

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to consider the historical background of the Pondo people in the pre-colonial and colonial eras. For one to understand the socio-economic and political history of the Pondo people it is necessary for the researcher to discuss the significance of the following aspects: the Pundos' social life and status; the Pundos and land; Pondo economy; Authority in Pondoland; Politics in Pondoland; The colonial impact on the lives of the Pondo people.

### **1.2 THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PONDO PEOPLE IN THE PRE-COLONIAL ERA**

Mr. C.K. Gxabu (Personal interview, 21 April 2002, Flagstaff) remarked that colonization brought about conflict and misunderstanding amongst the Pondo people (this is a verbatim translation from Xhosa):

Before the White men came into Pondoland, our forefathers were saying there was peace and harmony amongst the Kings, chiefs, headmen and the community at large. People used to share whatever they had, whether meals, wealth, and social problems, and this was the concept of "I am because you are". But the conflict amongst the Pondo people started when our Kings allowed Europeans in our midst.

Mr. Gxabu said that their forefathers used to live free in their land of birth, which was under the supervision of the king but controlled by the community. People were allowed to build houses wherever they wished as long as this did not interfere with grazing land. There were no land restrictions as far as grazing and ploughing of land was concerned. But after eastern Pondoland was annexed in 1894 matters drastically altered in Pondoland.

Mayer (1980:82) describes the life of Pondos in the pre-colonial era:

Despite its relative isolation, Pondoland was by no means immune from the forces of change generated by the expansion of the colonial powers in South Africa. But from the middle of the nineteenth century, the Mpondo were able to maintain large herds of cattle, which underpinned their economic independence. The surplus from pastoral production, in the form of hides, horns and cattle, was exported from Pondoland by European traders, who also brought in goods that the Mpondo wanted: blankets, beads, metal-ware and agricultural implements. Firearms, a major attraction at the labour centres of the Cape in the 1860s and 1870s, were available from traders in Pondoland.

Mayer shows clearly that before Pondoland was annexed, Pondos were independent as far as their socio-economic and system was concerned.

### **1.3 THE PONDOS' SOCIAL LIFE AND STATUS**

The Pondo people form part of the Xhosa national group, but differ regarding culture and customs. They are well known for their strong tribal ties and firm unity that stem from deep roots in their past. Pondoland's annexation by the Cape Colony in 1894 never took away Pondos' sense of Africanism (cf. Turok, n.d:4).

Beinart (1982:vii) observes regarding the annexation of Pondoland that:

Discussion of the process of colonization in Pondoland seemed particularly important, for its people had what may be considered an atypical experience: it was one of the last annexed areas of South Africa, it was not conquered by force of arms, and little land was taken for white settlement.

Beinart (1982:41-42) adds, concerning the political changes that were brought about:

Annexation reinforced and hastened political changes that had been evident in the late decades of the nineteenth century and finally closed off the possibility of any extension of chiefly power based on new sources of wealth. State intervention did contribute further to freeing the homestead from tributary controls exercised by the chiefs. But while the diminution of tributary constraints contributed to release new forces of production in Pondoland, the homesteads faced new demands, which locked them further into the broader Colonial economy.

One cannot deny the fact that annexation had both a positive and a negative impact on the socio-economic and political history of the Pondo people: the positive impact was that of education and the negative impact stemmed from the fact that annexation brought about conflict amongst the Pondos, because it destroyed their unity. They used to be a group that observed and respected their culture and customs. It is from this perspective that Turok (n.d:4) comments, "The pride of the Pondo people in their customs and traditions is legend".

Hunter (1979:65) describes the life of the Pondo people before annexation thus:

Before contact with Europeans the Pondos provided food and shelter for themselves by breeding cattle, growing grain and pumpkin, hunting, and making huts, clothing, household utensils, and weapons from material at hand. Now to make a living they also work for Europeans.

In terms of what Hunter says, it seems that land, to the Pondo people, was the nucleus that brought a sense of self-respect, confidence and dignity. But one should add that the notion of land ownership also united them.

#### **1.4 THE PONDOS AND LAND**

Borer (1998:83) describes the negative impact of the Native Land Areas Act of 1913 and the stance of the ANC concerning the implementation of this Act as follows:

In a clear erosion of the common good, the 1913 Native Land Act created separate "Native and European Homelands" under which Blacks had to receive permission to reside in white territory. A mere 7.3 percent of the land was reserved for Africans whose population total was five million, as opposed to one and half million whites. The implementation of the Act was accompanied by human rights abuses, including wide scale evictions of Africans from farmland outside their designated reserves. Moreover, the government's land policy unveiled its philosophy of unequal racial co-existence in all spheres of life. The ANC repeatedly declared its opposition to the Act, especially to the resultant human rights violations. They pointed out that it had "been passed without consultation with Africans,... deprived them of their rights as British citizens. segregated them in the land of their birth, and forced them off the land of their ancestors."

This point was made by Sol T. Plaatje much earlier. He indicated, like Borer, that the Land Areas Act of 1913 made South Africans aliens in the land of their birth.

Pogrud (1990:81) supports this when he comments as follows regarding the issue of separate development:

Separate development spelt a grim reality for blacks. It meant, in the first place, that they were to lose even the reduced rights conferred on them by their second-class citizenship and were to become strangers in the land of their birth; it meant that the dispossession and enforced removal, often at gunpoint would become more ferocious; in particular, the targets now would be old, the ill, the women and the young children who could not provide labour. And it meant intensification of the pass laws, to root out those blacks deemed to be in the cities illegally - that is, again, people whose labour was not needed and who therefore did not have permission to be there.

The issue of land was not only problematic in South Africa, but also throughout Africa. European countries colonized Africa for its raw material. But African leaders such as Dr Julius Kiano and Tom Mboya opposed any bill that deprived Africans of their rights to the land of their birth (C.f Wasserman, 1976:64).

Wasserman (1976:64) describes the long struggle over the issue of land, the stance of African leaders against the injustices that were implemented by the leaders of European countries, and the implications of economic constraints on land deprivation in Africa:

In a strong statement on the land issue by the African Elected Members, under Ngala's signature, the nationalist leader declared that the African people had struggled for many years for "extensive" land reforms in the highlands; the African Elected Members' policy on land had not changed from this in any manner. There were injustices and economic inequalities embodied in the land alienation system now obtaining in Kenya. No true leaders of the people can close their eyes to such injustices and inequalities for the sake of pacifying the opposition.

Wasserman pointed out that African leaders were not prepared to be quiet for the sake of maintaining peace and stability while their people were experiencing poverty.

Davenport (1977:164) describes the importance of land amongst the Pondo people and the impact of the white conquest in Pondoland:

Grazing land was held in common, but the chief could control access to it by the villagers' livestock. White conquest greatly reduced the amount of land available for African use, and for farming communities used to shifting agriculture and regular transhumance, this was serious.

Davenport pointed out that land and livestock played an important role in the lives of the Pondos, because it was their only means of survival. Land was and is still valued for its pastoral and agricultural value. Before the Pondo people came into contact with Europeans, they used to grow the following crops: maize, millet, sorghum, calabashes, sweet potatoes, tobacco and hemp (C.f Hunter, 1979:71). All these products came from the soil through the Pondos' own effort and initiatives, which demonstrates without doubt that they lived off the land, and that taking it from them meant total disaster. Pondos regarded land as a symbol of power, hence the Chiefs and headmen were responsible for its allocation, not the State.

Kuckertz (1984:92) further comments about the Pondos' understanding of land: "Land is never sold: it belongs to 'us all'. No one, not even the chief, can make a profit by speculating in land." Kuckertz suggested that as far as the land issue was concerned in Pondoland, a policy of democracy was the point of departure for land distribution. Though the chief was elected by the people to safeguard the land on their behalf, after the annexation of Pondoland in 1894 the sole owner of the land became the State. The Land Areas Act of 1913 deprived black people of the right to the land. But it is amazing to notice that the Church that was supposed to be the voice of the voiceless was silent; instead the Dutch Reformed Church supported the implementation of this Act. However, some individuals from the mainline churches spoke out and opposed it.

One should always bear in mind that most black churches, including black ministers, were dependent on the missionaries for their survival, but this does not justify their silence about the detrimental Acts that were imposed upon them by

the British government. Churches such as the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) did not oppose such legislation because they were part and parcel of decision-making in the Nationalist government and endorsed those laws.

Some missionaries who brought Christianity to the African Continent embraced double standards. On the one hand they preached a gospel of repentance and justification; on the other hand, they sided with a government that was imposing oppressive structures on the African continent. In the true sense of the word, the church has for a long time betrayed the gospel of Christ, and caused most African people to disregard the importance of Christianity in their social life.

Ahanotu (1992:155) describes the role of the Church concerning the issue of land and concept of missionaries about African culture.

The churches' betrayal of the gospel begins with the condoning of slaves, the warring crusades and the preachers of colonialism. While the colonialists were busy robbing people of their own land in Southern Africa, the church was right alongside, giving its blessings. One of the first English chaplains described the African as "barbarous" [sic] in skin of men, ignorant in language, habit and diet... no place of worship, no duty of rest, no shame, no truth, no ceremony in births or burials, mere brutishness and stupidity wholly shadowing them... the word Kaffir in fact means "unbeliever", or heathen. They taught that everything African was paganism, sin, and superstitious barbarism. To become a Christian, they had to renounce all their heritage, culture, dress and medicine... Mission school history books presented the Xhosa as thieves, not as cattle reclaimers, and said the white Boer never provoked the blacks but simply went on "punitive" missions.

According to Ahanotu this proves beyond the reasonable doubts that missionaries played an important role to help the colonizers to take land from Africans and to disregard their heritage and culture as their way of life.

One cannot deny the fact that land plays an important role in one's life: it gives one a sense of belonging. Throughout the world, people have revolted or gone to war on the issue of land. Walshe (1983:14) quotes the Cottesloe statement on the right to own land as follows:

It is our conviction that the right to own land wherever he is domiciled and to participate in the government of his country, is part of the dignity of the adult man, [sic] and for this reason a policy which permanently denies to the economically integrated non-white people the right of collaboration in the government of the country of which they are citizens cannot be justified.

Similarly, Granovsky (1940:3) describes how important land is to human beings:

The realization that the first step in the struggle for a Jewish Homeland is the struggle for land is one of the basic principles of Zionism. Land is the indispensable foundation of any human activity. Without it, there can be no agriculture, no industry, and no urban settlement. The first task of a landless people is to provide this foundation for its existence. But land is more than a mere foundation. It is the source from which men [sic] obtain their food. Land is, therefore, an indispensable means of production....

Granovsky points out that without land one cannot possess a sense of belonging and ownership, produce food and own livestock. Hence the Pondos resisted the authority of the Nationalist government: not because they were disobeying authority but because they were protecting what belonged to them. Any tribe or nation would have done the same; even Europeans themselves would not have allowed other people to annex their European countries because land concerns wealth and a sense of belonging.

## **1.5 PONDO ECONOMY**

Land and livestock were the core bases of the Pondos' economy: some people in their communities were extremely rich, like those in the royal families, while others were poor. But what was interesting was that both classes owned some property, e.g. fields, cattle, goats, sheep, hoes, ploughs etc. From the fields they obtained maize, which was their staple food. Grass also played an important part economically as it was used for two purposes, thatching and animal grazing.

Cattle played an important role, because they were used for their religious value as ritual victims and their juridical value in paying debts. While cattle had commercial value, this did not necessarily mean that other livestock had no economic value. For instance, donkeys and horses were used as a means of transport, before the Pondo people came into contact with the Europeans.

Pondos, like most other nations throughout the world, depended entirely on the land. Livestock was an important aspect of their wealth. The number of cattle one owned indicated wealth in the Pondo society. Goats, sheep, pigs, hens, ducks and geese were part of their animal husbandry. But cattle were of primary economic importance to the lives of the Pondos, as with other Nguni-speaking people. Cattle supplied meat, milk and hides for clothing. They also had social value in negotiating a bride's price ("lobola"<sup>1</sup>) and in other rituals.

Beinart (1982:15) points out the importance of livestock amongst the Pondos as follows:

Loaning relationships involved the passage of stock in return for services and support by the men; in marriage, it was women that passed against cattle. Traditions claim that grain was used for bride wealth at the time of close settlement - they may merely symbolize the deprivation experienced - but it seems that cattle, and perhaps small stock for poorer homesteads, were the usual means of bride wealth payment in Pondoland.

Kuckertz (1984:203) also describes how cattle were used as a form of bartering:

The pre-annexation independence of the Mpondo was directly linked to the wealth in cattle which they traded in order to obtain commodities they needed, such as guns and agricultural implements...the importance of cattle is summed up in two phrases which I have often heard in conversation: iinkomo yibank' (cattle are our savings-account) and iinkomo babantu (cattle are people). The first phrase pinpoints the economic aspect of cattle in its use of the most unambiguous terms of the

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<sup>1</sup> Lobola was paid for the bride in the form of cattle. Today this has been replaced by money, though there are still certain clans that practise that tradition.



cash economy: a banking institute, where there are loans, transfers and deposits. This is no more metaphor in Gagula, but has a basis in the reality of how the homestead economy proceeds. The second phrase refers to the complexity of social life in general, and in particular two aspects of it which need our attention and in due course, namely the system of inheritance and traditional religion and certain ritual related to it.

The other means of acquiring wealth was through hunting. Hunter (1979:95) describes the impact of hunting in Pondoland in the pre-colonial era as follows:

What part hunting played in the economic life of the Pondo before contact with Europeans it is impossible now to estimate, but it is known that the country was full of game - elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, lions, leopard, zebra, jackal, hyena, many varieties of buck, and game birds so game must have been a considerable item in the diet of the people. Any man was free to hunt buck and birds as he chose, and no part of them was due to the chief.

All these privileges, which the Pondos enjoyed in the pre-colonial era, were spilled like milk when Pondoland was annexed in 1894, which stripped Pondos of their dignity.

## **1.6 AUTHORITY IN PONDOLAND**

Status played a very important role in the homesteads of the Pondo people. The father has always been regarded as the head of the family. But one should also bear in mind that this was a clan that believed in the hierarchy of chief and headmen. The Paramount Chief was the head of the clan, followed by the district chiefs and the headmen. Hunter (1979:112) portrayed the significance of authority in Pondoland as follows:

If a Pondo is asked to whom any area belongs he will give in answer the name of the paramount chief of the country, or of the chief ruling over that district, or the name of the tribe or the predominant clan occupying it. Eastern Pondoland is spoken of as the country of Mandlonke (the paramount chief) or the country of the Pondo. The area referred to is the

area over which the chief has political authority. A chief had jurisdiction over people - if his people spread into unoccupied territory he would still claim their allegiance - but he also had jurisdiction over land.

The Paramount Chief, as the head of the clan, could speak with authority. Hence Pondos have been brought up and taught to understand that the land belongs to no one, but that it was a gift from Qamatha (the Supreme Being) to the Paramount Chief. But that did not give him the sole authority to misuse his status. He would consult the elders of the tribe and the ancestors before taking any crucial decision. This implies that the chief's authority was centred on the will of the people; hence the Pondos resisted when the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 was implemented and imposed upon them. This will be discussed extensively in the following chapters.

### **1.6.1 THE PONDO RELIGION AND POLITICS**

One cannot deny the fact that before the missionaries or "western civilization" came to Africa, Africans believed in God, but their concept of God differed from the western understanding. Africans conceived of God as a Supreme Being, the Creator of the World, uQamatha (Xhosa), uMvelinqangi (Zulu) and Modimo (Sotho). The Pondos took into consideration the importance of their ancestors as mediators between themselves and the Supreme Being (God); hence, Kuckertz (1984:261) says:

The Pondo had two words, uMdali (the "creator;" derived from the word ukudala, to "mould, to form") and uMenzi ("Maker;" derived from the word ukwenza, "to make") which might suggest belief in a creator: even if God is considered to be the source of all that exists, God comes into focus only occasionally (cf. Hunter 1979:269).

Setiloane, quoted in Mosala and Tlhagale (1986:96), describes Africans' perceptions of God as follows:

However, with the disintegration of communal society and the emergence of feudal relations in precapitalist Africa some changes begin to occur in the religious concepts of Africa. The emphasis on the religious significance of natural phenomena gives way to beliefs in Supreme Beings

and the importance of the ancestors as a link between the divine and the people. Setiloane's argument that "Badimo" (the living dead) are agents of Modimo through their participation in "Bomodimo" (the numinous sphere) and that they are connected to the biologically living who have seniority and authority, is an example.

Ahanotu (1992:154) describes the relationship of faith, ancestors and community as follows:

African chiefs or kings wielded both the religious and what we call the "secular" authority. In traditional societies, religion was not an affair of the individual, but was viewed as a matter of the entire community. Every member of the community was obliged to participate in the faith of the community, was bound by the tradition of the ancestors, and was required to observe the regulations, which were given to the family and the community by its ancestry. It was the task of the chiefs and elders to ensure that the faith of the community was not violated.

Pondo took their religion and politics very seriously; their belief in ancestors was of great importance because it was associated with the kinship system, and traditionally the king was chosen from the family or clan.

In 1650 the Council of Seventeen of the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) established a refreshment station at the Cape; and that opened a new chapter in the history of South Africa. In 1652 Jan Van Riebeeck developed that refreshment station into an agricultural colony (cf. Hofmeyr and Pillay, 1994:3). In 1820 when the British settlers landed on the shore of Algoa Bay, they were accompanied by missionaries from different denominations. William and Barnabas Shaw, Methodist missionaries, played an important role in proclaiming the Word of God in the Eastern, Western and Northern Cape. These giants of evangelism converted kings, which made it easier for them to implement Christian principles amongst the Xhosas. William Shaw was able to obtain a piece of land for his mission station by converting Vosani, Chief of the Tembu, in 1825.

The gospel spread throughout the whole of the Cape Colony (today known as the Eastern and Western Cape Provinces) and it was received with great fervour. In

Pondoland a missionary who played an important role in the lives of the Pondos was Jenkins, who was a very close friend of Chief Faku. Victor Poto, quoted in Mears (n.d:48) verified the relationship between Faku and the missionaries as follows:

Chief Victor Poto of Western Pondoland in writing of the attitude of Pondo Chiefs to missionaries states that Chief Faku received the first missionaries “with open arms and gave them sites, whereon to found mission stations”. Probing to find the reason he poses the question “what was the ultimate aim and objects of Chief Faku in receiving the missionaries so kindly, and in granting them land to build mission stations?” He answered: “Personally it is my opinion that Chief Faku was desirous that his people should receive Godly power, Divine Salvation and that Education, which so builds a man [sic] as to give him character and wisdom... whatever motives underlay Faku’s friendship and patronage the Gospel had free course among his people in Eastern Pondoland. Faku never professed Christianity but he used to say “there were only two good men in the country - Jenkins and himself”.

This demonstrates the impact Christianity had on the lives of the Pondos. What Poto (in Mears) has said demonstrates without doubt that there were strong ties in Pondoland between missionaries and Pondos, and that these ties were bonded by Christianity. But unfortunately the bond of Christianity was destroyed by politics after Pondoland was annexed in 1894.

## **1.7 POLITICS IN PONDOLAND**

The political atmosphere in Pondoland was determined by its context, as a society that believed in hierarchy. The King (iNkosi) was the father figure of the whole society and was regarded as the role model of the clan: he was referred to as “Inkosi nguTata Wesizwe”<sup>2</sup>. Despite his age, the community respected him and his authority in maintaining law and order. The Pondo king is not elected but born and in many instances, it is the first son, from the first wife, who is the heir to his father’s throne, and the clan pays the lobola of the first wife. This means

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<sup>2</sup> The king is the Father of the Nation.

that the elders can choose the wife for the king because she was believed to be “nguMama weSizwe”<sup>3</sup>.

Sometimes the heir to the throne may be physically or mentally disabled, but in this case no one has the right to replace him. Instead some tribes would qualify him (the mentally disabled son who is to ascend the throne) as the king but the kingship will be inherited jointly with the younger brother (who is mentally fit), to help his brother. The younger brother is basically the biological brother of the elder, from the same mother or the first wife of the king. According to primary sources<sup>4</sup> this situation occurred in Pondoland during the time of Chief Nyawuza. (some parts of this document have been torn, hence I have inserted three dots after “custom”, see Apendix “A”):

It is clear that, prior to the time of Chief Nyawuza, to the reigning Chief was in accordance with the Pondo custom... among the commoners to this day, and the eldest son of the first wife was recognized as the rightful successor. In Nyawuza’s time, however a change was made and the chief’s wife, towards whose dowry the tribe contributed and who was married only after a number of other wives, become the mother of the future chief. Ngqungqushe, son of Nyawuza, was the first chief born of a chief wife. Ngqungqushe’s chief had a son, Pakane, who was of weak intellect and who was regarded as unfit to succeed. Faku was elected to succeed him.

This was the crux of the matter that led to the Pondo revolt between 1960 and 1963, although the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 and other laws that were

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<sup>3</sup> The king’s wife is the Mother of the Nation.

<sup>4</sup> CMT/ 3/1642, REF C2/119, VOL 1314, HEADING “Chief, Headmen, Councillors and People”: this was an announcement of the decision taken by His Excellency the Governor-General in a letter regarding the chieftainship of Eastern Pondoland.

Implemented by the Nationalist government seemed to be the immediate cause of the revolt.

## **1.8 THE COLONIAL IMPACT ON THE LIVES OF THE PONDO PEOPLE**

Hunter (1979:113) comments as follows on the land issue in Pondoland after the annexation: “Land became the property of the Crown. The exclusive rights to cultivate certain arable areas were now granted through magistrates”. Their dispossession caused the Pondo people to submit themselves to white control and supremacy, because Africans could not hold title to land. This brought about a drastic change in the socio-political history of the Pondos. Paramount chiefs were no longer in control but were told by the colonizers how to lead their own people and administer land. The mining industry turned Pondo men into migrant labourers, and demarcation (ucando) was imposed immediately after annexation, which placed people according to their ethnic groups and the class system.

Pondoland was divided into seven districts: Eastern Pondoland consists of four districts: Lusikisiki (Qaukeni) which was and is still regarded as the capital town of Eastern Pondoland, Flagstaff (Spareni), Bizana and Ntabankulu. Western Pondoland comprises three districts: Libode, Ngqeleni and Port St Johns (Nyandeni), the capital town of Western Pondoland. These districts were subdivided into smaller sections, which were no longer under the administration of the Pondo Paramount Chief but were governed by a magistrate who gave orders to him. The magistrates introduced the system of Tribal Authorities (iiNqila), the main function of which was to act as an appeal court regarding the chief’s rulings. All these aspects led to the Pondo revolt from 1960 to 1963.

The new system of governance in Pondoland forced the Paramount chief to take orders from the magistrate and impose them on the people, although such instructions were against the will of the people. But not all chiefs took orders from

magistrates, which sparked conflict amongst the Pondo people. Beinart (1982:2) comments:

When Mhlangaso, chief councillor to the paramount of Eastern Pondoland, pursued a policy of encouraging the activities of traders and concessionaires in the 1880s, rumours spread among the people that he was "selling" them and the land for his own benefit. When, twenty years later, Sigcau, the paramount chief, promised to help mobilize migrants and was thought to have taken gifts from labour recruiters, he heard that certain headmen had brought the same charge against him. Over half a century on, in 1960, popular opposition to rehabilitation scheme and Bantu Authorities coalesced around the belief "that chief Botha [Sigcau's grandson] sold the Pondos and the country for his own ends".

### **1.8.1 THE EFFECT OF COLONIALISM ON THE PONDO PEOPLE**

Annexation reinforced and hastened socio-political changes in Pondoland. It closed off any possibility of extension of chiefly power based on new sources of wealth. All homesteads faced new demands that made life impossible for the Pondos. As mentioned earlier, the effects of colonialism were both positive and negative. It, and particularly annexation, changed the existence of the Pondos. Although the Pondo people resisted transformation, there was no doubt that it brought about enlightenment through education, Christianity, technology and particularly the new system of administration, which was a challenge to the Pondo leadership because their autocratic system was chauvinistic.

Beinart (1982:4) comments:

While the arrival of traders modified the social organization of production and the relationship between chiefs and people, it by no means dissolved central institutions in the society. And capitalist penetration was met with resistance when it began to threaten communal access to land and resources: constraints on accumulation arose partly from internal forces.

Missionaries played an important role in Pondoland because they were able to gain the confidence of the Paramount chiefs, which made it easier for them to implement some of their hidden agendas. Turok (n.d:6) points out:

Realizing its failure to win supporters amongst the African people in the towns, the Government is making concerted efforts not to suffer the same handicap in the reserves. Their first step to gain supporters was the winning over of the chiefs and their installation as puppets within the Bantu Authorities hierarchy.

In some instances missionaries played an important role in the African continent, particularly in South Africa. The church was often a vehicle for the progress, growth, development and enlightenment of many black women and men of South Africa in the early 1950s and 1960s and naturally played the key part in the mission schools. It was the first and the only body that brought education to black people in South Africa from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries.

Certain institutions, Healdtown (Methodist), Lovedale (the Church of Scotland Missionary Society), and St Francis College (Roman Catholic) were founded by missionaries. Prominent leaders such as Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe, Ellen Kuzwayo and others were products of mission schools. In the early 1940s most black teachers, nurses, pastors, interpreters, businessmen and women received their education from mission schools. This is not to argue that mission schools were perfect but that they played a vital role in the life of black South Africans.

It is from this perspective that Kuzwayo (1985:252-253) felt obliged to emphasize the significant role played by missionaries in South Africa, particularly in empowering black women.

There is no doubt that mission schools played a very important role in preparing black women to develop the confidence to stand side by side with men in the classroom and finally enter higher education to explore new educational avenues...All in all, education through these mission schools came as a psychological and emotional liberation to black women as they began to discover their physical potential and identity, even if to a very small degree. The slogan of the Afrikaner over the years has been, and still is, "sit die kaffir op sy plek" (put the kaffir (black) in his place). The Nationalist government institutionalized this by destroying the education foundation laid by missionaries. They seized Lovedale, Healdtown, Adams College, Khaiso and reduced them into nothing.



Kuzwayo states that the education that was provided by missionaries was an eye-opener, which caused women to be recognized as human beings created in the image of God. In the missionary schools Pondos were able to learn skills, which enabled them to cultivate their land productively and to look after their livestock and breed the animals successfully. Missionaries taught the Pondos that God was the only provider of their wealth. Those Pondos who were converted to Christianity observed the Sabbath. But it was not only observed by the converted alone; non-converts observed it too. This meant that no member of the community, including the Paramount Chief, would do any work on Sunday. The church insisted that all converts should go to church to worship God, the provider of all they had. During that period, therefore, the church played an important role in the life of the Pondo people.

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

If one takes into consideration the historical background of the Pondo people in the pre-colonial era, one may say that colonialism destabilized their socio-economic and political system. It seems that Pondos were people who believed in their own culture and tradition. They measured their wealth by the large areas of land and the large numbers of livestock, which they owned. Culture and tradition, or land and livestock were the core features of their life.

Colonialism arrived with missionaries who brought Christianity and avenues for education to Pondoland. Unfortunately these two positive aspects were negated by colonialism, because the missionaries themselves were proclaiming colonialist policies. It is in terms of this perspective that Xozwa (1989:5) describes how colonizers, with the help of missionaries, snatched the land from the hands of African people: "At first we had the land, and you had the Bible. Now we have the Bible and you have the land." The next chapter will discuss the causes of the Pondo revolt.

## CHAPTER 2

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this chapter is to discuss in detail the background of the Pondo revolt and the year 1960, an era of black resistance in the African continent. This topic will be examined by taking into consideration the important political events that took place in the African continent, particularly in South Africa, and other parts of the world.

### 2.2 THE CAUSE OF THE PONDO REVOLT

One should always bear in mind that there is no revolt or revolution without a cause. Dunn (1972:15) describes the importance of revolution as follows:

For a revolution to be a real revolution it is necessary for the revolutionaries who seize power to be genuinely more capable of handling the problem of the society in which they win power than were their immediate predecessors – and above all it is necessary that it should not turn out that the only problem which they are capable of handling more deftly than those whom they replace is the single problem of social control.

Revolt and revolution are two different concepts with different meanings; therefore, it is appropriate to define these two concepts. “Revolt” is a verb and “revolution” is a noun. The *Oxford Paperback Dictionary* defines these two concepts as follows: “Revolt is an act or state of rebelling or defying authority, and revolution is the overthrow of the government or social order, especially by force.”

Certain historians define the second concept, “Revolution”, as follows, Calvert (1984:2-3) defines it thus:

Firstly, revolution is a process by which people become disenchanted with the incumbent government, on which they focus their failure to attain their political demands. Secondly, it is an event in which an existing government is overthrown and a new one established in its place. Thirdly,

it is a program of change instituted and carried through by the incoming government. Lastly, it is a myth, describing the sequence of events in terms, which serve to legitimize the action of the incoming government and the program it has instituted.

Van Vuuren et al (1988:344) define "Revolution" in the following terms:

A revolution is a rapid, fundamental, and violent domestic change in the dominant myths and values of a society, in its political institutions, social structure, leadership, government activity and policies. Revolutions are thus to be distinguished from insurrections, rebellions, revolts, coups, and wars of independence. A coup d'etat in itself changes only leadership, and perhaps policies; a rebellion or insurrection may change policies, leadership and political institutions, but no social structure and values: a war of independence is a struggle of one community against rule by an alien community and does not necessarily involve changes in the social structure of either community.

On the other hand, Bundy (1987:2) defines "Revolution" as follows:

But what is a revolution? In a definition that draws heavily on the ingenuity of others, let me propose that revolutions are historical phenomena exhibiting the following features:

1. rapid institutional changes of a society's state structure; a breaking-through or over-turning of an existing political order;
2. a simultaneous transformation of social relations: a decisive shift in the balance of power between social classes;
3. such a transfer of political and social power involves "class-based revolts from below", the entry by normally dominated social groupings into actions of resistance or violent revolt;
4. the transfer of power thus effected through "socio-political conflicts in which class struggle plays a key role" is then consolidated in terms of an ideology or programme: revolution involves conscious objectives, they seek to promote changes justified as positive improvements.

For one to understand the main cause or causes of the Pondo revolt, one has to examine what was happening in the African Continent and other parts of the world in the period from the early 1940s to the early 1960s.

## 2.3 THE 1950 AND 1960: AN ERA OF BLACK RESISTANCE

A brief background regarding what was occurring in the African Continent and other parts of the world, as far as the socio-economic and political history of Black people was concerned in the early 1940s and 1960s, will, it is hoped, provide a clear picture of the causes of the revolt.

When the National Party came to power in 1948, there was a socio-economic and political shift in the history of South Africa. The indigenous people of South Africa became aliens in the land of their birth. They were victimized: discriminated against on the racial, gender, social, economic and political grounds. The Holy Bible describes this vividly in Lamentations 5:1-5 (the outcry of the Israelites when they were in captivity):

Remember, O LORD, what has befallen us; look, and see our disgrace!  
Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers, our homes to aliens.  
We have become orphans, fatherless; our mothers are like widows. We  
must pay for the water we drink; the wood we get must be bought. With a  
yoke on our necks we are hard driven; we are weary, we are given no  
rest.

This was one of the texts that were not supposed to be preached on because the Nationalist government regarded them as a threat. Most leaders of the mainline, English speaking churches, but not the Dutch Reformed Church, opposed the policy of apartheid from all angles, but not vigorously. Graybill and Thompson (1998:181) quote Walshe in this respect:

Nevertheless, the South African regime could not stop the prophetic movement, which continued to spread during the course of the 1980s, particularly within ecumenical organizations. The Mainline churches remained problematic. The white Dutch Reformed Church continued to support the state, the English speaking churches, the Roman Catholic Church, Methodist, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and so forth - remained what I call "phlegmatic" churches: They condemned apartheid but did very little to confront the state.

Mainline Churches did not confront the State because they were multi-racial, and white people were in positions of power, unlike indigenous Churches who were black-orientated. Throughout South Africa, people were treated according to the colour of their skin. Even though some whites associated themselves with the struggle against apartheid they automatically benefited from the constitution by the mere fact of being white South Africans. Pogrund (1990:40-41) describes Sobukwe's conversation with a Methodist minister, Grant, about the issue of whites who were automatically protected by the South African constitution even though they pretended to be opposed to it.

According to Matthew Nkoana, a well known journalist and a member of the Pan-African Congress, in a May 1959 article in Drum magazine, the Principal [sic] of Healdtown made a speech at Fort Hare about the brotherhood of man, suggesting it could be fostered between white and black by personal contact in homes and in informal meetings without changing the state's laws. Sobukwe addressed him: 'the moment I step out of your home, sir, after a show of brotherhood of man, the police will pick me up for a pass offence' 'but that won't be my fault' replied Grant. 'it will be,' protested Sobukwe. 'You are part and parcel of the set-up in this country. The church cannot absolve itself from this. The Methodist church itself is pursuing a segregationist policy: it has different stipends for its white and black ministers', Grant said this was because Africans congregations could not afford to pay more. 'Then why is it that white ministers who administer to African congregation get more than their African colleagues?'

This demonstrates convincingly why the Church was unable to confront the State. Because all white South Africans were automatically protected by the constitution, it was difficult for most white ministers to oppose the State. One could say that there were very few whites who were against the apartheid system: instead, most of them used the church as window-dressing to protect themselves against the evil doctrines of apartheid, on the other hand quietly sowing and reaping the fruits of apartheid.

Balia (1991:8) quotes Jafta's comment on a clash between Boraine and Vorster regarding the issue of racism in the Methodist church of South Africa.

Once when a past president of the Methodist church, Dr Alex Boraine, confronted the then Prime Minister of South Africa, Mr. B.J. Vorster, about the evils of apartheid, Mr. Vorster embarrassed Dr Boraine by highlighting the racial inequalities within the Methodist Church. It was as if Mr. Vorster had carefully studied the minutes of the Methodist Conference and knew that the racism in the country was reflected within the Methodist Church. Indeed, the Methodist Church, like other so-called main line churches, has been guilty of “driving the devil out by the door and bringing him in by the window”. Racism within the church has been and still is a reality, which cannot be denied since racial tendencies manifest themselves both covertly and overtly.

On the other hand, Gqubule (1996:109) commented as follows about the role of the Church towards the apartheid regime:

The Church is a creation of Jesus Christ. But she often plays a harlot with the society in which she lives. As a result one sometimes fails to see in her the Bride of Jesus Christ. Chameleon-like she often takes her hue from the society that surrounds her and partakes in harlotry of that society. When secular powers deal unjustly with some of God’s people and humiliate them on racial and other grounds, the church has often done the same. The damage done to the Black people of South Africa by mass removals and Bantu Education is incalculable. And apart from a few, often maligned, prophetic voices, the bulk of the church remained silent and sometimes co-operated with the state.

This is what Africans experienced when the European countries colonized the whole of the Continent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Africans lost everything they had, but they refused to give up their dignity and their land.

Many events that occurred in the 1950s and 1960s in South Africa split families, because people who fought for the liberation of the Africans<sup>1</sup> were arrested. Some were imprisoned and sentenced to life and death while others went into exile. From this perspective McWilliams (2000:83) describes George Bernard Shaw’s observation regarding the sixties as follows:

George Bernard Shaw once observed that “revolutionary movements attract the best and the worst elements in a given society,” if any decade in American history simultaneously produced the “best and worst element”, it was the 1960s, and the legacy of that era is no less paradoxical. Much of what happened then was divisive. Many of the

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<sup>1</sup>By Africans it meant the indigenous people of Africa.

events that occurred in the sixties split generations, races, sexes, political parties, and even families.

Shaw's observation not only reflects American history, but also African history and that of other parts of the world. In South Africa, Blacks<sup>2</sup> were discriminated against in all spheres of life. It seems that the 1950s and 1960s were the beginnings of a Cultural Revolution throughout the world. South Africans fought for self-identification and their human rights. Policies such as rehabilitation schemes led to migrant labour. The victims of rehabilitation were the inhabitants of reserves throughout South Africa. They were forced to live close to each other with the intention being to deprive them of sufficient land for ploughing and grazing. Hence they were forced to sell their livestock at very low prices, which caused them to become poor.

One may say that these were strategies used by the government to force men to leave their families and look for work in big cities like Kimberley, Bloemfontein, Durban, Johannesburg etc. This led to the breaking down of many families in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when migrant labour reached its pinnacle. From this point in particular, Black people in South Africa defied the unjust policies of discrimination that were enforced by the Nationalist government.

Many events that occurred in South Africa and other parts of the world had a negative impact on most families. In the African Continent, such events included the unjustified policies that were enforced by the colonizers. Those policies brought about instability in the socio-economic situation of the marginalized people. Hence the following incidents took place: in 1959 riots occurred in Leopoldville (in the Congo) and hundreds of people were killed. In Sharpeville, South Africa, on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 1960 many were massacred and many more arrested. During the Paarl insurrection in 1962 still others were killed and arrested, as in Langa and Nyanga anti-pass campaign of 1961. In the previous

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<sup>2</sup> "Black" refers to the black people of South Africa, including Coloureds and Indians.

year the Pondo people revolted against unlawful policies and some of them were killed, arrested, exiled and deported.

In 1960 a state of emergency was declared and political parties such as the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan African Congress (PAC) were banned. These political organizations were suspected of instigating a coup d'etat: political leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki, Robert Sobukwe and others were arrested and some went into exile for their own safety. Peaceful negotiations were entered into by Blacks and some White leaders who were anti-apartheid, but were ignored by the Nationalist government.

Some Black leaders opted for Gandhi's policy of passive resistance (Ghandi was a nationalistic Indian leader who spearheaded a revolution that brought down the British rule in India) but this was also ignored by the government of the day. It was against this background that Mandela made his statement before court in 1962. Muendane (1982:39) quotes Mandela's speech as follows:

How many more Sharpevilles would be there in the history of our country. And how many more Sharpevilles could the country stand without violence and terror becoming the order of the day?... I, and others who started the organization, did so for two reasons. First... we believed that violence by African people had become inevitable, and that unless reasonable leadership was given to canalize and control the feelings of our people, there would be outbreaks of terrorism ... Secondly, we felt that without violence there would be no way open to African people to succeed in their struggle against the principle of white supremacy...

Mandela opted for violence not because he was arrogant but because he wanted to draw the attention of the Nationalist government since it was ignoring the people's concerns. Woods (1978:21) describes Mandela's strategies as regards implementing violence as follows:

It was only when Mandela's patience in appealing to whites for compromise was exhausted that a split occurred in the popular movement. Mandela decided that the future appeals to reason were a waste of time and that only violence could jolt Afrikaner nationalism out of its refusal to negotiate. The violence campaign was to start with selective sabotage of



electricity pylons and power stations. If the white minority government remained obdurate, police stations and military installations would be the next targets. If this made no significant impression, the violence would escalate if necessary into full civil war.

This demonstrates beyond reasonable doubt that Mandela was furious, and that the only way for the ANC to free the people of South Africa was seen to be through violence, though violence was against the principles of the ANC, because the Nationalists were not prepared to negotiate. On the one hand, most South Africans were complaining about oppressive structures while on the other hand, the White minority of South Africa regarded the declaration of South Africa as a Republic on the 31<sup>st</sup> May 1961 positively. People such as H.F. Verwoerd were regarded as “heroes” because they had laid the foundation of the policy of separate development, known as Apartheid.

Legislation in South Africa was contrary to what was happening in other parts of the African continent and other parts of the world in the 1950s and 1960s. While the Black people of East, West and Central Africa were granted independence and freedom of speech and of the press, the Black people of South Africa were experiencing oppression. Certain events were, however, regarded as positive by Africans. In June 1960 Congo became independent and Nigeria obtained its independence in October of the same year. The British Government in 1968 granted Swaziland independence and in 1966 it granted Botswana and Lesotho independence.

In May 1963 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was established in Addis Ababa. In East, West, and Central Africa the late 1950s and early 1960s were perceived as a “golden spring” of independence. African poets, scholars and novelists such as Chinua Achebe, James Ngugi and Wole Soyinka emerged because Africans were independent and the freedoms of speech and of the press were no longer restricted. Great African scholars’ voices were listened to.

Such scholars, both women and men, used paper to express their ideas and to liberate their neighbouring countries such as South Africa.

In America the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed and the twenty-fourth amendment, prohibiting poll taxes, was ratified. The following year America enacted an Immigration Act. These were some of the achievements which made people such as Martin Luther King (Jr) proud because they had fought successfully for the liberation of the Black people. Despite the oppressive structures in South Africa, Chief Albert Luthuli also caused the black people of South Africa to feel proud. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1961 for his key role in declaring apartheid an evil act that was against the will of God.

One may also say that the 1950s and 1960s were era of an identity crisis, because people of different races, particularly in South Africa, fought for their own recognition or sense of self-identity. It is from this perspective that African theologians and Black theologians such as Gabriel Setiloane, Itumeleng Mosala, Buti Tlhagale, Simon Maimela, John Mbiti and others instilled the spirit of Africanism. They used phrases such as “umntu ngumntu ngabantu” or “motho ke motho ka batho”<sup>3</sup> and “Xa mina xa wena, Xa wena xa mina.”<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, freedom fighters such as Steve Biko, Robert Sobukwe, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Govan Mbeki, Martin Luther King and others used this phrase: “Black is beautiful, and I am proud to be Black”. All these were aspects that showed an element of self-identification. Meier et al (1991:17-18) describe how Dr Martin Luther King (Jr) and Stokely Carmichael preached the notion of “Black Power” to conscientise Black Americans regarding self-esteem:

The two men soon revealed to the world a leadership schism of major proportions. While King continued to preach nonviolence and racial integration to Mississippi blacks, Carmichael electrified the crowds with cries of “Black Power”: “the only way we gonna stop them white men from

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<sup>3</sup> These phrases in IsiZulu and seSotho simply mean “I am because you are”.

<sup>4</sup> This expression likewise means “what belongs to me belongs to you and what belongs to you belongs to me” (people shall share).

whuppin' us is to take over. We been saying freedom for six years and we ain't got nothin'. What we gonna start saying now is black power...Ain't nothing' wrong with anything all black 'cause I'm black and I'm good. Now don't you be afraid. And from now on when they ask you what you want, you know what to tell them," the crowd replied in unison, "Black power! Black power! Black power!" The slogan expressed tendencies that had been present for some time and had been gaining strength in the black community. As it became a household phrase, the term generated intense discussion of its real meaning, and a broad spectrum of ideologies and programmatic proposals emerged. In politics, black power meant independent action - Negro control of the political power of the rural Southern Black Belt countries and of the black ghettos, and the use of this control to improve the condition of farm laborers and slum dwellers. It could take the form of organizing a black political party or controlling the political machinery inside the ghettos without the guidance or support of white politicians.

In Palestine, the Saharawi Republic, Ireland and El Salvador, blacks fought racism and fascism of all kinds in their countries for the sake of their identity. In Britain, British cities were confronted with riots that led to racial violence. Witte (1996:26) commented as follows about the threats to identity in Britain:

This concerned not only the supposed biological or social characteristics of black people, but also what had been called the racial character of the British people and their national identity (Solomon.1989: 47). The arrival and settlement in Britain of these groups of British subjects from former colonies were perceived as threats to the racial character and identity of the British people.

This proves indubitably that the issue of racism runs very deep, because in some countries such as the Netherlands, racial discrimination comprised that of white against white. The issue of racism exerted a negative impact on those who believed in equality and liberation, because it brought about hatred amongst people. In South Africa, there was a call for Black Power too, because black people were regarded as second-class citizens. These grievances caused the marginalized people of South Africa to disobey many of the unjust policies that were enforced by the Nationalist government.

Africans fought for their integrity as human beings created in the image of God. They felt that they were being undermined by those who were in authority, who

implemented structures such as segregation. Many Black South Africans opted to resist all policies and Acts enforced by the Nationalist government when it came to power in 1948. The Prime Minister, D.F. Malan, and his cabinet modernized and reconceptualized the policy of segregation and gave it a new title: "Apartheid". Dr Hendrick Verwoerd, who was the current Minister of Native Affairs, developed the concept "Apartheid". His main objectives were to instigate and promote the idea of white supremacy for which he was known as the architect of apartheid by most South Africans.

Hofmeyr and Pillay (1994:246-247) describe the effect of the philosophy behind the concept "Apartheid" as follows:

In fact, apartheid laws legalized racism. One bedrock law passed in 1950 was the Population Registration Act, which legally defined a person's position in society according to the colour of his [sic] skin. Many of the other apartheid measures emanated from this act. Some of the other important acts passed were the Mixed Marriages Act (1949), the Group Areas Act (1950), the Separate Amenities Act (1953), the Bantu Education Act (1953), the Immorality Act (1957), and the Political Interference Act (1968). Many of these, as well as other acts and regulations were passed under the guise of "separate but equal", but more often than not facilities and provisions for whites were far superior to those of other groups. Apartheid meant, in effect, the hierarchical ordering of the entire South African society, and systematic political, economic and social discrimination against blacks. It was a philosophy, which left few lives in South Africa untouched.

Hofmeyr and Pillay portray the severity and the evil of the policy of apartheid and its negative impact on the lives of Black people. They show how apartheid was offensive to the Black people of this country since it made them less human. The declaration of South Africa as a Republic on the 31<sup>st</sup> May 1961 worsened the situation, because the Republic benefited the white minority of South Africa. The main objective of the Republic was to practise apartheid policies without any interference from the British Empire, since South Africa was a British colony.

Albert Luthuli, John Dube and Martin Luther King were prominent political leaders who based their politics on Scripture. One would be ungrateful if one did not also

recognize Rev Beyers Naude, Ben Marais, various DRC ministers and others who risked their lives and families and adopted a stance against the apartheid policies, which were imposed and practised by the DRC. These people opposed the heresy that was proclaimed by E.P. Groenewald, a DRC minister and his colleagues, which affirmed that racial segregation was grounded in Scripture.

It is very interesting to notice that the Nationalists misused the word of God when it suited them, but when it contradicted their policies they would say that religion and politics did not mix because they were two different entities. Tutu (1983:37) commented as follows about this issue:

This kind of criticism will reach crescendo proportions if the Church not merely provides an ameliorative ambulance service, but aims to expose the root causes; if it becomes radical (which refers to the roots of the matter) then it will arouse the wrath of those who benefit from the particular inequitable status quo. It could expose them to harassment and worse in its concern for justice, for an equitable distribution of wealth, in its call for the eradication of corruption, for an end to the abuse of power, the need to empower the powerless. And so when you work for a more just, participatory and sustainable society whose members share in crucial decision-making about the issues that are important for their lives, that is when you hear the cry, "Don't mix religion with politics!"

Tutu implied that religion and politics cannot be separated provided they are not misused, but a problem arises when people are oppressed by using scriptural teaching. In this regard religion and politics do not mix because God is not the oppressor but the liberator. The inequalities between blacks and whites caused tensions that led to revolt in South Africa. The history of conflict between blacks and whites in South Africa did not begin when the Nationalist Party came to power in 1948. Saunders (n.d:32) describes the historical background of black people who had resisted white supremacy as early as 1850.

That Africans long and bitterly resisted white advance on the Cape's eastern frontiers is well known. Historians have spoken of a hundred years of war between white and black on that frontier, and recently some have argued that this history of resistance was an important factor in the origins of African nationalism in South Africa. Recognition of the crucial importance of this long resistance has been based on detailed studies of

its earlier phases. The later phases, from cattle-killing (1857) onwards, have been relatively neglected, and some have remained almost totally unexplored. There exists no full-scale study of the Cape-Xhosa war of 1877-78, the last attempt by an African group on the Cape eastern frontier, the Gcaleka, to escape having white rule thrust upon it...

Beinart and Bundy (1987:109) discussed another issue of revolt by blacks against the government as follows:

In 1880, both Mhlonhlo and Mditshwa, the two Mpondomise chiefs, rebelled against the Cape colonial government, which had recently annexed their land. The Mpondomise revolt was not in itself a serious threat to colonial power, for both chiefdoms were small. Yet it came at the time when colonial forces, stretched thinly over a wide expanse of the recently annexed Transkeian Territories, were attempting to subdue a series of African rebellions. The revolt was heralded by the killing of Hamilton Hope, magistrate at Qumbu and two junior officials.

Saunders, Beinart and Bundy portrayed conflict between whites and blacks regarding land in the mid nineteenth century. This indicates that the Pondo revolt of 1960 was not influenced by current politics, but that a revolt by the Xhosa nation, with the intention of protecting their land, had already occurred more than a century earlier.

Though the 1960s represented the pinnacle of black revolts throughout South Africa, in 1919 and 1960 there were massacres of Africans besides those of Sharpeville, Langa, Nyanga and Pondoland. Edgar (1977:1) describes one of the massacres caused by Mgijima's resistance in 1921 that led to the Bulhoek massacre:

On May 24, 1921, nearly two hundred members of Enoch Mgijima's Israelites sect were massacred in a brief, fierce clash with a contingent of South African police at Bulhoek, a rural African location situated about twenty-five miles from Queenstown. The massacre was the eventual outcome of a lengthy confrontation between European authorities and the Israelites, who had been encamped at Ntabelanga, their Holy City, fervently awaiting an approaching millennium. For well over a year, the authorities, first on a local and then on a national level, had laboriously negotiated with the Israelites hoping to persuade the sect to move peacefully off land which the government said it was illegally occupying. Finally, after all attempts at negotiation had failed, it had dispatched a

police force to remove the Israelites, who had courageously but futilely resisted them.

Edgar shows how important the sense of belonging was to the Israelites; the issue was the question of land and to whom it belonged. Villa-Vicencio and De Gruchy (1994:210) quote Mazamisa's understanding of land by virtue of being an African. He articulated Brueggemann's understanding of this issue as follows:

The land problem in South Africa is not only a political, economical and emotional reality; it is also an ethical issue of significance. The core issue involved is grounded in a universal reality articulated by Walter Brueggemann: "The sense of being lost, displaced, and homeless is pervasive in contemporary culture. The yearning to belong somewhere, to have a home, to be in a safe place is a deep and moving pursuit. Loss of place and yearning for place are dominant images".

The issue of belonging can also be seen in Zeerust, Sekhukhuneland, Paarl, Langa and Sharpeville, Pondoland and other parts of the world that experienced clashes over land dispossession.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

In conclusion, 1960 was a year of uprising by blacks in South Africa and Africa as a whole, in which the black people of South Africa strove to be recognized as human beings created in the image of God, in spite of the colour of their skin. The next chapter will focus on the real causes of the revolt between 1960 and 1963.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will discuss the factors that led to the revolt from 1960 to 1963. It will also consider the following: The genealogy of the Pondo kingship; The Bunga or United Transkei Territorial General Council (UTTGC); The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951; The impact of the Rehabilitation Scheme on the Pondo people; Tax and Dipping; the Pass Law Act of 1952 and the Bantu Education Act of 1953.

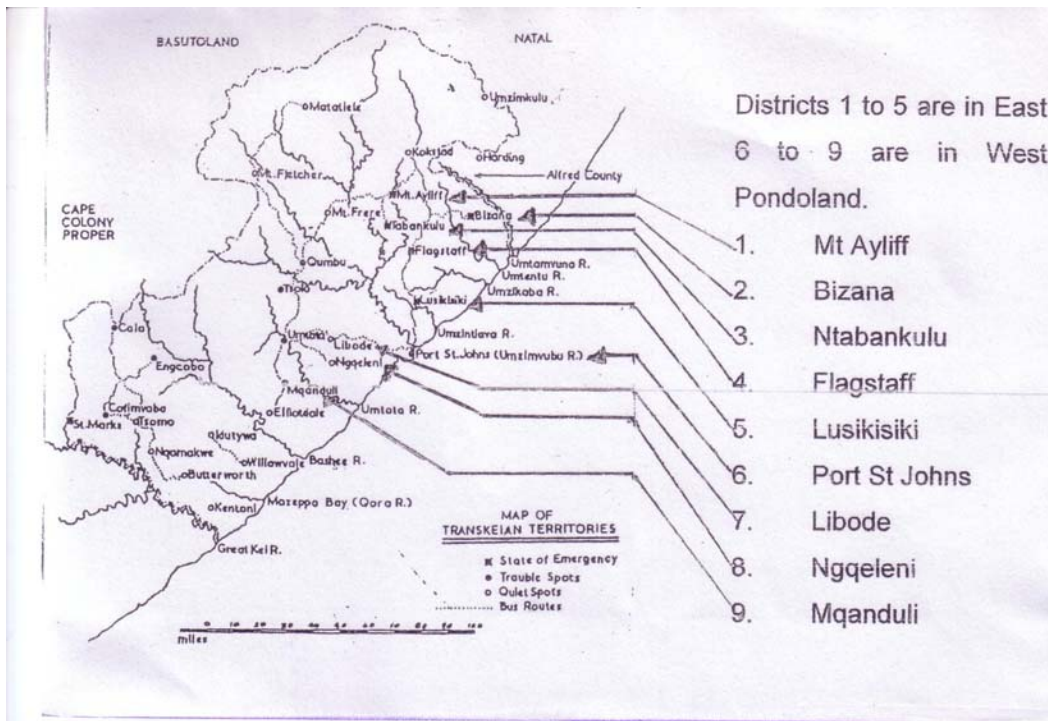
### **3.2 FACTORS THAT LED TO THE PONDO REVOLT OF 1960-1963**

Pondoland is one of the South African Reserves found in the Eastern Cape Province (then known as Transkei). Due to conflict between the sons of Paramount Chief, Faku, it was initially divided into two sections, eastern and western Pondoland. Eastern Pondoland consisted of five districts, Flagstaff, Bizana, Tabankulu, Mt Ayliff and Lusikisiki and western Pondoland consisted of four districts, Port St Johns, Libode, Ngqeleni and Mqanduli.

Davenport (1977:57) describes the cause of the division in Pondoland as follows:

The Mpondo, who stayed out of the wars with the Cape altogether, were divided into an eastern and a western branch. This happened when Faku tried to avoid a conflict between Ndamase, his right-hand son and commander of his armies, and the heir of his great wife, Mqikela. He sent the former west across the Umzimvubu and allowed him considerable independence. The split lasted because Mqikela was unable, owing to the opposition of other chiefs, to restore the unity of the chiefdom round his own great place at Qaukeni.





**FIGURE NO 1. THE DISTRICTS OF EASTERN AND WESTERN PONDOLAND (MAP TAKEN FROM TUROK, N.D:1)**

Mr. C.K. Gxabu (Personal interview, 23 April 2002, Flagstaff) reveals the real cause of the Pondo revolt. The interview was verbatim, translated literally into English from Xhosa (See the primary source in appendix "A": it reveals the real cause of the Pondo revolt):

Faku the King had two sons: Mqikela and Ndamase

Mqikela was born in 1860, he was the elder son of the great wife. This implied that he was the heir since his mother was from royal family, and according to Pondo custom or tradition. The heir is the only one who inherits his father's throne (ubukhosi). Ndamase was the elder son of Faku from the first wife who was not from the royal family and that meant he had no right to inherit his father's throne.

These two sons of Faku, Mqikela and Ndamase had conflict about the leadership or the inheritance of their father's wealth. Since Pondoland was divided into two, the west and the east. Faku send Ndamase to west and gave him authority and independence to rule those Pondos in the west. This implied that Ndamase was the chief of the west. Mqikela the rightful heir remained in the east with the intention that when his father died he

would take over as a rightful heir of the throne. Indeed when his father died he took over as the chief of the Pondos in the east. Mqikela married Sarili the daughter of Gcaleka. Sarili was from the royal family and that meant her elder son would be the heir of his father's throne. Unfortunately Mqikela died in 1887 (27 years old) and he had no son to inherit his throne. And the question was, who would be the chief?

MaSarili had no choice but to adopt Sigcau who inherited the throne. Sigcau died in 1905 and by then he had a son Marelane who was 15 years old. Another wife of Mqikela had a son, Mswakeli but unfortunately her mother was not from the royal family and that deprived him the rights to inherit his father's throne. Mhlangaso was asked to take over on behalf of Marelane until he becomes matured. Mhlangaso was vigilant and not co-operative and he was exiled from Pondoland. Marelane died in 1921 and his half brother (Mswakeli) took over because Marelane's three sons Mandlonke the rightful heir to the throne and his two half brothers Nelson Sigcau and Botha Sigcau were still too young to take over. Mswakeli died in 1934 and Mandlonke the rightful heir took over his father's throne. Mandlonke committed suicide and he had no son.

Marelane's son from the elder wife Nelson Sigcau was supposed to be the chief and not Botha because he was younger than Nelson. There was a quarrel amongst the Pondos on who would be the chief. The Governor-General had to interfere and Botha Sigcau was appointed as the Paramount Chief instead of Nelson Sigcau and that was the beginning of the quarrel among the Pondos, and that led to the Pondo revolt from 1960 to 1963.



**FIGURE NO 2. KING SIGCAU AND HIS SON KING MARELANE OF EAST PONDOLAND. ( PICTURES TAKEN FROM W. CINGO, N.D:10 AND 26)**

Before the imposition of Bantu Authorities by the Nationalist government, the Pondo people enjoyed confidence in their kings, chiefs and headmen. They strongly believed in a dynasty. Interfering with kings meant a total disaster that sometimes led to a civil war.

Turok (n.d:9) comments on the Pondos' understanding of their kings:

The Pondo people are more amenable to rule by hereditary chiefs than other less unified tribes and less likely therefore to refuse to accept their dictates without good reason, provided - and here lies the crux of the matter, such chiefs or leaders are genuinely representatives of the people... it is to be regretted that the Government has continued to insist on upholding the appointment of chiefs and headmen arbitrarily chosen by themselves rather than elected by the people concerned in a democratic fashion.

Turok's assessment that Pondos accepted hereditary chiefdoms is correct. This is a traditional African structure of authority in all ethnic groups. It seems that there was a conflict in the house of Faku, and that this affected the Pondos. It was caused by government's interference in Pondo social life and politics. According to Mr. Gxabu (Personal interview, 23 April 2002), when King Marelane died he left his sons Mandlonke his heir, and his two half brothers Nelson and Botha Sigcau. According to Pondo custom the heir is supposed to be the first son of the wife whose lobola was paid by the clan or the people.

Mandlonke committed suicide and had no son to succeed him. This uncertainty signalled the beginning of conflict among the Pondo people. The majority of them chose Nelson Sigcau to succeed Mandlonke, but the government ignored the people's choice and chose Botha Sigcau who was pro-government. Victor Poto influenced the Governor-General regarding Botha Sigcau; a primary source<sup>1</sup> reveals how the Governor-General chose Botha instead of Nelson:

The late chief, Mandlonke, died in 1938 and after his death two rival claimants, Nelson Sigcau and Botha Sigcau, appeared, and each of them claimed both the chieftainship and the property. After instituting an enquiry into the rival claims to the chieftainship, the Governor-General appointed

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<sup>1</sup> CMT 3/1643, REF C2/123-C2/123, VOL 1315, Native Appeal Case (R.18. A.D. ,September 29, October 30, 1943, before the full bench. Sigcau vs. Sigcau

Botha Paramount Chief of Eastern Pondoland in terms of section twenty-three of Act 38 of 1927 and the validity of that appointment was not in question. Subsequent to his appointment as Paramount Chief, Botha took possession of that portion of the property of the late Chief Mandlonke, which had previously belonged to the Great House of the previous Chief Marelane. Thereafter Nelson instituted an action against Botha in which he claimed delivery of the property an account of Botha's dealing with it. The trial court gave judgment for the Defendant and against that decision the Plaintiff appealed.

Government interference with Pondo customs and tradition, by forcefully installing Botha Sigcau instead of Nelson the rightful heir, caused tension among the Pondo people, and this among other factors led to the 1960 revolt. Mbeki (1964:118) describes the South African government's objectives in installing Botha Sigcau instead of Nelson as follows:

Then the Nationalist government moved in to invade the area with its new policies, and from the very start it went wrong, making the serious mistake of choosing as the arch-champion of Bantu Authorities chief Botha Sigcau, a man already discredited in the eyes of his people. As far back as 1939, when the choice had had to be made of a successor to the Paramount Chief of East Pondoland the government of the day had picked on Chief Botha Sigcau in preference to his half-brother Nelson, who had been regarded by many as the rightful heir. The use of Chief Botha by the Nationalists to introduce Bantu Authorities, in the face of popular opposition to his chieftainship, was bound to provoke widespread resentment.

On the other hand, Beinart (1982:160) describes the importance of the heir in Pondoland as follows:

Botha, Marelane's eldest son by his first wife and a known government supporter, received the backing of the administration and also some of the leading chiefs and councillors, such as Poto. But Botha's opponents argued that according to Mpondo custom, the eldest son of the first wife of the paramount could never succeed. The large mass of the people threw their support behind Nelson, who claimed to be son of one of the qadi (support) house of Marelane's great wife. He was put forward as a candidate who would be far more sensitive to popular opinion and less co-operative with the administration. After holding a commission of enquiry, the administration installed Botha under an armed guard. Nelson's supporters responded by boycotting the installation. When it became clear that violence would produce no result, they took Nelson's claim to the Supreme Court in 1942. (The case was lost.) The political process

surrounding the chieftaincy again came to the fore when a mass revolt against the state's rehabilitation and Bantu Authorities programmes was organized in Eastern Pondoland in 1960.

Gwebizilwane Sigcau (Personal interview, 2002.04.17, Flagstaff) the son of Chief Vukayibambe of Ntlenzi, said that those who opposed the installation of Botha Sigcau, argued that the Nationalist Government had made a major mistake by appointing Chief Botha Sigcau as Paramount Chief. Mr. C.K. Gxabu (Personal interview, 2002.04.21, Flagstaff) added that the Nationalists knew very well that Botha was discredited in the eyes of his people because he was pro-government. It seemed that the objective of the Nationalist government in appointing him instead of Nelson was to divide the Pondo people into two camps, which they ultimately did.

Most Pondos mobilized themselves against the Paramount Chief Botha Sigcau, his chiefs, headmen and the government. They questioned his integrity and ignored whatever he said. According to some Pondo people Nelson Sigcau was the rightful heir to the throne. Unlike his half brother Botha Sigcau, Nelson Sigcau was favoured by most Pondos for his stance against the policies of the Nationalist government.

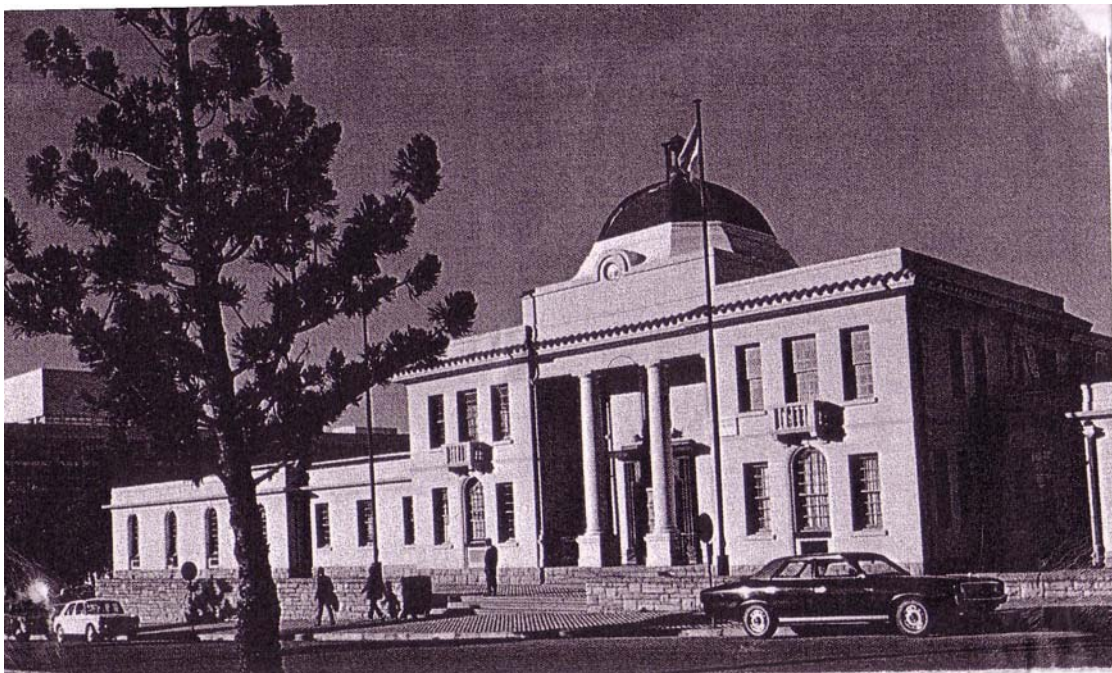
The Bantu Authorities Act was introduced by the Nationalist government in 1957 but it was not effective since the Pondos and others revolted against it. Mr. C.K. Gxabu (Personal interview, 2002.04.21, Flagstaff) stated that the real causes of the Pondo revolt were the following: Bunga (UTTGC), the Bantu Authorities Act (iinqila), Rehabilitation scheme (ucando), Tax and Dipping, the Bantu Education Act and the Pass Law (Dompas).

Carter et al (1967:92) describe the establishment of the Bunga and its objectives as follows:

The Bunga, or, as it was more officially termed, the United Transkeian Territories General Council (UTTGC) was the major platform for self-expression in the Transkei from its establishment in 1931 until it transformed itself into the Transkeian Territorial General Authority in



1956. Its forerunner was the Transkeian Territories General Council (TTGC). This latter body, first established in 1894, as noted, for the four districts of Butterworth, Idutywa, Nqamakwe and Tsomo, gradually expanded with the extension of the Bunga system to include representatives from the new local district councils. Both councils, the TTGC and the UTTGC, were quasi-popular bodies, but both were chaired and directed by White officials. Neither ever had more than advisory powers. Both discussed the distribution of a small budget, consisting of funds raised with the Transkei to meet their limited local responsibilities. An overwhelming proportion of the considerations in the two councils focused on purely local and practical issues like cattle dipping to combat disease, the building of minor roads, and markets. Unless the government specifically asked for an opinion, the councils were not supposed to concern themselves with political matters.



**FIGURE 3. THE BUNGA BUILDING AT UMTATA BEFORE IT WAS RESTRUCTURED. (PICTURE TAKEN FROM LAURENCE, 1976:41)**

In South Africa most of the Black people and some few Whites conceived Parliament as an oppressive structure, because it denied Black majority of South Africans their democratic rights. Hence on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1957 Luthuli (n.d:34) wrote a letter to the Prime Minister on behalf of the ANC and commented as follows:

The denial to the African people of the democratic channels of expression and participation in the government of the country has accentuated the stress and strains to which they are subjected. My people have come to view with alarm every new session of parliament because it has meant the passing of more oppressive discriminatory legislation there. (Cf. South African Studies 3; this is what appears in the bibliography because the article has no author.)

The Pondos and the Tembus regarded the Bunga as a symbol of oppression because it had accepted the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951. The United Transkei Territorial General Council (UTTGC) was effectively ruled by the magistrates because any resolutions taken by it were not binding unless approved by the Nationalist government, which depended entirely on the advice of the chief magistrate and district magistrates. The United Transkei Territorial General Council was understood by the people of Transkei to be a place of discussion, where kings, chiefs, headmen and other respected members of the community met to discuss the future of all the people of Transkei. The Xhosa nickname "IBunga" meant a place of discussion or a caucus.

One of the main objectives of the UTTGC was to protect Blacks as far as their voting rights were concerned, e.g. in 1926 and 1936 when the Prime Minister J.B.M Hertzog, removed Blacks from the common roll in the Cape. Some members of the parliament accepted the bill of 1926, but Professor Carter and others opposed the bill as undemocratic. Laurence (1976:24) describes Carter's concern regarding the undemocratic situation in the Bunga meeting:

Natives are in a majority compared with Europeans. This union government is known as a democracy. If that is true it is strange that we should be represented by three members when Europeans are represented by 150. That would never satisfy the natives of South Africa.

The Bunga registered its strong protest against Hertzog's Parliamentary decision. It insisted that Blacks should be represented by Blacks in parliament. As early as 1944 Verwoerd insisted that the UTTGC should accept "self-government" (umaziphathe) in the Transkei but some members of the Bunga rejected his

proposal. In 1951 the government introduced the Bantu Authorities Act. This act was strongly rejected in 1952 by some members of the Bunga and there was a split decision regarding this matter. Unfortunately, when Kaizer Daliwonga Matanzima joined the Bunga in 1955 he used his status as Paramount Chief of the migrant Tembu to persuade some members of the Bunga to adopt the Act on behalf of all the people of Transkei without consulting them.

The Report of the Departmental Committee of Enquiry<sup>2</sup> in Pondoland describes how the Bantu Authorities Act came about in Transkei:

In 1931 the Pondo General Council amalgamated with the Transkeian General Council under the name of the "United Transkei Territories General Council". In 1951 (Act No 68 of 1951) the Bantu Authorities Act was passed. This Act was not intended for the Transkei because it did not make provision for the integration of the General Council system and also not for the multiplicity of Tribes and the intermingling of certain tribes in certain areas. The United Transkeian Territories General Council, shortly after that time, passed a resolution asking that the Act should not be applied to the Transkei, and the minister gave the assurance that it was not intended for the Transkei. However, in 1955 there were numbers of motions on the agenda of the United Transkeian Territorial General Council asking for the application of the Bantu Authorities system, and eventually an all-embracing motion - asking for the application of the Bantu Authorities system to the Transkei - was carried unanimously. At the 1955 session, the General Council appointed a Recess Committee to investigate ways and means to incorporate the General Council system into the Bantu Authorities system. The report of this committee was considered at a special meeting of the United Transkeian Territories General Council in the same year and, with minor amendments, was accepted.

In 1963 the Bunga accepted the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951. This caused difficulties for the kings, chiefs and headmen who were the members of the Bunga, which led to a chaotic situation in Transkei. After the adoption of the Bantu Authorities Act, the UTTGC or Bunga was restructured and renamed the Transkei Territorial Authority (TTA) under the leadership of Botha Sigcau.

Bellwood (1964:104) commented as follows about Botha.

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<sup>2</sup> CMT 3/1472, REF H2/Q, VOL 709, Report of the Departmental Committee of Enquiry into Unrest in Eastern Pondoland



Paramount Chief Botha Sigcau, of Eastern Pondoland, who, as we have seen, is an enigmatic figure at the present stage of Transkeian politics, became the first African chairman of the Territorial Authority in 1959. He was succeeded in 1961 by Senior Tribal Chief Kaizer Matanzima, of Emigrant Tembuland. Early in that year the Territorial Authority decided to approach the South African government to obtain self-government for the Transkei.



: "Bunga" building at Umtata being enlarged to accommodate the 109-member  
Transkeian Legislative Assembly

**FIGURE 4. THE BUNGA BUILDING UNDER CONSTRUCTION AFTER THE BUNGA OFFICIALLY ADOPTED THE POLICY OF "SELF-GOVERNANCE" AND WAS RENAMED THE TRANSKEI TERRITORIAL AUTHORITY (TTA). (PICTURE TAKEN FROM BELLWOOD, 1964:32)**

Chief Kaizer Matanzima taking the oath. Administering it (in robes) is the chairman of the Assembly, Mr. O. J. Busakwe



**FIGURE 5: CHIEF KAIZER MATANZIMA TAKING THE OATH. ADMINISTERING IT (IN ROBES) IS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSEMBLY, MR. O.J. BUSAKWE (PICTURE TAKEN FROM BELLWOOD, 1964: 32).**

Laurence (1976:30) observed regarding the Transkei Territorial Authority: “The first infant Bantustan was conceived, if not born - and over the next 20 years it was to grow into Adulthood first with the attainment of ‘self government’ in 1963 and then with the granting of Independence in 1976”.

There was uproar in the whole of Transkei when the news broke out that the Bunga members had adopted the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 on behalf of all the people of Transkei, knowing very well that the latter opposed it. Kings such as Sabata Dalidyabo of the Tembu tribe were furious about the adoption of the Act and his clan objected to it. This opposition caused civil war amongst the Tembus.

Laurence (1976:34) describes Tembu resistance to the Bantu Authorities system:

Tembuland, an important Transkei district provided the initial resistance to the introduction of the system under Proclamation 180 of 1956. Tribesmen there objected to the prescribed division of Tembuland into three areas - Bonvanaland, Tembuland and Emigrant Tembuland. As early as 1957 the Tembus appointed a delegation to journey to Pretoria to state their objection to Bantu Authorities. According to the delegates, they were told they were free to reject the system but if they did so the price would be withdrawal of educational and social services provided by the central South African government... but four members of the delegation were later deported from the area for allegedly causing dissension in the tribe and opposing government proposals for the welfare of the people.

In spite of the intimidation by the government, the Pondos were determined to fight hard to protect their land. The Pondos of both East and West Pondoland insisted that their members should be withdrawn from the Bunga meetings. In the King's palace the members of the Bunga and the King gathered and announced the final decision (kugqityiwe) of the White government interested in dispossessing them of their land. Whatever the king and the chief said was not taken seriously because they were regarded as government puppets.

Hence Pondos from West and East Pondoland started to disassociate themselves from the king's meetings and held their own gatherings on the mountains and hills to express their dissatisfaction with the decisions taken by IBunga. These gatherings were inclusive because the Kings and chiefs were welcome to attend. But they did not do so since they were under the authority of the government; for them joining "unofficial" gatherings meant losing their status and salaries. Botha Sigcau's salary was increased from 100 pounds per annum to 500 pounds because he accepted the new system. Most of the Pondo people consequently lost any remaining confidence in him.

Copelyn (1974:19-20) describes the Pondos' grievances about the leadership of Botha Sigcau and his chiefs thus:

In Eastern Pondoland, Paramount Chief Botha Sigcau had no such prestige. He was regarded by many Mpondo as a usurper. Although he

had been in power since 1938, and had officially been “reconciled” with the contesting party, his rule was still unpopular in 1960. The Mpondo were most determined to have him removed from the Paramountcy. Further, the newly acquired powers of the chiefs and headmen were badly abused in Eastern Pondoland. Among other things, chiefs began charging a fee for allocating land, “introducing” their subjects to the Native Commissioner, and allowing grass to be cut for thatching. There were suggestions of corruption in the chief’s courts and on school boards.

The corruption amongst the Paramount Chief, chiefs and headmen was one of the reasons for the revolt in Pondoland.

The Report of the Departmental Committee of Enquiry<sup>3</sup> discusses the Pondos’ concerns regarding corruption:

The complaint amongst the majority is that the chief has sold them and their land to the government. A just cause for complaint is that the chief has gathered around him at the Great Place a number of young men as councillors who abuse their positions, treat the ordinary people with disrespect, practice bribery and corruption and generally create an atmosphere at the Great Place, which is foreign to the Pondo and detrimental to the administration. There is evidence that one of the main culprits in this respect is the Chief’s Secretary Saul Ndzumo who is also Secretary of the Qaukeni Tribal authority. A further complaint in which there is substance is that many of the chief’s relatives have been appointed as Headmen and Sub-Chief. While this is customary, the scale on which these appointments have been made is too large in the view of the people.

These were some of the issues that led the Pondo people to withdraw from the gatherings that were called by the Paramount Chief at the Great Place. Their own meetings were held in different towns and locations in Pondoland. The Pondos from Lusikisiki to Port St Johns met at Rode (Taweni) under the leadership of Tony and Wanna Johnson, and the Pondos from Bizana met at Mt Nongqulwana. The main objectives of these gatherings were to discuss the withdrawal of the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951; representation in the Republic’s

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<sup>3</sup> CMT 3/1472, VOL 709, REF H2/Q. Report of the Departmental Committee of Enquiry into Unrest in Eastern Pondoland.

Parliament; relief from the increased taxes and pass laws that hampered free movement; and the removal of Paramount Chief Botha Sigcau.

One may ask why the Pondos chose the mountains, of all places. This was because mountains possessed a special significance in the life of Jewish, Christian and African religions or traditions. Jews, Christians and Africans believe that God dwells in the mountains, and for them mountains were and are places of prayer, worship, sacrifice, and covenant (cf. Gen 8:4; 22:1-14 and Exodus 3:1-12; 24:9-18); hence the Temple was built on Mt Zion. God spoke to Moses on various occasions from the mountains, and prophets spoke to God from them. For many religious people mountains were places of grievance worship, praise-giving, sacrifices etc. Christ taught his disciples to spend time with God on the mountains. When Christ was in despair he went to the mountain and spoke to God. (cf. Mt 17:1-5).

The African concept of a mountain is similar from the Jewish and Christian concepts. Africans understood mountains not only to be places of worship and praise, but also as places for performing rituals such as circumcision. They also regarded mountains as their forts during times of war. Hence the Pondos chose the mountains to hide from the government forces. The Pondos were not the first tribe to revolt against white supremacy using a mountain as their base. In 1921 the Israelite movement under the leadership of Enoch Mgijima had used Ntabelanga mountain for this purpose.

### **3.3 THE BANTU AUTHORITIES ACT OF 1951**

When the Nationalist government came to power in 1948, it intensified the policy of apartheid throughout South Africa. The person who was behind and supervised the application of this policy was Dr H.F. Verwoerd, who became the Minister of Native Affairs in October 1950. In 1951 he introduced and enforced

the Bantu Authorities Act in rural areas or reserves in South Africa. His main objective was to abolish the Natives Representative Council (NRC). The NRC was an advisory body whose members came from all over South Africa. It was established by General Hertzog, in order to give black people the right to voice their grievances. Verwoerd's objective in implementing the Bantu Authorities Act was to endorse Hertzog's policy of removing black people from the common roll in Cape Town. Laurence (1976:27) describes Verwoerd's view:

But if blacks hoped that scrapping the NRC would lead to direct representation in parliament – which remained the fundamental objective of black political aspirations – Verwoerd quickly disillusioned them. Only six weeks after becoming Minister of Native Affairs, he summoned the council in order to explain his policy to it. His statement was a classic exposition of apartheid theory. He told the councillors there could be no question of black and white developing together within the same area or society. That could merely precipitate a struggle for domination in which blacks would come off second best for the foreseeable future – with consequent black resentment and resistance, which augured ill for the future of both peoples. Rather than risk arousing an “increasing sense of resentment and revenge” and a “terrific clash of interest”, it would be better for the two people to develop separately or apart. That was the course he was determined to pursue. The present government believes in the domination of the whites in their own areas, but it likewise believes in the domination of the Bantu in their own areas, he told the council.

The ideology of Verwoerd was rejected by most Africans in the reserves, and only a few adopted the idea for their own benefit. Lucas Mangope in Bophuthatswana, Kaizer Daliwonga Matanzima in Transkei, and Botha Sigcau in the Eastern Pondoland regarded the Bantu Authorities Act as a golden opportunity for “nation building and independence”. Unfortunately the idea of independence was rejected by the majority of Africans in the reserves. Most African leaders, such as Mandela, stated categorically that they had no confidence in the Act; they held the strong belief that their aspirations could never be realized within the narrow confines of the reserves.

*The New Age*<sup>4</sup> reported as follows about Africans' unity in this respect:

Bantu Authorities is dying...Slowly but surely this fraud of "self-governance" for the African people is being smashed by peasants in widely separated areas... it is being exposed in all its nakedness for what it really is: the extension of the rule of the sjambok to the rural areas. In spite of long terms of imprisonment, deportations, threat and intimidation, the people are determined not to allow this system to supplant the traditional tribal democracy - a form of democracy which has existed for centuries in which all tribesmen decide on matters affecting their tribe.

Theologians such as Beyers Naude, Ben Marais of the DRC, Bishops Ambrose Reeves, Geoffrey Hare Clayton and Desmond Tutu of the Anglican Church, the Rev Allan Boesak and others emphasized the fact that South Africa should be understood as a single whole, as an entity, and demanded representation in the central authority, Parliament.

Hence Walshe (1983:41) writes as follows about the stance of the church in South Africa as far as the community was concerned:

South Africa was "one community", a variety of people brought together by the providence of God working in history. Within this community, the value and the great dignity of each person had to be fully respected. In practice this meant ending this system of migratory labour, maintaining stable family life, initiating a colour-blind franchise and repealing statutes like the Mixed Marriages Act and the Group Areas Act, which destroyed free association and the growth of human fellowship.

The church was completely opposed to the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 because it knew very well that its intention was to disorganize the social structure in the reserves. Hammond-Tooke (1975:202) describes the irony of this Act:

It was pointed out by the Government spokesmen that sixty years of the council system had left the reserves underdeveloped and had failed to harness the minds and energies of the African peoples to the task of making the transition from a subsistence economy to an economically viable area. The reason for this, they said, was firstly, that the council system was foreign to the "genius" of Bantu government and, secondly, that the people had been spoon-fed by government officials. Give them more direct participation, make them responsible, financially and otherwise, and their attitude would undergo an immediate change. They

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<sup>4</sup> Thursday, 1 December 1960, p 1, Vol 7 No. 7

were perhaps right in their diagnosis of paternalism: it is much less certain that they were wise in basing the new system on the chieftainship.

A report concerning the National Crisis in Pondoland<sup>5</sup> reveals further facts that caused the Pondos to reject the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951:

Before the new law was implemented, tribal custom and law were influenced by the principle that the chief was not a dictator. He could not take a decision without consulting his people, or without their consent. Out of this fundamental democratic tradition developed tribal courts of a highly democratic nature. Every adult male tribesman had the right to participate in the proceedings and to assist in the determination of decisions and judgments. Consequently the members of the tribe enjoyed equal justice. Every authority acknowledges that as a result of this system there prevailed a high degree of justice, order and harmony within the tribe. After Bantu Authorities were imposed upon the people, the Paramount Chief, in defiance of Pondo tradition, law and custom, was turned into a DICTATORIAL RULER, OVERNIGHT THE CHERISHED AND ESSENTIAL RIGHTS OF THE PONDOS WERE ABOLISHED. The people were excluded from the governing bodies and the tribal courts. The Paramount Chief was told to choose court councillors who would not question Nationalist policy. The functions of the chiefs and the councillors are now those of the Nationalist stooges, individual merit and understanding of Pondo law now being of minor importance. For the first time in the Pondo history bribery has become a feature of court procedure, and the whole new system is wide open to corruption.

The main objective of the Nationalist government in promulgating the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 was not to empower the black people in the reserves, as Hammond-Tooke has already demonstrated, but to reduce the number of people dependent on small-scale farming as a livelihood. To create a ruling aristocracy of hiring chiefs; to remove from the land all those who had no arable allotments, and place them in special settlements consisting of the landless and dispossessed; to foster the growth of a middle class of professional men and traders' and lastly to cause a split amongst the Pondos. Migrant labour was one of the results.

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<sup>5</sup> CMT 3/1478, REF 42/4-48/8/8, Vol 714, National Crisis in Pondoland: "These are facts, which the government is endeavouring to hide behind its iron curtain of secrecy".

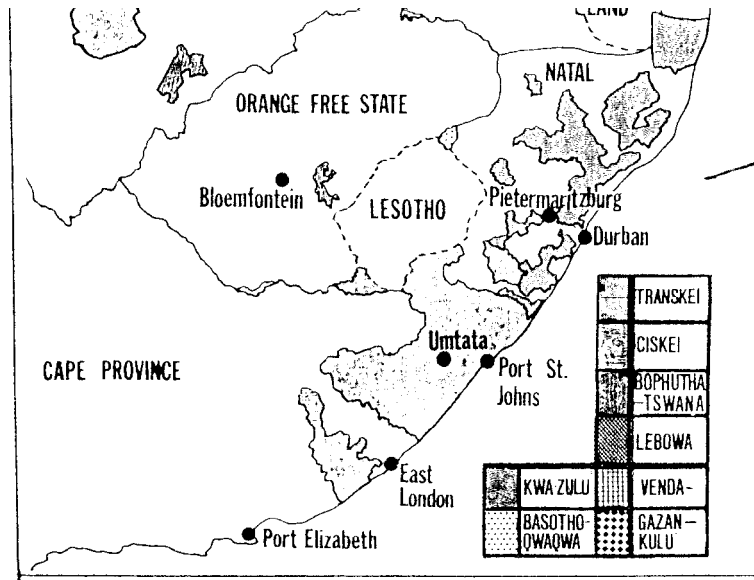


The implementation of this Act was a thorn in the flesh for all South African homelands. It led Pondos and Tembus in Transkei, Pedis in Sekhukhuneland, Sothos in Qwaqwa, Zulus in Nongoma and Tswanas in Zeerust to mobilize themselves to revolt against any unpopular legislation, which would be detrimental to their future. Davenport (1977:347) describes the objectives of the Nationalist Government as follows:

After the accession of the Nationalist Party to power, a great deal of the peasant resistance which followed, and which increased in intensity between 1957 and 1964, resulted from opposition to unpopular legislation introduced after 1948. At the centre of the picture was the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, which was an attempt to restructure the government of the reserves on more traditional lines, but in practice came to mean the establishment of a system of indirect rule through the medium of subservient and sometimes well-rewarded chiefs, chosen for their preparedness to enforce government policy at the expense of their own popularity. The outcomes of the Bantu Authorities Act were as follows:

### **3.3.1 THE OUTCOMES OF THE BANTU AUTHORITIES ACT**

When one takes into consideration Davenport's description of this Act, one can see that the main objective of the Nationalist government was to plant a poisonous seed that would grow into conflict in the homelands between the kings and their people, which as noted earlier, indeed happened. Some kings, chiefs and headmen supported the plan of the Nationalist government; though others refused to betray their people, this still created conflict amongst South Africans themselves. One group that voiced its opposition to Bantu Authorities legislation comprised the Pedi (Northern Sotho) people in Sekhukhuneland. Outbreaks of resistance in Sekhukhuneland occurred in April 1957 when the Nationalist Government deported certain Pedi councillors to Natal. Arthur Phetedi Thulare and Godfrey Sekhukhune were deported for agitating against the rumoured deposition of their chief, Moroamoche Sekhukhune, who was completely opposed to the Tribal authorities.



**FIGURE 6. MAP ILLUSTRATING HOW SOUTH AFRICA WAS DIVIDED ACCORDING TO HOMELANDS. (PICTURE TAKEN FROM LAURENCE, 1976:266)**

In 1958 large sections of the Ba-Pedi tribe of Sekhukhuneland resisted the Bantu Authorities system, which led to the banishment of chief Moroamoche and his councillors. Kgobalela Sekhukhune, who supported the Nationalist government policy, was appointed in the place of Moroamoche, against the will of the Pedi people, who refused to cooperate. This led to riots in May 1958 because they felt that the government had interfered in their social-political life. 338 Africans were arrested and some tribesmen received life and even death sentences for objecting to the Bantu Authorities. According to Mbeki (1964:115) eleven heroes of the Pedis in Sekhukhuneland, were sentenced to death:

1. Madinoge Morwamoele [the chieftainess]
2. John Makopole Kgolane
3. Jack Mogase Mariri
4. Johannes Machele Ngwako
5. Klaas Marweshe Mabinane
6. James Kgologgi Mahlanguame
7. James Monompane Motubatse
8. Frans Morewane Tswaledi
9. Jim Kgoro Makgoleng
10. Sebilo Mahlako
11. Jim Makalapeng Morewane

In April 1957 Chief Moila of the Batswana tribe was also deposed for refusing to support the Bantu Authorities system, which brought about violence in his homeland of Hurutshe (then Western Transvaal). Mbeki (1964:113) describes the deposing of Moila:

In the Marico district, adjoining the Bechuanaland border, is the Bafurutse reserve of Linokana. The recognized senior chief was Abraham Moila. He had already been in bad odour with the authorities in 1956 for his unwillingness to sign the Bantu Authorities Act. In March 1957 he was summoned to the office of the commissioner in Zeerust and told to instruct the women of his tribe to take out passbooks. He simply conveyed the instructions. In April, the issuing unit arrived, but only 76 women took books. Three days later the commissioner arrived in the royal village and summarily deposed the Chief, who was ordered into exile.

The Government attitude towards Moila irritated the people of Bafurutse. When the violence was over, the Nationalist government appointed Chief Lucas Mangope as the head of the Bantu Authorities at Bophuthatswana. This was part of the government strategy of divide and rule because not only Abraham Moila, but also Sabata Dalindyebo and Nelson Sigcau were marginalized or deposed. In 1962 there was unrest in Thembuland, because Chief Sabata Dalindyebo (of the then Transkei) and his people were totally opposed to the implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act. Hence Chief Kaizer Matanzima who was pro-Nationalist was installed, instead of Sabata Dalindyebo, the rightful heir to the throne. This on its own caused chaos amongst the Tembu.

As noted above Eastern Pondoland experienced the same problem when communication between the government and the Pondo people broke down in 1937 after Mandlonke committed suicide. As explained earlier, in 1939 the Nationalist government appointed Botha Sigcau to be the king instead of Nelson Sigcau. On several occasions the government used Botha Sigcau to enforce the rehabilitation scheme in Eastern Pondoland but they were unsuccessful. The Pondo people who supported Nelson felt that Botha was a sell-out and that he would betray them to the government by accepting policies that would be detrimental to them; hence they boycotted his installation as a king.

Mbeki (1964:119) describes the Pondos' vote of no confidence in Sigcau and their resistance to the government scheme as follows:

In September 1957, the Pondos of Bizana rejected Bantu Authorities, Bantu Education and the rehabilitation scheme at the meeting to which the peasants came in their thousands. They demanded that Botha Sigcau should publicly declare whether he was the head of the Pondo tribe or the boot-licker of Verwoerd, the then Minister of Native Affairs. Botha Sigcau left surreptitiously, and the meeting went out of control, ending in disorder and the widespread cry "Umasiziphathe uyakusebenza sifile" or "Bantu Authorities will operate over our dead bodies."

The Pondo people were prepared to take the law into their own hands, for the sake of protecting their children and themselves against so called "self-government," a structure that was regarded as detrimental to the future of the Pondos. Some leaders, such as Lucas Mangope, Kaizer Matanzima and Botha Sigcau, betrayed their people who were vocal about the unjust policies and were exiled, imprisoned for life or sentenced to death, and this led to the unrest, which took place in the late 1950s and early 1960s in many areas throughout South Africa.

### **3.4 THE IMPACT OF THE REHABILITATION SCHEME ON THE PONDO PEOPLE**

Mager (1999:72-73) defines the rehabilitation scheme as follows:

Rehabilitation - allegedly a "new era in Bantu history" - was introduced at the end of the Second World War in a bid to deal with the economic and social crisis of the reserves. It replaced the earlier betterment strategy for stock limitation (which had achieved little more than the shuffling of people and cattle) and attempted to provide a strategy for severe development. The scheme superimposed social engineering measures - including controlled land settlement, the establishment of peri-urban settlement for landless Africans permanently employed in industry, and the removal of "surplus population" from rural locations to land purchased by the Native Trust-on earlier less concerted plans for stock limitation, fencing, and contour ploughing. Underpinning rehabilitation was the attempt to ensure a steady supply of labor for an expanding industrial sector and to alleviate acute overcrowding. In the wake of wartime food shortages and the devastating droughts of the late 1940s, there was the added incentive of boosting agricultural productivity in the reserves. The mechanisms for its

implementation were the reduction of livestock, the confinement of cattle to specified grazing areas, and the removal of people into closer settlements. Boundaries between areas demarcated for human settlement, rational grazing camps, forestry areas, and water sources were to be separated by fences.

Rehabilitation represented one of the schemes that together crippled all the people in the reserves spiritually, emotionally and financially. The wealth of the people there was taken out of their hands immediately.

Though 1948 was a year of liberation for the minority, the white South Africans, on the other hand, it saw the beginning of the oppression of the majority of South Africans by the Nationalist government. The Nationalist government intensified the programme of land “rehabilitation”, “stabilization” and “betterment”. The Nationalists insisted that all African farmers must sell their cattle at very low prices or else cull them since they possessed insufficient land for grazing. This was an insult to the Pondos because they had owned enough land for grazing and planting in the pre-colonial era.

Rehabilitation and betterment created difficulties for the social life of the Pondo people because fencing was introduced, which restricted the old practice of free-range grazing and availability of pasture. Families were forced to live in close proximity, which caused disputes among neighbours. Another negative implication for the social life of the Pondo people was their removal from the vicinity of their ancestors’ graves and land. Redding (1996:564) describes the enforcement of the rehabilitation scheme thus:

Moreover, to enforce rehabilitation policies, state officials frequently used coercion, which, in turn, produced increasing hostility from many African farmers. Often, whole villages were punished with fines when anonymous individuals protested rehabilitation policies, for example by cutting fences. Families who resisted villagization caused magistrates to refuse to allocate new homestead sites in entire administrative areas. Those who balked at cattle culling found themselves unable to get government permits to move livestock between districts. Agricultural officers tried to bully people into complying with soil “stabilization” measures, such as contour ploughing and ridging, and alienated people to the point where some Xalanga residents told their magistrate that they “wanted nothing

that comes from the government.”... It may also have had the effect of building a greater sense of community in opposition to the state.

The inhabitants of rural areas were obviously the main victims of rehabilitation and stabilization. The Land Areas Act meant that 57 per cent of these people in the rural areas would be removed from the land of their forefathers and that over a third of their animals would be culled or removed from the area through sale to whites because there would not be sufficient land for grazing. Hence many had to travel to urban areas in search of employment. Copelyn (1974:11) records Verwoerd’s argument for the advantages of betterment as follows:

Since 1952... I have tried to adopt a different course, and that fits in with the institution of Bantu Authorities in terms of which the responsibility was thrown on to the Bantu himself. It fits in with his shouldering of burdens and the result will be that improvements can be brought about on a tremendously larger scale and thereafter they can be left in the hands of the Bantu himself, subject to some supervision. That means colossal savings and great expedition. In this process, also, care was taken that instead of what is called improvements or reclamation work, certain principles of stabilization came into the picture. That means that instead of intensive soil conservation works and the improvement of small areas, less intensive and more extensive work is done in a larger area by stabilizing against deterioration.

It seems that the main objective of government in introducing the rehabilitation scheme was to impoverish all the black people of South Africa, particularly those in rural areas. The government of the day knew very well that people in such areas were dependent entirely on land and livestock for their survival. But the government insisted the Pondos should cull their stock owing to insufficient land for pasturage in the reserves. It also went to the extent of instructing the Pondos to reduce their cultivation.

This statement is confirmed by Redding (1996:563-4):

Rehabilitation and betterment schemes were unpopular with African farmers. From the viewpoint of stockowners, cattle culling was their worst nightmare come true; the state was no longer satisfied merely to tax the cattle, it now proposed to kill them or force their sale at depressed prices. In many districts of the Transkei in the 1950s, up to 35-40 per cent of the

people had no access to arable land and so, for their agricultural income, they were entirely dependent on their livestock. Cattle-culling not only had economic consequences, but significant social ones as well: ...At the same time, fencing restricted the very old practice of free-range grazing, while limiting the total available grazing land, thus directly constraining the number of the livestock that could survive and the number of people who could survive as livestock-owners. Fencing also cost money, usually paid for by higher stock levies. Even for people who were only partly dependent on livestock for their livelihood (along with arable farming and remittances from labour migrants) these were serious economic blows.

This was one of the consequences that left Pondo men with no choice but to become migrant labourers in the mines. As far as the Nationalist government was concerned it had achieved its goal. The worst part of the situation was the fact that the Paramount Chief, Botha Sigcau, was pro-rehabilitation, which angered almost the whole Pondo nation. They felt that their king and chiefs had betrayed them by accepting bribes at their expense. Mbeki (1964:97-98) wrote about the government incentives to chiefs:

The government proceeds with its rehabilitation schemes, turning to Chiefs and offering to those whose areas will accept rehabilitation measures appropriate incentives: increased special stipends, increased land allotments, words of praise and places of honour, and, behind all, the right to continue as government appointed Chiefs. With these fruits of office dangling before them, the Chiefs often commit peasants to acceptance of the rehabilitation scheme without consulting them.

The Bantu Authorities and rehabilitation schemes spread like wildfire throughout the reserves. Mbeki described these two systems as an octopus that stretched its tentacles in other directions. This is accurate because Chief Cyprian Dinizulu of Zululand was also pro-rehabilitation. This made him unpopular, because the community of Nongoma resisted the scheme. Both the chief and the government also retaliated by denying the people of Nongoma the right to plough their arable allotments and forcefully removing them. In Ciskei people were also completely opposed to the betterment scheme because it was seen as a strategy to strip Africans of their resources. People who protested against rehabilitation were

punished with fines. Magistrates refused to allocate new homestead sites to those who protested rehabilitation.

When the land betterment (ucando) scheme was introduced the intention was to bring people together and fence them in. Pondo men and women felt that they were being physically, psychologically and emotionally abused because the government forced women and men to construct barbed wire fences that divided them into what was called Trust land (bringing Pondo people to live in close proximity), and to build dams for which they received no payment. If any person refused to cooperate he or she was charged with disobedience towards the authorities. Bantu Authorities Tribunals (iinqila) constituted special courts for this purpose. The Pondos began to disregard these Tribunals because they sided with the government. Mandela (1965:44) describes the objectives of rehabilitation as follows:

In point of fact, the real purpose of the scheme is to increase land hunger for the masses of the Peasants in the reserves and to impoverish them. The main objective is to create a huge army of migrant labourers, domiciled in rural locations in the reserves far away from the cities. Through the implementation of the scheme it is hoped that in course of time the inhabitants of the reserves will be uprooted and completely severed from their land, cattle, and sheep, to depend for their livelihood entirely on wage earnings. By enclosing them in the compound at the centres of work and housing them in rural locations when they return home, it is hoped to prevent the emergence of a closely knit, powerful, militant, and articulate African industrial proletariat who might acquire the rudiments of political agitation and struggle. What is wanted by the ruling circles is a docile, spineless, unorganized and inarticulate army of workers. Not only rehabilitation led to the Pondo revolt but also the issues of tax and dipping.

### **3.5 TAX AND DIPPING ISSUES THAT LED TO THE PONDO REVOLT**

Redding (1996:557-558) describes his understanding of colonial tax amongst the Xhosa people as follows:

...Among the symbols, one was of particular importance: the creation of public rituals, especially the ritual of tax collection. Tax collection was a crucial ritual because it demonstrated on a yearly basis the power of the



colonial state and subordination of the African subject. It also required a census that gave the state both material jurisdiction over the population (since those who were not on the tax register did not have legal access to farmland), as well as the supernatural powers that accompanied the process of counting people and knowing their names. Knowing how many wives or cattle a person had was essential to doing him harm, and knowing a man's name made him easier to kill through magic. Thus, tax collection was not only symbolic of the state's secular authority but it also imbued the state with supernatural powers. Similarly, tax payments were not merely indications of peoples' acknowledgement of the authority, they also helped to constitute that acknowledgement.

The colonists annexed Pondoland in 1894 and introduced tax. Chief Sigcau, the grandfather of Botha Sigcau, categorically objected to the levying of tax in Pondoland. Hargreaves et al (n.d:18) describe the result: "After the annexation of Pondoland, accusations were made that Chief Sigcau had opposed the registration of his followers as Hut Tax payers and that he had threatened to shoot a clerk engaged in the work".

After 1948 the Nationalist government intensified many policies implemented by the British Empire, including that of tax. Pondos were subjected to a procedure that they had never experienced in the pre-colonial era: being counted every year like livestock or objects. This caused them to consider tax as subordinating them to white supremacy, because it undermined their integrity as human beings created in the image of God.

*The Torch*<sup>6</sup> reports the objectives of an increment in tax as follows:

The bill further provides for an increase in the basic tax, which the people have to pay to the C.A.D. via the Board of Management. This tax is increased from 10s. to 2 pounds. The purpose of this increase is to drive more people on to the labour market, both directly and indirectly. Directly in order to find the money to pay the taxes, and indirectly by paying for the "betterment schemes".

There were two types of taxes: firstly the hut tax that was imposed by the Cape Colony and later renamed Local Tax. Despite its name, the tax was imposed on

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<sup>6</sup> Tuesday, 31 March 1959, page 1, Vol xiv, no 1

wives, not on huts: initially it was ten shillings per wife per year. It informed the government regarding how many wives a man had. The second tax was the Poll Tax, which was imposed in 1905 and officially termed the General Rate. This tax assisted the government to calculate how many adult men there were in the reserves. In 1950 tax payments declined in Pondoland, because most people linked the tax increment with the establishment of Bantu Authorities and the empowerment of the chiefs. During 1959 in Bizana only about four percent of the poll taxes and 17 per cent of the hut taxes were paid: the beginning of passive resistance in the area.

Redding (1996:565) describes the attitude of the Pondo people towards their Paramount Chief Botha Sigcau, as the person who was instigating the increment in the tax for his own benefit:

In Eastern Pondoland, the dislike of the pro-government Paramount Chief, Botha Sigcau, was such that, by itself, it drove many Africans to reject rehabilitation schemes. Sigcau's unpopularity predated tax increase and Bantu Authorities, but it reached its zenith in 1957, when, at a meeting in Bizana, people's vocal protests drowned out the prepared remarks of both Sigcau and the magistrate. Botha Sigcau was not the only unpopular chief. As the South African state invested chiefs with additional judicial and administrative powers, they seemed more threatening to the African population at large. "The greatest objection to the system [Bantu Authorities] I encountered", reported the Transkei's Chief Magistrate in 1960, was the granting of jurisdiction and considerable authority to the Chiefs.

One cannot deny the fact that tax and dipping had changed the social life of the people, because in some instances when elderly interviewees were asked about the changes that had taken place since Pondoland was annexed, they complained about these issues and self-governance. Although some obeyed the policy because they had no choice, others refused and chose to be exiled and imprisoned for the sake of protecting their land. Hunter (1979:67–68) verifies the importance of these issues:

If one asks an old man what changes he has noticed taking place in his lifetime a usual reply is "I see that we now dip, and pay taxes, and are no longer ruled by our chiefs but by the Government". It is not generally

recognized by Pondo that dipping has really checked cattle disease, although the cattle population of Transkei, decimated by epidemics between 1911 and 1918, more than doubled between 1918 and 1930, and the increase coincides with the introduction of dipping. It is complained that the frequent dipping makes oxen less fit to race, and the restrictions on movement make large gatherings of cattle for racing impossible and increase difficulties of marketing.

Jabavu (n.d:3-4) compares black and white tax in the 1930s as follows:

A white in South Africa (if married) pays an income tax only when his income exceeds 400 pounds; and even then his abatements are so favourable that if he has four children he pays nothing until his income exceeds 640 pounds. Comparing this man with the average Native with four children we get the following contrasts: a location peasant residing on Crown land, living, as the majority do in the Cape, on a single "isikonkwane" (six acres) yielding 12 pounds worth of produce in any fortunate season, pays a poll tax of 1 pounds plus 10s. extra personal tax. This means that the black man pays 80 pounds on an income of 640 pounds where the State regards the white man as being too poor to afford to pay a penny. To put this differently it means that 53 black men pay between them 80 pounds on their aggregate income of 640 pounds where a single white man earning 640 pounds pays nothing.

This injustice not only took place in the South Africa: even in the United States poor people were oppressed as far as the issue of taxation was concerned, as demonstrated by Parenti (1988:97):

The corporation-dominated state uses taxation as well as public spending to redistribute wealth in an upward direction. Taking into account all local, state, and federal sales, excise and income taxes, as well as Social Security, we find that the lower-income people pay a higher percentage of their earnings than do upper-income people, while generally getting less for what they pay. Even a capitalist organ like the Wall Street Journal admitted: "One of the ironies of the federal tax system is its bias against the poor." And in 1985, after several years of the Reagan tax cuts, the Washington Post reported: "Taxes on the working poor have sky-rocketed while taxes on the well-to-do and on profitable corporations have declined dramatically."

Parenti shows that democracy was intended for the rich, because poor people were getting poorer. Even in the richest countries in the world, like America, tax

was employed as an oppressive element. In addition, *Umthunywa*<sup>7</sup> reported as follows on the issue of tax:

Last year the general tax on Africans of 18 and over was increased from 1 pound to 1,15 pounds. This year the Native taxpayer earning between 15 pounds and 20 pounds a month (the majority group) will pay 2 pounds. This tax introduced in 1925 is not payable by other population groups. The native begins paying tax at 18, while other population groups only start paying personal (provincial) tax at the age of 21.

This exploitation brought about misunderstanding between black leaders and the British Empire. Copelyn (1974:23-24) summarized the general tax in the Transkei in 1954 to 1960 as follows:

1. General tax or 'head tax' on males: 1 pound p.a. In addition married men paid 10s general tax on each wife. The tax on males was increased by 75 per cent to 1 pound 15s p.a. as from 1 January 1959.
2. Local tax: 10s payable on each hut up to a maximum of 2 pounds.
3. General levy: 10s p.a. imposed by the Transkeian Territories General Council in 1955.
4. Stock Rates: varying between one and two shillings p.a. on each head of cattle, introduced into Transkei 30 May 1958.
5. Ploughing, Dipping and Grazing Field: in return for service rendered.
6. 'Voluntary' and 'Compulsory' Tribal levies: which could be imposed with general consent by Tribal, District, and Regional Authorities.

These taxes were imposed on people in the Transkei by the Nationalist government through certain chiefs and headmen, who angered many people to such an extent that the latter decided to take the law into their own hands. Not only the Pondos protested against the imposition of tax: A prominent African leader, Bambatha, a Zulu chief, was exiled to the Umvoti district, for refusing to co-operate in paying tax. Gandhi, the Indian leader, negotiated with General Smuts about the withdrawal of tax. Enoch Mgijima, who was born and brought up in the Methodist family, but later formed his own church known as "The Israelites" claimed to be guided by a vision and prophecy that the end of the world was near. He asked his followers to await the coming of Jesus on Ntabelanga Mountain. Unfortunately, the government of the day refused to grant him a permanent settlement and insisted that he and his followers should pay tax for

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<sup>7</sup> Saturday, 1960 January 23, p 6. vol 22, No. 27

the land that they had occupied. The Israelites refused, which led to conflict and the massacre.

Mbeki (1964:105) describes how the Pondo chiefs and headmen benefited from the tax that they collected from people:

The Nationalist government began, in 1950, to bribe the Chiefs. It introduced two scales for Headmen in that year. One group was placed on the scale of 30 pounds x 6 – 96 pounds and the other on the scale 24 pounds x 6 – 52 pounds. In addition, all headmen received a bonus of 8 pounds a year for collecting tax. The four most important Chiefs were paid 900 pounds, 750 pounds, 600 pounds and 324 pounds. Headmen were given another rise a few years later. They were graded according to the number of taxpayers in their areas, and paid on a corresponding scale. Those at the bottom of the scale received 60 pounds a year in basic allowance and bonus; those at the top of the scale received 144 pounds. The salaries of the four most important Chiefs were increased to 1.200 pounds, 900 pounds, 800 pounds and 600 pounds. Chief Kaizer Matanzima, who is not a Paramount chief, received 400 pounds. In 1960 the government announced a further 25 per cent increase all round, and a doubling of the tax-collection bonus. This raised the headmen's salaries to 88 pounds for those at the bottom of the scale and 224 pounds for those at the top.

There were unofficial taxes, extorted from poor individuals by the chiefs and headmen before granting people sites and other benefits. The poor were supposed to pay a certain amount for a permit to cut wood, thatching grass, to brew beer, to hold initiation rites for boys and girls. All these taxes were unrecorded and were collected by headmen with the permission of the chief.

The chiefs thought that they were making themselves secure by bribing headmen at the expense of others. Unfortunately this was a dismal failure that caused the Pondos to lose confidence in their chiefs and to regard them and the headmen as exploiters. Most Pondos refused to pay tax (since they did not wish to enrich other men) on their cattle, their huts, and wives because all these belonged to them, not to the government. Also the Pondos were not only very much aware of the fact that the official tax that was collected by the chief for the government was also meant to enrich some of the chiefs, but also that at the end

of the day it was going to be used by the government to build fences, dips and dams, items that were regarded by the Pondos as destructive of their social-economic life. On the other hand, tax was used constructively to build schools, but many Pondos argued that the schools were built so that children could be trained to accept subservience to white authority. People were compelled to pay poll tax because failing to do so, meant to lose property or be imprisoned. Mandela (1965:45) provides statistics regarding people who were arrested for failing to pay poll tax:

According to the 1949 official Year Book for the Union, 21,381 Africans were arrested that year for general tax. Earlier, John Burger had stated in *The Black Man's Burden* that something like 60,000 arrests were made each year for non-payment of this tax. Since the Nationalist Party came to power these arrests have been intensified. In the Reserves, chiefs, headmen, mounted police, and court messengers comb the countryside daily for tax defaulters and, fearing arrest, thousands of Africans are forced to trek to the mines and surrounding farms in search of work. Around the jails in several parts of the country, queues of farmers are to be observed waiting for convicts.

This proves beyond reasonable doubt that the issue of tax was not only a thorn in the flesh of Pondo people, but a problem faced by all Africans. Another issue was the system of dipping that was imposed by the Nationalist government. It was compulsory because it was said that dipping would combat disease in one's livestock. Tanks were built throughout the country and black foremen were employed and paid by the government. The duties of the foremen were to see to it that every household that owned livestock dipped every week or month. The owner of any livestock had to pay a compulsory tax for each animal.

Many Pondos were well aware of the fact that some cattle diseases were spread during the dipping process: hence they opposed it. They believed that dipping caused their livestock to die. Not only the Pondos resisted it. In East Griqualand dipping tanks were blown up and some men took up arms. The Pass Laws Act of 1952 and the Bantu Education Act of 1953 were further issues that instigated the Pondos to revolt between 1960 and 1963.

### 3.6 THE PASS LAW SYSTEM OF 1952

When Africans in urban areas began increasing in numbers, the problem faced by the Nationalist government was therefore it was going to control these people. The proposal was made that the pass system should be introduced for all blacks who were flocking into the cities. This meant that all black men and women were to carry passes for the sake of self identification and as a means of control.

Vigne (1969:17-18) describes the impact of influx control on the lives of black people thus:

“Separate development” did not only impede economic development within the territory. It also brought about the implementation of a policy, which is already creating intolerable conditions of life for hundreds of thousands of Africans and is likely to become even more terrible in its effects. This policy, loosely known as Influx Control, has led to the mass disruption of families and homes in the so-called white areas, to the forcing of many thousands away from carefully built up homes and livelihoods in the cities, back to the “homelands” from which economic necessity had driven them in the first place.

Davenport (1977:338) comments as follows on Section 10:

The notorious section 10 of the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952 limited Africans with a right to live permanently in the urban areas to those who were born there, those who had lived there continuously for fifteen years, and those who had worked continuously for the same employer for ten, in the same year a Native (Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents) Act required all Africans (including those exempted under the pass laws, and women for the first time, as well as men) to carry ‘reference books’ containing their photographs, and information about their places of origin, their employment records, their tax payments and their encounters with police. This created the means of ensuring that control over African influx into the towns could be exercised.

The main objection to the pass law was the fact that it restricted people’s freedom of movement, and that it dictated that they could take work only in prescribed areas, where lower wages rates were paid. This meant that when one was born in Transkei one had no right to work in Johannesburg unless granted permission by the Paramount chief. If not, he was deported back to his place of birth or imprisoned.

*The Torch*<sup>8</sup> further reports the objectives of passes as follows:

The second speaker dealt with the pass system. He showed how an African has to carry a pass wherever he goes. He must have a pass to remain in any area, he must have a pass to seek work, he must have a pass to go into a location, he must have a pass to spend a night with a friend. Every movement of an African was strictly controlled so that he may be directed to wherever he is required to work, be it in the farms, mines or industry.

The pass law also affected women, because their men were arrested while they went out looking for jobs to feed their loved ones. It is from this perspective that on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 1959 the Black women of South Africa marched to the Union Buildings to plead with the Nationalist government to scrap the pass law, but the Nationalists refused to do so in 1960, the Pan African Congress felt that it was their responsibility to back-up women and to continue with the anti-pass law campaign in Sharpeville (Vereeniging), Langa and Paarl (Cape Province).

The spirit of nationalism opposing the pass law also spread rapidly to eastern Pondoland. Pondos, like others, rejected the system because they believed that since they had been born and bred in Pondoland no one had the right to restrict them and their freedom of movement in the land that had belonged to their forefathers. *Umthunywa*<sup>9</sup> reports following about reference books in Transkei:

The Transkei police warn Natives that the reference book system has been restored and that Natives will be liable for persecution if they are unable to produce a reference book or other acceptable identifying document when called to do so. Persons who may employ Natives not in possession of the proper documentations will also be liable for prosecution.

Luthuli (n.d:35) describes the pass laws as follows:

The pass laws, which not only deny the African people freedom of movement, are enforced in ways that cause people much unnecessary suffering and humiliation. They are definitely an affront to human personality and it is not surprising that their extension to our womenfolk has resulted in Union-wide protests and in the expression of deep indignation by the entire African population. These protests and

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<sup>8</sup> Tuesday, 1959 November 17, p 6, Vol XIX.

<sup>9</sup> Saturday, 1960 April 16, p 1, Vol 22, No 39.



demonstrations are indicative of a state of unrest and intense tension among the African people. Section 10 of the Native (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act of 1945, as substituted by Section 27 of Act 54 of 1952 places serious and far-reaching restrictions on the right of my people to enter into and remain within an urban area in order to compel them to seek employment on European farms where working conditions are extremely shocking. Acting under this provision, local authorities and members of the police force have forcibly removed from their homes and families thousands upon thousands of my people in the interests of the European farming industry.

Women played an important role in the anti-pass campaign: throughout almost all of South Africa, they fought for freedom of movement. Large numbers of demonstrations against passes for women took place in towns and villages in 1957 and 1958. Some of the women who took part became victims of abuse. African men and women who did not carry passes were forced to leave urban areas because their presence was considered to be detrimental to the maintenance of peace and order.

Mbeki (1964:113) commented as follows about women who played important role as far the issue of passes were concerned

Crowds of women forced the minority that had taken out pass-books to surrender them, and the books were burnt. Incident flared up at first in one village, then in another. When a group of women was pointed out to the authorities as being those responsible for a pass-burning, a large crowd of women thrust themselves forward, shouting: 'if they are guilty, we are also, you must arrest us all.'

### **3.7 BANTU EDUCATION ACT OF 1953**

A further issue that caused the Pondo revolt of 1960 was the introduction of the Bantu Education Act of 1953. The issue of education in eastern Pondoland had become problematic as early as 1917. Marelane was appointed to the Cape Province Native Education Commission in 1919. He played an important role in

insisting that the Native Education Department should allow the Pondo people to have a say in the administration of education since they paid tax towards education. He insisted that the majority of Pondo people should be more fully represented in decision-making concerning the future of their children. Paramount chiefs like Sigcau (father of Botha Sigcau) and Marelane demanded that their children receive proper education and insisted that more educational institutions be built. Many Pondos, like them, prioritized education and rejected the unfairness of the Bantu Education Act.

Beinart (1982:109-110) describes the influence of chiefs on education as follows:

Since Mhlangaso's rise to power in the nineteenth century, in which his mission education played some part, the Mpondo chiefs were well aware of the advantages of literacy in a colonial world, though many had an ambiguous attitude to the effects of education. Sigcau had not been entirely remiss in this sphere. He had given 100 pounds to Emfundisweni mission school in the 1890s, had authorized and arranged labour for the erection of schools, and he had educated his own children, including one daughter, beyond primary level. However, at his death there were still only twenty eight schools in Pondoland, all primary...Marelane instituted, with administrative approval, an annual two-shilling education levy, which brought in between 2,000 pounds and 3.000 pounds a year to fund primary schools. By 1921, the number of schools in Eastern Pondoland had increased to ninety-four and the number of pupils to between five and six thousand. The Paramount's energies were particularly devoted to funding a Teachers Training College at the Methodist centre of Emfundisweni in Flagstaff district. A sum of 1,200 pounds was initially raised, and in 1921 there were 142 student teachers at the institution.

One cannot deny the fact that missionaries played an important role in educating the Pondos. They funded most of the schools in Pondoland, and at the same time they were prepared to allow the Pondo chiefs to participate on behalf of their people, and make decisions that would affect the future of their children. But when Bantu education was introduced, it stripped away the powers of the Pondo people to make decisions concerning the future of their children.

The Department of Native Affairs gained control over all African schools, which created financial pressure on the missions to hand over their schools to the

hands of Bantu school boards. There was uproar in the whole of South Africa about the Bantu Education Act of 1953. This Act was one of the most oppressive structures that the Nationalist government had implemented. It undermined the integrity of the Black person. The Government spent ten times as much on whites as on African students. The inferior education Africans received was designed to condition them to accept positions of subservience. After the implementation of this Act, Blacks who were at the white universities were forced to leave so-called white universities and to attend so-called bush universities.

Horrell (1964:6) explains how Maree, the Minister of Bantu Education, described the objectives of the Bantu Education Act in an address in 1959:

The paramount principle in education of the (African) child in the urban areas must be, just as it is in the Reserves, that we must try to retain the child as a child of his own national community, because it is the basic principle of Bantu education in general that our aim is to keep the Bantu child a Bantu child... The Bantu must be so educated that they do not want to become imitators [of the Whites, but] that they will want to remain essentially Bantu.

Most African leaders knew very well that the person behind this speech was H.F. Verwoerd, who was influenced by Hitler's theories of fascism. Germany like other European countries had its colonies on the African continent. Germany outlined the principles that were to govern the future treatment of Africans in German colonies. The country was well known for its racial discrimination. It emphasized that no Africans would experience equality with Europeans, and that was this crux of the matter as far as Bantu Education was concerned.

The Church played a prominent role as far as the Pass Law and opposition to the Bantu Education Act of 1953 were concerned. One should bear in mind the dynamic institutions such as Healdtown, Lovedale, St Francis College, Adams College and others that were affected by this Act. The government insisted that all educational institutions should be governed by this Act that would automatically remove power from the missionaries. From this perspective the Church felt that it should take a stance against the government of the day.

Unfortunately the DRC was one of the Churches that aligned or identified itself with the Nationalist government and adopted and approved any policy that was laid down by the latter. The South African Council of Churches (SACC) was an ecumenical movement that opposed apartheid. Afrikaans churches, except the Dutch Reformed Mission Church and Reformed Church in Africa, were not members of the SACC. The SACC was really disturbed by this Act and took on the responsibility of challenging it.

In October 1954 Archbishop Clayton of the Anglican Church wrote a letter of concern to all mainline churches with regard to the Bantu Education Act. Its purpose was to investigate the feelings of the heads of churches and their senior ministers about the Act. Churches felt that the Act would violate the principles of education and that it should be opposed by all available means. Unfortunately some mainline churches were not financially viable and when the state threatened not to subsidize the missionary schools, institutions such as Healdtown, Lovedale and others were surrendered to the Nationalist government. But the Roman Catholic Church maintained their institutions.

Walshe (1983:6-7) verified this situation as follows:

When the Bantu Education Act was passed in 1953, the Anglican and the Roman Catholics refused to accept its provisions, the former closing their schools and the latter picking up financial responsibility for maintaining them independently of the state. Four years later the English speaking churches objected strenuously to the "Church Clause" in a bill designed to give the Minister of the Interior power to bar Africans from attending churches in white areas. In this case the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, the cautious Geoffrey Clayton, was goaded into leading the opposition. As a result, a modified version of the bill was passed into law and sufficient pressure was mounted to dissuade the government from using its new powers.

However, while the Church thus far had played its part not all English speaking Churches opposed the Nationalists. Many members of these churches supported the Nationalist government very quietly. Hence these churches were often silent

about the oppressive structures that had been implemented by the Nationalists ever since they had come into power in 1948. The Church must be blamed for its silence because most of the Acts and policies were endorsed by the D.R. Church in support of apartheid policies. But the additional silence of the English speaking Churches regarding apartheid exerted a negative impact on the lives of the black people.

### **3.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has demonstrated the effect of colonization on the life of the Pondo people. It also demonstrated the impact of the Nationalist government when it came into power in 1948. Acts and policies that were implemented by the British Empire when it colonized South Africa were endorsed by the Nationalist government when it came into power in 1948, and caused tension and hatred between Blacks and Whites. Policies such as the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, the Education Act of 1953, the Rehabilitation scheme and the Pass Law of 1953, were thorns in the flesh of people who lived in rural areas or reserves. Hence the Pondo people, amongst others, revolted against the Nationalist government for implementing these policies that were detrimental to their socio-economic and political wellbeing. The next chapter will discuss the conflict among the Pondo people themselves.

## CHAPTER 4

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Two aspects that led to the Pondo revolt have already been mentioned in the previous chapters. However, this chapter will discuss the actual Pondo revolt by taking into consideration the following aspects: The conflict amongst the Pondos themselves; the ringleaders of the “Hill Committee”; Government interference in Pondo affairs; the reaction of the Pondos towards their authorities; the stance of the church against Nationalist policy; and the aftermath of the revolt of 1960 to 1963.

As already stated in the previous chapters, the Pondo revolt did not start in 1960 as many people think, but began in the 1950s when the Nationalist Government introduced the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951. The revolt reached its zenith in 1960. The adoption of the Bantu Authorities Act by the Bunga members caused conflict and a breakdown of communication amongst the Xhosa people and their kings, chiefs and headmen. Almost all the Xhosa inhabitants of Transkei were unhappy about the decisions taken by the Bunga members on their behalf without their consent. The Report of the Departmental Committee of Inquiry into Unrest in Pondoland<sup>1</sup> states that:

The dissatisfaction continued and matters reached a climax with the nomination of Tribal Authority Councillors by the Paramount Chief. The people of the Isikelo Tribal Authority, who, as far as can be ascertained, have always objected to the establishment of these Authorities strenuously opposed the appointment of the Paramount Chief’s nominees on the grounds that they had not been consulted about nominations.

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<sup>1</sup> CMT 3/1472, FILE H/2Q VOLUME 709: Report of the Departmental Committee of Inquiry into Unrest in Eastern Pondoland .

On the other hand, Horrell (1971:36) comments as follows:

During the year that followed general unrest mounted, particularly in East Pondoland, the main grievances being high-handed action by certain chiefs in accepting betterment schemes without proper consultation with the people and in appointing members of Bantu Authorities in a manner, which was not in accordance with tribal customs. Influx control and increased taxation appeared to be contributory causes.

From what Horrell has written, it seems that the Bantu Authorities Act brought about conflict amongst the Pondos themselves. Not only were the Xhosa people disturbed by this Act; most South Africans were opposed to it, particularly those who lived in the reserves, and registered their dissatisfaction as far as it was concerned. However, let us focus on the conflict that was created amongst the Pondos by this Act.

#### **4.2 THE CONFLICT AMONGST THE PONDOS**

The Pondos' main concern was the fact that the Act would put them into a cocoon and that they would be unable to take part in wider international affairs. In fact, the main objective of the Nationalist Government was to pin down black people. The anti-Government political leaders in the reserves categorically refused to accept the Bantu Authorities Act. They objected because they believed that accepting it would be suicidal for those in the reserves. Among the Xhosa people in Transkei, the Tembu clan registered their concern under the Paramount Chief Sabatha Dalindyebo. However, not all Tembu chiefs opposed the Act. Kaizer Daliwonga Matanzima, the Paramount Chief of the Emigrant Tembu clan, supported it and instigated the adoption of the Act by iBunga meetings as early as 1951.

In Eastern Pondoland Botha Sigcau was also pro the Act; he urged the Pondos to accept the Act for the sake of the future of their children. But the Pondos refused, especially those who supported Nelson Sigcau, Botha Sigcau's half

brother. Nelson Sigcau also refused to accept his half brother's attitude though he did not publicize this. If one takes into consideration the enthronement of Botha instead of Nelson, one may say that the revolt did not start in 1951, but that it actually began in 1939 when Botha Sigcau was enthroned as Paramount Chief after the death of Mandlonke his half brother.

However, one may ask: if Nelson Sigcau, the popular Chief, had been officially enthroned according to the will of the Pondos as the Paramount Chief, and had accepted the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, would the Pondo people have objected to the Act? Or would the Act still have caused division among the Pondo people? Were the Pondo people objecting to the Act because it had been conveyed through Botha Sigcau who, according to them, had been unlawfully enthroned? Was their objection to the Act only another way to communicate their concerns and anger to the Government of the day? Was the objection directed to the government, which made the decision on their behalf?

In this regard one can only assume that the issue of the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 had much to do with the enthronement of Botha Sigcau, while the supporters of Nelson were very much aware that the Government wanted to use Botha Sigcau to punt their hidden agenda. They knew that Botha Sigcau, unlike Nelson Sigcau, would not oppose any of the Acts or Laws that would be implemented in Pondoland. Hence Nelson's followers refused to accept that Botha Sigcau should inherit the throne. Based on the findings of extensive research done on this revolt, it would be unfair to point fingers. But one can again assume that the Pondos were most concerned about their socio-economical and political existence. It seems that they simply needed a leader who would maintain and respect their dignity as human beings created in the image of God.

It appears that even if Nelson had been the Paramount Chief and had adopted the Bantu Authorities Act, the Pondos would have retaliated against it and other Laws because these Acts had negative implications for them. People that I



interviewed claimed that they were not disobedient to the government, but were protecting what belonged to them, their wealth, land and the future of their children.

Eveleigh (1920:96) describes how they respected the Government:

At times the Pondo people have been brought to the verge of war against the white people as a result of listening to evil advice, but they have never fought against the Government... It is due in a very large measure to the influence of the missionaries that Pondoland was annexed to the Cape Colony in 1894 without a shot being fired.

The supporters of Botha Sigcau claim that the whole issue of the Bantu Authorities Act had been taken out of context and politicized. And that it was used as an excuse by most political leaders to drive their hidden agendas: to attack Botha Sigcau and the Nationalist government for imposing unjust policies. The Nationalist Government was well aware of the fact that most Pondos and Nelson Sigcau were not in favour of their Paramount Chief. This can be demonstrated by the interview of 12 June 1941 between Mr. R. Fyfe-King and Nelson Sigcau<sup>2</sup>:

You have traded on the fact that the Government does not wish to punish its children, and notwithstanding my warning to you, you have continued to make trouble in this district, and I have come here to warn you very seriously to-day, warn you that the Government will not hesitate to banish you from this district unless your campaign against Chief Botha ceases. I am not referring now to the case you have against him. That is a matter quite apart, but you, as a loyal subject of the crown are bound to render obedience to the Government and to the Chief the Government has placed over you, and I would just like to impress upon your child mind that if you continue as you are doing, you and your principal followers, will be banished from here.

This conversation proves without doubt that Botha did receive full support from the Government and the latter was fully aware of the fact that Botha was not on

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<sup>2</sup> CMT 3/1643, REF C2/123-C2/123, VOL 1315. Interview between Mr. R.Fyfe-King and Nelson Sigcau, held at Lusikisiki on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 1941.

good terms with the majority of Pondos. Unfortunately the Government failed to take this into consideration.

As early as 1957 the Pondo people requested Botha Sigcau, his chiefs and headmen to submit their grievances to the magistrate. Botha refused to do so and the Pondo people were angered, to such an extent that they decided not to attend the “kundla” meetings called by Botha Sigcau and his cabinet. The Pondos complained that Botha Sigcau always presented them with final decisions made by the Bunga. Turok (n.d:9) describes their frustration with Botha Sigcau:

Dissatisfied with their chiefs’ attitude the people sent deputations to the magistrates directly. In 1957, in the district of Bizana for example, a deputation was informed that their grievances would be referred to Pretoria. Nothing was heard for some time, and the year later, another deputation interviewed the new magistrate at Bizana who told them that he had no record of their earlier representations. The complaints were repeated but once again no reply was received from official quarters. Frustration and dissatisfaction were building up, until matters boiled over in an outburst of anger at a meeting in the Isikelo location in East Pondoland. Two of the chief’s councillors were asked to explain at an Inkundla what benefits the people would get from the Bantu Authorities, which they had been trying to popularize.

When participants decided to leave the Inkundlas due to lack of confidence in Botha Sigcau, one man by the name of Mngqingo showed a vote of no confidence in Botha by facing the opposite direction and turning his back on Botha while he was addressing the meeting. Mbeki (1964:118) records this event:

Several years before the revolt finally flared, the government had made efforts to induce the peasants to accept Bantu Authorities. In 1953 it tried, through Paramount Chief Botha Sigcau, to force the rehabilitation scheme upon Eastern Pondoland, but at a meeting held in Lusikisiki at which Botha Sigcau was present, the people categorically rejected the scheme. The meeting was highlighted when one man by the name of Mngqingo turned his backside to Botha Sigcau, a sign of non-confidence; the people supported him and booed the chief and the officials.

Mngqingo took off his trousers and underwear and pointed his buttocks at Botha Sigcau. According to Pondo custom, such an action undermines the target. The gathering dispersed and committees were formed that met separately and away from the king's palace. Most people opted for the mountains and bushes where they would not be disturbed. Mandela (1965:90) at the All-In African Conference held at Pietermaritzburg on the 25 and 26 March 1961 describes the importance of the meetings that were held in the bushes as follows:

I am attending this conference as a delegate from my village. I was elected at a secret meeting held in the bushes far away from my kraals simply because in our village it is now a crime for us to hold meetings. I have listened most carefully to speeches made here and they have given me strength and courage. I now realize that we are not alone. But I am troubled by my experiences during the last weeks. In the course of our struggle against the system of Bantu Authorities, we heard many fighting speeches delivered by men we trusted most, but when the hour of decision came they did not have the courage of their convictions. They deserted us and we felt lonely and without friends.

This statement by Nelson Mandela shows that blacks were deprived of freedom of speech during the apartheid era; hence they opted to hold their meetings in remote locations.

The districts that voiced their dissatisfaction about the rule of Botha Sigcau and Bantu Authorities were those of Bizana, Lusikisiki and Flagstaff. Chief Poto Ndamase of Western Pondoland had no objections to Botha Sigcau because he had opted for him to be Paramount Chief after the death of Paramount Chief Mandlonke. *Drum*<sup>3</sup> records this as follows:

Marelane who was the Paramount Chief of all Pondos, had three recognized sons. Botha was the eldest, followed by Mandlonke, and then Nelson. According to custom, although Botha is the eldest, he could not be Chief because of a certain old tribal custom, and Mandlonke was appointed. When Mandlonke died, the tribesmen expected Nelson to be appointed. Instead, through the unexpected interference by Nyandeni, Chief Poto's seat, Botha was appointed and, when the whole tribe objected, police dispersed the tribesmen.

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<sup>3</sup>September 1960, p23.

It is very interesting to note that the Western Pondoland Chief Poto Ndamase was not active in the politics of the day. Despite his passive resistance to the revolt, his clan was very much involved in it. But if one takes into consideration the splitting of the Pondos from the period of Faku onwards one will be able to tell why Ndamase was not much interested in the revolt.

The main objective of the hill committee was to discuss their grievances with the intention of sending a delegation to submit them to Pretoria, since Botha Sigcau had failed to do so.

Laurence (1976:36-37) describes these grievances precisely:

Tribesmen subsequently formed an Anti-Bantu Authorities committee, which submitted a memorandum of grievances to the Department of Bantu Affairs. Among the grievances were: (1) dissatisfaction with the pro-government stance of Paramount Chief Botha Sigcau of East Pondoland; (2) resentment at higher taxes under Bantu Authorities (particularly as they were used to pay salaries to “unwanted government-appointed chiefs”); (3) protest against land rehabilitation schemes; (4) allegations that bribes were necessary to ensure fair treatment in the new tribal courts; (5) complaints that the “newly appointed chiefs did not consult the people” and that government officials “only consulted the chiefs”.

These grievances caused a major schism amongst the Pondo people, because supporters of Botha felt that those Pondos who opposed him undermined his authority as the Paramount Chief of all Pondos. The ringleaders started inciting people to ignore any instructions from the Paramount Chief and the Government until their grievances were taken into consideration.

#### **4.3 THE RINGLEADERS OF THE REVOLT (HILL COMMITTEE)**

The Government was convinced that the revolt of the Pondos was instigated by professional political leaders. Albert Luthuli and Oliver Tambo were major

suspects. According to the Report of the Departmental Committee of Inquiry<sup>4</sup> the following people were the ringleaders of the Pondo revolt.

Sub-chief Mhlabuvelile Hlamandana, Majojo Hlamandana from Sikelo location, Mtetunzima Ganyile, Dan Ganyile from Amanikwe location, Theophilus Tshangela, Ngumbushe Baleni from Amadiba location, Hargreaves Mbodla, Mkatali Walter Madikizela from Monti location, Milner Madikizela, Headmen Gwebityala Funqu, from Ntsimbini location, Solomon Mbambeni Madikezela from Amangutyana location, Sigwebo Mhlanga from Vlei location, Elijah Lande from Hlabathi location, William Mpini Madolo from Ntlotsana location, all these ring leaders were from Bizana District where the seed of the revolt germinated. Ringleaders at Taweni location were Sithembile, Malodzi, Nonkwenkwe, Mathamane. Wana and Tony Johnson from Lusikisiki District.

The committee at Bizana was stronger and more aggressive than those at Lusikisiki and Flagstaff. For that reason, whatever decision was taken by the committee at Taweni had to be approved by the committee at Bizana. These committees were not approved by the Paramount Chief and the government; therefore, when they met in the village they were disrupted and dispersed by the government officials for holding unofficial gatherings. This frustrated the committees in both districts and the delegation from Bizana arrived with the solution that the committee there had said they should meet in the mountains to avoid interference by Government officials. The Bizana committee met at Mt Nongqulwana and others at Mt Nqindilili. Hence these committees adopted the name "Hill Committees".

#### **4.4 GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE IN THE PONDO AFFAIRS**

The Pondos knew very well that holding meetings at the mountains was against the law. Identical minute no. 146/276<sup>5</sup> discusses unlawful meetings as follows:

These unlawful meetings have been receiving the Department's attention since as long ago as 1953. Proclamation No 198 of 1953 takes the

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<sup>4</sup> CMT 3/1742, Vol 709, Ref 42/ Q, Report of the Departmental Committee of Enquiry into Unrest in Eastern Pondoland.

<sup>5</sup> CMT 3/1472, REF 42/K, Vol 709, district officer file no.1 /9/2. Identical minute no. 146/276.

traditional Bantu law, mentioned in paragraph 1 above, into account for it provides that the Native Commissioner may consult the chief or headmen about the holding of meetings. The proclamation, however, goes even further in protecting and upholding the chief's authority by providing for the imposition of severe penalties upon any person who holds a meeting without the prior knowledge of the chief and the approval of the Native Commissioner.

The members of the hill committee suspected followers of Botha of informing the police about their secret meetings. The committee members took the law into their own hands: they attacked all those who were suspected of being government spies. In Lusikisiki and Flagstaff the first victim was King Jikindaba, who was murdered; the members of the hill committee were blamed.

The police began patrolling all the villages of Flagstaff and Lusikisiki and dispersing any unofficial gathering that was held in the local hills. The hill committee decided to meet on Ngquza hill because it was very high and was reached through a deep, steep valley. The killing of King Jikindaba made the situation still more tense for the Pondos. In terms of Pondo custom, when the king dies the whole clan or nation must mourn, and certain rituals must be performed to cleanse the tribe from the evil spirits. The committees also had to stop meeting in order to pay their last respects to the king.

In the Bizana district the hill committee met on Ndlovu hill because after the death of King Jikindaba the whole area of Bizana was constantly patrolled by police. The hill committee of Nongqulwana felt that it had no privacy and it also met on Ndlovu hill. The two committees came to the agreement that if any member of either committee was found to be an informer that person would be dealt with accordingly. On the Hill they drew up their own constitution. Pondos who were opposed to the Nationalist government's Acts and policies called themselves members of the ANC. They allied themselves with the struggle of the ANC and termed themselves "Congo". "Congo" is the slang name derived from the word "Congress".

The laws of Congo<sup>6</sup> were as follows: (See Appendix “B”)

1. Cases must not be taken to the sub-chiefs.
2. Cases are dealt with by Congo.
3. Murder cases are to be taken to Town.
4. We must not go to Botha because we told them that we do not want him together with his sub-chiefs.
5. Lands and kraal sites are to be given by Congo.
6. We do not want Bantu Authorities.
7. A supporter of Bantu Authorities who wants to be a Congo must pay the sum of 25.3.6 pounds.
8. A person who does not join the Congo will be called a Jendevu (sell-out or spy) and must pay 5.3.6. When he does not pay it we must see to him.
9. When a chief want to join Congo must pay 25.3.6 pounds.
10. When a women does not want to get married to man, the lobola must be returned to the man.
11. When it is the man who does not want the woman the lobola must be retained.
12. When a person assaults another he must pay 10 pounds cash.
13. Ndlavini is prohibited to the Congo.
14. Dances are closed by Congo.
15. Parties are closed.
16. Congo meetings will be opened by prayers and closed by prayer. Respect Congo.
17. Chief, indunas must collect monies from their people, whoever does not pay the money, the induna must bring him to the Congo. Don't be afraid of anything.

It is against this background that the committee at Ngquza hill summoned Linda Mabija to appear before it. Linda was the secretary of the Paramount Chief of Eastern Pondoland in the Bunga. He was asked what was discussed at the Bunga and by means of threats from the members of the hill committee he was forced to explain everything. He was warned not to tell anyone about his interrogation.

Mr. C.K. Gxabu (Personal interview, 2002.04.21, Flagstaff) stated that this was the first big gathering that was held on Ngquza hill, on 13<sup>th</sup> May 1960. Almost all

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<sup>6</sup> CMT 3/1472, Vol 709, Ref 4/Q 330/332. Constitution of the Congo.

the Pondo men from the Eastern and Western districts were present. The gathering was dispersed by helicopters and aircraft. The Pondo men clashed with the soldiers who arrived by air. Meanwhile, traditional songs were sung: “Uyinja mlungu, safa saphenduka, saphenduka inja ebomvu. Uthinta thina nje, uthinta abangasayi kufa”<sup>7</sup> dancing and brandishing their knobkieries up and throwing stones at helicopters and aircraft, but no casualties were reported on that day.



**FIGURE 7: PICTURE OF NGQUZA HILL TAKEN ON THE 22<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2002**

Ngquza hill is situated in the centre of the area bordered by Lusikisiki, Flagstaff, and Bizana. The height of the mountain helped the Pondos to see the police vans from a distance. Points A to B illustrate the place where the Pondos gathered and were disrupted by the two helicopters, which marked the beginning of the conflict between the Government officials and the Pondos.

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<sup>7</sup> White men you’re a dog, we die and we resurrect as a red dog. When you touch us you should know that you have touched those who will no longer die.



The clash of 13<sup>th</sup> May 1960 created mixed feelings amongst the members of the hill committee. Some members felt that meetings on the hill should cease while others felt they should continue in spite of the situation. The next meeting was scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> June 1960, and all Pondo men of 18 upwards from East and West Pondoland were summoned to meet on Ngquza hill.

Mr. C.K Gxabu (Personal interview, 2002.04.21, Flagstaff) asserted that the Pondos met on the hill to discuss their grievances and not to revolt against the Government. Between the 13<sup>th</sup> May and 16<sup>th</sup> June 1960, numbers of people who were present were arrested. Stoffel Johnson was one of the prominent ringleaders taken into custody. He was found with two unlawful guns in his possession. He was a powerful and influential member of the hill committee, who was able to recruit Pondos in large numbers.

On the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1960 Wana Johnson and Isaac Maratshala were delegated to travel to Kokstad prison to release Stoffel. Wana Johnson, a senior member of the hill committee, was reluctant to go but was eventually persuaded. His last words to those who were going to Ngquza on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> June were: “Nto zika Faku ze nazi okokuba igama lale mfazwe siyilwayo ngudabalele, iyakulwa nasizukulwana sethu”<sup>8</sup> and he left them with his blessings.

Mr. C.K. Gxabu added that the Pondos strongly believed in traditional healers, as Christians believed in Christ, that their belief in traditional healers did not make them anti-Christ because Christ is above all. It is from this perspective that he felt obliged to discuss this belief (this quotation is verbatim and is literally translated from Xhosa):

Here in Pondoland before we go to any war, all Pondo men had to consult the traditional healer who would tell us about the outcomes of the war before we fight. The traditional healer would give us herbs (intelezi) to protect ourselves against our enemies, and he would also warn us about

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<sup>8</sup> Gentlemen of the house of Faku, you should know that the battle that we are fighting is a long one, it is going to be fought by the next generations to come.

some certain aspects that we would need to consider before or during the process of the war. The name of the traditional healer was “Uyakrakra-pelepele”.’ He said to us, the Pondos of Lusikisiki, Flagstaff, Tabankulu and Port St Johns, if we come across a black calf on our way to Ngquza, and that calf falls down two or three times before us, we should return because that is the sign that shows that we would be attacked and defeated at Ngquza. Indeed, on our way to Ngquza we experienced what the traditional healer told us. Unfortunately there was a quarrel amongst ourselves: some were saying we should return back as the traditional healer had instructed us to do, while others were reluctant and insisted that we continue because no one from Bizana would know what happened. However, we all agreed among ourselves to go on as per agreement of the 13<sup>th</sup> May 1960.

Copelyn (1974:38) narrates a court case concerning a Pondo man who presented his testimony, during an appeal hearing in Grahamstown, regarding Pondo belief in traditional healers:

At the headman’s kraal I found a big pot with liquid medicine. We all had to put our fingers in the water and suck the medicine and another person was making crosses and incisions on our foreheads... it was said we should first take this medicine because we are going to Ngquza Hill.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1960 at about 8 a.m. the Pondos met on the hill. The estimated number of men present that day was three to four thousand. Joseph Sigcau (Personal interview 2002.04.19, Lusikisiki) stated that the whole mountain was black with a huge number of men from the age of 18 upwards. The leaders of all the hill committees instructed the people to go down the valley to prevent helicopters and other aircraft from disturbing them. It was hoped that the helicopters and aircraft would be unable to reach them and would crash because of insufficient air. Unfortunately this logic did not work.



**FIGURE 8: PICTURE OF NGQUZA HILL. ALSO TAKEN ON THE 22<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2002**

Figure 8 demonstrates what happened on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1960. The Pondos gathered at point A, and moved down to point B, at the foot of the mountain. Soldiers approached from point C and D towards point B, where the shooting took place. At point B the men divided themselves into five groups, and each group was to listen to a speaker. But before anything could happen police Saracens were noticed on the hilltop of Ngquza surrounding the whole area. The estimated number of Saracens was 48 and they were packed with soldiers who were heavily armed. As their commander issued orders they descended the slope and approached the crowd, pointing firearms at the crowd.

Though the Pondos could not understand what was said by the commander, they could see that the soldiers were following his orders. Only the actions of the army helped them to understand that the commander was giving instructions to attack. A helicopter that caused confusion during the battle flew from point F, that is from the direction of Bizana. Points A to E were occupied by Pondo women who were watching and provoking the soldiers and insulting them for teargassing and beating their husbands and children.

One elderly Pondo man by the name of Matyibisa raised a white flag to show that they were not intending to fight. It was made of a sack that contained bread for sustenance during the meeting, because the Pondos knew that they would spend the whole day there. The commander of the soldiers ignored the flag and continued ordering the army to attack. When the soldiers were twenty to thirty metres away they began shooting at the crowd. Confusion ensued: the Pondo men ran for their lives but some were shot dead while others were severely beaten.

The Pondo women were distressed, seeing their husbands and children being brutally attacked and killed. One woman, Mrs. Nkiniza, was amongst the Pondo men when they were attacked. She ran in between the soldiers and her menfolk, singing a Methodist hymn, "Kubo bonke ooThixo, Akakho onje ngaYe; Kuba iinceba zakhe, zimi ngophakade"<sup>9</sup> which is sung when one experiences hardship. Mr. C.K. Gxabu (Personal interview 2002.04.21, Flagstaff) observed, regarding the Xhosa women who were watching their husbands and children being beaten by the soldiers at the feet of Ngquza Hill (this quotation is verbatim):

Xa ophephela emhlane behaba besiza ngakwiintloko zamakhosikazi phezu kwentaba iNgquza, abafazi abanxibe iiblumasi bebezikhulula iiblumasi zabo badunuse, bebonisa abaqhuba ophephela emhlani iimpundu zabo, kanti abafazi ababenganxibanga ziiblumasi bona bebephakamisa nje ilokhwe athi xa uphephela esondela bavele badunuse.<sup>10</sup>

Their aim was to express their opposition to the pilots and soldiers regarding what was happening further down the hill. The beatings started at 9:30 a.m. and lasted until 6:00 p.m; 58 casualties were reported, and 11 people died. Their graves are at point B. Some of the Pondos were arrested at hospital and other casualties opted not to go there to avoid being taken into custody. This event

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<sup>9</sup> Of all gods there is no one like Him, because His grace is everlasting.

<sup>10</sup> Some women at the hilltop of the mountain were insulting soldiers, as the helicopters and aircraft were flying over their heads. Women were undressing themselves, pointing their buttocks at pilots as they navigated and hovered over their heads. This was their only way to protest.

caused the Pondos to be disrespectful towards the Government and local authority, and the aftermath of the revolt brought agony, anger, and poverty.

The Church failed dismally to intervene at Ngquza. It was silent generally about the Pondo revolt and the killings of the innocent by the government. Prominent churches at that time included the Anglicans, Catholics and Methodists. Only two Methodist evangelists, Molodzi and Solomon Madikizela, stood up and challenged the government about the killings of the people; being Pondos they rejected their Church's silence and gave up their calling as evangelists and joined the men of the hill.

The Church's silence was painful. Some people are still suffering even today, and no longer have faith and hope in the Church. Hence many have opted to join political parties rather than the Church. They maintained that the Church had caused emotional and spiritual damage in most Pondos and that it needed to repair this. One fails to understand why the Church was so timid about the incident at Ngquza, because it happened only two months after the Sharpeville massacre. The Church made a stand and voiced its concerns to the government about the Sharpeville shooting, yet said nothing about the shooting of the 11 Pondos on Ngquza Hill.

As a result of Sharpeville the Cottesloe Consultation took place, with the objective of acting as the voice of the voiceless, particularly the marginalized. Hofmeyr and Pillay (1994:273) describe the genesis of the Cottesloe Consultation:

The main factor giving rise to the Cottesloe Consultation, was the massacre of Blacks, which took place at Sharpeville. Police opened fire on 3 000 to 10 000 people, who were participating in a peaceful protest led by the Pan-Africanist Congress. The protest was targeted at the abolition of pass laws, and was specifically aimed at opposing white domination and emancipating blacks in South Africa.

This was the background to the violence of the government forces at Ngquza hill.



**FIGURE 9. MONUMENT AT NGQUZA HILL DEDICATED TO THE 11 HEROES WHO DIED ON THE 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 1960: (PICTURE TAKEN ON THE 22<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2004.**

#### **4.5 THE REACTIONS OF THE PONDOS TOWARDS THE GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES.**

Mbeki (1964:117) depicts this attitude as follows:

The Pondos have been well known in South African history for their allegiance to authority. There is no record of Pondos ever having taken up arms against even the early British forces who first occupied Pondoland. On one occasion in 1895, when it seemed that a clash was inevitable over the refusal of the Pondos to pay taxes and a British punitive force was on the point of marching to Pondoland, the situation was saved by Chief Sigcau himself, who surrendered at Kokstad and was subsequently transported to Robben Island.

From this source, one may assume that Pondos respected those who were in authority despite their race. But on the other hand, they were protective of what belonged to them such as land, livestock and their social life. This implies that one should not interfere with these factors because this could force the Pondos to revolt, as occurred with the Nationalist Government.

The revolt of 6 June 1960 had negative results for all Pondos. Negatively the Pondos disregarded authority, from their Paramount Chief to the Government, which led to unrest in the whole of Pondoland. During the interviews one could notice that it was heart-breaking for Pondos to narrate this part of their history, because it seemed to be resurrecting painful memories. Pondo women reported that during the night soldiers raided and patrolled their houses and searched for men who were over the age of 18; these women were sexually harassed and the soldiers destroyed everything that were in their houses. Mrs. Nombulelo Thoriyawutye (Personal interview, 2002.04.24, Bizana), stated that during the night police raided their houses as if they were looking for culprits but in the true sense of the word they were harassing and abusing them spiritually, psychologically, physically and emotionally; in some instances women were even raped.



**FIGURE 10: MRS. NOMBULELO THORIYAWUTYE, VICTIM OF THE REVOLT OF 1960: THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN 23<sup>RD</sup> APRIL 2002**

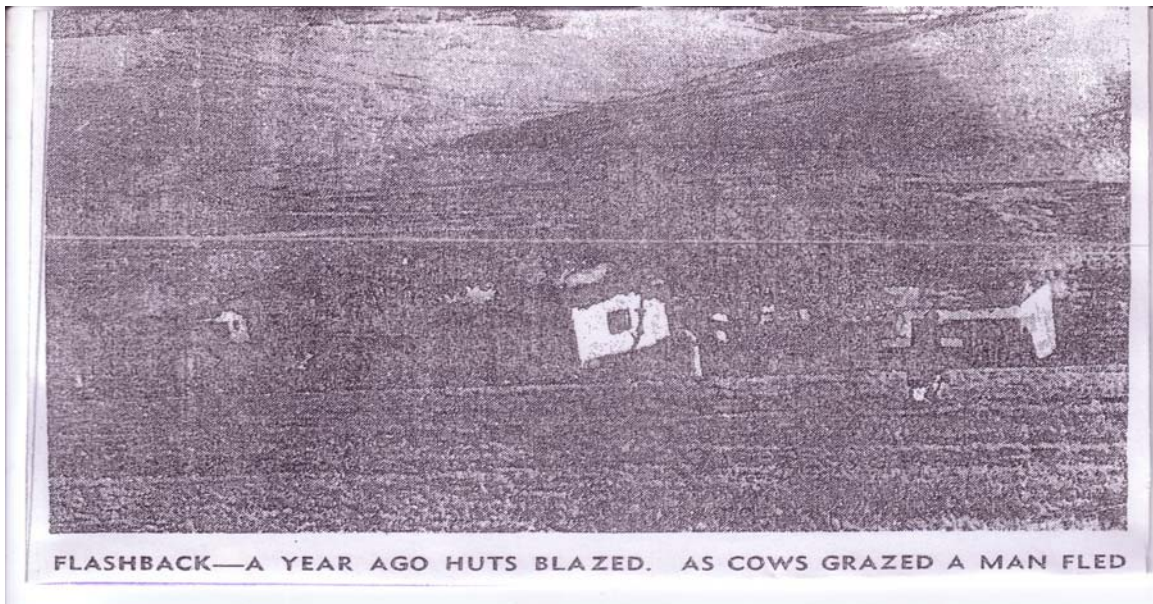
Mbeki (1964:126-127) describes the abuse of Pondo women and men by police:

Many peasants have reported how soldiers and police burst into their huts at night and looked on while women, taken by surprise, crossed hands over the front of their bodies to hide their nakedness. They have told of how their food was looted, their milk cans and calabashes turned upside down and emptied, their money stolen. Stories are common of how some of the army and the police interfered with women and forced them to have sexual intercourse with them, of how men were made to stand or sit down in a double-up position, with their arms tied and thrown over a stick slipped behind the knees, so that their skin over the buttocks was fully stretched and the area properly exposed to beating or kicking. Others have related how they were made to stand against a wall and their heads bashed against it until they collapsed.

Thoriyawutye experienced actual harassment after the incident on Ngquza Hill. She had twins who were six months old. During the night when the police were raiding houses, they kicked down her door and entered the house; she jumped



through the window and broke her hip. The police did not notice her and left the house; she stayed there for the whole night because she was in pain and unable to move. Her twins cried the entire night until she received help in the morning. She has been crippled since that night.



**FIGURE 11: FROM DRUM MAGAZINE 1960 FEBRUARY**

The picture from *Drum* illustrates the huts that were burnt: they belonged to Pondos who were suspected to be informers for the Botha Sigcau and the Government. About 200 huts had been destroyed since the beginning of the revolt in 1960. Men, women and children fled for their lives and sought refuge in the army's camps. It seems, however, that the presence of the soldiers in Pondoland created more conflict than peace. As a result of these incidents most Pondos developed a negative attitude towards the Government. Pondo men started retaliating by attacking all the chiefs, headmen and people who were supporters of Botha Sigcau and the Government. Most of the huts that belonged to such individuals were burnt together with their livestock, and some people were killed. There was a civil revolution amongst the Pondos themselves.

*Drum*<sup>11</sup> reports a priest's concern about the starvation and military presence in Pondoland as follows:

A priest to whom I spoke put it more bluntly: "The truth is the people are starving. If the Government could direct its intense energies into setting up gigantic feeding schemes and emergency relief stations, we might get more peace around here. Saracens and helicopters are not the answers."

Saul Mabude, the chairman of the District Authority, was a victim; his kraal was burnt to ashes and his pigs and fowls were slaughtered, while his hut was set on fire by other Pondos. A source<sup>12</sup> states that the assaults on chiefs and government informers occurred as follows:

On the 9<sup>th</sup> March 1960, a meeting was held at the Great Place of Sub-chief Mahlabauvelile Hlamandana at Isikelo and three councillors were seriously assaulted. On the 20<sup>th</sup> March 1960, the Kraal of Saul Mabude, who is a member of the Isikelo Tribal Authorities was burnt down.

Chief Vukayibambe Sigcau of Hewu was killed together with his two indunas. *New Age*<sup>13</sup> reported his death:

Following on the assassination of Chief Vukayimbambe Sigcau and two of his indunas....After the meeting of Nqindilili Hill was dispersed the people found that two members of the tribe had died of gunshot wounds and that four were seriously injured, two with assegai wounds. Eye-witnesses reported that these wounds were inflicted by Chief Sigcau and his indunas. The following day the tribesmen held another meeting at which it was reported that one of the tribesmen had been beaten up and arrested by Sigcau and his indunas. This it was alleged, was done in the presence of a large contingent of police. Late that night, after the police had left, angry tribesmen attacked the Chief's kraal and released the arrested tribesmen who was bound with chains and rope. He was in the same hut as the Chief and three of his indunas. The Chief and his indunas were killed by angry tribesmen when they saw their compatriot badly injured, with weal's all over his body and a big gash on his head.

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<sup>11</sup>February 1962, p17.

<sup>12</sup> CMT 3/1472, REF H2/2, VOL 709, "Report of Departmental Committee o Enquiry Unrest in Eastern Pondoland.

<sup>13</sup>Thursday December 1, 1960, p 1, Vol 7, No 7.



**FIGURE 12: THE PICTURE SHOWS THE SITE OF THE HUT WHERE CHIEF VUKAYIBAMBE AND HIS TWO INDUNAS WERE KILLED: TAKEN ON 23<sup>RD</sup> APRIL 2002**

Point A indicates where the first hut of Vukayibambe was situated. After his murder the hut was burnt to ashes.



**FIGURE 13: THE NEW HOUSE BUILT AFTER CHIEF VUKAYIBAMBE AND HIS TWO INDUNAS WERE KILLED AND BURNT INSIDE THE HUT: TAKEN ON THE 23<sup>RD</sup> APRIL 2002.**



According to Chief Gwebizilwane, the elder son of the late Chief Vukayibambe, his father was killed because he was supporting the Nationalist government. Gwebizilwane is still expressing his bitterness about his father's death.



**FIGURE 14: THE GRAVE OF CHIEF VUKAYIBAMBE WITH HIS SON CHIEF GWEBIZILWANE STANDING BESIDE IT: TAKEN ON THE 22<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2002**



**FIGURE 15: THE GRAVES OF THE TWO INDUNAS WHO WERE KILLED WITH VUKAYIMBAMBE: PICTURE TAKEN ON THE 23<sup>RD</sup> APRIL 2005**

Because the Pondo people were infuriated they destroyed everything associated with white people in eastern Pondoland. The trading stores belonging to the latter were boycotted: the Tahle, Hlabathi, Stoffel Wings, Hlwahlwazi and Oosthuizen. Mr. Oosthuizen at night approached some members of the Congo and bribed them not to boycott his store since he was not pro-Government and his bribe and request were accepted. Wicks also had no choice but to plead with the members of the hill committee to allow him to open his trading store since he was not pro-Government. He was the only white person who was allowed to attend the hill committee and pleaded before it for the lifting of the boycott.

*Umthunywa*<sup>14</sup> reported Wicks' story as follows:

The story of the first and only known White man ever to attend a meeting of "The Hill" - the power-wielding Pondoland secret rebel society - was told to a Cape Times correspondent by the man himself, 23-years-old Mr. Keith Wicks. Mr. Wicks bought a trading store in the Flagstaff district, from a man who had been forced out of business by a Pondo boycott. When Mr. Wicks tried to reopen the store he, on finding that he too was being boycotted, talked to Pondos and he was told that if he wanted his business to succeed he must attend a meeting of "The Hill" and submit to its judgement... 'At the top of the hill in a great circle, sat 4,000 Pondos, I waited until it was my turn to appear before the Hill... I was in the centre of the circle for about half an hour. Each man at the meeting was allowed to ask me questions, but only one was permitted to speak at a time. They asked me many questions, but the two main ones were: "Are you Afrikaans or English-speaking?" And, "Are you now the owner of the store or managing for the past owner?" Mr. Wicks told them that he owned the store and spoke English. After a three-hour wait in the rain, Pondos came to tell him "You may open your store. The boycott will be lifted".

Mr. Wicks was fortunate because some other trading stores were burnt to ashes. At Pumlo location, thirteen miles from Lusikisiki, a trading store owned by a white man, Mr. Ken Walder, was set on fire at 2:15 a.m. Hundreds of huts were destroyed by fire but before the huts were burnt occupants were warned to vacate the premises and were psychologically, emotionally and physically abused. By this means the Pondos sent warning signs to those people who were

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<sup>14</sup>Saturday, 1960 December 24, page 3, Vol 23, No 26.

intending to be Government informers, and almost everything went out of control in Pondoland.

Redding (1996:576) provides the following statistics relating to cases heard in Bizana and the brutality of the police to the Pondos:

In Bizana district in 1960-1961, the magistrate tried 33 cases of arson (with 177 accused), 38 cases of murder or culpable homicide, nine cases of holding an illegal meeting, 250 cases of pass violation, and 76 cases of possession of dangerous weapons; but by far the most significant percentage (80 per cent) of the cases were for failure to pay taxes - 1,633 cases. In addition to arresting tax defaulters, the state suppressed the revolt by bringing in the military to assist police, by using sten guns, Saracens armoured cars, and jets. The Mobile Units frequently used brutal tactics including beating, looting, and, it was alleged, rape. The police most of whom were white, also engaged in hut-burning and killing of livestock to punish those who supported the rebels. Some pro-government chiefs and headmen carried out their own punishment in the wake of the Mobile Units' visits. These punishments included a number of hut-burnings (some resulting in deaths) and threats of physical harm, as well as punitive re-assignment of land and imposition of fines.

The state was on the side of those chiefs and headmen who were pro-the Bantu Authorities, and it issued revolvers and supplied bodyguards to any chief who had received threats from members of the hill committee. A confidential letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> June 1961,<sup>15</sup> confirming the supplying of guns to the chiefs, reads as follows:

1. I have to inform you that I have given this matter very careful consideration and after discussions with the senior officials I am of opinion that weapons such as revolvers must be distributed with the utmost caution.
2. I have no doubt that every chief in the Transkei will demand a firearm as any type of firearm is of a great value.
3. The Deputy Commissioner of Police agrees with me that firearms should only be granted to Chiefs where there is real likelihood of their being attacked:
4. The following Chiefs should be allowed revolvers during the present state of emergency

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<sup>15</sup> CMT 3/1472, REF 42/Q VOL 709, FILE NO 330/332, Confidential letter to Mr. Cronje dated 12<sup>th</sup> June 1961, ARMS FOR CHIEF: TRANSKEI.

- A. BIZANA Mbungulwa Langasiki, Xakatile Mlindazwe, Gangatha Baleni
- B. FLAGSTAFF Nelson Sigcau, Sigixana Langa
- C. LUSIKISIKI Botha Sigcau, Mdaluka Mqikela
- D. LIBODE Victor Poto
- E. QUMBU Sandy Majeke
- F. ST. MARKS Kaiser Matanzima
- G. UMTATA Sabata Dalindyebo
- H. MATATIELE George Mosheshe

The unrest in Pondoland spread rapidly to the whole of Transkei. The Pondos accused the Government of imposing repressive Acts and policies. On the other hand, the Government accused the Pondo people of being disobedient to their Paramount Chief and the Government. It seemed that no one was prepared to take the blame, since the unrest was out of control and this caused violence amongst the Pondos themselves.

#### **4.6 THE RESPONSE OF THE CHURCH**

Hofmeyr and Pillay (1994:259) describe the aim of the Church as follows:

The aim of the church is to bring about social justice. Justice must be done to the poor and oppressed and if the present system does not serve this purpose, the public conscience must be roused to demand another. If the church does not exert itself for justice in society, and together with the help she can offer, also is not prepared to serve as the champion for the cause of the poor, others will do it. The poor have a right to say: I do not ask for your charity, but I ask to be given an opportunity to live a life of human dignity (Tlhagale, 1990:9).

For many years the church was caught in a dilemma, because some denominations argued that the Nationalist policies that were discriminating against people because of their race, gender and skin colour should be dealt with. The Churches requested that all denominations should voice their concerns about the oppressive structures that were imposed upon black people. Unfortunately, a Church such as the DRC would not oppose these policies, because it was in the forefront of justifying that apartheid was based on Scriptural teaching. This on its own caused tension in most Churches. Ministers of the DRC

were strongly warned not to protest against apartheid legislation because that would embarrass the government.

In the early 1950s black leaders in the church who acted as voices to the voiceless included men like Z.K. Matthews, Chief Albert Luthuli, Rev James Calata and many others. These men were Christians at heart and their social and political involvement in the life of the Church was part and parcel of their Christian life. They never compromised their stance as far as their faith and apartheid was concerned.

The DRC was honest because it played open cards as far as its support for apartheid was concerned. It never compromised its point of departure: the strong belief that apartheid was the will of God and that Afrikaners were the chosen nation of God. Hofmeyr and Pillay (1994:254) in this regard record that: "In 1944 the general secretary of the Broederbond declared that the Broederbond is born from a deep conviction that the Afrikaner nation has been placed in this country by God's hand".

Methodists and other so-called English-speaking Churches proclaimed themselves to be one undivided Church, yet discriminated against blacks on the grounds of race. Gqubule (1996:122) describes Dugmore's concern regarding the issue of racism within the Methodist Church as follows: "Significantly Mr. Dugmore conceded that there were white Methodists who did not want black Methodists to worship in white Churches and who opposed the present trends towards the one and undivided Church".

Not only the Methodist Church kept quiet about the issue of racism in South Africa and throughout the African continent. English-speaking Churches, particularly white members, were unable to voice their concern about discrimination in the Church because they were in fact discriminating against their colleagues and benefited from the apartheid regime by virtue of being white.



Some whites worshipped with black people every Sunday, but from Monday to Saturday they were hostile because of the apartheid system. Wallis and Hollyday (1989:73) depict Chikane's relationship with his deacon as follows:

I had to be able to say to the guy who tortured me, who happens to be a deacon of my church in the white congregation, for me to live is Christ, to die is gain. If you kill me, I go to heaven, and it doesn't solve your problem. But if you release me, then I continue preaching the gospel. It does not matter which way you take it, because both ways you're going to be a loser.

People like Rev Chikane knew very well their stance and their principles as far as their conversion to Christianity was concerned; they stood by their faith and this was supposed to be the calling of the Church in the early 1950s and late 1960s. The duty of the Church was to protest consistently and persistently against apartheid and against the introduction of every conceivable new form of oppression over the years. It was the responsibility of the Church to declare the government as illegitimate. Unfortunately in the reserves the Church failed to do so because for many years it suppressed and ignored the dimension of its own tradition that emphasized social engagement. Instead the Church adopted the formulary that claimed theology and politics do not mix, which weakened the image of the Church.

As far as the issue of Pondoland was concerned the Church was timid and ignorant about the revolt that caused so much suffering. On the other hand, the church was vocal about the Sharpeville incident. The Most Reverend Professor Keet, Dr Geyser and Reverend Dr Naude of the DRC played an important role during the Cottesloe Consultation: they objected strongly to apartheid as an evil act that was against the will of God. And for this they became unpopular in the family of the DRC and they were forced to resign from their positions as DRC ministers.

The Cottesloe Consultation (CC) gave birth to the Christian Institute (CI) under the powerful leadership of Beyers Naude. The CI was formed because it taught that the CC had failed to confront the Nationalist government about its unjust

policies. The point of departure for the CI was to denounce apartheid policy as being unbiblical and unchristian and to reject it. It was in this context that people like Allan Boesak, Frank Chikane, Charles Villa-Vicencio, Bishop Desmond Tutu and others denounced apartheid as a sin and heresy. But one fails to understand why the issue of the Pondo revolt was ignored.

Mr.C.K. Gxabu (Personal interview, 2002.02.21, Flagstaff) said that the Pondos were Christian at heart but during their struggle for freedom the Church was not there for them; this made most of them lose touch with the Church because it had failed them when they needed it most. He did not deny the fact that the missionaries played an important role in the whole of Transkei, because they used to give the people shelter, food, clothing and so on, etc, which the Church failed to do. He remarked that the only thing that the Church knows is to ask for money, but when the people are in need of the Church, it is not there for them.

#### **4.7 THE AFTERMATH OF THE PONDO REVOLT OF 1960 TO 1963**

*Drum* magazine (September 1960) describes Pondoland after the revolt as Berlin after the Second World War. The villages of Pondoland were razed to the ground; people despaired because their huts had been burnt to ashes; life was difficult for women and children because there was no food. The social life of Pondo people went down the drain because families were scattered. The feasts that were usually held during initiation schools and after reaping, and wedding celebrations, were no longer observed; poverty was the only daily reality and starvation seemed to have become people's way of life. Where there had been peace and harmony, there was anger and fighting.

Dyantyi<sup>16</sup> describes his interview with one of the Pondo men who was a migrant labourer in Johannesburg, who expressed his uncle's pain during their evening family prayer meeting as follows:

That evening after supper, during the family prayers, my uncle shocked me, I had expected him to thank the Lord for having saved me from death in the terrible jungle that is Johannesburg. Instead, after going through the tribulations of his family, he asked the Lord to look after the black people who are living through times that he likened to Jews who were living in captivity. He went on: we get our bread with peril of our lives because of the sword of the wilderness. Our skin was black like an oven because of the terrible famine. They ravish the women in Zion and the maids in the cities of Juda. Princes are hanged up by their hand: the faces of elders are not honoured. They took the younger men to grind, and the children fell under the wood. The elders have ceased from the gates, the young men from their music. The joy of our hearts is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning.

This demonstrates without question that despite the tribulations through which the Pondos had gone, the element of faith was still instilled in their hearts. Despite the facts that men were arrested day and night, and that some men who were actively involved in the revolt were detained without trial, expelled and deported from Pondoland, while others were sentenced to life imprisonment or death, the Pondos cherished the hope that one day they would achieve their freedom. Life was not easy in Pondoland: it constituted the survival of the fittest.

The aftermath of the revolt comprised not only poverty, anger and hatred in Pondoland, but also heavy sentences on those who had caused unrest there. In some instances families were banned or deported. A confidential letter dated 16<sup>th</sup> November 1960<sup>18</sup> also demonstrates that deportation occurred:

In compliance with your instructions I forward a list of persons whom the Paramount Chief considers should be deported. I am unable to offer any comment in so far as those living in Bizana and Flagstaff are concerned... I am satisfied that the following persons have taken a prominent part in "The Hill" or "Congo" activities:  
Embotyini Location  
MABUBANE TAMANA

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<sup>16</sup>September 1960, p 22.

<sup>18</sup> CMT 3/1472, REF H2/Q, VOL 709, Confidential letter dated 16<sup>th</sup> November 1960, Unrest: LUSIKISIKI DISTRICT.

MVEZWA DINGEZWENI  
POPOZA  
Upper Ntafufu Location  
MAKANDLELA NDODA  
Nkunzimbini Location  
GILBERT MACINGALA  
CENTSANA FEMBE (and his brother who is a witch doctor – name not known)  
The Vlei Location  
BOTTOM MATSHIBANA F (spokesmen of the 13<sup>th</sup> October 1960)  
SITEMBISO MPOSWA  
Upper Hlabati Location  
EDWARD TUCKER (Coloured who prompted Bottom on 13/10/60)

During the course of the night the police officials burned the huts of people who were opposed to the Government. No action was taken against the police and this angered the Pondos who were members of the “Hill Committee”.

The unrest in Pondoland left the Government with no choice but to impose Emergency Proclamation 400 in all South African homelands. The emergency made freedom of movement for both residents and non-residents of the homelands very difficult.

The main objective of the emergency, firstly, was to crush the revolt by training black policemen to act as special bodyguards for pro-Government chiefs. Secondly, it provided for detention without trial for any person suspected of having committed an offence or of intending to commit an offence. Thirdly, it was intended to impose iron control over unofficial or unlawful meetings. Fourthly, it empowered chiefs to try and punish any black person accused of subverting their authority and to impose penalties beyond their normal jurisdiction of R100. Lastly, it empowered the Minister of Bantu Authorities and Development to prohibit the entry into Transkei of any person or to prevent any person already there from leaving. It also accorded him the power of banishment and to curb free speech.

People such as Anderson Khumane Ganyile were banished from Transkei. Others were imprisoned and sentenced to life sentences or death, or to banishment. The *Torch*<sup>19</sup> reported the banishment of Ganyile as follows:

The government have banished Mr. Anderson Ganyile. Mr. Ganyile was banished in terms of the Suppression of Communism Act by the Minister of Justice. He is an ex-Fort Hare student who was refused re-admission when Fort Hare became a Bush college. Mr. Ganyile acted as interpreter for Mr. R. Arenstein who acted for the accused during the Pondoland persecutions. This apparently made them agitators, because Mr. Arenstein was also banned and had to obtain special permission to complete this work in Pondoland.

Mr. C.K. Gxabu (Personal interview, 2002.04.21, Flagstaff) stated;

Mr. Arenstein was banished in Transkei not because he was an agitator and instigating the revolt, but because he wanted the truth to be revealed about the actual cause of death of the eleven Pondo heroes that were killed on the 6 June 1960 at Ngquza Hill. Arenstein's investigation made him to be unpopular to the Nationalist Government, because he insisted that the bodies of eleven Pondos who were killed at Ngquza Hill should be exhumed for evidence purposes that they were shot while they were running.

Many chiefs who were opposed to the Bantu Authorities Act were also banished from Transkei. Chief Mhlabuvelile Hlamandana of the Sikelo location in Pondoland and his mother were banned from Bizana under the Native Administration Act of 1927, and were removed to Groblersdal. Mhlabuvelile was strongly influenced by his mother who persuaded him not to pay the fees and fines levied by the court to the tribal authorities. He further incited his followers to assault three councillors and to burn their kraal. He also forced people to attend illegal meetings.

These bannings and heavy sentences created tension between the Pondos and the Government. The names of people whom Pondos regarded as their heroes, because they were hanged for refusing to be oppressed in the land of their own birth, follow (Mbeki 1964: appendix 4):

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<sup>19</sup>Wednesday, 16 November 1960, p 3.

Mjanyelwa Mnconco from Mpisi location.  
Yiva Voyoyo from Bizana.  
Zwelibanzi Kwetshuba executed 29.3.62.  
The following men were from Isikelo location, Bizana. Executed March 1962  
for the murder of Chief Vukayibambe:  
Voxwana Mapamela.  
Shadrack George.  
Wilson Ngobe.  
Masipalati Nkomo.  
Samani Mpanbaniso.  
Maduse Sandlobe.  
Nenjulwa Ngwevu was sentenced to death for disregarding the Bantu  
Authorities.

Such brutality most people in these reserves would not forget. Some breadwinners of their families were permanently removed. Those who were temporarily removed through banishment had lost all they possessed when they returned to Pondoland: land, livestock and some members of their families. In addition, dreadful diseases such as Kwashiorkor affected the children.

*Drum*<sup>20</sup> describes the pain of a Pondo woman as follows:

Mrs. Blayi told me: This is the ploughing season. My husband, Nyamayipeli, and our two sons, Thomas and Hlati, are in the death cell in Pretoria waiting for the hangman. They were found guilty of murdering Chief Standford Nomagqwathekana. I must do all the work. There are no men here any more...

Life was very difficult in Pondoland after the revolt. Petros Notha (Personal interview, 2002.04.24, Bizana) expressed the feelings of the Pondos after the revolt (this quotation is verbatim translated from Xhosa):

We don't regret because we were fighting a just war, and for that matter, we were protecting our land. Despite the tribulations that we went through, that was supposed to be part and parcel of the revolt. The blood of innocent men that was spilt during the revolt was the sign of victory and today we are rejoicing as Pondos that South Africa is free because of the blood that was shed at Ngquza Hill, and we salute all those who were hanged for refusing to give up what belonged to their fore-fathers. Therefore we don't regret instead we are rejoicing.

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<sup>20</sup>February 1960, p13.

Albert Luthuli's view of freedom, as recorded in Hofmeyr and Pillay (1994:271), contains similar sentiments:

I try... in a spirit of trust and surrender to God's will as I see it, to say: "God will provide". It is inevitable that in working for freedom some individuals and some families must take the lead and suffer. The Road to Freedom is via the Cross (Karis and Carter, 1977:489).

#### **4.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has demonstrated the real cause of the Pondo revolt, and effects that had caused the Pondo people to revolt against unjust laws such as Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 that had caused great schism amongst the Pondos. The church that was supposed to be the mouth - piece of the people was quiet about the revolt, instead the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) was supporting the unjust policies and unlawful laws that were against human rights. This demoralized Pondos and most of them lost hope in church. Some few members of the Main-line churches had played important role to voice their concern about the evil that was portrayed by the apartheid system. The revolt had cost many lives of the Pondo people but that made Pondo people to be very strong because the blood that flowed was regarded as the water that nurtured the seed of liberation.

## CHAPTER 5

### 5.1 CONCLUSION

When the Europeans settled in South Africa in the seventeenth century, the political atmosphere in South Africa altered. Colonization changed the socio-economic and political history of South Africa, and that of the continent as a whole. It implemented a policy of segregation that was later changed to strict apartheid by the Nationalist government when it came to power in 1948. It is very interesting to notice that when the Cape Colony took over the Transkei between 1878 and 1894 eastern Pondoland was the last territory to be annexed in 1894. This on its own tells a story about the Pondo people.

As mentioned in chapter two the Pondos were people who had believed in themselves before the advent of colonialism. They respected the authority and the political structures of the time, and observed their own rituals and customs. Land and livestock were their priorities: the sources of their income and wealth. Though the political atmosphere altered, the transition period from the pre-to the post-colonial era demonstrated the fact that the missionaries exerted great influence in Pondoland. They were the key people who were able to convince the kings to repent and cease their ancestral worship, which the missionaries believed to be heathen practices.

After 1894 society in Pondoland experienced instability because the people were dispossessed of their land. The late 1950s and early 1960s were perceived as the main years of black resistance in South Africa, and in other countries where oppression was based on gender, race or colour. It seemed that resistance in South Africa was worsened by the Nationalist government itself when it came to power in 1948.



After 1948 unrest in South Africa increased, owing to the laws and policies that were implemented, based on racial grounds. Political leaders such as Albert Luthuli, Oliver Tambo, Govan Mbeki, Nelson Mandela, Alan Paton, Robert Sobukwe, Clarence Makwetu and others were imprisoned or harassed for protesting against these diabolical Acts and policies. Church leaders such as Archbishop Geoffrey Clayton, Bartholomeus Keet, Ben Marais, Beyers Naude, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Alan Boesak, Frank Chikane, Charles Villa-Vicencio and others, became the voice of the voiceless during the years of apartheid.

However, other church leaders condoned apartheid as being justified by Scripture. Professor E.P. Groenewald of the Dutch Reformed Church was one of the key persons who affirmed that racial segregation was grounded in Scripture. The issue of Church-State relations in South Africa was emphasized by this argument. Villa-Vicencio (1986:82) observes:

The churches have accepted the formula, which has been prescribed over the years by a succession of rulers, both within and without the church. It is a formula, which says theology and politics don't mix. The church has suppressed and ignored that dimension of its own tradition, which emphasized social engagement. It has been said that the best-kept secret in the theology of the church is that theology which requires the church to be engaged in social, political, and economical issues.

Villa-Vicencio implied that the church as a whole was applying double standards: on one hand, those theologians who were members of the Dutch Reformed Church and members of the Nationalist government justified apartheid as being affirmed by Scripture. On the other hand, theologians from the mainline churches used the same Scripture to condemn apartheid as an evil act that was against the Law of God. The members of parliament or of the Nationalist government argued that religion and politics did not mix. The issue was the fact that the Nationalists were using scripture when it suited them and for their own political gain rather than for building the kingdom of God. A few Christians were vocal in this regard but most English speaking churches were silent about the issue of apartheid and scripture.

Madise (1999:36) commented as follows:

The Anglican Bishop of Namibia, Colin Winter, who was exiled, used to say these words "The church is a harlot, but that harlot is my mother" (Gqubule 1996:106). What Colin Winter meant by these words was simply that the church participates in what is taking place in a large society, and especially in collaborating with the secular powers. This simply illustrates that, when the secular powers perform unjust actions, the church follows by doing the same. An example of that is the irreparable damage done to the black people of South Africa by mass removals and Bantu Education. When these removals took place, the church kept quiet about this whole problem and at times co-operated with the state.

It is evident that the Church contributed to the suffering of black people by keeping silent when policies were ungodly.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1983:37) also observed regarding Religion, Politics and the DRC:

It is strange that this happens only when a particular socio-political and economic policy is denounced as being unchristian or unjust. If that same policy is described by religious leaders as being in accordance with Christianity, then there is no question in this instance of a religious person being accused of mixing religion with politics. The White Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) in South Africa for a long time sought to provide scriptural justification for the Nationalist Party policy of Apartheid. Nowhere was the cry uttered that this was mixing politics with religion; whereas when other South African Christians declared apartheid to be abhorrent to the Christian conscience, then people were told that religion and politics belonged in separate categories and that it was wrong to mix them. We need to add in fairness to the DRC that one hears less and less today that apartheid can be justified scripturally.

However, Villa-Vicencio and De Gruchy (1985:123-124) concur with Archbishop Tutu's description of Church-State relations:

...The third theological axiom of church-state relations is that Christ is the lord of both theology and politics. In other words, theology and politics are inextricably bound together. For the state to endeavour to refute this is to take on more than a few turbulent priests. Rather, it is confronting a long and stubborn tradition. It would, of course, be quite unrealistic to expect any regime to negate itself in responding to the demands of the church. When this critique and consequent vision is, however, part of the dream, which constitutes the aspiration of a large black majority in the country, politically it dare not be disregarded. Theologically on the other hand, the

church dare do nothing other than speak on behalf of the poor, the marginalized and the voiceless, because this is part of its New Testament identity. It is obliged to show a special concern for the poor, because God is seen in the Scriptures to show a preferential option for the poor...The theological imperative to speak for the poor cannot be divorced from a political obligation to present their demand to a government that fails, by virtue of denying them the franchise, to represent their interests.

According to the afore-mentioned theologians the duty and obligation of the Church is to take an active role in the social life of people, particularly when the marginalized are deprived of their human rights and dignity as human beings created in the image of God. However, on the other hand, one cannot deny the fact that the English-speaking Churches played a prominent part in some instances. For example, during 1960 Churchmen and women voiced their concern about the oppressive structures that denied black people any sense of dignity.

As early as 1950 the Nationalist government ignored these grievances. This led to the Sharpeville massacre on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 1960 when many went to the local police station to resist the pass law that discriminated against them and deprived them of freedom of movement in the country of their birth. Sharpeville attracted the attention of the World Council of Churches (WCC), which called the South African member churches, including the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK) of the Cape Province and Transvaal, to a consultation at Cottesloe, outside Johannesburg. The objective of the consultation was to reject apartheid policies, which were detrimental to human dignity.

The Cottesloe Consultation (CC) issued a statement that reads, "we recognize that all racial groups who permanently inhabit our country are part of our total population, and we regard them as indigenous" (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1986:200). It is very interesting to notice that this was the mission statement of the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, when he addressed Parliament in February 2005. He stated clearly: "South Africa belongs to those who live in it". This implies that all

people who live in South Africa, whether black or white, should be proud of being South Africans.

During the era of resistance leaders such as Beyers Naude played an important role establishing the Christian Institute (CI), with the intention of taking over where the Cottesloe Consultation had left off. The CI continued the ecumenical dialogue that had been started by the CC. The main concern of the CI was to involve all denominations in Bible studies to proclaim social justice. From this context Beyers Naude used Acts 4:19-20 as his point of departure concerning authority and the Church-State relationship. In this famous scriptural text that Christians should obey God rather than man, he encouraged black people to obey God rather than the state.

The aim of the Christian Institution was to pursue the economical dialogue that was started by Cottesloe. Christians from all denominations were involved by means of bible study and other activities (cf Hofmeyr and Pillay 1995: 275). From this activities “The Message to the People of South Africa” emerged which enjoined the Christians to reject apartheid and obey God rather than man. In 1960 the Church was vocal about, legislation and policies that were detrimental to the future of black people and about Sharpeville, but one fails to understand why the Church was very quiet or ignorant about the Pondoland shooting of 6 June 1960. The 1960 unrest in Pondoland was caused by the political atmosphere of the day as already mentioned in chapter four.

During this study dissertation it was observed that the Pondos would not accept anything contrary to their will. Hence they fought tooth and nail to disobey the Nationalists’ authority. One may say that this implied that the Nationalist government obliged the Pondo people to revolt. Turok (n.d:13) supports this point as follows:

Every struggle develops a momentum of its own; and as the struggle progresses new concepts arise, new demands are made, and the participants are locked in battle on a higher level. The Pondo Revolt is no

exception, as can be seen from the changes that have taken place in the demands and approach of the Pondos during the course of the struggle. In their first protests against Government dictatorship, the Pondos limited their demands to the issues that were of immediate concern. Even though the Government likes to pretend that the Pondos were stirred up by “outside agitators,” the truth is that the Government pressed the people so hard that they had to fight back. Furthermore, initially, their methods of struggle were the traditional ones - the holding of meetings, deputations to the magistrate, and, as the crisis deepened, the burning of huts and expulsion of undesirables from their midst.

When one takes into consideration the whole issue of the political atmosphere in Pondoland, and the question arises, “where was the church during the Pondo revolt of 1960 to 1963?”, the answer would be, “the church was there but silent or ignorant”. In the true sense of the word one could say that the DRC needs to be blamed for the entire situation that took place when the Nationalist government came into power in 1948. In the same breath, one could acknowledge that the DRC was a political base for the Nationalist government: therefore, it had no choice but to support and to protect this party as any other political party would have done, because of the political context of the day.

One should always bear in mind that not all theologians of the DRC supported the notion that apartheid was scripturally justified. And on the same note not all theologians from the English-speaking churches disagreed with this notion. However, it seems that the DRC and the Nationalist government were not concerned about or aware of the end results of apartheid policies. The unrest in the whole of South Africa emerged from the resistance against apartheid. The English-speaking Churches were partly to be blamed for being biased when dealing with political issues that were affecting the people of South Africa and particularly for neglecting rural areas.

The Pondo people no longer felt confidence in the Church because it had failed to protect them during the time when they needed it most. The Churches, both the DRC and the English-speaking Churches, need to admit that they have failed

to perform their obligations as the mouthpiece of the marginalized, because people lost their loved ones, their wealth and their property. The socio-economic fabric of Pondoland was damaged and it seems that no one is prepared to heal the wounds of the Pondo people, especially their anger and their bitterness.

Therefore, the present moment is a golden opportunity for the DRC and the English speaking Churches as well as the present State, to visit Pondoland in order to heal the wounds of the children and grandchildren of those Pondo people who died for the sake of liberation. The Church and the State should implement feeding schemes that could alleviate the poverty that was caused by the revolt of 1960; introduce counselling programmes that would heal the wounds that were caused by the apartheid policies; and create bursary schemes that would assist the grandchildren of the victims of the revolt.

However, such reparations should not be applied to the to Pondo people alone but to all those who were the victims of the apartheid regime during the struggle in the 1950s. In future the Church as well as the state should not repeat the same mistake in neglecting the inhabitants of the reserves, because most Africans today are still suffering spiritually, emotionally and psychologically.

Let me conclude by quoting Jafta (1997:41):

Racial conflicts in South Africa's history resulted in the loss of many lives. What distinguishes the Ntabelanga massacre from others, such as the Sharpeville massacre of 1960, is the strong religious element in it. At no time previously in the history of South Africa had religion played such an obvious and significant role as it did at Ntabelanga. A combination of Christianity, traditional religion and politics was, ironically, unintentionally responsible for the massacre. If victory is considered by the number of casualties in a war, then one can say that the government of the day won. But if other factors are to be considered, such as moral courage, demand for human dignity, as well as the refusal to accept blatant racism, oppression and dispossession, then the Israelites won the day.

Jafta implies that despite the suffering and deaths that the Pondo people experienced during the struggle for their liberation in 1960 the Pondos have won

the battle through their moral courage. It is in this context that Musawenkosi Nonkonyani (personal interview, 2002.04.26, Flagstaff) commented as follows about the aftermath of the revolt (this quotation is translated verbatim from Xhosa):

We the Pondo people don't regret that our fathers and brothers were killed at Ngquza Hill for the sake of protecting our forefathers' land and liberating us from the bondage of apartheid. Because today we are proud to say that Pondo people played a prominent role in liberating South Africans. Today South Africa is enjoying the fruits of democracy because of the blood of the martyrs that was shed at Ngquza Hill on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1960.

APPENDIX "A"

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...efs, Headmen, Councillors, and People.

I have come here to-day to announce to you the decision of His Excellency the Governor-General in the matter of the chieftainship of Eastern Pondoland.

Before making that announcement it is necessary that I should tell you some of the historical facts on which the decision has been based and also remind you that the appointment of a Chief is a matter for the Government whose decision must of course be respected by all.

No.

It is unfortunate that in the present case there are two claimants and that each of them has strong support throughout Pondoland. The Government as a good father of the people consults his children in a matter affecting their welfare and if possible gives effect to their wishes.

As opinion was divided His Excellency the Governor-General had to make a final decision between the two sides.

It is clear that, prior to the time of Chief Nyawuza, to the reigning Chief was in accordance with Fonde custom among the commoners to this day, and the eldest son of the first wife was recognised as the rightful successor. In Nyawuza's time, however, a change was made and the chief wife, towards whose dowry the tribe contributed and who was married only after a number of other wives, became the mother of the future Chief. Ngqungqushu, son of Nyawuza, was the first Chief born of a chief wife.

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05/08/16

Ngqungqushu's chief wife had a son, Pakane, who was of weak intellect and who was regarded as unfit to succeed. Faku was selected to succeed.

Faku

why

In the time of Faku the Chief himself selected Ndamase, eldest son of his first wife, to succeed him, but Ndamase declined the honour and sought for and obtained for his father a chief wife from the Amanci tribe who, in due course, presented him with a son, Mqikela, and the latter became Chief.

Mqikela married a number of women and, later, following the custom, a daughter of Sarili, Chief of the Gcaleka tribe, as

or



chief wife, but she bore no children. It was proposed that Ndibaniso, son of a minor wife, should be recognised as heir but to this strong objection was voiced by Cetywayo, eldest son of the first wife married, who claimed to succeed, failing issue in the Great House. After a discussion by the principal men of the tribe, including those from Western Pondoland, Cetywayo's claim was apparently upheld, but he died before his father. Sigcau, son of a minor house was then adopted by the chief wife and he, in due course, succeeded to the chieftainship.

Sigcau married a number of women before his accession and, after that, the daughter of a Chief in Natal (Majali), but she bore no children and again a selection from among the sons of the minor houses was made and this son, Marelane, became Chief, despite the fact that the eldest son of the first wife married was then alive.

Marelane married first Mapakati, mother of Botha, and, later, Mandwane, who had no issue, then a chief wife by name Mankosinani. He afterwards married Mamshibeni, mother of Nelson, and Maqinehebe, mother of Mandlonke, and sundry other wives. The chief wife had several children but only one, a daughter, survived. On the death of Marelane a selection again had to be made and Mandlonke, son of Maqinehebe, was put into the Great House. During Mandlonke's minority Mwakeli, a brother of the late Chief Marelane, acted as Regent.

In due course Mandlonke was installed as Chief, but died tragically before he married a chief wife, and without leaving any male issue. Mankosinani, chief wife of Marelane, was also dead so that a position without precedent in the annals of Eastern Pondoland had arisen. There was no Chief, no male issue of the Chief and no chief wife living into whose hut it would otherwise have been in accordance with custom to place a successor.

After the death of Mandlonke and before his funeral, the councillors of the late Chief residing in the immediate vicinity of the Great Place held a private meeting and selected Nelson as Chief without consulting other members of the Royal Blood as should have been done.



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A subsequent meeting was called by Botha to discuss how the late Chief's debts were to be liquidated and some of those who attended objected to any call being made for contribution towards the debts until the future Chief had been chosen and wished to proceed to that choice at once. Botha and his followers in turn objected that, as the meeting had been called to discuss the debts the selection of a Chief could not then be dealt with. The other party was insistent and Botha, with his following, left the meeting. Some of the councillors referred to above then announced that Nelson had been selected.

In view of the disagreement, a meeting was convened by me of representatives of all the districts of Eastern Pondoland. Chief Victor Poto of Western Pondoland was also invited to be present. At this meeting the names of Botha and Nelson were put forward and eventually Chief Victor Poto was asked to adjudicate in the dispute. After withdrawing for consultation with his councillors Chief Victor Poto announced his decision in favour of Botha. Nelson's supporters refused to accept the verdict. NB.

The supporters of Botha maintain that custom has failed and that, in the absence of a Chief and of a Chief Wife, he should succeed in preference to a son of a minor house.

Nelson's supporters maintain that the son of the first wife can in no case succeed and, in support of that contention, quote a statement contained in Chief Victor Poto's book.

Chief Victor Poto was interrogated in regard to this and stated:-

"When I wrote my book I referred to the circumstances where the Chief Wife was still alive so that the child to be selected could be, as it were, borne by her. On this occasion there is no Great House and the Chief is dead. That house is therefore finished. An appeal has to be made to the Pondó custom in regard to inheritance. If there had been a Chief Wife she would have been able to select the 'Intsokanqanji' (the eldest son of the first woman married) of the previous generation. I say that this would not be in conflict with the statement in my book because the Chief Wife is given the right to bear a son for herself from among the sons of her late husband by his other wives".

On this point it is interesting to recall that Ndamase, son of Faku by his first wife, was actually selected to succeed and that  
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the attempt to supersede Cetywayo, also a son of the first wife, by a son of a minor house was frustrated. This disposes of the contention that the son of the first wife married can never be considered.

It is clear that, in default of male issue in the house of the chief wife, the selection of a successor has, in the past, been made in consultation with the chief wife.

According to Pondo custom, as applying to commoners, the first woman married is the Great Wife and the second the Right Hand Wife. On failure of male issue in the Great House the son of the Right Hand House succeeds to the Great House. In the case of a Chief marrying a woman, to whose dowry the tribe has contributed, she becomes the Great Wife and the woman first married the Right Hand Wife.

In the present instance, and in the absence of any parallel case in Pondo history, the logical course to pursue would seem to be to follow the ordinary Pondo custom.

It is recognised that the custom obtaining in Eastern Pondoland of selecting a son of a minor house to become a son of the chief wife, in the absence of male issue by her, should, where circumstances permit, be maintained and the decision in the present case should not be regarded as a final break away from that custom.

His Excellency the Governor-General has decided that Botha Sigcau shall be the Chief of Eastern Pondoland and I call upon all people in Pondoland to show him the respect which is due and to obey him in all things lawful.

Chief Botha, I now hand you your letter of appointment. I counsel you to show wisdom and forbearance in your dealings with your people and to render implicit obedience to the Government.

You have been called to occupy the highest position in the Pondo Nation and your responsibilities are therefore great.

It is my earnest wish that you should by your conduct justify the trust which is now reposed in you.

You are aware that a section of your people have opposed your appointment /....

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

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PA

appointment but I hope you will forget this and deal so fairly with them that they will come to rejoice that the Government chose you.

To your brother Nelson who no doubt will for a time feel a sense of bitter disappointment your sympathy should be extended and I hope that you and he will become good friends. You are his Chief and he must respect you but he is your brother and should be your friend.

I wish you joy in your chieftainship and a place in the affections of your people.

To the Ponde people I wish good rains, a plentiful crop and a happy Christmas.



CONSTITUTION OF THE CONGO.

19/11/60.

424 (5)

The laws of the Congo are as follows : *Sever. Govt 2/1472*  
Obey the Congo. *VOL- 709*  
*REF 4/2 330/332*

APPENDIX B

1. Cases must not be taken to the sub-Chiefs.
2. Cases are dealt with by Congo.
3. Murder cases are to be taken to Town.
4. We must not go to Bota because we told them that we do not want him together with his sub-Chiefs.
5. Lands and Kraal sites are to be given by Congo.
6. We do not want Bantu Authorities.
7. A supporter of Bantu Authorities who wants to be a Congo must pay the sum of £25.3.6.
8. A person who does not join the Congo will be called a *jendevu* and must pay £5.3.6. When he does not pay it we must see to him.
9. When a Chief wants to join the Congo must pay £25.3.6.
10. When a woman does not want to get married to man, the lobolo must be returned to the man.
11. When it is the man who does not want the woman the lobolo must be retained.
12. When a person assaults another he must pay £10 cash.
13. Gavini is prohibited to the Congo.
14. Dances are closed by the Congo.
15. Parties are closed.
16. Congo meetings will be opened by prayers and closed by prayer. Respect Congo.
17. Chief indunas must collect monies from their people, whoever does not pay the money, the Induna must bring him to the Congo. Don't be afraid of anything.

CHIEF MAGISTRATE HOOFLANDSDORP.  
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 DEPT. OF DEVELOPMENT  
 PRETORIA.  
 16/11/60  
 CHIEF MAGISTRATE HOOFLANDSDORP

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1. Gxabu, Clement (21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2002, FLAGSTAFF)  
Taweni location  
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Eastern Cape.
2. Ganyile, Mthethunzima (27<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2003, BIZANA)  
Kwa-Dunge location  
Bizana  
Eastern Cape.
3. Nonkonyane, Musawenkosi.(26<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2002, FLAGSTAFF)  
Bhala location  
Flagstaff  
Eastern Cape.
4. Notha, Petros (24<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2002, BIZANA)

Magusheni location  
Bizana  
Eastern Cape.

5. Sigcau, Gwebizilwane. Chief (17<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2002, FLAGSTAFF)  
Hewu location  
Flagstaff  
Eastern Cape.
6. Sigcau, Joseph (17<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2002, LUSIKISIKI)  
Mtshayelo location  
Lusikisiki.  
Eastern Cape
7. Thoriyawutye, Nompumelelo ( 24<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2002, BIZANA)  
Magusheni location  
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