

AK217/J2.3

**C94**

NEWSPAPERS

Sunday Times, Daily Dispatch, Finance Week, The Friend and The Natal Mercury

Recently these newspapers and publications have come out in full support of the so-called new constitution thus becoming extensions of the state's propoganda and ideological tools alongside the Labour Party.

After careful consideration the National Executive Committee has referred this matter to the regional councils for final decisions. It is important that action in this regard should flow from popular feeling if it is to enjoy maximum support.

The added advantage in this approach is that regional newspapers will be considered regionally.

# Biographies

## LIONEL BERNSTEIN

Lionel 'Rusty' Bernstein was born in 1920. Of middle class parents, he attended a private school in Natal, and became involved in the struggle against apartheid from an early age. By the late 1930s he was Secretary of the Labour Party's League of Youth and a member of the Party's National Executive.

After finishing his schooling, he became a part-time architectural student at Wits University. In 1939 he joined the Communist Party and within a year was in charge of propaganda at the Johannesburg office. He was also elected to the District Committee.

During World War II he served with the 6th South African Division in Europe and joined the Springbok Legion. On his return to South Africa he was involved in the 1946 Mineworkers' strike, and was charged and fined for assisting an 'illegal' action.

Over the next ten years he continued his political activities: he was a founder member of the Congress of Democrats (COD), an executive member of the Springbok Legion, editor of its newspaper 'Fighting Talk' and helped to draft the Freedom Charter.

In 1955 he was banned from participating in and political activity, and in 1956 was arrested and became a defendant in the Treason Trial (1956-61). In the 1960 State of Emergency he was detained, released, and in 1962 was placed under house arrest. Despite these restrictions he continued to be active, and was arrested in the raid on



Rivonia in July 1963.

At the Rivonia trial the State alleged that he was a member of Umkhonto We Sizwe and of the banned Communist Party, but he was acquitted due to lack of evidence. He was then rearrested and charged with breaking his banning order in 1963, but escaped to London while out on bail. Lionel Bernstein is married to another South African political exile, Hilda Watts Bernstein.

## DENNIS GOLDBERG

Dennis Goldberg was born in Cape Town in 1933. Both his parents were members of the South African Communist Party. He attended Observatory Boys' High School and then the University of Cape Town. In 1955 he graduated with a degree in engineering and worked for the City Council.

Throughout the 1950s he was active in democratic organisations, first in the Modern Youth Society, a non-racial youth organisation tied to the Congress Alliance, and then in COD. He was also active in organising for the Congress of the People in 1955. He later served as an executive member and President of COD before it was banned in 1962.

During the state of emergency in 1960 he was detained for four months. After his release and following the formation of Umkhonto We Sizwe, he joined the underground movement, working with the High Command of Umkhonto and developing techniques for manufacturing explosives.

He was arrested in the raid on Rivonia in 1963 and subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment. He is serving this sentence in Pretoria Central Prison.

While in prison he has fought a long campaign for the right of political prisoners to have free access to newspapers and radio. In 1978 this was brought to court and although he lost the case on appeal, the press coverage of the issue persuaded the Prisons Department to grant political prisoners the right to read newspapers and listen to radio broadcasts.

He is married and has two children, and his wife Esmé has not been allowed to see him for 18 years. His family live in England.

#### AHMED MOHAMED KATHRADA

Ahmad Kathrada was born in 1929 in the Western Transvaal town of Schweizer Reneke. His family was observant Moslems and followers of Ghandi. At the age of nine he was sent to Johannesburg for schooling. His political activities began at an early age when in 1940 he joined the Communist Party. He left school at seventeen before completing his formal education and went to work as a full time organiser in the offices of the Transvaal Passive Resistance Council. Later that year he served a jail sentence for civil disobedience.

In 1951, as chairperson of the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress, he attended the Berlin Youth Festival, the Congress of the International Union of Students in Warsaw, and then worked for nine months at the headquarters of the World Federation of Democratic Youth in Budapest.

Returning to South Africa, he helped organise the Defiance Campaign for which he received a nine month suspended sentence.

In 1954 he was banned, but he continued his political activities while also helping to organise the Central Indian High School in Johannesburg. In 1956 he was arrested and charged with Treason and was a defendant in the Treason Trial (1956-61).

During the 1960 state of emergency he was detained for five months. In October 1962 he was placed under twelve hour house arrest and a few months later he 'disappeared' to join the underground.

He was arrested in the raid on Rivonia where he had gone to record an underground broadcast. He was charged under the Sabotage and Suppression of Communism Acts, found guilty, and sentenced to life imprisonment.

#### NELSON ROLIHLEHLA MANDELA

Nelson Mandela was born in 1918 into the royal Tembu household. He went to school at Healdtown Missionary School and in 1938 went to Fort Hare University. After completing only two years of his B.A. degree, he was suspended for participating in a student protest. He then moved to Joburg, where he completed his degree through UNISA. In 1914 he began studying law at Wits.

In 1944 he joined the ANC and with Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu, founded the ANC Youth League. In 1948 he was elected National Secretary of the Youth League, and at the ANC Conference in 1949 became a member of the National Executive of the ANC. He became National President of the Youth League in 1950.

In 1951 he went into partnership in a legal practise with Oliver Tambo. In that year he also became Transvaal President of the ANC. In 1952 he headed the Defiance Campaign Against Unjust Laws and received a nine month suspended sentence for his part as volunteer-in-chief. He was also banned for six months. He was banned again in 1953

for five years, and this forced him to resign his positions with the ANC.

He was arrested and charged with treason in 1956 and was a defendant in the Treason Trial. However, despite harrasment, bannings and arrest, he continued to excersise his leadership from behind the scenes. After the ANC was banned, Mandela went underground and for seventeen months evaded all efforts to arrest him.

During this time he left South Africa and toured independent countries in Africa. He addressed a Conference of the Pan African Freedom Movement of East, Central and Southern Africa at Addis Ababa. Shortly after his return in late 1962, he was arrested and sentenced to five years' imprisonment for illegally leaving the country and for incitement.

He was brought from prison after the raid on Rivonia and was charged in the Rivonia Trial with sabotage and with being a member of Umkhonto We Sizwe. He was found guilty and received a life sentence.

In the years since his imprisonment, he has been recognised throughout the world as a statesperson and a leader of the struggle for freedom in South Africa. He has received many honorary degrees, and there have been a number of campaigns for his release.

He is married to Winnie Mandela, and they have two daughters. He also has two children from a previous marriage. He is now fifty six years old.

GOVAN ARCHIBALD MVUNYELINA MBEKI

Govan Mbeki was born in 1910 in the Ngamakwe district of the Transkei. His schooling was at a number of different mission schools, including Healdtown. In 1937 he received a B.A. degree from Fort Hare University. In 1940 he completed a Bachelor of Economics degree through UNISA and published a book on the Transkei called Transkei in the Making.

After leaving Fort Hare, he taught for several years but was dismissed for being involved in politics. Govan began his political involvement while at Fort Hare and had joined the ANC in the mid 1950s. An intellectual and an activist, Mbeki saw himself as a committed socialist. Acting on this commitment, he opened a co-operative store in Idutywa in the Transkei.

He also continued his writing and other activities : in 1930 he became editor of the Territorial Magazine, in 1941 he was elected secretary of the Transkei African Voters Association and in 1943 he was elected to a four year term in the Transkei Bunga as a representative from Idutywa. In 1945 he he was elected secretary of the Transkei Organised Bodies, and in 1946 he published a book called Let's Do It Together which aimed at promoting the organisation of co-operatives societies. He was also instrumental in drafting 'African Claims', an ANC policy document.

In the early 1950s, Mbeki's store was destroyed by a tornado, and he returned to teaching. He was dismissed for trying to organise coal workers near his school in Ladysmith. Thus in 1955 he moved to Port Elizabeth and became a reporter for 'Spark' and editor of New Age until these publications were banned.

During this time he also helped to co-ordinate organisation for the Congress of the People and consolidate support for the ANC in the Eastern Cape.

Devoting himself full time to the ANC in 1956 he became National Chairperson as well as a member of the Joint Committee of the Congress Alliance. Despite being banned and harrassed, he continued to play a key role in the ANC in the late 1950s.

During the state of emergency in 1960 he spent five months in detention. In 1962 he was arrested and charged under the Explosives Act and was in solitary confinement for several months before being brought to trial. He was acquitted on a legal technicality and was served with house arrest order. He ignored the order and went underground.

In 1963 he was arrested in the Rivonia raid and sentenced to life imprisonment for sabotage and for being a member of the High Command of Umkhonto We Sizwe.

In 1964, after the Rivonia trial, a book of his, South Africa : The Peasants Revolt, was published. Despite imprisonment, he has continued to study and in 1970 was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Amsterdam in Holland.

Govan Mbeki is married and has four children. He is now 74 years old.

#### RAYMOND MHLABA

Raymond Mhlaba was born in 1920 in the Fort Beaufort district of the Eastern Cape. He completed ten years of schooling, the last two of which were at Healdtown, before having to leave for lack of money. During these years he was involved in a number of student organisations. In 1942 he joined the Communist Party and from 1946 until the party was banned in 1950, he served as district secretary for the Port Elizabeth area. In 1944 he joined the ANC and from 1947 - 53 was the local branch chairperson.

On 26 June 1956 he led a group of Defiance Campaign volunteers through the 'European Only' entrance of the New Brighton railway station, becoming the first ANC leader to be arrested. He was later banned, but was nevertheless elected to the Cape Executive of the ANC in 1954 and continued his political activity.

In 1950 he was detained during the state of emergency. After his release he undertook a number of secret activities for the ANC. He was arrested in the raid on Lilliesleaf farm, but denied that he was a member of Umkhonto We Sizwe. However, he testified that he had done underground work for the ANC. He was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Raymond Mhlaba is a widower with eight children.

#### ANDREW MLANGENI

Andrew Mlangeni was born in Prospect township in Johannesburg in 1926. He worked as a golf caddie to earn the money for his education. He completed his Junior Certificate at St. Peter's Secondary School in 1946. He was unable to proceed for lack of funds and worked as a clerk and later as a bus driver.

In 1951 he joined the ANC Youth League and in 1954 he was elected Branch Secretary for the Johannesburg area. In 1958 he was elected Regional Secretary for the Soweto area. In 1961 he helped organise the All In Africa Conference in Pietermaritzburg. Later that year he was arrested while investigating the forced removal of the Bapedi tribe from their land near Lydenburg. He was arrested again during the Rivonia raid and charged, under the Sabotage and Suppression of Communism Acts, with attempting to overthrow

the government by violent action. He denied that he was a member of Umkhonto We Sizwe but admitted that he had agreed to carry messages for the organisation. He was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Andrew Mlangeni is married with four children.

#### ELIAS MOTSOALEDI

Elias Mostoaledi was born in 1924 near Middleburg in Sekhukhuniiland. Owing to his poverty he was able to attend school only until Std.6. He then moved to Johannesburg in search of work. He found a job as a domestic worker and then as a worker in a boot factory. He joined the Leather Workers Union and shortly after that the Communist Party. In 1948 he joined the ANC.

In 1949 he was elected chairperson of the African Furniture, Mattress and Bedding Workers Union. In the same year he was also elected chairperson of the Transvaal Council of Non-European Trade Unions. He became ANC Branch Secretary and a member of the Transvaal Provincial Executive Committee.

In 1950 he helped to organise the 'stay aways' by workers in the Denver Mens' Hostel. He was detained in 1952 for his part in the Defiance Campaign. Later that year he was hospitalised with T.B. and while in

hospital he was banned.

In 1960, during the state of emergency, he was detained for three months. At the end of 1962 he joined Umkhonto We Sizwe and was a member of the technical committee of the Johannesburg Regional Command. In 1963 he was detained and kept in solitary confinement for fifty days. Later that year he was charged under the Sabotage and Suppression of Communism Acts in the Rivonia Trial, was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment.

#### WALTER MAX SISULU

Walter Sisulu was born in 1912 in the Engcobo district of the Transkei. He left school at the end of Std. 4 due to financial problems and at the age of seventeen left the Transkei for the Witwatersrand. He worked as a labourer in a dairy and then as a miner on the gold mines. During the 1930s he held a number of factory jobs while studying to improve his education. He also took part in the Orlando Brotherly Society, a Xhosa organisation which promoted an interest in tribal history.

In 1940 he joined the ANC. In 1943-44 he helped establish the ANC Youth League with the aim of pressurising the ANC into more militant action. He became treasurer of the Youth League.

At the ANC Conference in 1949 his role was central to getting the organisation to adopt the Programme of Action which



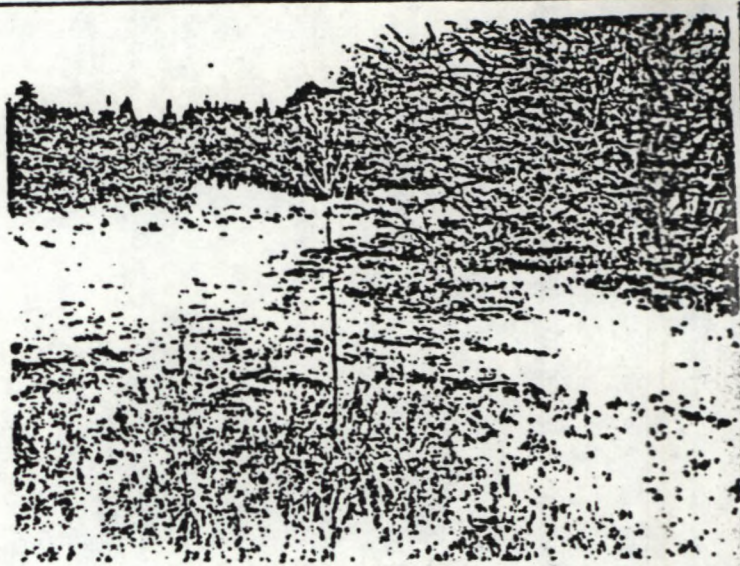
embodied the more militant line of the Youth League. He was also elected Secretary General of the ANC.

In 1952 he was jailed as a resister in the Defiance Campaign but was later released and then re-arrested. With other leaders of the campaign, he stood trial late in 1952 and was sentenced to nine months suspended for three years. He was re-elected Secretary General in 1952.

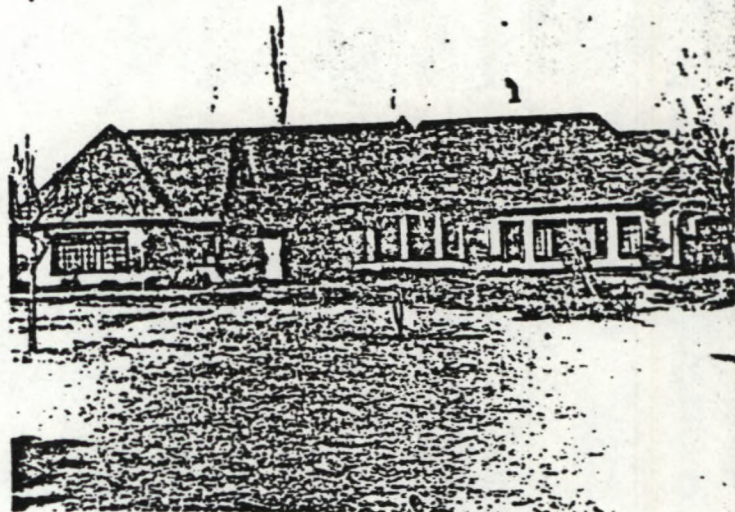
During 1953 Sisulu spent five months travelling through Russia and China. In 1954 he was banned and forced to resign from the ANC. However, his participation continued from behind the scenes. He was a defendant in the treason trial of 1956-61. During the state of emergency he was detained for five months. In 1962 he was placed under twelve hour house arrest. In March 1963 he was convicted of furthering the aims of the banned ANC and of helping to organise the stay-at-home protest of 1961.

He was sentenced to six years in jail but was released on bail pending appeal. On 20 April 1963 he disappeared and went underground to join Umkhonto We Sizwe. On 26 June 1963 he made a short broadcast on the ANC radio station. He was arrested in the raid on Rivonia in July '63 and convicted of sabotage and sentenced to life imprisonment.

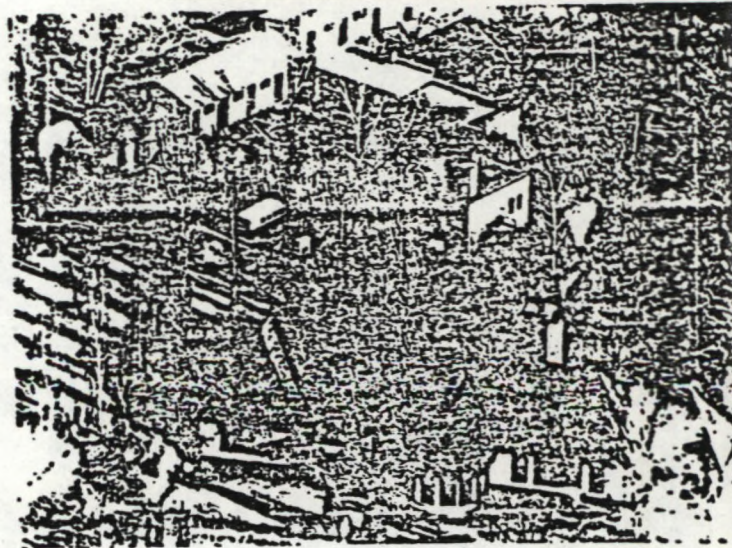
Albertina Sisulu, his wife, was elected as one of the Presidents of the UDF in 1983.



THE GOD OF THE BLUESLEAF



THE MAIN HOUSE



THE FINAL VIEW OF THE RIVONIA

**Collection Number: AK2117**

**DELMAS TREASON TRIAL 1985 - 1989**

***PUBLISHER:***

*Publisher:* **Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand**

*Location:* **Johannesburg**

**©2012**

***LEGAL NOTICES:***

**Copyright Notice:** All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

**Disclaimer and Terms of Use:** Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of the collection records and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document is part of a private collection deposited with Historical Papers at The University of the Witwatersrand.