West, Dube, Jabavu and all the major townships, then wound its way to Doornkop Cemetary. It was five miles long.

Residents lined the road for the entire route. As the cortege went by, hats were taken off, women went down on their knees and children waved.

At the cemetary more than 2 000 people formed a guard of honour as the convoy reached the gates.

At the graveside, the Last Post was played by a Boy Scout. 'Abide With Me' was sung as the coffin was lowered.

Hysterical women fainted, and both men and women cried uncontrollably as the priest blessed the coffin.

Julia remained calm and composed. She was supported by relatives as she poured flowers into the grave.

After the grave was covered, Reggie Ngcobo addressed the crowd.

> "My uncle served his people for many years and when the end came he died a poor man materially, but richer spiritually."

The ceremony ended with the Sofasonke Party supporters chanting their song 'Sofasonke'.

After the funeral the mourners went back to Mpanza's home for the ceremonial washing of the hands. (117)

Mpanza's seat on the U.B.C. was taken over by another Sofasonke woman the next year as Julia was ill and still in ritual mourning. (118)

The U.B.C. suffered for its creditibility with the loss of Mpanza.

> "With their limited powers Urban Bantu Councillors are not held in very high esteem, but Mpanza was a unique man. He stood head and shoulders above the rest, and he was very popular ...
>
> If there was fighting-talk to be done, it was always left to Mpanza to produce the fireworks .. Now Mpanza is dead the Councillors themselves admit that the U.B.C. is a castrated bull." (119)

Julia was now left to hold the party together on her own. She spoke of their life together.

> "As my husband fought with the backing of the men, I was also fighting on his side with the women." (120)

When she had gone with him onto the veld in 1944, she had lost her youngest child at the time.

> "Papa (Mpanza) comforted me and told me that I should always be prepared to make sacrifices in the service of my people. Many other people had lost their children and we had led them to that place, he told me."

A reporter asked her:

> "Did you not at times feel dwarfed to live in the shadow of such a great man?"
>
> "Shadow? Dwarfed? What do you mean! I lived in his shelter and not his shadow. He never dwarfed me, but made me feel like a queen. He taught me many things which I am trying to put in practice as a public leader today,"

was Julia's reply. (121)

Finally, Julia Mpanza, the organiser of the Sofasonke women, followed her husband to the grave in August, 1973. (122)

On 1st August, 1975, the U.B.C. resolved to make Mpanza's home a museum in honour of his battle for the creation of Soweto. (123)

The long awaited tombstone was eventually unveiled over his and Julia's joint graves in November, 1978. On it was inscribed:

Soweto Veteran Civic Leader
1936 - 1970
Advisory Board Member
Founder of the Sofasonke Party (1943)
Founder of Urban Bantu Council (1968)
Christian, Warrior, Fighter,
Racehorse Owner

Bosala Belibusa
Inyaniso
Sofasonke
M P A N Z A (124)

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29. New Age, March 8, 1962.

30. New Age, March 22, 1962.

31. New Age, May 24, 1962.

32. R.D.M., September 3, 1962.

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96. World, March 25, 1969.

97. R.D.M., August 2, 1969.

98. Star, August 4, 1969.

99. R.D.M., October 21, 1969.

100. Drum, September, 1970.

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121. Drum, August 22, 1973.

122. R.D.M., August 8, 1973.

123. World, August 1, 1973.

124. Post, November 27, 1978.

The memory of Mpanza lives on. The praises of Mpanza are told all over Soweto. Indeed, not only Soweto but also along the Rand, and even further, in other provinces, in the rural areas, there are many who have heard of the deeds of Mpanza. It is not only the educated, the politicised, but the ordinary people who have heard of Magebula Mpanza, of what he did in the vast township of Soweto. But it is not the Mpanza of the U.B.C. they know, not the Mpanza who angered the political movements in 1961 and who entered the Government's enclosure.

It is the Mpanza of 1944 who is known to the ordinary people, to the working class, the Mpanza who organised the squatters, against the threat of the Council - the Mpanza who gave them houses, the Father of Soweto.

It was Mpanza's brilliance as a organiser, his deeply rooted empathy with the ordinary people, specifically the working class and his ability to translate this into action, which stands over his later failures when he was politically destroyed in 1961. It was his daring at placing himself at risk in a struggle for working class goals which has kept him alive in the minds of working people today, even though in the long run he failed. He failed because although he acted in working class interests, his populist ideology only expressed the consciousness of the people at the time, and did not seek to develop it in a more progressive direction. His populist and Africanist ideology which borrowed from any cultural symbols, whether tribalist, racial, religious or colonial was incapable of penetrating to deeper contradictions in the social system and thus mobilizing for fundamental goals. The same populist ideology on a personal level was what made him accept charismatic leadership and oppose broader unity with other progressive groupings. It also prevented him from creating decentralised organisations which would have ensured that his party would have remained rooted in its working class base and made it less susceptable to the co-optive manouvres of the state. It can be seen that the personal roots of Mpanza's moving toward the style of politics he adopted, lie in the story of his own development as well.

The party which did have an ideology which could have developed a decentralized mass organisation and which did understand the more fundamental issues was the Communist Party. However, their failure in Orlando was precisely due to their lack of some of Mpanza qualities as a speaker and organiser. While they had a more progressive programme they failed to take the popular consciousness of the working class as the starting point for the insertion of a more developed consciousness. They also lacked organising skills. This appears to be partly due to a tendency on the part of the party to have been overly concerned with white politics and so to have not given sufficient support to the black members in Orlando. This may have contributed to why Mofutsanyana, who was not a charismatic figure, became the leader of the Communist Party in Orlando instead of someone less of an intellectual, more a part of the working class. Without Mpanza's organising abilities, the Communist Party failed to make an impact on the Orlando working class, for whom at that time of recent proletarianization, their 'policies' meant very little. The Communist Party thus also came to grief and faded from the scene from 1944 onwards.

The contradictions in Mpanza's politics have allowed dangerous distortions to occur in the interpretation of his legacy today, despite the widespread recognition of his earlier contribution to the working class in 1944. This would have been less possible had Mpanza adopted a more progressive ideology. The gains of the 1940's might also have been more durable.

I have tried to show that without an ideology that expresses fundamental working class interests, working class organisation can be led astray, and that without working class organisatin, that ideology is impotent. Put more simply, in Orlando, what Mpanza had in pratice, the Communist Party had in theory. It was unfortunate that the two could not meet, for if they do not, to use the words of the poet, we will follow grey-haired Mpanza to a political death, then the crooks will remain ruling our land.

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UmAfrika

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The Voice of Orlando

The World

| TOWNSHIP | YEAR STARTED | AT 30TH JUNE 1964 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | POPULATION | HOUSES |
| Pimville | 1906 | 29 088 | 1 232 |
| Eastern Native Township | 1926 | 3 968 | 627 |
| Orlando | 1930 | 65 593 | 11 314 |
| Jabavu | 1948 | 25 468 | 5 100 |
| Dube | 1948 | 12 727 | 1 956 |
| Mofolo | 1954 | 28 284 | 4 543 |
| Moroka North | 1955 | 15 207 | 2 693 |
| Central Western Jabavu | 1954 | 25 468 | 1 432 |
| Molapo | 1956 | 8 188 | 1 466 |
| Moletsane | 1956 | 10 360 | 1 962 |
| Tladi | 1956 | 10 000 | 1 860 |
| Dhlamini | 1956 | 9 015 | 1 422 |
| Chiawelo | 1956 | 20 152 | 3 989 |
| Zondi | 1956 | 8 861 | 1 548 |
| Phiri | 1956 | 11 332 | 2 190 |
| Mapetla | 1956 | 11 476 | 2 105 |
| Jabulani | 1956 | 11 721 | 2 039 |
| Naledi | 1956 | 19 923 | 4 043 |
| Senaone | 1958 | 8 732 | 1 511 |
| Zola | 1958 | 30 630 | 5 572 |
| Emdeni | 1958 | 11 680 | 2 298 |

THE HISTORY OF THE NEAD 1965 - J.C.C. NEAD

ORLANDO HOUSING 1936-1947

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| December | 1936 | 2 800 |
| | 1937 | 4 460 |
| | 1938 | 5 861 |
| | 1939 | 5 891 |
| | 1940 | 5 891 |
| | 1941 | 6 476 |
| | 1942 | 6 641 |
| | 1943 | 6 641 |
| | 1944 | 6 641 |
| | 1945 | 6 739 |
| | 1946 | 7 041 |
| | 1947 | 7 623 |

Annex. "B" of memorandum of J.C.C. to Moroka Commission, 1947.

| YEAR | APPOINTED | ELECTED |
|---|---|---|
| 1954 | W.S. PELA - H.B.M. MDINGI | J.S. MPANZA, J.J. MASUPHA, L.P. KUMALO, REV. O.S.D. MOOKI |
| 1955 | W.S. PELA - H.B.M. MDINGI | H.M. BUTSHINGI, S.J.J. LESOLANG, S.M. MOEMA, G.G. XORILE |
| 1956 | W.S. PELA - H.B.M. MDINGI | H.M. BUTSHINGI, S.M. MOEMA, S.J.J. LESOLANG, G.G. XORILE |
| 1957 | SELF MAMPURU - H.B.M. MDINGI | G.G. XORILE, H.M. BUTSHINGI, S.M. MOEMA, M. MATSOETLANE |
| 1958 | | J.S. MPANZA, G.G. XORILE, S.M. MOEMA, H.M. BUTSHINGI |
| 1959 | | G.G. XORILE, J.S. MPANZA, S.M. MOEMA, H.M. BUTSHINGI |
| 1960 | SELF MAMPURU - H.B.M. MDINGI | J.S. MPANZA, T.S. RAMATHIBELA, E. SANGWENI, J. HASHE |
| 1961 | SELF MAMPURU - H.B.M. MDINGI | J.S. MPANZA, E. SANGWENI, KAISER MNWEBA, S. MOLAKENG |
| 1962 | H. BUTSHINGI - S. MAMPURU | J.S. MPANZA, T.J. RAMATHIBELA, E. SANGWENI, K. MNWEBA |
| 1963 | SELF MAMPURU - H.M. BUTSHINGI | J.S. MPANZA, T.J. RAMATHIBELA, K. MNWEBA, E. SANGWENI |
| 1964 | H.M. BUTSHINGI - I.R. RATHEBE | J.S. MPANZA, T.J. RAMATHIBELA, K. MNWEBA, W.V. DINISO |
| 1965 | H.M. BUTSHINGI - I.R. RATHEBE | J.S. MPANZA, J.L. LANGA, R.J. RAMATHIBELA, K. MNWEBA |
| 1966 | | J.S. MPANZA, M.V. DINISO, A. MOKOENA, (S. MOLAKENG), K. MNWEBA |
| 1967 | H.M. BUTSHINGI - J.R. RATHEBE | |
| 1968 | H.M. BUTSHINGI - J.R. RATHEBE | |

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11. B.W., December 12, 1955.
12. U. wa B., December 25, 1964.

## ORLANDO ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS 1933 - 1968 (Incomplete)

| YEAR | APPOINTED | ELECTED |
|---|---|---|
| 1933 | T. MANQINA - P. CHIMELOANE | K.W. MSIMANG, JOHN SEBOBONE, G. KULUSE, J. HLISO |
| 1934 | E.E. TSHABALALA - WISE POKA | ARTHUR MADHLALA, JOHN MOFOKENG, EDGAR MPATI, ANDREW BOKABA |
| 1935 | E.E. TSHABALALA - WISE POKA | JOHN MOFOKENG |
| 1936 | WISE POKA - E.E. TSHABALALA | J. MPANZA, JOHN MOFOKENG, J.B.D. NOVEMBER |
| 1937 | BARNEY NGAKANE - SAMUEL S. TEMA | J. MPANZA, JOHN MOFOKENG, J.B.D. NOVEMBER, SAMUEL LETSATSI, E.E. TSHABALALA |
| 1938 | BARNEY NGAKANE - SAMUEL S. TEMA | |
| 1939 | BARNEY NGAKANE - S. MOTA | S.M. MOEMA |
| 1940 | BARNEY NGAKANE - S. MOTA | E.T. MOFUTSANYANA, J. MASUPHA, S.M. MOEMA |
| 1941 | BARNEY NGAKANE - S. MOTA | E.T. MOFUTSANYANA, J. MASUPHA, S.M. MOEMA, H.M. MDINGI |
| 1942 | BARNEY NGAKANE - S. MOTA | E.T. MOFUTSANYANA, J. MASUPHA, S.M. MOEMA, J. MPANZA |
| 1943 | H.B.M. MDINGI - O.S.D. MOOKI | E.T. MOFUTSANYANA, S.M. MOEMA, J. MPANZA |
| 1944 | H.B.M. MDINGI - O.S.D. MOOKI | E.T. MOFUTSANYANA, S.M. MOEMA, J. MPANZA |
| 1945 | H.B.M. MDINGI - O.S.D. MOOKI | J.S. MPANZA, G.G. XORILE, J.G. MOPHIRING, LUCAS P. KUMALO |
| 1946 | H.B.M. MDINGI - WALTER TELA | J.S. MPANZA, G.G. XORILE, J.G. MOPHIRING, LUCAS P. KUMALO |
| 1947 | W.S. PELA - H.B.M. MDINGI | J.S. MPANZA, L.P. KUMALO, J.J. MASUPHA, REV. O.S.D. MOOKI |
| 1948 | W.S. PELA - H.B.M. MDINGI | J.S. MPANZA, L.P. KUMALO, J.J. MASUPHA, REV. O.S.D. MOOKI |
| 1949 | W.S. PELA - H.B.M. MDINGI | J.S. MPANZA, L.P. KUMALO, J.J. MASUPHA, REV. O.S.D. MOOKI |
| 1950 | W.S. PELA - H.B.M. MDINGI | J.S. MPANZA, L.P. KUMALO, REV. O.S.D. MOOKI, J.J. MASUPHA |
| 1951 | W.S. PELA - H.B.M. MDINGI | J.S. MPANZA, REV. O.S.D. MOOKI, J.J. MASUPHA, L.P. KUMALO |
| 1952 | W.S. PELA - H.B.M. MDINGI | J.S. MPANZA, J.J. MASUPHA, REV. O.S.D. MOOKI, L.P. KUMALO |
| 1953 | W.S. PELA - H.B.M. MDINGI | L.P. KUMALO, J.J. MASUPHA, REV. O.S.D. MOOKI, J.S. MPANZA |

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