

REFLECTIONS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTI-RACIALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA: AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

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The ANC was formed in 1912, two years after the creation of the Union of South Africa (Pogrund, 1990:22). In this arrangement, South Africa was divided into four provinces. The Union allowed for the limited franchise for blacks in the Cape to continue but excluded the vast majority of blacks in other provinces. The ANC in its initial stages was involved in begging, pleading and at times praying. The British Crown did not heed to this form of protestation. In the 1940s, with the emergence of the ANC Youth League (ANCYL), young people transformed the ANC's methods of protestation. It was in the conference of 1942 that the ANC agreed to the formation of the Youth League. The first president of the Youth League was Anton Lembede. Lembede worked with Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu, Robert Resha and Peter Raboroko. These young men were guided by the older A.P Mda and Jordan Ngubane. As soon as they moved into office, the ANCYL engaged itself with the drafting of its manifesto. The ANC president, A.B Xuma approved of it in 1947. After the approval and adoption of their policy the ANCYL removed Xuma from office accusing him ironically of collaborating with the Indian Congress and Congress of the Coloureds.

The Youth League emphasized black exclusivism as the basis of African solidarity. They argued that Africans were oppressed as a nation and not as a class. They rejected the interpretation that Africans were oppressed in terms of social class. They further declared that they were pre-

pared to work with other non-European groups (i.e. the Indians and so called Coloured only on common issues).

As Pogrund puts it: "But it declared that, the only force which could deliver freedom was that of African Nationalism organized in national liberation movement lead by Africans themselves." They further proclaimed that Africans could co-operate with others when they themselves had achieved unity (Pogrund, 1990:24). They believed in group cohesion as the strategy. The ANC categorically rejected any form of racism or discrimination against the minorities (Pogrund, 1990: 24). It is interesting to note that in those early stages of development, the ANC could not draw a difference between non-racialism and multi-racialism.

In the 1940's contrary to the policy of the ANCYL, Xuma began to forge links with the South African Indian Congress (SAIC). Prior to this, in the 1930's, the ANC's resistance was aimed at "collaboration" and "non-collaboration". The ANC generally opted for non-collaboration with institutions created by the government and any other non-African organisation. This was in response to Hertzog's segregation laws of 1936. The government created what they called Native Representative Council (NRC). Its assigned role was to advise the government as to the interest(s) of the black people. The ANC rejected the NRC as a "toy telephone". The advice of the NRC to the government was never taken seriously (Pogrund, 1990: 24).

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Referring to the NRC Pogrund writes: “The controversies were inevitable as to, to what extent should the oppressed make their oppression possible? Could the system be changed from within? Could co-operation perhaps prove to be but the first step leading eventually to full participation? Didn’t both participation and strategy make it preferable to refuse to co-operate and rather to hold out for more meaningful rights?” In answer to the above questions forty years later, ironically the government responded by creating two segregated houses in parliament for the so-called Coloureds and Indians with the exclusion of Africans. (Pogrund, 1990: 24).

Although the majority of ANC firmly rejected the Native Representative Council, the leadership had an ambivalent attitude towards non-collaboration. Xuma, Matthews, R.V Selope and W.P.G Champion were members of the NRC. Their voice was never heeded to. In 1946, the NRC, with the ANC under the leadership of Xuma adjourned *sine die* in protest against being ignored. The NRC was severely dealt a blow thanks to the coming to power of the Nationalist Party in 1948. The Youth League vehemently argued that the ANC had no business in sitting in the NRC. They argued that these leaders were direct participants in an oppressive system. (Pogrund, 1990: 25).

The other problem that remains until to date was the involvement of the CPSA in ANC affairs. The CPSA, formed in 1921, was totally subservient to the Soviet Union. As a result, it was caught up in Stalin’s purges of the 1930s. Many of the leaders of the CPSA summoned to Moscow were never to be seen again (Pogrund, 1990:25). Its surrogate status to the Soviet Union forced the CPSA to adhere to a thoroughly racial notion of South Africa as a black republic. However, in its own policies the CPSA remained multi-racial. It was its internationalist approach that made it a suspect to nationalist within the ANC and the ruling nationalist whites. The majority of the ANC executive consisted of members of the CPSA.

As Joe Slovo puts it: “No significant differences existed between the two organizations on immediate content, strategy and tactics of the South African Revolutionary Council.” (Karis and Gerhart, 1964-79:37) Joe Slovo in his analysis of the situation deliberately downplays the racial issues contained in this multi-racial alliance, let alone the deep seated ideological disparities

between the ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP). This has always been an uneasy if not strange alliance, even to date.

Non-communists and communists continued to differ significantly within the ANC. Generally speaking the communists within the ANC remained a minority. The communist members who operated within the ANC executive and in the Revolutionary Council of South Africa, constituted the most able, dedicated and courageous members. They were best positioned to influence the ANC (Karis and Gerhart, 1964-79:38). Notwithstanding the fact that the CPSA had influence in the ANC; it was in fact the ANC that was influencing the CPSA at all times. It is even suggested that at some point Kotane, a renowned communist, suggested the liquidation of the CPSA (Karis and Carter, 1964-79:38). The SACP however, continued to be viewed as the vanguard workers party. Another African Communist who was frustrated by these multi-racial arrangements, where African leadership was marginalised was Thabo Mofutsanyane. Until to his death, Mofutsanyane insisted on the formation of a Black Communist Party in which he thought black people will continue with the struggle on their own.

After sentencing Mandela and his comrades in 1964, an important group that emanated from white liberals and former white communists emerged. It was called the African Resistance Movement (ARM). Deeply associated to this group was John Harris, who put a dynamite in a suitcase and put it in the ‘whites-only’ section of the station. Harris was a member of the Liberal Party until he was forced to resign. The Liberal Party, formed in 1953, was in its initial stage a purely white party. It soon attracted many blacks. As a result, black members increased in such a way that they became the majority. Nevertheless, the upper echelons remained white. The ARM was a multi-racial organization but the fact that it was white-led cost concern amongst the black members and they became suspicious of multi-racialism (Karis and Gerhart, 1964: 21-23).

The Liberal Party became a hiding place for SACP members. Liberals and communists joined hands in the ARM. Prior to the formation ARM a group called National Committee of Liberation (NCL) was formed. The group was led by Monty Berman, an expelled member of the SACP, John Lang who was a liberal party leader in the Transvaal

and the former ANCYL members who had formed a group called African Freedom Movement (AFM) Baruch Hirson, a Trotskyite, was a key link. Africans within ARM/NCL continued to view these two as all white organization and thus thwarting the very aims and objectives of liberal multi-racialism. (Karis and Gerhart, 1964-1979: 21-23).

Berman, after having been released from jail tried to co-operate with the ANC and SACP, but his moves were rejected. The rejection did not deter him. His group continued with the sabotage campaign. They were involved with campaigns ahead of the formation of the MK and *POQO*. MK distanced itself from the sabotage activities of the NCL/ARM. In a flyer, the NCL however, welcomed the formation of MK. Generally, the ARM embraced socialist aims but remained suspicious and antagonistic towards the SACP. It was the radical outlook of this group (NCL/ARM) that made the ANC to shun it. The ANC was not impressed by its “whites – only” leadership.

Within the ARM, efforts were made to forge working relations with the PAC and ANC with an aim of forming what they termed the National Freedom Army, where the ARM could assist technically. In 1964, members of the ARM were arrested and many fled the country. John Harris was hanged. Although lacking in mass organization and naïve in its operations, one cannot brush off their struggle as insignificant and or doubt their achievements. Although the majority of these people were white liberals and communists, they had African members who carried out some of their operations. (Karis and Gerhart, 1964-1979:22).

Although the ANC and SACP rejected Berman’s appeal for co-operation with NCL/ARM, one of their flyers saluted the formation of the MK and it read: “The NCL welcomes the appearance of the ‘Assegai of the Nation’. Both the ‘Assegai of the Nation’ and NCL support the Liberation Movement”. They went further to say, “However, no one group has the responsibility for fighting for the freedom of its country.” (Karis and Gerhart, 1964-1979: 22).

All what they were trying to explain was that the liberation of the people was not a monopoly of one group and that the ANC/SACP were not the sole liberators and owners of the struggle. In September 1961 the NCL/ARM began sabotage with arson and toppling of power pylons. The MK

announced the commencement of their campaign the same year but in December. This part of South African history that demonstrates the involvements of whites in acts of sabotage has unfortunately not been highlighted in our schools and universities. We can only thank Karis and Gerhart for bringing it to the attention of scholars (Karis and Gerhart, 1964-1979:23). Perhaps these efforts could have been more effective in a non-racial environment. It was the multi-racial approach of the NCL/ARM that weakened the movement.

After Sharpeville, both ANC and PAC were banned. The two had no alternative but to resort to armed struggle. The ANC formed *Umkhonto We Sizwe* (MK) whilst the PAC came up with *POQO* (Apla – Azanian Liberation Army). The years ahead for the two liberation movements were not easy. They were cash-strapped and did not have any formal training for armed struggle. The ANC initially had its headquarters in Tanzania. In exile the alliances, SACP, SAIC, SACTU, and Coloured Congress (CC) used the same offices as ANC. The SACP however continued to maintain relationships with other communist parties on the international platform, while the SACTU remained connected with Trade Union Movement internationally.

The ANC/MK recruits started receiving formal training in Tanzania. They received training mostly in China and the Soviet Union. After returning to Tanzania on completion of their training, MK members found themselves bored and inertia. The major problem was that the home base was deplete of under-ground structures. The people back home did not know how to hide guerrillas. The other problem was created by leaders in the camps who did not know how to act. Many white cadres remained in the camps when their black comrades had to under-go military training and they started questioning the multi-racialism that was being propagated within the alliance (ANC/SACP) axis.

This behaviour of white cadres in the camps, who did not want to fight, is perhaps confirmed by Malcolm X when he says: “I’ve never seen a sincere white man, not when it comes to helping black people. Usually things like this are done by white people to benefit themselves. The white man’s primary interest is not to elevate the thinking of black people, or to waken black people, or white people either. The white man is interested in the black man only to the extent that the black man is of use

to him. The white man's interest is to make money, to exploit." (Malcolm – x.org).

Quoting Matthews, Karis and Gerhart write: "There were also other pressures on the leadership to act. Not only did the ANC have to mollify a restless guerrilla force that had already been tied down to Kongwa Camp too long." According to Matthews, the liberation committee of the Organization of African Unity started putting pressure on the South African Liberation Movement. (Karis and Gerhart, 1964-1979: 28-29).

In 1964, MK soldiers were sent to Zimbabwe to fight alongside ZAPU. In honour of Chief Luthuli, the former ANC president, the detachment was called "The Luthuli Detachment". The Rhodesian army admitted temporary defeat, and sought reinforcements from racist South Africa. MK came face to face with the enemy (Karis and Gerhart, 1964:29). However, Joe Slovo criticized the campaign as misconceived. Many died and some captured and jailed in Rhodesia and Botswana. Chris Hani and comrades retreated to Botswana where they were imprisoned. Botswana was action was condemned by the then Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the prisoners were released. The MK campaign was solely black and multi-racialism again came into the spotlight. (Karis and Gerhart, 1964: 40-41).

In exile, there was an attempt by the dissenting group within the ANC to challenge the influence of the SACP in the ANC. The group was centred on one Tennyson Makiwane. At an unveiling of the tombstone of Robert Resha in London, Ambrose Makiwane, in his speech, attacked the ANC for opening its membership to non-Africans. His attack was mainly directed to the whites in the SACP. Duma Nokwe, a member of the ANC executive, who was present, vowed that he would bring about the expulsion of Makiwane and other "traitors." (Karis and Carter, 1964: 42-43).

In response, the SACP compared the eight with the PAC before them. In their documents, the dissenters claimed: "White middle-class liberals, headed by the Joe Slovos who masquerade as Marxist (and) will stop at nothing to maintain their privileged position in national liberation struggle of the African people." The statement was a clear rejection of the multi-racial stance of the ANC. (Karis and Gerhart, 1964: 42-43).

The eight were eventually expelled. In 1975, Tambo called for a meeting in London, which was attended only by Africans. The expelled members argued the unconstitutionality of the Morogoro conference, which they claimed was more consultative. They further called for the review of opening membership within the ANC. They vehemently questioned the relationship between the ANC and SACP. They viewed the SACP as "exercising undue influence" in the ANC (Karis and Gerhart, 1964-1979:43). Ironically, the expelled argued like the PAC in 1955, when they rejected the Freedom Charter and multi-racialism.

They launched a party of their own, which was called ANC (African Nationalists). They recognized Mandela as their only leader. Their call for unity amongst Africans that was sent to the PAC and Unity Movement fell on deaf ears (Karis and Gerhart, 1964: 43). The former and the latter espoused the same principles of anti-multi-racialism. It is strange that the PAC and Unity Movement distanced themselves from the ANC (African Nationalists). Perhaps there could have been some reasons about this group that made the PAC and Unity Movement not to trust them. Surely on the question of multi-racialism, the two organizations were on the same page with the ANC (African Nationalists).

Later, Tambo referring to this group said: "Open membership was not really the thing they wanted....they just wanted to be leaders. It was a power struggle." The real problem was not leadership as such but multi-racialism which the adherents of ANC (African Nationalists) regarded as the worst form of racism. In the 1980's most of the members of the ANC (African Nationalist) returned to the ANC. Tennyson Makiwane in 1979 joined the homeland government of the Transkei, where he acted as a consultant and roving ambassador. In 1980, an "unknown" gunman killed him. According to Karis and Gerhart, Makiwane, "It seems highly probable that he was killed by an ANC assassin." (Karis and Gerhart, 1964-1969:44) In fact, taking into account politics of that time, the ANC (AN) feared multi-racialism.

In the Morogoro Conference of 1969, they were silenced. Robert Resha's efforts to stop open-membership were ignored. The dissenters had no other alternative but to break away. The ANC never changed its ideological stand and they remained in concert with the other racial groups

including white communists. Internationally, the ANC enjoyed support and it would be fatalistic for them to yield to the demands of the Africanists within the ANC. The Soviet Union, China and the Anti-Apartheid Movement in Europe and America on the other hand demanded open membership from the ANC. The Soviet Union, through the SACP gave massive support to the ANC. The support as such was crucial to the ANC.

The Western countries, together with America, were unrelenting to their demand that the ANC remain multi-racial irrespective of the fact that the ANC was working with communists. The Sino-Soviet conflict also impacted on the South-African liberation movement. The ANC refused to take sides in this conflict. It was this well-calculated neutrality that made Tambo to be a well-respected statesman internationally. The consistency of the ANC made it to galvanize support across both political and ideological lines. The split of the African Nationalist (AN) did not shake the ANC. The ANC prevailed, whilst the former faded away.

In the early years of the liberation struggle the African students were not organized separately. They did not have an organization mainly directed to their political aspirations. Most of the African students were at the University of Fort-Hare, an institution that was created separately for social groups that were classified as "non-whites". National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) that was founded in 1924, catered only for white students. NUSAS was liberal and espoused multi-racialism. Multi-racialism approach caused division amongst black and white students.

A few black students studying in whites-only institutions were not members of that organization. African students were organized mainly within the ANC and, CPSA and Unity Movement. In these circumstances NUSAS, well organized and funded, played a pivotal role to oppose the regime. The Afrikaner Students later formed the Afrikaner Studente Bond that supported the Apartheid regime. In the white universities, the two whites-only student organizations were always at loggerheads. It must however be emphasized, that NUSAS, from its very inception purported to espouse non-socialist policies. However, their activities and behaviour later always pointed to a totally different direction.

In the beginning, NUSAS was only in all-white universities. It comprised of both English

and Afrikaans students. With the intensification of black resistance, NUSAS felt the need to extend its membership to Fort-Hare University that was exclusively for blacks. Later, with the establishment of other tribal universities like the University of Zulu-Land, the University of the North, the Wentworth Section of the Medical School of the University of Natal, the University of Western Cape and the University of Durban-Westville the call for inclusion of black students in NUSAS intensified.

Black students who were attracted to NUSAS were an insignificant minority. The main battleground between NUSAS and the government was the exclusion of black students in white universities. NUSAS stubbornly fought against such exclusion (Karis and Gerhart, 1964-1979: 66-67). After the victory of the Nationalist Party in 1948, the numbers of Afrikaner students in NUSAS drastically declined.

NUSAS wanted to widen up the scope of political operation inside the country whilst the authorities and the Studente Bond insisted that NUSAS confines itself to student matters. The Studente Bond abhorred the insistence by NUSAS to include black students. They were also against NUSAS's strong views as to the admission of black students in white universities. The government kept a hawkish eye on the activities of NUSAS. NUSAS, clinging to politics of multi-racialism, unintentionally antagonized black students. After the banning of the ANC and PAC, NUSAS became the only extra-parliamentary group opposing Apartheid. By then, it had a significant black support. (Karis and Gerhart, 1964: 67).

The suspicion of blacks within NUSAS that white students had a paternalistic attitude continued to live. In the 1960's and 70's heated debates about whether NUSAS should join the liberation struggle emerged. Notable figures in these debates were Martin Leggasick and Jonty Driver, who were both in the leadership of NUSAS. The decision was later left to individuals because some felt that such a move would destroy the only voice above-ground since the ANC and PAC were banned and forced to operate under-ground.

Many members of NUSAS continued with the good work even after completion of their studies, they either left the country, or went on with their activities in challenging the apartheid regime abroad. Some joined underground political struc-

tures; others were incarcerated for their beliefs; others had to pay the supreme price “death” for their convictions. A handful of these became members of either the ANC or the SACP in exile or/and underground. Later it will be demonstrated how SASO (South African Students Organisation) broke away from NUSAS, by a group of black students led by Steve Biko. NUSAS was a mixture of white liberals, communists and nationalists.

Ideologically, it is indisputable that the PAC shaped the political and ideological development within black politics in South Africa. After the death of Lembede the ANCYL abandoned its strategy of non-collaboration and became inclusive. It forged working relations with Indians, Liberals, Communists and other whites. The move caused problems within the League. In 1948, the Nationalist Party with their apartheid policies took control of the country. The leaders of all anti-government forces united to challenge the system. The ANC used this opportunity to recruit members vigorously to swell its ranks. The ANC also needed resources which financially and militarily could help and steer the movement forward. The convergence of these anti-government forces was termed a multi-racial approach. The die-hard Africanists within the ANC and the ANCYL rejected this change of strategy. It was from the Africanists creed within the ANC, that the PAC was born.

According to the PAC, when the ANC embarked on Passive Resistance of the 1950's that was a deviation from the Programme of Action as it was envisaged by Lembede and the ANCYL. What exacerbated the situation was the fact that some of the co-authors of the Programme of Action were now sitting in the NEC of the ANC and failing to implement the Programme. The ANCYL and the Africanists eluded that to the influence of the non-Africans who were now in the ANC. (Africa South, 1959: 33).

The PAC became a target of ANC attacks. The first attack came from Walter Sisulu, who accused the PAC leadership of extreme racialism; referred to their leaders as demagogues and of a lack of patience and experience. (Africa South No.4 of July-September; 1959:34) Sisulu lashed: “Yes these truths must not blind us to the fact that these are men and women amongst them who genuinely believe that the salvation of our people lies in fanatical African racialism and denunciation of

everything that is not African. And such a policy of extreme nationalism is not without its potential appeal. It would be unrealistic to pretend that a policy of extreme nationalism must in the nature of things always be unpopular. The people are quick to detect the insincerity of the mere demagogue and they have confidence in the courage and wisdom of their tried and tested leaders.” (Africa South, 1959:34).

Sisulu further attacked: “Have not risen up to the broad non-racial humanism of congress movement”. Sisulu went on to say that they had no experience of genuine comradeship in such organizations as Congress of Democracy. He lashes out: “With a state policy of increasingly barbaric repression of the African people; with the deliberate destruction of every form of normal human contact between people from different population groups; and with the systematic banning and isolation of the convinced and fervent anti-racialists among the Africans from political activity, there is no knowing what the future will hold.” (Meli, 1988:139).

Although the ANC at that time was non-racial, they seemed not to be sure about the multi-racial approach of their newly acquired friends. The fact that the ANC remained solely black in their upper echelons, confirms their suspicion of non-Africans in their midst. Lamenting on this state of affairs in favour of multi-racialism, Xuma, the then president of the ANC wrote: “The ANC had lost its identity as a national liberating movement with the policy of its own and distinctly African leadership.” (Meli, 1998:38) Xuma was complaining about the absence of whites, so-called Coloureds and Indians in the ANC leadership. It must be pointed out that although the Indians were now working jointly with the ANC in the Congress Alliance, the Indian Congress remained purely Indian in character. The behaviour of the Indians in this regard, was not in line with the non-racialist policies of the ANC and thus caused further scepticism amongst African members of the ANC.

The Congress of Democracy in which all anti-apartheid organizations, including the ANC were converged, in its policies of multi-racialism, were dominated by whites. It is clear that even in this multi-racial make-up white racism could still show its ugly head. It will not be far-fetched to say that the extreme racialism Sisulu saw in the PAC, was a

common feature cutting across all political organizations of that time; even those operating within the multi-racialist ideal of the Congress of Democracy. These are some of the reasons why the PAC condemned multi-racialism. The Liberal Party, although the main advocate of multi-racialism remained outside the Congress Alliance. One of the reasons was that they did not want to be seen working with communists in that set-up. The Liberal Party refused to co-operate with the Congress of the People for fear that the government may mount more repression. (Karis and Gerhart, 1977: 318).

This type of argument ironically, was being used by the ANC against the more militant PAC. The PAC felt that only a doctrine of exclusive nationalism would be dynamic enough to inspire Africans to heights of sacrifice. (Karis and Carter, 1977:319) The liberals and the ANC saw in the PAC a parallel of Nazism with their strong exclusive African nationalism. Pitje, one of the PAC leaders said: "Ours is not the same nationalism as the Nazis in Germany were the majority oppressed and persecuted the minority. It is a nationalism seeking freedom from the oppressor minority." In one of his speeches referring to multi-racialism Sobukwe said: "Against multi-racialism, we have this objection that the history of South Africa has postural (sic!) group prejudices and antagonisms and if were to maintain the same group exclusive (sic!) parading under the term of multi-racialism we will be transporting to the new Africa these very antagonisms and conflicts. Further, multi-racialism is in fact pandering to European bigotry and arrogance; it is a method of safeguarding white interests implying as it does proportional representation irrespective of population figures. In that sense it's a complete negation of democracy. To us the term multi-racialism implies that there are such basic inseparable differences between the various national groups here that the best course is to keep them permanently distinctive in a kind of democratic Apartheid that is to us racialism multiplied which probably what the term connotes.» (Sobukwe's speeches).

Sobukwe further explained that distinctive and exclusive nationalism of the PAC did not imply racialism and that the Africans wanted to rally themselves around African nationalism to tease out group cohesion. Sobukwe succinctly said: "We aim politically at government of the Africans,

by the Africans, for the Africans, with everybody who owes his only loyalty to Africa and is prepared to accept the democratic rule of African majority being regarded as an African. We guarantee no minority rights, because we think in terms of individuals not groups," (Sobukwe speeches). Sobukwe further argued, that in individual rights, "both minority and group rights are implied". It is interesting to note that Sobukwe's explanation of multi-racialism as racism multiplied, earn him harsh criticism within the ANC, white liberals and the Communists, who accused him of hiding himself behind semantics. Interestingly enough, there is a striking intersection between Sobukwe's understanding of multi-racialism and Mandela's. In his recent book, titled *Conversation with Myself*, Mandela says: "We have never accepted really multi-racialism. Our demand is for a non-racial society, because when you talk of multi-racialism, you are multiplying races; you are saying you have in this country so many races. That is in a way to perpetuate the concept 'race' and we preferred to say we want a non-racial society We discussed and said exactly what we are saying that we are not multi-racialist, we are non-racialist." (Mandela, 2010: 118) Although Mandela is not quoting Sobukwe, who said this long before him and at the time when the ANC was pandering their stance on multi-racialism, Mandela squarely agrees with Sobukwe. On the question of group cohesion that was mis-interpreted by the South African government as reversed-racism, one could borrow from Malcolm X where he says: "There can be no black-white unity until there is first some black unity... We cannot think of uniting with others, until after we have first united among ourselves. We cannot think of being acceptable to others until we have first proven acceptable to ourselves." (Malcolm-X.org).

By saying this, the PAC earned itself an attack by Joe Matthews in an article that appeared in *Liberation* of July 1959: "But the whole point is that in countries where the population is not homogeneous, where there are a number of national groups, it becomes necessary to go further than recognize the rights of each individual citizen of the state. It becomes essential to create conditions under which those who do not belong to the numerically superior groups are able to develop their languages, culture and customs without let or hindrance." (Karis and Gerhart, 1977: 515-551).

Matthews further observed and warned the PAC that: “The (PAC) Pan Africanist Congress adopted as its policy the Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations. They ought to remember that this declaration was adopted after a world war caused by groups that refused to respect minority rights. The Nazis practiced oppression of the Jewish minority by the majority. It is the “democratic German” majority which oppressed the Jews. True enough each individual Jew had equal rights theoretically in the state in common with other individuals but no rights as the minority group. The guarantee of full rights to minority groups is fundamental in any true democratic society.” (Karis and Carter, 1977: 515-551) Again the statement by Malcolm X who was talking on a different platform and situation (American in character) could explain better the situation of the PAC; when he wrote:

“If I have a cup of coffee that is too strong for me because it is too black, I weaken it by pouring cream into it. I integrate it with cream. If I keep pouring enough cream in the coffee, pretty soon the entire flavor of the coffee is changed; the very nature of the coffee is changed. If enough cream is poured in, eventually you don’t even know that I had coffee in this cup. This is what happened with the March on Washington. The whites didn’t integrate it; they infiltrated it. Whites joined it; they engulfed it; they became so much a part of it, it lost its original flavor. It ceased to be a black march; it ceased to be militant; it ceased to be angry; it ceased to be impatient. In fact, it ceased to be a march.” (Malcolm-X.org).

Sobukwe’s understanding was that once these minorities owed their loyalty to “Afrika” and are prepared to accept the democratic rule of an African majority, they would be logically accepted as Africans. When Sobukwe was rejecting multi-racialism the logical result of his statement was the advocacy of a single mass political party of the oppressed people. (No Sizwe, 1979:117) Such a position was a deviation from the old principle of the ANC and the whole Congress Movement that had between it and Apartheid a point of intersection. Sobukwe remained convinced that multi-racialism if left unabated would later create the balkanization of Africa: “We reject both Apartheid and multi-racial-

ism as solution to our socio-political problems. Apart from a number of reasons and arguments that can be advanced against Apartheid we take our stand on the principle that ‘Afrika’ is one and to be one, nobody, I repeat, nobody has the right to balkanize our land.” (Karis and Carter, 1977:515-516).

In our new South Africa, we still have people who are harping to multi-racialism, and these people are without doubt led by the white liberals i.e. Democratic Alliance (DA). These people claim to be federalists. They believe instead of a unitary state, the federal state would accommodate all races in a much more pluralistic way. RW Johnson, a former director of Helen Suzman Foundation writes: “The existence of a centralized unitary state, enabled the apartheid regime to rule monolithically”. Johnson forgets that the strength of the apartheid regime was not necessarily based on its centralized unitary system but that race was the rallying point of that regime. Whites as the race were provided with all the racial comforts of the apartheid with the exclusion of all those who were not white. The regime thought in terms of race. Johnson’s understandings of what he calls “local accommodations” in a federal system is racially motivated and not far from the concept of Orania¹. He believes that the Bantustans were not supposed to have been phased away but maintained and incorporated “as proper consolidated federal states”. Johnson would not only be looking at these people as minorities but as races in their own localities or regions. He believes that in this federal arrangement that one would see the natural growth of multi-racialism politics. In short, federalism in South Africa, he understands, would have provided for multi-racial functionality better. This way of thinking would take us back to the era of apartheid where people would be judged according to where they come from and in terms of their race. His arguments are not only racist, but weak and rebuttable. According to his arguments, these races would not only be multiplied according to their races but also according to their locality, region and provinces. He half-heartedly agrees that to a certain extent that could encourage regionalism and secessionist tendencies. It is not surprising then that the Abathembu King Buyelekhaya Dalindyabo is also talking about seceding from the present South African unitary state (Johnson in Focus, 2010: 9-14).

¹ A place in South Africa that still up to date remains exclusively white and with an ideal to form its own state – very racist in outlook.

It must also be put on record that the PAC was not violently opposed to Communists, like conservative African nationalists within the ANC and Liberal Party; the PAC viewed the communists with suspicion. The suspicion was based on the fact that the PAC understood the activities of the white Communists in the ANC as having ulterior motives of hi-jacking the African leadership in the ANC. Another pointer, which sharpened the contradictions between the PAC and communists, was the fact that whites dominated the SACP. Reading the SACP, Sobukwe found that in reality they were «never communists» in the Marxist sense of the word. Sobukwe's arguments were based on the fact that in 1928, the then Communist Party of South Africa capitulated to the Comintern that forced on them the acceptance of a theory that the National Question was inseparable from the Workers Revolution. Sobukwe said about them: "They are all quacks!" (Motlhabi, 1987:203).

Whilst operating within multi-racialist structures, the ANC never deviated from its non-racialist position nor did it abandon African nationalism as its ideology. When the Freedom Charter was read to the people in Kliptown in 1955, for the first time, the then president of the ANC Albert Luthuli was serving house arrest and banning orders in Natal. That is the reason why the ANC did not adopt the Freedom Charter immediately.

The ANC adopted the Freedom Charter after consultation with its structures and the President. Luthuli, after having read the Freedom Charter, found it to be an objectionable document and it was adopted on principle as a guiding document. By having adopted the Freedom Charter, the ANC did not embrace the multi-racialist approach. The ANC however, continued with African nationalism that made it ideologically distinct from the liberals and communists they were working with in that arrangement. (see Luthuli, *Let My People Go*) The ANC has always put it very clear that they followed the Freedom Charter as a guiding document.

On the other hand, the PAC carried on with logical consistency, the strategy of the ANCYL of non-collaboration. (No Sizwe, 1979: 116) The concern of the PAC was the manner in which whites and other "non-Africans" were allegedly misdirecting the ANC. The PAC argued that after the adoption of the Freedom Charter the ANC failed to direct mass action. To refute this position of the PAC, the ANC retorted: "The people looked

to the African cause to preach to the people that all whites and Indians were enemies, when in fact many were sympathetic and made themselves useful in the struggle." (Karis and Carter 1977:319) Precisely what the PAC, NEUM and later the BCM did not appreciate was this sympathetic attitude of whites and Indians. They believed that such commitment will not be achieved by merely sympathizing with them in a "big lie" called multi-racialism.

The ANC further found in the PAC's policies a danger that appealed to the worst popular instincts and could eventually lead to undisciplined violence and more government repression. They warned that should the Africans build their foundation on racism, they would be no better than the racist they were fighting (Karis and Carter, 1977:319). In reply to these accusations of racialism Sobukwe averred: "We do not hate a European because he is white. We hate him because he is an oppressor and a racist, in the South African context and it is plain dishonesty to say I hate the 'sjambok' (a whip) and not the person who is wielding it." (Azania Combat, no 4, 1987:30).

The PAC opposed the presence of whites in the ANC because such minorities they argued "crippled the spirit of self-reliance and independence in the thinking of African masses." Sobukwe further stressed that only an exclusive African nationalism propounded by Africans alone and geared towards their national and spiritual interests as a group, could galvanize the illiterate and semi-literate into a united and determined force. (Karis and Carter, 1977:319).

Sobukwe warned further, that whilst the middle class Africans may value the symbolism of multi-racialism and might not feel that the ANC is dominated by the whites and Indians congresses, "Ordinary Africans had yet to be convinced by an alliance served to reinforce their doubts about their worth and ability of their own." Furthermore, he argued: "As long as such doubts lingered in the minds of Africans they would continue to be mental slaves unable to press their demands on the South African ruling class. Slave mentality had to be destroyed and the Africans should draw their strength in their numerical superiority." (Sobukwe's speeches).

Sobukwe's rejection of participation by whites in the struggle of a black man found fertile grounds in the Black Consciousness Movement of the late

60's. The BCM succeeded to extend the message to the masses. In the South African context, the BCM was influenced from many directions. In the 1930's the Rev. Calata toyed around this philosophy and poets like Mqhayi wrote a lot about that pathological state of mind in the African people. They detected that the African seemed to have accepted his fate. It was the Youth League, through the meticulous brainwork of Anton Lembede, that the philosophy was synthesized into a lethal political tool by both Sobukwe of the PAC and Steve Biko of the BCM.

All white organizations who were in an alliance with the ANC (white liberals and white communists), had one common enemy – and that was African nationalism. On the one hand the Nationalist Party (the government) also looked at this burgeoning African nationalism with trepidations. White fear was based on the fact that if African nationalism could be left unabated, it would unleash African “chauvinism” that would in turn foster black solidarity.

After the 1948 general election, the Nationalist Party in a document said: “The maintenance and the protection of the European population as a pure white race, the maintenance and protection of the indigenous racial groups as a separate community, with the prospects of developing into self supporting communities in their own areas and stimulating of national pride, self respect and mutual respect amongst various races of the country.” (Ashford, 1987:2-3) The aim was clear as indicated above was to safeguard white interest and to break up African nationalism. (Lazard, 1987:7-47).

The Nationalist Party set-up Tomlinson Commission to demonstrate how the ends premised in the Apartheid policy. In a paper presented in Elizabeth House, Oxford, In September 1987 John Lazar argued: “While the Nationalist Party had in the periods up to 1948, formulated and sloganized the general fundamentals of Apartheid there was still much confusion as to Apartheids long term implications. It was these draconian divisions of the country that created doubts in the minds of Sobukwe and Biko as to the legitimacy of multi-racialism when whites were to be grouped together as a front against blacks.” (Lazar, 1987:1-47).

In the earlier Commissions the SANAC (South African Native Affairs Commission) and

the Fagan reports the “Native Question” was formulated in such a way to imply homogeneity within the African societies. Although the report observed slight regional varieties (Ashford, 1987:10), it was this in mind that the report recommended a homogeneous “Native System” with an informed system of administration. What is strikingly interesting is that these earlier reports were in fact in agreement with demands that Africans were homogeneous a declaration that formed the very basis of the African National Congress of 1912. (Snail, 1993:230).

Ashford observed that, “The dialectical anti-thesis of the assumption that Africans were homogeneous became the implicit assumption that the Europeans were homogeneous. At ground level however the proponents and authors of these commissions negated the fact that the Afrikaans speaking white majority pursued politics of division within the white society. They appealed to the cultural and national unity of the Afrikaner as distinct of that of the English. These distinguishing instruments between the two white groups were deliberately ignored and the Afrikaner theoreticians found it impossible to break down the existing white homogeneity.” It is reports of this nature that made the Africans especially in the PAC refuse to participate in any gathering that purported to represent the African's interests through multi-racialism.

Departing from the above strategy, the architects of Apartheid developed a new position that both black and white societies are composed of distinct cultural and national units. In order not to break white unity Afrikaans and English had to be given equal status in all matters affecting the state. There was then a noticeable shift from the homogeneous categorization to the heterogeneous entities. The Africans had to be divided into ethnic categories. These recommendations came later with the Sauer report. (Snail, 1993: 230-231).

Whilst the ANC continued with African nationalism, albeit the involvement of non-Africans within its ranks, the PAC refused to cooperate with these groups. As African nationalism in South Africa was now transforming itself into an ambitious movement, the entire Africa was on its way to independence. In their endeavour to protect minorities within the Congress Alliance and the ANC itself, the ANC had a tendency of drawing distinctions between what was happening in South Africa and the entire African continent. Prof.

Matthews, a leading personality and theoretician wrote: "South Africa differs from other territories such as Ghana or Nigeria...where the black man outnumbers the white man to such an extent that it is ridiculous to talk about the country being anything other than a black man's country." (Karis and Carter, 1977: 321).

In South Africa, in addition to the Africans we have settled here significant numbers of other groups and therefore the country must be recognized as a multi-racial country with all that implied. The statement went further to argue that it was inappropriate in South Africa to give to the terms "Self determination or independence" – the meaning that was attributed to these words in the rest of the African continent (Karis and Carter, 1977: 321). In response to this, the PAC explained that: "The Africanists do not all subscribe to the fashionable doctrine of South African exceptionalism. Our contention is that South Africa is an integral part of the indivisible whole that is Africa...we take our stand on the principle that Africa is one and desires to be one and nobody has the right to balkanize our land." (Sobukwe's speeches).

At its formative stage, the PAC did not have any new programs to offer and instead started with the implementation of the Program of Action of the ANCYL for which they accused the ANC of having abounded and embarked upon multi-racialism. They later introduced what they termed Status Campaign. The target of the campaign was the businesses, shops and all other public places that failed to give courteous services to African customers. Such businesses would be picketed and boycotted. The aim was to teach the African people to assert themselves. At these early stages, the PAC was faced with a problem of a very restless and militant youth. Whilst planning these campaigns, the Anti-pass Campaign intercepted the PAC and in such campaigns, the former realized the potential of channelling the anger of their impatient youth.

In December 1959, the leadership called for a conference in Bloemfontein where the Anti-Pass Campaign was adopted. The call was perfectly timed in that it coincided with many activities in the ANC and elsewhere in the country that were shaking the very foundations of the Apartheid regime.

In December 1959, The ANC called for a conference where a firm decision for immediate

action was taken. In February 1960, the British Premier, Macmillan, visited South Africa, where he vehemently attacked the Nationalist Party for its Apartheid policies. He told parliament about the "Winds of Change" that were sweeping the entire African continent. At that very moment in Cator Manor next to Durban, people protested against raids. In that protest, nine police were killed. In the Eastern Cape the people reacted by killing government collaborators. This was in reaction to implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act. Both the PAC and ANC were seen addressing big rallies countrywide. In February of the same year, the PAC leadership instructed its members that when a call comes from their headquarters, all were to leave their pass documents at home and surrender to arrest. However, the PAC was cautious and people were requested and warned not to resort to violence. In the midst of all these the government reacted by stepping up repression. (Karis and Carter: 1977).

On March 21st, responding to the call from the PAC leadership, the people lined up around police stations countrywide in the early hours of the morning. The ANC had planned its actions to start on the 31st March 1960. The ANC had planned to send delegation throughout the country to Bantu affairs commissioners to demand the abolition of the Bantu Authorities Act and all pass laws. Following the instructions from the leadership of the PAC, members responded accordingly. In many places, demonstrations went on without any violence. It was in Durban, Van der Bijl Park, Evaton and Langa in Cape Town where there was confrontation between the police and crowds. In Sharpeville, the police opened fire on unarmed people claiming 69 lives and many maimed and injured. The massacre in Sharpeville and Langa made headlines all over the world and South Africa was never to be the same again (Snail, 1993:235); the action of the police and government was a terrible blow to the ANC and its allies in their politics of multi-racialism.

There were chains of reactions following the massacre in Sharpeville. The ANC and PAC were banned. Ironically, the ANC accused the PAC of having sacrificed the people by their "reckless" action. Leadership of both organizations was arrested. This caused the whites in South Africa to panic as the foreign embassies were flooded by people who were leaving the country. From all corners

of the world, Apartheid policies were criticized and condemned. The American State Department, in particular issued a strong statement condemning the South African government. Members of the opposition made calls to the government to make some concessions, but the pleas fell on deaf ears. The PAC and ANC called for a prayer day for the victims of Langa on the 28th March. Many foreign companies withdrew their investments. The United Nations took a firm stand against Apartheid whilst the British Commonwealth expelled South Africa as a member state. A white farmer made an attempt on Dr. Verwoed's life and potential foreign investors withheld their money. (Karis and Carter, 1977).

The imprisonment and banning of the both the ANC and PAC leadership left a serious political vacuum. The South African situation was now clearly militating itself against the multi-racialist approach of the white liberals and white communists within and outside the ANC. The battle was now set on clear racial lines. The Liberals moved in to fill the gap left by the PAC and ANC. African opportunists who believed in Bantu stand policies of the government had a field day. The English and Afrikaner, sharing common guilt and fear came closer to each other. The Indians and so-called Coloureds associated themselves with the Africans-the South African society on its own drifted away from multi-racialism. It was now the question of whites against blacks. On the other hand, African nationalism equally detested by white liberals and white communists, was surging forward. Leaders and many members of the organizations went into exile or/and operated underground in the home base. Western countries refused to give military training or weapons to the liberation movements although they offered support in a form of funding some of their projects.

The (OAU) Organization for African Unity and Non-Aligned Movement offered support in terms of arms and military training but due to lack of resources, their support remained inadequate. The ANC, through the workings of the SACP, got a positive response from the Soviet Union and because of this, China supported the PAC. (Legum, 1988: 109) It must however be explained that China's support was not exclusively PAC. The Chinese did not take sides in the South African Liberation Movement in terms of support. They continued with their support of the ANC albeit the

same for the PAC. The ANC and PAC abandoned their old methods of peaceful negotiations and embarked upon an arms struggle. *Umkhonto We Sizwe* and *POQO* were formed. The former became the armed wing of the ANC whilst the latter was for the PAC. With the positive reaction of the international community and irrespective of the harsh government measures, African nationalism continued to rise. Appearing in separate courts, Mandela and Sobukwe refused to plead. Sobukwe said: "It will be remembered that we refused to plead to charges against us. We feel we had no moral obligation to obey the laws made by the minority. Without wishing to impugn the personal honour and integrity of the magistrate, an unjust law cannot be applied justly." He went further to say, "We believe in human race and that alone. The history of the human race has been a struggle for the removal of mental, moral and spiritual oppression and we would have failed had we not made our contribution to the struggle. We are glad we made it." (Benson Mary, 1974:6-7) In another court Mandela lashed out: "Why is it that in this courtroom I am facing a white magistrate, confronted by a white prosecutor, escorted by white orderlies, does anybody honestly suggest in this type of atmosphere the scales of justice are evenly balanced?" (Bizos, 2007:201-202).

When Sobukwe and Mandela uttered the statements, little did they know the impact they would have on a generation that was about to take over from them. I quoted these statements deliberately to try and demonstrate that the two leaders were quite aware of the mental war that the powers that be was waging against the oppressed masses. Moreover, Mandela's utterances about white orderlies and white magistrates are a far cry away from multi-racialism. Fertile grounds were thus prepared for the emergence of the Black Consciousness that was to follow which saw mental oppression as its point of departure of the total liberation of the black people. (Snail, 1993:237-238) In the South African conundrum the struggle was directly influenced by African nationalism.

The banning of the two African Liberation Movements necessitated the need for the formation of underground structures since the two movements could not operate above ground. The state security was so tight that it was not easy to start clandestine manoeuvres. The underground network of the organizations was surely dealt a blow

by informers within the movement. There was a huge exodus of African intellectuals who were members of the two banned organizations. By the mid 60s exile missions were established and it was from there that the two organizations started to re-organize. (Snail, 1993:239).

In the home base, institutions of Apartheid had a field day. The whole focus of the struggle was swayed to a totally different direction. Whilst fighting the white Apartheid structures, the liberation Movement found itself battling with the African opportunists who were buying themselves in to the homeland policies of the apartheid. The church had to be transformed into a new voice of Africans to register their protest. The exile group worked tirelessly to re-establish underground structures inside the home base. In institutions of higher learning, high schools, and theological seminars etc, cell systems were formed. A large scale of recruitment of young people for military training was embarked upon. (Snail, 1993).

It was exactly at that time that the young Thabo Mbeki helped to form an exclusively black student movement – a break away from politics of multi-racialism. The movement was to carry from where the ANCYL had left. Mbeki was elected the first national secretary of the African Students' Association (ASA) (Gevisser, 2009:79). In his first article, to the *New Age* Mbeki wrote: "Given that the African student was lettered amongst his people he would have to take the lead as the intellectual elite of a people (suffering) from subjugation by a minority group." (Gevisser, 2009:75).

When Thabo Mbeki wrote these words, little did he know that for many years to come, he would be a member of the South African Communist Party which supported multi-racialism that did not rhyme with the statement above. What caused the formation above was not the desire to transform it into a communist or socialist structure but he was influenced by a drive to form an exclusively black or African organization deplete of white control and domination – it was a self reliant thing that he was toying around with. As Gevisser puts it: "There was a gangly adolescence to Mbeki's first attempt at propaganda but his conceptualization of the role of African students in their society and struggle was sophisticated and literate, a prescient foreshadowing of Black Consciousness Movement of a few years later." (Gevisser, 2009:75) Although ASA was politically closer to the ANC, the new

formation was exclusive in character.

The PAC students responded with the formation of ASUSA (African Students Union of South Africa). The formation of these students organization was an immediate response to the banning of the ANC and PAC – an attempt to close the vacuum left by the ANC and PAC. At that point in time, NUSAS was still debating whether it should join the liberation movements or not. The two students' organizations were deeply connected to the liberation movement from their very inception. Their concern was more national than NUSAS whose immediate aim was geared towards the students. The failure by NUSAS not to come to the party in as far as liberation movements were concerned created problems from within. Many black students started to doubt whether it made sense to remain in this multi-racial situation.

Unfortunately the heavy-handedness of the government forced ASA and ASUSA to disband. NUSAS, the Liberal Party, and black opportunists mentioned above continued to assume the role of mediators for black students. Strange enough, the government feared NUSAS and the Liberal Party which they branded "communist orientated organizations": Black students at black institutions were becoming tired of the patronizing hand of NUSAS which they also accused of hypocrisy—multi-racialism was to the African students like a political ploy to confuse them. (Snail, 2009:243).

It was from black universities in the late 60's that first efforts were made to establish an above ground black organization. The church, in the form of UCM (University Christian Movement) provided the springboard for the emergence of such a structure. Enjoying a multi-racial membership, the UCM nevertheless experienced great difficulties in containing the energies of both black and white student within one body. The South African political scenario placed every possible obstacle in the way of inter-racial contacts and the execution of common projects amongst students. (Walsh, 1973:38).

By the late 60's, both white and black students caucuses had formed. (Walsh, 1973 38:39) From within the black students, debate developed on the topic of black theology. It was from that caucus that the South African Students Organization (SASO) was born. The emergence of SASO was encouraged by many reasons. The very nature of South African political scene was in itself an

impediment between black and white students in the UCM. Suspicion, mistrust, hostilities and prejudices from both sides were the order of the day, mocking at the very multi-racial arrangement of UCM. Hypocrisy and arrogance, on the part of some white students; made integration impossible and antagonized black feelings. Ignorance and complacency of the white students about black experience drove another wedge between the students. (Snail, 1993).

An inferiority complex created mistrust on the side of black students in this multi-racialism of inequities-the sincerity of white students was questioned. Above all, there was a desperate necessity for the creation of an independent organization whose activities were to be co-coordinated with the underground organizations inside and outside South Africa-a pointer which caused concern amongst white students. Black students (that is Africans, Indians and so-called Coloureds) were on the other hand not united and were having serious problems of communication-suspicion and mistrust again reigned. (Snail, 1993).

According to Leggasick, the inception of Apartheid in 1948 threatened the very autonomy and existence of universities. The universities of Cape Town and Witwatersrand were under siege, blamed for the growing number of black students in their campuses. (Leggasick, 1967:32-33) The pressure from pro-government institutions and the regime itself was too much for those universities. Fearing reprisals, Wits University placed quotas on the number of black students admitted to its Medical School. Students stood firm on the side of their fellow black students, making it impossible for the universities to implement racial laws. In the middle of all these frustrations was NUSAS. (Ibid. 34).

Social and political stultifications in the country, coupled with preferential treatment of certain groups resulted in different aspirations in various segments of the economy (Black Review, 1972:18). The situation was worsened by the fact that NUSAS was predominantly white. The voice of dissent began to emerge in several black organizations. The Durban Student Union and the Cape Peninsula Union were fanatically opposed to NUSAS's multi-racial approach. The two Unions merged to form what was called The Progressive National Students Union: "The Cape Peninsula Students Union refused to co-operate with NUSAS

in their protests and other forms of activity. They saw NUSAS as a student wing of the imperialist formation whose interest was to control blacks." (Black Review, 1972:18).

When SASO was formed in 1968, its manifesto of 1971 read: "The white man must be made aware one is either part of the solution or part of the problem that in this context because of the privileges accorded to them by legislation and because of their continuing maintenance of an oppressive regime whites have defused themselves as part of the problem." (Black Review, 1972-1975:40-45).

The message of BCM was clear on the question of multi racialism. Above all, the BCM directed itself to the black man himself and to the white liberal in South Africa. The Liberals saw BCM as racism-reversed. Interestingly, in its formative stage, the white government hailed BCM as a positive development in their history of separatism. Amongst the black students, debates continued about the formation of an all black student organization, and the role played by NUSAS and UCM in their affairs. SASO was eventually launched in 1969 (Motlhabi, 1984:106); all whites were seen as part of the system and any effort towards reconciliation was thrown over-board. SASO manifesto declared that: "Therefore, we believe in all matters relating to the struggle towards realizing our aspirations, whites must be excluded." (Black Review 1972:41).

As indicated earlier the concept of non-colaboration was not entirely new in the South African political arena. The idea was forcefully carried out by the Youth League of the ANC and the Non-European Unity Movement in the 1940's. Lembede of the ANCYL, stressed that whilst cooperation amongst the different racial groups may be desirable: "It could only take place between Africans organized as a single unit and the other "Non-European" groups as separate units." (Bernstein Hilda, 1978:12) In the PAC, whites were excluded and the "Indians of the merchant class" rejected. The so-called Coloureds were accepted as Africans whilst a room was reserved for the poor Indians. Contrary to its fore-bearers, the BCM embraced both Indians and so-called Coloureds. (Bernstein, 1978:14).

In many respects the BCM echoed ideas from the past. Whilst BCM expounded the unity of the oppressed, the idea of the "pathological state of

mind brought about amongst blacks by racism – the loss of self-confidence, inferiority complex and idolization of whites.” (Bernstein, 1978:12) BCM was in essence working on the foundation laid by Lembede and once again reflected in the policies of the PAC in 1959. The idea of mobilizing all the oppressed as a group was started by the NEUM as early as 1943. Similar to the NEUM, the BCM rejected all forms of cooperation with the white population of South Africa.

Many white liberals and NUSAS saw this as an ominous sign of counter-racism. According to Barney Pityana, the first step of BCM was: “To make the black man see himself, to pump life into his empty shell; to impulse him with dignity; to remind him of his complicity in the crime allowing himself to be misused and therefore letting evil reign supreme in the country of his birth ... This means that blacks must build themselves into a position of non-dependence upon whites. They must work towards a self-sufficient political, social and economic unit ... Black man you are on your own!” (Hope and young, 1981:79).

Alan Paton, expressing his fears about the surging BCM wrote an article, *The Failure of Political Liberation* in which he lamented: “That is why I hold in contempt those young white radicals who sneer at liberals and liberalism. Who were their mentors? If it had not been for the Jabavus, Marquards, Hoernles they would have been in darkness until now. One cannot measure past labours in terms of present demands. After all White power has done it for generations. But if Black power meets White power in headlong confrontation, and there are no Black liberals and white liberals around, then God help South Africa. Liberalism is more than politics. It is the humanity, tolerance and love of justice. South Africa has no future without them.” (Adam and Giliomee, 1979: 258).

On the question of confrontation that underlies Alan Paton’s statement above, Biko answered: “It isn’t a hating thing. It’s a positive Black self-confidence thing involving no hatred of anyone, not even the Nats – only what they represent today.” (Hope and Young, 1987:79) According to Biko, Black consciousness was described as a state of mind, an attitude and that anybody who identifies himself with the black cause or describes himself as such, was a black man. The definition transcends racism let alone multi-racialism. In the above state-

ment there is room for whites. “Merely by describing yourself as black, you have started on a road towards emancipation; you have committed yourself to fight against all forces that seek to use your blackness as a stamp that marks you out as a subservient human being.” (Bernstein Hilda, 1978:15).

Rejecting multi-racialism and integration as counter-points of apartheid, Biko said that the only way of approaching Apartheid was the abolition of the whole system, since integration was impossible in that system. He said: “While the white liberal identifies with the Blacks, the burden of the enormous privileges which he still uses and enjoys becomes lighter. Yet at the back of his mind is a constant reminder that he is comfortable as things stand and therefore should not bother about change.” (Bernstein, 1978:14).

Biko was of the opinion that no struggle could be waged in the South African context without a strong counterpoint to racism. The thesis of white racism could only have one valid anti-thesis, a solid black unity to balance the scale. Between the thesis, white and anti-thesis black, there would emerge a synthesis of ideas and a *modus vivendi*. A synthesis of this nature, he elaborated, would develop on its own and that it needed no prescription. What Biko was trying to explain here, is that people integrate on their own and need not be told as to how they should do it. In other words no amount of multi-racialism would force people to integrate. White liberals and whites generally would not willingly relinquish their power over the people they dominate. He argued: “We must accept that the limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress. Our situation is not a mistake on the part of whites but a deliberate act, and no amount of moral lecturing will persuade the white to correct the situation.” (Bernstein, 1978:14).

At the formative stage of UCM, many black students were satisfied with it. One of the leaders of the South African Students Organization, Barney Pityana expressed this optimistic view: “The establishment of UCM ... opened new avenues for contact. UCM had a special appeal to students at university colleges. The fact that within a year and half of its existence UCM had already a black majority in its sessions is indicative of this. Hence with the continued getting together of students from university colleges, dialogue began

again amongst black students.” (Fatton, 1986:65).

This optimistic attitude of Pityana was soon to be disappointed by black discontent within UCM. As the dialogue between black students (Africans, Indians and so-called Coloureds) was being intensified, criticism of UCM as a duplicate of NUSAS was brought to the fore. Fatton writes: “The ultimate outcome of this dialogue was a severe blow to multi-racialism.” (Fatton, 1986) What is of vital importance is that the move away from white dominated multi-racial organizations was also a blow to the ANC that by now had embraced multi-racialism as a strategy.

Ranwedzi Nengwekhulu had this to say: “Concern was expressed that such organizations, as NUSAS and University Christian Movement were white dominated and as such, paid very little attention to problems pertaining to the black students community. In fact, some people began to doubt the very competence of a pluralistic group, especially where the unaffected group is from the oppressor camp. It was felt that a time had come when Blacks had to formulate their own thinking, unpolluted by ideas from a group with a good deal at stake in status quo.” (Fatton, 1986:65-66).

SASO newsletter of August 1970 carried a blistering attack on the role played by white liberals. The article argued that it was not the Nationalist Party (the governing party) but the liberals that the black man should check. The liberals were referred to as: “That bunch of non-conformists, do-gooders that goes under all sorts of names – liberals, leftists etc.” (SASO Newsletter, 1970) It goes on to state that these are the people who claim that they feel also as acutely oppressed as blacks and went further to label liberals “Black souls wrapped up in white skins.” It further launched an attack on the multi-racial and integrationist theory of liberals. “It is impossible to integrate people coming from various segregated societies, as it is in South Africa, with their built-in complexes.”

It found the liberals always vacillating between black man’s and white man’s world: “Skilfully articulating the black man’s grievances while at the same time extracting what is good coming from the privileges of the white man’s system.” (SASO Newsletter, 1970) The liberals found themselves in an uncomfortable place, where they were torn between Afrikaner and African nationalisms. On both sides, they were not fully trusted and faced possible rejection. When the liberals in

1955 refused to co-sponsor the Congress of the People, the ANC also distanced itself from them.

BCM, however, continued working with certain white individuals who they trusted. Individuals such as Beyers Naude, Father Stubbs, David Russel and many others. They also did not accept all Black people as black. Homeland leaders were rejected and dismissed as “government stooges” and black police were seen as “part of the system.” The pejorative term “non-whites” was turned against anybody who collaborated with the system. Fatton quoting Leggasick and Shingler writes: “NUSAS leaders were faced with a unique dilemma which reflected their position as white critics of white supremacy. As whites, they are an inextricable part of the very system they criticized.” (Fatton, 1986:64) In the same tone Fatton observed that Blacks considered themselves at best as aliens within the white dominated NUSAS and at worst as token emblems of NUSAS sanctimonious multi-racialism. To emphasize this point, he quotes Gerhard:

“Despite its multi-racial membership, NUSAS was essentially white-populated, white financed, white-led and white controlled, although its policies ran counter to the nationally dominant white consensus. Non-whites, as delegates and office-holders, did play a role but were for the most part overshadowed by their white counter-parts and in some instances were callously used and manipulated as symbols of NUSAS integrated non-racialism.” (Fatton, 1986:65) It must be mentioned that whilst the BCM was fantastically opposed to integration and multi-racialism, they half-heartedly accepted the term “non-racialism” – they found it inadequate to explain abstinence from racism. In their writings they preferred the word “anti-racism” and stubbornly wrote that there is a difference between non-racism and anti-racism.

CONCLUSION

All whites in South Africa were guilty of apartheid. They all enjoyed the rights and privileges created by that system. They all had preferential treatment on the bases of their skin colour. Liberals and communists would mix with Africans during the day but at night they would retire back to the comforts created by the apartheid system exclusively for whites. In these multi-racial gatherings they were complacent about the fact that

Africans should be led. Those who were in the ANC by virtue of their being white received better treatment.

The fact that the white liberals in 1955 refused to sponsor the Congress of the People remained haunting the minds of the Africans in the ANC. The liberals and all the whites recognized South Africa as a sovereign state and legitimised the very order of the day by merely voting. It was mostly their arrogance that the Africans in the ANC and outside detested. The Africans observed inequalities in multi-racial set-ups. There was totally no doubt that the middle class whites, liberals and communists in this multi-racial milieu would not abandon their riches and privileges after independence, if such independence would be attained on multi-racial lines.

The refusal of the Africans to multi-racialism was justified in the sense that a multi-racialist is not necessarily a non-racialist. In fact Africans saw multi-racialism as a ploy to obscure racism. It is not that some in the ANC, by embracing and pandering towards multi-racialism were not aware of the concerns raised by other Africans. As mentioned earlier, the ANC used those multi-racial arrangements as a contact-building platform amongst races. The ANC wanted people to discuss and debate issues and it also believed that, that was the

only way of reaching consensus amongst the people. As Mandela averred, the ANC did not necessarily accept multi-racialism as espoused by white liberals and white communists outside and within the ANC.

The ANC needed both tactical and financial support. In many instances, it was the very whites who clinched international contacts for the ANC, both in the Western and Eastern blocks. Multi-racialism was also used as a palliative (stop-gap measure) and a recruiting ground as to have as many people across the colour-line constituting the membership of the ANC. Multi-racialism was also used by the ANC for political image packaging especially in the Western-countries who feared for whites should a black government take over. The Black Consciousness Movement of the late 1960's went a step further by arguing that even "non-racialism" was not adequate and they proposed "anti-racialism" instead. Before his death, Sobukwe embraced the position of the Black Consciousness Movement as it was articulated to him personally by Steve Biko. In the language and publications of the ANC and PAC, anti-racialism and non-racialism are used inter-changeably – a consternation that needs to be revisited. It must also be noted that the world-renowned South African constitution emerged as non-racialist!

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