THE LEADER

A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF THE FIRST DECADE OF THE LEADER WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO IT'S STANCE ON THE PASSIVE RESISTANCE CAMPAIGN OF 1946

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INTRODUCTION

In November 1991 The Leader newspaper celebrated its 50th anniversary. This was no small feat for a newspaper that was launched single handedly by Dhanee Bramdaw on 30 November 1940. The Leader proved to be a popular newspaper and found its way into many Indian homes. The Leader was founded to promote and protect the interests of the Indian community. In its very first issue The Leader declared that "it hopes to interpret all those facets of community life and development that should prove of interest to all its readers. The Leader is an independent organ, owing no allegiance to any group or body, but its columns will be open to all bodies which place the welfare of the Indian community, in its entirety, foremost. The Leader may have its own viewpoint, but it will never deny the use of its columns to expressions of divergent views, honesty expressed and within the law and directed toward the well-being of the community." **[1]**

The Leader cannot be divorced from the social and political context within which it was born. The 1940s began with increasing anti-Indian agitation among the white population. In an attempt to appease its white electorate's fears over "Indian Penetration" the Smuts government passed the Pegging Act of 1943. Once the Pegging Act lapsed in 1946, the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act of 1946 was passed as a further means of restricting the movement of Indian people. The Indian population was becoming increasingly aware of their lot and was determined

[1] The Leader, 30th November 1940, p.2. Also see The Leader - Golden Jubilee Supplement. 14th November 1991. p.3.

to fight against the unjust laws that were being passed against them. Determined to improve their lot as a community, the Indian population's response to the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act was the launch of the Passive Resistance Campaign of 1946. The Passive Resistance Campaign served to highlight the grievances experienced by the Indian community in South Africa. It transformed the Indian Question in South Africa from a domestic problem to an international one.

It was against this background of growing anti-Indian agitation and political turmoil that The Leader was born. At this time two other Indian newspapers were already in circulation - the Indian Opinion and Indian Views. As a fledgling newspaper amid political oppression and strong competition there was little chance of survival for The Leader. Yet The Leader, from its humble beginnings, grew to be the oldest Indian newspaper in Durban today.

Over the years The Leader has been a source of news and information to the Indian community. Yet The Leader itself has not been the focus of any indepth study. I will begin my study of The Leader by looking at the life of Dhanee Bramdaw, his reasons and motivation for founding a newspaper to cater specifically for the interests of the Indian community. A brief analysis of The Leader will also be made.

I will thereafter, focus on the Passive Resistance Campaign of 1946. Although the Passive Resistance Campaign will be discussed it must be emphasized that this is not the focus of my study. The Passive Resistance Campaign as a topic has been well researched. The Passive Resistance

Campaign in Chapter Three will be used as a test case to investigate The Leader's stance on the campaign.

I will look at The Leader on its own terms but comparisons will be made with the Indian Opinion and Indian Views throughout my study.

CHAPTER ONE : *THE LEADER*

A NEWSPAPER "DEDICATED TO THE INDIAN COMMUNITY". [1]

When Dhanee Bramdaw established The Leader in November 1940 as a weekly newspaper, it was during a highly politicised period in South Africa's history. South Africans, especially white South Africans, were still nursing the bitterness and divisions created by the question of South Africa's entry into World War II. In Natal, the white population was alarmed at the influx of Indian families into white areas. This gave rise to the question of "Indian Penetration" (discussed further in Chapter 2). In an attempt to appease the white electorate's fears, Prime Minister Smuts, acting contrary to the advise of the Broome Commission, introduced the Pegging Act, predecessor of the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act of 1946. What Smuts' actions served to create was heightened emotion in the Indian community of Natal that helped spearhead the 1946 Passive Resistance Campaign (covered extensively by The Leader newspaper), and made the 1940s one of South Africa's most controversial decades. It was against these socio-economic and political odds that faced the Indian community in Natal that Dhanee Brandaw managed to establish and cement his newspaper - The Leader.

Dhanee Bramdaw was born on 5th October 1901 in Pietermaritzburg and was the eldest son of Dabee and Poola Bramdaw. With education opportunities limited for Indian people, Dhanee Bramdaw was fortunate

to gain a sound primary and secondary school education. Dabee Bramdaw was an interpreter in the Supreme Court and had wanted his son to pursue a career in law. **[2]** But Dhanee Bramdaw wanted to be a journalist and this was evident during his stay at the South African Native College at Fort Hare. At Fort Hare he was appointed editor of the college magazine "South African Native College" (SANC). "He showed a flair for journalism and was soon contributing articles to the regional offices." **[3]** Dhanee Bramdaw was disillusioned at the prospect of following a career in law and decided to pursue his interest in journalism. In 1926, Dhanee Bramdaw was given a job as librarian in the editorial library of The Natal Witness by Debi Jugdeo, the circulation manager. **[4]** Prior to accepting this job, Dhanee Bramdaw had been a teacher, although this was for a short period only. **[5]** At The Natal Witness he was allocated the task of sorting and filing news clippings. His flair for journalism must not have gone unnoticed for he was soon writing and contributing articles to the "Indian World." The "Indian World" was a page in The Natal Witness set aside for news of Indian relevance or interest. Soon thereafter he was asked to contribute to a column on a daily basis and found himself promoted to editor of the "Indian World." **[6]** This indeed was a great achievement for he was the first Indian in South Africa to work on the editorial staff of a daily newspaper. **[7]** Simultaneously, Dhanee Bramdaw was also correspondent to other daily newspapers, including The Daily News (known originally as The Natal Advertiser), The Natal Mercury, The Rand Daily Mail and The Sunday Times. **[8]**

Dhanee Bramdaw was also "a correspondent for Reuters and he represented them at various non-European conferences throughout the country." **[9]** He conducted special reporting for Reuters at the historic signing of the Cape Town Agreement in 1927. Srinivasa Sastri, Agent-General of the Government of India, visited South Africa from June 1927 to January 1929. He arrived in South Africa as a delegate to sit at the first Round Table Conference between the Government of India and the Union government of South Africa in December 1926. The Round Table Conference was held to address the grievances of the Indian community of South Africa, and most notably their rejection of the Areas Reservation Bill that segregated the races. The culmination of the Round Table Conference was the signing of the Cape Town Agreement in 1927 (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2). A significant development of the Agreement was the securing of funds by Sastri toward the establishment of a teachers training college and secondary school in Durban. This institution was named Sastri College. Dhanee Bramdaw had forged a special friendship with Sastri. As a tribute to that friendship, Dhanee Bramdaw co-edited a book called Sastri Speaks. This book contained a collection of Sastri's speeches and writings during his stay in South Africa from June 1927 to January 1929. N. Bramdaw, grandson of the late Dhanee Bramdaw explains that funding for this project came from S.R. Naidoo, a close associate of his grandfather. **[10]** The motive behind Dhanee Bramdaw's undertaking was "to preserve, even in its imperfections, the words of that great Indian - Srinivasa Sastri - who may yet speak to us and the succeeding generations." **[11]**

In 1935, with the assistance of The Natal Witness staff, Dhanee Bramdaw published Out of the Stable. In this book he wrote a short history of the Indian people in South Africa from 1910 - 1935. In his analysis of the Indian Question, Dhanee Bramdaw called for the Indian to be recognised as a citizen of this country, "contributing his share to the general well - being of the whole, and his upliftment, coming either from within himself or from external sources, the other non-European races of the country would benefit." **[12]**

Dhanee Bramdaw thereafter in 1936 proceeded to compile the first South African Indian Who's Who and Commercial Directory which ran into two editions prior to World War II but was unable to complete the production of the third edition due to ill-health. **[13]** What role this book served to play, was to "unite various trading concerns which were scattered throughout the country" and "to collect in a convenient form the "brief biographies" of the personalities included." **[14]** Once the biographies and pictures of the personalities were accepted, Dhanee Bramdaw managed to fund the printing of the book and apparently later in 1940 the funds were also used to finance the running of The Leader newspaper. **[15]**

Dhanee Bramdaw travelled extensively throughout Africa. His travels took him to such places as Kenya, South and North Rhodesia, East Africa and Nyasaland. According to his son Sunil Bramdaw, many friendships were forged from his travels and this was how he later managed to receive news from areas outside of South Africa once

The Leader was founded. **[16]** Dhanee Bramdaw was also a correspondent for the Hindu Madras, The Pioneer, Lucknow and the Madras Mail.

The Leader newspaper was launched in November 1940, (the reasons for Dhanee Bramdaw establishing a newspaper and other issues will be discussed further in the pages that follow). During "its first few months, he worked single-handedly to put the newspaper on its feet." **[17]** Ranji S. Nowbath joined the newspaper in 1941 and Dhanee Bramdaw assumed responsibility for the administrative side of the paper. He would travel to various parts of South Africa to secure advertisements and news. He unfortunately fell ill in 1946 and suffered a stroke. Realising that his health was failing he made arrangements for his children to study overseas because the local schools did not provide an adequate education for Indian pupils. **[18]** Acting on medical advise, Dhanee Bramdaw embarked on a cruise to England but sadly passed away on 4 July 1952 between Mombassa and Aden. **[19]** His wife, Mrs Saraswatie Bramdaw took over the daily running of The Leader and today, some 54 years later, it is one of if not the only family - owned newspaper in the country. **[20]**

The 1940s "began with the world at war, when censorship was in full force." **[21]** Severe shortages of commodities brought about by the world war meant that there was a shortage of newsprint and hence the newspapers consisted of fewer pages than usual. As a result of shortages in newsprint and the limited space available for news, the white newspapers decided to reduce or eliminate their Indian news service altogether. Literacy among the Indian population was

increasing **[22]** and therefore there was a need to include more Indian news of interest instead of eliminating Indian news altogether. The Indian community was eager to receive news of interest and issues that affected them directly as a community. Dhanee Bramdaw often had to answer numerous questions from the Indian community in a small space accorded for Indian news in the white newspapers. **[23]** He was thus motivated to start a newspaper that catered specifically for Indian news and other matters of interest. The two Indian - owned weekly newspapers - the Indian Opinion and Indian Views proved to be unsatisfactory. These two newspapers targetted a specific readership group and not the whole Indian community. The Indian Opinion printed its news predominantly in Gujarati, Tamil and Hindi. The Indian Views printed its news in Gujarati. The other reason why these newspapers were not read by the whole community was the fact that they could only be obtained through subscription. According to Nowbath both the Indian Opinion and Indian Views were "apologies for newspapers" and were actually magazines and not newspapers. **[24]**

The Indian Opinion was born on 4 June 1903 and was founded by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. The newspaper began publication in Grey Street Durban but in 1904 moved to Gandhi's Phoenix Settlement. The newspaper was initially published in English, Gujarati, Tamil and Hindi but due to technical reasons the newspaper was published in English and Gujarati only. **[25]** The articles that were published in English were often summaries of a more detailed article in Gujarati while items of local interest

appeared only in the vernacular language. **[26]** According to Nowbath the Indian Opinion was orientated more toward reporting on Gujarati cultural activities. **[27]** The newspaper was sold at a high price of six pence and consequently the average Indian person could not afford to subscribe to it. Those who did subscribe to the newspaper were from the Indian business class and subsequently the newspaper began to express the views of that grouping. Another criticism that has been levelled against the Indian Opinion was that it was "the political mouthpiece of Mr Gandhi and there was hardly an issue printed without an article from him." **[28]**

The Indian Views emerged on 3 July 1914. Its editor was M. I. Meer and the newspaper catered for Muslim interests. It was also published in English and Gujarati. M.I. Meer, as the proprietor and publisher of the Indian Views would travel to the various towns in Natal to collect news of interest. Because the newspaper was used to give expression to Muslim views and catered for their interests, Muslim people, especially the businessmen were prepared to grant him donations to run the newspaper. **[29]** The Indian Opinion gathered news in a similar manner. Speaking from his personal experiences, Nowbath explains that these newspapers were printed and issued on a weekly basis but whether they were actually read was indeed another story altogether. **[30]**

The Indian Opinion and Indian Views were restrained from reaching a wider audience by the particular linguistic group they represented. As more people within the Indian community became educated or literate, English began taking over as the language of communication among

the majority of the people. It was here that Dhanee Bramdaw discovered a gap in the newspaper business. What the Indian community needed was a newspaper that was printed in English and catered for the interests of the Indian community as a whole. Dhanee Bramdaw was also dissatisfied by the manner in which white newspapers reported news that was thought to be of vital interest to the community and he "saw the need for a newspaper that articulated the sentiments of the Indian community." **[31]** The Indian community during the 1930s and 1940s was being subjected to all kinds of political and socio-economic discrimination. There was a growing fear among the white population at what was termed "Indian Penetration". Consequently the government of the day began to take measures, by enacting such laws as the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Amendment Act of 1936, to restrict the movement of the Indian community. Dhanee Bramdaw felt that such news was of vital importance to the Indian community but that the white newspapers did not report on such issues adequately. His main objective then for starting The Leader was to establish a newspaper dedicated to the Indian community "as a hand-maiden for their aspirations" and founded especially for them and their interests. **[32]** The Leader when it emerged was printed entirely in English and it was not a subcription based newspaper. It was made available to "anybody with a tickey on a Friday." **[33]** The Leader was cheaper than the Indian Opinion and Indian Views which meant that it was made available to the average person on the street. In its outlook The Leader did not target any specific group within the Indian community and reached the majority in the Indian community.

When Dhanee Bramdaw expressed his intention of starting his own newspaper to the general-manager of The Natal Witness, he readily received his support and The Natal Witness printing equipment was made available to The Leader. **[34]** However, due to the pressure of time and space the first issue was a short one and consisted of only four pages. An apology for the short issue was printed on the left hand corner of the first page. Originally it was planned that The Leader would consist of eight pages. Dhanee Bramdaw explained that due to the constraint of limited time available it was impossible for the proposed eight page issue to be printed but promised that "this defect would be corrected as soon as possible." **[35]** Thereafter, for the next year regular eight page issues were printed. The 20 September 1941 issue included an eight page supplement of the annual Natal Indian Congress' conference, making this a sixteen page issue. Although the first issue consisted only of four pages, it contained a variety of news items. The main news item of the day was the question of "Indian Penetration." It would appear that the question of "Indian Penetration" was not confined to the province of Natal but it was of concern in the Transvaal area as well. The spokespeople for the Indian community were A.I. Kajee and S. Rustomjee. This indicates that the radical elements within the Natal Indian Congress such as Drs M. Naicker and Y. Dadoo had not yet emerged to dominate Indian politics and that the conservatives were still very much in power. A large amount of space was allocated to the film industry. The Leader advertised for both English and Indian films, thereby catering for the interests of all the sectors within the Indian community. The Leader

ran a column where property news was featured. In another column entitled "Mainly About People," it featured news of births, weddings, graduations, journeys undertaken and examination results. The Leader also featured local and international sports news.

This humble beginning was just a taste of what was to come for The Leader grew to incorporate more and diverse features that catered for different tastes and interests. The Leader included a column entitled "The Women's World" that featured items from recipes to household hints. In 1948 and 1949 a new political column was introduced entitled the "Crack of the Sjambok." A cartoon feature was introduced that incorporated both a political comment cartoon and a strip. **[36]** The advertisements in The Leader were of a wide variety, featuring adverts from furniture to perfume.

Being a journalist did not exclude Dhanee Bramdaw from the unfair laws that surrounded the Indian community of South Africa. He was a non-white and was subject to the same constraints as any other person of colour. Yet The Leader managed to survive against these odds. According to Nowbath, Dhanee Bramdaw was on excellent terms with the family that ran The Natal Witness. **[37]** As a result he was able to obtain newsprint at a reasonable price. As The Leader was printed at The Natal Witness and since he did not pay toward the upkeep of premises because he used The Natal Witness offices, it was possible to print The Leader at a low cost. **[38]** Nevertheless, Dhanee Bramdaw also managed to finance the running of The Leader from the money he received from Reuters and the South African Indian Who's Who and Commercial Directory. Otherwise

he financed the newspaper with assistance from family and friends and received no outside help. **[39]** The Leader was open to receiving advertisements and the money received from advertising was used to finance the daily running of the newspaper.

The Leader was datelined Durban but it was printed in Pietermaritzburg, the place where Dhanee Bramdaw resided and worked. Consequently, according to Nowbath, the people of Pietermaritzburg believed that it was a Pietermaritzburg newspaper while those in Durban believed that The Leader was a Durban based newspaper. **[40]** The Leader nevertheless maintained a suite in "Penbrow Chambers" in West Street, Durban but moved to Baker Street after a few months and by the mid - 1940s it had moved to Pine Street, Durban. **[41]**

The Leader was distributed by the Central News Agency (CNA) from their offices in Smith Street, Durban and much of the sales were carried out in central Durban, the North Coast and Transvaal. **[42]** Sale of The Leader in the Transvaal was carried out via subscriptions that Dhanee Bramdaw had secured. When The Leader was first published it declared that it was a newspaper for a quarter million Indians. By December 1948 The Leader's last standing order from the printers was 17 500. **[43]** When The Leader was established in 1940, the circulation figures for the Indian Views was just over 3000. **[44]** Within a short period of time The Leader had managed to pass the combined circulation figures of both the Indian Opinion and Indian Views.

In its first publication The Leader declared its policy. The Leader bravely claimed to represent "first and foremost its own viewpoint", while simultaneously declaring its columns open to "divergent views, honestly expressed and within the law." **[45]** The Leader pledged no allegiance to any particular political group. The Leader reported on what made the news of the day. According to Nowbath, as far as The Leader's policy was concerned, it would ask itself whether an issue was of importance or value to the community. **[46]** Although The Leader was clear in stating that its columns were open to divergent views, it did however reserve the right in its editorials to express its own view-point. The Leader reported on all types of news whether it was political, socio-economic or sports. The members of the general public were free to express their opinions with regard to the issues that were published, provided that these views were within the bounds of decency. But the editorial column was reserved for the editor of the day to express his view. Depending on who was the editor of the day, he was prepared to accept a "hammering" from all sides of the public as each editorial was published. **[47]** Asked if The Leader could be considered a conservative or radical newspaper, Nowbath replied that "in those days" there was no such terms as radical or conservative but that these are terms used today to describe events and newspapers of yester-year. **[48]** Nevertheless it can be concluded that The Leader was indeed a progressive newspaper in all aspects, whether it was the type of printing equipment it used or the manner in which it reported the news of the day. (This aspect

will be investigated further in Chapter 3).

When Dhanee Bramdaw started The Leader in 1940, he had to single handedly run all the affairs of the newspaper. In April 1941, Ranji Nowbath was employed as an advertising representative. His journalistic qualities did not go unnoticed and he was soon running the editorials and reporting. For the next three or four years after Nowbath had joined The Leader, it was effectively run by just two people ie. Dhanee Bramdaw and Nowbath. **[49]** Nowbath assumed the duties of reporter, editor and advertising manager simultaneously.

Ranji Nowbath was born and raised in Newcastle. After successfully completing his matric his father advised him to attend the medical school at the University of Witwatersrand. But Nowbath did not want to leave the comforts of his home or the care of his mother and decided to enroll for a degree in law through a correspondence college. **[50]** When Nowbath was in standard 9 and 10 he boarded with Dhanee Brandaw's mother and a close relationship was forged with the Bramdaw family. As a result when Dhanee Bramdaw launched The Leader in 1940, Nowbath was a well known person to Dhanee Bramdaw. Nowbath was asked to write to him if he ever needed a job. Nowbath feels that he is a part of the Bramdaw family. Nowbath started his job at The Leader in April 1941 and he assumed editorship during 1946 - 1948 but at the end of that time he felt that he was at a "dead end" and left to go to India on a scholarship. **[51]** At this time Nowbath had already acquired his intermediate

LLB. He did not however lose his interest in newspapers and kept his association with them until 1985/86. He worked for such newspapers as the Indian Opinion and Graphic. Nowbath is now living in retirement. **[52]**

Another prominent journalist to start work at The Leader was Bobby Harrypersadh. When Nowbath was the editor of The Leader he allowed Harrypersadh to make contributions of summaries of week-end sport and thereafter offered him a full-time job in 1946 or 1947. **[53]** In Pietermaritzburg C.G. Moodley was responsible for all local news, sports reporting and welfare news. **[54]** He was popularly known as C.G. and was the longest serving journalist at The Leader. **[55]**

As a journalist Dhanee Bramdaw was extremely dissatisfied at the inferior treatment given to news of vital importance to the Indian community. He also observed the failure of the Indian newspapers to adequately report the news of the day to the Indian community. Realising that the Indian community needed a newspaper to cater specifically for their interest and well-being, he founded The Leader amid political turmoil and severe oppression. The Leader was a progressive newspaper whose editorial declared a brave policy which the Passive Resistance Campaign of 1946 tested.

END NOTES

1. The Leader - Golden Jubilee Supplement , 14 November 1991, p.1.
2. Interview with S. Bramdaw, 15 September 1994, 9h30.
3. The Leader, 11 July 1952, p.1.
4. N. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.2.
5. Interview with Bramdaw.
6. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.2.
7. The Leader, 11 July 1952, p.1.
8. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.2. Refer to interview with R.S. Nowbath, 17 November 1994, 9h30.
9. The Leader, 11 July 1952, p.1.
10. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.9.
11. Ibid, p.9
12. Ibid, p.10
13. The Leader, 11 July 1952, p.1.
14. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.10.
15. Interview with Bramdaw, Also See Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.10.
16. Ibid
17. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.5.
18. Ibid, p.6.
19. The Leader, 11 July 1952, p.1.
20. The Leader - Golden Jubilee Supplement, p.1.
21. Ibid, p.2.
22. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.12.

23. Ibid, p.13.

24. Interview with Nowbath.

25. C.G. Henning, The Indentured Indian In Natal (1860 - 1917), (India : Promilla and Company, 1993), p.185.

26. Ibid, p.189.

27. Interview with Nowbath.

28. Henning, The Indentured Indian In Natal, p.185.

29 Interview with Nowbath.

30. Ibid.

31. The Natal Mercury, 14 November 1991.

32. Interview with Nowbath. Also see The Leader - Golden Jubilee Supplement, p.1.

33. Ibid.

34. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.13.

35. The Leader, 30 November 1940, p.1.

36. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.17.

37. Interview with Nowbath.

38. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.14.

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42. Ibid, p.15.

43. Interview with Nowbath. Also see Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.15.

44. The Leader- Golden Jubilee Supplement, p.2.

45. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.15.

46. Interview with Nowbath.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

52. The Leader - Golden Jubilee Supplement, p.32.

53. Interview with Nowbath.

54. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.14.

55. The Leader - Golden Jubilee Supplement, p.5.

CHAPTER TWO : *"STRUGGLE IS ON"*[1]

THE PASSIVE RESISTANCE CAMPAIGN OF 1946.

"The coming of the Indians to Natal was no spontaneous uncontrolled movement of adventurous individuals seeking a better livelihood than their home country gave them. It was part of an elaborate system organised and controlled by the Governments of Great Britain and India." - Dr Mabel Palmer. **[2]**

The province of Natal was proclaimed a British colony in 1843. The white population discovered that the semi-tropical coastal belt of Natal favoured the growth of sugar-cane. But the problem of labour proved to be a serious one. **[3]** After an appeal was made to Sir George Grey, Governor of the Cape Colony and the High Commissioner over British territories in South Africa, he recommended the recruitment of labour from India. Initially the Government of India was reluctant to send Indian labourers to Natal but changed its mind once "the British Government pledged to safeguard the interests of its subjects everywhere on the basis of a common standard." **[4]** According to Pachai " the first Indians came to South Africa as a result of a triangular pact between the governments of Natal, India and Great Britain." **[5]**

The first group of Indian labourers arrived in Durban on 16 November 1860 on the SS Truro. They had been recruited from various parts of India and belonged to different language and caste groups. The indentured labourers arrived here under contract.

When the first group of men and women returned to India when their contracts expired in 1871, they lodged complaints with the Indian authorities with regard to the way they were treated in Natal.**[6]** Subsequently further immigration was temporarily suspended and the Coolie Commission was set up to investigate complaints and make recommendations. After a Protector of Indian Immigrants was appointed, medical services were provided and new regulations were introduced, India once again allowed the immigration of Indian labourers to South Africa in 1874.**[7]**

The groups of Indian immigrants to arrive on South African soil now consisted of indentured labourers, "free" Indians and "passenger" Indians. The "free" Indians were those labourers whose contracts with the white farmers had expired and who chose to remain in Natal instead of return to India. Those Indians who arrived in South Africa at their own expense were known as "passenger" Indians. These "passenger" Indians were not bound by any contract and were attracted to South Africa predominantly by the prospect of trade and other commercial opportunities. "Passenger" Indians who arrived in Natal enjoyed equal citizenship rights as the white population in the colony until these were terminated in 1893 when Natal was granted responsible government.

According to Maasdorp and Pillay the initial reaction of white Natalians toward the Indian population was favourable, but once the Indians began to compete with whites in the supply of agricultural produce and trading, white attitudes changed and the Indians were seen as potential competitors. **[8]**

The Indian population sought to exploit the opportunities available to them and to progress in all aspects of their lives. But their enthusiastic efforts were dashed as they battled against social prejudices and harsh political and economic oppression that was to make up Indian history in South Africa, especially Natal.

While it was the desire of many Indians to achieve free status and progress socially, there were those Indians who found the conditions of indenture so intolerable that they chose either to abscond before their contracts expired or flee as soon as they became free citizens. **[9]** The Wragg Commission of 1885 found that there was strong anti-Indian sentiment among the white population in Natal, which viewed the Indians as temporary citizens only. An investigation into labourers' complaints revealed that they had to endure harsh working conditions including acts of assault, non-payment or the withholding of wages. The labourers and their families also had to endure inadequate living conditions. There was a high mortality rate resulting from poor working and living conditions, illness and the growing concern of suicide. Nevertheless, once Natal was granted responsible government in 1893, Indians were faced with further repressive measures that were designed to keep them as indentured labourers for as long as possible. A series of enactments deprived Indians of the franchise in Natal, restrictions were placed on "free" Indians entering the country and the notorious 3 tax was designed to compel Indians to return to India. **[10]** When Gandhi arrived in South Africa he was shocked at the repressive conditions that the Indian population had to endure. It was Gandhi who brought the concept of passive resistance and the teachings of Satyagraha

to South African soil. (It was passive resistance that was used years later in 1946 to fight against the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act). Using the practice of passive resistance Gandhi successfully opposed in 1913 the Asiatic Law Amendment Act of 1907 and called for the registration of all Indian people. The passive resistance campaign was suspended once the Gandhi - Smuts Agreement was reached in 1913. The £3 tax was abolished and Indian marriages were recognised. When Gandhi left South Africa's shores in 1914 after remaining in the country for some 20 years the lot of the Indian population had not improved. Anti-Indian sentiment was once again flaring and in order to appease its electorate the government of the day passed various laws that restricted the movement and practices of the Indian community in the Transvaal and Natal.

The Transvaal Asiatic Land and Trading Amendment Act was passed that prevented the issuing of new trading licences to Indian traders after May 1919, except where licenced businesses changed hands from one Indian trader to another. The Areas Reservation Bill of 1926 which Bagwandeen describes as "a drastic blow to the "izzat" (dignity) of the Indian", proposed segregating the Indian population to special areas allocated to them in each town. **[11]** Dissatisfaction and fear among the Indian population resulted in the Government of India calling for a Round Table Conference. The culmination of the conference was the Cape Town Agreement of 1927 that provided a scheme to assist in the emigration of Indians, the entry of wives and minor children into South

Africa, the upliftment of the Indian community in South Africa and the appointment of an agent for the Government of India in South Africa. **[12]** The 1936 Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Amendment Act placed restrictions on the occupation of land and trading practices of Indian people. In Natal however, there was no comparable legal restriction. As a result of the lack of development in Indian residential areas, a growing number of well educated and prosperous Indians began to buy homes from the late 1930s in the white areas of Natal, both for investment and residential reasons. **[13]** This development became known as "Indian Penetration" and caused an outcry from the white population, outraged at the prospect of living side by side with the Indian families.

In an attempt to appease the white electorate Smuts appointed the Broome Commission to investigate the question of "Indian Penetration." The Broome Commission concluded that the situation was not a serious problem. Despite the findings of the Broome Commission Smuts proceeded to pass the Pegging Act in 1943 which was designed to restrict the occupation of land by the Indian population in the Durban area. When the "Pegging Act" was due to lapse on 31 March 1946, Smuts announced in the House of Assembly on 21 January 1946 the intention of introducing a Bill that would address the problem of land tenure in Natal. This Bill was to be known as the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Bill ie. the "Ghetto" Act. What the Asiatic Land Tenure Bill sought to do was to restrict Indians from purchasing property in certain areas. These

areas were known as "controlled" areas. No Indian could obtain property from a non-Asian person and vice-versa. Unless the Land Tenure Advisory Board recommended that a permit be granted, no property was to change hands between "Europeans" **[14]** and Asians. In areas that were deemed "uncontrolled" no restrictions were placed and Indians could obtain land and occupy these areas. The second part of the "Ghetto" Act was the Indian Representation Bill that granted Indian people "political rights" on a communal basis. Essentially what this Bill provided for was two Europeans to be elected to represent Indian interests in the House of Assembly while two members (who might be Indians) would be elected to the Natal Provincial Council. **[15]** The Indian community was astounded by the new legislation.**[16]** In a pamphlet published by the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) the "Ghetto" Bill was condemned as a discriminary measure that "subjects the Indian community to economic and social ruin." **[17]** The Act was accused of reducing the status of the Indian population and the communal franchise clause was rejected. In a meeting held in Durban on 3 February 1946 the NIC passed a resolution that called for the use of passive resistance as a measure to oppose the "Ghetto" Bill while a delegation was to be sent to India to muster support for the campaign. It was also decided that the Government of India should convene a round table conference in order to discuss the situation.

A deputation of delegates from the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) met with Smuts prior to the introduction of the Bill to Parliament in an attempt to change his mind about the "Ghetto" Bill. But Smuts proved to be uncompromising and rejected the proposals put forth by the deputation especially the proposal for a Round Table Conference with India.

The Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Bill was passed on 3 June 1946, after what was known to be one of the longest debates held in parliament. Dr Malan, the leader of the opposition had accepted the Bill in that it effectively seperated the different race groups with regard to the obtaining and owning property. But he was critical of the Act in that it granted the franchise to the Indians. The Dominion Party considered the "Ghetto" Bill as an improvement of the Pegging Act but like Malan it rejected the idea of the franchise being granted to the Indian people. Bagwandeen explains that Hofmeyr proved to be a disappointment to the Indian community who belived that he would oppose the Bill but instead he declared that he accepted the Bill as a compromise. **[18]** In a special conference that had been convened by the NIC on 30 March 1946 it was decided that if the "Ghetto" Bill was passed by Parliament then the Passive Resistance Campaign would be launched. 13 June 1940 was declared "Hartal Day" in order to protest against the unfair and unjust "Ghetto" Act. Most Indian businesses and offices closed and children remained home from school. In Durban the campaign proved to be most successful while in Stanger, Greytown and Pietermaritzburg

it was only half-heartedly supported and in Ladysmith, Dundee and Estcourt the call for protest was ignored. **[19]** It would appear that the reason for the tremendous success of the campaign in the Durban area was that the greatest concentration of Confrontationist supporters were from this area.

Bagwandeen explains that by the time the "Ghetto" Act became law the NIC and SAIC had changed its "orientation from caution to militancy." **[20]** The NIC had emerged in 1943 from the alliance between the Natal Indian Association (NIA) and the NIC. It consisted of the Accommodationist Pather - Kajee group and the Confrontationist Dadoo - Naicker group. But this proved to be the start of a long and bitter feud that eventually ended in the resignation of the Accommodationist Kajee - Pather group in October 1945. By 1946 the NIC leadership was completely taken over by the radical elements who forged links with other nationalist parties for example, the Communist Party. The existence of two groups that both claimed to represent Indian interests served to create a duality and disunity that eventually reduced the effectiveness of the fight against injustice.

The first act of resistance occured on 13 June 1946 when a group of Indian women crossed the Transvaal border by train into Natal without permits and courted arrest by the authorities. That afternoon these women joined some 12 000 people in a mass meeting held at Nichol Square, commonly refered to as Red Square. After the meeting a group of volunteers led by Dr. M. Naicker and M.D. Naidoo pitched tents on a vacant piece of municipal land at the intersection of Umbilo Road and Gale Street. The strategy behind this act was

to tempt arrest by the authorities in violation of the Asiatic Land Tenure Act. This action was to be carried out timelessly throughout the Passive Resistance Campaign in order to have as many resistors arrested in an attempt to gain the support and sympathy of the international community and ultimately the United Nations Organisation. These acts of defiance no doubt caused immense embarrassment to the Smuts government. The Durban City Council and police were aware that if they arrested or "harrased" the passive resistors it would cause an outcry from many sympathetic supporters both in and out of South Africa. As a result they were cautious in their approach to the situation thereby "hoping to deny the campaign its impact." **[21]** The situation took an ugly turn on 19 June 1946 when a group of white youths "repeatedly raided and wrecked" the passive resistors tents. **[22]** The authorities were now forced to act and the passive resistors were arrested on 21 June 1946 and charged for tresspassing. Ever cautious, the magistrates court did not charge the resistors under the newly passed Asiatic Land Tenure Act. All but two resistors were cautioned and discharged. That very evening the passive resistors returned to the site and were once again subjected to a barrage of abuse from white youths. The government issued a proclaimation under the Riotous Assemblies Act that prohibited any gathering within 400 yards of the passive resistance site. **[23]** The group of passive resistors were arrested and charged under the proclaimation. The leaders of the group were sentenced to seven days

hard labour while the rest were cautioned and discharged. The fact that only the leaders were sentenced demonstrates the cautious approach of the government to the delicate situation. In its editorial entitled "Justice in South Africa" The Leader slammed the actions of the South African judicial system, stating that it was painfully clear that there were two systems of justice in South Africa. **[24]** The newspaper questioned the reasons as to why only the Indian passive resistors were arrested while the "European" youths were left to go. Undeterred by the unfair treatment of the courts the passive resistors returned to the site "in a calm and dignified protest against the "Ghetto" Act. **[25]**

The acts of defiance continued, much to the chagrin of the white government which could not arrest and imprison masses of passive resistors without causing an international outcry. What the government resorted to doing was arresting and imprisoning the leaders of the various passive resistance groups as an attempt to break the morale of the campaign and avoid any international stirrings. On 27 June 1946 Drs. Dadoo and Naicker were sentenced to three months and six months imprisonment with hard labour respectively in terms of the Riotious Assemblies Act. They were followed by M.D. Naidoo (sentenced to six months and one week of hard labour) and Dr Goonam (six months and a week of which four were suspended). However this strategy failed to discourage the passive resistors and the government imposed a fine of £ 5 without the option of imprisonment. The passive resistors were warned that if their fines were not paid their property would be auctioned. But not a single passive resistor paid his or her fine.

The government had no further choice but to imprison the passive resistors in mass numbers. When the first phase of the resistance campaign had ended on 6 July 1946, 158 volunteers had been sentenced to jail. In an official statement dated 5 July 1946 the NIC declared that "today is the day of victory for the struggle of the Indian people in South Africa." **[26]** Although, the NIC considered the campaign a tremendous success, it also expressed concern at the mounting racial tension.

On 11 July 1946 the second phase of the resistance campaign was launched when a group of volunteers pitched tents on the corner of Walter Gilbert and Umgeni Roads. On 23 October 1946 a mass campaign was organised in Durban to coincide with the opening of the United Nations General Assembly. Those passive resistors who occupied a site at Umbilo Road and Gale Street were arrested. Bagwandeen explains that thousands of "Europeans" and "non-Europeans" witnessed one of the largest mass arrests that took place in the Union. **[27]** But the mass arrests that were occuring was exactly what the passive resistance campaign hoped to achieve. The NIC was to use this development "to good effect for propaganda purposes both in India and at the United Nations." **[28]**

While the NIC was concentrating its efforts in intensifying the Passive Resistance Campaign, the Accommodationist elements within the SAIC nominated a delegation to attend the United Nations meeting where

the Indian Question was to be addressed. The Joint Passive Resistance Council that consisted of the NIC and TIC Councils had also nominated a delegation to attend the United Nations meeting. Old rivalries and personality clashes began to reveal themselves at this crucial stage in the struggle. The Joint Passive Resistance Council refused to acknowledge the delegation nominated by the SAIC. As far as the Joint Passive Resistance Council was concerned the SAIC delegation did not represent the interests of the Indian community. What resulted then from this fragmented organisation was "2 official delegations proceeding to New York, in the same plane, carrying with them the same picture of the South African scene but yet insistent on presenting this picture seperately, at great harm to the unity and the prestige of the South African Indian and at equally great expense to the Indian pocket." **[29]** In its editorial The Leader slammed the actions of the Joint Passive Resistance Council and the SAIC, stating that it was a tragic situation for the Indian community "that it is faced with periodical outbursts of internal strife which can be avoided by the use of common sense, mutual adjustment and discussion in committee." **[30]**

At the opening session of the United Nations General Assembly there were delegations from 54 member states present. Most importantly a delegation from the Union was present, headed by Smuts and Heaton Nicholls, administrator of Natal; along with a delegation from India headed by Mrs Vijayalakshmi Pundit. The divisions that were present among the South African Indians served to damage and weaken their

case, as well as the position of the delegation from India. **[31]** Nevertheless, Mrs Vijayalakshmi Pundit presented a strong case on behalf of the South African Indians. Prior to the opening of the General Assembly a detailed memorandum covering the history of Indian immigration to South Africa, their general treatment and the socio-economic and political ills they were subjected to endure, was set out by the Government of India. As a counter measure the South African Union Government also issued a memorandum that pointed out the Government of India's failure to take into account the economic, social and educational progress that was enjoyed by the Indian community of South Africa.

The matter was eventually referred to the Joint First (Political) and Sixth (Legal) Committee. Mrs pundit commenced by delivering a history of the Indian people in South Africa. She stressed that the Indian people had contributed toward South Africa's economic advancement yet they were the victims of its unjust policy. Mrs Pundit maintained that the Indian people were entitled to protection under the United Nations Charter. She declared that the Government of India regarded the Indian question as a political one and not a legal one, she went to say that India was opposed to the segregation of Indians in South Africa and that India had a moral and political obligation to Indians in South Africa. **[32]** Mrs Pundit declared that the matter in question was not between two countries only, but that its "potential consequences made it a world problem" that only the United Nations could solve by exercising "their collective wisdom and to employ their moral sanction in the interests of justice." **[33]** Smuts followed Mrs Pundit and he commenced by making the statement that there were two issues

with regard to the case that was presented by the Government of India. The first issue concerned the facts of the case (discussed by Mr Heaton Nicholls) and the second issue concerned the legal aspects and the right of the United Nations to intervene in South Africa's affairs. Referring to Article 2 (7) of the United Nations Charter Smuts brought it to the delegates' attention that "every state has the right to live its own way, as long as it does not infringe the equal right of other states to do the same ..... " **[34]** Smuts declared that the India Government had no right to interfere or intervene in the affairs of the Union of South Africa and denied that the Union had violated any fundamental human rights in its treatment of the Indian population. Smuts maintained that the Indian population in South African enjoyed much greater economic, educational and social advancement than their counter parts in India.

Mr Chagla also representing the Indian Government delegation, elaborated on the points that were made by Mrs Pundit. He asserted that "since 1860 there had been a painful history of broken promises" for the Indian people of South Africa. **[35]** He went on to say that the Indian people were citizens of the Union of South Africa yet they did not enjoy the fundamental right to vote. In terms of its general policy and the enactment of the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act of 1946 the Union government had violated the Cape Town Agreement of 1927 and the fundamental principles and purposes of the Charter. **[36]** Mr Chagla referred to the Cape Town Agreement as a solemn treaty, which the South African delegation simply

denied as an act of good intention.

Mr Heaton Nicholls presented the "facts" of the case on behalf of the South African delegation. He asserted that the matter had reached its present proportion as a result of the Government of India using the South African Indian Question as propaganda to further its own objectives. Reiterating Smuts' statement, he claimed that the Indians in South Africa enjoyed a better standard of living than those in India and maintained that any dissatisfaction stemmed from them clinging to the caste and class distinctions that were prevalent in India. Quoting Joshi, Bagwandeen says that "Mr Heaton Nicholls of South Africa assailed India in the most indecent language heard in the forum of the world." **[37]** Speeches from 43 other delegates were presented and the committee was left to judge the issue. The United Nations General Assembly on 8 December 1946 adopted the Franco-Mexican resolution that recommended that the Government of India and the Government of the Union of South Africa be given a year in which to resolve their differences and report thereafter to the next United Nations session.

The reaction of South Africans was mixed. The white population reacted by boycotting and picketting Indian businesses. In Natal especially, the number of Indian people left unemployed was considerable. The Minister of the Interior, Clarkson stated that : " there can be no retracing the steps that have been taken. The Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act is in operation and it will remain in operation." **[38]** Dr Naicker of the

Joint Passive Resistance Council warned that : "It is no time for self-congratulation or gloating among our people. Great sacrifices lie ahead before we obtain our just demands." **[39]** When summing up the year 1946, The Leader editorial asserted that "nobody regrets the passing of this year less than the Indian; when this year opened the propects were bleak and uninviting. But today there is a break in the clouds and we can discern a ray of hope shining and that is the UN decision. While we cannot afford to relax our vigilence during the next 12 months, there is however one consolation, the eyes of the world are focused on South Africa." **[40]** But the call from the Joint Resistance Council to maintain the intensity of the Passive Resistance Campaign went unheeded. By this time the intensity and enthusiasm of the campaign had began to wane and it never reached the proportions that it did when it started. White attributes the waning of support to the general public's acceptance that the campaign had reached its goal with the United Nations resolution and there was no organisational structure that could adequately mobilize and sustain the support of the campaign at a consistant level and by October 1946 the campaign was struggling against financial difficulties. **[41]** The financial difficulties that the council was experiencing stemmed from the fact that the majority of its funds were being allocated to passive resistors' dependants and as a result there was too little money left to the action communities. In order to counteract this problem the NIC executive decided to decentralize the NIC to different areas.

The royal visit of February 1947 served to emphasize how the support for the resistance campaign had declined. Smuts viewed the royal visit as an event that could allow him to regain his lost prestige and strengthen the South African Union Government's case before the next United Nations meeting. The Confrontationist elements within the NIC decided to show their dissatisfaction by calling to the Indian community to boycott the coming tour. The NIC maintained that "in view of its struggle against the discriminatory legislation of the king's government in South Africa, it was unable to accord their Majesties a glad welcome to South Africa." **[42]** This course of action was adopted by the NIC despite Pundit Nehru of India advising against it.

The call to boycott the royal tour proved to be an embarassment to the NIC, especially the Confrontationist elements within it. The Leader reported that over 10 000 Indians turned out to enthusiastically welcome the royal family. **[43]** The call to boycott the royal visit was ignored particularly in the Pietermaritzburg and surrounding areas. The collapse of the boycott provided an opportunity for the Accommodationist elements to regain some of their lost ground and they set about issuing counter propaganda claims, criticising the Confrontationists for their actions. What the weakened the position of the radicals within the NIC did result in was an alliance with the African National Congress (ANC). The ANC had at the start of the Passive Resistance Campaign pledged its support for the struggle. This support eventually resulted in the signing of the Xuma-Naicker-Dadoo Pact, commonly referred to as

the "Doctors Pact", in March 1947.

Growing tension between the Accommodationist and Confrontationist elements resulted in the Accommodationists forming a new group called the Natal Indian Organisation (NIO) in April 1947. This move further paralysed the NIC's weakened position. The Kajee led group had met with Smuts on 11 April 1947 to discuss the formation of a new organisation and this resulted in an explosive situation with the NIO and NIC openly attacking each other. With screaming headlines The Leader was to report constantly thereafter on attacks and counter attacks between the leaders of the NIO and NIC. **[44]** Drs. Dadoo and Naicker called Kajee "the stooge of General Smuts." **[45]**

After a meeting was held between Smuts and the NIO in May 1947 it was decided that the NIO should send a cable to the Nehru government requesting that the Indian High Commissioner be returned to South Africa. The Government of India refused, explaining that this would only occur if the South African Union Government accepted the resolution that was passed at the United Nations conference in 1946 as a basis for discussion between India and South Africa. Pundit Nehru attempted to open discussions with Smuts through many of his letters to the South African Prime Minister. Smuts on the other hand, merely dismissed these attempts as "Nehru's silly correspondence." Smuts stood firmly against adopting the United Nations resolution. Smuts informed Nehru that he had not violated any of the fundamental rights of the UN Charter nor did he break any

international agreements, and he asserted that if he did adopt the resolution it would mean that the Union did violate the charter and agreements. **[46]** Pundit Nehru replied "I have tried my best to end the deadlock between our two governments, but must observe with regret, that though no fault of ours, no common statement or negotiations between us has been found." **[47]** And thus the two countries remained deadlocked with both Smuts and Nehru standing firmly by their decisions.

In a report submitted in September 1947 to the United Nations General Assembly prior to the reopening of the Indian Question debate in November, the South African Union Government and Smuts, in particular, gambled on the state of confusion in India and growing international tensions to deflect the United Nations criticism from South Africa. **[48]** Once more the South African delegation maintained that it had not violated any human rights. Dr Dadoo, on behalf of the Passive Resistance Council slammed the report and called on the United Nations member states to impose trade sanctions against South Africa and for the Passive Resistance Campaign to revive itself. The Indian community was expected to give the campaign its fullest support. **[49]** But the response from the Indian community was disappointing. The masses that had turned up at the meetings when the campaign was first launched in June 1946, failed to materialise and the number of volunteers was reduced. The Leader in its editorial called on the leaders of the campaign to change their tactics and strategies. It asked them to acknowledge the fact that their

tactics were failing and needed to be changed and the newspaper recommended that the trade sanctions be called off and the High Commissioner be returned to South Africa. **[50]** The suggestion put forward by The Leader fell to deaf ears.

What ensued at the United Nations conference in November 1947 turned out to be the final nail in the resistance campaign's coffin. India's resolution that called for both the governments of India and South Africa to sit at a Round Table Conference failed to gain the necessary 2/3 majority. Other matters that needed urgent attention were now occupying the United Nations agenda. The fact that the resolution failed to gain the vital 2/3 majority vote meant a crushing defeat for the Confrontationist NIC who had relied so much on its support. India also viewed this as a defeat. But to Smuts and white South Africans in general it was seen as a tremendous victory. Smuts now considered the time right to open negotiations with India. The Accommodationist NIO was also gaining support and prestige during this tense period. This proved to be a further blow to the Confrontationist NIC. The Passive Resistance Council decided to resuscitate the flailing campaign and on 15 January 1948 25 volunteers crossed the Natal-Transvaal boundary in defiance of the Immigrants Regulations Act of 1913. As in 1946, the government chose to ignore the new strategy that was adopted. Once its inaction was questioned in parliament, the authorities were forced to act. When a batch of 25 resistors crossed the Natal-Transvaal border in 10 February 1948 they were arrested and

sentenced to one month's suspended sentence. On 12 February 1948 15 resistors once again violated the Act and were sentenced to one month's imprisonment which was suspended if the act was not repeated. Drs. Dadoo and Naicker were charged in the Durban Magistrates Court for aiding and abetting the resistance campaign and were sentenced to six months imprisonment. But by this time the campaign had lost its vigour and force. A small group of resistors were still dedicated to the campaign but the majority of the Indian community was no longer interested in sustaining the campaign. As a result the Accommodationists managed to strengthen their position at the expense of the Confrontationist's failing strategies. In a conference held in Cape Town Smuts indicated his willingness to meet with representatives of the Indian government provided that the High Commissioner return to South Africa and trade sanctions be lifted. On 15 March 1948 the Accommodationist political organisations met at a meeting in Durban, out of which the South African Indian Organisation emerged. By June 1948 the Smuts government had lost the election to Malan's Nationalist Party and the Joint Passive Resistance Council decided to suspend its campaign. Besides, Malan and his government refused to acknowledge the NIC and the Passive Resistance Campaign was never revived.

Faced with a piece of legislation that affected their dignity as citizens of South Africa, the Indian community turned to the United Nations Organisation as a means of solving the problem of injustice. The United Nations was

an international organisation established as the "guardian of international peace and security, of harmony among nations both large and small and among the peoples of the world and of all races, kinds and creeds," **[51]** Yet the faith and hope that the South African Indian Community placed in the organisation was short lived. Although the NIC hailed the United Nation's resolution as a victory, it was a "hollow victory" because "the United Nations cannot compel any country to grant specific rights and privileges to its citizens for that is left entirely to the government of that country." **[52]** That the United Nations could not force the South African government to accept any resolution nor could it intervene directly in the affairs of this country, was a fact that Smuts was well aware off. Nothing therefore, was done to make the resolution an effective one. The fact that the Indian delegation from South Africa comprised of two seperate groups did not help the situation either. Although Mrs Pundit, representing the delegation from India, made an impassioned plea on behalf of the South African Indian community to the United Nations, the fragmented unity of the South African delegation weakened their case.

Closer to home, the Indian community was divided in a tug of war between the Accommodationist and Confrontationist elements each claiming to best represent its interests. What did result from the Passive Resistance Campaign of 1946 was an ANC - NIC alliance. According to Bagwandeen the Passive Resistance Campaign served to foster closer co-operation between the Indian people and other people of colour, especially the Black people. **[53]**

Although the Passive Resistance Campaign lost much of its vigour and force after a few months, it did become a beacon of inspiration for future struggles against injustice.

END NOTES

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3. D. Bagwandeen, "Historical Perspectives", in The Indian South Africans, A. J. Arkin, K.P. Magyar, G.J. Pillay (eds), (Pinetown: Owen Burgess Publishers, 1989), p.3.

4. Bagwandeen, "Historical Perspectives", p.4.

5. Pachai, The South African Indian Question, p.1.

6. S. Bhana and J. Brain, Setting Down Roots, Indian Immigrants in South Africa, 1860 - 1911, (Johannesburg : Witwatersrand University Press, 1990), p.30.

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8. G. Maasdorp and N. Pillay, "Indians in the Political Economy of South Africa", in South Africa's Indians: The Evolution of a Minority, B. Pachai (ed), (Washington D.C. :University Press of America, 1979), p.217.

9. Bhana and Brain, Setting Down Roots, p.60-61.

10. Bagwandeen, "Historical Perspectives", p.5.

11. Ibid, p.7.

12. Pachai, The South African Indian Question, p.119. Also see to Bagwandeen, "Historical Perspectives", p.8.

13. B. White, "Passive Resistance in Natal in 1946 - 1948", Journal of Natal and Zulu History, V, (1982), p.1. Also see Bagwandeen, "Historical Perspectives", p.10.

14. The word "European" is used in the context of that period.

15. J.K. Motwani and J.B. Mutwani (eds), Global Migration of Indians, (New York : National Federation of Indian - American Association, 1989), p.29.

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19. White, "Passive Resistance In Natal", p.5.

20. Bagwandeen, "The Question of "Indian Penetration" in the Durban Area and Indian Politics", p.285.

21. White, "Passive Resistance In Natal", p.5.

22. The Leader, 22 June 1946, p.1.

23. White, "Passive Resistance In Natal", p.6.

24. The Leader, 29 June, p.6.

25. S. Bhana and B. Pachai (eds), A Documentary History of Indian South Africans, (Cape Town : David Philip, 1984), p.201.

26. The Leader, 13 July 1946, p.5.

27. Bagwandeen, "The Question of "Indian Penetration" in the Durban Area and Indian Politics", p.304.

28. White, "Passive Resistance in Natal", p.7.

29. Pachai, The South African Indian Question, p.200.

30. The Leader, 12 October 1946, p.6.

31. White, "Passive Resistance in Natal", p.10. Also see Pachai, The South African Indian Question, p.200.

32. Bagwandeen, "The Question of "Indian penetration" in the Durban Area", p.329.

33. Pachai, The South African Indian Question, p.201.

34. Bagwandeen, "The Question of "Indian Penetration" in the Durban Area", p.331.

35. Pachai, The South African Indian Question, p.202.

36. Ibid, p.203.

37. Bagwandeen, "The Question of "Indian Penetration" in the Durban Area", p.331.

38. White, "Passive Resistance in Natal", p.11.

39. The Leader, 9 December 1946, p.6.

40. The Leader, 28 December 1946, p.6.

41. White, "Passive Resistance in Natal", p.12-13.

42. Ibid, p.15.

43. The Leader, 22 March 1947,p.3.

44. The Leader, 27 September 1947, p.7.

45. Ibid.

46. The Leader, 23 August 1947, p.1.

47. Letter disclosed in The Leader, 23 August 1947, p.9.

48. White, "Passive Resistance in Natal", p.19.

49. Bagwandeen, "The Question of "Indian Penetration" in the Durban Area", p.306.

50. The Leader, 4 October 1947, p.6.

51. Pachai, The South African Indians, p.197.

52. Bagwandeen, "The Question of "Indian Penetration" in the Durban Area", p.335.

53. Ibid, p.311.

CHAPTER THREE : *"A TRAGIC SITUATION"* [1]

The Passive Resistance Campaign served to highlight the plight of the Indian community in South Africa. Unfortunately it failed to bring about the political changes that it hoped and subsequently the lot of the Indian community remained unchanged. The progress of the Passive Resistance Campaign was closely followed by The Leader. That campaign was a major political event of the 1940s and proved to be a useful example for testing the brave stance that The Leader had taken in its declaration of its policy as presented in the first issue. By the time the Passive Resistance Campaign was underway in June 1946, the circulation figures of The Leader were already matching and passing those circulation figures of the Indian Opinion and Indian Views. This was an indication that The Leader was being well received by the majority of the Indian community. What will be investigated in the following pages are the reasons behind The Leader's popularity as a newspaper and in particular The Leader's stance on the Passive Resistance Campaign is examined.

The Leader is a progressive newspaper. In a time when there were no opportunities or outlets for non-white journalists, for example non-white newspapers were not sold over the counter in shops, The Leader always managed to print the latest in news. Nowbath attributes this to the fact that The Leader made use of the latest printing equipment. **[2]** The Indian Opinion and Indian Views used antiquated equipment while The Leader "was working in relation to the times with modern equipment. " **[3]** Nowbath had edited

the Indian Opinion for one and a half years prior to it being closed down in 1961. The printing equipment that the Indian Opinion had been using in 1961 was the same equipment that it had first purchased in 1903 when it was founded by Gandhi. The same can be said of the Indian Views. These two newspapers never updated their equipment and consequently printing the news of the day was a tedious and time consuming process. The handset type printing equipment would take the printer almost a whole day to print ten or twenty centimetres of type. Any mishap with the equipment meant that the printer would have to start the process from scratch. The Leader though was printed on linotype. By making use of the latest printing equipment The Leader was able to meet deadlines and deliver the latest in news to the community as soon as possible. It was made available to the public on a Friday and Saturday of every week. Prior to the printing taking place on a Friday morning, Bobby Harrypersadh would go out into the streets of Durban or Pietermaritzburg and investigate what each of The Leader's rival newspapers were reporting and this information was passed to Nowbath who would edit their articles and in conjunction with The Leader's own information, print the news of the day. **[4]** As a result the news was always available very quickly and very promptly.

A significant area of departure between The Leader and the Indian Views and Indian Opinion was in the type of advertisements that each of these newspapers printed. The Indian Opinion and Indian Views were regarded as conservative newspapers. The type of advertising that these two newspapers undertook consisted predominantly of cigarette and tyre advertisements. These

newspapers were approached by the particular companies who would undertake a contract with the newspapers to advertise that product for a particular period of time. **[5]** The newspaper proprietors were paid in advance and the advertisement was printed on a particular page or in a particular corner of a page. Consequently what used to happen was that the advertisement would be printed over a long period of time without its position ever changing from its allocated place. **[6]** What resulted then was a type of static advertising with little variety. The Indian Opinion catered specifically for the Gujarati community and it was predominantly the Gujarati businessmen and traders who would place their advertisements in the Indian Opinion. The majority of these advertisements were printed in the Gujarati script. The Indian Views also carried advertisements predominantly from the Muslim community. Any advertisement depicting intimacy between a man and woman or showing items of personal hygiene was strictly taboo. Consequently one would fail to find advertisements for perfume or other intimate items in these two Indian newspapers.

The Leader on the other hand can be considered progressive in its advertising. It carried advertisements for perfumes and bath soaps and featured men and women in close proximity. But The Leader never overstepped the bounds of decency and the advertisements that it featured never sought to offend. Its advertisements consisted of a wide variety of items and were all printed in English. Those businessmen and traders who chose to advertise in The Leader came from all sections of the Indian community. The Leader did not favour any particular group within that community.

Unlike the Indian Opinion and Indian Views whose editors drove around Natal gathering local news that was of interest to their particular audience, The Leader had several outlets for receiving news. It must be remembered that the Indian Opinion and Indian Views were predominantly magazines and not newspapers and that they were orientated more toward cultural activities. The Leader on the other hand was a fully fledged newspaper. It had journalists like Bobby Harrypersadh and R. Nowbath (also editor between 1946 - 1948) to gather and report on the local news. The Leader's overseas news was obtained from the numerous "contacts" that Dhanee Bramdaw had made from his travels abroad. **[7]** The friends whom Dhanee Bramdaw had made overseas would send him articles and magazines from which he would select items of interest. The Indian reader after 1945 was very interested in the news that arrived from India (India was to gain its independance within two years) and The Leader used to receive news from the Indian newspapers and magazines that were brought by the regular boats sailing between Bombay and Durban. **[8]** News that was of interest and topical was selected from the magazines and newspapers and printed in The Leader. Through an instrument known as a teleprinter - "the wire" - The Leader used to subscribe to Reuters and request that any material of Indian interest be sent to them for printing. By using the different outlets available to it, The Leader was able to print news of both local and international interest.

The success of The Leader can also be attributed to its non-alignment with any political grouping. The Leader "stood for honest reporting" and refused "to be drawn into the mainstream of Indian opinion." **[9]** In the editorial column of its very first issue The Leader fearlessly declared that it was "an

independent organ, owing no allegiance to any group or body, but its columns will be open to all bodies which place the welfare of the Indian community, in its entirety, foremost. This, in fact, will be the Leader's criterion of judgement of all public affairs affecting Indians." **[10]** This indeed was a bold statement, a statement that the Passive Resistance Campaign of 1946 tested.

Nowbath's personal opinion of the Passive Resistance Campaign was that it was "a huge joke" and he informed those involved with the campaign of the way he felt. **[11]** When the campaign was officially launched on 13 June 1946, Nowbath was asked to be a participant but he refused, claiming that he had "grown up in too much of comfort" to spend his time in jail. **[12]** He did however agree to join in the march that was organised prior to the first batch of passive resistance volunteers occupying the piece of muncipal land at the corner of Umbilo Road and Gale Street. Nowbath's personal opinion was made known to the passive resistance volunteers but he also informed them that publicly he was not going to condemn the campaign. He was not going to approach the Passive Resistance Campaign with a negative attitude as it was an issue that affected the community and it highlighted many grievances. **[13]** The Leader's news columns were open to afford the campaign its publicity. The Leader carried extensive coverage of the Passive Resistance Campaign and provided it with good publicity. Nowbath nevertheless stressed that The Leader's editorial columns were reserved for its own view point.

Although Nowbath offered no further explanation or reason as to why he thought

the Passive Resistance Campaign was a farce, it can be speculated that Nowbath felt that the volunteers' actions would yield little interest from the general public. Even the Durban Police and authorities were cautious in their approach to the situation, knowing that any drastic measures on their part would result in both a local and international outcry. What the Smuts government and the local authorities hoped was that the interest that was initially stirred would dwindle to indifference if the Passive Resistance volunteers were not interfered with. The situation though took a nasty turn on 19 June 1946 when the group of Passive Resistance volunteers at the corner of Umbilo Road and Gale Street was attacked by a group of white youths. This was what provided the Passive Resistance Campaign with the attention it was seeking and ultimately changed Nowbath's perspective on the situation. Nowbath argues that "this was what made the issue" for him, for if those volunteers had been left alone, their actions would have received little attention. **[14]**

During 1946 and 1947 The Leader carried much coverage on the Passive Resistance Campaign, all of which Nowbath reported on. He maintains that this was "the simple material approach to the subject - we sold more papers." **[15]** This may have been the logical approach to the situation but it was also the policy of The Leader to report on all events that were of interest to the community or had the community's welfare as its concern. Whether the aim of reporting on the campaign was to sell more newspapers or whether the editor approved or disapproved of the situation; the Passive Resistance Campaign was the news of the day and it highlighted the plight of the Indian community and therefore The Leader was not going to deny or withhold news from the community.

News of the Passive Resistance Campaign featured prominently among the front pages of The Leader's weekly issues. The headlines were bold and punctured with short quotations and phrases that immediately captured the reader's attention. As each legislation was passed and as each event occured, it provoked a particular response from the Indian community and it was the emotion behind this response that The Leader managed to capture in its headlines and reports.

The Indian community was determined to resist the "Ghetto" Act at all costs and this was clearly evident from The Leader's headline that screamed from its front page "Natal's Determined Cry : 'No Indian Ghetto Bill' ". **[16]** The Leader once again revealed the determination and head strong attitude of the Indian community from a headline that read "We Shall Face It To The Bitter End." **[17]** In contrast to The Leader, the reporting that was done by the Indian Opinion and Indian Views can be regarded as passive. When the Passive Resistance Campaign was launched the Indian Views for example, simply entitled their article "The Indian Question in South Africa" and proceeded to present the facts of the case. **[18]** This type of reporting can be attributed to the fact that the Indian Opinion and Indian Views did not have the type of modern printing equipment that The Leader possessed that enabled it to print more news in a much shorter space of time. It must also be noted that the Indian Views, for example, was "edited, reported and run" by one man, M.I. Meer. **[19]** At The Leader's office Nowbath was assisted by Bobby Harrypersadh.

The Leader in its reporting never emphasized the views of one political group over another. Instead it expressed the sentiments of all political groups within

the community. By including the opinions of the different personalities involved in the Passive Resistance Campaign, The Leader provided the reader with the opportunity to judge the type of approach that was favoured by each of the political groups to the Indian question in South Africa. This is best exemplified in The Leader's article entitled "We Have To Continue Firing Our Bullets ..." **[20]** The United Nations General Assembly had adopted the Franco-Mexican resolution in December 1946 and the Accommodationist Kajee - Pather group, which viewed this as a victory, called for the suspension of the Passive Resistance Campaign. This provoked an angry outcry from the Passive Resistance Council which asserted that the resistance would continue until the Smuts government adopted the United Nations resolution. The Leader reported on both reponses to the United Nations decision. (The response of The Leader will be discussed later).

The Leader also reported on the divisions and dissatisfaction that had began to characterise the Confrontationist NIC group. By September / October 1947 elements within the Confrontationist Dadoo - Naicker group began to express their dissatisfaction at their leaders approach to the Indian Question. They did not agree with Dr. Dadoo's call for world sanctions against South Africa, believing that this strategy would ultimately affect the very people it sought to help. **[21]** This dissatisfaction led to the resignation of certain leading personalities like Mohanlal R. Parekh (treasurer of the NIC) and Mr Bawa. Quoting well-known Indian leader S.R. Naidoo in its headline "Dadoo Is Spoiling A Good Case By Bad Handling", The Leader reported Naidoo as further claiming that Dr Dadoo was "an out and out communist" and that "communism outweighs his sense of proportion and his sense of duty in

leadership to his own people." **[22]** Satisfied with the United Nations decision the majority of the Indian community, by this time, began to lose interest in the Passive Resistance Campaign. The Leader no doubt expressed the Indian community's sentiments when its editorial called for the Passive Resistance Council to change its strategies. **[23]** This call went unheeded and the mud-slinging among the Indian leaders continued. In reply to the accusations made by S.R. Naidoo in The Leader, Dr. Dadoo blamed Smuts for trying to create divisions within the Indian community and subsequently trying to weaken the Passive Resistance Campaign. **[24]** Dr Dadoo maintained that the Indian community "after fifteen months of struggle was still united." **[25]** Dr. Naicker reiterated Dr. Dadoo's statement a few weeks thereafter when he stated that "the Indian people were more determined than ever before. They had implicit faith in the struggle and full confidence in their national organisation, the Natal Indian Congress." **[26]** Despite the divisions and personality clashes that served to ultimately weaken the Passive Resistance Campaign The Leader continued to give coverage to the campaign, until it was finally suspended when Malan's Nationalist government came to power in 1948.

The Leader's coverage of the Passive Resistance Campaign was extensive. The Leader's news columns provided the Passive Resistance Campaign with extensive and favourable coverage. (Any damage to the campaign was done by the rivalry that emerged among its leaders). Nowbath agreed to open The Leader's new columns to the Passive Resistance Campaign but he asserted that The Leader's editorial columns were reserved for its own viewpoint. Nowbath explains that the Passive Resistance Campaign

drew no significant support or opposition from The Leader's news columns. **[27]** When Smuts proposed to replace the Pegging Act with the "Ghetto" Act, it drew outrage from The Leader. "We soon will be faced with a situation fraught with the gravest peril to our existence as a self-respecting community." **[28]** The Leader called for united action by all Indian South Africans and asked the Natal Indian Congress Committee to invite the Kajee - Pather group to join them in solidarity against the unjust Bill. Nowbath, editor of The Leader during the Passive Resistance Campaign, did not believe that the campaign would be successful. The Leader's editorial called for the Indian community to fight against the "Ghetto" Act even if Passive Resistance was their own weapon. But The Leader also asked the Indian community to examine its forces for "we cannot be so blind as not to see that we lack the fullest degree of cohesion." **[29]** The Leader believed that the Passive Resistance Campaign could never be successful because the Indian community's common interests were divided to the point where a class conflict was created and their leaders were not united. "Our adversaries will not delay in taking advantage of our weaknesses so as to divide us still further." **[30]** The Leader also criticised the rivalries and divisions among the Indian leaders that served to weaken the Indian case at the United Nations. The Leader descibed the situation as a tragedy that the Indian community was "faced with periodical outbursts of material strife which can be avoided by the use of common sense, mutual adjustment and discussion in committee." **[31]** The Leader tirelessly questioned the actions of Smuts, the Joint Passive Resistance Council, the NIC and NIO with regard to the general well-being of the Indian community.

The Leader even questioned the reason behind sending so many delegations to India and New York stating that it was an "unnecessary waste of money which can be put to some very tangible and practical use." **[32]** The Leader's editorials criticised many of the Passive Resistance Campaign's actions but it also offered suggestions that often fell to deaf ears. When Smuts refused to adopt the United Nations resolution, the Confrontationist Dadoo-Naicker group called for trade sanctions against South Africa and an intensification of the Passive Resistance Campaign. The call for trade sanctions served to hurt the very community it was supposed to help and The Leader suggested that Dr. Dadoo change his approach to the situation. **[33]** But the advice was never utilised.

In The Leader's first issue its editorial claimed that "The Leader may have its own viewpoint, but it will never deny the use of its columns to expressions of divergent views, honestly expressed and within the law and directed towards the well-being of the community." **[34]** In a column entitled "Our Readers Speak" the general public was invited to express their views on any matter of topical interest. The Passive Resistance Campaign was launched with a tremendous support from the majority of the Indian community. But as the campaign progressed divisions began to reveal themselves among the different leaders and political groups which ultimately served to divide the Indian community. This was clearly evident by the letters that The Leader published from the public.

The Royal visit in February / March 1947 to South Africa was without doubt a tremendous embarassment for the Confrontationist NIC. Prior

to the royal tour visiting Durban the Confrontationist NIC called for a boycott of the tour by the Indian community. This call was virtually ignored as thousands of Indian people turned up to enthusiastically welcome the royal tour. The Leader published two letters from two readers, one in support of the tour and the other opposed to it, that indicated the divided attitudes of the Indian community with regard to heeding the NIC's call. A.H. Bhyat was totally opposed to the idea of the Indian community welcoming the royal tour. He asked the readers not to forget that their mother country India was "enslaved for centuries by this king's countrymen" and went on to claim that the tour was nothing but a bolster for Smuts' "shakey regime." **[35]** The reader criticized The Leaders column - "Talk of the Bazaar" for supporting the royal tour. On the other hand, E.E. Ameen supported the royal tour and claimed that boycotting the royal tour would not help the Passive Resistance Campaign in any way. This reader asked the NIC and TIC's leaders to rethink their stance on the tour and the Passive Resistance Campaign in particular, advising them to "use more tact and diplomacy in their politics." **[36]**

In other letters the readers were also divided in their support of the different leaders and their different approaches to the situation at hand. **[37]** But throughout the Passive Resistance Campaign The Leader's columns remained open to both sides of the issue. The Leader's telephone lines were also open to the public who often called to express their sentiments over a particular viewpoint that the editorial had expressed. Nowbath, recalling his own experiences as editor for other newspapers after he had resigned from The Leader in 1948, maintains that newspapers

today choose which letters they wish to publish. This was unlike The Leader which published all letters with divergent viewpoints provided, off course, that they were within the bounds of decency. **[38]**

Nowbath claims that the Passive Resistance Campaign was a farce because unemployed young men in the streets were paid to go to jail. **[39]** This allegation was vehemently denied at the time. The Leader reported that the Passive Resistance volunteers themselves were not paid to go to jail but if any person was unable to care for his/her family while in jail, then the Passive Resistance Council would assist in supporting the family. **[40]** Evidence revealed that the Passive Resistance Campaign began to experience financial difficulties. What made the campaign a joke was the fact that Volkskas Bank granted the Passive Resistance Council an overdraft to continue with the campaign. **[41]** The Passive Resistance Council also received "black market money" known as "ooplong" among the Indian traders of Grey Street, to continue with its campaign and this money was never accounted for because no receipts were issued. **[42]** Nowbath explained that he was called by certain people in the Indian community to approach Sorabjee Rustomjee to account for money that Rustomjee had collected. Describing Rustomjee as "a one man show" who went around collecting money to the value of £7000, Nowbath reveals that Rustomjee asked him to return to the Indian community and tell them that "Sorabjee collected the money in the name of Sorabjee and will account to Sorabjee." **[43]** Nowbath asserts that it was incidents like these that turned the Passive Resistance Campaign into a joke.

But the Passive Resistance Campaign cannot be called a joke. Granted that the divisions and personal rivalries among its leaders served to weaken the campaign but it also highlighted the plight of the Indian community. The Passive Resistance Campaign caused Smuts and his government to cringe in embarassment as the Passive Resistance Campaign focused the worlds attention on the situation in South Africa. It was indeed an embarassing situation for Smuts who a few months prior to the Passive Resistance Campaign had drawn up the preamble to the world's peace-keeping body - the United Nations. The Passive Resistance Campaign turned the Indian question from a domestic problem into an international one and placed the plight and injustices of the small Indian community in South Africa in to the world's spotlight.

During the Passive Resistance Campaign The Leader acted as an independent body that reported the news of the day without becoming a political mouth-piece for any of the political groups within the Indian community. Acting strictly in accordance with its editorial policy, The Leader placed only the well-being of the Indian community foremost. Although it tirelessly questioned the actions of all the political groups involved in the Indian question, The Leader also offered suggestions and advice in its editorial columns which it regarded as best serving the interests of the Indian community. In keeping with its editorial policy The Leader opened its columns to the Passive Resistance Campaign and invited letters from the public expressing their divergent views with regard to the campaign and the general situation of the Indian community itself. Although the Passive Resistance Campaign began to lose its vigour The Leader continued to report on its activities because that

was the news of the day and it was what interested the community. The Passive Resistance Campaign was finally terminated when Malan's Nationalist Government came to power in 1948.

END NOTES

1. The Leader, 12 October 1946, p.6.
2. Interview with R. Nowbath, 17 November 1994, 9h30.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Informal Interview with C.G. Henning.
6. Ibid.
7. Interview with S. Bramdaw, 15 September 1994, 9h30.
8. Interview with Nowbath.
9. N. Bramdaw, "Unpublished Project", p.15.
10. The Leader, 30 November 1940, p2.
11. Interview with Nowbath.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. The Leader, 6 April 1946, p.1.
17. The Leader, 22 June 1946, p.5.
18. Indian Views, 12 June 1946.
19. Interview with Nowbath.
20. The Leader, 18 January 1947, p.1.
21. The Leader, 4 October 1947, p.1.
22. The Leader, 11 October 1947, p.5.
23. The Leader, 4 October 1947, p.6.

24. The Leader, 18 October 1947, p.7.

25. Ibid.

26. The Leader, 15 November 1947, p.7.

27. Interview with Nowbath.

28. The Leader, 19 January 1946, p.6.

29. The Leader, 8 June 1946, p.6.

30. Ibid.

31. The Leader, 12 Ocotber 1946, p.6.

32. The Leader, 20 September 1947, p.6.

33. The Leader, 4 October 1947, p.6.

34. The Leader, 30 November 1940, p.2. Also refer to The Leader - Golden Jubilee Supplement, 14 November 1991, p.3.

35. The Leader, 1 March 1947, p.3.

36. Ibid.

37. The Leader, 1 November 1947, p.4.

38. Interview with Nowbath.

39. Ibid. Also see The Leader, 14 September 1946, p.6.

40. The Leader, 14 September 1946, p.6.

41. Interview with Nowbath.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

CONCLUSION

Dhanee Bramdaw's career in journalism began in the editorial library of The Natal Witness. It was here that his reputation as a remarkable journalist was founded. He also worked as a correspondent for The Daily News, The Natal Mercury, The Rand Daily Mail and The Sunday Times.

Dhanee Bramdaw was often incensed by the disdainful manner in which news of importance to the Indian community was treated. The space that was allocated in white newspapers for Indian news and interests was very limited. The two Indian - owned weekly newspapers - the Indian Opinion and Indian Views proved to be unsatisfactory sources of news and information. These were event orientated newspaper magazines whose circulation was restricted to their particular linguistic groups. Dhanee Bramdaw was thus motivated to start a newspaper that catered specifically for Indian news and other matters of interest.

The Leader was born at a time when the Indian community was being subjected to enormous socio-political and economic ills. The growth of The Leader coincided with the growth of white agitation toward "Indian Penetration." The Pegging Act was introduced in 1943 to discourage any further movement of Indian families into the white area. Once the Pegging Act lapsed in 1946, the Smuts government introduced the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act ("Ghetto" Act) which was fiercely rejected by the Indian community. Accusing the Act of being a measure to condemn the Indian community to social and economic ruin, the Joint Passive Resistance Campaign was

formed to spearhead the Passive Resistance Campaign of 1946. Subsequently the face of Indian politics was changed from one of compromise to one of confrontation. The Passive Resistance Campaign was a source of immense embarassment for Smuts, the man who had a few months prior to the launch of the campaign, helped to draw up the preamble for the world's peace-keeping body, the United Nations. The Passive Resistance Campaign focused the world's attention on the plight of the Indian community in South Africa. With strong support from the Government of India, the Indian Question was presented before the United Nations General Assembly. However, internal rivalries, personality clashes and a fragmented unity served to weaken the South African Indian delegation's case and the Indian community was forced to accept the face tht a total victory was impossible. The Passive Resistance Campaign lost its intensity and was forced to terminate its struggle. It did however change the dimension of Indian politics and inspired the Indian population and other people of colour to unite in a struggle against future injustices.

In The Leader's first editorial its policy was ambitiously stated. The Passive Resistance Campaign provided a test for The Leader's policy. The Leader's news columns always remained open to give coverage to the Passive Resistance Campaign. It closely documented the stirring events of 1946 - 1948. The Leader in its editorial pledged to deliver the news of the day to the Indian community and it provided the Passive Resistance Campaign with favourable publicity, although its news columns revealed no real support or opposition to the campaign. The editorial columns of The Leader however, were strictly reserved for its own views and it often questioned the actions of the various

political groups in relation to the interests of the Indian community. The Leader invited the Indian community to express its sentiments on matters of interest or on the news of the day. The Passive Resistance Campaign provoked a diversity of views from the Indian community and The Leader became a voice through which the Indian community expressed itself. The Leader ultimately remained as the voice for the Indian community. In a time when many issues were still taboo in the Indian community, The Leader proved to be a progressive newspaper, from the way it reported the news of the day to the advertisements it published, yet it always remained within the bounds of decency.

The success of The Leader can be attributed to it being available to more people. It did not target a specific readership group but the entire Indian community. It allowed for the expression of divergent views and it provided the people with the news they wanted to read.

"The Leader is really an outstanding one amongst all other papers, published for the benefit of the non-Europeans, especially the Indians in South Africa" - J. A. Naidoo. **[1]**

[1] The Leader, 10th May 1941.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

D. BRAMDAW, the founder and editor of The Leader

The Leader, 11 July 1952

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 2

The
South African Indian
WHO'S WHO
and
Commercial Directory

A Biographical Sketch Book with illustrations of South African Indians and an Illustrated Business Directory

FIRST ISSUE

Compiled and Edited by
Dhanee Bramdaw
with a foreword by
Kunwar Sir Maharaj Singh
(Former Agent of the Government of India in South Africa)

London Office: Reuters,
24, Old Jewry, London, E.C. 2.

PIETERMARITZBURG:
THE NATAL WITNESS, LIMITED.
1935.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 3

SASTRI SPEAKS

Being a collection of the speeches and writings of the Right Honourable V. S. Srinivasa Sastri in South Africa during his term of office as Agent of the Government of India in South Africa

EDITED BY

S. R. NAIDOO and DHANEE BRAMDAW

WITH A FOREWORD BY

Mr. JAN. H. HOFMEYR

FIRST EDITION

Printed and Published by

THE NATAL PRESS, PIETERMARITZBURG

South Africa

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 4

20th February 20th February

INDIAN PRAYER DAY

AN APPEAL

In view of the grave crisis in which the Indian community finds itself today and the serious threat to its future well-being, the Natal Indian Congress has declared Wednesday, 20th February, a Day of Prayer for Indians throughout the Province of Natal.

Congress hereby appeals to all Indian business men and professionals to make arrangements to close their businesses and offices on this day from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Congress also appeals to all Indian workers to make arrangements with their employers, if they possibly can, to stop work from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on this day.

We trust that all Indians will realise the seriousness of this appeal and will not only close their own businesses and offices but will also persuade others within their sphere of influence to do so.

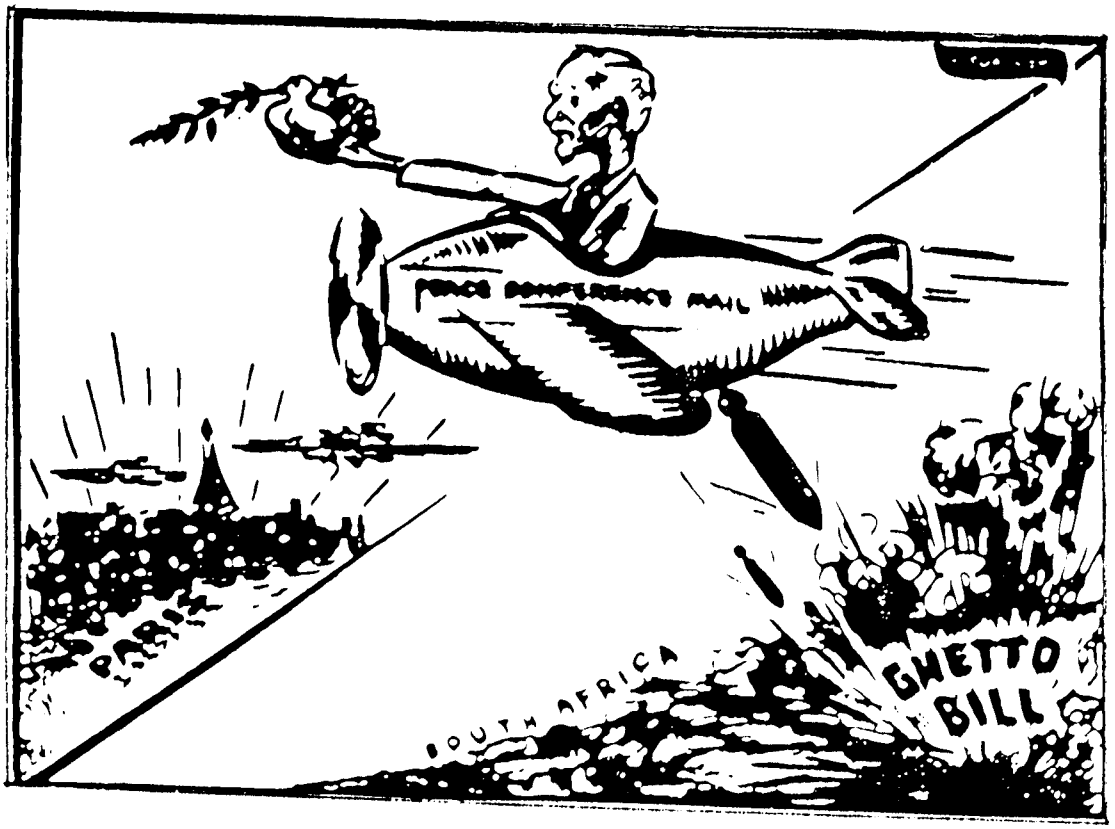
A. I. MEER,
M. D. NAIDOO,
Joint Hon. Secretaries.

The Leader, 9 February 1946.

APPENDIX 5

Source: Coolie Doctor, Dr Goonam,1991.

APPENDIX 6



The Leader, 20 April 1946.