



CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ORGANISATION, LEADERSHIP AND FINANCING OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE

One particular aspect of Umkhonto we Sizwe about which little has been written since the beginning of the armed struggle in 1961, has been the organisation's structure, the nature of its leadership and its funding. This is not surprising, since revelations about how the organisation operated, who its leaders were, and who financed it, could be harmful if not destructive to its security. This is particularly true of the period between 1961 and the middle of the 1960's when the armed struggle was being conducted from within South Africa. During these early years no information was ever officially released by the ANC on any of its underground structures; their interrelations and functions or who was responsible for what in the organisation. What is known about the organisation and leadership of Umkhonto and the underground during these early years, is largely based on information revealed during the numerous court cases that involved the members or alleged members of the underground ANC and the SACP and the research that has been undertaken by various scholars on the subject. Edward Felt was the first scholar to make extensive use of the abovementioned court material for research into the history of the ANC, the SACP and Umkhonto between 1960 and 1964. As a result of the work done by him and the information contained in other sources such as Bruno Mtolo's book on Umkhonto a reasonably clear picture can be formed of the organisational structure of Umkhonto and its leadership during this period. As far as the funding of Umkhonto is concerned virtually nothing is known besides the fact that the organisation was set up largely with SACP funds.

Since the 1970's a number of new sources have appeared on the subject



of both the ANC and Umkhonto, which contain specks of information on the organisation, leadership and funding of the two organisations. While this additional information has added to our knowledge of the ANC and Umkhonto, the overall picture of the organisation and leadership of Umkhonto between 1961 and the present, remains to be a sketchy one at best. Although the account that follows necessarily reflects this lack of illuminating information, it does provide some insight into how Umkhonto was structured, what changes took place over the years, whom its leaders were and who funded it, particularly during the 1980's.

I THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE

1.1 The Period 1960 - 1964

According to Feit⁽¹⁾, Umkhonto's organisational set-up followed the broad outlines of Nelson Mandela's M-Plan. Although Umkhonto started off in what seemed to have been an unplanned fashion, attempts were soon made to transform the new organisation into a modified format of the M-Plan. According to Feit, Umkhonto, like the ANC, was organised into a web of commands that linked the various structures of the underground organisation together through a system of contact persons that operated clandestinely and vertically. This was similar to underground communist structures elsewhere and any deviation from the M-Plan was done purely for functional reasons.

Although Umkhonto followed the broad outlines of the M-Plan, the picture of the organisation's structure is complicated by the fact that the M-Plan itself - with the exception of the Port Elizabeth and Cator Manor regions - was never fully implemented in the country, but was often adapted by the local ANC leadership to serve their own needs rather than that of the broader organisation. As a result, in some regions the leaders of the ANC and the SACP were able to make effective use of the local structures of the ANC, modified by the M-Plan to introduce Umkhonto, while in others it had to set up

1. Feit, Urban Revolt in South Africa, (Journal of Modern African Studies 8(1), 1970, p. 66).



entirely different and independent structures for Umkhonto. In Port Elizabeth, for instance, where the M-Plan had been successfully implemented, the local leaders of the ANC and Umkhonto could and did make effective use of the local organisational structures and leadership of the ANC and the SACP to set up Umkhonto in 1961.

In Durban and the rest of Natal, on the other hand, where the local ANC had resisted the implementation of the M-Plan (with perhaps the exception of the Cato Manor township just outside Durban, where the M-Plan had been partially implemented) the leadership of Umkhonto could not make use of the organisational structure or the membership of the local ANC to set up Umkhonto in 1961. Since Umkhonto's leaders could not make use of the structure of the leadership of the ANC in Natal, it made use of the underground structures of the Communist Party and SACTU in the province to set up Umkhonto during that years. With most of Umkhonto's national leadership also being members of the underground SACP, it was logical that Umkhonto should recruit its leadership in Durban from the ranks of the Communist Party and its affiliated organisations, such as the Hospital Worker's Union in Durban. Thus, as a result of the hostility between the local ANC and the radical leadership of the underground ANC in Johannesburg, Umkhonto obtained an organisational structure in Natal that was somewhat different from Umkhonto structures elsewhere in the country.

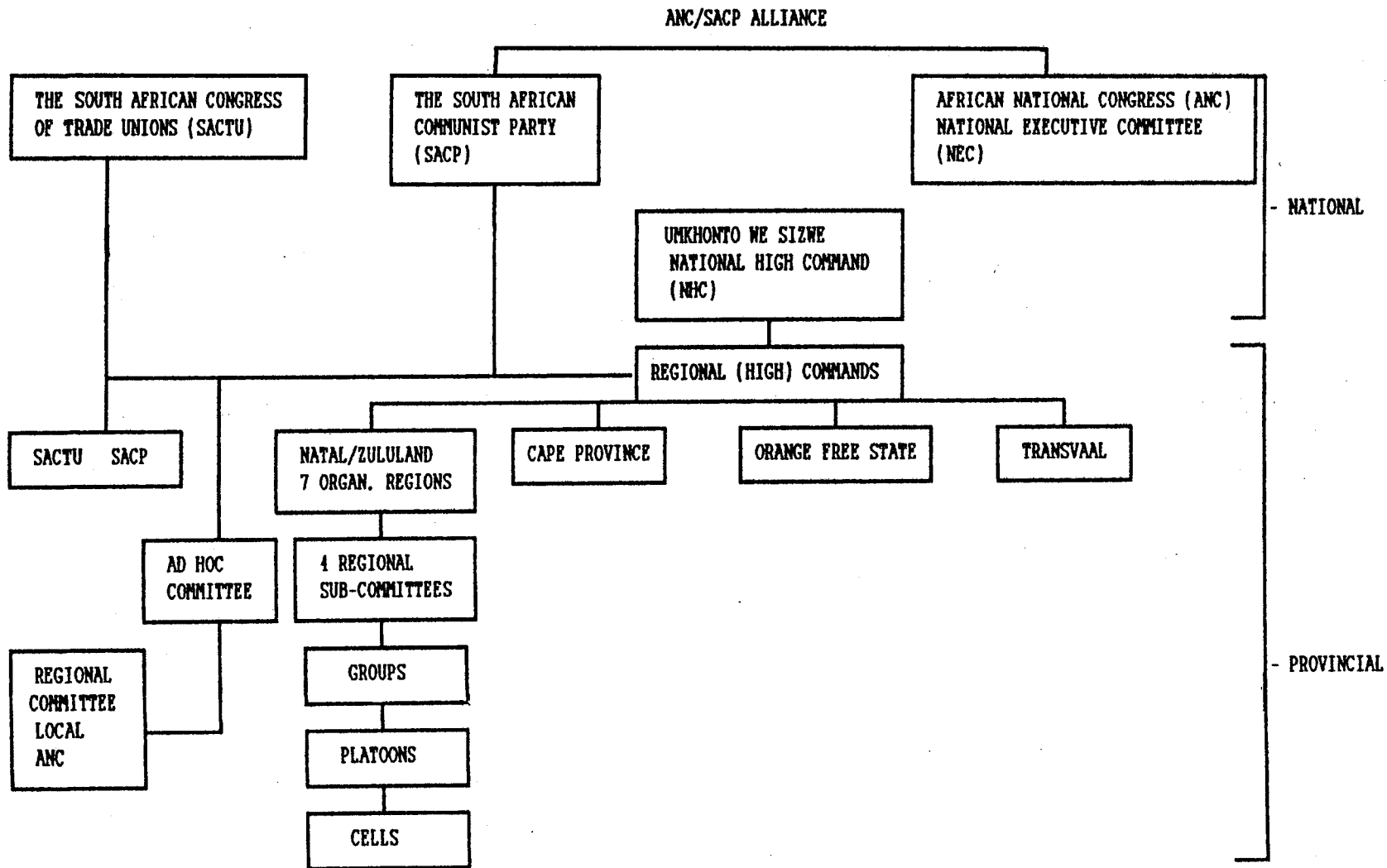
1.1.1 Umkhonto's Organisation and Leadership in Natal⁽²⁾

Theoretically, Umkhonto in Natal was designed to consist of a single Regional (High) Command situated in Durban, and four sub-Regional Commands representative of the rest of Natal and Zululand. With the Regional Command in Durban being the most senior and thus the co-ordinating organ in the province, the sub-Regional Commands were its direct link to the lowest level of organisation, namely, the groups, sections and cells which were mainly responsible for the physical execution of the sabotage campaign.

2. See Diagram H, p. 405.

DIAGRAM H

BASIC ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE IN NATAL 1961 - 1963





In addition to these divisions, Natal was to have been divided into seven organisational areas, each under the control of an area organiser who was directly responsible to a regional organiser attached to the Regional Command in Durban. To ensure that the seven area organisers did their work properly - which was the recruitment of volunteers for Umkhonto - an overseer was to have been appointed by the Regional Command in Durban with the approval of the ANC (presumably the NEC in Johannesburg because the ANC and Umkhonto in Natal were not in agreement on the armed struggle). According to Mtolo,⁽³⁾ who is a major source of information on Umkhonto in Natal, the NHC in Johannesburg had the final say on the appointment of both the seven area organisers, and their overseer. The seven organisers were to be paid R20,00 a month plus a travelling allowance of R14,00 per month. Since the provinces had no funds of their own, all salaries and allowances needed to conduct the armed struggle came directly from the NHC in Johannesburg, which in turn obtained its funds from the SACP. According to Mtolo, the NHC in Johannesburg also in this respect had the final say in the organisational set-up of Umkhonto in Natal. Thus, the seven organisational areas were not devised by the Regional Command in Durban but by the NHC. Mtolo wrote:

Mbeki showed me a list of the seven organisational areas. When I look at it as a man who knows Natal I guessed that it had been taken from a map. In some places organisers would be crossing one another's areas. When I pointed this out I was told that we could zone the areas to suit ourselves.⁽⁴⁾

It is not known how many of the seven proposed organisational areas were eventually set up by the Regional Command in Durban. According to Mtolo, whose evidence is very sketchy on the subject, Solomon (Solly) Mbanjwa was charged with the task of setting up these areas. Mbanjwa allegedly visited Pietermaritzburg, Hammersdale and Bergville

3. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 73 - 74.
4. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 74 - 75.



during the first half of 1963 to arrange for the establishment of sub-Regional Commands in these areas.⁽⁵⁾

Shortly after Mbanjwa returned to Durban, Mtolo was instructed to proceed to Bergville to instruct the members of the newly established sub-Regional Command in the art of bomb making and sabotage. Mtolo's contact person in Bergville was known by the name Zondo. Zondo, like Mtolo (and virtually everyone else in Umkhonto in Natal) was a member of the SACP in the province. Zondo had been recruited into Umkhonto by David Ndawonde, who was one of Umkhonto's group or section leaders in Durban.

According to Mtolo, the Bergville sub-Regional Command consisted of four people, namely Zondo, Rabbit, and two others whose names he failed to mention.⁽⁶⁾ Beyond this, nothing else is known about the structure and the activities of the Bergville sub-Regional Command, or whether any other sub-Regional Commands were ever set up.

Further divisions were mentioned by Mtolo both in his testimony at the Rivonia Trial in 1963 and later in his book on Umkhonto in Natal. These were groups, platoons, sections and cells. Unfortunately Mtolo did not elaborate on these divisions, or on their functions. As a result it is difficult to determine whether these divisions were ever set up by the Regional Command in Durban or how they were to have functioned. There is also uncertainty as to whether they were different organs or whether these were in fact all one and the same organ, referred to by different names. Given the relatively small leadership structure of Umkhonto in Natal and the difficulty that it had in recruiting sufficient volunteers for the organisation between 1962 and 1963, not to mention the fact that most of the acts of sabotage committed by Umkhonto in the province were done by members of the Regional Command assisted by a handful of others, one is inclined to believe that Umkhonto's structure below the division of sub-Regional Command consisted primarily of cells and that in some areas, such as in the Durban area, where Umkhonto had a larger

5. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 89 - 90.

6. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 103 - 109.

following, cells could be grouped together to form a group, platoon or section. What can be gathered from Mtolo's evidence was that a cell normally consisted of four members of whom one was designated as the cell leader.⁽⁷⁾ The latter person was the only member of the unit that had direct contact with the next level of organisation which could be either the sub-Regional Command or a group or platoon, when sufficient cells could be grouped together to form such a sub-division. In the case of the latter, three cells normally formed a group or platoon. This meant that a group or platoon could have up to twelve members, of whom one was elected or appointed to act as a group or platoon leader. This further meant that where a group or platoon had been formed, the various cell leaders would be responsible to the group or platoon leader who in turn would be responsible to the next level of organisation. No horizontal contact between the various organs of Umkhonto was allowed. In other words, theoretically the members of one cell or group did not know the members of another cell or group. In practice, however, this did not always work well and the members of one cell sometimes became known to the members of another cell. There is also the possibility that Mtolo could have confused groups with cells and that the groups such as those in Durban and Hammersdale which he refers to in his evidence were in actual fact cells, since they consisted of only four to five members. The situation remains unclear. Mtolo for instance alleged that the acts of sabotage that were committed by the Regional Command of Umkhonto in Durban towards the end of 1962 to revenge the arrest of Nelson Mandela were executed by three "groups" consisting of four members each. The members of these groups were not ordinary Umkhonto cadres but were either group or sub-group leaders themselves. The group that for instance stood under the leadership of Mtolo himself consisted of three group leaders, namely Solomon Mbanjwa, who was himself an Umkhonto group leader in Hammersdale; Ablon Duna, who was the deputy-leader of the Durban group, and Jerry Kumalo who was the group leader of the Claremont township group. The other groups were composed in a similar manner, namely three group, or sub-group

7. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, p. 29.



leaders under the direct command of a member of the Regional Command in Durban. Billy Nair of the Regional Command in Durban for instance commanded the second group. He was assisted by Cootzee Naicker, Kirsten Moonsammy and Ebrahim Ismail. Ebrahim and Moonsammy were themselves the leaders of the Durban Central and Clairwood groups respectively. Ronnie Kasrils, who was the only White member of Umkhonto in Durban commanded the third group and was assisted by Justice Mpanza and two others whose names are unknown.⁽⁸⁾

The task of these three attack groups which operated directly under the command of the Regional Command in Durban was two-fold, namely to select and reconnoitre targets for attack and, once these targets had been identified, to report them to the Regional Command who in turn had to report it to the NHC in Johannesburg for approval.

According to Mtolo, once an attack had been executed and the outcome was known, a report had to be submitted to the Regional Command as well as to M.P. Naicker in Durban who was the local news agent for the leftwing paper New Age in Natal.⁽⁹⁾ Propagation of the armed struggle was thus an important element of the ANC and the SACP's armed struggle from the beginning. Undoubtedly the government was well aware of this with the result that New Age was banned in 1962.⁽¹⁰⁾

In addition to the various structures mentioned so far, a further structure known as the Secretariat was set up in Natal. This organ was formed sometime in 1962 by the ANC-SACP leadership in Johannesburg to try and improve relations between the ANC and Umkhonto in Natal. Not a great deal is known about the activities of the Secretariat, but it appears to have substituted some of the functions of the local Regional Committee of the ANC, such as the implementation of the M-Plan which the Regional Committee was having little success with. The Secretariat existed until about February 1963

8. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 26, 27, 48, 49, 51.

9. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, p. 51.

10. Pike, A History of Communism in South Africa, p. 274.



when it was replaced by an Ad Hoc Committee. At the same time a new Regional Committee was set up in Natal, because the old one was not co-operating with the Regional Command of Umkhonto in the province. It is interesting to note that the members of the Ad Hoc Committee were not appointed by the ANC in Natal but by a member of the ANC's NEC and Umkhonto's NHC in Johannesburg, namely Govan Mbeki. Although the task of the new Ad Hoc Committee was similar to that of the Secretariat it replaced, its members were more carefully selected.⁽¹¹⁾ According to Mtolo, Curdnick Ndlovu, who was the leader of Umkhonto in Natal, was instructed by Walter Sisulu of the NHC to resist giving in to the demands of the ANC in Natal and to act only on instructions coming directly from the NHC in Johannesburg. He was further instructed to make sure that any contact between Umkhonto and the ANC in the province was conducted through the office of Solly Mbanjwa who was in charge of the Ad Hoc Committee.⁽¹²⁾

Both the new Regional Committee and the Ad Hoc Committee were therefore creations of the ANC and the SACP in Johannesburg. As far as their composition and functions were concerned, the Regional Committee consisted of a chairman, a secretary, a treasurer and a number of sub-committees such as a finance sub-committee, a trade union sub-committee, a rural areas sub-committee and a sub-committee for propaganda. Two of these sub-committees, namely that on finances and that on propaganda, were headed by members of Umkhonto's Regional Command in Durban - Jerry Kumalo was in charge of the propaganda sub-committee while Curdnick Ndlovu was in charge of the sub-committee on finances.⁽¹³⁾

The Ad Hoc Committee, unlike the Regional Committee, was under the full control of the NHC of Umkhonto, the ANC and the SACP in Johannesburg. It for instance received all its instructions directly

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11. Durban Regional Court, Natal, Case RC. 139/1964, The State against Pascal Ngakane and 24 others, Evidence of E. Kunene, pp. 5 - 6.
 12. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 28 - 29.
 13. Durban Regional Court, Natal, Case RC. 139/1964, The State against P. Ngakane and 24 others, Evidence of E. Kunene, pp. 25 - 32.



from these three organs and also reported back to them directly by means of a courier. In contrast to the Secretariat it replaced, the new Ad Hoc Committee was given increased powers and authority. It was allowed to take decisions independent from the NHC in Johannesburg as long as they remained within the broad framework of the organisation's policy and programme. This was probably done to reduce the province's dependence on the NHC in Johannesburg and to expedite decisions at the lower levels of organisation. As a result of increased police action against the ANC and Umkhonto by the beginning of 1963, the leaders in Natal sometimes found it impossible to keep regular contact with Johannesburg.⁽¹⁴⁾

As far as the sub-committees are concerned, very little is known about their functions beyond what can be inferred from their names. According to Elias Kunene⁽¹⁵⁾ who briefly described the functions of these committees while giving evidence in court, the task of the sub-committee on finances was to collect funds and donations from people who were sympathetic to the struggle. It also handled all funds received from the NHC in Johannesburg. The sub-committee on trade unions, on the other hand, dealt with matters relating to trade union activities such as the organisation of workers in industry and the recruitment of new members, presumably for Umkhonto. SACTU, as had been indicated, served as a major source of recruitment for Umkhonto in Natal. The sub-committee on rural areas did exactly what its name implied, namely to organise and promote the armed struggle outside the urban areas and to solicit support for the ANC and Umkhonto in the rural areas of Natal.⁽¹⁶⁾

The fourth and last sub-committee, namely the propaganda sub-committee, was responsible mainly for the preparation and distribution of lectures and propaganda material in the townships. It also had close

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14. Feit, Urban Revolt in South Africa, 1960 - 1964, p. 109.
 15. Durban Regional Court, Natal, Case RC. 139/1964, The State against P. Ngakane and 24 others, Evidence of E. Kunene, pp. 30 - 34.
 16. Durban Regional Court, Natal, Case RC. 139/1964, The State against P. Ngakane and 24 others, Evidence of E. Kunene, pp. 30 - 34.



ties with the sub-committee on rural areas (which it assisted in a propagandist capacity).

Originally thus, Umkhonto in Natal was largely an urban based organisation with most of its members living and operating in the various Black townships around the province. By 1963, however, there were indications that the organisation was planning to extend its structures and recruitment campaigns to the rural areas. According to Mtolo:

In our Regional Command meetings we decided that we should use our position as SACTU secretaries to convene a joint meeting of the ANC Regional and SACTU officials. The idea was that we should organise a meeting of all the people - mainly workers and peasants, chiefs and indunas - so that we could select certain people to be our contacts in the rural areas.⁽¹⁷⁾

1.1.2 The Organisation of Umkhonto outside Natal

Very little is known factually about the organisation of Umkhonto outside Natal. In the Port Elizabeth region in the Eastern Cape the local ANC had been successfully reorganised along the organisational lines of the M-Plan. Umkhonto - in terms of its organisational structure and leadership - immediately identified itself with the ANC and the underground SACP-SACTU structures. Although not a great deal is known about Umkhonto's structure in the Eastern Cape, indications are that it was basically similar to the organisational set-up of Umkhonto in Natal, and that it only differed from it in that it also made use of the local organisational structure of the ANC in the region.

As was the case in Natal, the various organisational divisions of Umkhonto in the Eastern Cape and elsewhere were vertically linked together by means of couriers, who ensured the upwards and downwards flow of information between the provinces and Umkhonto's underground

17. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, p. 27.



headquarters in Johannesburg. The lowest organisational division was the cell. In the Port Elizabeth region, unlike Natal, the various divisions of Umkhonto consisted of units of seven - whether it be houses, cells or zones. For instance, seven houses or a street block would form a cell while seven cells would form a zone branch or group which would resort directly under the Regional Command or Regional Committee in the province. The latter two organs were directly responsible to the ANC and Umkhonto's NHC in Johannesburg.⁽¹⁸⁾ In Port Elizabeth, where Umkhonto made use of the organisational structure of the ANC, the Regional Committee and the Regional Command were probably the one and same organ thus making it unnecessary for the ANC-SACP alliance in Johannesburg to set up an Ad Hoc Committee, as it did in Natal, to liaise between the ANC and Umkhonto.

Due to the close relationship between the ANC and Umkhonto in the Eastern Cape, it is not clear whether all underground cells in the region were unified cells, that is whether they contained both ANC and Umkhonto cadres or whether a division was kept between them. Indications are that most Umkhonto cells were representative of both the ANC and Umkhonto. According to Feit, many of the Umkhonto recruits who were captured by the police for having left the country illegally during the 1960's to be trained as guerrillas often did not know whether they belonged to the ANC or Umkhonto and considered the two organisations to be one and the same. Similarly, many of those who were recruited specifically for Umkhonto made reference to their membership of the ANC rather than Umkhonto when questioned on their activities in the latter organisation. Feit ascribed this partially to the fact that

the ANC and Umkhonto were not neatly structured bodies following prescribed lines. Lines, he pointed out, were blurred even for members; often they were not really certain which organisation they had joined or been transferred to. This vagueness, together with the tendency for members of Umkhonto to say that they were ANC, was often used by the police in nailing ANC leaders.⁽¹⁹⁾

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18. Feit, Urban Revolt in South Africa, 1960 - 1964, pp. 98 - 101.
 19. Feit, Urban Revolt in South Africa, 1960 - 1964, pp. 188 - 189.



1.1.3 The National High Command (NHC) of Umkhonto we Sizwe

The size of the NHC as it existed in the early 1960's up to the time of the Rivonia raid in July 1963 has never been determined. At the trial of the NHC in 1963, the State listed ten names in its indictment as being definite leaders of the NHC and some 22 others as possible leaders or people who had been closely associated with the NHC.⁽²⁰⁾ Francis Meli, in his recently published book on the ANC does not shed much light on the subject either. He merely stated that those who formed Umkhonto in 1961 were all members of the ANC and the SACP and that Mandela had been the organisation's first Commander-in-Chief.⁽²¹⁾

It is possible, given the interlocking membership between the ANC, the SACP and Umkhonto, that the NHC could indeed have been as large as the state suggested in 1963. However, this is highly unlikely as such a large body would have severely hampered the decision-making process - something that a clandestine underground organisation cannot afford. Normally, underground command structures like the NHC are small and highly mobile. This is of the utmost importance if quick decisions and flexibility of actions are required. In view of this it is thus doubtful whether the inner core that controlled Umkhonto was much larger than a handful of people, all of whom were members of both the ANC and the SACP. It is also not clear what position the National Executive of the ANC occupied during these years. Although reference is made to its existence after 1960, its membership and size was never revealed until the Morogoro Consultative Conference, by which stage it existed and operated exclusively outside South Africa. By then it contained approximately 20 members. It is of course possible that the underground National Executive of the ANC and the NHC of Umkhonto were one and the same organ for the period 1961 to 1963 and that the members of the NEC were also the members of the NHC. The fact that almost no reference is made to the

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20. Supreme Court, Transvaal Division, Case 65/64, The State against N. Mandela and others, Revised Indictment, pp. 1 - 2, and Opening Address Dr. P. Yutar, pp. 1 - 19.
21. Meli, South Africa Belongs to Us, p. 148.



NEC during this time and that most of its alleged members also appeared to have been members of the NHC of Umkhonto, suggests that this was more than likely the case, at least until the collapse of the underground by the mid-1960's.

As the most senior organ in the organisational structure of Umkhonto, the NHC was charged with the task of controlling the day-to-day running of the armed struggle. As a creation of the ANC-SACP alliance, the NHC had representation on both the NEC of the ANC and the Central Committee of the SACP, from where it received its instructions and funding. According to Mell⁽²²⁾ the NHC had the powers to co-opt new members, to appoint Regional Commands, to determine tactics and targets and was in overall command of the training of cadres and the financing of the armed struggle.

All contact between the NHC and the provinces were maintained by means of specially assigned couriers. Occasionally instructions were also sent by post, but since this was not a secure method of communication it was only used in extreme cases. On some occasions provincial leaders of Umkhonto were instructed to report to the NHC in Johannesburg, either to receive instructions or to be given special training in some or other aspect of sabotage or underground work. On other occasions the provinces were visited by members of the NHC to make assessments of developments in the provinces and to deal with problems. Both Joe Modise and Nelson Mandela, for instance, visited Natal in 1962, while Bruno Mtolo paid at least two visits to the NHC in Johannesburg. He also escorted recruits from Natal to Johannesburg between 1962 and 1963.⁽²³⁾

Although the NHC, as the most senior organ in Umkhonto's organisational set-up, had the final say in virtually all matters with regard to the development of the armed struggle in the provinces, the need for the Regional Commands to sometimes act without the prior consent

22. Mell, South Africa Belongs to Us, p. 147.

23. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 69 - 88.



of the NHC, meant that in practice the underground headquarters in Johannesburg was not always consulted on all matters relating to the armed struggle in the provinces.

1.2 THE POST RIVONIA PERIOD: UMKHONTO WE SIZWE IN EXILE,
1964 - 1983

As is the case with the internal history of Umkhonto, not a great deal is known about the organisation's external history and structure due to the extensive secrecy attached to its activities and leadership.

With the destruction of the underground movement by the middle of the 1960's following the discovery of the combined underground headquarters of the ANC, the SACP and Umkhonto at Rivonia in July 1963, the control and day-to-day running of the armed struggle in South Africa fell to the ANC's Mission in Exile. Exactly what became of Umkhonto and how it was structured in those years is not clear.

The little available evidence suggest that for the first few years after 1965, Umkhonto did not exist as a separate organisation under the control of an exile NHC but that all activities related to the armed struggle in South Africa, such as the recruitment, training and return of cadres to South Africa were directly controlled by the ANC-SACP alliance in exile. This remained to be the case until the Morogoro Conference in 1969 when the functions of the ANC and Umkhonto were separated and the latter was placed under the direct and day to day control of a Revolutionary Council.

According to James Stuart, a member of the SACP and later member of the ANC's NEC, who had left South Africa in 1964, there was little by 1965 that could be structurally recognised as either the ANC or Umkhonto. Although the ANC and Umkhonto by that date had between 500 and 600 people in exile, the ANC's Mission in Exile in Dar-Es-Salaam existed of little more than two "residences", one known as the "Luthuli residence" and the other the "Mandela residence", as well as two battered vehicles, a Landrover and a Morris Oxford station wagon. By that stage Umkhonto also appeared to have had its first military

training camp at Kongwa in Tanzania. This camp was apparently set up sometime between 1964 and 1965 and was the home of the second batch of recruits who were sent to the Soviet Union and Red China in 1964 for political and military training. One of the first commanders of Kongwa camp was Stuart himself. He was also part of the first group selected to infiltrate South Africa in 1967 and to organise mass insurrection.⁽²⁴⁾

To judge by what has recently been published on this early period in the history of the ANC's Mission in Exile, the NHC which conducted the affairs of Umkhonto inside the country up to 1964, was not immediately duplicated by the External Mission after that date. Indications are that the ANC and the SACP were jointly responsible for the running of Umkhonto and the armed struggle in South Africa. According to Meli, a meeting of the NEC of the ANC in Exile was held in Dar-es-Salaam in 1965 at which the entire armed struggle and the future of the ANC was assessed. The meeting, which was an enlarged gathering of the NEC, followed the pattern of External Mission consultative meetings held since 1960 whereby representatives from various offices and organs of the ANC-SACP alliance that were in existence at the time, were summoned to Dar-es-Salaam to discuss and decide on important issues. The 1965 meeting was attended by the leaders of Umkhonto, the SACP and SACTU. According to Meli, the purpose of this crucial meeting was to review the political situation, set new tasks, and improve

our machinery for vigorously pursuing the objectives of our armed struggle, including in particular, the movement of Umkhonto we Sizwe units to the home front. It was around this time that the working alliance between the ANC and the CP became a more open alliance and began to be officially acknowledged.⁽²⁵⁾

In 1966 a further consultative meeting of the NEC of the ANC was held in Dar-es-Salaam. It was attended by the same people who attended

24. The Daily News, (Durban), 1990.04.9 - 10.

25. Meli, South Africa Belongs to Us, p. 160.



the 1965 meeting. This time the main item on the agenda was the role and status of members and organisations such as the SACP and the SACTU in the ANC's External Mission, especially with regard to their role in the dual responsibility of the Mission to mobilize the masses in South Africa in preparation for the resumption of the armed struggle and to build up international solidarity and support for the cause of the ANC. Meli went on to state that by 1966 the ANC's Mission in Exile, as a result of the destruction of the underground inside South Africa, had taken over, "in short, the whole process of preparation for armed struggle" in South Africa.⁽²⁶⁾ Although Meli went on to say that the new responsibilities placed on the shoulders of the Mission in Exile called for a drastic reorganisation, he does not say how this was done, with the result that we are still in the dark as to the organisational structure of the ANC and Umkhonto between 1966 and the Morogoro conference of 1969 when some major changes were forced onto the ANC and the SACP by changing conditions both inside and outside the movement.

Two major changes which were introduced to the organisation and structure of the Mission in Exile at Morogoro in 1969, was the reduction of the NEC of the ANC from twenty-three to nine members, to which there has been referred to in Chapter Five, and the creation of a separate organ: the Revolutionary Council, jointly staffed by the ANC and the SACP to conduct the affairs of Umkhonto. Stephen Davis⁽²⁷⁾ writes:

The 1969 conference mandated the restructuring of the Party's underground, with new attention being paid to South Africa's black youths. The international solidarity work that had been the external mission's chief occupation would now, on paper at least, be assigned second priority after the work of internal political mobilization.

Another major decision taken at Morogoro that affected the organisation of the Mission-in-Exile, was the division of the ANC into three

26. Meli, South Africa Belongs to Us, p. 161.

27. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, pp. 23 - 24.



major sections and the decision to move the organisation's headquarters from Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania to Lusaka in Zambia. In terms of the first decision, three new departments namely that of the President, the Secretary-General and Treasurer-General, were set up to oversee the entire liberation struggle, to control the various non-military departments and to control the finances of the organisation respectively. In addition to these offices departments of education, health, legal and religious affairs as well as women's and youth branches were set up.⁽²⁸⁾

Thus after 1969 the political and military aspects of the armed struggle were again divided between the ANC-SACP on the one hand and Umkhonto on the other. Much of the history of Umkhonto between 1969 and the mid-1970's, when a change in the status of the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique made it possible for the ANC-SACP alliance to resume the armed struggle in South Africa, appear to have been taken up with the training of cadres and the infiltration of guerrillas into South Africa to set up underground structures inside the country in preparation for the resumption of the armed struggle.⁽²⁹⁾ The more specific means by which this goal was to be achieved and the relationship between the internal centres, the External Mission, and the Revolutionary Council is however not clear and were never revealed from inside Umkhonto.⁽³⁰⁾

It is also not clear how many underground cells, if any, the ANC and Umkhonto had managed to establish inside South Africa or in neighbouring states between 1969 and the mid-1970's. Indications are - and this is partially borne out by the general absence of ANC-Umkhonto guerrilla activity during this time - that the organisation probably had not more than a handful operative inside the country during these years but that the activity of the latter was largely inhibited

28. The Daily News (Durban), 1990.04.10.

29. Johns, Obstacles to Guerrilla Warfare, (The Journal of Modern African Studies 11 (2) 1973, pp. 286 - 287); Mayibuye, 1969.05.10, p. 8.

30. Johns, Obstacles to Guerrilla Warfare, (The Journal of Modern African Studies 11 (2), 1973, p. 287).



by the vigilance of the South African police and the absence of friendly borders which could be used to infiltrate arms into the country. It also appears that the ANC and Umkhonto had little or no organisational presence in any of the rural and homeland areas of South Africa up to the middle of the 1970's. This will help to explain why the Mission in Exile was largely unable to resume the armed struggle inside South Africa before the second half of the 1970's.

As a result of its organisational weaknesses inside South Africa during the first half of the 1970's, the ANC and Umkhonto were largely caught unaware by the Soweto uprising when it broke out in June 1976.⁽³¹⁾ The sudden mass influx of recruits into the ranks of the ANC and Umkhonto, while highly welcomed by these organisations, presented them with serious logistical, ideological and organisational problems. Although the ANC and Umkhonto managed as best as they could with the sudden organisational and other demands made on them, it was not until the end of the 1970's that Umkhonto was in a position to relaunch and escalate the armed struggle in South Africa.

Thus, although the ANC had managed to overcome most of its internal leadership problems by the middle of the 1970's and had succeeded in setting up a handful of underground cells inside South Africa, it still lacked the necessary organisational infrastructure to take advantage of the revolutionary developments that followed the Soweto unrest in 1976. In fact, the growth of the Black Consciousness philosophy, coupled with the sudden influx of thousands of its adherents into the ranks of the ANC and Umkhonto, while advantageous for Umkhonto, presented a serious problem to the SACP and Umkhonto. Schooled in Black Consciousness philosophy most of the new recruits had first to be converted to Marxist-Leninism before they could be successfully absorbed into Umkhonto and the SACP.⁽³²⁾ Thus, instead of being in a position organisationally to capitalise on and

31. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, pp. 27 - 28.

32. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, p. 28.

expand upon the revolutionary atmosphere created by the Soweto unrest in 1976, the ANC and Umkhonto found themselves mainly occupied with the task of absorbing and re-educating the new recruits. According to Stephen Davis,

this task, of absorbing the mounting exodus of students into a substantial Umkonto army became the major preoccupation of Tambo's exile executive.⁽³³⁾

Although the ANC and Umkhonto's organisational structure remained largely cell-based and underdeveloped inside South Africa for most part of the period 1976 to 1980, the development of bases and training facilities in both Angola and Mozambique was accelerated during this time. Mozambique, for instance, became the new seat of the Revolutionary Council in 1976, while Angola began to house most of the training camps established by the ANC for the political and military training of Umkhonto's cadres. Exactly when these camps were set up, how they functioned and what their organisational structure looked like is not clear, but, one can assume that since they were centres for the political and military training of Umkhonto cadres they were probably run along normal military lines under the direct and overall command of the Revolutionary Council, which was theoretically responsible to both the NEC of the ANC and the Central Committee of the SACP. This remained the situation approximately up to the end of the first quarter of the 1980's.

1.3 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE FROM 1983 TO 1988

In 1983 the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto came under increasing pressure as a result of three major developments. Firstly, the South African government achieved considerable success in its efforts to isolate the ANC in the frontline states, especially in Mozambique and in Swaziland. The signing of the Swazi-Accord in 1982, the Mozambique accord in 1984 and the across border attacks on ANC-Umkhonto bases and facilities by the SADF since 1981 had resulted inter alia in the

33. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, p. 28.



Revolutionary Council's position in Mozambique becoming unacceptably vulnerable. Secondly, since the resumption of the armed struggle during the latter half of the 1970's and the constant influx of new recruits into the ranks of both the ANC and Umkhonto from South Africa it had become increasingly important for the ANC to provide an organisational structure that could speed up both the political education and military preparedness of the Black masses in South Africa. In other words, it had by the early 1980's become increasingly necessary for the armed cadres of Umkhonto to also fulfil a more propagandist and political function. And thirdly, an unhealthy rivalry had developed over the years between the political and military structures of the ANC both at the upper and lower levels of organisation. In the light of these developments it was decided in 1983 that the time had come for a major overhaul of the existing organisational structure serving Umkhonto, to provide the organisation with a new structure that could combine both the political and military aspects of the armed struggle.⁽³⁴⁾ The outcome of this development was the creation of the Political Military Council (PMC) (See Diagrams "I" and "J" on pp. 424, 425).⁽³⁵⁾ The PMC together with a revived NHC, stood at the head of a vast organisational hierarchy which by the mid-1980's consisted of Regional Political Military Councils (RPMC) also known as Regional Political Military Commands based in the frontline states; Provincial Political Military Councils (PPMC) also known as Implementation Machinery based in the four provinces of South Africa, Area Alternative Structures (AAS), and Refusal and Organisational Committees for politico-economic or alternative authority structures in the provinces. The latter divisions included structures such as people's courts, stay-away committees, funeral committees, transport, rent and election boycott organisations as well as Youth Congresses such as the Soweto Youth Congress (SOYCO). These latter divisions were followed by zone, branch, street or cell committees which represented the lowest level

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34. African National Congress National Consultative Conference, June 1985, Internal Commission Report, p. 14. See also M. Morris, ANC of South Africa: Organisation and Hierarchy, 1988/1989 (Single chart with comments); and South Africa: Hani's Rise, (Africa Confidential 29 (16), 1988.08.12, p. 2).
35. Morris, ANC of South Africa: Organisation and Hierarchy, 1988/1989, (single chart with comments).



of organisation in Umkhonto's organisational structure inside South Africa in the mid-1980's. In addition to these divisions the new structure also made provision for the establishment of Area Political-Military Commands (APMC). This latter division which was responsible for political and military operations inside South Africa, resorted directly under the command of the PPMC (or Implementation Machinery).⁽³⁶⁾

A further division or group that resorted directly under the control of the NHC of Umkhonto was the Special Operations Group (SOG). The latter organ appeared to have had no direct connection with any of the above mentioned divisions but apparently operated as an elite force within Umkhonto. According to Morris,⁽³⁷⁾ who has done extensive research on the organisational structures of the ANC and Umkhonto in the 1980's, the SOG was perhaps the most elite of all the ANC-Umkhonto organs. Its members were better trained and better equipped than the average Umkhonto cell. The SOG operated in groups of between three and four and was called in when a particularly difficult target had to be attacked or when special skills were required. The total members of the SOG was about fifty men. They were mainly from elite units such as the Luthuli Detachment as well as other units who saw service against the Rhodesian and South African security forces in Rhodesia during the late 1960's, and against the Unita forces in Angola in the early 1980's.⁽³⁸⁾

As the most senior organ in the organisational set-up of Umkhonto after 1984, the PMC, like the old Revolutionary Council it replaced, reported directly to the National Executive Committee of the ANC and the Central Committee of the SACP, which both had representation on the PMC. Since the SACP had a majority in the ANC's NEC, it was thus

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36. Morris, ANC of South Africa: Organisation and Hierarchy, Single Chart with Comments.
 37. Morris, ANC of South Africa: Organisation and Hierarchy, Single Chart with Comments.
 38. C. Hani, The Wankie Campaign, (Dawn, Souvenir Issue, p. 34).

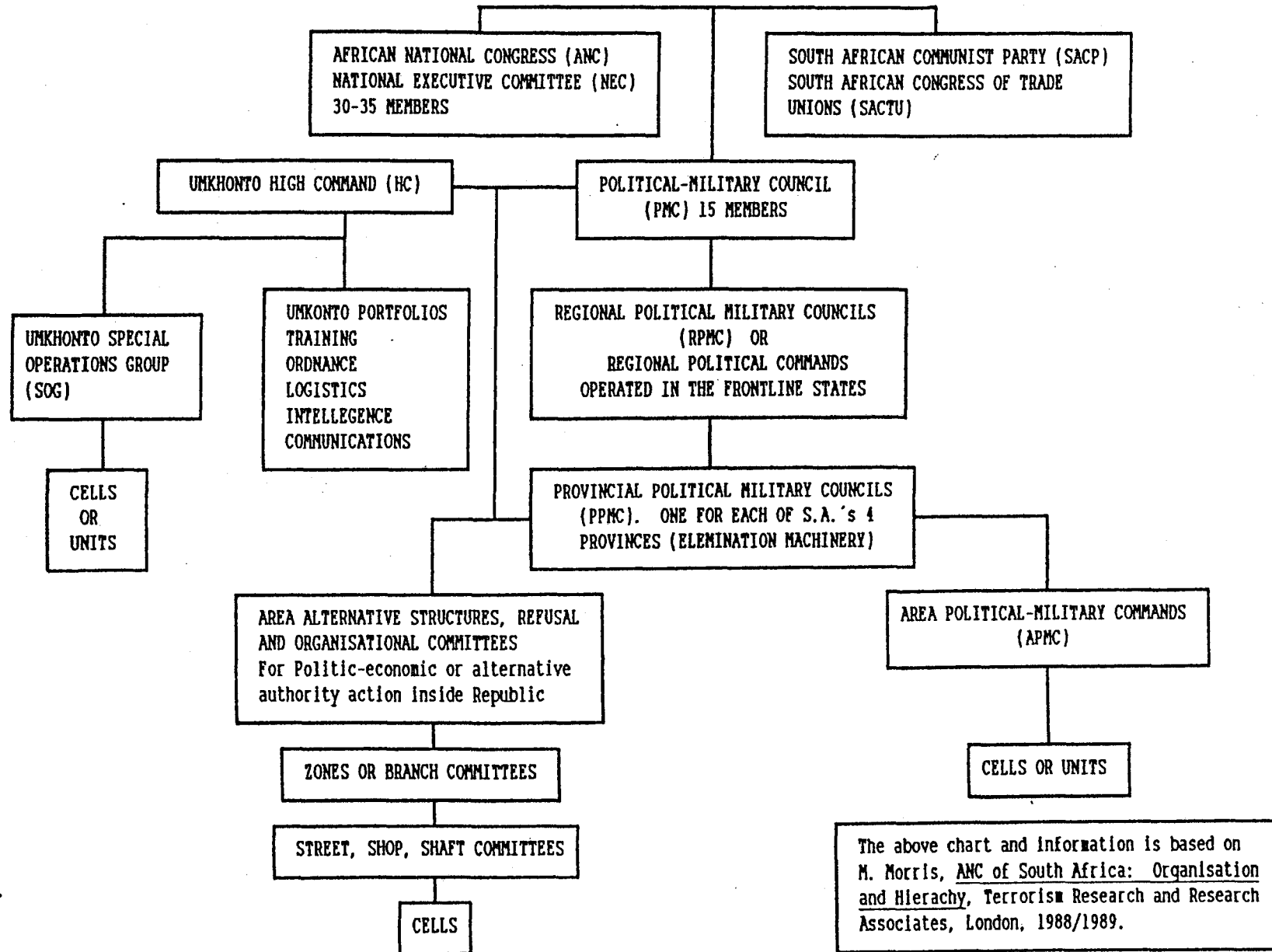
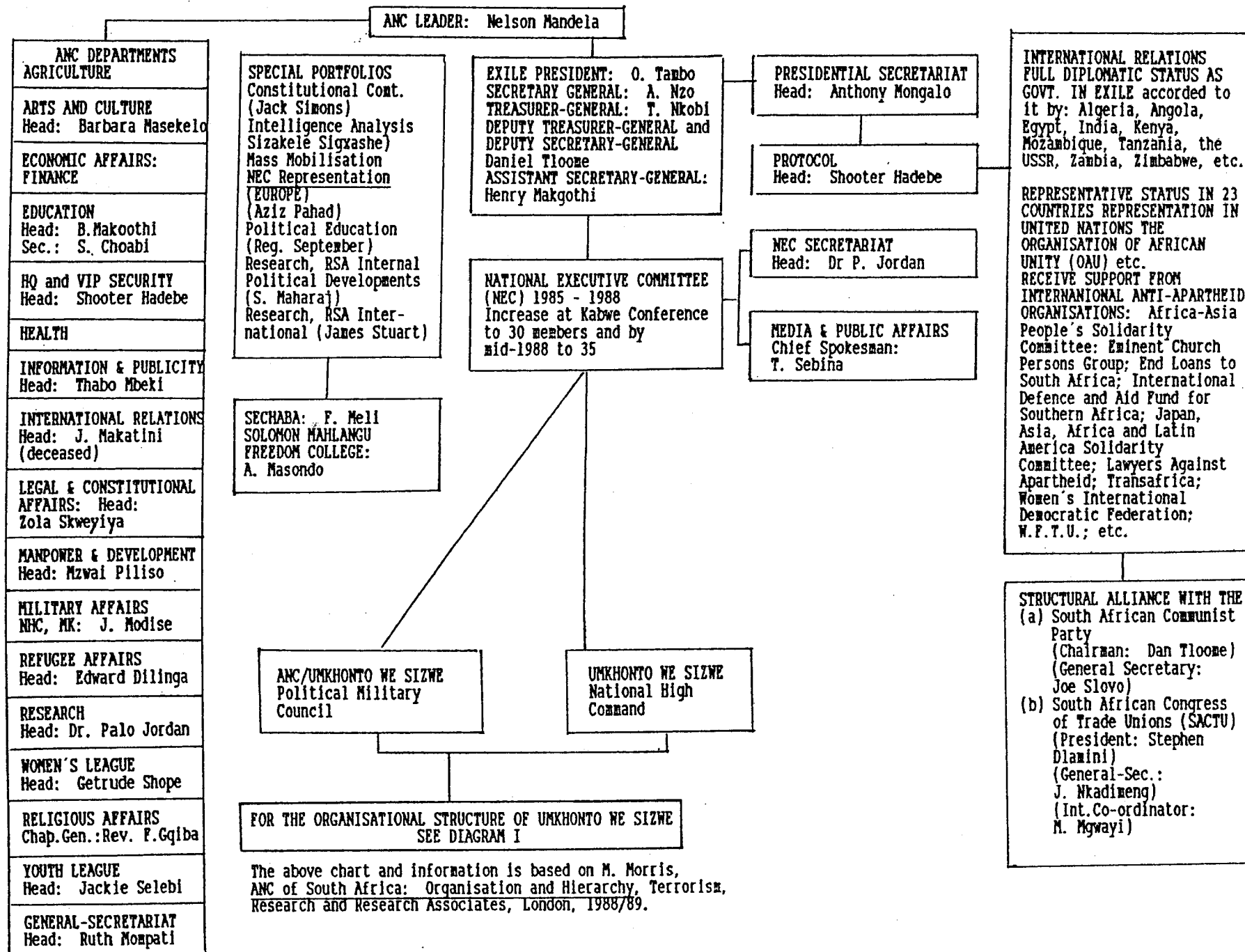


DIAGRAM J
 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE ANC/UMKHONTO WE SIZWE IN EXILE 1985 - 1988





in control of the political and military functions of the PMC. As such the SACP via the PMC became directly responsible for all political and military aspects of the armed struggle in South Africa. Politically the PMC controlled the recruitment, transportation and training of all recruits, while militarily it supervised the establishment of underground cells inside South Africa for the performing of specific tasks such as the smuggling of arms into the country and the establishment of arms caches; the infiltration of trained guerrillas; the identification of targets for attack, and the execution of attacks where and when possible. The PMC also concerned itself with the extension of underground structures inside South Africa to the rural areas, particularly the Black homeland areas.

Exactly how many of the above organisational structures had been established by the time of the Kabwe Consultative Conference in mid-1985 is difficult to say. Indications are that the ANC and the SACP were still in the process of implementing the new structures by the time that the Kabwe conference took place. One aspect that complicates the assessment of Umkhonto's organisational structure in the period after 1984 is the fact that it was constantly being altered by the ANC and the SACP to counter the South African government's diplomatic and political initiatives as well as its counter-insurgency actions both inside and outside the country. For instance in 1984, following the signing of the Nkomati Accord the ANC-SACP alliance had to scale down its organisational structure inside Mozambique and remove most of its key personnel from the country. As a result, by the end of that year the ANC and Umkhonto had only a skeleton staff operating in Mozambique. Unable to set up fully operative Regional Political-Military Councils (Commands) in Mozambique and restricted by the Swazi-government from using Swaziland as a transit route between Mozambique and South Africa, Umkhonto was forced to reduce some of its regional structures and to combine others in order to survive. For instance, as far as its Implementation Machinery in the Transvaal and Natal was concerned,



the ANC-SACP alliance was forced to create a special Co-ordinating Committee to co-ordinate the political machinery of the ANC and the military machinery of Umkhonto after 1984.

Indications are that the RPMC's referred to above were only set up in November 1985 when the structure was extended to incorporate these divisions. Exactly how many RPMC's were set up during or after 1985 is not clear but, given the importance of Angola, Botswana and to a lesser extent Swaziland (Umkhonto continued to use Swaziland despite the restrictions that had been placed on its officials and activities by the Swazi-government) in the overall strategy of the armed struggle, the first RPMC's were probably set up in these three countries in 1985. It was also claimed that Ismail Ebrahim, who was a founding member of Umkhonto in Natal in the 1960's, was made Chairman of the Swaziland RPMC in 1985. Prior to this Ibrahim was Treasurer and later Chairman of the aforementioned Co-ordinating Committee. He succeeded Ronnie Kasrils to that position in December 1984. As the Chairman of the Swaziland RPMC, Ismail Ebrahim reported directly to the PMC leadership in Lusaka.⁽³⁹⁾

The need for a highly flexible organisational structure that could combine both the political aspects of the armed struggle and could react to the constantly changing political and military environment in Southern Africa, had thus become of the utmost importance to the ANC and the SACP by the mid-1980's. This point was clearly emphasised by the ANC's NEC at its Second National Consultative Conference at Kabwe in June 1985. In its report to the conference, the Internal Commission of the NEC made it clear that if the organisation was to survive, its operational machinery and its organisation

39. G. Moss, MK and the Armed Struggle, (Work in Progress 52, March 1988, p. 4). See also Morris, ANC of South Africa: Organisation and Hierachy, Single Chart with Comments; and South Africa: Hani's Rise, (Africa Confidential 29 (16), 1988.08.12, p. 2); Barrel, MK, pp. 63 - 65, and Swaziland kidnappings. The Case of Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim, (Sechaba, December 1987, pp. 14 - 15).

had to be structured to meet a given situation and should not be frozen for all times ... it is envisaged, that the structures currently being established by the PMC, to meet these criticisms and difficulties, should be subject to alterations as the struggle develops.⁽⁴⁰⁾

The ANC and SACP's ability to alter their organisational structures according to developments in Southern Africa was severely put to the test in 1986 and again two years later in 1988. At the end of January 1986 the ANC and Umkhonto found themselves expelled from their offices and homes in Lesotho, when the pro-ANC-SACP government of Chief Leabua Jonathan was overthrown by a pro-South African government under the leadership of Major-General Metsing Lekhanya. Although Lesotho was never a key element in the ANC and Umkhonto's organisational set-up in Southern Africa, the demise of the Jonathan government nonetheless represented both a material and moral, if not a diplomatic setback for the ANC-SACP alliance. A total of more than 300 ANC-Umkhonto officials and operators were expelled from Lesotho between 1986 and 1987. With the destruction of its offices and whatever transit facilities it operated in Maseru, the ANC-SACP alliance was after 1986 increasingly forced to shift the centre of its organisation and operations to Botswana.⁽⁴¹⁾

A second major setback for the ANC and Umkhonto in 1986 came at the end of the year when the South African security police arrested and interrogated Ismail Ebrahim. As the Chairman of Umkhonto's RPMC in Swaziland, Ebrahim was a key operative in Umkhonto and the underground. At the same time, with the information obtained from captured ANC-Umkhonto leaders such as Ebrahim, as well as from other sources, the Mozambican government was forced to expel six senior ANC-SACP-Umkhonto leaders from Maputo. They were Jacob Zuma, Sue

40. African National Consultative Conference, June 1985, Internal Commission Report, p. 14.

41. R. Edgar, The Lesotho Coup of 1986, (The South African Review 4, pp. 373 - 382). For additional information on the "Lesotho Coup" see also The Daily News (Durban) 1986.01.16 - 22; ANC Attacks S. African Pressure on Lesotho, Radio Freedom, Lusaka, 1986.01.16, (SWB, 1986.01.20); The ANC and Lesotho, Radio Freedom, Lusaka, 1986.02.10; (SWB, 1986.02.14); and Mozambican Radio's Broadcasts of ANC official's Views on P.W. Botha and Lesotho, Maputo, 1986.02.13 - 14, (SWB, 1986.02.18).

Rabkin, Farouk Salooje, Bobby Pillay, Idris Naidoo and Peter Gumede. (42)

These setbacks did not go uncommented by the ANC-SACP alliance which was clearly upset by it. In a statement released in October 1986, the Alliance expressed its deep concern at the setbacks it had suffered with regards to its organisational structures and operational capabilities in both Mozambique and Lesotho since 1984. It pointed out:

Despite all our efforts we have not come any nearer to the achievements of the objectives we set for ourselves, ANC underground structures remained weak and unable to supply reliable support for Umkhonto cadres. Umkhonto units still operate largely in isolation ... (43)

Despite the fact that Umkhonto was able to steadily increase its attacks on targets inside South Africa after 1985, a third fact that undermined the ANC and Umkhonto's organisational development in the country after 1986 was undoubtedly the general State of Emergency declared by the South African government in June 1986 and its annual renewal. As a result of the extended powers granted to the State and the police under the Emergency, the ANC-SACP alliance found it almost impossible to set up new structures and to maintain these structures inside the country. By the mid-1980's the South African police was able to uncover and destroy the underground presence of the ANC and Umkhonto inside South Africa almost as fast as the organisation was able to establish it.

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42. South Africa: Hani's Rise, (Africa Confidential 29 (16), 1988.08.12, p. 2). See also Cooper, A Survey of Race Relations, 1987/1988, pp. 697 - 698.
43. PMC document entitled "What to be done", October 1986, as quoted in T. Lodge, The African National Congress after the Kabwe Conference, (The South African Review 4, 1987, p. 10). For a different ANC view on the subject see ANC comment stresses internal struggle (SWB, 1986.10.14); ANC's Comment on RSA "Threat" to Mozambique, Radio Freedom, Addis Ababa, 1986.10.11, (SWB, 1986.10.14); ANC Radio's Discussion Programme with Oliver Tambo, Radio Freedom, Addis Ababa, 1986.10.16, (SWB, 1986.10.20). See also ANC's Slovo on Achievements of Umkhonto we Sizwe, PANA, 1987.01.08, (SWB, 1987.01.08).

As a result of these developments, Umkhonto's leaders had to admit by 1988 that the organisation was unable to establish a major organisational presence inside South Africa which was considered a pre-requisite for a people's war. In an article that appeared in Sechaba, in September 1988, Ronnie Kasrils, Umkhonto's Chief of Intelligence, made it clear that

despite the tremendous upsurge of mass resistance (in South Africa) over the past three years, we were not able to take full advantage of the favourable conditions that materialised. We were unable to deploy sufficient forces at home; our cadre still found big problems in basing themselves amongst our people; our underground failed to grow sufficiently and our people were left to face the enemy and his vigilantes with sticks and stones; the incredible mass resistance and strikes were consequently not sufficiently reinforced by armed struggle.⁽⁴⁴⁾

The final setback to the ANC and Umkhonto's organisational network in Southern Africa came on 22 December 1988 with the signing of the New York Accord. In terms of the Accord, the ANC-SACP alliance had to remove all ANC and Umkhonto bases and personnel from Angola by the beginning of 1989. Although the ANC and the SACP have tried to play down the effect that this dramatic development has had on the organisation of Umkhonto in the region and in particular its ability to escalate the armed struggle into a people's war, the reality of the situation was that the signing of the New York Accord had but virtually destroyed its organisational infrastructure in Angola. This in turn had effected the organisation's structures and operational ability inside South Africa which has always depended on the ANC and Umkhonto's external structures to keep it operative. Thus, through a combination of diplomatic and military initiatives which began with the signing of the Swaziland Accord in 1982 and which was followed by the Nkomati and New York Accords, the South African government had managed by the end of 1988 to isolate the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto in Southern Africa if not paralysed the armed struggle.

44. R. Kasrils, Politics and the Armed Struggle: The Revolutionary Army, (Sechaba, September 1988, p. 3).

2. A GENERAL PROFILE OF THE LEADERSHIP AND CADRES OF UMKHONTO

Although the term "cadre" is commonly used to refer to the total membership of an underground organisation, for the purpose of this study, a definite distinction will be made between those members of Umkhonto who belong to the leadership echelon of the organisation and those who represent its rank-and-file.

2.1 The Leadership of Umkhonto, 1961 - 1965

At the formation of Umkhonto in 1961, most of the people who made up its leadership corps at the national and the provincial levels of the organisation, were drawn from the leadership ranks of the ANC, the SACP, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) and the various organisations that were affiliated to them. Unlike the ANC but true to the principles of the SACP and SACTU, Umkhonto was a fully multi-racial organisation which drew its members and cadres from all the main population groups in South Africa.

This was also true for the organisation's leadership at the provincial level, although Whites appeared to have been more predominant at the national level of the organisation where most of the forward planning for the sabotage campaign was done. In Natal for instance, only one White person had a position on the Regional Command structure of Umkhonto in the province. He was Ronnie Kasrils, who later became the organisation's Chief of Military Intelligence. Other Whites in Umkhonto, such as Lionel 'Rusty' Bernstein, Joe Slovo, Percy Hodgson, Harold Strachan and Albie Sachs, were either members of Umkhonto's NHC in Johannesburg or were associated with it through their membership of SACTU and the SACP. With the exception of Kasrils, who as a member of Umkhonto in Durban participated in a number of sabotage acts in the 1960's, most Whites in Umkhonto or who associated with it, appeared to have served in a training or advisory capacity. Both Sachs and Hodgson as well as Strachan occupied such positions in the organisation, while Slovo was in command of most of the planning behind the sabotage campaign. He was made commander of



Umkhonto after the arrest of Nelson Mandela in August 1962. He probably also occupied the same position during Mandela's absence from the country during the first half of the same year.

At the provincial level of organisation, the leadership of Umkhonto in Natal, for instance with the exception of Kasrils and Brian Chaitow (the latter was Chinese), consisted mainly of Africans and Indians. In the rest of the country the leadership of Umkhonto consisted mostly of Africans. In the Western Cape members of the Coloured community also formed part of Umkhonto's underground structure. Two names that spring to mind here are that of Ben Turok⁽⁴⁵⁾ and Reginald September.

As far as educational qualifications are concerned, it is interesting to note that at the national level of organisation, most of the White leaders of Umkhonto or those who were identified as having associated with it, had some or other post-matric qualifications. Slovo, James Kantor, Harold Wolpe and Vivian Ezra were all members of the legal profession, while others, such as Dennis Goldberg, Bernstein and Arthur Goldreich were equally well qualified. For instance, Goldberg was an engineer, Bernstein an architect and Goldreich, who was closely associated with the purchase of Lilliesleaf Farm and the formation of Umkhonto in 1961, was an industrial designer.⁽⁴⁶⁾

In terms of formal and post-matric education, the Black leaders of Umkhonto were by contrast generally not as well educated as their White counterparts. With the exception of Nelson Mandela and Govan Mbeki who held post-matric qualifications, most of the remaining African members of Umkhonto's NHC and regional command structure were poorly educated. Walter Sisulu had a matric qualification, while Wilton Mkwayi, Andrew Mlangeni, Raymond Mhlaba, Elias Motsoaledi and

45. B. Turok, Strategic Problems in South Africa's Liberation Struggle, pp. 1 - 10. See also Vermaak, Braam Fischer. The Man with Two Faces, pp. 8 - 22.

46. See Mtolo, Umkhonto we Sizwe, pp. 15 - 16, 110; Karis and Carter (eds.), From Protest to Challenge, vol. 4.



Joe Modise had educational qualifications that ranged from standard five to the junior certificate (standard eight).⁽⁴⁷⁾ Despite their limited formal educational qualifications these African leaders nevertheless all played a significant role in the formation and day-to-day running of Umkhonto after 1961. They all appeared to have possessed the determination and qualities that made them highly suitable for the type of leadership that was needed to guide Umkhonto. Mkwayi, for instance, who had only completed the sixth grade, played an important role in the trade union movement both before and after the formation of SACTU in the mid-1950's. Having displayed exceptional leadership skills and an understanding of trade union work, Mkwayi was sent out of South Africa between 1960/61 to undergo extensive guerrilla training. As a result of the senior position he held in SACTU (he was the Treasurer) and the close ties he had with the SACP (of which he was also a member), Mkwayi was sent to the Soviet Union and Communist China for political and military training. This was to prepare him for the eventual military leadership of Umkhonto.

With Slovo's departure from South Africa in April/May 1963, Mkwayi was made Commander-in-Chief of Umkhonto. Despite his apparent limited formal education, Mkwayi turned out to be a master at guerrilla tactics, underground work and on the use of explosives. Up to the time of his arrest in 1964, Mkwayi was a key member of Umkhonto's new (second) NHC that was set up following the raid on Rivonia.⁽⁴⁸⁾

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47. Duma Nokwe: Honourable Son of Africa, (Sechaba 12, Second Quarter 1978, pp. 31 - 37). See also J. Modise, The happiest moment in my life, (Dawn Souvenir Issue, nd, pp. 10 - 12).
 48. Van der Merwe, Die Slag om Suid-Afrika, no. 7, Bri-Bri: Die Swart Pimpernel, (Die Huisgenoot, 1971.11.05, pp. 14 - 18); Karis and Carter (eds.), From Protest to Challenge, vol. 4, p. 90. For more information on Wilton Mkwayi and the Second NHC of Umkhonto see also Vermaak, Braam Fischer. The Man with Two Faces, pp. 145 - 154; Sechaba, March 1987, p. 10; Dawn, Souvenir Issue, p. 19; and Meli, South Africa belongs to Us, pp. 159, 168.



Due to the close relationship between the ANC, the SACP and SACTU, many Africans were encouraged to attend part-time classes in Marxist-Leninist theory which appeared to have served as a sort of alternative to Black education. Many blacks missed out on a formal education, not necessarily because they rejected it, but because a variety of circumstances, ranging from a lack of money to no facilities often made it impossible for them to attend a formal school. As a result, the extra classes in Marxist political and economic theory were a means of increasing their education, even if it was an education tailor made for membership to the ANC and the SACP. (49)

The only Indian on the NHC in the early 1960's was Ahmed Kathrada. He left school at the age of 17 years to join the world of resistance politics. It is not clear what level of high school education he had achieved, but after he had left school, Kathrada joined the offices of the Transvaal Passive Resistance Council as a full-time worker. (50)

In terms of age the leaders of Umkhonto's NHC can be roughly divided into two broad categories, namely those who were born before the end of the First World War (i.e. 1918) and those who were born in the period thereafter. Among those who belonged to the first category were Mandela, Mbeki, Sisulu and Strachan. The remaining members of the NHC of Umkhonto belonged to the second age category, which means they were born after 1918. Among those who belonged to this latter category were Slovo, Bernstein, Hodgson, Mhlaba, Mlangeni, Motsoaledi and Goldberg. Goldberg was probably the youngest member of the NHC of Umkhonto in 1961.

Most of the leaders of Umkhonto's NHC were thus between the ages of 35 and 49 years at the time that Umkhonto was formed in 1961. Mandela, for instance, who was the first Commander of Umkhonto was 43

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49. Karis and Carter (eds.), From Protest to Challenge, vol. 4, pp. 120 - 121, 151 - 153; Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 1 - 15.
50. Karis and Carter (eds.), From Protest to Challenge, vol. 4, pp. 48 - 49. See also Melli, South Africa belongs to Us, pp. 98, 154, 156 - 157, 168.



years old, while Oliver Tambo, who commanded the ANC Mission in Exile and Umkhonto was 44 years old in 1961.

At the regional or provincial level of organisation, the leadership of Umkhonto was somewhat different. For one, it contained very few Whites, and with the exception of a few individuals, most leaders had only limited formal education. In the case of Durban for instance, only Kasrils, Billy Nair and Chaitow had a matric or post-matric qualification. Of the remaining members of the Regional (High) Command of Umkhonto in the province, very few had even a high school qualification. Mtolo, for instance, who was Umkhonto's expert on explosives in Natal, only had a standard four education.⁽⁵¹⁾ Curdnick Ndlovo and Eric Mtshali, who both held senior positions in the Regional Command in Durban, were equally poorly educated.

2.2 Cadres

Although no specific minimum educational qualifications were apparently required by the NHC of Umkhonto for membership to it and the Regional Command structures in the provinces, some basic educational qualifications were apparently laid down by the national leadership for the recruitment of cadres into the organisation. According to Mtolo,⁽⁵²⁾ at the onset of Umkhonto's recruitment campaign in Natal in the 1960's, only people with a junior or a senior certificate qualification were sought by Umkhonto. This was a tall order, considering the generally low educational level of most Africans in South Africa in the 1960's and the generally poor level of education held by most of the African leaders of Umkhonto themselves. An African with a matric qualification, let alone a university degree in 1960, was not a common phenomenon. In most cases an 'educated' African in 1961 was someone who had successfully

51. See Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 1 - 3.

52. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 10 - 14; Feit, Urban Revolt in South Africa, pp. 220 - 224.



completed primary school or the first or second year of high school.⁽⁵³⁾ To find Africans with a standard eight or matric qualification that would be prepared to serve in Umkhonto or be willing to leave South Africa for military training, was thus easier ordered than complied with. This was borne out by the fact that the Regional Command in Durban was unable to meet its quota of recruits between 1962 and 1963. In the end, in order to meet their quota of recruits, the Durban Regional Command was quite happy to settle for anyone who was remotely willing to join Umkhonto. Pressurised by the NHC in Johannesburg to send more recruits, the Regional Command in Durban eventually settled for a group of young African pickpockets who practiced their skills at Durban's Municipal Market. These youngsters, according to Mtolo, had virtually no formal education but were suitable for Umkhonto because of their particular lifestyle. He wrote:

We know that most of these boys had a hard life and they would form a tough core of guerrilla fighters, even though they would need a lot of discipline. As for Marxism, they would grasp it quickly, because they had a personal knowledge of starvation.⁽⁵⁴⁾

While not everybody recruited into Umkhonto in the early 1960's were of the same caliber as the above pickpockets, there is however evidence that suggest that by the mid-1960's Umkhonto's leaders were no longer too concerned about educational qualifications, and that anyone who was prepared to join Umkhonto and be sent out of the country for military training, was accepted.

3. LEADERSHIP AND CADRES, 1965 - 1988

As is the case with the overall history of the ANC and Umkhonto in the post-1965 period, very little is known about the leadership and cadres of Umkhonto for most of the period up to the beginning of the

53. Duma Nokwe: Honourable Son of Africa, (Sechaba 12, Second Quarter, 1978, pp. 31 - 37).

54. Mtolo; Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 58, 83.

1980's, when slightly more information became available on the subject. Indications are that in the years between the collapse of the internal underground structures of the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto in the mid-1960's and the advent of the Morogoro National Consultative Conference in 1969, the leaders of the ANC's Mission in Exile were forced to take control of both the former diplomatic and political activities of the ANC as well as the military work of Umkhonto. The general impression that one gains from this period is that no separate leadership structure was set up by the Mission in Exile prior to the formation of the Revolutionary Council in 1969 to guide Umkhonto. It is thus also not clear exactly who the exile leaders of Umkhonto were between 1965 and 1969. Indications however are that people such as Joe Slovo, Joe Modise, James Stuart and others, played an important role in the activities of Umkhonto during these years. (55)

Umkhonto thus remained without a specific leadership structure guiding it until the Morogoro Conference in 1969. As far as the Wankie incursions were concerned it appears that these were guided by the combined exile leadership of the ANC and the SACP. It was only at the Morogoro Conference in 1969 that the first major changes to the leadership of Umkhonto were effected following the collapse of the liberation alliance's internal leadership structures in South Africa in the mid-1960's. According to ANC/Umkhonto sources recently quoted in the South African press, approximately 1 000 people had left South Africa between 1960 and 1966 to join the ranks of the ANC and Umkhonto. By the end of 1965 however the number of people leaving South Africa had slowed down to a mere trickle. This remained to be the case for most part of the period 1966 to 1976 when the Soweto uprising sent thousands of new recruits into the ranks of the ANC and Umkhonto in exile. According to Stuart, who was among the second group of recruits who left South Africa in the early 1960's,

55. For a more detailed discussion on the subject see Dawn, Souvenir Issue, pp. 10 - 35. Also The Daily News (Durban), 1990.04.9 - 11 (Series of articles based on interviews between Ken Vernon and members of the ANC's Mission in Exile in 1990).



there was very little that one could call a liberation army outside South Africa by the mid-1960's. Umkhonto had very few training facilities at its disposal in these years and as a result it more often than not could not accommodate all those who wished to join its ranks. Many, especially those with professional and other qualifications that could not be utilised by Umkhonto in the mid-1960's, had to be turned away and was thus permanently lost to the leadership in exile. One such example was a group of 21 Black nurses, who had fled South Africa during these years. Since the ANC could not employ them or utilise them in its camps, they were eventually accommodated in Tanzanian (Tanganyika) hospitals and as such were lost to the organisation.⁽⁵⁶⁾

According to Stuart, many of those who had left South Africa in the early 1960's ended up in the Soviet Union, while others were sent to Algeria, Egypt, Cuba, China and the Scandinavian countries. Stuart himself was sent to the Soviet Union for military training. After approximately 15 months of military and political training at Odessa, Stuart was made Commanding Officer at one of Umkhonto's first training camps at Kongwa near Dodoma in Tanzania. Others, such as Sam Maseomela, who were also trained in the Soviet Union as well as in Communist China, were posted to similar positions at other Umkhonto training camps elsewhere. Those who were unsuited for a role in Umkhonto's training camps were allowed to study overseas or were sent as ANC representatives to countries around the world.

Although many ended up studying economics or engineering, in reality the ANC and Umkhonto had little need for either economists or engineers in the 1960's. As a result, graduates who wished to remain with the ANC found themselves pressed into different types of employment. For instance, engineers often found themselves assigned to political and diplomatic positions, while soldiers found themselves administering almost non-existent ANC offices.⁽⁵⁷⁾

56. The Daily News (Durban), 1990.04.10 (ANC Builds from Within).

57. The Daily News (Durban), 1990.04.10 (ANC Builds from Within).

The pressing leadership problems that the Mission in Exile had to face since the mid-1960's were thoroughly discussed at the consultative conference in 1969 where a new leadership structure for Umkhonto was devised. The most significant change was the formation of a Revolutionary Council to take direct control of the affairs of Umkhonto. Although the exact membership of the RC was never revealed, most of those who appeared to have served on it were senior members of the SACP and SACTU. Among the latter who served on the Council were Slovo, Yusuf Dadoo, Reginald September, Alfred Nzo, Moses Kotane, Moses Mabhida, Jacob Zuma, Henry Makgothi and others (See Chapter five, pp. 279 - 291). This meant that those who controlled the underground SACP and its affiliated organisations in South Africa during the 1950's and 1960's were still in charge of the ANC-SACP alliance by the beginning of the 1970's. This remained to be the case at least until the middle of the 1970's, when the Soweto uprising and the massive influx of recruits from South Africa infused new blood and with it a spirit of renewed radicalism into the ranks of the ANC, the SACP and Umkhonto.

Although the influx of these new recruits did not have an immediate effect on the leadership of the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto, the liberation movement was eventually forced to begin absorbing some of the more capable of these new generation leaders into the leadership of the Alliance and Umkhonto to allow for the representation of their generation in the training camps in Angola and elsewhere. Although the first wave of new recruits did not immediately bring about a dilution of the old guard leadership of the ANC, the SACP, and Umkhonto, the second wave of Blacks that left the country in the mid-1980's, most of whom were absorbed by Umkhonto, did place increased pressure on the exile leadership to give greater recognition to the rising of young militant leaders in the liberation movement. The unrest and mutiny in Umkhonto's training camps in Angola in 1984 highlighted exactly this problem. After the appointment of Marks Shope and Jack Simons to Umkhonto's camps in Angola in the early 1980's to take control of the political education of the new recruits, many of the former Black Consciousness-inclined Soweto youths, who had been successfully converted to Marxism, had been



incorporated into the leadership of the SACP and the ANC. According to Africa Confidential, a number of those who had left South Africa during the disturbances of 1976 in all probability stood a good chance to be elected to the ANC's NEC in the future.⁽⁵⁸⁾ Amongst those singled out by Africa Confidential for possible promotion were Klaus Maphepha, the SACP's regional chief in Swaziland, Peter Mayibuye, "Che" Ogara, Dan Cindi, Khumalo Migwe, Raymond Nkuku and Kingsley Xuma. According to the same source, most of these new breed of exile leaders had been trained in Umkhonto's training camps in Angola and elsewhere and seemed to be devoted members of the SACP.⁽⁵⁹⁾ (Although they were singled out by Africa Confidential for possible promotion to the ANC's NEC after 1985, none of the above leaders of Umkhonto were however elected to the ANC's NEC at its National Congress held in Durban in early July 1991.)⁽⁶⁰⁾

Africa Confidential went on to point out that once the ANC had taken the post 1976 generation on board the Mission in Exile was completely transformed from within. Among the rich array of Stalinist methods that gained currency in the organisation was the practice of discrediting dissenters by sending them into exile. In other words, those recruits who did not agree with the manner in which the SACP leadership controlled or dominated the ANC or conducted the affairs of Umkhonto were summarily kicked out of the organisation or sent to rehabilitation camp, of which there were reported to be several in Angola and Tanzania (See Chapter 8). Even the smallest sign of discontent, especially with the way in which the White leadership of the SACP and Umkhonto had come to dominate the intellectual life and direction of the ANC, was severely dealt with.⁽⁶¹⁾

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58. South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential, 31 (1), 1990.01.12, p. 2).
 59. South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential, 31 (1), 1990.01.12, p. 2).
 60. The Daily News (Durban), 1991.06.08 (ANC unity forged from many strands).
 61. South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential, 31 (1), 1990.01.12, p. 2). See also Chapter 6.



In contrast, those who supported the SACP and who successfully completed the transition from Black Consciousness to Marxism, were often rewarded with important positions inside the movement or as representatives of the ANC in countries around the world where the ANC-SACP alliance had official missions. Although the NEC of the ANC was reduced to nine members in 1969, by 1985 it had again grown to 30 with the proviso that a further five members could be co-opted by the NEC should the need arise. While none of the post 1976 generation of leaders and cadres were elected onto the NEC or Umkhonto's Political Military Council in 1985, a number of the younger leaders in the ANC and Umkhonto were appointed to the NEC, notably Thabo Mbeki, Palo Jordan, Chris Hani, Siphosiso Makana and Francis Meki. These latter leaders had left South Africa in the 1960's and were in their early or mid-forties by 1985. As such they represented the second generation of exile leaders in the ANC-SACP alliance that had come to prominence since the beginning of the armed struggle. The third and fourth generation of leaders are those who had left South Africa in the mid-1970's and the mid-1980's respectively.

Since the mid 1980's there appeared to have been a growing division between those in the organisation who supported a violent transfer of power in South Africa and those who campaigned for a more moderate possibly negotiated solution to South Africa's problems. Although both sides included devoted Marxists, they differed from one another in their interpretation of the principles of Marxism. The die-hards in the liberation movement such as Hani, who became Chief-of-Staff of Umkhonto in 1987, and others such as Kasrils and Mac Maharaj who supported him, openly rejected the relatively moderate, social democratic views of their colleagues who stood under the leadership of Thabo Mbeki, Lindiwe Mabasa and others. From 1985 onwards Hani and his supporters have attempted to build a power base for themselves in the ANC-SACP alliance through their control of Umkhonto and their influence in the SACP. Consequently, although the more moderate minded Joe Modise was the Commander of Umkhonto, it was Hani and his supporters who dominated the organisation by the latter half of the 1980's. It was reportedly through Hani's efforts that for instance Steve Tshwete, the first of the 1976 generation of ANC

leaders, was appointed to Umkhonto's NHC as Political Commissar - a position that Hani himself occupied in the organisation between 1982 and 1987. With Tshwete in the number three position and the support of other key leaders in Umkhonto such as Kasrils who was Chief of Military Intelligence, Hani was in a position to openly challenge the more conservative leadership of the ANC in exile in 1987. Consequently and, contrary to the opinion and wishes of the more moderate leadership in the ANC, Hani and Tshwete in 1987 openly called for the armed struggle to be directed against White soft (civilian) targets in South Africa.⁽⁶²⁾

The fact that the ANC did not immediately step in to curtail Hani's ambitions was interpreted by some sources as a clear indication of the powerful position that Hani and his supporters had come to occupy in the liberation movement by the beginning of 1988. If this was indeed the case then it can also be argued that the predominant view in the liberation alliance by the beginning of 1988 was one that favoured a military solution led by Umkhonto in South Africa.

Although the ANC's NEC was slow to react to the Hani challenge, Tshwete was suddenly removed from his position as Political Commissar in early 1988 and reassigned to the rank of Head of Mass Mobilisation. He was also given a seat on the ANC's NEC. His vacant position in Umkhonto was filled by Timothy Mokoena, who was a former senior commander of Umkhonto in Angola. With Tshwete and not Hani's dismissal from Umkhonto in 1988 it was argued that Hani was too powerful to be touched and that he and fellow hardliners rather than Modise and the moderate were in control of the armed struggle. Since then however, three major developments had taken place that have effectively curbed the position and influence of Hani and his hardliners in the liberation alliance. The first was the relative failure of the ANC and Umkhonto's anti-election campaign in October

62. See South Africa: Hani's Rise, (Africa Confidential 29 (16), 1988.08.12, pp. 1 - 3); Barrett, A Profile of the ANC, May 1989, pp. 21 - 24, 61 - 62; The Daily News (Durban), 1988.08.24.

1988. The second was the unfavourable reaction of the Swedish government (who is the ANC's main financier) to Hani and Tshwete's publicly declared policy to concentrate future ANC attacks on White civilian targets. The third but more important factor that influenced the position of Hani and his supporters was the New York Accord signed in December 1988. This latter agreement effectively destroyed Hani's power base and left him with an organisation in shambles if not a cause for which there appeared to be increasingly less justification after 1988.⁽⁶³⁾

All this had a dramatic effect on the relationship between the so-called "doves" and "hawks" in the liberation alliance. Since the signing of the New York Accord, Hani and his followers seemed to have lost part of their influence in the ANC's NEC and the SACP. Faced with the closure of its bases and other facilities in Angola and a changing international environment that was rapidly moving away from settling regional conflicts through military means, there were clear signs by the middle of 1989 that power in the ANC had shifted from the hawks to the doves. Although the latter faction which stood under the leadership of Thabo Mbeki were no less Marxist than the Hani faction they were nevertheless less militant and more in support of a moderate, peaceful solution in South Africa. The latter faction with its strong social democratic views, together with the recently released internal leaders of the ANC, were increasingly setting the pace with regards to leadership developments inside the ANC's NEC and the SACP by the end of the 1980's.

3. THE FINANCING OF UMKHONTO

Although the subject of funding has been referred to earlier in this study it will be more fully discussed here. While a fair amount is known about the funds that the ANC have received during the late

63. South Africa: Umkhonto Packs its Bags, (Africa Confidential 30 (2), 1989.01.20, p. 6). See also South Africa: Hani's Rise, (Africa Confidential 29 (16), 1988.08.12, p. 1); The Daily News (Durban), 1989.06.15, 21.

1970's and the 1980's, very little if anything is however known about the funding of Umkhonto other than that it was set up with money that mainly came from the SACP who again appeared to have received its funds from a variety of sources most of which were overseas. Although Scandinavian countries such as Sweden have been giving financial assistance to the ANC and other liberation organisations in Southern Africa since the late 1960's (Sweden began to give aid in 1968/69) little is known about the actual amounts received by the ANC-SACP alliance in exile, or how much was allocated to Umkhonto. In view of this it is virtually impossible to draw an even remotely accurate picture of the financing of Umkhonto during these early or even the later years. As pointed out above, Umkhonto was almost exclusively set up and run with money provided by the SACP in the early 1960's. The SACP was apparently also responsible for arranging the first weapon supplies by the Soviet Union after 1964. How these weapons were arranged, supplied and how many were delivered to Umkhonto is not clear but they were probably delivered to the ANC-SACP alliance free of charge through Dar-es-Salaam and the Organisation of African Unity's (OAU) Liberation Committee which was established in that same year.

According to Modise, the later Commander of Umkhonto, the early years of the armed struggle were difficult years due to a serious lack of funds. The transportation of recruits in and out of South Africa between 1961 and the mid-1960's cost a great deal of money. Most of the money that was used for transport during these early years, he claimed, came from within the liberation movement. Outside the country the ANC and Umkhonto's cadres, according to Modise, received assistance from some of the African governments that have indicated support for the ANC and the armed struggle. Modise wrote:

We got assistance from the Ethiopian, Egyptian and later the Algerian governments. The Algerians sponsored our initial training and later the Chinese. I think we sent one group to China and from then onwards we acquired most of our training from the Soviet Union.⁽⁶⁴⁾

64. J. Modise, The happiest moment of my life. (Dawn, Souvenir Issue, pp. 10 - 12).



Thus in terms of its aid to Umkhonto the Soviet Union not only provided funds through the SACP but it also provided Umkhonto with military and political training during the early phase of the armed struggle.

After the control of the armed struggle had been shifted outside South Africa after 1965, the ANC also appeared to have received funds from a variety of other sources. The most important of these was the Swedish government who in 1968 passed an act whereby it was obliged to grant foreign aid totalling at least one per cent of its gross domestic product to liberation organisations. Most of this aid went to liberation movements in Southern Africa which included the ANC and Umkhonto. (65)

In addition to Sweden the ANC also received financial and "humanitarian" aid from other sources such as some African governments, the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) in the UK and the Netherlands, and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. Although the SACP and the Soviet Union was no longer the chief financiers of the ANC's Mission in Exile and the armed struggle after 1965, they nonetheless had a major say in the ANC and Umkhonto's financial affairs through their representation on the ANC'S Treasury Department. In 1963 for instance Moses Kotane, who was also General-Secretary of the SACP since 1938 was made Treasurer-General of the ANC's Mission in Exile. This position he held until 1973 when he was replaced by T.T. Nkobi, who has been described as a communist by some and a non-communist by others. An executive member of the ANC's NEC and PMC, Nkobi was reelected to the position of Treasurer-General in 1985. He still holds this powerful position to-day. (66)

Exactly what sort of funding the ANC received in the late 1960's and the early 1970's, and what percentage went to Umkhonto is not known.

65. Sweden: Footing the Bill, (Africa Confidential 27 (24), 1986.11.26, 4).

66. The African Communist 106, Third Quarter 1986, p. 23; South Africa: The ANC, (Africa Confidential 27 (25), 1986.12.10, p. 2). See also Chapter Six footnote 93.



Indications are that although the organisation was receiving more money as reflected in the purchase of a boat, the Adventurer, in 1971, to infiltrate 25 Umkhonto combatants by sea (see Chapter four footnote 212), sufficient funds were still in short supply. In 1971 the Swedish government made some R1,19 million available to "refugees" and liberation organisations in Africa, the bulk of which went to organisations such as the ANC, ZANU, SWAPO and other liberation organisations in Southern Africa.⁽⁶⁷⁾ Despite these increased funds the ANC however seemed to have operated on a shoe string budget. According to Sindiso Mfenyana, a member of the ANC's NEC, when he was transferred to the ANC's headquarters in Lusaka in 1974, the ANC had apart from an office it shared with other liberation organisations such as Frelimo, ZAPU, and SWAPO, only one car and two rented houses that accommodated about a hundred people. The car was an old 1932 Fiat and it apparently served the entire ANC-SACP Alliance in Lusaka up to the mid-1970's when the ANC moved out of its shared office into its own office which it shared with a Zambian businessman. (The latter was apparently done in an attempt to avoid attacks against Lusaka by the Rhodesian security forces.) According to the same source, while ample food, clothing and other necessities were available for the relatively few ANC members in Lusaka in the mid-1970's, they proved to be totally inadequate especially after June 1976 when the ANC was hit by the "huge flood of youths fleeing South Africa in the wake of the Soweto uprising".⁽⁶⁸⁾

On the subject of the ANC's financial position in the 1980's, Stephen Davis in his recent study on the armed struggle in South Africa wrote that the ANC Treasury Department administered all funds that kept the organisation and Umkhonto financially afloat.⁽⁶⁹⁾ In order to see that the organisation's limited resources were not wasted, Nkobi and the Treasury Department were vested with wide powers to ensure strict control over all non-military supplies and equipment. In addition,

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67. See Horrell, A Survey of Race Relations, 1971, pp. 94-95; as well as Dawn, Souvenir Issue, pp. 33, 43; See also Chapter 5 footnote 70.
68. The Daily News (Durban), 1990.04.10, (ANC Builds from Within).
69. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, pp. 72-74.



Nkobi and his department was also given the responsibility of developing innovative money-making projects to strengthen the liberation alliance's financial position. According to Davis the ANC's annual non-military budget had been estimated at about \$50 million or approximately R150 million by the mid-1980's. Umkhonto needed a further \$50 million (R150m) to conduct its affairs. Most of this latter budget however was controlled secretly by Umkhonto budget officials in Angola which is probably the reason why so little if anything was known about the financing of the latter organisation. Of the \$50m (R150m) allocated to the ANC for "non-military" purposes as much as \$30 m (R90m) was apparently received by the organisation in the form of in-service and in-kind aid such as teachers, tractors, seeds, training, clothing, food, medicines and numerous other types of goods needed by the organisation to conduct its affairs. The remaining \$20m (R60m) constituted a cash amount used by the ANC for the day-to-day running of its affairs. The ANC also received funds that had been privately raised by organisations and individuals such as Bishop Desmond Tutu's Refugee Fund; politically orientated rock music concerts and by actors including the cast of television series such as "Cagney and Lacy" in the United States who had voted in 1988 to donate their entire South African royalties to the ANC. Thus, every time the series was shown in South Africa, the ANC and thus Umkhonto benefitted financially by it.⁽⁷⁰⁾

Cash donations to the ANC from western countries, particularly the Scandinavian countries as well as Third World nations had also grown significantly during the 1980's. One Scandinavian country that substantially increased its financial aid and support to the ANC in the mid-1980's was Sweden. Since it first gave aid to the ANC-SACP in the late 1960's the Swedish government has steadily increased its annual contributions to the liberation alliance. Although all Swedish aid has been earmarked for 'humanitarian' purposes, there has never been any control over it with the result that it can be expected that a fair share of this aid ended up with Umkhonto. According to Africa Confidential⁽⁷¹⁾ Swedish government aid to the ANC and Swapo in

70. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, p. 74.

71. Sweden: Footing the bill, (Africa Confidential 27 (24), 26 November 1986, p. 4).



1986 alone amounted to something like \$29 million (R87m) and there was every indication that this amount would be increased in the future. In the same year the Swedish government also granted an additional amount of \$100 million (R300m) in financial aid to the Frontline states and liberation organisations, most visibly among them the ANC and SWAPO. It is not clear how much of this latter amount was received by the ANC and Umkhonto, but considering that by 1986 besides SWAPO and the PAC, the ANC was the only other liberation organisation actively engaged in armed struggle in Southern Africa, it can be safely assumed that a fair amount of the additional \$100 million was received by the ANC and Umkhonto. In 1990 it was also reported that the ANC had received an amount of R24 million from the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC). This claim was later denied by the SACBC.⁽⁷²⁾

According to Davis the ANC in Exile acted as a type of borderless welfare state. It supplied food, clothing, transportation, education, housing and health-care for its 13 000 (some sources indicate 20 000) constituents or refugees living outside South Africa.⁽⁷³⁾ Each of these persons apparently received a minimum allowance of about \$8,33 (R24,99) per month for a student, or a token salary of up to \$26 (R78) per month for administrators and soldiers. These direct cash payments alone, according to Davis, must have amounted to approximately \$3,6 million (R10,8m) per year.⁽⁷⁴⁾

In an article that appeared in the South African press in April 1990⁽⁷⁵⁾ it was reported that the ANC had an annual budget "of hundreds of millions of rands" and that members of the organisation (and presumably also Umkhonto) received a monthly allowance of some 2 000 Zambian Kwacha (approximately R90). Compared to the monthly salary of 3 500 Kwacha (approximately R157) paid to a university

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72. See The Daily News (Durban), 1990.09.24 (Shock disclosure of aid to ANC) and The Daily News (Durban), 1990.10.24 (Bishop's denial of church assistance to ANC supported).
 73. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, p. 72; The Daily News (Durban), 1990.04.11 (A New Privileged Elite).
 74. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, p. 72.
 75. The Daily News (Durban), 1990.04.11 (A New Privileged Elite).

lecturer in Zambia, the amount of 2 000 Kwacha represented a reasonable allowance in a country as poor as Zambia. However, when compared to the cost of a meal for two at one of Lusaka's better hotels which could run up to 2 000 Kwacha, the allowance paid to ANC members was small. The financial position of an ANC member in exile was perhaps best summed up by Don Ngubane, who was the organisation's Administrative Secretary for the Department of Information and Publicity, and lived in Lusaka. Ngubane (a nom de guerre) lived with his wife and two small children in a small but comfortable suburban bungalow.⁽⁷⁶⁾ Within this bungalow the family had two television sets, a video recorder, a hi-fi set, an electric stove and a fridge. They also employed a maid to help with the housework and to look after the two children. As a reasonably senior member in the ANC's organisational hierarchy, he had the use of an ANC vehicle for personal purposes provided that it was not needed elsewhere. According to Ngubane:

... life is OK. But there is no doubt we could not have survived outside the wider community of the ANC. We don't really need money because in the organisation we live largely in a moneyless society. I have managed to buy some luxuries, like a video, from money saved on overseas assignments. As for the rest, we managed. Sometimes I do not know how, but we do.⁽⁷⁷⁾

Although international aid to the ANC in exile had substantially grown since the mid-1970's, part of the reason why it was constantly short of funds was that it had established a vast hierarchy in exile that made increasingly heavy demands on whatever funds it had. For instance, although its 44 external missions (by 1988) provided important linkages with the international community and foreign governments these missions had to be financed almost entirely by the ANC itself. In addition transportation costs involving travel to and from these offices also took a large slice out of the ANC's annual budget. Add to this the 200-odd vehicles - sedans, bakkies, kombi's and trucks - owned by the ANC by 1988, that had to be maintained

76. The Daily News (Durban), 1990.04.11 (A New Privileged Elite).

77. The Daily News (Durban), 1990.04.11 (A New Privileged Elite).



annually by the organisation and one begins to understand why it was always in need of more funds.

In an attempt to meet its needs and to improvise for the shortfall in hard currency to finance the work of Umkhonto, the ANC has undertaken a number of projects over the years - the most noticeable of these being the farms it operated in Zambia and Angola. Davis wrote:

Farms and small factories have been started to promote self-sufficiency in food, clothes, furniture and construction. In most cases the ANC deliberately employs host-state nationals, at union wage to foster local goodwill. (78)

The 3 300 hectares ANC Farm at Chongella in Zambia, for instance, was worked by Zambian labourers to produce vegetables, corn, poultry and cattle for consumption by the ANC and where possible surpluses were sold at the Zambian market to generate income. Similarly, the ANC's furniture shop at Mazimbu was run by Tanzanians and ANC students and its products were built both for community needs as well as for market sales. (79)

But these projects and others like them have only been partially successful and very few if any could be considered self-sufficient. The farm at Chongella for instance has been heavily dependent on grants (some \$500 000 or R1 500 000) and equipment from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. The same applied to the furniture factory at Mazimbu. Here training was provided by donor countries such as East Germany, Denmark, Zambia and Tanzania. Similarly, other enterprises such as the clothing factory also at Mazimbu operated on extensive Dutch grants and equipment that had been donated to the ANC.

In addition to these enterprises and the funds they generated for the ANC, it has also been claimed by the ANC that substantial sums of money raised inside South Africa were received by the organisation

78. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, pp. 72-73.

79. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, p. 3.



over the years. With regards to Umkhonto as such, Davis wrote that:

Officials sponsor a 'fighting Fund' appeal that encourages compatriots in exile to support Umkhonto ... In reality, however, the Congress has not undertaken major professional grass-roots fund-raising campaigns.⁽⁸⁰⁾

All this of course had a direct effect on the ability of Umkhonto and the armed struggle. Although the organisation had managed to step up its armed attacks inside South Africa it is also true that its equipment which was mostly donated by the Soviet Union and other Soviet Bloc countries was mostly out of date. "In short," argued Davis, "Umkhonto's arsenal has consisted largely of surplus supplies of outdated Soviet and East European munitions."⁽⁸¹⁾

Thus, the overall picture of the ANC's Mission in Exile and Umkhonto's armed campaign in the 1980's showed an organisation struggling to make financial ends meet. Although large sums of money and in-kind aid was received from a wide array of sources this money had to be thinly spread to meet all the demands of the Mission in Exile which had to provide a home to an ever-growing exile population, estimated to be more than 20 000 by the end of the 1980's.⁽⁸²⁾

4. CONCLUSION

Organisationally speaking, Umkhonto went through three major adjustments between its formation in 1961 and the end of 1988. The first came with the destruction of the internal underground structures of the ANC-SACP alliance in the mid-1960's while the second came at the Morogoro Consultative Conference which saw the formation of a Revolutionary Council to guide the day-to-day running of Umkhonto and the armed struggle. The third major change or

80. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, pp. 71, 73.

81. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, pp. 71, 74.

82. The Sunday Times (Johannesburg), 1991.07.30 (The ANC's most worried man. 20 000 exiles champing at the bit to come home but there's no cash in the kitty).



adjustment came in 1983 when the Revolutionary Council was replaced with an entirely new and more elaborate structure, the Political Military Council (PMC) and its various sub-structures. Consequently, for the first time since 1961, the political and military phases of the armed struggle were co-ordinated to the best possible advantage of the liberation movement.

Although these changes were introduced in the name of the ANC and the struggle for Black political rights in South Africa, the organisational structure was drafted by the SACP which was the real force behind Umkhonto. For all practical and ideological purposes, Umkhonto had become the military wing of the SACP rather than the ANC by the mid-1980's.

According to Michael Morris of Terrorism Research Associates in London,⁽⁸³⁾ who has attempted an analysis of the organisational structure of Umkhonto and the ANC and the interrelationship between the two, it is almost impossible to draw an accurate diagram of the organisational structure of either the ANC or Umkhonto. He gave two reasons for this. One, the structure and leadership of the two organisations were constantly changing due to developments in South Africa and the successes of the South African government's counter-insurgency operations and diplomatic initiatives. The second was the overlapping in membership between the ANC, the SACP and Umkhonto. Since the members of one organisation were also the members of another, it was often difficult to draw a clear distinction between the different divisions of the ANC, the SACP and Umkhonto.

A further factor that complicates the issue was the fact that the names of personnel were often kept secret, particularly in the SACP and Umkhonto, to protect them from assassination attempts but probably also to hide internal differences and to remove from public scrutiny any changes that might be effected in the organisation as a

83. Morris, African National Congress of South Africa, Organisation and Hierarchy, Chart and Comments, single page.

result of differences of opinion and ideology. The use of pseudonyms by many if not most members of the ANC, Umkhonto and the SACP, also presents a problem to anyone attempting to make sense out of the structures and leadership of these organisations.

In terms of its leadership, the ANC, the SACP and to an extent Umkhonto, remained under the control of the members of the 'old guard' who were responsible for the formation of Umkhonto in 1961. Although the influx of two major groups of radical-minded recruits into the ranks of the ANC-SACP-Umkhonto liberation alliance diluted the numerical strength of the old guard leadership, they nevertheless managed to hold on to power, despite an up and coming and better educated younger leadership corps. This trend was confirmed at the ANC's first National Conference held inside South Africa at the beginning of July 1991 since its unbanning in February 1990. Although the position of the younger and often more radical leaders in the organisation was substantially strengthened through the election of several of them such as Thabo Mbeki, Palo Jordan, Steve Tshwete and Ronnie Kasrils to the ANC's NEC, the top positions in the organisation remained firmly in the hands of the older guard and in particular the "internal" leaders who were released from South African prisons in the late 1980's.⁽⁸⁴⁾

In sharp contrast to the older generation of ANC and Umkhonto leaders of whom only a handful had any post-matric qualifications, the younger generation of leaders in the liberation alliance such as Mbeki, Jordan, Meli, Lindiwe Mabuza and others were academically well qualified with several of them holding Masters or Doctors degrees. Mbeki, for instance, gained a Masters degree in Economics from Sussex in the United Kingdom, while Meli, a former editor of Sechaba, held a Doctors degree in History from the University of Leipzig in East Germany. Similarly, Miss Mabuza and Jordan both obtained Doctors

84. The Daily News (Durban), 1991.07.8 (ANC unity forged from many strands).

degrees from American universities.⁽⁸⁵⁾ In addition to their formal (academic) education many, if not most, of the younger generation of leaders in the ANC and Umkhonto also had years of experience in international politics, diplomacy and intrigue, something they shared with the old guard leadership outside South Africa but which their counterparts inside South Africa did not have.

In terms of the organisation's financial position, the position is less clear with regards to the amounts of money allocated to Umkhonto annually. Although an amount of some \$50 million (R150 m) had been suggested there can be little doubt that the organisation received a great deal more to conduct its affairs. This being the position in the 1980's the picture for the 1960's and 1970's is less clear. The little that is known indicates the fact that up to the mid-1970's the organisation had an extremely limited budget and that it battled to make ends meet. If this was indeed the case it will partially help to explain why the ANC and Umkhonto were largely unable to restart the armed struggle inside South Africa in the mid-1970's. Things changed dramatically after the Soweto uprising of mid-1976 when thousands of recruits began to stream into the offices of the ANC in exile. This latter development together with the establishment of Marxist regimes in Angola and Mozambique not only affected the liberation alliance in terms of organisation and logistics but also financially. After 1976 increasing material and financial aid appeared to have been channelled to the ANC in exile by sympathetic governments, institutions, individuals and organisations both in the West as well as in the Eastern Bloc. Again figures and amounts for this period are not available. What is clear however is that both financial and material aid whether in the form of cash, in-kind or in-service aid steadily increased over the years since the late 1970's. Equally important is the fact that as one liberation organisation after another in Southern Africa achieved their aims

85. Information compiled from: The Daily News (Durban) 1989.12.3; 1990.02.28; 1990.03.03; Barrett, A Profile of the ANC, May 1989, pp. 1-72; Meli, South Africa Belongs to Us, Information on cover page. See also Lodge, State of Exile, (Third World Quarterly 9 (1), January 1987, p. 17, footnote 61).



between 1975 and 1980, increased money and other forms of aid became available to the ANC and SWAPO who remained the only two liberation organisations recognised in the region by the middle of the 1980's. Consequently, money previously made available to other liberation organisations could then be channelled to the ANC and SWAPO. Again, how this development exactly influenced the ANC and Umkhonto's financial positions is not clear. Reports on the movement's financial position that appeared in the daily press by the end of the 1980's indicated that while large sums of money was annually given to the ANC, the organisation remained financially embarrassed.⁽⁸⁶⁾

86. The Sunday Times (Johannesburg), 1991.07.30 (The ANC's most worried man).