

MOTHER OVERJOYED AT
DETAINEE'S RELEASE

S. Tume 21670 BY MARGARET SMITH

COOLSHED BLAZE: 5 IN COURT

Four men tortured,
defence alleges

ALLEGATIONS WERE MADE at the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court

An...
permit to
isolation

GROUP AREAS ACT
AFFECTS
SPORTS

TICKY BARNES
LET YOUR SON
ALWIE SHOW
YOU THE WAY

DAILY MAIL, Friday, April 2, 1962

Three get jail for
aiding escapee Lee

Rand Daily Mail, 14 December, 1969

THE RED ACT TRIAL

★ FROM PAGE 8

'Practically forced'
woman tells judge

tsihande Nkhu, one of the
accused, accompanied her.
Wirse gave her a small

said nothing, but had not told
her to take it off.
She said her sister did ...

THE ADJUDGE

MOTHER OVERJOYED AT
DETAINEE'S RELEASE

S. Tume 21670 BY MARGARET SMITH

COOLSHED BLAZE: 5 IN COURT

Four men tortured,

Fatima Adam | Ameen Cajee | Laloo Chiba | Magan Narsee Chhiba | Yusuf Isaacs
Narendra Jasmath | Abdulhay Jassat | Ahmed Kathrada | Wolfie Kodesh | Mac Maharaj
Wilton Mkwai | Kista Moonsamy | Indres Naidoo | Shirish Nanabhai | Faker Salie
Reggie Vandeyar | Solly Vania | Bobby Vassen | Tommy Vassen

Men of Dynamite:

Pen Portraits of MK Pioneers

Rashid Seedat and Razia Saleh (Editors)

First published by the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation in 2009

Signet Terrace Office Park
Corner Hummingbird Ave and Guineafowl St
Lenasia 1827
Johannesburg, South Africa

Telephone: +27 11 854 0082
Fax: +27 11 852 8786
Email: info@kathradafoundation.org
Web: www.kathradafoundation.org

© Ahmed Kathrada Foundation

All rights reserved

Edited by Rashid Seedat & Razia Saleh

Research and writing by MoD Collective:
Shabir Ballim, Lesley Hudson, Taryn Mackay,
Lerato Makgobatlou, Prema Naidoo,
Razia Saleh & Rashid Seedat

First edition
December 2009

ISBN 978-0-620-45874-0

Design and layout by Cut 2 Black (Pty) Ltd
23 Jan Smuts Avenue, Johannesburg, South Africa 2193
Tel : +27 11 482 3580 | Fax : +27 11 482 1019 | www.cut2black.co.za

Printed by Shereno Printers
10 Atlas Rd, Dunswart, Boksburg
Tel : +27 11 894 4150 | Fax : +27 11 894 4153



CUT 2 BLACK

Contents

Abbreviations	8
Photographs	9
Dedication	14
Message by Cyril Ramaphosa	15
Preface by Ahmed Kathrada	16
Chapter 1 Introduction	19
Chapter 2 Background	23
Chapter 3 Story of the “Men of Dynamite”	37
Chapter 4 Pen portraits of the “Men of Dynamite”	56
<i>Fatima “Fati” Adam</i>	58
<i>Ameen “Doha” Cajee</i>	59
<i>Laloo “Isu” Chiba</i>	65
<i>Magan Narsee Chhiba</i>	82
<i>Yusuf Isaacs</i>	84

<i>Narendra "Nanoo" Jasmath</i>	86
<i>Abdulhay Jassat</i>	88
<i>Ahmed "Kathy" Kathrada</i>	94
<i>Wolfie Kodesh</i>	105
<i>Mac Maharaj</i>	110
<i>Wilton Mkwayi</i>	119
<i>Kista Moonsamy</i>	122
<i>Indres Naidoo</i>	127
<i>Shirish Nanabhai</i>	136
<i>Faker Salie</i>	143
<i>Reggie Vandeyar</i>	146
<i>Solly Vania</i>	155
<i>Bobby Vassen</i>	158
<i>Tommy Vassen</i>	162
Chapter 5 People, events and songs associated with "Men of Dynamite"	169
<i>Dr Essop Jassat</i>	170
<i>Ahmed Essop "Quarter" Khota</i>	173

<i>Moosa "Mosie" Moolla</i>	176
<i>Peter Moonsammy</i>	181
<i>Suliman "Babla" Saloojee</i>	183
<i>Maniben's diary</i>	186
<i>Longest night</i>	187
<i>Escape from Marshall Square</i>	192
<i>Pinjre ke panchhi</i>	197
<i>Parna janda</i>	199
Interviews	202
Other primary sources	205
Secondary sources	206
Endnotes	209

Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
CPSA	Communist Party of South Africa – was banned in 1950 and was secretly re-established in 1953 as the South African Communist Party (SACP)
GDR	German Democratic Republic (was also known as East Germany)
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), military wing of the ANC
MP	Member of Parliament
NIC	Natal Indian Congress
NP	National Party
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SA	South Africa
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACTU	South African Congress of Trade Unions
SAIC	South African Indian Congress (not long after the Congress became dormant, the same abbreviation would unfortunately be used for the South African Indian Council, which was a statutory body created during the apartheid years to supposedly represent the views of the Indian community); the Transvaal Anti-SAIC Committee was established in early 1981 to oppose the South African Indian Council elections that were to be held in November 1981
TIC	Transvaal Indian Congress
TIYC	Transvaal Indian Youth Congress
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UDF	United Democratic Front
YCL	Young Communist League

Photographs

Title and credit	Page
<i>Cyril Ramaphosa – Nelson Mandela Foundation</i>	15
<i>Ahmed Kathrada – Yunus Chamda</i>	16
<i>Men of Dynamite Collective with Kista Moonsamy, Abdulhay Jassat, Reggie Vandeyar and Shirish Nanabhai, Johannesburg, October 2009 – Kevin Mark Pass</i>	20
<i>Dr Dadoo addressing a rally at Red Square, Fordsburg – Navin J Desai, courtesy of Ahmed Kathrada</i>	23
<i>Between 1860 and 1911, 152 184 indentured labourers from India arrived in Natal – Museum Africa</i>	26
<i>Portrait of Mahatma Gandhi with an inscription by Gandhi to Thambi Naidoo in 1909 – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	28
<i>NIC leading members IC Meer and JN Singh – Ahmed Kathrada Private Collection</i>	31
<i>TIC elections held on Natalspruit Sport Ground in 1946 – Mosie Moolla Private Collection</i>	32
<i>On the roof of Kholvad House: L-R: Yusuf Cachalia (SAIC), DU Mistry (SAIC), Dan Tloome (SACTUI/ANC), Goolam Pahad (SAIC), OR Tambo (ANC), David Bopape, (Tvl ANC), Molvi I Cachalia (SAIC), 1953 – Herb Shore, courtesy of Ahmed Kathrada</i>	35
<i>March prior to the infamous Sharpeville massacre, 1960 – Museum Africa</i>	36
<i>Mosie Moolla and Nelson Mandela in the early 1960s – Mosie Moolla Private Collection</i>	38
<i>Leaflet (manifesto) issued by Umkhonto we Sizwe on the day of its launch on 16 December 1961 – Dawn: Journal of Umkhonto we Sizwe. Souvenir issue: 25th anniversary of MK</i>	40
<i>MK logo – www.anc.org.za</i>	41
<i>A fallen pylon the night after MK was launched, 1961 – Bailey's African History Archive</i>	43
<i>Aerial view of the Liliesleaf farm house used as an exhibit during the Rivonia Trial – National Archives (Brenthurst Collection)</i>	45
<i>Drawing illustrating cutting of telephone wires in progress – Dawn: Journal of Umkhonto we Sizwe. Souvenir issue: 25th anniversary of MK</i>	46
<i>Exhibit during Little Rivonia Trial: Study of different types of demolitions – National Archives (State vs Mkwazi and others, WLD 578/64)</i>	47
<i>The old Fordsburg Post Office, 1904 – Museum Africa</i>	50
<i>Nana Sita in the middle, with "Nehru" cap – Seedat Family Private Collection</i>	52
<i>Collage of press cuttings – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	54
<i>A panel from Nelson Mandela: the Authorised Comic – Courtesy of Umlando Wezithombe</i>	55
<i>Fati on her wedding day with her sister, Rookie – Courtesy of Rookeya Vally</i>	58
<i>Ameen Cajee – Indicator newspaper</i>	59
<i>Volunteers during the Defiance Campaign receive a final briefing, Anderson Street, 27 May 1952 – Museum Africa</i>	60
<i>Doha with Ayesha Dawood, IC Meer and Nelson Mandela, Lenasia, c1991 – Kadir Saloojee Private Collection</i>	60

<i>Doha was a cited as a co-conspirator in the Little Rivonia Trial – National Archives (State vs Mkwazi and others, WLD 578/64)</i>	63
<i>A newsletter of the Transvaal Anti-SAIC Committee, 1981 – Seedat Family Private Collection</i>	63
<i>Ameen and his wife Aisha in Flat 13, Kholvad House – Indicator newspaper</i>	64
<i>Isu Chiba – Laloo Chiba Private Collection</i>	65
<i>Chiba sibilings: L-R: Isu, Daya, Jashoo, Raman and Luxmi, 1936 – Laloo Chiba Private Collection</i>	66
<i>Isu with his uncle, Dajee Pema, shortly before going to India – Laloo Chiba Private Collection</i>	68
<i>Isu's wife Luxmi with their daughters, Gita, Yashvanti and Kaylash – Laloo Chiba Private Collection</i>	69
<i>Isu and Kathy having a discussion at the launch of the exhibition on Walter and Albertina Sisulu, 2008 – Nelson Mandela Foundation</i>	71
<i>Drum magazine's report on the Rivonia Trial – Bailey's African History Archive</i>	73
<i>Isu's warrant of committal – National Archives (State vs Mkwazi and others, WLD 578/64)</i>	75
<i>In 1977, the South African government allowed the media to photograph the political prisoners on Robben Island – National Archives (Nelson Mandela Prison Files)</i>	77
<i>Isu receiving the Order of Luthuli, Silver from President Thabo Mbeki, 2004 – Laloo Chiba Private Collection</i>	79
<i>The Chiba family portrait, c1943: L-R: Isu, Raman, Jashoo, Chiba (father), Dahi (mother), Luxmi, Govind and Daya – Laloo Chiba Private Collection</i>	80
<i>Magan Narsee Chhiba – Courtesy of Jaimati Chhiba</i>	82
<i>Magan Narsee and his wife Jaimati – Courtesy of Jaimati Chhiba</i>	83
<i>Yusuf with his sister Amina Cachalia and his wife Shireen – Courtesy of Amina Cachalia</i>	85
<i>Narendra Nanoo Jasmath – Courtesy of Shanti Jasmath</i>	86
<i>Nanoo Jasmath and his wife Shanti – Courtesy of Shanti Jasmath</i>	87
<i>Abdulhay Jassat – Kevin Mark Pass</i>	88
<i>Central Indian High School (better known as Congress School) sports day – Kadir Saloojee Private Collection</i>	89
<i>Mosie and Abdulhay, with Ebrahim Desai (centre), were born on the same day and have shared many common political escapades – Mosie Moolla Private Collection</i>	91
<i>Abdulhay and his wife Harlene – Mosie Moolla Private Collection</i>	93
<i>Ahmed Kathrada – Dana Gluckstein</i>	94
<i>Kathy disguised as Pedro, when he went underground – Police Files, Mayibuye Centre</i>	95
<i>Kathy's prison card – Matthew Willman</i>	96
<i>Kathy's prison uniform and utensils – Ahmed Kathrada Private Collection</i>	97
<i>A young Kathy – Ahmed Kathrada Private Collection</i>	98
<i>Some of Kathy's close comrades from the 1950s, including JB Marks, Yusuf and Molvi Cachalia, Goolam Pahad and Mervy Thandray – Mayibuye Centre</i>	100

<i>A poster of the 156 accused during the Treason Trial of 1956-1961 using Eli Weinberg's famous collage of the trialists – South African History Archive</i>	102
<i>Kathy at the launch of Memoirs at the Constitutional Court, Johannesburg, 2004 – Yunus Chamda</i>	103
<i>Wolfie Kodesh – Mayibuye Centre</i>	105
<i>CPSA poster demanding African soldiers be given guns, 1942 – South African History Archive</i>	106
<i>Cover of New Age – Digital Innovation South Africa</i>	107
<i>Photo of Nelson Mandela taken in the early 1960s when he was dubbed the "Black Pimpernel" by the media – Courtesy of Azhar Saloojee, Nelson Mandela Foundation</i>	108
<i>Wolfie at a rally in London, 1990 – Mayibuye Centre</i>	109
<i>Mac Maharaj – ANC Department of Information and Publicity</i>	110
<i>Cover of Mandela's speech, probably printed by Mac – Maniben Sita Collection, Nelson Mandela Foundation</i>	112
<i>A list of documents found at Mac's place, 21 Pierce Street, Doornfontein used in the Little Rivonia Trial. Mac was accused No.5 – National Archives (State vs Mkwayi and others, WLD 578/64)</i>	114
<i>Part of the charge sheet against Mac "Accused No.5" in the case State vs Mkwayi and others – National Archives (State vs Mkwayi and others, WLD 578/64)</i>	115
<i>Transcription of Mandela's autobiography into very small print by Mac – National Archives</i>	116
<i>Mac inscribed this photo for Natalya, daughter of his friends Issy and Ramnie Dinat in 1977 in London, soon after he fled into exile – Courtesy of Natalya Dinat</i>	117
<i>Mac Maharaj at an ANC rally in Lenasia in 1993 – Indicator newspaper</i>	118
<i>Wilton Mkwayi – Lalloo Chiba Private Collection</i>	119
<i>Wilton Mkwayi standing in the front right with his friends and comrades in the 1950s – Mayibuye Centre</i>	120
<i>The file cover of the trial State vs Mkwayi and others – National Archives (State vs Mkwayi and others, WLD 578/64)</i>	120
<i>Press conference held in Soweto soon after the release of Ahmed Kathrada, Elias Motsoaledi and Wilton Mkwayi and others in October 1989 – Indicator newspaper</i>	121
<i>Kista Moonsamy – Kevin Mark Pass</i>	122
<i>Kista's ID card – Kista Moonsamy Private Collection</i>	122
<i>Paul Joseph in exile in London, c1970s – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	123
<i>The newsletter Spark kept the people informed about events during the repressive era of the sixties – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	124
<i>Kista and Rosie Moonsamy – Kista Moonsamy Private Collection</i>	126
<i>Indres Naidoo – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	127
<i>Picture sent to Indres while he was on Robben Island: L-R: Ramnie, Ama (mother), Murthi, Shanti and Prema – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	128
<i>Natalya Dinat, Indres's niece, attended the ANC's Consultative Conference in 1985 held in Kabwe, Zambia – Courtesy of Natalya Dinat</i>	128

<i>Indres Naidoo as a young boy – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	128
<i>Women gathering to march onto the Union Buildings in 1956 – Mayibuye Centre</i>	129
<i>Indres Naidoo's warrant of committal – National Archives (State vs Vandeyar and others, WLD 188/63)</i>	130
<i>Indres and his mother Ama Naidoo on the day of his release, 13 May 1973 – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	131
<i>Indres and his son Bram – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	132
<i>Albie Sachs – Nelson Mandela Foundation</i>	134
<i>Naidoo family get together, including Shirish Nanabhai and his son Kamal, early 1990s – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	135
<i>Shirish Nanabhai – Kevin Mark Pass</i>	136
<i>TIYC Annual Conference, 26 August 1962 held at the Duncan Hall, Johannesburg: L-R: Indres Naidoo, Shirish Nanabhai, Mosie Moolla, Winnie Mandela, Barry Higgs and Khalil Saloojee – Mayibuye Centre</i>	137
<i>A trip to Cape Town organised by the TIYC. Essop Jassat is standing left back. Seated are Mosie Moolla and Babla Saloojee – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	138
<i>Report in The Star, 13 May 1963 – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	139
<i>Shirish and Rajula's wedding, 1978 – Shirish Nanabhai Private Collection</i>	141
<i>Collage of pictures of Shirish – Shirish Nanabhai Private Collection</i>	142
<i>Faker Salie – Laloo Chiba Private Collection</i>	143
<i>Langlaagte Railway Station – Museum Africa</i>	145
<i>Reggie Vandeyar – Kevin Mark Pass</i>	146
<i>Reggie as a young boy – Reggie Vandeyar Private Collection</i>	147
<i>L-R: Reggie, Chinnamal (mother), Sushila (daughter), Assoo (wife) and Sharmala (niece-seated), c1950s – Reggie Vandeyar Private Collection</i>	147
<i>The Johannesburg City Hall was used for many protest meetings in the 1950s – Museum Africa</i>	148
<i>Ambassador Hotel – Museum Africa</i>	150
<i>Reggie sitting in between Henry Makgothi and Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim at the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the Congress of the People – Reggie Vandeyar Private Collection</i>	150
<i>A photograph of the signal box used as evidence in Reggie's trial – National Archives (State vs Vandeyar and others, WLD 188/63)</i>	152
<i>Reggie's warrant of committal – National Archives (State vs Vandeyar and others, WLD 188/63)</i>	153
<i>A letter to his daughter, Sushila, from Robben Island – Reggie Vandeyar Private Collection</i>	154
<i>L-R: Solly Vania, Raman Chiba, Billy Naidoo and Isu Chiba, August 1963 – Laloo Chiba Private Collection</i>	155
<i>Teachers at the Central Indian High School (Congress School) – Mayibuye Centre</i>	156
<i>Bobby Vassen – Vassen Family Private Collection</i>	158
<i>Govind Chiba, Bobby's close friend on the left – Vassen Family Private Collection</i>	159
<i>Bobby at home, London, 2009 – Vassen Family Private Collection</i>	161
<i>Tommy Vassen – Vassen Family Private Collection</i>	162
<i>Tommy with Govind Chiba and a friend – Vassen Family Private Collection</i>	163

<i>Christmas lunch in London, 1987. This photo was sent to Kathy whilst he was on Robben Island – Ahmed Kathrada Private Collection</i>	164
<i>Pamphlet by the South African Indian Congress in support of Nana Sita – Maniben Sita Collection, Nelson Mandela Foundation</i>	166-167
<i>Tommy and Dela Vassen – Vassen Family Private Collection</i>	168
<i>Essop Jassat at Wits Medical School – Essop Jassat Private Collection</i>	170
<i>Speaking at an Anti-SAIC meeting, Lenasia, 1982 – Seedat Family Private Collection</i>	172
<i>Essop Jassat, Reggie Vandeyar and Ramlal Bhoolia at CODESA – Essop Jassat Private Collection</i>	172
<i>Ahmed Essop “Quarter” Khota – Courtesy of Khalik and Nafissa Mayet</i>	173
<i>Quarter and his wife Ayesha – Courtesy of Khalik and Nafissa Mayet</i>	175
<i>At his 70th birthday party in 1998 with Goolam Pahad and Kathy; grand daughters Mahdiya Coovadia & Azminah Mayet – Courtesy of Khalik and Nafissa Mayet</i>	175
<i>Mosie as a young child – Mosie Moolla Private Collection</i>	176
<i>Molvi Cachalia with nineteen resisters from the Transvaal, March 1947 – Seedat Family Private Collection</i>	177
<i>The Freedom Charter was adopted at the Congress of the People in Kliptown, June 1955 – Seedat Family Private Collection</i>	178
<i>The story of Mosie’s escape with Abdulhay Jassat, Harold Wolpe and Arthur Goldreich was featured in the Sunday Review, Sunday Independent in 1994 – Abdulhay Jassat Private Collection</i>	179
<i>Photo taken in Tunduma, at the Tanzania and Zambia border: L-R: Alibhai, a friend, Zubeida, Mosie and their children Tasneem and Azaad, 1968 – Mosie Moolla Private Collection</i>	180
<i>Mosie addressing the International Youth Conference Against Apartheid, New Delhi, India, January 1987 – Mosie Moolla Private Collection</i>	180
<i>Peter Moonsammy – Courtesy of Roshnee Moonsammy</i>	181
<i>Funeral Service Programme – Seedat Family Private Collection</i>	182
<i>Suliman “Babla” Saloojee’s Identity Card – Courtesy of Rookeya Vally</i>	183
<i>Babla and Rookie Saloojee – Courtesy of Rookeya Vally</i>	184
<i>Babla’s funeral, September 1964 – Courtesy of Rookeya Vally</i>	185
<i>Maniben’s diary: “Bapuji” is Gujarati for father. She is referring to Nana Sita who is in jail – Maniben Sita Collection, Nelson Mandela Foundation</i>	187
<i>Press cutting on Gammat Jardine – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	188
<i>The car used to drive to the Riverlea Station – National Archives (State vs Vandeyar and others, WLD 188/63)</i>	189
<i>The toolshed – National Archives (State vs Vandeyar and others, WLD 188/63)</i>	190
<i>Press cuttings of the arrest – Naidoo Family Private Collection</i>	191
<i>On 11 August Maniben Sita notes the escape in her diary – Maniben Sita Collection, Nelson Mandela Foundation</i>	192
<i>Marshall Square – Museum Africa</i>	193
<i>Write up on Greef in the Sunday Independent, 1994 – Abdulhay Jassat Private Collection</i>	194
<i>Fordsburg, c1950s – Bailey’s African History Archive</i>	194
<i>Songbook of the TIYC with various freedom songs – Seedat Family Private Collection</i>	201

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the "Men of Dynamite" and their families. They will always be remembered as individuals who bore the trials and tribulations of exile, imprisonment, banning, torture and hardship with great courage and determination.

Message

Men of Dynamite is an important contribution to the growing body of work on the history of the struggle in South Africa. The main area it illuminates is the contribution of members of the Indian community to Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the military wing of the African National Congress (ANC) in the Johannesburg area in the early years of its existence.

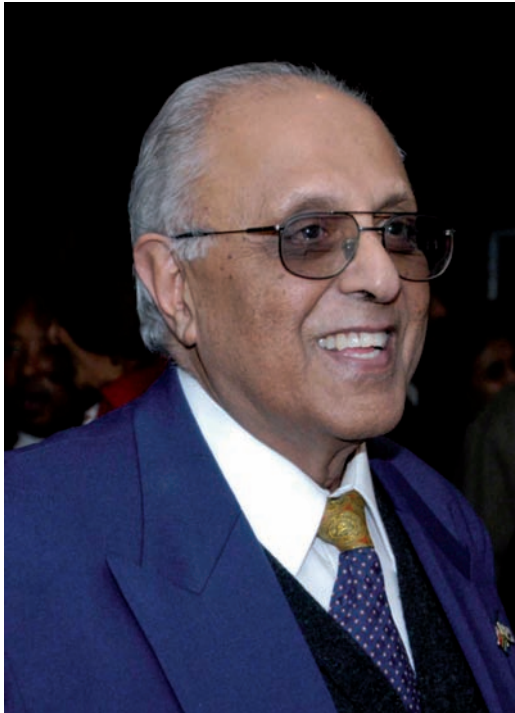
The Ahmed Kathrada Foundation is happy to be the publisher of this book for several reasons. Firstly, it is consistent with our mandate of disseminating the history of resistance in South Africa. Secondly, it demonstrates non-racialism in practice during the darkest days of apartheid, which is also a remit of the foundation. Thirdly, the book will be launched on 12 December 2009, to coincide with the twentieth anniversary of the deaths of the young MK cadres Prakash Napier and Yusuf Akhalwaya. In so doing, we are able to connect the experiences of the first and last generations of MK fighters. Finally, this book is a fitting tribute to Comrade Kathy who celebrates his 80th birthday this year as well as the numerous heroes who are profiled here.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those people who spent many hours working on and researching the book to give us an attractive and interesting read.

Cyril Ramaphosa
Chairperson of the Board of Trustees
Ahmed Kathrada Foundation
December 2009



Preface



The initiators of this project, the researchers, the contributors, the editors, and the Foundation have to be congratulated for the publication of this book. Because of the restrictive apartheid laws and practices, MK units were made up largely of men and women who lived in particular group areas. It is therefore not designed to be a history of MK; but rather an attempt to record albeit briefly, the actions, experiences, the discipline and above all the courage of a relatively small number of MK units.

While not in any way lessening the contributions of any of the comrades, I wish to single out one particular unit, as well as several individuals.

Reggie, Shirish and Indres are friends and comrades who I knew and worked with for many years before their arrest. Theirs was the first MK unit to be arrested, and the very first unit to be sent to Robben Island. The three comrades served their ten-year sentences at a time when conditions on Robben Island were at their worst. Hard labour, insults, humiliation, assaults were the order of the day. In fact Indres was punished with four lashes. In spite of all the hardship and suffering, they emerged with their heads held high, proud, undefeated, loyal and determined.

I was under house arrest at the time of their arrest, and I can still recall the anguished phone calls from their families, asking me to do something. The very worst experience was when Ama Naidoo phoned to say that Indres had been brought home under escort, while still bleeding from a gunshot wound! I never felt so shocked, frightened and helpless, because my house-arrest order prohibited me from leaving the flat at the stroke of 7. I rushed out to the lawyers, who immediately went into action. Alas, although clearly in contravention of the law, the police brazenly refused to allow them access. Because the lawyers were thwarted in their efforts for good reason, we then turned to the one-and-only Babla. I always regarded him as my young brother. Loved by all. All he requested were toiletries and clean underwear, plus some cash, and off he went to Marshall Square. He returned later after seeing not only the three, but also Laloo Chiba and Abdulhay Jassat. A typical example of what Babla managed to accomplish against seeming odds. The lawyers were now in possession of the information they needed.

Just one more incident about Babla – partly amusing but very tragic. The Picasso Club was a group of about six members of the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress, specialising in slogan

painting on walls, and putting up posters. One very cold night, after having completed the task of putting up posters, there was one poster left. Babla dared us to put it on the wall of Grays Building, the Security Police headquarters. Mission accomplished, and as we were on the way home, the police gave chase and caught up with us. Luckily we were let off with a warning, and we went smilingly home. But by no stretch of imagination could we foresee what was to come.

It was on a Saturday of September 1964. We had been on Robben Island for barely three months. We had already been locked up in our single cells when Walter returned from his first six-monthly visit from Ma Sisulu. All of us eagerly waited for him to give us some news from home. But Ma Sisulu brought news that none of us ever wanted to hear. Babla had been killed and thrown out of the windows of the seventh-floor building by the sadistic murderer, Swanepoel. THE WINDOWS OF THE SAME GRAYS BUILDING WHERE BABLA HAD PUT ON THE LAST POSTER!! There was dead silence as we collectively tried to contemplate the enormity of the tragedy. My brother and comrade Babla was dead! Dear Babla, loved by all who knew him. We were never going to hear his gruff and cheerful voice again! Forty-five years have gone by, we will never forget him. However, we pay tribute to his widow Rookie who bravely and unceasingly kept his memory alive, and in doing so she became and remained a more determined political activist.

There is Laloo Chiba, Mr L, as I call him; my dear friend, comrade, brother. There is not space enough to write about him. Kind, caring, generous and modest to a fault, brave, loyal and dedicated. Much can be written about each of these adjectives, but none can do sufficient justice to describe him. Salt of the earth.

Then Prakash and Yusuf. During the weeks after our release, they were among the comrades who had been assigned to stand guard outside my late brother's house, where I was staying. They were generally in the midnight-to-morning shift. My late sister-in-law Ayeshabai was a very caring and generous lady. Every morning she would insist on Prakash and Yusuf to come in and have some breakfast. Much to my regret I can't remember Yusuf ever accepting her invitation. Therefore I never really came to know him as well as I would have liked to. But Prakash frequently joined us, and it was my good fortune to know him better. Now, Ayeshabai was not comfortable with English or Afrikaans; and Prakash did not know Gujarati. But I marvelled at the way the two of them could converse morning after morning, with Ayeshabai using a mixture of Afrikaans, English and Gujarati. They seemed to enjoy talking to each other.

In December 1989, Shan and I were in Cape Town, staying at our friend Eddie Daniels's place. One morning Shan was called to the phone. After he joined me he was completely and unusually silent. It took him some time to tell me of the tragic death of Yusuf and Prakash!! Naturally it came to us as a great shock. It was only that morning that I learnt for the first time that the two comrades were trained MK operatives. And it was only much later that I learnt more about them. When looking back now I realize and appreciate their calibre. They were hard working, utterly dedicated, modest, highly disciplined and courageous. They were true examples of activists. The more I learnt about them, the greater is our respect, and greater is our loss.

For me, this Preface would be incomplete without saying something about Ameen Cajee and Shan. Like the others mentioned, they two are exceptional cadres. We only came

to know about Shan a few years ago at a meeting of the Lenz ANC Branch. There, not only did we get confirmation of his MK membership, but also we learnt a great deal about his activities, and the activities of other MK units under his command.

As with Mr L, there is not space enough to do justice to Shan and Ameen. Ameen was a soldier's soldier. Extremely courageous and dedicated he was not one to dabble much with theory. He was par excellence a practical man. I owe a great deal to him. He stayed at 13 Kholvad House for many years. When I was placed under house arrest, I was not allowed to have any visitors. Not even my mother was allowed. In fact I last saw her towards the end of 1962, when I broke my house arrest order by quickly going down to the car to meet her.

At that time Ameen was working in Wolmaranstad, and I really needed someone to share the flat. The idea was he would be allowed to have visitors, and in case of a police raid, he could claim my visitors as his. It took one phone call from me, and Ameen was on the train to Johannesburg, and to Flat 13.

A few months later, one day in about March/April 1962, I was given an order from the leadership to go underground in about four hours time! I was to leave the flat that I had occupied since 1947, all the furniture, my car etc. I confided in Ameen, and left everything to him. He gladly accepted the position. But, true to his word, he insisted on keeping it under my name. Even the phone. In many of the letters and messages I received in prison from him, he reiterated that the flat belonged to me.

So much so that on the day of our release Ameen came and told me that he had alternate accommodation, and I should move back into Flat 13. But not before his daughter and my godchild, Djamila would allow me. After a couple of weeks she said I could move in. And what did I find? Djamila had the entire flat re-furnished! Such friendship and loyalty is not easy to find.

How many people know that Ameen, at great risk, put his little dry-cleaning shop at the disposal of comrades to have their meetings. These include David Webster, Neil Aggett and others. Fortunately Comrade Winnie Mandela is still alive to bear testimony to this part of Ameen's contribution.

There is so much more that can be said about MK cadres, and about those who played a participatory role in MK activities.

My concluding wish is that someone, or some institution would initiate a project to record and publicise the role of martyrs who lost their lives in the struggle. Men and women like Yusuf and Prakash, Ruth Slovo, Dulcie September, Vuyisile Mini, Solomon Mahlangu, Caleb Mayekiso, Steve Biko, Jeanette Schoon and her little daughter Katryn, Professor David Webster, Ahmed Timol, Looksmart Ngudle, Neil Aggett, Babla, Rick Turner, Imam Haroon, John Harris and many others. We dare not allow their ultimate sacrifice to go unrecorded.

Ahmed Kathrada
28 November 2009

Introduction

Men of Dynamite tells the story of the band of mainly young Indian men who lived in the vicinity of Fordsburg, Fietas and surrounding areas that were drawn into the armed struggle in the early 1960s. They were amongst the earliest and most resolute recruits to this new mode of resistance. Some were drawn into underground and sabotage units of the South African Communist Party (SACP) and shortly thereafter into Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) when it was launched on 16 December 1961.

They were active in carrying out many acts of sabotage in the early days of the armed struggle and many paid dearly for their involvement. The phenomenon begged some key questions: Who were these individuals? What was the context? What motivated them? What roles did they play? What were the risks, costs and sacrifices? The answers to these questions are diverse and interesting and provide one of the main motivations for writing this book.

The other motivation for this book is more direct and personal. It emanates from hearing the many stories, recollections and reminiscences of veterans of the liberation movement drawn from the Johannesburg Indian community.

From the early 1980s, many of us heard Isu Chiba, Reggie Vandeyar and Shirish Nanabhai relating their experiences as MK cadres and as prisoners on Robben Island. stalwarts such as Ameen Cajee and Dr Essop Jassat also spoke about their own involvement, which went back to the 1930s and 1940s respectively. Prema Naidoo and other members of his family uniquely straddled the generations and provided a lot of the “infill”, especially of the repressive 1970s period. The release of Ahmed Kathrada and other Rivonia trialists in 1989 and the return of exiles after 1990 – including Indres Naidoo, Abdulhay Jassat, Mosie Moolla and others – provided a new and rich source of history. As the political conditions eased into the 1990s, and with the advent of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), more and interesting new facts came to light in these ongoing and often unstructured conversations.



Men of dynamite collective with Kista Moonsammy, Adulhay Jassat, Reggie Vandeyar and Shirish Nanabhai, Johannesburg, October 2009

The reminiscences accumulated into multiple storylines of community mobilisation, organisation and action; police harassment, banning, detention, torture and arrest; social interaction, community engagement and family life; acts of bravery and feelings of trepidation; the turn to armed struggle; and life in exile or prolonged periods of imprisonment and banning.

Some of these stories have been told. Ahmed Kathrada has been the most prolific and has produced no less than four books, including his *Memoirs*, over the past 20 years. Mac Maharaj collaborated with Pdraig O'Malley on *Shades of Difference: Mac Maharaj and the Struggle for South Africa*. Indres Naidoo's book *Island in Chains: Ten years on Robben Island by Prisoner 885/63* mainly covers his experiences on the Island.

There are, of course, an infinite number of narratives. But the story of the network of mainly young Indian men from Johannesburg and surrounding areas in sabotage units in the early 1960s has not been recorded sufficiently. The individual stories of the main protagonists (except Ahmed "Kathy" Kathrada and Mac Maharaj) – Fatima "Fati" Adam, Ameen "Doha" Cajee, Laloo "Isu" Chiba, Magan Narsee Chhiba, Yusuf Isaacs (also known as Yusuf Asvat), Narendra "Nanoo" Jasmath, Abdulhay Jassat, Wolfie Kodesh, Kista Moonsammy, Wilton Mkwai, Indres Naidoo, Shirish Nanabhai, Faker Salie, Reggie Vandeyar, Solly Vania, Bobby Vassen and Tommy Vassen – have hardly been heard in the public domain. These individuals did not act in isolation. People like Dr Essop Jassat, Ahmed Essop "Quarter" Khota, Peter Moonsammy (also known as Peter Joseph), Moosa "Mosie" Moola and Suliman "Babla" Saloojee were an integral part of their legal, social and political support networks.

We are profoundly aware that memories fade as time marches on and that many of our protagonists are in their late sixties or seventies. So it is critical that the stories be recorded and told while most remain in moderate to good health. Men of Dynamite has thus been written to record these remarkable stories and to honour the lives of individuals who have made an inestimable contribution to the struggle against apartheid. This we hope will inspire others to undertake similar initiatives to record the lives of all our heroes and heroines so that we ensure that their stories live forever and eternally secure a legacy for them and their families.

From the outset, this was a collaborative effort. Indeed, without the hard work and effort of a number of key players, this project would not have got off the ground.

The Ahmed Kathrada Foundation – including “Kathy” himself – not only endorsed the idea of this book, it readily accepted the idea as part of its programme to celebrate Comrade Kathy’s 80th birthday. This was critical because it gave us a tight deadline, provided an institutional home and brought its considerable support to get the book to print.

Lesley Hudson of Cut 2 Black Media was an early and passionate supporter of the project. Her company, which she jointly owns with Faizel Cook, generously provided intellectual, copywriting, administrative, logistical and design support. Taryn Mackay and Lerato Motale Makgobatlou, in particular, assisted in conducting many of the interviews and writing several pen portraits. The creativity of the design team – Robyn Jeevanantham, Fikile Ntshumayelo, Sarel Mokheithi and Chesway Slabbert – left us with an aesthetically pleasing product.

Prema Naidoo and Shabir Ballim were indispensable members of the team who were always willing to help in anyway they could: providing transport, interviewing, writing, editing, jogging memories and filling in the gaps. In the background, Kamala Naidoo fully supported her itinerant husband.

Shaheda Seedat-Patel of the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation hosted a number of the interviews; and provided logistical support. Shan Balton, the foundation’s CEO, was instrumental in making the project happen at all levels.

Our profound gratitude is due to Isu Chiba who was one of the main sources of our inspiration and central to the conceptualisation and implementation of the project. Yusuf Isaacs, Abdulhay Jassat, Mac Maharaj, Kista Moonsamy, Indres Naidoo, Shirish Nanabhai, Faker Salie, Reggie Vandeyar, Bobby Vassen and Tommy Vassen provided intellectual and political guidance, graciously made their time available for interviews, dredged up pictures and memorabilia, and in some instances, wrote up their own profiles.

The support of the families of Ameen Cajee, Magan Narsee Chhiba and Nanoo Jasmath was critical for the project; in particular, Djamilla Cajee and Iqbal Cajee, Mrs Jaimati Narsee Chhiba and Gabriele “Gabi” Blankenburg. We also thank Nafissa and Khalik Mayet, Roshnee Moonsammy and Hassen Lorgat and Mrs Rookie Vally for assistance on Quarter Khota, Peter Moonsammy and Babla Saloojee respectively. Dr Essop Jassat made himself available for an interview at short notice. Mosie Molla very ably contributed to his own story.

We thank the families of our participants for enthusiastically contributing their treasured personal photographs. Mrs Ramnie Dinat parted with some valuable family pictures and memorabilia. Linda Chernis from Museum Africa, Graham Goddard from Mayibuye Centre, Bongsi Maswanganyi, from Bailey’s African History Archive and Lucia Raadschelder from the Nelson Mandela Foundation also provided some of the stunning photographs that are displayed in the book. Kadir Saloojee and Yunus Chamda kindly allowed us use of their personal photographs.

At short notice, we were able to mobilise Yunus Momoniat to assist in editing the book. Omar Badsha, the CEO South African History Online, made many valuable suggestions that we have incorporated, as had Eric Itzkin of the City of Johannesburg. Lael Bethlehem and Tasneem Carrim and Fazila Malherbe for kindly checking the manuscript for errors. Thank you to Maya Sooka for her Hindi translations.

We also thank members of our own family – especially Fazela Mahomed for taking care of Zain and Nazneen during deadline – for their unstinting support.

A disclaimer is essential here. This book is not a definitive account of the individuals and events that are profiled here. It heavily relies on the memories of individuals, and while care had been taken to check the stories, it was not within the scope of this project to fully corroborate every recollection. This is a popular account and it is likely that with comprehensive research, others may well come to very different interpretations and conclusions that we have come to. However, the final responsibility for errors and omissions, remains our own.

Rashid Seedat and Razia Saleh
Johannesburg
December 2009

Chapter 2

Background¹



Dr Dadoo addressing a rally at Red Square, Fordsburg

The radicalisation of the Indian community by the late 1950s was shaped by the convergence of their socio-economic conditions, racially discriminatory policies imposed by successive governments and the tradition of resistance pioneered by Mahatma Gandhi and re-ignited by the Congress movement during the 1940s and 1950s.

This radicalised community generated many cadres who were prepared to continue the fight against apartheid and eschew non-violence when all the avenues for non-violent protest were effectively closed.

This chapter provides the context and background that witnessed the emergence of the "Men of Dynamite". We first examine Indians in Johannesburg in the early years from a spatial, demographic and socio-economic point of view. We then proceed to provide an historical overview of the community, with an emphasis on the politics of resistance. This macro picture helps us to understand the emergence of the turn to armed struggle and the involvement of our principal protagonists.

Indians in Johannesburg in the early years

The discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 established Johannesburg at the centre of the largest and richest gold field ever discovered (Mandy 1984:xv). In 1880, the land on which the city stands was bare veld with a few Boer farmhouses and African homesteads. By 1897, just 11 years later, it had a population of 42 533 Africans, 1 807 Indians and Chinese, 2 879 people of "mixed race" and 50 907 whites (Carr 1990:11). It had become the largest city in South Africa.

The spatial structure of the city began to take root. The reef mining-belt bisected the city and indeed, most of the Witwatersrand. Industrial development was clustered on the mining belt, while trade and commerce were based mainly in the central business district.

The rich moved to Saratoga Avenue in Doornfontein and then to Parktown; the white middle class went north and east to Braamfontein, Hillbrow, Yeoville and Bellevue; poor whites were given land in Vrededorp; and others (mainly blacks) lived on the swampy ground west of Market Square (Mandy 1984:13).

In 1904, using an outbreak of bubonic plague as its rationale, the Johannesburg City Council established a new African location at Klipspruit, 13km from the city centre, in present day Soweto (Bonner and Segal 1998:13). The next major initiative for African housing came in 1918 when the Council established the Western Native Township (Mandy 1984:174), while other Africans lived in the slums of Prospect Township, Sophiatown and Newclare. In 1931, the new African township of Orlando was constructed, leading over time to

the development of a series of townships that eventually became Soweto.

According to Randall and Desai (1967:1), President Kruger of the Boer South African Republic (Transvaal) set aside a "Coolie² Location" as a residential area for Indians, located on the site of the present day Vrededorp and Pageview (Fietas). "By 1896 about half of the Asian population were living [there] and the Brickfields (Burghersdorp), with the rest distributed throughout the central portions of the town and Fordsburg ... [and] Ferreirastown, Marshalltown west of Sauer Street, and the western part of Braamfontein. ... There were substantial numbers of Indians living in City and Suburban, eastern Braamfontein and the city centre."

The Indian population of Johannesburg grew slowly from 5 384 in 1904 to 6 214 in 1921, with the numbers made up as follows: Fordsburg (216), Burghersdorp (620), Ferreirastown (251), Marshalltown and City and Suburban (88), Johannesburg (444), Vrededorp (55), Braamfontein (2), Doornfontein (1) and 1 682 Indians living in Malay Location. The old Coolie Location was cleared in 1904 (Randall and Desai 1967:8).

Indians continued living in these areas for much of the twentieth century. The Group Areas Act of 1950 led to the declaration of Lenasia as the Indian group area for Johannesburg (whereas Pageview was declared white in 1956). By 1960, only a relatively small number of people moved to Lenasia and most of the Indian inhabitants of the city still lived mainly in the suburbs just west of the city centre.

Between 1904 and 1960, the Indian³ population relative to the total increased from 2,4% to 3% (Brijlal 1989:25-29). In 1960, there were 477 125 Indians in South Africa. By that time, only 5,5% of the community were not born in South Africa.

There were some 64 000 Indians – made up of 33 000 males and 31 000 females – living in the Transvaal in 1960. At the time (and up to the present) the vast majority lived in Natal, which had a population of 395 000 out of the total South African Indian population of 477 125 (Brijlal 1989:30). The population of Indians in Johannesburg in 1960 totalled 28 993 (6,1%), compared to Pretoria with a population of 8 046 (1,7%) and Durban, which had a population of 236 477 (49,6%) (Arkin 1989:57).

English has emerged as the main home language in the Indian community. Use of English increased from 6,33% to 31,79% between 1951 and 1970, while Tamil declined from 32,78% to 24,37% and Gujarati declined from 10,77% to 7,3% in the same period (Brijlal 1989:35).

The religious profile of the Indian community in SA in 1960 was Hindu (68,6%), Islam (20,7%), Christianity (7,5%) and other (3,2%); and in 1980 there were 468 300 Hindus and 90 984 Muslims in Natal and 33 404 Hindus and 66 808 Muslims in the Transvaal. It is worth noting that Hindus made up just 2,1% and Muslims 1,2% of the South African population as a whole (Pillay, Naidoo and Dangor 1989:145-153).

Official statistics point to the fact that the level of educational attainment up to 1960 was particularly low within the Indian community (Arkin 1989:58-60). In 1960, most Indians were employed in manufacturing, commerce and services sectors; and the 1960 percentage distribution of occupations of Indians by sex are tabulated as follows (Arkin 1989:60-62):

	Male	Female
Professional, technical	3,9%	13,3%
Administrative, executive	2,3%	1,2%
Clerical worker	7,9%	4,6%
Sales worker	21,8%	15,6%
Farmer, fisherman	10,9%	9,0%
Miner, quarryman	--	--
Transport worker	7,5%	0,2%
Craftsman, production worker	33,6%	29,7%
Service worker	12,1%	26,3%
No occupation stated and workers not elsewhere classifiable	--	--

Percentage distribution by occupations of Indians by sex, 1960 (Source: Arkin 1989:60-62)

The profile in the Transvaal, one can safely assume, was different in a few respects. The proportion of farmer/fisherman would have been negligible and craftsman/production worker would have been lower than the aggregate. Consequently, the proportions for clerical worker and service worker would have been significantly higher.

Historical overview

The cumulative experiences over a period of 100 years profoundly shaped the political consciousness of the Indian community in South Africa. The experiences recalled here will aid our understanding of the conditions that led to the armed struggle and the involvement of this dedicated band

of young Indian men from a few western suburbs of the city of Johannesburg.

It is not well known that some Indians first arrived in South Africa in the seventeenth century. The Dutch brought Indian



Between 1860 and 1911, 152 184 indentured labourers from India arrived in Natal

slaves from the subcontinent to the Cape, which they ruled as a colony from 1652. "From then [1653] until late eighteenth century when the import of slaves from Asia was prohibited, many...persons from India – mainly Bengal, Coromandel Coast and Kerala – were taken to the Cape and sold into slavery." (Reddy 2009) The slaves were brought to work on the farms or to do domestic work and were eventually absorbed into the nascent Coloured population, thereby erasing their ethnic origins.

The arrival of significant numbers of Indians in South Africa occurred in 1860, when indentured immigrants arrived in the British Colony of Natal to work on the sugarcane plantations, which were well suited to the subtropical coastal lowlands of the colony. At this time, the territory of present day South Africa was divided between the Boer republics of the Orange Free State and the South African Republic (Transvaal) and the British colonies of the Cape and Natal.

According to Fatima Meer (1969:10) the first group of 342 indentured immigrants, including 75 women and 83 children, comprising mainly Hindus and a small number of Christians and Muslims from south India, arrived on 16 November 1860 on board the SS Truro, which departed from the port of Madras. Ten days later, on 26 November 1860, another 351 indentured labourers, including 61 women and 83 children, travelled aboard the SS Belvedere from the port of Calcutta.

A total of 152 184 indentured immigrants, aboard 384 ships, were brought to Natal between 1860 and 1911. Of these, 101 468 people came from southern India (the Madras Presidency, Mysore and surrounding areas), while the rest came from the northern and northeastern areas of India (the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and Bihar in the

Bengal Presidency). They comprised 62% men, 25% women and 13% children; and the majority were Hindu, 2% were Christian and less than 12% Muslim (Dhupelia-Mesthrie 2000:10).

"Indenture" is a labour contract for a specified period, after which the person under contract is "free" to return to his or her homeland or elect to remain in the country. "The demand for indentured labour arose from the need of white farmers who were experimenting with sugar production for a secure supply of labour. This the local African population would not provide, since the hold of their subsistence economy had not been broken. Farmers found that African workers were content to work for short periods after which they returned to their homes." (Dhupelia-Mesthrie 2000:10)

Independent immigrants (also known as "passenger Indians") came to SA at their own cost to pursue economic activity of their own choosing. They were mainly Muslims from Gujarat, but were; later joined by Hindu Gujaratis, Urdu-speaking Muslims from the United Province, and a few Marathi-speaking Konkani Muslims (Pahad 1972:15).

The Natal government originally requested Indian labour in the colony on the basis of fair and equal treatment after completion of the indenture. Over time, as the immigrants freed themselves from their contractual obligations, they began to economically compete with the White population of Natal. "In the end it was not what Indians looked like or their customs which determined relations and policies. White traders, farmers and workers focused on the Indians as significant competitors." (Dhupelia-Mesthrie 2000:16) This led to anti-Indian agitation on a significant scale in Natal and, later, in the Transvaal.

When Natal was granted “responsible government” in 1893, it enacted a number of laws that curtailed the rights of Indians with respect to the franchise and the entry of free Indians, and it imposed a £3 tax, which was designed to compel free Indians to return to India.

Indians first entered the Transvaal in 1881, but after the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand, significant numbers of free and passenger Indians moved to the territory. Discriminatory laws were also imposed on Indians in the Transvaal from 1885 onwards, including restrictions on trade, residence and occupation, and ownership of property (Pahad 1972:16).

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi⁴ arrived in South Africa in 1893 to act for a merchant client in a case against another Indian merchant. He was quickly sensitised to escalating anti-Indian agitation, treatment meted out to Indians and the increasing number of discriminatory laws imposed by the governments of the British colonies and the Boer republics. He experienced racial discrimination at first hand when he was famously thrown off a train at Pietermaritzburg because he refused to leave the whites-only first class compartment.



Portrait of Mahatma Gandhi with an inscription by Gandhi to Thambi Naidoo in 1909

This led him to organise and mobilise resistance against the colonial and republican governments. He established the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) on 22 August 1894 and later formed the Transvaal British Indian Association in 1903. In the early days, the resistance was dominated by wealthy Indian merchants who sought to address their major concerns by appealing to the (British) imperial doctrine of equality (Bhana 1996a:1).

Reddy (2009a) describes Gandhi's experiences in SA, including the development of his philosophy of satyagraha, as follows:

Not only had he [Gandhi] spent twenty-one years of his adult life in South Africa, but he had served four of his ten terms of imprisonment in that country – in the prisons of Johannesburg, Volksrust and Dundee. It was in South Africa that he developed his philosophy of satyagraha. ... Gandhiji found that 'passive resistance' was seen even by European friends as a 'weapon of the weak.' He sought a term which could be understood by Indians and make it clear that the resistance was out of moral strength rather than any weakness. He invited suggestions and, in November 1907, invented the term 'satyagraha' (firmness in truth). The choice of the term itself appears to have helped crystallise his thinking.

In the Transvaal, he opposed the Asiatic Registration Act of 1907 (the Black Act) that required the registration of all "Asiatics". Satyagraha was launched in July 1907 when volunteers picketed registration offices and most of the community refused registration under the Act. In 1913,

satyagraha was employed to oppose the £3 tax and other discriminatory laws. Gandhi achieved mass support for the last phase of the satyagraha campaign (1913-1914), which was supported by poor and middle class Indians (Bhana 1997:100).

Thousands of resisters went to jail. This was Gandhi's legacy to future generations of resisters in South Africa, breaking the fear of imprisonment. Several families that participated in this resistance campaign would produce the resisters of later years who opposed apartheid laws, which clearly promoted injustice (Dhupelia-Mesthrie 2000:22).

In 1913 thousands of Indian coal miners went on strike in Newcastle and a large number of these took part in the march from Newcastle to Volksrust, in order to deliberately defy the law that required Indians to carry permits to cross from one province to another. It was the core group from these marchers who were the original founders of Tolstoy farm.

Sustained pressure led to the Gandhi-Smuts Agreement, whereby Gandhi agreed to suspend satyagraha in exchange for abolition of the £3 tax, recognition of Indian customary marriage and admission of wives and children domiciled in South Africa. However, restrictions on Indians in the Orange Free State and the Cape remained in place. Gandhi eventually left South Africa permanently in 1914.

The Transvaal Asiatic Land and Trading Amendment Act, promulgated in 1919, placed severe restrictions on the issuing

of new trading licences and the ownership of fixed property. This was followed by the Class Areas Bill of 1924, which sought to segregate Indians residentially and commercially, but which did not succeed due to the electoral defeat of the South Africa Party. However, the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provisions) Bill, which sought to both segregate and to substantially reduce the number of Indians in the country through repatriation was initiated a year later.

The essence of the solution proposed by the Union government on the “Indian question” lay in voluntary repatriation or emigration to another British colony. This met with widespread concern by the local community, which was already into its second generation. The intervention of the Government of India was sought and a Round Table Conference was held in 1926-27. This resulted in the Cape Town Agreement of 1927, which formally introduced the mediatory role of the Government of India with regard to South Africans of Indian origin and the appointment of a diplomatic representative – called “agent”, later “agent-general” and finally “high commissioner”: Bhana (1997:101) is of the view that the diplomatic representatives added confusion to the political scene because “he could not be seen to be actively promoting the cause of South Africa’s Indians; and on the other hand, he had to moderate their interests for the sake of British dominion harmony ... In a situation of such ambivalence, his role often created dissension among the Indians.”

Anti-Indian agitation increased in the 1930s. By the early 1940s, Jan Smuts enacted the Occupation of Land Restrictions Act of 1943 (also known as the Pegging Act). The new law required government approval for all new land and property transactions between Indians and Whites.

The South African Indian Congress (SAIC) was formed in 1919 at the initiative of the Cape British Indian Council to oppose discriminatory laws. It also comprised the NIC and the TBIA, which was later replaced by the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC), formed in 1927. However, its moderate leadership was “basically defensive and dependent of the goodwill of the Indian and South African Governments.” (Pahad 1972:7)

But, a new politics was brewing. In Natal, members of the Anti-Segregation Council (ASC) mounted a successful challenge for leadership of the NIC in 1945, where they were elected before a crowd of 7 000 supporters. Dr GM “Monty” Naicker was elected president of the NIC, a position he held until 1961 (Bhana 1997:102). Leading members of the NIC included HA Naidoo and MP Naicker, who were trade unionists; attorneys JN Singh and IC Meer who studied at Wits along with Nelson Mandela; and members of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) such as Debi Singh and Dawood Seedat.

A similar story played itself out in the Transvaal, where Dr Yusuf Dadoo took control of the TIC. Dadoo, who joined the CPSA in 1939, emerged as one of the most important figures in resistance politics in South African history. Among the leaders of the TIC were the trade unionist TN Naidoo, whose father Thambi Naidoo was one of Gandhi’s closest associates in SA; brothers Molvi Ismail Cachalia and Yusuf Cachalia, whose father was also close to Gandhi during the days of satyagraha; and Nana Sita, a staunch Gandhian who later became a symbol of resistance to the Group Areas Act.

The radicals in both provinces comprised of individuals who were drawn from the professions, the trade unions, the merchant class, Gandhians and members of the Communist



NIC leading members IC Meer and JN Singh

Party of South Africa. They differed from the conservatives in several respects. They eschewed moderate politics in favour of direct, militant mass action; they were concerned with the position of the Indian working class, especially through their strong connection with the trade union movement; they were inspired by anti-imperialist and anti-colonial struggles across the world, not least the struggle for independence in India led by the Indian National Congress; and they were committed to the principle of non-racialism and unity of all the oppressed people.

After World War II, the “numbers of [Indian] South African-born predominated and youthful third-generation Indians were ready to claim their South African heritage as a right”, coupled with a sizable population of 250 000, of whom 210 000 were in Natal, 30 000 in the Transvaal and 10 000 in the Cape (Bhana 1997:103).

When the Pegging Act expired in 1946, the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, named the “Ghetto Act”, was passed. The law provided for compulsory residential and trade segregation in exchange for indirect representation in parliament and the provincial legislatures.

This set the stage for the launch of the Passive Resistance Campaign on 13 June 1946, by the Joint Passive Resistance Council (which comprised the TIC, the NIC and the Cape Indian Assembly). Two thousand volunteers courted arrest by illegally occupying land prohibited in terms of the Ghetto Act and illegally crossing provincial boundaries (Indians were required to have a permit to cross provincial boundaries).

This campaign lasted for two years and was very significant because it revived the militant, non-violent mass action pioneered by Gandhi a few decades before.

In 1948, the NIC and the TIC took control of the SAIC from the old conservative leadership.

In keeping with the non-racial approach of the radicals in the Indian Congresses, the Joint Declaration of Cooperation or the "Doctors' Pact" was signed on 27 March 1947 by Dr AB Xuma of the ANC, Dr Naicker of the NIC and Dr Dadoo of the TIC, wherein they pledged joint cooperation between Indian and African in a united struggle for common objectives.

For its part, the leadership of the ANC was highly impressed by the militant but non-violent action of the 1946 Passive Resistance Campaign, conducted jointly by the TIC and NIC.

It was this pact that partly inspired the adoption by the ANC of the 1949 Programme of Action on the basis of militant but non-violent opposition to repression.

The South African Native National Congress, later to become the African National Congress (ANC), was formed on 8 January 1912 in Bloemfontein shortly after the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910. The National Convention of 1908 that followed the South African War (also known as the Anglo-Boer War) agreed to the establishment of a union that amalgamated the Boer republics and British colonies into a unitary entity within the British Commonwealth. However, the



TIC elections held on Natalspruit Sport Ground in 1946

deal denied the indigenous African majority basic democratic rights. Instead, the idea was that African people should be confined to the 13% of land in the reserves, where they were expected to agree on their own “self-determination” in what were essentially crowded ethnic enclaves.

At its inception, the ANC sought to unite the African people across tribal and ethnic lines to press for their political rights within the union. In its early years, the organisation’s approach was basically non-confrontational, where the modus operandi was to send deputations to London to put pressure on the British government, as the colonial power, to intercede on behalf of African people.

The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU), under the leadership of Clements Kadalie, was formed in 1919 and rose to become one of the most active and militant organisations of the 1920s. It could not sustain itself and collapsed by the late 1920s. The Communist Party of South Africa was established in 1921 as a workers’ party. With a majority African membership, it subsequently emerged as one of the most significant non-racial organisations of the first half of the twentieth century. The Non-European United Front, formed in the 1930s aimed at fostering unity of the oppressed people of South Africa.

Josiah Gumede was elected President of the ANC in 1927. He sought to transform the ANC into a militant, mass organisation but was thwarted by the conservatives who voted him out in 1930. As a result the ANC remained a moderate organisation until after the Second World War. After the African mineworkers’ strike of 1946, led by JB Marks, a member of the CPSA, the political climate began to change.

The National Party (NP or “Nats”) came to power in 1948 when it promised the Whites-only electorate that it would vigorously implement apartheid, which sought to entrench racial separation. A number of new laws were thus passed in subsequent years: the Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act, the Mixed Marriages Act, the Immorality Act, the Bantu Education Act and the Suppression of Communism Act.

The Nats also promised to escalate state repression. In 1949, meetings organised by the Communist Party MP Sam Kahn were banned in the Transvaal under the Riotous Assemblies Act; restrictions were placed on Dr Dadoo; passports were refused to activists; and publications were censored by decrees in the Government Gazette (ANC 2003:5).

The political climate changed dramatically after the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) – with luminaries such as Anton Lembede, Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, and Walter Sisulu in its leadership – proposed a militant Programme of Action at the ANC conference in 1949, where Sisulu became Secretary-General of the ANC. As has already been stated, the new course for the ANC was partly influenced by the success of the Indian Congresses during the Passive Resistance Campaign.

Racist and repressive laws and practices saw increasing militancy on the part of the ANC and its allies. A Defend Free Speech Convention held in Johannesburg on 26 March 1950 with the participation of the ANC, the SAIC, the African People’s Organisation (APO) and the CPSA called for a general strike on May Day 1950, the call was limited to the Transvaal. Police opened fire on demonstrators killing 18 people – 17 in Alexandra and 1 in Benoni. In response, the leadership of the ANC and SAIC held an emergency meeting and declared 26 June 1950 as a national day of protest and mourning.

The 1950 events precipitated the most organised, visionary and sustained period of resistance hitherto seen in South African history.

The 1950s saw a surfeit of leaders emerging in the Congresses. Chief Albert Luthuli, a devout Christian and a hereditary chief, replaced Dr Moroka as president of the ANC. He was president of the Natal ANC before he replaced Moroka. Leading members of the Communist Party in the leadership of the ANC included Moses Kotane and JB Marks. Other leading figures included Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela.

Contemporaries of Dr Dadoo and Dr Naicker in the 1940s included Molvi Cachalia, Yusuf Cachalia, Ismail Meer, JN Singh, Debi Singh, Dawood Seedat, Ashwin Choudree, DU Mistry, TN Naidoo, Molvi Saloojee, SM Mayet, George Singh and MP Naicker.

The formation of the Congress of Democrats (COD) was inspired by the Defiance Campaign. Its leading figures were former members of the Communist Party of South Africa, which was banned in 1950, such as Joe Slovo, Ruth First and Bram Fischer and members of the Springbok Legion such as Jack Hodgson and Rusty Bernstein.

The campaigns of the 1950s were visionary, widespread and militant, and they sought to challenge the legitimacy of the apartheid state. In 1952, the Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws or “Defiance Campaign” was launched to challenge unjust laws. It saw 8 000 people of all races courting arrest in defiance of these laws.

The Defiance Campaign was the very first joint campaign of the ANC and SAIC on a national scale. Nelson Mandela

was the National Volunteer-in-Chief, and Molvi Cachalia, his Deputy. It was the first time that African and Indian men and women jointly defied and were imprisoned. There were also a few white defiers.

The formations along racial lines – ANC, SAIC, Coloured People’s Congress, and the mainly white Congress of Democrats – along with the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu) coalesced into the Congress Alliance in the mid-1950s. This signalled non-racialism in action on a significant scale. Moreover, the constituent bodies of the alliance were broadly united in policy, practice and action.

The Freedom Charter, adopted at the Congress of the People on 25-26 June 1955, was the product of the Campaign for the Congress of the People. This was an extensive campaign that covered every corner of the country, where people were asked to put forward their vision for a free, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa. It evoked a massive popular response, where people of all races, classes and ethnicities responded positively. The Freedom Charter was hugely influential and provided the inspiration for the Constitution of democratic South Africa, adopted in 1996. Several other campaigns captured the imagination of the oppressed people of South Africa including the Women’s March of 1956, the potato boycott against slave-like conditions on potato farms, the Alexandra bus boycott and the campaign against Bantu education.

The campaigns of the Congress Alliance led to the emergence of a mass movement. Membership increased dramatically and popular participation in the activities of the organisations reached unprecedented levels during that period.



On the roof of Kholvad House L-R: Yusuf Cachalia (SAIC), D U Mistry (SAIC), Dan Tloome (SACTUI/ANC), Goolam Pahad (SAIC), O R Tambo (ANC), David Bopape, (Tvl ANC), Molvi I Cachalia (SAIC), 1953

As the tempo of resistance increased during the 1950s, the apartheid government responded equably. It tightened repressive legislation, banned and harassed leading activists and resorted to the use of force in some public demonstrations. In 1956, 156 people were arrested and charged with treason. After an initial process, charges were dropped against most of the accused except 30 key leaders of the movement, including Chief Luthuli, Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo and Ahmed Kathrada. Although they were eventually acquitted in 1961, five years after the initial charges were levelled, the trial consumed the time and energy of key leaders and came at huge personal cost to these individuals.

The PAC broke away on two main points. They did not accept

the Freedom Charter; especially that South Africa belonged to all its people – black and white. They did not believe in co-operation with Indians, whites and coloureds. And they were anti-communist, and regarded the Freedom Charter as a communist document.

The PAC embarked on an Anti-Pass Campaign in 1960 that precipitated the events in Sharpeville on 21 March 1960, when the police killed 69 people and wounded 186. A general strike called on 28 March brought the country to a standstill. On 30 March, the government declared a State of Emergency and detained more than 2 000 people across the country. On 8 April the ANC and the PAC were banned in terms of the newly legislated Unlawful Organisations Act.



March prior to the infamous Sharpeville massacre, 1960

Story of the “Men of Dynamite”⁵

The dramatic events of 1960 constituted a rupture. The regime decided that the answer to escalating resistance was harsh and unremitting repression. Under these conditions, ANC and SACP national structures operated underground to define their response to the tightening conditions. This set the scene for the turn to armed struggle and the emergence of the “Men of Dynamite”, a band of mostly young Indian men who operated as clandestine saboteurs between 1961 and 1964 in the predominantly Indian suburbs on the western fringes of Johannesburg.

It is clear that the SACP took a formal decision to embark on armed struggle in December 1960, well before the ANC did so, and during the course of 1961, the SACP was already in the process of recruiting cadres, arranging basic training and handling explosives (Magubane et al 2004:82-83). This was probably due to the “capacity and infrastructure [of the SACP] to survive underground for a reasonable period of time.” (Chiba 2008:4)

Ismail Meer, a leading member of the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), describes the debates within the SAIC and ANC on the move to armed resistance:

Around August/September 1961, the national executive of the banned ANC met secretly on a farm in Groutville, Natal, under the chairmanship of Chief Albert Luthuli.

On the same night the Indian Congresses met in Tongaat. We were preparing for the issue to be discussed at the joint executives of the Congresses to be held the next evening. ... Finally, we agreed that we would go to the joint meeting with the ANC, as we felt that there was still the possibility of using non-violent methods of struggle, but that we would not stand in the way of the ANC if it decided otherwise.

The joint meeting took place at 8pm at the beach house of the Bodasinghs, near Stanger. The debate continued through the night. Chief Luthuli, the president general of the ANC, presided. He opened the meeting by informing us that the executive of the ANC had met and decided to allow the formation of an organisation that would engage in violent forms of struggle...

Nelson Mandela was unrelenting in championing the turn to violence. As dawn crept on us, we wrapped up the debate and endorsed the decision that the ANC had taken the night before. We had placed an enormous responsibility on Nelson Mandela. Our decision led to the birth of Umkhonto we Sizwe, which announced its existence in the midst of explosions that rocked South Africa on 16 December 1961. (Meer 2002:224)

A leaflet issued by the "command of Umkhonto we Sizwe" on 16 December 1961, the day of its formation, stated:

Units of Umkhonto we Sizwe today carried out planned attacks against Government installations, particularly those concerned with the policy of apartheid and race discrimination.

Umkhonto we Sizwe is a new, independent body, formed by Africans. It includes in its ranks South Africans of all races. ... [It] will carry on the struggle for freedom and democracy by new methods, which are necessary to complement the actions of the established national liberation organizations. ... [It] supports the national liberation movement, and our members, jointly and individually, place themselves under the overall political guidance of that movement.



Mosie Moolla and Nelson Mandela in the early 1960s

It is, however, well known that the main national liberation organizations in this country have consistently followed a policy of non-violence. They have conducted themselves peaceably at all times, regardless of Government attacks and persecutions upon them, and despite all Government-inspired attempts to provoke violence. They have done so because the people prefer peaceful methods of change to achieve their aspirations without the suffering and bitterness of civil war. But the people's patience is not endless.

The time comes in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices: submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all means within our power in defence of our people, our future and our freedom. (Karis and Carter 1977:716-7)

The leaflet (also referred to as MK's manifesto) is an important text for a number of reasons. It set out the rationale for MK's formation. It argued that the liberation movement had long pursued a policy of non-violence. The reaction on the part of state was a "policy of force, repression and violence [which] will no longer be met with non-violent resistance only". This meant that existing modes of resistance would be broadened to include the armed struggle.

The leaflet was unambiguous in pointing out that MK operated under the political guidance of the liberation movement, meaning the leadership of the ANC, in order to distinguish itself from purely militaristic organisations.

The leaflet hinted that MK's mode of armed resistance at the time would take the form of sabotage. "At first, MK confined its operations to acts of sabotage: forays against military installations, power plants, transportation links, and telephone lines. Sabotage was chosen because initially MK was not equipped to engage in other forms of violence and because such activities did not involve loss of life." (O' Malley 2007:88) This differed from other modes such as insurrection,

guerrilla warfare or full-scale civil war. There is some debate about the document entitled "Operation Mayibuye", which was found by police during the Rivonia arrests. It argued for a switch to guerrilla warfare and was presented as evidence at the trial. However, Walter Sisulu refuted the contention that it set out the policy of MK.

Laloo Chiba (2008:4) states that in his view, "... it had never been the objective of the Liberation Movement to bring the repressive apartheid State to its knees by defeating it militarily ... [since it] had the most sophisticated and powerful military machine on the African continent, such an objective would have been unrealisable in the first place. Rather, the purpose of the armed struggle was to apply further pressure on the Government, in conjunction with other pillars of the National Democratic Revolution, with the view to forcing it to the negotiating table."

MK's membership was open to all races. Laloo Chiba (2008:3) said that in the three major trials of 1964 – the trial of the 18 in Durban at the beginning of 1964, the Rivonia Trial concluded in mid-1964 and the Little Rivonia Trial in December 1964 - more than 40% of those convicted and sentenced came from "minority population groups". This marked a major departure from the racially based organisational structures of the Congress Alliance. MK's non-racial membership was an important reason for the ANC to formally open its membership to all races after the 1969 Morogoro conference.

Umkhonto we Sizwe Manifesto

Leaflet issued by Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) on 16 December 1961

Units of Umkhonto we Sizwe today carried out planned attacks against Government installations, particularly those connected with the policy of apartheid and race discrimination.

Umkhonto we Sizwe is a new, independent body, formed by Africans. It includes in its ranks South Africans of all races. It is not connected in any way with a so-called "Committee for National Liberation" whose existence has been announced in the press. Umkhonto we Sizwe will carry on the struggle for freedom and democracy by new methods, which are necessary to complement the actions of the established national liberation organizations. Umkhonto we Sizwe fully supports the national liberation movement, and our members jointly and individually, place themselves under the overall political guidance of that movement.

It is, however, well known that the main national liberation organizations in this country have consistently followed a policy of non-violence. They have conducted themselves peaceably at all times, regardless of Government attacks and persecutions upon them, and despite all Government-inspired attempts to provoke them to violence. They have done so because the people prefer peaceful methods of change to achieve their aspirations without the suffering and bitterness of civil war. But the people's patience is not endless.

The time comes in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices: submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all means within our power in defence of our people, our future and our freedom.

The Government has interpreted the peacefulness of the movement as weakness; the people's non-violent policies have been taken as a green light for Government violence. Refusal to resort to force has been interpreted by the Government as an invitation to use armed force against the people without any fear of reprisals. The methods of Umkhonto we Sizwe mark a break with that past.

We are striking out along a new road for the liberation of the people of this country. The Government policy of force, repression and violence will no longer be met with non-violent resistance only! The choice is not ours; it has been

made by the Nationalist Government which has rejected every peaceable demand by the people for rights and freedom and answered every such demand with force and yet more force! Twice in the past 18 months, virtual martial law has been imposed in order to beat down peaceful, non-violent strike action of the people in support of their rights. It is now preparing its forces — enlarging and rearming its armed forces and drawing the white civilian population into commandos and pistol clubs — for full-scale military actions against the people. The Nationalist Government has chosen the course of force and massacre, now, deliberately, as it did at Sharpeville.

Umkhonto we Sizwe will be at the front line of the people's defence. It will be the fighting arm of the people against the Government and its policies of race oppression. It will be the striking force of the people for liberty, for rights and for their final liberation! Let the Government, its supporters who put it into power, and those whose passive toleration of reaction keeps it in power, take note of where the Nationalist Government is leading the country!

We of Umkhonto we Sizwe have always sought — as the liberation movement has sought — to achieve liberation, without bloodshed and civil clash. We do so still. We hope — even at this late hour — that our first actions will awaken every one to a realization of the disastrous situation to which the Nationalist policy is leading. We hope that we will bring the Government and its supporters to their senses before it is too late, so that both the Government and its policies can be changed before matters reach the desperate stage of civil war. We believe our actions to be a blow against the Nationalist preparations for civil war and military rule.

In these actions, we are working in the best interests of all the people of this country — black, brown and white — whose future happiness and well-being cannot be attained without the overthrow of the Nationalist Government, the abolition of white supremacy and the winning of liberty, democracy and full national rights and equality for all the people of this country.

We appeal for the support and encouragement of all those South Africans who seek the happiness and freedom of the people of this country.

*Afrika Mayibuye!**

Issued by command of Umkhonto we Sizwe.

*Africa Return!

Leaflet (manifesto) issued by Umkhonto we Sizwe on the day of its launch on 16 December 1961

Organisation and recruitment

At the apex of Umkhonto we Sizwe was the National High Command, with Nelson Mandela as the Commander-in-Chief. Other members of this structure were Walter Sisulu, Joe Slovo, Govan Mbeki and Raymond Mhlaba. The High Command was responsible for policy, tactics, targets, training and finance.

MK sought to build a network of clandestine operatives. The National High Command set up regional commands in different parts of the country: Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and Durban. Regional commands were responsible for carrying out acts of sabotage locally. These in turn set up and recruited cadres who would be operationally active at the local level. A division of labour saw different people assigned to various teams responsible for reconnaissance, support, propaganda, ordnance procurement and sabotage. In some instances, recruits were sent overseas for military training.

Members of the Johannesburg (also called the Transvaal) Regional Command comprised Elias Motsoaledi, Patrick Mthembu (who later turned state witness), Jack Hodgson, and Ahmed "Kathy" Kathrada, who was a member for a short time. Their initial work involved bringing the former SACP units into MK and arranging training for cadres.

In Natal, members of the Regional Command included MP Naicker, Ronnie Kasrils, Eric Mtshali, Billy Nair and Bruno Mtolo, who later sold out. Solomon Mbanjwa and Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim were later co-opted onto the Regional Command (Magubane et al 2004:108-109).

The composition of the national and regional commands was an important departure from the structure of the Congress Alliance. It comprised people of all races and had strong representation from the Communist Party and, in the case of Natal, the influence of trade unionists (Magubane et al 2004:108). There was, however, a dearth of women in these structures. The lack of women cadres in MK's early history needs further research.

MK was a non-racial organisation, but the rigid racial separation enforced under apartheid meant that most operations were conducted by units organised on a racial basis (Magubane et al 2004:113). In other words, units would easily escape the attention of the police if they were made up of the same racial group. Hence, the emergence of our "Men of Dynamite".



MK logo

Around late 1961 and early 1962, Kathy, who was a member of the Johannesburg Regional Command, recruited his old friend Ameen "Doha" Cajee, who also hailed from the small western Transvaal town of Schweizer-Reneke, and comrades Moosa Moosajee and Abdulhay Jassat into an MK unit. His unit carried out "modest sabotage with the dual purpose of assessing targets and testing the efficacy of our equipment". (Kathrada 2004:142) Kathy recalls that he and Doha, with Dasu as a lookout, placed an incendiary bomb in the Portuguese Labour office on the night of the launch of MK on 16 December 1961.

In 1960, after the lifting of the State of Emergency, Reggie Vandeyar recruited Laloo "Isu" Chiba into an SACP cell, which was part of the party's underground network. In early 1961, Paul Joseph and Wolfie Kodesh, who were party veterans, joined the duo. Led by Wolfie, the foursome constituted one of the SACP's sabotage units shortly after the party decided to engage in this new form of resistance. The unit engaged in rudimentary forms of sabotage that involved the disruption of power supply and telecommunications by sawing pylons and cables.

Some months later, towards the end of 1961, the party sabotage unit was instructed to disband and, with the same members, reconstitute itself as an MK unit. It was the first MK unit to be established in the Indian areas of Johannesburg. At the launch of MK on 16 December 1961, the unit identified, reconnoitred and attacked three targets which were symbols of apartheid. MK's manifesto was distributed throughout the country on the night of its establishment. Doha and Dasu Joseph, Paul's brother, distributed it locally.

Early in 1962, Wolfie was moved out of the unit and reassigned to other duties. His superior in the Regional Command was Jack Hodgson. It was then decided that Isu would replace

Wolfie and that Jack would remain the contact person in the Regional Command. They were instructed that each member of the original unit had to establish a new four-person unit of his own, thereby expanding the original unit into four units each operating with four operatives. This structure of 16 operatives constituted a platoon, and Isu was appointed the platoon commander. He remained in charge of the four units from 1962 until his arrest in April 1963.

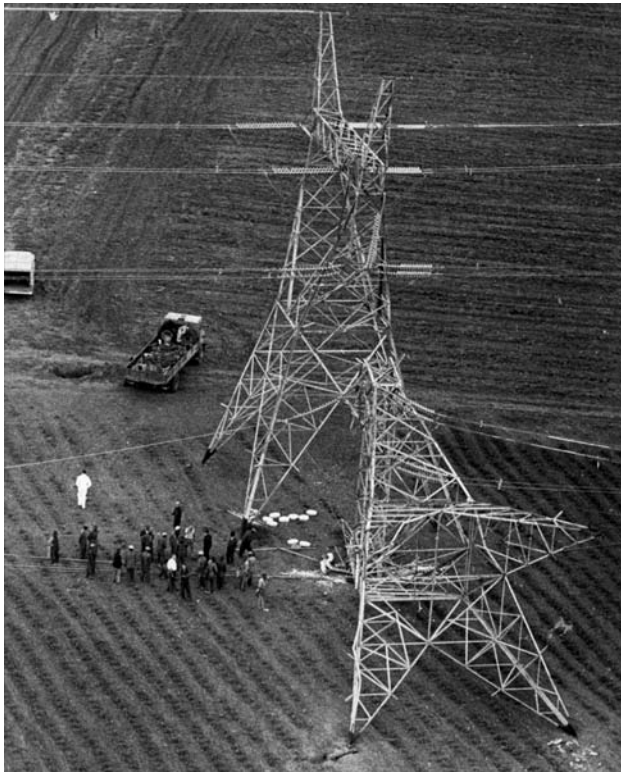
Kathy had then terminated his membership of the Regional Command after discussions with senior comrades. In fact, he continued to do administrative work at Rivonia for the National High Command.

Isu led one unit, whose members were Solly Vania and Faker Salie, both close friends. Presumably, they were recruited because they were implicitly trusted by Isu and, since they did not have any history of direct political involvement, there was little chance that the police would monitor them.

Reggie led another unit. He recruited Indres Naidoo and Shirish Nanabhai⁶. Gammat Jardine, who turned out to be a police agent, then joined them. Indres and Shirish were members of the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress (TIYC). The advantage of using activists as recruits was that they were dedicated and disciplined. In the event of being caught, they would not easily betray their comrades. They would also understand the primacy of politics and strictly adhere to the organisation's strictures regarding loss of life.

Political activists were steeped in the tradition of reading revolutionary literature. At that time, literature about guerrilla struggles in China, Cuba, Algeria and Vietnam was very much in the vogue. Indres Naidoo said: "At the time of my arrest the police found a book published by the Americans which dealt

with guerrilla warfare as espoused by Che Guevara and Mao tse Tung [Mao Zedong], published as a counter insurgency book but very useful to us." (Naidoo 1986:31).



A fallen pylon the night after MK was launched, 1961

On the other hand, activists who remained involved in legal organisations had a high profile and had to balance their legal and clandestine activities. Naidoo reveals on one occasion he, Shirish and Reggie performed an MK duty, and missed an important political meeting. Although Nanabhai and Vandeyar could make excuses, he couldn't because his mother, brothers and sisters were all at the meeting (Naidoo 1986:31).

The leader of the third unit was Paul. The unit's members were Amien Cajee (not Ameen "Doha" Cajee), Omar Bhamjee and Magan Narsee Chhiba. Each of the new recruits had not previously been politically active, and would in all likelihood avoid police observation. Cajee and Bhamjee were sent for training to Czechoslovakia in August 1962. It appears that they had a fall-out and consequently decided to remain abroad, opting to live in England instead of returning home. Magan was later shifted to a new unit headed by Solly in 1963, and later still into a unit headed by Kista Moonsamy in 1964.

Abdulhay Jassat led the fourth unit. Like Indres and Shirish, Abdulhay was also a leading member of the TIYC. The other three members of the unit were Tommy Vassen, Yusuf Asvat and Moosa Moosajee. Tommy was Bobby's elder brother, and also a friend of Kathy and Isu. Yusuf Isaacs (also known as Yusuf Asvat) was a brother of Dr Zainab Asvat and Amina Asvat (later Cachalia) who were high profile activists with the Transvaal Indian Congress. Asvat himself did not enjoy his sisters' political profile. Moosajee, like Jassat, was part of a unit that was previously led by Kathy.

Solly was instructed to set up a unit of his own, which included Bobby, and Magan, who was transferred from Paul's unit, and Kista Moonsamy.

Nelson Mandela was arrested on 5 August 1962, tried and sentenced to five years' imprisonment for leaving the country illegally and organising a national stayaway. But a bigger blow was still to come. Roughly a year later, on 11 July 1963, almost the entire leadership of MK was arrested at Liliesleaf Farm in Rivonia.

Wilton Mkwai, who escaped capture at Liliesleaf, then, set up the second National High Command. This structure comprised Wilton, David Kitson, Isu and Lionel Gay. Mac Maharaj was the political commissar to the High Command and John Matthews served on its technical committee. Although Isu had been promoted to the highest structure in a relatively short time, he maintained his links with his units in Johannesburg.

In early 1964, Kista set up a unit of his own, comprising Magan, his comrade in Sollys's unit, Joe Cajee and Nanoo Jasmath, who was Shirish Nanabhai's brother.

Ahmed Bhabha, SM Mayet and Fatima "Fati" Adam (later Guman)⁷ were recruited in 1964. They were assigned to assist Lionel Gay and Nanda Naidoo with setting up a broadcast on 26 June 1964 at Shangrila Club in Vereeniging, which was owned by prominent Indian businessmen. The broadcast was to be made by Wilton Mkwai, the leader of the second National High Command at the time, but it failed. Bhabha gave evidence at the Little Rivonia Trial on the failed broadcast, but his evidence was not material in that it did not impact negatively on the conviction and sentence of the accused.

The political commissar to the second National High Command was Mac Maharaj. While studying in London in the late 1950s, he linked up with Vella Pillay, the representative of the Central Committee of the SACP in the UK. Mac was then offered training in the then German Democratic Republic:

In the end, I trained for eleven months: six months in all aspects of training and five months in sabotage – how to use dynamite, blow up pylons, cut railway lines, and manufacture homemade explosives. Then in May 1962 I

returned to South Africa via London. I was the first person to undergo training outside the country after the decision to turn to organized violence as a means of struggle. (O'Malley 2007:90)

Mac was then integrated into a unit of the SACP in mid-1962 that was led by Kathy. The other members were Abdulhay Jassat, Ebrahim Moolla and Solly Essakjee, who dropped out in 1963. Mac was also appointed to a technical committee with three other people in order to set up printing works. Paul and his brothers Peter and Dasu were deeply involved in underground and MK work, and they were vital to Mac's underground work, especially on the propaganda front. Through contact with Ruth First and Wilton Mkwai, Paul was formally integrated into MK. After the Rivonia arrests, Mac was asked to serve as the commissar to the second National High Command. Along with Mkwai, he manufactured bombs for MK units and was involved in bombing railway tracks. He worked closely with Doha Cajee and on one occasion they manufactured gunpowder, which blew up when they tried to dry it by heating it (O' Malley 2007:103-117).

At the beginning of the armed struggle, training was either non-existent or very basic. Arrangements were made with the People's Republic of China for some of the early recruits to be trained there. Among these were Wilton Mkwai, Joe Gqabi, Andrew Mlangeni, Nanda Naidoo (whose *nom de guerre* was Steve Naidoo) and Patrick Mthembu. Others were later sent to Algeria, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union.

Isu Chiba (2008:4) said that the spate of arrests, detentions and imprisonment of political activists during this period, coupled with many leaving the country "dented the capacity of the Movement to maintain the momentum of political



Aerial view of the Liliesleaf farm house used as an exhibit during the Rivonia Trial

activity. Obviously the vacuum needed to be filled as quickly as possible. But in so doing, it was unavoidable that activists with varying skills, experience, track records, commitment and discipline were drafted into the Movement without the

usual care and screening processes. A decline in the quality of their contributions was an inevitable consequence of that situation.”

Saws and dynamite

The shift to armed struggle meant that a whole new world of weapons, explosives and ordnance suddenly opened up. Black members of MK had little experience in these matters since black members of the South African armed forces were not allowed to bear arms. Infiltrating weaponry into the country was very difficult at the time because virtually all neighbouring countries were hostile to the liberation movements: South West Africa (now Namibia) was under effective South African control, Bechuanaland (now Botswana) was a British protectorate, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) was a British colony and Mozambique was a Portuguese colony. The only MK members that had this experience were white comrades who saw active service during the Second World War, such as Jack, Wolfie and Rusty Bernstein – and they were relatively small in number.

Many people recount their experiences of the rudimentary methods and weaponry used in the early days of the armed struggle. An early favourite tactic of the cadres was sawing off electricity pylons and cutting telephone lines. This was a labour intensive action that only required saws but had the desired effect of sabotaging a strategic installation – and it did not involve loss of life. Andrew Masondo (1986:21-23) tells the story:

The fact that we had no explosives was frustrating because we wanted to blow some electric pylons. One day whilst travelling by car from East London to Alice we noted that some pylons were made of wood. This gave me an idea of how we should deal with the pylons. I then checked on the information about the grid and how the switches

would work. It became clear that we could saw the pylons and pull them down. I also found that if there is a cut the switches go off and that if we chose a good pylon we could affect a big area.

Reggie recalls that one of the first missions that he, Wolfie, Isu and Paul carried out was cutting telephone lines in Springs – using a hacksaw and a sickle that they tied to a broom handle. They chose the target because it was in the same street as the Rev Douglas Thompson, who was known as the “Red Reverend”. They figured that he would give them refuge in the event that something went awry.



Drawing illustrating cutting of telephone wires in progress

Nelson Mandela recounted one of his experiences in Long Walk to Freedom:

MK was then practising setting off explosions. One night I accompanied Wolfie to an old brickworks on the outskirts of town for a demonstration. It was a security risk, but I wanted to attend MK's first test of an explosive device. Explosions were common at the brickworks, for companies

would use dynamite to loosen the clay before the great machines scooped it up to make bricks. Jack Hodgson had brought along a paraffin tin filled with nitroglycerine; he had created a timing device that used the inside of a ballpoint pen. It was dark and we had only a small light, and we stood to side as Jack worked. When it was ready, we stood back and counted down to thirty seconds; there was a great roar and much displaced earth. The explosion

Explosive

First you must not take anything for explosion without checking in house first.

Safety fuze 1 cm per second ??

Instantaneous fuze : 30 min per second ??

Detonating cord :650 min per second not a fuze but explosive (America)

There are two kinds of demolition

1. Hot demolition
2. Cold demolition

Hot demolition explodes and changes into smoke and fire (TNT)

Many kinds of cold demolition. Stone is cold demolition, knife putting obstacles in airfield cold demolition.

Throwing of oil on road to prevent cars moving.

Cutting of wire in engine or communication.

Blocking of car by felling trees.

Exhibit during Little Rivonia Trial: Study of different types of demolitions

had been a success, and we all quickly returned to our cars and went off in different directions.
(Mandela 1994:264-5)

Mac Maharaj describes how he addressed the problem of procuring ingredients for pipe bombs:

On another occasion Mkwazi came to me and said, "Pipe bomb ingredients – we can't get them because the regime has found out what ingredients we are using; and when we go to shops, we can't buy them." I said, "What are you missing?" He said, "Charcoal we can make. My problem is sulfuric acid and permanganate of potash for the ignition, and saltpeter." I said, "What's your problem with saltpeter?" "You can't go into any of the shops and buy saltpeter now. There has been a police alert to all suppliers of saltpeter to note who is coming in to buy, so you can't buy it in quantities." I said, "There must be a way."

I thought about the problem and read up a bit, and I found that saltpeter is used as a fertilizer for roses. It was right there in the encyclopedia on gardening. I put on a gardener's overall and went around inquiring at flower shops as discreetly as possible. I was able to buy stocks of it from shops selling gardening fertilizers. I would go there as a very expert gardener on roses, engage in discussions with the shop owners, and display my so-called knowledge about rose gardening. The chap would be very impressed and say, "You know a lot about roses." We get around talking about various fertilizers, and I would reject some and say, "That one I know, it doesn't work so well; it really depends on the soil." Then he would say at some point, "And saltpeter is something that you should consider using." I also found a contact Doha [Ameen Cajee] had

for sulphuric acid. I don't remember where it had been stolen from, but Doha had made the contact. (O' Malley 2007:111)

The difficulties of procuring chemicals and manufacturing explosives were all too apparent. Since dynamite and gelignite (a more potent type of dynamite) were widely used in mines and quarries, many accounts recall missions involving its theft and transportation.

Abdulhay and Tommy recall a mission to Durban when they were asked to pick up a consignment of stolen dynamite.

They drove to Durban in Abdulhay's van, stayed the night at MP Naicker's house and, the next day, met up with Billy Nair. Billy took them to the storage place where they met George Naicker, who passed on crates of the explosives to them. They then had a nerve-racking and arduous journey from Durban to Johannesburg "travelling at 30 miles per hour". They eventually arrived and were able to deliver the consignment to their seniors.

A key problem at the time was that some bombs failed to explode. Sometimes, they were not manufactured properly. Mac Maharaj describes the problem of igniting the explosives:

Many bombs did not go off because the operation depended crucially on putting the sulfuric acid into that gelatine capsule, putting the capsule into the pipe, then quickly sealing and positioning it. You were working in the dark, and if you splashed sulfuric acid onto your hand, it burned you. It was a tiny capsule and you were using an eyedropper; you might think you'd filled it and pressed it, but it could actually be empty. And you couldn't shine torches or anything.

But there was also the problem of dud dynamite supplied by police informers – in particular, Gammat Jardine.

Operations

The SACP sabotage unit constituted by Wolfie, Paul, Isu and Reggie was involved in the disruption of power supply and telecommunications. The same sabotage unit later becomes one of the first MK units in the country. On the night of the launch MK, Isu Chiba describes their first operation as an MK unit. In preparation for going into action, the unit had identified and selected three targets, namely, the Bezuidenhout Street Pass Offices in Ferreirastown, the white section of the Fordsburg Post Office on Central Road and the Bantu Commissioner's Court in Malherbe St in Newtown, an institution that convicted Africans for pass offences on a large scale in order to force them into farm labour. The unit also prepared three explosive devices – made up of potassium permanganate crystals and silver powder and sulphuric acid in plastic capsules served as timing devices.

We were under strict instructions to avoid the danger of injuries or loss of life, civilian or otherwise, as well as to refrain from revisiting the site of sabotage, irrespective of whether or not the attempt was successful.

We started at 10pm and had completed the operation within 30 minutes. The four of us were involved in the operation, except the last one, because Reggie had to go off to his job in a restaurant.

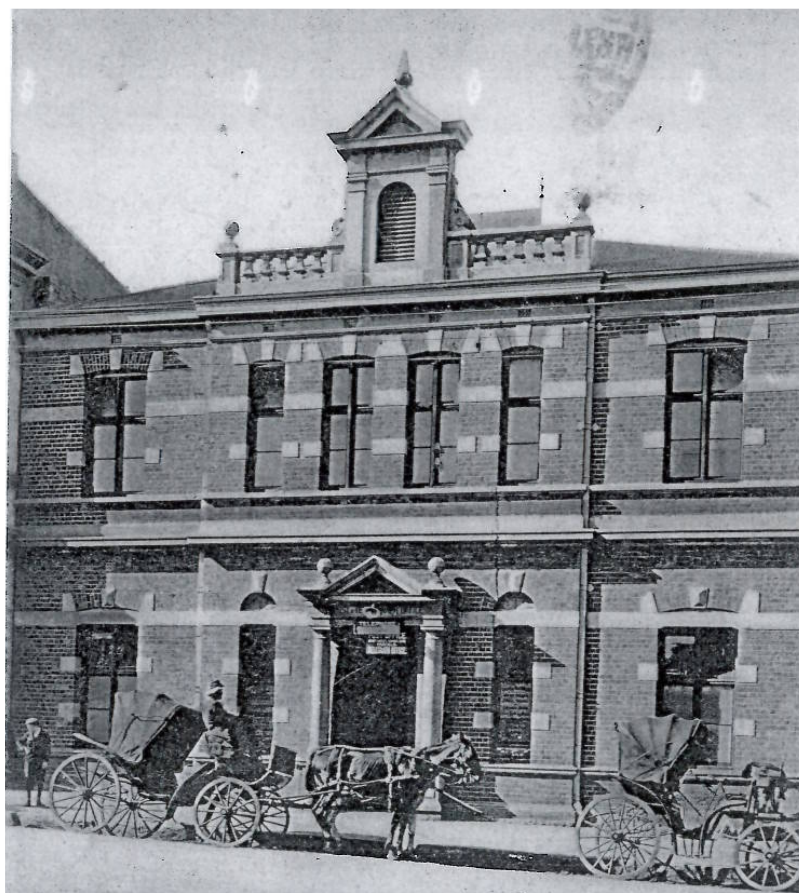
The abovementioned attempts were a huge success. If my memory serves me correctly, 27 acts of sabotage were carried out throughout the country on the night of the 16th of December. But MK suffered its first casualty on the same night in Dube, Soweto when Comrade Petrus

Molefe was accidentally killed instantly when the bomb, which he had been carrying for an act of sabotage, exploded prematurely.

An operation that deserves mention took place in September 1962, roughly a month after the arrest of Nelson Mandela. Isu, who was a platoon commander at the time, was called by his superior, Jack, and told that a major act of sabotage needed to be carried out within the next 36 hours to demonstrate that MK activities were continuing apace despite Mandela's arrest. Isu's difficulty was that none of the units under his command were available to act at short notice. He then contacted unit leaders Abdulhay Jassat and Solly Vania and a member of his own unit, Faker Salie. They met and agreed on a target. However, they confronted the problem that three members of this ad hoc group were unit leaders. Should something happen during the operation, vertical contact between the units and the higher echelons would be cut off. They decided to proceed in view of the political importance of the attack.

They selected the biggest bomb that was available – a 20 pound dynamite bomb that had been prepared by Elias Motsoaledi. The targets they selected were two powerful oil transformers in Vrededorp, close to the railway line and opposite a cinema. It was timed to go off after interval so as to ensure that the cinema patrons were not affected in any way.

Abdulhay was responsible for driving the getaway vehicle, Faker was the lookout and Solly accompanied Isu into the compound. They planted the explosive on a 44-gallon drum containing transformer oil to maximise the impact. The bomb was planted at 7pm and timed to go off at 9pm. They left the



Dear Jean The Post Office - Fordsburg 10/8/05-
How is everybody. all well here. I am
sending my goods off tomorrow. &
hope to follow in about 2 weeks. shall
let you know. Love to all from

The old Fordsburg Post Office, 1904

vicinity and waited for the big bang, but nothing happened. After waiting for an hour, they realised something was amiss.

The group was once again confronted by several dilemmas. If they left the bomb unexploded, it would land in the hands of the police who would be able to analyse how the bomb was made. But they were under strict orders never to return to the scene of an operation. However, the political context demanded that a major act of sabotage needed to be carried out. They were also confronted by the danger of arrest or something going wrong with the explosive. Chiba picks up the story:

But ultimately, through intense discussion, we said let's go for it and let's see what happens. We had to inspect the bomb. We would at least remove it. ... I went in to find out and determine exactly what was wrong. Now I was sweating – I have no hesitation in saying that I was sweating, I was very, very scared, no doubt about that. Because I simply didn't know. I've seen pictures, read stories, and read books, that when you defuse bombs and do all sorts of things, things can go wrong.

Nevertheless I went there and the first thing we had to do was to disconnect the timing mechanism. That was the difficult part. I disconnected it. Nothing happened. Then there was a fuse, which connected the timing mechanism to the explosive itself, to the dynamite. The fuse was short because it was going to be electronically detonated – you have a very short timing fuse. Having triggered it off you haven't got a minute or two minutes or even five minutes to take a walk or a run. But here it was such a short fuse and, in my estimation, it couldn't have been more than eight or 10 seconds before the bomb went off. And that is

the reason why I asked Solly to widen the hole in the fence in order for me to make a quick getaway. ...

Park the car so I could reach it within about 8 or 10 seconds, and that was done. Then of course I lit the cigarette, ignited the fuse and ran for my life. Just before I reached the car there was a massive explosion. Flames shot high in the sky as a result of the fact that the bomb had been placed on a drum containing transformer oil. ... The getaway was smooth, there were no other hitches – and that was it.

The attack was a huge success and made headlines. Isu reported the operation to Jack, who said: "That while I reprimand you, I nevertheless must say that an excellent job was done by this special unit of heads of units."

Tommy Vassen relates the story of the bombing of a house in Laudium allocated to Nana Sita. Abdulhay was the unit head and did not say where they were going. Upon realising that they were heading to Pretoria, Tommy became very nervous, sure that they were heading for the Union Buildings, the Voortrekker Monument or some other government installation. Abdulhay then informed him that the target was the house allocated to Nana Sita by the apartheid government. Nana Sita was a prominent leader of the Transvaal Indian Congress who was implacably opposed to the Group Areas Act. He flatly refused to leave his home and business in Hercules, which had been declared a white Group Area. The government had allocated him a house because the court insisted that he be given alternative accommodation once he was evicted.



Nana Sita in the middle, with "Nehru" Cap

They were joined by Yusuf Isaacs (also known as Yusuf Asvat) in Laudium, who travelled there by train. They taped up the windows, and set timers and detonators. To this day, Tommy jokingly bemoans being relegated to a lookout, feeling slightly cheated of the danger and romance. By the time they got back to Johannesburg they were told that a news broadcast reported an almighty explosion in Pretoria and there had been no casualties. They were ecstatic!

In 1964, the second National High Command issued a moratorium on armed activity in order not to jeopardise the Rivonia Trial, where the trialists faced the possibility of the death penalty. In mid-June 1964, after the trial was concluded, the moratorium was lifted. On 14 June 1964, Kista's unit attacked the Fietas 11th Street Post Office.

Consequences

Over time and as the resistance escalated, conditions became harsher. The government passed laws that permitted 90-day detention without trial and made sabotage a capital offence. In practice, the police dealt cruelly with suspected operatives and resorted to torture to extract information. Indeed, several operatives were arrested, charged, sentenced and imprisoned.

Nelson Mandela had left the country in 1962 to mobilise support for armed resistance across Africa and other parts of the world. When he returned to the country, he was sought by the police. He was arrested, charged and sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

On 17 April 1963, the unit led by Reggie and comprising Indres and Shirish was caught red-handed when attempting to commit an act of sabotage on railway property in Riverlea. A police agent named Gammat Jardine had infiltrated the unit and betrayed them. The three were arrested at the site just past midnight. Isu and Abdulhay were arrested at home in the early hours of that morning.

Reggie and Shirish were severely assaulted at the site of arrest and Indres was shot in the shoulder. Later that day they were taken to the railway headquarters where they were interrogated and tortured with electric shocks.

All five were initially charged with sabotage. The trials later separated the three who were caught red-handed, and the two who were arrested at home. The trio were found guilty and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

Isu and Abdulhay were defended by Harold Wolpe, but charges against them were withdrawn due to lack of evidence.

However, they were immediately detained at Marshall Square in terms of the 90-day detention law, which had just come into effect. There they found Mosie Moola, Wolfie and Leon Levy, who had also been detained in terms of the new law.

On 11 July 1963, the police raided MK's secret headquarters, Liliesleaf Farm in Rivonia, and arrested the leadership of MK.

As a result, Harold Wolpe and Arthur Goldreich were also arrested and detained at Marshall Square. By that time Wolfie and Leon Levy had left the country on exit permits. While at Marshall Square, plans were made for them to escape.

After 78 days of detention, Isu was approached by Lieutenant van Wyk, who told him that the police were prepared to release him on condition that he would not press charges against the Special Branch for torturing him. He was compelled to give an answer on the spot. "I decided to agree to that condition, but thought that I would refer the matter to the organisation once I was released. I approached the organisation, which instructed me to press charges against the security forces, and I did so," he said. He was thus released on 7 August 1963.

Isu went into hiding as a result of the escape of Harold, Arthur, Abdulhay and Mosie on 11 August 1963.

Mandela was brought from prison to stand trial along with his comrades after the Rivonia arrests. At the Rivonia Trial of 1963-1964, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Ahmed Kathrada, Andrew Mlangeni, Elias Motsoaledi and Denis Goldberg received life sentences for conspiring to overthrow the South African government.

This was a very harsh blow to MK as its leadership in the country had been imprisoned in one fell swoop.

Wilton Mkwai, who escaped capture at Liliesleaf, then set up the second National High Command. This structure comprised Mkwai, David Kitson, Isu and Lionel Gay. Mac was the political commissar to the High Command, and John Matthews served on its technical committee. Between June and October 1964, all the members were arrested. They were put on trial in what became known as "Little Rivonia" and received harsh sentences. Wilton was sentenced to life imprisonment, while David, Isu, John and Mac received sentences of 20, 18, 15 and 12 years respectively. Lionel Gay had turned state witness. After this trial, MK and underground activity within the country slowed down considerably for a number of years.

Paul and Babla Saloojee were arrested on the same day as Isu. Paul was released and went into exile. Babla Saloojee

was killed and thrown out of the seventh floor of security police headquarters at Grays Building.

In the first few years of MK's existence, there were a number of instances of betrayal. Patrick Mthembu gave evidence for the state at the Rivonia Trial and was subsequently assassinated. Kholisile Mdwai was responsible for informing on Wilson Kayingo and Vuyisile Mini about their MK activities, along with Zinakile Mkaba, which earned them death sentences in 1964. Mdwai was also responsible for providing evidence that saw another comrade sentenced to 20 years in prison (Masondo 1986:22). Gammat Jardine, a police agent, was able to infiltrate a unit led by Reggie Vandeyar. His betrayal led to a ten-year spell in prison for Vandeyar and two of his comrades. It is said that Gammat was traced to Cape Town where he was assassinated, presumably by MK operatives.



Personal costs

Involvement in MK exacted a heavy toll on most of the main participants. Wilton, Mac, Isu, Reggie, Shirish and Indres landed up on Robben Island. Many went into exile, like Faker, Solly, and Abdulhay. Some managed to live in the country with their lips tightly sealed, such as Kista, Magan and Nanoo. Others were arrested again and spent more time in prison, like Shirish. In most cases, the families were supportive, but in others it led to divorce or alienation from their children.



A panel from Nelson Mandela: the Authorised Comic

People, events and songs associated with the

“Men of Dynamite”

The “Men of Dynamite” did not act alone. They had a network of close collaborators who provided legal support, medical assistance, finance, meals, cover, transport, storage space and meeting places. This was critical to their operations, and for their survival in the underground. There were dozens of such people, but a few stand out and are profiled here.

There were many significant events at the time. Some of these are recorded in Maniben Sita’s personal diary, while the escape from Marshall Square is described in some detail.

We also highlight two songs that were sung at the time. These then, are the people, events and songs associated with the “Men of Dynamite”.

People

Essop Jassat²⁹

Dr Essop Essak Jassat has over the years launched, served and guided numerous community and political organisations. Central to the objectives of all the organisations that he has been involved in was the provision of a dignified life for all, irrespective of religion, gender or race.

Essop is the second eldest of three siblings, who was born on 5 October 1932 in 11th St, Vrededorp, Johannesburg. Both his parents hail from India. His mother, Khadija Jassat (nee Haffajee), was born in Bardoli and his father, Essack Jassat, came from Takoli. His father was at various times a hawker and shopkeeper.

He matriculated from the Johannesburg Indian High School and was one of only 12 black students to be accepted by the Medical Faculty of the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). At the end of his first year of studies, Essop was informed that there was no place at any of the hospitals for him to continue with his studies. Guided by the advice of Molvi Cachalia, he did a two-year science degree before continuing with his medical studies, which he completed in 1960.

Essop credits his interest in struggle politics to his father and eldest brother. In 1947 he joined the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress and began to actively participate in the many campaigns and activities of the organisation. He was intelligent, principled and hard working, so it came as no surprise that he was elected as the chairman of the TIYC

shortly after having joined. Essop was also elected as an executive member of the Transvaal Indian Congress.

In 1953, Essop and Ahmed “Kathy” Kathrada represented the TIYC at an ANC Youth League conference that was held in Uitenhage. At the time, Indians required a permit to cross provincial boundaries. When they were stopped at a roadblock, Kathy told Essop to claim that he was Malay, which the police accepted. Kathy was arrested, tried and sentenced to three months imprisonment, suspended for two years.



Essop Jassat at Wits Medical School

1955 proved to be a seminal year for the 23-year-old. At the Congress of the People, Essop had the great privilege of introducing the education clause to the assembled delegates. That year, he also received the first of two successive five-year banning orders.

In 1964 Essop was charged and sentenced for failing to comply with the conditions of his banning order. George Bizos represented Essop at his appeal and argued that he inadvertently failed to report to the police on a particular day because he was responding to a medical emergency. He lost the appeal and Essop had to serve 10 days of a two year suspended sentence.

As chair of the Student Liberal Organisation at Wits, Essop came into contact with Bob Hepple. As the regime became more draconian, Bob recruited Essop into an underground unit, which was tasked with gathering intelligence and scouting potential sabotage targets. The unit was led by Bob and consisted of Essop, Sydney Shell and Katuchewitz.

MK units in the Johannesburg area used a spare room attached to his new surgery to store stocks of dynamite, gelignite, fuses and other material used in sabotage operations. Even though Essop suspected that his brother Abdulhay and other operatives were using his premises, he never probed in any way. When Essop was detained under the 90-day detention law, the Special Branch confirmed his suspicion.

Essop was on call to the underground as a medical doctor. He recalled a telephone call, in the early hours of a morning, requesting that he urgently go to Yeoville to treat two burn victims. On entering the backyard rooms he saw two

blackened and soot-covered individuals. As he cleaned their faces he immediately recognised Mac Maharaj and Ameen "Doha" Cajee. Upon closer examination of the room, he realised that the "chaps were trying to dry gunpowder on a stove, which then exploded". Fortunately neither had suffered burns that required hospitalisation.

Kathy asked him to go a few times to Liliesleaf Farm in Rivonia to treat members of the National High Command of MK. The last time he went there was on a Saturday in order to assess Govan Mbeki who was suffering from a debilitating eye problem. Essop was in the process of arranging for a sympathetic ophthalmologist to examine and treat the senior ANC leader. Unfortunately that never happened. The Thursday after Essop's visit, Liliesleaf Farm was raided and the leadership was arrested.

Due to the outlawing of organisations as well as the imprisonment, exile and banning of friends and comrades political activities had been dampened during the late 1960s and the 1970s. It was during this period that Essop worked on launching and strengthening numerous community organisations, in particular, the Johannesburg Indian Social Welfare Association (JISWA), later renamed Johannesburg Institute for Social Services (JISS).

To counter the resurgence of community mobilisation after the 1976 Soweto uprising the apartheid government redoubled its efforts to co-opt pliable members of the oppressed. One such attempt was the creation of the South African Indian Council. In 1981, the Transvaal Anti-SAIC Committee was formed to oppose the elections of this toothless body and Essop was elected chairperson.



Speaking at an Anti-SAIC meeting, Lenasia, 1982

With the resurgence of Congress politics in the 1980s it was decided to revive the TIC on 1 May 1983. Essop was a strong advocate of this notion and was elected as the president of the TIC. He also became a patron of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983 and was detained with fellow UDF leaders in 1984.

In December 1984, Essop and 15 others, including UDF co-presidents Albertina Sisulu and Archie Gumede, were charged with treason. Due to "insufficient and unconvincing evidence", charges against 12 of the 16 accused were withdrawn in December 1985.



Essop Jassat, Reggie Vandeyar and Ramlal Bhoolia at CODESA

Essop was a TIC representative at the CODESA negotiations. In 1994 he was elected as a Member of Parliament and served in this position until 2004.

Today Essop has returned to his surgery on Bree Street in Fordsburg and is semi-retired.

On 25 May 1964, Essop married Shireen Patel and they have a son, Aadil, and two daughters, Yumna and Zaheera.

Ahmed Essop "Quarter" Khota³⁰



Ahmed Essop "Quarter" Khota, who was born on 5 July 1928, deserves credit for selflessly supporting the liberation struggle over an extended period of time. His friends affectionately knew him as "Quarter", a name given to him by Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu. It was a play on his surname and a reference to his slight physique since many beverages at the time were sold in a "¼ pint".

During the 1950s, he was a member of the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress and part of the corps of activists that contributed to the major campaigns of that decade. He assisted in fundraising for the Congress movement during that time.

The contributions that Quarter is best remembered for revolves around his business, New Reef Wholesalers (Pty) Ltd, that was located on 27(c) Market Street, Ferreirastown, Johannesburg. He was involved in the business since its inception in 1953 but assumed effective management of the business from his father-in-law in the mid-1960s, until it was sold in 1976.

Since his shop was centrally located on Market Street, activists would not hesitate in using his business as a drop-off or collection point. On the strength of a note he received from Mosie Moola, who was a detainee at Marshall Square Police Station in 1964, he

supplied a pair of shoes to a police officer as an inducement to effect the escape of Mosie, Abdulhay, Wolpe and Goldreich. Shirish Nanabhai recalls that, "Every child whose family was part of the struggle received their school clothes [free of charge] from Quarter's shop."

Joe Matthews (2009:53), a veteran of the ANC and SACP, described the role that Indian business owners in Johannesburg and Durban played in supporting the liberation movement during the 1950s. He mentioned Quarter thus: "In Johannesburg, to cite another example, you had New Reef Wholesalers and Ahmed Khota (Quarter) would make available to us goods from his shop."

Dasu Joseph (interview, 8/1/2003) reports that he was recruited by Wolfie Kodesh into an underground unit that included Quarter and Suliman "Babla" Saloojee. He recalls an incident when he and Quarter were putting up posters to announce the launch of MK:

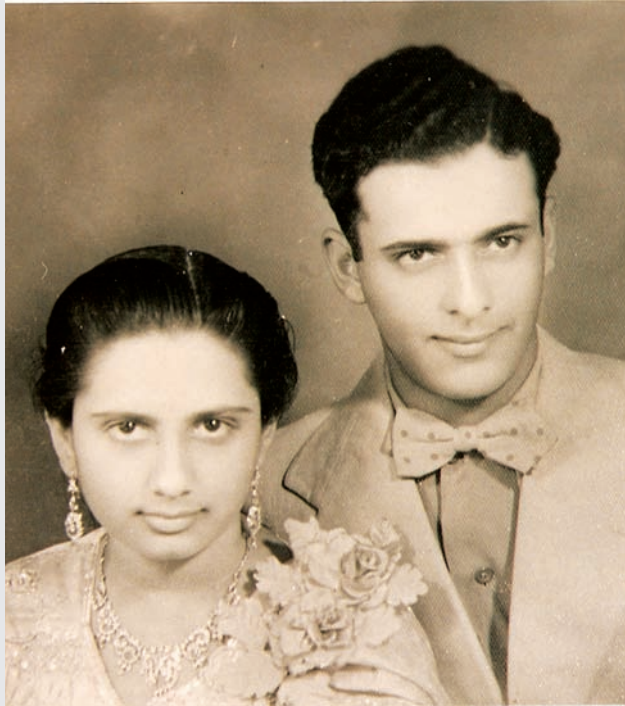
We went round Johannesburg and we were allocated an area whereby we were asked to stick up these posters. It was after we had been around Market Street and Diagonal Street, we were working down towards the pass offices in Avenue Road and the pass office was very, very dark and it was a very quiet evening. We went along to the walls of the pass offices that were facing the front and we began putting up these posters, Quarter stuck the glue onto the wall and I had the poster and spread it on. It was after we had completed that task and been around all over that we later discovered that when it was announced the following morning, we had put the posters up that night, that bombs went off simultaneously at the Fordsburg Post Office, the Johannesburg Pass Office where we had put

up the poster, the Portuguese Embassy, they all went up at the same time and a number of other buildings blew up. It was then that we learned that Ahmed Quarter and I would have been the first victims for MK because a bomb was planted right where we put up the posters and the guys who put it up there were watching us at the time and they couldn't signal to us that they had planted a bomb there.

Quarter also helped to store radio broadcast equipment for an attempted, but unsuccessful, broadcast by Wilton Mkwayi, who headed the Second National High Command of MK in 1964. He was detained for a short while at Rosebank Police Station during the 1960s in terms of security legislation.

Quarter was well known for an unsurpassed sense of humour, conviviality and generosity. He loved playing pranks on people who took themselves too seriously and possessed the gift for telling stories. Quarter's zest for life was also evident in his community work – raising funds for bursaries, initiating community projects, acting as go-between in numerous business and domestic conflicts and always providing a leg-up to business start-ups and families in need. The large and varied groups of people who came to pay their respects when he passed away on 17 June 2009 was testimony to his multi-faceted character.

Quarter is survived by his wife Ayesha, two sons Mohammed and Yahya, two daughters Reihana and Nafissa, his nephew and niece Mohammed and Yumna, whom he raised as his own from infancy, and 17 grandchildren.



Quarter and his wife Ayesha



At his 70th birthday party in 1998 with Goolam Pahad and Kathy; grand daughters Mahdiya Coovadia & Azminah Mayet

Moosa “Mosie”

Moolla³¹



Mosie as a young child

Moosa “Mosie” Moolla – revolutionary, leader and democrat – has over the years paid a heavy price for his beliefs and principles. During the course of his life he was cruelly separated from his children, detained on numerous occasions, faced the prospect of spending many years behind bars and spent 28 years in exile.

Mosie was born in the small western Transvaal town of Christiana on 12 June 1934 where his father ran a successful import-export business. The family was forced to relocate to Bloemhof, a nearby town, following the Great Depression of the 1930s. Mosie did his primary schooling in Bloemhof. Since there were no high schools catering for blacks, Mosie was forced to move to Johannesburg in 1949 to pursue his secondary education.

The exciting developments in national and international politics during this period sparked Mosie’s curiosity in current affairs. He recalls specifically the 1946-47 Passive Resistance Campaign against the Ghetto Act, India’s march to independence and the Indonesian struggle for freedom.

Boarding with a Congress stalwart, Mrs Ouma Bhayat, and surrounded by TIC activists such as Dr Vallabh Jaga, Dr Zainab Asvat and Dr Abdulhaq Patel, Mosie was recruited

into the newly launched TIYC. The very first campaign he actively participated in was the 1950 May Day strike in protest of the Suppression of Communism Act.

During this period the Picasso Club was formed for the purposes of writing political slogans on public walls. Among its members were Mosie, Ahmed Kathrada, Babla Saloojee, Faried Adams and Solly Esakjee. Mosie remembers one particular slogan painted on the all-white Johannesburg Public Library: "WE BLACK FOLKS WANT TO READ". This was removed by the authorities the next day, only to be replaced a short while later with "WE BLACK FOLKS AIN'T READING YET". The Star newspaper carried the story and commented on the sloganeers' sense of humour.

Actively participating in the TIYC by silk-screening and putting up posters, writing and distributing leaflets, Mosie quickly moved up the ranks of the youth movement. In a short space of time he was elected to the organisation's executive committee and then as the joint honorary secretary and finally as chairman, a position he held for nearly a decade.

In his matriculation year, 1952, Mosie participated in the Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws and was imprisoned for close onto a month. Due to his detention, Mosie was expelled and could not write his matric exams.

At the beginning of the campaign for the Congress of the People (COP), the Congress movement requested Mosie to leave his administrative job in a manufacturing company in order to serve full time on the Secretariat of the National Action Council of the COP.

Most members of the Secretariat such as Walter Sisulu, Joe Slovo, Rusty Bernstein and Yusuf Cachalia were banned under



Molvi Cachalia with nineteen resisters from the Transvaal, March 1947

the Suppression of Communism Act. It therefore became Mosie's major responsibility to ensure that all decisions of the Secretariat were effectively conveyed to all provincial and regional committees of the National Action Council.

He served in this capacity until the culmination of the COP campaign with the adoption of the Freedom Charter in Kliptown on 25 and 26 June 1955. Mosie was later elected onto the executive of the TIC and also served as its full-time organiser.

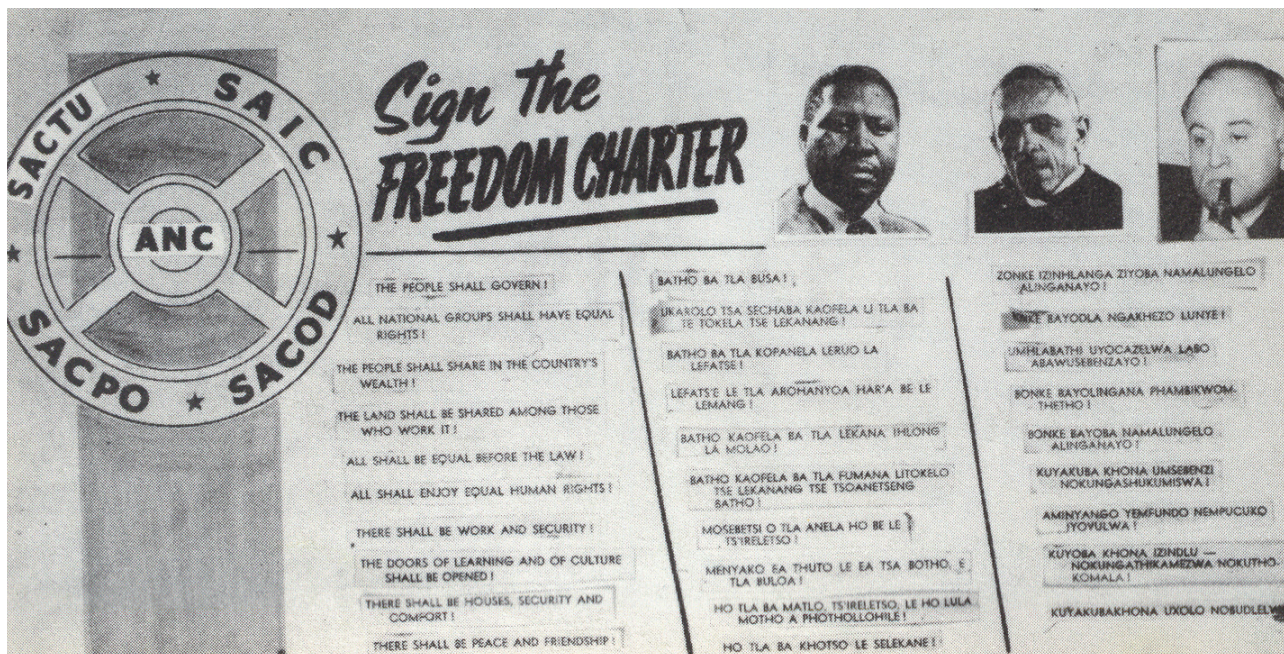
During December 1956 Mosie, along with 155 others, was arrested on the charge of high treason. He observed, "The accused represented virtually every strata of South African life – professionals, unskilled workers, peasants, atheists, the religious, artists, white, black, coloured and Indian." The Treason Trial exacted a heavy price on all; lives were disrupted, the daily burden of travel to the Special High Court in Pretoria and, tragically, in some instances the breaking up of family life.

He also recalls the support and acts of solidarity with the accused. Money for the bail was raised within hours. The women provided two meals everyday for five years, for all the accused, especially Mrs Thayanagie Pillay and Dr Zainab Asvat. There were crowds of supporters daily outside the court.

Mosie further emphasised that the state inadvertently brought together leaders such as Chief Luthuli, Professor ZK Matthews and Nelson Mandela and had created a forum for conferencing and robust political debate. He fondly remembers Vuyisile Mini's bass baritone when raised in song. Mini composed freedom songs, and was executed in November 1964 by the apartheid government.

Mosie was one of thirty – including Nelson Mandela, Helen Joseph, Ahmed Kathrada and Walter Sisulu – to see through the entire trial until 1961. Despite the prosecutors believing that they had a strong chance of conviction, they were all acquitted in March 1961, after being on trial for five years.

On the 10 May 1963 Mosie was amongst the first to be detained under the newly promulgated 90-day detention law. He was held in solitary confinement at Marshall Square Police Station. He later escaped from the police station along with Abdulhay Jassat, Harold Wolpe and Arthur Goldreich. Mosie then, illegally left the country, and made his way to Dar es Salaam, which housed the exiled leadership of the ANC.

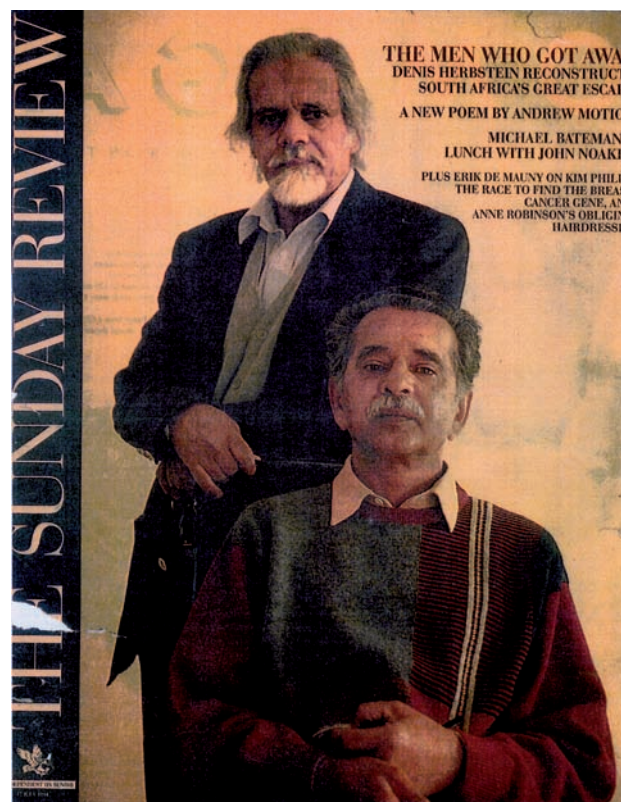


The Freedom Charter was adopted at the Congress of the People in Kliptown, June 1955

In 1964 Mosie joined Umkhonto we Sizwe and in 1965 was sent for a year to Odessa in the then Soviet Union for military training. His was the second unit to be sent to Odessa and his group included Josiah Jele (who served on the ANC's NEC), Peter Tladi and Jacqueline Molefe who, after 1994, became a major general in the SANDF. In 1966, after Odessa, Mosie went to Moscow for a six-month stint in intelligence training. On his return to Dar es Salaam, he continued his work within the ANC's Department of Publicity and Information as editor of *Spotlight on South Africa*.

From the time of his escape in 1963 until 1968 the apartheid state denied Mosie's wife Zubeida, and their children, Tasneem and Azaad, passports. Finally in 1968, they were granted passports and travelled by train to Lusaka, Zambia. Mosie joined them for a few days at Tunduma, at the Tanzania-Zambia border. This was the first time that Mosie saw his son, who was born two months after he fled the country. Azaad was now five years old, and his daughter, Tasneem was six years old. After the brief reunion Mosie returned to Dar es Salaam and Zubeida to Lusaka with the children. Zubeida, could not obtain a work permit in Zambia, was forced to send the children back to South Africa to live with her parents because she could not support them. This separation was very painful for all of them.

In 1969 Mosie was deployed to Bombay to work amongst South African students studying in India. The ANC's Asian mission was located in New Delhi with Mendi Msimang as its chief representative and Molvi Cachalia as the deputy chief representative. In 1971 Molvi Cachalia retired and Mosie was appointed in his place. In 1972 Mendi was transferred to Tanzania and Mosie took over as chief representative.



The story of Mosie's escape with Abdulhay Jassat, Harold Wolpe and Arthur Goldreich was featured in the Sunday Review, Sunday Independent in 1994

In 1978, Mosie was sent to head the ANC's Egypt and Middle East mission. He was also concurrently the ANC representative to the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO). In 1982 he was reposted to New Delhi. In November 1989 he was deployed as the ANC representative to the World Peace Council and had to relocate to Helsinki, Finland.

In December 1990, after 28 years in exile, Mosie returned to South Africa. He was employed by the ANC's Department of International Affairs based in Shell House. In 1991 he was



Photo taken in Tunduma, at the Tanzania and Zambia border: L-R: Alibhai, a friend, Zubeida, Mosie and their children Tasneem and Azad, 1968

elected as secretary of the TIC and served as a member of the TIC/NIC delegation to CODESA.

In 1995, President Mandela appointed Mosie as the South African ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran. He held the post until 1999. From June 2000 until 2004 Mosie was appointed as high commissioner to Pakistan.



Mosie addressing the International Youth Conference Against Apartheid, New Delhi, India, January 1987

Zubeida (nee Saloojee), Mosie's wife and life-long partner passed away on 3 April 2008. They were married for close to 47 years. Besides Tasneem and Azaad, he has another son, Afzal, who was born in New Delhi, India in 1972. Nelson Mandela gave his daughter, Tasneem her middle name Nobandla, which means "she of the masses".

Peter Moonsammy³²



Peter Moonsammy was born on 25 March 1928 in Market St, Johannesburg, the elder brother of Paul and Dasu Joseph. He went to work as a bellboy at the age of fourteen to help support a family of eleven siblings after his father died.

The Joseph brothers were intimately involved in resistance politics dating back to the 1940s in the Young Communist League, the Communist Party of South

Africa and the Transvaal Indian Congress. They were part of many of the major campaigns of the late 1940s and 1950s.

During the 1960s, the Joseph brothers played critical roles during that period. Paul was closely tied to the underground and led one of four MK structures operating in the Fordsburg area. Dasu (Dasu Joseph interview, 8/1/2003) reports that Wolfie Kodesh recruited him, Ahmed Essop "Quarter" Khota and Suliman "Babla" Saloojee into an underground unit. However, the unit was not directly involved in sabotage as such. Dasu also worked very closely with Mac Maharaj on the propaganda and printing side.

It is also clear that Peter was an important part of the support network for MK cadres operating at the time. When Abdulhay Jassat and Mosie Moolla escaped from Marshall Square, they happened to come across Peter, who had just returned from work in the early hours of the morning. He drove them to a safe house. He also hid Walter Sisulu at his home for three weeks during that time.

Much later, Kista Moonsamy reported that Peter came to see him when he was in hiding in 1964 in the then eastern Transvaal to inform him that it was safe for him to surface.

During the dark and difficult days of apartheid, there was constant contact between the Moonsammy and Mandela families, as described by Hassen Lorgat (2007:7-8) in his obituary to Peter:

... Madiba writes in his letter to the [Moonsammy] family from Robben Island (4 June 1985: "I wonder whether Zindzi ever noticed my embarrassment last year when she told me in passing that you and Doreen had, for several years now, looked after her as her own parents, often driving all the way to Soweto. ...

She had taken it for granted that I knew all about this and, when asked for particulars, she literally glowed with pure joy, as she gave me chapter and verse. ...

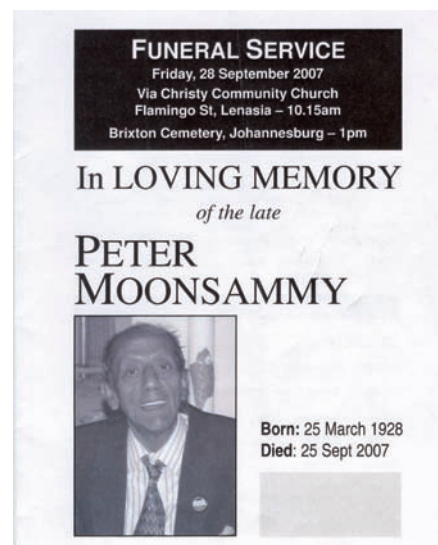
Madiba continues to write that "I often talked of your mother's ever cheerfulness and wonderful sense of humour, about Darley and Pakiry, Violet and Letchmee. ... I often remembered your smiling face as we met in Avenue Road or elsewhere in the City. But the grim walls of prison kept me ignorant of your trips to Soweto.

The chance remark by Zindzi completely changed the picture; it gave me an entirely different image of you and Doreen and I was seized by an acute sense of guilt when I became aware of just how greatly indebted we are to you. I sincerely look forward to seeing you and Doreen when I hope to embrace you most warmly for the good things you have done."

During the 1980s, Peter was a staunch supporter of the Transvaal Indian Congress and United Democratic Front. After the ANC was unbanned, he joined the Lenasia branch and actively supported its activities.

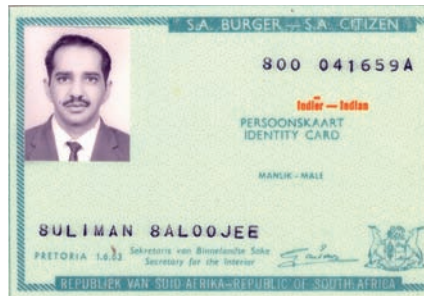
Peter died on 25 September 2007 at the age of 79 after few months' illness. In his obituary, Hassen Lorgat (2007:6) said: "When we talk of Peter we will not talk of paper certificates or qualifications but a man who brought out the true humanity and virtues of the working person and the oppressed in practice. He lived the values of love, modesty, tolerance, caring and sharing, and solidarity. ... He was a man without malice and characterised by a deep desire to serve others and his community."

He is survived by his wife Doreen, his children Kalie, Tony, Roshnie, Soobs, Rookie and Monty and grandchildren Anjuli, Kamugelo Naidoo, Mellisa, Ian, Deverani, Primithi, Anjeni, Desigan, Joshua, Simeon, Adrienne and Hannah.



Funeral Service Programme

Suliman “Babla” Saloojee³³



Suliman “Babla” Saloojee’s Identity Card

When comrades and friends of Suliman “Babla” Saloojee remember him, they usually reminisce about his humour, daring and cheeky insouciance towards the apartheid authorities; and their voices strain with a longing and sadness for a dearly missed comrade.

Babla was born on 5 February 1931 in the small town of Belfast in the then eastern Transvaal (now Mpumalanga). Like many young children of that time he was compelled to leave home in order to gain a basic education.

Babla was a well-known figure in TIC and TIYC circles. During the 1950s, he was a member of the Picasso Club, along with Ahmed Kathrada, Mosie Moolla, Abdulhay Jassat and Farid Adam, which spent many nights painting political slogans and putting up posters. He also participated in the major campaigns of the day such as the Defiance Campaign

Although he worked as a legal clerk, he often presented himself as a qualified lawyer when his comrades were in trouble with the police. He was able to quickly trace the whereabouts of detainees, arrange legal assistance and arrange for essential provisions.

He was known to have assisted in smuggling a number of people out of the country. He assisted his close friends Abdulhay and Mosie in successfully leaving the country despite a massive manhunt for the two escaped detainees.

Babla was detained on the night of his engagement to Rookie Adam in 1961. In February 1964 he was served with a banning order. On 6 July 1964 Babla, along with Ahmed Essop "Quarter" Khota, was arrested and taken to Marshall Square. His wife, Rookie who he married on 1 July 1962, recalls that the last time she saw him he had a bandage on his head. When she tried to inquire as to what happened the visit was cut short.

It is widely believed that on 9 September 1964 he was severely tortured, killed and thrown out of the seventh floor window. (a height of 20m) of Gray's Building, the Special Branch headquarters in Johannesburg. He was the fourth person to die in police custody. The inquest found that the cause of death was unknown, but to this day the suspicion lingers that he was murdered. He was 32 years old.

The most emotive and heartfelt tribute to Babla was written by his close friend Ahmed Kathrada:

Suliman Saloojee, my dearest friend Babla, was dead, killed by the police. This most gentle of men, this inveterate prankster, my comrade and source of strength, had been picked up under the ninety-day detention law, brutally interrogated and tortured to death - by the



Babla and Rookie Saloojee

sadistic Rooi Rus Swanepoel - then flung from a window on the seventh floor of Gray's Building, Johannesburg headquarters of the security police, on Wednesday 9 September 1964.

Not surprisingly, the so-called inquest accepted the police version that Babla had committed suicide by jumping to his death. I have never doubted, however, that he died under interrogation, and that his body was then thrown out of the window... The magistrate found that 'nothing in the evidence suggested that Saloojee had been assaulted or that methods of interrogating him were in any way irregular. He found that no one was to blame for his death. (Kathrada 2004: 207)



Babla's funeral, September 1964

Events

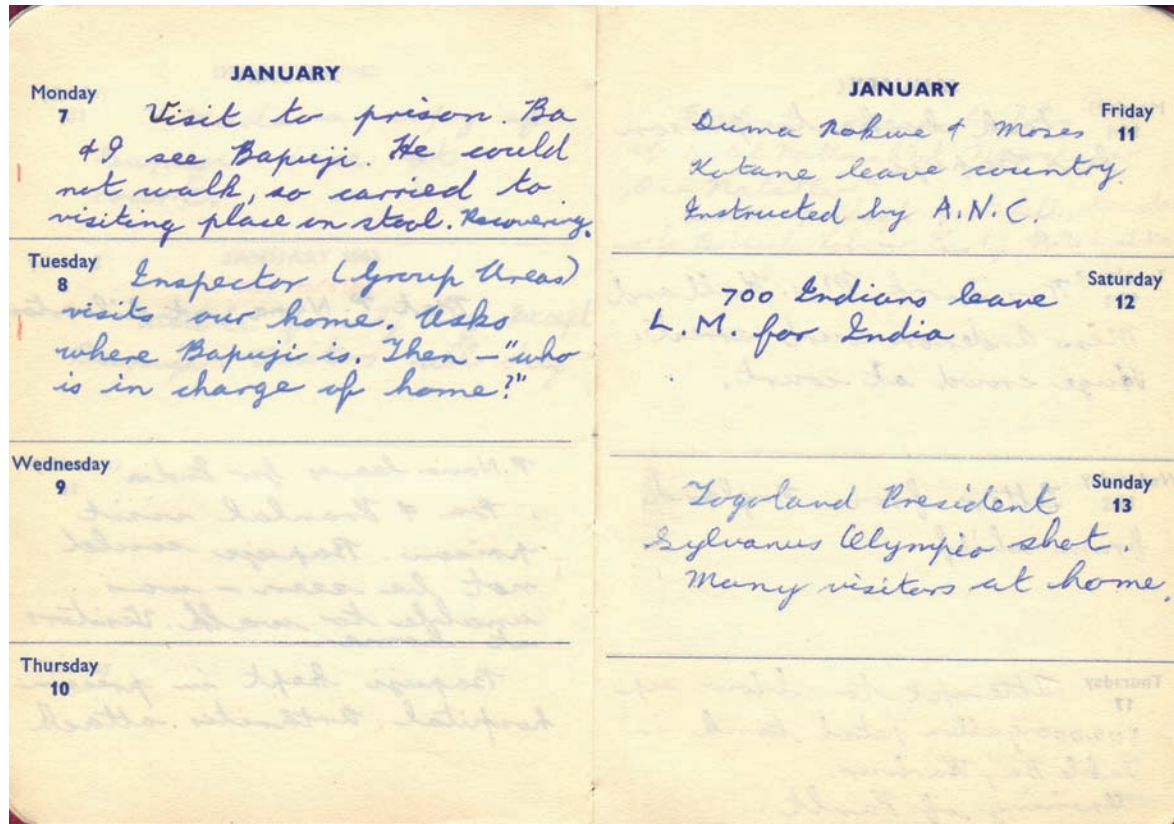
Maniben's diary³⁴

Nana Sita was a leader of the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) in the 1950s. On 26 June 1952, he and Walter Sisulu were the joint leaders of the first batch of defiers who went into Boksburg location without permits and were sentenced. He was persecuted by the apartheid regime in the early 1960s for refusing to move from his home and business in Hercules – a suburb of Pretoria that was declared white in terms of the Group Areas Act – to the newly established township of Laudium.

Indeed, Abdulhay Jassat, Yusuf Isaacs and Tommy Vassen bombed the house allocated to Nana Sita on Jewel St as a protest against the notorious legislation and to prolong his stay in Hercules. Nana Sita's daughter Maniben recalls that Solly Nathie – an activist of the TIC – phoned her either on the day before or on the day of the bombing asking about the address of the house allocated to her father. Over the years, she remained convinced that he was directly involved in the attack, which was not the case.

Maniben was born on 24 December 1926. She lived with her father during those difficult days and was very politically aware and active. In order to protect four valuable documents from the constant police raids that they faced, Maniben decided to sew a cushion containing a booklet entitled "I accuse! Speeches to Court by Nelson Mandela", a leaflet entitled "The South African Group Areas Act and Mr Nana Sita", a booklet entitled "South Africa's Treason Trial" and a copy of her 1963 diary.

In 2008, Maniben decided to give Nelson Mandela a gift for his 90th birthday. She thought of the cushion and remembered that it contained his speech at the dock. Somehow, she forgot that it also contained her diary, where she recorded the major political issues of the day. When the gift was received, it was opened and the documents were retrieved and now form part of the Maniben Sita collection at the archives of the Nelson Mandela Foundation.



Maniben's diary: "Bapuji" is Gujarati for father. She is referring to Nana Sita who is in jail

Longest night³⁵

Indres Naidoo, who was arrested with Reggie Vandeyar and Shirish Nanabhai, describes the night of their arrest on 17 April 1963. A police informer named Gammat Jardine betrayed them. Indres relates their experience in 1986, 23 years after the event occurred.

When Reggie got back into the unit a man approached him in his house and offered to sell him a box of dynamite.

At that stage it was very difficult get hold of the dynamite and in every region an instruction was given to try and find dynamite. Reggie of course naturally told this man that he is not interested, but informed the unit. The region was informed and promised to investigate this man whose name is Gammat Jardien. After three months of investigation they found that Gammat Jardien stayed in Booyens, was a petty crook with tremendous knowledge in the use of dynamite. The region thought not only should we buy the dynamite from him but we also try to recruit him. Reggie talked to him

and found him a very willing person and was keen to join MK. He was then recruited and introduced to me and Shirish.



Press cutting on Gammat Jardine

We had a number of political discussions with him and also pointed out frankly to him that as a MK we were very naïve in the use of explosives. He then promised to teach us and we later went out for experiments.

I remember one time going to a farm about 15km north of T.J. Gammat Jardien merely took out the dynamite, stuck it onto a tree and lit it. It felled a tree. We were impressed with how he felled that tree. He then showed us how to go about it. Then 1963 came along. Gammat Jardien had shown us a very good target near a Coloured township called Riverlea. We went over to the target and observed it and reported to the region. The region fully agreed that it should be our next target and decided that we should go on the next job on the 16th April 1963. Everything was planned but for some strange reason that I can't recall, at the last minute the region decided that we should postpone it for the next day.

Gammat came on the agreed time with his car and the dynamite and we informed him of the postponement. Gammat seemed very anxious and disappointed and tried to persuade us to tackle the job as planned. We explained that when the region takes a decision it is final. He then persuaded us to go and check the area and the target again. We got to the scene, everything was planned, where we'd stop, how we were going to move, etc we then observed the target again.

After our reconnaissance, on our return as we were coming down to Bree Street we heard a knock in the car. We stopped and thought that it could be a serious problem as we needed a car for the job the following day. I walked home while Gammat took the other two comrades home, (it was on his

route) in his broken down car. The following day, the 17th April we prepared ourselves to go on the job. Shirish and I attended a meeting earlier that evening and from the meeting we went to Doornfontein. I put on jeans, a black jersey and gloves. We left home at about eleven in the evening and I remember my mother asking where I was going to that time of the night.



The car used to drive to the Riverlea Station

We went to where Reggie was working as a waiter and he immediately informed us that he was not happy with the behaviour of Gammat Jardien. We were very surprised that he could give us the assurance that the car would be fixed. And indeed as we were talking he arrived with the car fixed as promised. He told us he took the car in the early morning and told them that he wanted it before five and got it. All three

of us got into a car and drove to Reggie's home. Reggie and myself got off and went into the house. Reggie gave me a rod to keep and told me with the first false move Gammat make I must hit him very hard. At that time Reggie was a very big guy, he weighed almost 200lbs, not fat, this was all muscle. We then agreed that if anything happened, Reggie would be the guy to lead the attack on him. We returned to the car and moved towards Riverlea. We parked the car as planned and got out. Shirish and I went to the signal post, Gammat went to the tool shed and Reggie stood guard approximately 10-15 metres away. Suddenly there was a strange noise, a long hooters sound. We all looked up. The sound died and yet there was no car in sight. The main road was about 150 metres away from where we were and no one could see a car passing. Nevertheless we wrote it off as some passing car. We then decided to go on with the job and as I was fixing the dynamite to the signal post we noticed that Gammat had made a little fire near the tool shed. I shouted at him, asking him what the hell he was doing. Reggie on the other hand became impatient and shouted at me to light "bloody" fuse. I lit the fuse; as I lit it we heard a police whistle. Reggie shouted, telling us to run for our lives. We ran, I jumped a fence of more than one metre in my attempt to get away.

We ran to where Reggie was and the three of us, noticing that Gammat Jardien was not around, searched for him but Gammat had disappeared. As we were approaching the car the whole place lit up. It was like broad daylight and the last thing we heard was "stop, put up your hands." All of us stopped simultaneously. A revolver went off and my hand was hit. I did not realise that I was shot. It was only later when I saw blood that I realised I was shot. We were surrounded by dozens of policeman wearing railway balaclavas.



The toolshed

It was early April and it was bitterly cold. We were asked what we were doing there at that time of the night. All of us, without hesitation, replied we'd come with Gammat Jardien. They asked us where Gammat Jardien was and we told them that his sister lived in Riverlea and he had gone to her as we were having a problem with our car. A cop was sent to look for Gammat but came back within a minute saying there was no Gammat. At that point the explosion went off. It went off with a tremendous bang and Swanepoel shouted *"Ahah, Mandela se soldate"* (Ahah, Mandela's soldiers).

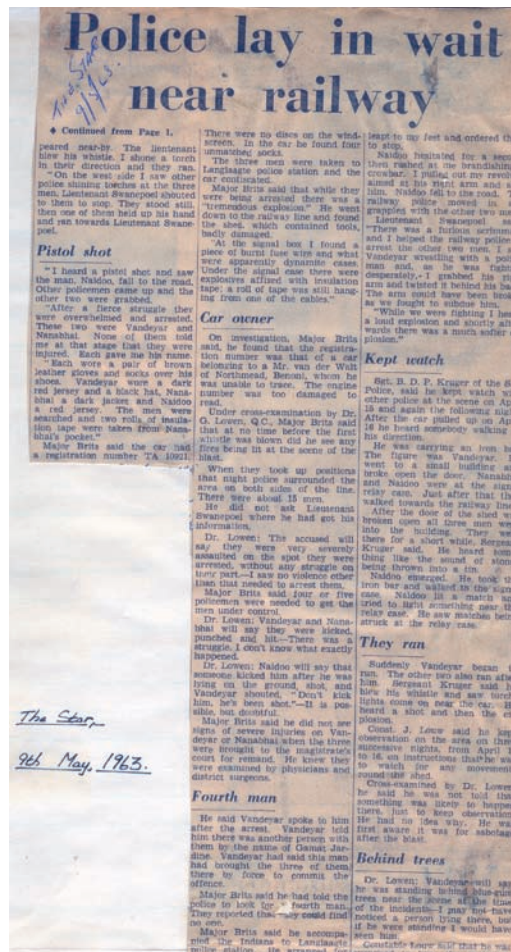
They then stuck into us. I was first in line and they hit me down. Reggie tried to protest asking them if they could not see that I'd been shot. *"Hey koelie jy is harde bek ne?"* with that they brought him down. They then worked on him breaking a couple of his ribs. We were bundled into cars

and taken to the police station. At the police station my hand became swollen. It felt as if the whole arm from the shoulder was collapsing on me. I pleaded for a doctor or to be taken to the hospital, but they refused, telling me "Hey you gonna die here'." The policeman in charge later made a call (presumably consulting some senior) and when he came back said *"Vat die koelie hospital toe"*. I was taken by about four policemen who literally picked me up and threw me in to a pick-up van. At Coronationville Hospital the doctor, who was a very nice guy, had to tear my clothing off and then he saw the bullet sticking out just next to the shoulder blade. The bullet entered through my arm and passed on to between the shoulder blades where it got stuck. All the doctor did was to pull it out using a tweezer. He ordered that I be admitted but the cops refused. He then asked them to sign the document stating that they were taking full responsibility because as far as he was concerned I was to be hospitalised. He, I want to emphasise, was very pleasant. He gave me some painkillers, which they took away later.

When we returned to the police station Reggie and Shirish were not there. The next I heard was their screams. I heard them pleading: "Please help, leave me. I don't know anything." I realised that these chaps were being beaten up and I thought to myself: "My God, I'm next." When Shirish come out of that room, I couldn't recognise him his face was battered. He couldn't even put his glasses on. Reggie could hardly walk. They put us all into separate cars and I was taken home. When we got to Doornfontein the cops just started banging the door. My two brothers, two sisters and my mother were shocked when they saw me. I was in very bad shape and my family demanded an explanation. They started their search, cutting open pillows and mattresses.

They broke the tiles of the fireplace looking for arms and ammunition. On finding the book I earlier referred to they remarked "Oh, so you are reading guerrilla warfare." They also found lots of letters. Mac Maharaj was staying at my place and ran a newspaper called *Parade*. In fact it was one of our papers. Mac was the editor and the sole journalist. They went

through all those letters, which included letters to SANROC and other sporting organisations and took them away. During all this my family became very agitated and refused to let the cops to sit down. I was taken back to Marshall Square, locked in a cell all by myself, with no blankets and I was in terrible pain. It was the longest night in my life.



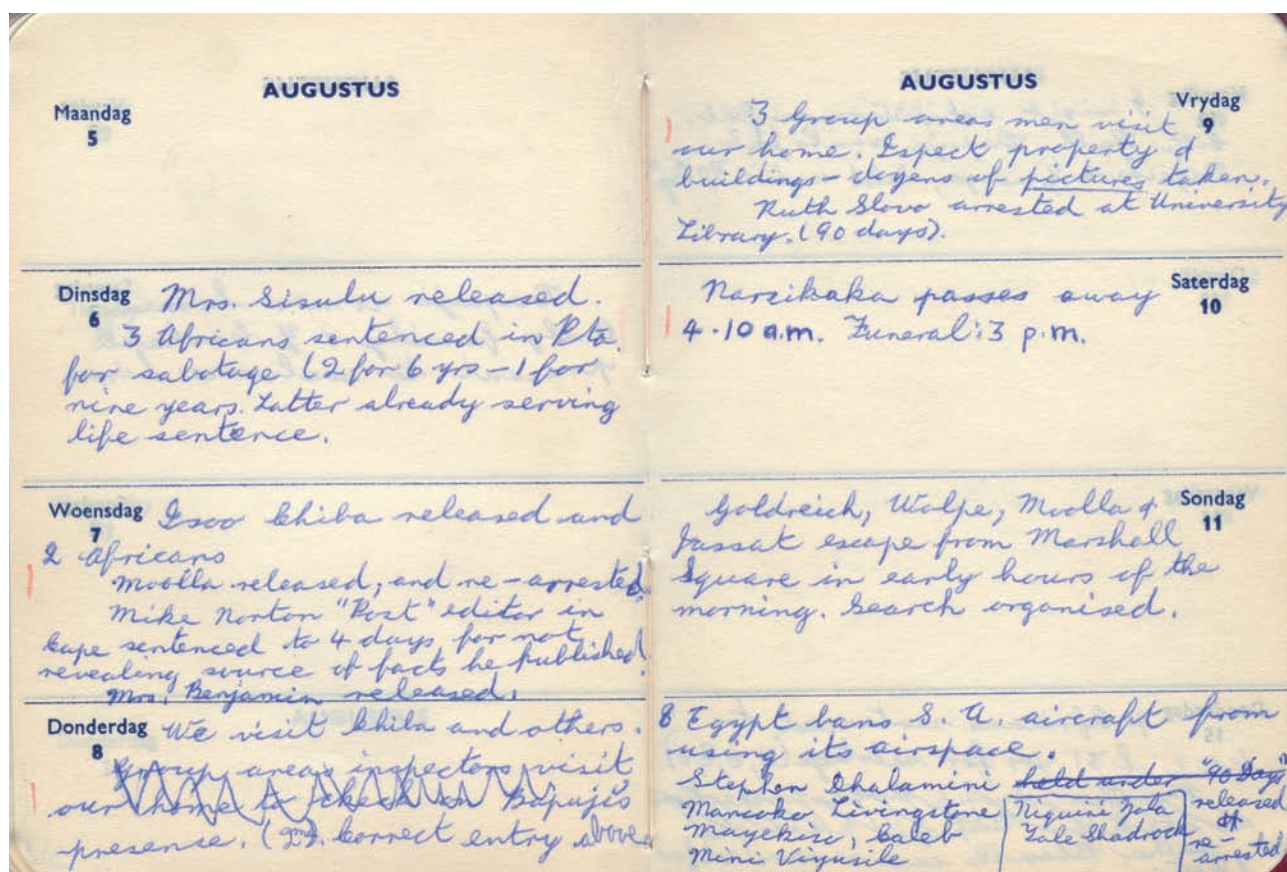
Press cuttings of the arrest

Escape from Marshall Square³⁶

On the morning of 11 August 1963 at about 2am, four men, friends and comrades, found themselves reluctantly compelled to part ways. Having just escaped from the infamous Marshall Square police station in central Johannesburg they were aware that the security establishment would launch a massive

manhunt for them. What they were unaware of was the inspiration and legend their escape would trigger in the years to come.

Standing in front of the Johannesburg Public Library on Market Street, Arthur Goldreich and Harold Wolpe chose to go north to Hillbrow while Abdulhay Jassat and Moosa "Mosie" Moolla went west towards Fordsburg.



On 11 August Maniben Sita notes the escape in her diary



Marshall Square

A few months before, Abdulhay Jassat and Laloo “Isu” Chiba were arrested on suspicion of sabotage and were severely tortured. When the state’s case of sabotage against them collapsed, they were transferred to Marshall Square under the 90-day detention law.

Arthur Goldreich and his wife Hazel were the owners of the Liliesleaf Farm in Rivonia, where MK had its secret headquarters. During the raid on Rivonia on 11 July 1963, police arrested Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Rusty Bernstein, Ahmed Kathrada, Bob Hepple, Arthur Goldreich and his wife Hazel. They also arrested all the farm labourers and domestic workers.

Harold Wolpe had handled the purchase of Liliesleaf Farm and had a copy of disciplinary procedures for MK cadres in his handwriting.

Mosie Moolla was amongst the first 90-day detainees at Marshall Square. A leader and high profile activist in the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress (TIYC) the police suspected that he had knowledge of the sabotage and bombings that had taken place in the Fordsburg area.

The three Indians, Abdulhay, Mosie and Isu, were kept in isolation cells while Goldreich and Wolpe were incarcerated in the white section, which was separated by bars from the Indian section. They were able to communicate when sympathetic warders looked the other way. They began discussing the idea of escape.

At first the detainees tried to file through the bars of the prison. AnnMarie Wolpe, wife of Harold, smuggled in over 20 hacksaw blades concealed in food to the detainees. The detainees found these to be ineffective and feared that a search of their cells would compromise AnnMarie and discarded the plan.

One day a smiling and friendly 18-year-old constable named Johan Greeff was assigned to the front desk, bordering the cells that held Mosie, Abdulhay and Isu. Without an understanding of the type of detainees being held Greeff began to befriend them. Greeff found the detainees charming, engaging and generous when the need arose.

The detainees slowly and deliberately began to cultivate a friendship with Greeff. There was, however, not unanimity among the detainees in using Greeff to facilitate an escape. Isu objected on the basis that the likeable Greeff would face a beating and imprisonment once the escape was executed.

“to use in any way he saw fit”. The four detainees recognised that they had the bait to put their plan into action.

Since Abdulhay and Mosie had developed a closer relationship with Greeff, the four decided that they should approach Greeff with the bribe. One evening Mosie and Abdulhay invited Greeff into Mosie’s cell and asked Greeff to take the oath that, “Die wat ons hier praat is tussen ons drie, die vier meere en die Here (What we are about to talk about is between three of us, these four walls and the Lord.)” Abdulhay traced a figure of two thousand pounds on the wall then asked Greeff to assist them to escape. Greeff said he would consider the offer.

Two days later Abdulhay and Mosie approached Greeff again and doubled the offer. Greeff had his eye on a top of the range Studebaker Lark, which he knew he could not afford on his meagre salary. Suddenly the car seemed like a possibility and he accepted the offer.

Despite the real possibility of Greeff betraying them and the trepidation that the detainees felt about placing their fate in a policeman’s hand, they immediately began to put the plan into action.

It was decided that escape would happen at midnight on a Friday night. The detainees informed Greeff that he would go to Goldreich’s cell and, as part of the deception, be hit over the head and relieved of his keys. Arrangements were made for Greeff to collect the money from Isu’s house after the escape. Transport was arranged for the detainees once they walked out of the prison.

Unfortunately, due to the volume of people being processed through the charge office the plan had to be postponed to the

Saturday night. On the night of the escape, at the appointed time, the detainees anxiously watched midnight pass without any sighting of Greeff. With a mounting sense of desperation and alarm the detainees could do nothing but wait for Greeff.

At 1am Greeff came into the cells and informed the detainees that a trio of drunks whom he had to process had delayed him. He then let the detainees out of the gates of the exercise yards into the car park.

Having separated at the Johannesburg Public Library, Wolpe and Goldreich had a stroke of good fortune. Looking for phone in Joubert Park they came across the sympathetic theatre director Barney Simon. He drove them to his place from which they made arrangements with Mannie Brown to smuggle them out of the country.

Mannie moved them to a safe house, bought an unmarked second-hand car and got a sympathetic student to drive them to Swaziland. During the entire six-hour journey to Swaziland, Wolpe and Goldreich travelled in the boot of the car. From Swaziland they were disguised as priests and flown to the then relative safety of Bechuanaland (now Botswana).

Abdulhay and Mosie continued to make their way to Fordsburg. They came across Peter Moonsammy (also known as Peter Joseph), a fellow activist and comrade, on his way home from his job as a waiter. Peter drove them first to Herby Pillay’s flat, then to Tommy Vassen’s place and eventually to Said Cachalia’s home where they found safe accommodation

After three days, Mosie decided to go to Magaliesburg and Abdulhay went to stay at his aunt’s farm in Vereeniging,

where he stayed for two weeks, only coming out at night when all the other people had gone to sleep and it was considered safe.

Two weeks later, Abdulhay, disguised as a pious Muslim woman in purdah (veil), was driven to the Bechuanaland border by Moosa Angamia. Seven weeks later Mosie was also smuggled out of the country by Moosa Angamia and his good friend Suliman "Babla" Saloojee.

The apartheid government, embarrassed at losing four detainees, offered a reward of five thousand pounds and launched a massive manhunt. This was in vain because the four had successfully made their way out of the country.

For Johan Greeff the incident exacted a heavy toll. His Station Commander was immediately suspicious of Greeff's role in the escape. Upon cross-questioning Greeff confessed that he was to receive money. For his role in the escape Greeff served two of the six years he was sentenced to. After 1994 Mosie and Abdulhay, with the support of Walter Sisulu, lobbied the ANC to settle the debt they owed to Greeff. Greeff was eventually paid about R100 000 by the ANC.

The success of the escape of Arthur, Abdulhay, Harold and Mosie should not only be measured by their personal freedom but the inspiration that it served for activists and members of the movement during that dark period.

Songs

Pinjre ke panchhi³⁷

The Hindi song – Pinjre ke panchhi re – sung by Kavi Pradeep for the film Naagmani (1957), directed by Raman B Desai, music by Avinash Vyas and lyrics by Kavi Pradeep, was very popular with activists who were detained and imprisoned in the late 1950s and 1960s because it tells of the pain of the caged bird.

Ahmed Kathrada, in one of his letters from Pollsmoor Maximum Prison, dated 25 March 1989, tells his correspondent, Mrs Zuleikha Mayat: “Your reference to Iqbal’s poem about the bird in the cage lamenting over freedom reminded me of the well-known song ‘Pingre ke panchi re, tera dard ne jane kooi’. ... (For Censors: ‘No one knows the agony of the bird in the cage’.)” (Vahed and Waetjen 2009:261)

Pinjre ke panchhi re, tera dard na jaane koye

Baahar se to khaamosh rahe tu

Bheetar bheetar roye re

Kah na sake tu, apni kahani

Teri bhi panchhi, kya zindagaani re

Vidhi ne teri katha likhi aansoo mein kalam duboye

Chupke chupke, rone waale

Rakhna chhipaake, dil ke chhale re

Ye patthar ka desh hai pagle, koyi na tera hoye

Caged bird oh, no one knows your pain

Outwardly you remain silent

Inwardly/within you weep

You were not able to tell your tale

Oh bird what a life you lead

Fate wrote your story with her pen dipped in tears)

You who cry silently

Keep hidden, the state of your heart

This is a land of stone fool/crazy-one, no one will be yours

Parna janda³⁸

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the song Parna janda was popular with activists in the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) and Transvaal Indian Youth Congress (TIYC). Indeed, a TIYC publication of October 1961 entitled Songs ...for you to sing, provided the following background to the song: "After the massacre at Jallian-walla-bagh, Amritsar, India, in 1919, where 379 men, women and children were killed in cold-blood and hundreds wounded, this song was composed and dedicated to those martyrs who laid down their lives in the cause of India's freedom. The theme of the song is: Keep the banner of freedom flying." (TIYC 1961:4)

Two decades later, the song was revived by the Transvaal Anti-SAIC Committee that campaigned against the elections of the South African Indian Council in 1981 and by the Transvaal Indian Congress after its revival on 1 May 1983, during its campaign against the tricameral Parliament. Khalil Saloojee, a veteran of the 1946 Passive Resistance Campaign, revived the song at packed public meetings and rallies.

Bazi e jane ispe lagana (repeat)

Parna janda na niche jookana (3)

Ye mehnat ka soonka sahara (repeat)

Jisne chamka diya he sitara,

Ispe aa e mosseebut oothana

Parna janda na niche jookana (3)

Ye mazdoore ki he e nishani (repeat)

Jis ki darde bari he kahani,

Ye rahe to rahe zindagani

Wo jooke to mitado jawani,

Ooski soorkhi ka khoonse barana,

To na janda na niche jookana (3)

Jab azaadi ki bhook lagi thi (repeat)

To goliyawn Jalyan me challi thi

Yad ho goliyawn ka wo khana

To na janda na niche jookana (3)

Oon shahidon ki kabraw pe jana (repeat)

Phoole aansoo ke oonper charana

Oon ke harsal jalse manana

Jispe khoonki kahani soonana

Soonker kaanpe ka zalim zamana

Parna janda na niche jookana (3)

Put your whole being into this
struggle

But don't allow your spirit to be
conquered

This is the fruit of our labour

It is the shining star of our existence

For this we must bear all hardships

But we won't allow our spirit to be conquered

This is the symbol of the workers

Whose tale is filled with sorrow

What is youth

To achieve our goal we will sacrifice our lives

We will colour our lives with our blood

But we won't allow our spirit to be conquered

When we cried out in hunger for freedom

Bullets tore our flesh

We remember being fed with those bullets

But we won't allow our spirit to be conquered

Go to the graves of those martyrs

And strew them with wreaths of tears

Commemorate their sacrifices every year

And tell the tales written with their blood

So that the oppressors will tremble

But we won't allow our spirit to be conquered

transvaal indian youth congress

presents...

SONGS ... FOR

YOU TO SING



Songbook of the TIYC with various freedom songs

Interviews

Blankenburg, Gabriele (Gabi)

Interview conducted on 11 August 2009 in Cape Town by Razia Saleh

Cajee, Djamilla and Cajee, Iqbal

Joint interview conducted on 11 October 2009 in Johannesburg by Shabir Ballim

Chhiba, Jaimati

Interview conducted on 19 November 2009 in Lenasia by Isu Chiba, Prema Naidoo and Shabir Ballim

Chiba, Laloo

Interview conducted on 28 May 1997 in Cape Town by Wolfie Kodesh (subsequently corrected by Laloo Chiba)

Chiba, Laloo

Interview conducted on 23 October 2009 in Lenasia by Rashid Seedat, Razia Saleh, Prema Naidoo and Shabir Balli

Isaacs, Yusuf

Interview conducted on 23 October 2009 in Johannesburg by Shabir Ballim and Prema Naidoo

Jassat, Abdulhay

Interview conducted on 18 July 2009 in Parkwood, Johannesburg by Rashid Seedat, Taryn Mackay and Lerato Motale Makgobatlou

Jassat, Essop

Interview conducted on 29 November 2009 in Johannesburg by Prema Naidoo and Shabir Ballim

Joseph, Dasu

Interview conducted on 8 January 2003 in London by Padraig O'Malley from <http://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv03445/04lv03833/05lv03891/06lv03894.htm>, accessed on 27 November 2009

Joseph, Paul Interview conducted on 9 November 2002 in London by Padraig O'Malley from

<http://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv03445/04lv03833/05lv03858/06lv03886.htm>, accessed on 26 November 2009

Kodesh, Wolfie

Interview conducted on 3 March 1990 in London by Howard Barrell

Kodesh, Wolfie

Interview conducted on 4 October 2000 by Moses Hadebe in Cape Town for the ANC/University of Connecticut Oral History Project

Maharaj, Mac

Interview conducted on 1 November 2009 in Johannesburg by Rashid Seedat, Razia Saleh and Prema Naidoo

Moonsamy, Kista

Interview conducted on 6 October 2009 in Lenasia by Prema Naidoo and Shabir Ballim

Moonsammy, Peter (also known as Peter Joseph)

Interview conducted on 10 July 2002 in Lenasia by Loyiso Pulumani for the ANC/University of Connecticut Oral History Project

Naidoo, Indres

Interview conducted on 3 October 2000 in Cape Town by Lungelwa Madyibi and Moses Hadebe for the ANC/University of Connecticut Oral History Project

Naidoo, Indres

Interview conducted on 11 August 2009 in Cape Town by Razia Saleh

Nanabhai, Shirish

Interview conducted on 2 July 2009 in Lenasia by Rashid Seedat, Prema Naidoo, Taryn Mackay and Lerato Motale Makgobatlou

Nanabhai, Shirish

Interview conducted on 19 November 2009 in Lenasia with Shirish Nanabhai (on the life and involvement of his brother Narendra "Nanoo" Jasmath) by Shabir Ballim and Prema Naidoo

Sita, Maniben

Interview conducted on 27 November 2009 in Laudium by Razia Saleh and Rashid Seedat

Vally, Rookeya

Interview conducted on 29 November 2009 in Johannesburg by Prema Naidoo and Shabir Ballim

Vandeyar, Reggie

Interviews conducted on 8 July 2009, 31 July 2009 and 13 October 2009 by Rashid Seedat, Prema Naidoo, Taryn Mackay, Lerato Motale Makgobatlou and Shabir Ballim

Other primary sources

Chiba, Laloo (2008) "A family project: Laloo 'Isu' Chiba" unpublished dossier

Chiba, Laloo (2009) "A note on Solly Vania"

Lorgat, Hassen (2007) Obituary in "In loving memory of the late Peter Moonsammy" unpublished document

Moolla, Mosie (2009) "Personal Profile" unpublished document

Naidoo, Indres (1978) Statement by Indres Naidoo at the meeting of the Special Committee against Apartheid in observance of the Day of Solidarity with South African Political Prisoners 10 October 1978

<http://www.anc.org.za/un/others/sp100878.html>, accessed on 14 November 2009

Salie, Faker (2009) "Document requested by Esu Chibba regarding events related to my involvement with Umkhonto we Sizwe" unpublished document

Truth And Reconciliation Commission Amnesty Committee, AC/2001/257, Henri Van Der Westhuizen Applicant AM8079/97), <http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/decisions/2001/ac21257.htm>, accessed on 27 November 2009

Truth And Reconciliation Commission Amnesty Hearing, 9 October 2000, Henri Van Der Westhuizen, Application No: AM8079/97, <http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/amntrans/2000/201009jb.htm>, accessed on 27 November 2009

Vassen, Bobby (2009) "Bobby Vassen pen portrait" unpublished document

Vassen, Tommy (2009) "Invited or incited" unpublished document

Vassen, Tommy (2009) "Tom's times" unpublished document

Secondary sources

ANC (African National Congress) (1967) "Portrait: Laloo Chiba – man of courage" in Sechaba, July 1967, No. 10

ANC (African National Congress) (2002) Afrika Ke Nako: 90 Years of Struggle

ANC (African National Congress) (2003) Umrabulo: Let's talk politics No. 18

Arkin, A (1989) "Economic structure" in Arkin, AJ, Magyar, KP and Pillay, GJ (eds) (1989) The Indian South Africans. Pinetown: Owen Burgess

Arkin, AJ, Magyar, KP and Pillay, GJ (eds) (1989) The Indian South Africans. Pinetown: Owen Burgess

Bagwandeem, D (1989) "Historical perspectives" in Arkin, AJ, Magyar, KP and Pillay, GJ (eds) (1989) The Indian South Africans. Pinetown: Owen Burgess

Bhana, S (1997) "Indianness reconfigured, 1944-1960: The Natal Indian Congress in South Africa" in Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East (formerly South Asia Bulletin), Vol. XVII, No. 2

Bhana, S (1997a) Gandhi's Legacy: The Natal Indian Congress 1894-1994. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press

Bhana, S and Brain, J (1990) Setting down roots: Indian migrants in South Africa: 1860-1911. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press

Bonner, P and Segal, L (1998) Soweto: A history. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman

Brijlal, P (1989) "Demographic profile" in Arkin, AJ, Magyar, KP and Pillay, GJ (eds) (1989) The Indian South Africans. Pinetown: Owen Burgess

Carr, WJP (1990) Soweto: Its creation, life and decline. Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations

Herbstein D (1994) "The smiling policeman" in The Sunday Review supplement of The Independent on Sunday, 17 July 1994.

Karis, T and Carter, GM (eds.) (1977) From protest to challenge: A documentary history of African politics in South Africa 1882-1964, Volume 3 Challenge and violence 1953-1964. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press

Kathrada, AM (2004) *Memoirs*. Cape Town: Zebra

Magubane, B, Bonner, P, Sithole, J, Delius, P, Cherry, J, Gibbs, P and April, T (2004) "The turn to armed struggle" in SADET (South African Democracy Education Trust) (2004) *The road to democracy in South Africa Volume 1 (1960-1970)*. Cape Town: Zebra

Mandela, N (1994) *Long walk to freedom: The autobiography of Nelson Mandela*. Randburg: Macdonald Purnell

Mandy, N (1984) *A city divided: Johannesburg and Soweto*. Johannesburg: Macmillan

Masondo, A (1986) in *Dawn: Journal of Umkhonto we Sizwe*. Souvenir issue: 25th anniversary of MK.

Matthews, J (2009) "Interview with Joe Matthews" in *The Thinker Vol 4*

Meer, F (1969) *Portrait of Indian South Africans*. Durban: Avon

Meer, IC (2002) *A fortunate man*. Cape Town: Zebra Press

Ministry of External Relations, Republic of India (2001) *Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora*. Ministry of External Relations: New Delhi

Naidoo, I (1986) in *Dawn: Journal of Umkhonto we Sizwe*. Souvenir issue: 25th anniversary of MK.

Naidoo, I (as told to Albie Sachs) (1982) *Island in chains: Ten years on Robben Island*. Middlesex: Penguin

Naidoo, I (2000) *Island in chains: Ten years on Robben Island*. Sandton: Penguin.

O'Malley, Pdraig (2007) *Shades of Difference: Mac Maharaj and the struggle for South Africa*. New York: Viking Penguin

Pahad, E (1972) "The development of Indian political movements in South Africa, 1924-1946" Thesis submitted for the degree of doctor of philosophy to the University of Sussex, July 1972

Pillay, GJ, Naidoo, T and Dangor, S (1989) "Religious profile" in Arkin, AJ, Magyar, KP and Pillay, GJ (eds) (1989) *The Indian South Africans*. Pinetown: Owen Burgess

Randall, P and Desai, Y (1967) *From 'Coolie Location' to Group Area: A brief account of Johannesburg's Indian community*. Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations

Reddy, ES (2009) "Indian slaves in South Africa: A little-known aspect of Indian-South African relations", at <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/solidarity/indiasa3.html>, accessed on 7 September 2009

Reddy, ES (2009a) "Gandhiji and the struggle for liberation in South Africa", at http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/people/gandhi/7.html#N_1_, accessed on 7 September 2009

SADET (South African Democracy Education Trust) (2007) *The road to democracy: South Africans telling their stories, Volume 1, 1950-1970*. Pretoria: Unisa Press

Sapa (1996) "Police killed my husband, widow tells truth commission" at <http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/media/1996/9604/s960430d.htm>, accessed on 20 November 2009

Senzangakhona, M, Mabitse, E, Abrahams, U and Molebatsi, G (2001) "Umkhonto we Sizwe: Within living memories" in ANC (African National Congress) *Umrabulo: Let's talk politics MK's 40th Anniversary*, No. 13

TASC (Transvaal Anti-SAIC Committee) (1981) *Anti-SAIC News*, August 1981

TIYC (Transvaal Indian Youth Congress) (1961) *Songs ... for you to sing*. First edition.

Vahed, G and Waetjen, T (2009) *Dear Ahmedbhai, Dear Zuleikhabehn: The letters of Zuleikha Mayat and Ahmed Kathrada 1979-1989*. Auckland Park: Jacana Media

Wikipedia (2009) "Guy Fawkes" from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guy_fawkes, accessed on 11 October 2009

Endnotes

- 1 Rashid Seedat wrote this chapter from a variety of secondary sources.
- 2 “Coolie” (or Koelie in Afrikaans) was the derogatory word for Indians during apartheid.
- 3 Official statistics under apartheid actually recorded demographics for Asians, which included the small number of people of Chinese descent.
- 4 He later acquired the honorific “Mahatma” meaning “Great Soul”.
- 5 Rashid Seedat wrote this chapter.
- 6 Isu Chiba and Bobby Vassen both recall that Bobby was part of Reggie’s unit for a short time but Reggie has no recollection of this.
- 7 Mac Maharaj provided this information.
- 8 Paul Joseph declined participation in this initiative.
9. This pen portrait is based on a joint interview with Djamilla Cajee and Iqbal Cajee conducted by Shabir Ballim on 11 October 2009; and the following secondary sources: SADET (2007), Kathrada (2004) and O’ Malley (2007).
10. This pen portrait is substantially based on Laloo Chiba’s own unpublished account of his life entitled “Brief family history and thumbnail portrait of Laloo ‘Isu’ Chiba,” completed in 2008. Supplementary information was gleaned from an interview with Laloo Chiba conducted on 23 October 2009. This account was compiled and edited by Rashid Seedat.
- 11 Coincidentally, there were four women named Luxmi in Isu’s family, viz. one of his sisters, his wife, his brother Raman’s wife and his father’s second wife.
- 12 This pen portrait is based on an interview conducted with Mrs Narsee Chhiba on 19 November 2009 and information provided by Laloo Chiba; Shabir Ballim wrote it.
- 13 This pen portrait is based on an interview conducted with Yusuf Isaacs on 23 November 2009; Shabir Ballim wrote it.

- 14 This pen portrait is based on an interview conducted with Shirish Nanabhai on 19 November 2009; Shabir Ballim wrote it.
- 15 This pen portrait is based on an interview conducted with Abdulhay Jassat on 18 July 2009; Taryn Mackay wrote it.
- 16 This pen portrait is principally based on Ahmed Kathrada's *Memoirs* (2004); Razia Saleh compiled it.
- 17 This pen portrait is based on interviews conducted with Wolfie Kodesh, on 3 March 1990 by Howard Barrell; and on 4 October 2000 by Moses Muziandile Hadebe for the ANC/University of Connecticut Oral History project; Lerato Motale Makgobatbu wrote it.
- 18 This pen portrait is principally based on Pdraig O'Malley's *Shades of Difference: Mac Maharaj and the struggle for South Africa* (2007); it was compiled by Razia Saleh.
- 19 Isu Chiba compiled this pen portrait.
- 20 This pen portrait is based on an interview conducted with Kista Moonsamy on 6 October 2009; Shabir Ballim wrote it.
- 21 Isu Chiba contends that the decision could have only come from Solly Vania who was the leader of the unit.
- 22 This pen portrait is based on various interviews conducted with Indres Naidoo and Gabriele Blankenburg and other secondary sources; Razia Saleh wrote it.
- 23 This pen portrait is based on an interview conducted with Shirish Nanabhai on 2 July 2009, Taryn Mackay wrote it.
- 24 This pen portrait is based on a piece written by Faker Salie on his life and involvement in MK entitled "Document requested by Essu Chibba regarding events related to my involvement with Umkhonto we Sizwe"; Rashid Seedat edited it.
- 25 This pen portrait is based on interviews conducted with Reggie Vandeyar on 8 July 2009, 31 July 2009 and 13 October 2009; Taryn Mackay wrote it.

- 26 Laloo Chiba compiled this pen portrait; and Rashid Seedat edited it.
- 27 This pen portrait is based on a piece written by Bobby Vassen on his life and involvement in MK entitled “Bobby Vassen pen portrait”; Lerato Motale Makgobatbu edited it.
- 28 This pen portrait is based on two pieces written by Tommy Vassen on his life and his involvement in MK, respectively entitled “Tom’s times” and “Invited or incited”; it was compiled and edited by Taryn Mackay.
- 29 Information for this profile is based on an interview with Dr Essop Jassat on 29 November 2009; Shabir Ballim wrote it.
- 30 Information for this profile was provided by Khalik and Nafissa Mayet and some secondary sources; it was written by Rashid Seedat.
- 31 This profile was written by Mosie Moolla and edited by Shabir Ballim.
- 32 Information for this profile was provided by Hassen Lorgat; Rashid Seedat wrote it.
- 33 Information for this profile is based on an interview with Rookeya Vally on 29 November 2009; Shabir Ballim wrote it.
- 34 Information for this section is based on an interview with Maniben Sita on 27 November 2009; Rashid Seedat wrote it.
- 35 This section is extracted from Indres Naidoo’s article (1986) in Dawn: Journal of Umkhonto we Sizwe. Souvenir issue: 25 anniversary of MK
- 36 This account is based on interviews with Mosie Moolla and Abdulhay Jassat; and Denis Herbstein’s article “The smiling policeman” in the Sunday Review supplement of The Independent on Sunday, 17 July 1994.
- 37 Maya Sooka did the translation of this song.
- 38 Translation taken from Anti-SAIC News, August 1981.

MOTHER OVERJOYED AT DETAINEE'S RELEASE

S. Time albhi **By MARGARET SMITH**

WOLSHED BLASE: 5 IN COURT

Four men tortured, defence alleges

ALLEGATIONS WERE MADE in the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court today

An exit permit to isolation

Torture in
S. Africa:
testimony
by exile

GROUP AREAS ACT
AFFECTS
SPORTS

TICKY BARNES
LET YOUR SON
ALWIE SHOW
YOU THE WAY

AILY MAIL, Friday, April 2, 1962

Three get jail for aiding escapee Lee

Rand Daily Mail, 14 December, 1969

THE RED ACT TRIAL

★ FROM PAGE 8

'Practically forced' to make statement, woman tells judge

tsihande Ndon, one of the
accused, accompanied her.

said nothing, but had not told
her to take it off.

Wirese gave her a small

She said her sister did

THE ACCUSED

MOTHER OVERJOYED AT DETAINEE'S RELEASE

S. Time albhi **By MARGARET SMITH**

WOLSHED BLASE: 5 IN COURT

Four men tortured,

"Men of Dynamite: Pen Portraits of MK Pioneers" traces the lives of early MK recruits

in the Johannesburg area. Some are well known, such as Ahmed Kathrada, Wilton Mkwayi and Mac Maharaj,

whilst others are relatively unknown such as Ameen Cajee, Kista Moonsamy

and Faker Salie. There are nineteen people featured in this remarkable but untold story.