Chapter 3

3.1. The reconstitution of the PAC as a liberation movement in Diaspora (1960-1963).

The literature on the reconstitution of the PAC and its re-emergence as a fairly coherent and functioning organisation in exile is limited. The reconstitution of the PAC was a long drawn-out process which spanned the period 1960 to 1990. This chapter focuses on the initial period, 1960-1963, which is not covered in existing literature and research. The tendency, in existing literature, is to focus on the weaknesses of the exiled PAC without any reflection on how it was reconstituted as a liberation movement under new and different conditions of exile.\(^1\) This can be explained, partly by the fact that the initial temporality of exile communities and the clandestine nature of their existence resulted in a situation whereby very little was recorded and kept, even by PAC members themselves, of the experiences of re-forming the PAC in exile. The communities formed by members of the exile liberation organisations were, scattered, constantly mobile, unstable and not well organized during the initial period.\(^2\) This was because of the fact that most of the leadership was either in detention or serving jail sentences on Robben Island prison or in other prisons in South Africa. Besides, the political environment in the neighbouring states such as Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana was hostile, given the fact that these states were not independent during the period 1960 to 1962. They were, in fact, British protectorates. In other words, PAC members were loosely scattered in the BLS states, some in Accra, Ghana, in Cairo, Egypt and also in London, England. The nucleus from which the official PAC organ was born, remained in Maseru, Lesotho, until the end of 1963, when PAC headquarters was moved to Dar-es-Salaam, in Tanzania. All these factors made it difficult for scholars to study the re-constitution of the PAC during this period. This chapter examines the formation of the PAC as a liberation movement in

\(^1\) To identify these tendencies, see the works by Tom Lodge, ‘Revolutionary exile politics, 1960-1975’, pp. 296-360 in Black Politics in South Africa since 1945; Howard Barrel: The Outlawed South African Liberation Movements; Stephen M Davis: Apartheid’s Rebels: inside South Africa’s Hidden War.

Lesotho during this under-researched period, but also reflects on PAC developments in other parts of the world.

The initial section examines how the first group of PAC exiles established themselves in Maseru before the launch of a formal PAC structure in 1962. It uncovers the detail of the conditions under which PAC exiles lived in Lesotho and the implications these conditions had on the development of the organisation. The second section examines attempts by the first group of exiles to develop strategy documents for the organisation. These documents, even though very basic in content, were intended to guide the activities of the organisation. The third section examines PAC activities in other parts of the world during the period 1960 – 1963. Lastly the chapter examines the formation of the South African United Front, an alliance between the PAC, ANC, South African Indian Congress and the South West African National Union.

From the outset, it should be noted that the attempts to close the gap which exists in the exile history of the PAC, i.e. the period 1960 to 1963, will always be fraught with enormous difficulties. First, the small exile communities formed by PAC members, in Lesotho, were characterised by the constant arrival of new members and the departure of old ones. In other words, this attests to the looseness and discreteness of the PAC exile community during the early stages. The difficulties which this brings into the study is that to discern trends or patterns of the initial development of the organisation becomes difficult. This is exacerbated by the fact that existing research, archival material and literature covering this period is also fraught with gaps. To uncover critical information about how the ‘Africanists’ re-formed their organisation under completely different circumstances, the chapter draws from bits and pieces of available archival materials and literature but relies heavily on oral information. Available oral evidence reveals, though hazily, some of the important issues in this regard. One is acutely aware of the potential weaknesses of oral information in historical research. Given that oral information is based on memory-derived narratives, the “dialectic of remembering and forgetting” may

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3 Interviews conducted with S. Tokoane, Pretoria, 30 October 2002; Elliot Mfaya, Kingwilliams Town, 22 July 1998.
sometimes cast doubts on the epistemological qualities of research findings.\textsuperscript{4} Hence the oral sources and information generated is cross-corroborated amongst several informants and with limited but recognised scholarly works.

The banning of the PAC on April 8, 1960, created a number of unforeseen problems for the eleven month old organisation. Its top leadership was imprisoned and Sobukwe, the PAC President, was sentenced to three years in prison and his colleagues in the national executive, to two years in prison. Others in the lower echelons of the organisation were given 18 months prison sentences. The only layer of leadership which remained outside custody included people like Nanha Mahomo and Peter Molotsi who had left the country on the 20\textsuperscript{th} March 1960 on the instruction that they should mobilise the international community, including the rest of Africa, against Apartheid and also generate resources for the establishment of PAC bases outside South Africa.

As if Sobukwe knew what was going to happen shortly after the state of emergency was declared and the Pan Africanist Congress was banned, he appointed Mr ZB Molete as Acting President. Sobukwe acted in terms of the Presidential Decree adopted in December 1959.\textsuperscript{5} Even though Z.B. Molete was imprisoned during the period following the banning of the PAC, he was released from prison in August 1960 and this helped to provide a limited degree of leadership for the exiled PAC. He acted as President of the PAC until August 1962.\textsuperscript{6} Molete, Mahomo and Molotsi were targeted by Sobukwe to lead the process towards the re-formation of the PAC outside South Africa. As indicated in the previous section, Mahomo and Molotsi were tasked to raise funds for the creation of the PAC rudimentary infrastructure in Maseru (Lesotho) and set up PAC missions in Accra (Ghana), London (England) and in Cairo (Egypt).\textsuperscript{7} These were not fully-fledged offices with full infrastructure as would be expected, but were merely contact points for

\textsuperscript{4} Pierre Nora: “Between Memory and History”, Representations, 26 Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory, 1989, pp. 8-9.
\textsuperscript{5} PAC Archives: ‘Background to crucial appointments and policy statement’, 20\textsuperscript{th} June 1964, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{7} B. Leeman: Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania, p. 100; Interview between Malcom Dyan and A. Mahlangu, Cape Town, October, 1990.
the PAC in these countries. Different ideological and political tendencies developed in these various offices and there was a dominant tendency of disloyalty to the center of authority (in Maseru). This will be examined in-depth in the following chapter, when more attention will be given to the generation of conflict within the exiled PAC. Suffice it to say that a perception was created among non-PAC members that “there were different PACs in every part of the world”.

It needs to be highlighted that the ‘official status’ of the Maseru PAC was contested. C.L. Lakaje, a PAC official based in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, argued in his submission to the Africa Liberation Committee of the OAU, (made in 1967), that Potlake Leballo (who became Acting President of the ‘official PAC in Lesotho), “unilaterally declared Maseru the headquarters of the PAC. This caused great consternation in the ranks of the PAC”, but given the circumstances of illegality of the PAC in South Africa, and the closeness of Lesotho to South Africa, PAC members had no choice but to join the Maseru group. This was confirmed in an interview with the late Dr Mantshontsho who maintained emphatically that “it was by chance that Maseru became the headquarters of the PAC in 1962 and it was unfortunate that Leballo grabbed the helms of its leadership”. Even though the authenticity of Maseru as the headquarters and official center of power was contested, it was widely recognised as the official PAC headquarters. When the headquarters were relocated to Dar-es-Salaam in 1964, Maseru continued to function as a PAC mission. Established research in this field also concurs that the first official exile PAC organ was established in Maseru, Lesotho, in 1962.

The Lesotho office of the PAC was officially opened in Bonhomme House in Maseru in 1962 when P.K. Leballo arrived from South Africa, after serving a two-year prison sentence for his role in the anti-pass campaign. Leballo took over from Z.B. Molete as

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8. Interview with W Mazamisa, Cape Town, 1 May 2000. Mazamisa lived in the Netherlands for ten years and had contacts with seemingly disparate organs of the PAC in Europe.


10. Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Umtata, 13 February 1995, a member of the National Executive Committee of the PAC in exile and lived both in Dar-es-Salaam and later in London.

acting President of the exiled PAC. The point of interest at this stage is what happened before Leballo came to Maseru and what were the processes prior to the official launch of the exile PAC.

As far back as April 1960, individuals and groups of people from South Africa, some ANC members and other PAC members started trickling into the neighbouring states of Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland. It was in Maseru, the capital of Lesotho, where a significant presence of PAC membership established itself. They were initially a loose grouping interspersed amongst the native Basotho population who out of goodwill and sympathy with the political situation of black South Africans, accommodated them. Some Basotho people in the township accommodated South African PAC refugees on the basis of their understanding, however limited, of the relationships between the PAC and the Basotho Congress Party, of which P.K. Leballo was its founding member and patron. During the initial period, when the first groups of PAC exiles trickled into Lesotho, the network of relatives of P.K. Leballo (a Basotho national and leader of the PAC) helped provide temporary accommodation to members of the PAC.

At a later stage, as the number of PAC exiles increased, Mr Ellias Skamanie, a member of the BCP provided accommodation to almost all PAC exiles. His home is still regarded by the first generation PAC exiles as the home and the first PAC camp outside South Africa. What is not clear from the interviews is whether Skamanie was tasked by the BCP to accommodate the majority of PAC exiles or whether it was on his own volition. In spite of the widely indicated positive attitude of BCP supporters towards the small but growing PAC exile community, the barrier of language is said to be a problem which made it difficult to communicate needs, advice and support. Most PAC members as Elliot Mfaxa puts it, “had to learn SeSotho under a lot of pressure”.

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13 B. Leeman: Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania, pp. 150-183.
14 This is based on interviews conducted between February 1997 and December 2000 with M. Gqobose, E. Mfaxa, M. Dyani, N. Phama, Cde Ben and B. Skosana.
At the beginning, scattered PAC exile communities were not openly politically active but were only marginally connected with what was happening in South Africa. The major pre-occupation of the first groups were concrete matters of survival. As indicated in the interview with Elliot Mfaxis, the main concern during the first few months ‘was food and accommodation’. In spite of Skamanie’s accommodation some groups of newcomers in the exile community were still in need of shelter and as a result were accommodated in temporary shelters in the backyards of houses. Even after the arrival of P.K. Leballo in August 1962, (as the new acting President of the PAC), these problems continued unabated. The more the number of PAC exiles grew in Lesotho, the more serious the problem of accommodation became. This resulted in the spread of PAC exiles to other towns and villages of Lesotho, for example, to areas such Mafeteng and Butha-buthe.

As the exile community expanded, the problems facing this community also increased. Security became a serious problem among the Lesotho-based exiles. PAC members were arrested regularly by members of the Basutoland police, either on grounds of entering the country without the necessary permits or pure suspicion of pursuing a political agenda not acceptable to the government of the day. The PAC publication The Africanist summarised the situation in the following manner:

“PAC freedom fighters escape from Vorster’s banishment, arrests, detention and imprisonment in the Republic of South Africa only to suffer the same persecutions in Basutholand. The Colonial Basutoland government not satisfied by the nefarious collaboration that exists between itself and Vorster’s Gestapo police, has decided to try out some of Vorster’s outrageous inhuman practices on PAC freedom fighters in this territory. Without giving any reasons and without any cause and/or justification for such an act the Basutholand government has restricted PAC members to the Magisterial district of Maseru and has asked them to report to the police regularly. The penalty for the violation of these orders is the withdrawal of the permit to be in Basutholand. By this desperate act, the British Imperialists hope to halt the inevitable. Come what may, PAC is irrevocably committed to overthrow white domination Now!”

16 Interview with E. Mfaxis, 22 July, 1998.
17 M. Gqobose indicated in the interview (29 July 1996) that some of the ‘cadres’ lived as squatters in the backyards of houses of BCP members in Maseru.
19 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: The Africanist, Maseru, April, 1965, p. 11.
It is clear from the above statement that PAC exiles were regarded by Basutholand authorities as illegal immigrants. Most of them entered the country without permits or official passports. The Lesotho-based PAC leadership which included people like Z.B. Molete, T.M. Ntantala, M. Gqobose and Elliot Mfaza, experienced periods of imprisonment for entering Lesotho illegally. They were required to report to the nearest police stations on a daily basis. Under such circumstances, political activity was difficult. In spite of the hardships already indicated, structures which were to lay the foundations of a fully operational exile organization, were set up during this period.

3.2. The re-constitution of PAC leadership structures in exile (1960-1962).

The question which this section seeks to answer is who remained in the leadership of the PAC after the arrest of most PAC leaders after the Sharpeville massacre, the banning of the PAC and the state of emergency in April 1960. Secondly, who constituted the leadership of the formal PAC structure in Maseru, what kind of structure was it and how was it set up? As already indicated, Z.B. Molete was appointed by Sobukwe to be the Acting President of the PAC whilst the rest of the leadership was in jail. Simultaneously, with Z.B. Molete’s appointment, which was effective from September 1960, was the appointment of J. Molefi as acting Treasurer. They both served in these positions until August 1962. Other appointments made during the PAC’s time of crisis included the appointment of Ellias Ntledibe as PAC representative in Lesotho. People acting in these positions, together with Chairpersons of PAC regions inside South Africa, constituted the National Executive Committee of the PAC. In a letter from Sobukwe dated August 25, 1962, P.K. Leballo was entrusted with the powers to act as PAC President. By the end of September 1962, the PAC convened a Presidential Council in Maseru. It was attended by groups of PAC members from various parts of Africa and all PAC regional heads from South Africa. The Council resolved to endorse the Presidential appointment of P.K. Leballo (as acting President), and elected J.N. Pokela as Secretary, M. Gqobose as member of the Presidential Council, T.M. Ntantala as member of the Presidential Council, Z.B. Molete as Secretary for Publicity and Information, Zeph Mothopeng as
Acting National Treasurer and E. Mfaxa as National Organiser.\textsuperscript{20} In November 1963, Mr T.T. Letlaka was co-opted to the Presidential Council by virtue of his position as chairman of the Transkei region. Representatives abroad were also members of the Presidential Council. They included Mr E.L. Ntloedibe, chief representative in Accra, Ghana; Patrick Duncan, the first white person to become a member of the PAC, a chief representative in Algeria; L. Mgweba, chief representative in Egypt; M. Nkoana, chief representative in Lagos, Nigeria; J.D. Nyaose, Liaison Officer of Labour in Dar-es-Salaam; L. Masimini and Ms G. Mathuthe, assistants in the Labour desk in Dar-es-Salaam; S Ndlovu, chief representative in Botswana and was assisted by Mokone and M. Loabile; A.B. Ngcobo, Chief representative in Leopoldville, Congo; D. Ncayiyana, Chief representative in Lusaka, Zambia and R. Mkwanazi, chief representative in Manzini, Swaziland.\textsuperscript{21} The Presidential Council, (as the new Committee was called), became the first formal PAC executive structure in exile. Mfaxa argues that the structure was just a formality because Leballo “did things by himself with only a few handpicked individuals from the national executive”.\textsuperscript{22} In fact, there are a number of similar positions which question and cast doubt on the legitimacy of the Presidential Council. These issues will be analysed in the next chapter.

The formation of the Presidential Council was followed by the declaration of a general statement of policy to regulate the relations between the Presidential Council and other previously existing PAC structures inside South Africa. The policy statement indicated that “the Presidential Council, acting with the powers vested in them by the Presidential Decree of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa and confirmed by the President Mr Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, who is armed with the said Presidential Decree passed by the national congress of the Pan Africanist held in Orlando, Johannesburg, 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} December 1959, have conferred on them absolute power to rule, govern, direct and administer the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa during all times the movement is

\textsuperscript{20} PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Background to official appointments and policy statement, pp. 2-3; B. Leeman: Africanist Political Movements in Lesotho and Azania, p. 219.
\textsuperscript{21} PAC Archives, Fort Hare: ‘Background to official appointments and policy statement’, pp. 3-4.
\textsuperscript{22} Interview with Elliot Mfaxa, 21 July 1998.
banned and in revolution”. The statement proceeded to state that “from now hence forth we deem it in the best interests of the African revolution that orders and commands should emanate only from the Presidential Council at its headquarters in Maseru. Every other wing of the Movement shall take instructions from the headquarters”. PAC representatives abroad were also issued with a set of policy instructions which emphasised the centralisation of all powers and decision-making at headquarters. PAC representatives abroad were not allowed, as a matter of policy, to hold executive meetings or take executive decisions; their duties were limited to “building the true image of the PAC to the world”, “fearlessly putting across the message of the PAC and justifying its cause”, procuring “money and any other help or assistance required for the successful accomplishment of the revolution”. Unfortunately, the policy statements were all too broadly cast and were not backed up by any set of procedures to ensure implementation. On the whole, the policy statements disclosed an approach to power which set the tone for what became the first 17 harsh years of the PAC’s existence in exile. This issue is covered in detail in the first section of chapter four.

Nonetheless, the existence of a formal leadership structure assisted in the conceptualisation of a few strategic documents for the exiled PAC. It also helped create a political home for PAC refugees from South Africa and a single point of reference when authority about PAC matters was sought.

3.3. Development of Strategy Documents for the exiled PAC.

One of the few achievements, spearheaded by members of the Presidential Council, during the rather disorganised formative years of the PAC in exile was the development of strategy documents and guidelines for the exiled organisation. Among the strategy documents produced by the PAC members in Lesotho during this period was

23 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: ‘Background to official appointments and policy statement’, p.4.
24 Ibid. p. 4.
25 Ibid. p.5.
on “Self-reliance and the Mobilization of resources in the PAC”. The document enunciated the concept of self-reliance and how it could be applied under conditions of exile, in general, and under conditions in Lesotho, in particular. It explained self-reliance as a three-in-one principle which all PAC exiles had to follow. The document explained self-reliance in the following manner:

“It is a principle, a policy and a method of struggle. It is a principle because it is unchangeable under any circumstances, for example, during the liberation struggle it is applicable and after liberation it is a guiding principle in nation building”.

According to this document, the PAC was to develop its own strategies of survival in the exile environment so that it does not rely completely on the support of other nations. Secondly, self-reliance was seen as a policy which might be modified depending on “concrete conditions that apply at a particular time” in the course of the struggle. Thirdly, self-reliance was conceived of as a method to be used in the battle “particularly when waging a people’s war where survival” literally depend on what freedom fighters did “employing their own minds and utilizing their own hands” in the countryside where “they would have to survive tilling the land and living on wild fruits and other forms of sustenance from the forest”. The strategy document on “Self-reliance” also introduced the concept of projects intended to procure funds “for a carefully designed scheme of self-reliance”.

An important aspect of the strategy document related to the methods to be followed in order to mobilise resources from within the PAC itself. One of these methods involved ensuring that regional heads of the PAC inside South Africa collect and audit monthly subscriptions by PAC members and a portion of the funds was sent to the headquarters in Maseru. The second approach was to set “targets of funds and resources” for each

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26 The document was the brain-child of Mfanasekhaya Gqobose, who later became the PAC’s Secretary for Economic Affairs. Initially conceived in Lesotho, the documents was refined in Tanzania into one of the policy documents of the PAC.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
financial year. It was not deemed unreasonable, for example, “to state that PAC needs 150 million US Dollars and 100 tons of materials of all kinds every year to wage struggle”. The principle which informed this method was that the minds of PAC members, friends and supporters needed to be conditioned to something definite and substantial. The self-reliance strategy of the PAC also talked to the importance of establishing departmental clusters which take collective responsibility in the acquisition and usage of resources. For example, the department of economic affairs, the national organiser and publicity and information were to be developed into a cluster for resource control and acquisition purposes. The document contained sound strategic proposals but the problem was that they were never implemented and there was no official mechanism or system to ensure their implementation. In other words, the strategy documents remained on paper hence the chaos which dominated the period of Leballo’s leadership. At the same time there were efforts, even though limited, to implement some of the strategic proposals on self-reliance in Lesotho. This is enunciated in the section that follows.

The second policy document was “Guidelines on PAC cells abroad”. This document, conceptualised by PAC members in Lesotho, resulted in a set of official procedures which were later adopted as policy by the PAC at its new headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania after 1964. According to this document, PAC members in all parts of the globe, including countries neighbouring South Africa, were to organise themselves into cells consisting of not less than 10 members. The cells were administered by a three person committee consisting of a co-ordinator who acted as chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer. The duties of PAC cells abroad were not dissimilar to the underground PAC cells in South Africa but only differed in terms of constitution and scope of activities. PAC cells inside South Africa tended to have more elaborate committee structures and

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31 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/16: Self-reliance and mobilisation of resources in the PAC, n.d., p. 7.
32 The document was also adopted by a fully functional PAC structure in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. No date is indicated on the document. Interviews with PAC executive members who lived in Lesotho as part of the first group of exiles (i.e. Elliot Mfaya and M. Gqobo), point to the fact that the document was also conceived at the Lesotho headquarters by the first group of exiles.
the focus of their activities was on political mobilisation and agitation.\textsuperscript{35} Whereas the PAC cells abroad, maintained a very slender constitution in terms of the numbers of people in each cell and the duties were focused on liaison activities with international solidarity groups, non-governmental organisations, embassies and donor organisations.\textsuperscript{36} The cells outside South Africa were also intended to collect contributions from PAC members who were gainfully employed in the various host countries. According to the policy document, the organisation intended to be self-funded through the utilisation of internally generated funds and in the second instance, it also wanted to curtail dependence on donations from solidarity and support groups abroad. The extent to which the principles enshrined in these documents were translated into reality is difficult to assess, especially during the early period of exile, i.e. 1960-1962.

\textbf{3.4. The Practice of self-reliance by PAC exiles in Lesotho.}

Oral evidence confirms limited attempts by the Lesotho group to realise the self-reliance principles of the organisation. The Lesotho group started a ‘courier system’ in order to link the exiles with internal underground PAC structures in order to raise funds needed to support the initiatives of the exile organisation.\textsuperscript{37} The ‘courier system’ entailed the use of a PAC member/s to serve a liaison function and also to transfer messages and correspondence between Maseru and PAC underground branches in South Africa. Mr Diphu was the first ‘courier’ used by the small PAC exile communities in Lesotho to connect with underground structures in South Africa. Besides collecting money from the internal PAC structures, Diphu was used to spread the message to PAC members in South Africa that they must not flock into Lesotho because of logistical problems and also the attitude of the Basotholand government. Some messages were written on the inside cover of his jacket and were coded in such a way that the police would find it difficult to understand, if they happened to arrest Diphu. To a limited extent the courier system helped to generate funds for the external PAC, but that was not enough to cover

\textsuperscript{35} Interview with Malcom Dyan, Cape Town, 21 December 2000; TRC: ‘PAC and Abuse of Human Rights, TRC Research Department.
\textsuperscript{36} PAC Archives, Fort Hare: J Mkhwanazi: ‘Guidelines on PAC cells abroad’ p. 1.
the cost of living in a foreign country. Diphu was later joined by Cynthia Lechaba and Patricia Lethalo as couriers. They were arrested in April 1963 at Caledon Bridge frontier following the meeting between P.K. Leballo, Z.B. Molete and a single journalist, when Leballo disclosed PAC plans to launch an insurrection against the South African government.\(^\text{38}\)

The PAC exiles in Maseru decided to start a school for adult education as another attempt at generating funds for clandestine, but small-scale, PAC activities in Lesotho and also in other parts of Africa. The school was started at Seapoint (Maseru) with a few Basotho nationals who attended as students. The venue was a cleared area in the bush. The school grew to a point where, through BCP influence, a hall was granted to the exiles to conduct their classes. The hall was called ‘Alexander Hall’ in Seapoint in Maseru.\(^\text{39}\) Though not funded by the government, the exiles were able to derive income from teaching at the school. This assisted in the development of a rudimentary PAC infrastructure in the form of offices and covert military training of the first PAC guerrillas in Lesotho.\(^\text{40}\) The exiles eventually received funding for their initiative from the Lutheran Church in Geneva. This assisted with the purchasing of equipment for science classes and also the payment of salaries for teachers.\(^\text{41}\) The school was later, in 1965, recognised by the Lesotho government as a public school. Its curriculum and examinations were aligned with other public schools. The school was called Maseru Secondary Community School and it specialized in adult education. It offered Mathematics, Physics, Biology, Agricultural Science and the two languages (i.e. English and SeSotho). Most teachers at the Maseru Secondary Community School were PAC exiles and only a small number of teachers were Basotho nationals from the BCP.

\(^{38}\) The view about a “boisterous press conference”, articulated by Tom Lodge in ‘Resistance and Ideology in Settler societies’, particularly his article, “The Poqo insurrection, 1961-1968”, pp. 179-222 is contested by Bernard Leeman, “Africanist Liberation Movements in Lesotho and Azania”, p. 180. Leeman argues that the South African authorities were already working towards the implementation of drastic measures against the PAC as was recommended by the Snyman Commission. Leballo’s meeting with journalists was not fundamental to the attacks on the PAC; D.A.B. Mahlangu: “From South Africa to Azania”, p.66, conveys the same impressions as B. Leeman.

\(^{39}\) Interview with E. Mfaxa, 24 July, 1998.

\(^{40}\) Interview conducted by Walter Toboti with T.M. Ntantala, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 1985.

\(^{41}\) Interview with E. Mfaxa, 24 July, 1998.
The funds generated by PAC exiles who taught at the Community School helped to support not only new-comers in the exile communities but most importantly, the first group of PAC militants who started their training in Lesotho under the leadership of T.M. Ntantala who later became the Commander of APLA forces in Tanzania. They were disguised as a rugby team. As the team expanded, it was divided into three teams, one in Maseru, one in Butha-buthe and one in Mafiteng. These were the areas where the three ‘teams’ conducted their physical and ideological training. This issue will be developed in chapter six which examines the evolution of the PAC military strategy.

Other projects of a self-reliance nature only bore fruit after the headquarters of the organisation had been moved from Maseru to Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania in 1964. These included the acquisition of a site from local residents and a house which was built, for residential purposes, by PAC members in Maseru. “Next to it a shed was built for shoe making. Attempts were also made to acquire land from Basuto Chiefs for planting food crops”. These initiatives helped PAC recruits who passed through Lesotho to Tanzania at a later stage. Problems of accommodation and food shortages were reduced. PAC self-reliance initiatives in the areas of education and limited crop farming were later supported by the United Nation’s High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). It is unfortunate that the UNHCR archives in Pretoria have no records covering this specific period. What complicates matters even further, is that documentary sources shift the focus to developments in Tanzania, following the relocation of the PAC headquarters. The impression derived from oral information is that only the leadership of the PAC moved to Tanzania, while the bulk of the membership remained in Lesotho as part of the Basotholand chapter of the PAC. Elliot Mfaxa remained in Lesotho, to continue with PAC projects already started until he was recalled to the Dar-es-Salaam headquarters and deployed to Zimbabwe as Chief Representative and later Head of education and human resource development in the PAC. This happened after the arrival of Nyathi John Pokela in 1981.

43 Ibid, p. 3
44 Ibid.
3.4. Developments in other parts of the world (1960-1962).

During this formative period in exile, PAC members in other parts of Africa and Europe engaged in various political initiatives. These initiatives, though uncoordinated, laid a foundation for a functioning exiled liberation organisation. During the short period, between 1960 and 1962, the PAC was able to establish contact locations in London, Accra, Cairo, Francistown (Botswana), Dar-es-Salaam, Leopoldville (in Kinshasa), Algiers and Lagos in Nigeria.45

In the neighbouring Botswana, the PAC established itself, even though clandestinely, given the hostile attitude of the Bechuanaland government towards the PAC exiles. The government of Bechuanaland adopted the same strategies as the Lesotho government, in dealing with PAC exiles. It declared leading PAC officials, like Z.B. Molete, “prohibited immigrants in Bechuanaland” and harassed all foreigners suspected of being affiliated with the PAC.46 The attitude of the Bechuanaland government seemed to have persisted even after the country obtained its independence from Britain in 1966. The PAC Chief Representative in Botswana, found it difficult to operate because he was also declared a “prohibited immigrant” by the Botswana government.47 The statement made by the PAC and published in its internal publication ‘The Africanist’ can only attest to the frustrations and difficulties the PAC had with the Bechuanaland government. The PAC articulated its frustration in the following manner:

“However, we wish to awaken the Bechuanaland government to the realities of Africa today. The Pan Africanist Congress has made an unequivocal declaration that there is nobody, worse of all a foreigner, who has the right to tell the African people where to go and where not to go in this continent of Africa, from Cape to Cairo, from Morocco to Malagasy”.48

After independence, the Botswana government was only prepared to recognise those PAC exiles who had been officially granted refugee status but the government was not willing to tolerate political activities intended to overthrow the regime in South

45 See T. Lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 306.
46 PAC Archives: The Africanist, Maseru, 1965, p.11.
47 PAC Archives: “Reviewing the State of the Party”; Undated, No author, PAC Tanzania, p.2.
48 PAC Archives: The Africanist, Maseru, 1965, p.11.
Africa. This should be understood against the background of the relations of economic dependence on South Africa outlined in Chapter 2. Thus, the PAC’s existence in Botswana had no political significance for the party, more especially in relation to the party’s military operations, as will be outlined in Chapter 7.

In Accra, the capital of Ghana, there was a group of PAC exiles led by Nana Mahomo, Raboroko and Molotsi. Other members of this group included Mampe, Siboto, Nongauza, Ndibongo and Malomo.\(^\text{49}\) Some of them had moved from Dar-es-Salaam to Accra at the beginning of 1962. It is not clear why they left Dar-es-Salaam for Accra. This group could not constitute a functioning structure because it was divided from the very outset. Ata Kgosana and Mgweba were accused by the Cairo PAC group of disloyalty to the exile leadership of the PAC (headed by P.K. Leballo). The manner in which they left South Africa and went into exile was without instruction from the leadership of the party. In addition to that, Kgosana established personal contacts using the ‘reputation’ he earned when he led the marchers in Cape Town in 1960. Thus when he left South Africa, he acted outside the established leadership structures of the party.\(^\text{50}\) Hence Mahomo, Molotsi and Raboroko insisted on disciplining the two fellow exiles. This divided not only the Accra-based group of PAC exiles but the Dar-es-Salaam and Lesotho groups. As a result of this Ata Kgosana and Mgweba severed ties with the PAC and moved to Ethiopia.\(^\text{51}\) It appears that from that date, Ata Kgosana, in particular, ceased to be politically active and lived the life of an independent refugee until he was gradually brought back into the fold of active PAC politics firstly during the period of Nyathi John Pokela’s leadership and finally by Johnson Mlambo on the eve of the unbanning of the liberation movements and return of exiles to South Africa in 1990. Even though loosely organised, the PAC had a recognisable presence in Accra in 1962 and the attitude of the government of Ghana towards the PAC exiles was positive. This was illustrated by the fact that late in 1962, President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, “bought a Swedish freighter for the PAC and had loaded it with arms in Egypt. The ship sailed south in early 1963 to land the weapons on

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\(^{49}\) A.T. Kgosana: *Lest We Forget*, p. 73.

\(^{50}\) This is a view expressed by Comrade Tekere (a member of APLA) during the interview in Cape Town’s Langa Township, 21 December 2000.

\(^{51}\) A.T. Kgosana: *Lest We Forget*, p. 74.
the Transkei coast to assist the Poqo rising. However it never arrived. Later it emerged that it had been sold. One high ranking PAC official came under suspicion, but the matter was never resolved”.  

In Europe, the PAC commenced operations in London soon after the organisation was banned in 1960. An office was opened in 1962. The London office functioned independently and occasionally in conflict with the PAC headquarters in Maseru. The tensions between the London office of the PAC and the external headquarters seem to have persisted throughout the existence of the PAC in exile. The main issue was about the control and utilisation of funds from the donors and solidarity groups in Britain. The UK mission only developed a fully-functioning and organised structure in 1977 with the appointment of Winston L. Mvusi as acting Chief Representative, reporting to the PAC headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam. Otherwise, before that date, the UK office was “completely unco-ordinated, loosely organised and without a clear set of procedures which tallied with the Headquarters”.

In countries such as Egypt, Algeria, Congo and Ethiopia, the PAC members operated more as individuals. One would hardly refer to an organisational presence in those countries. In Leopoldville (Kinshasa), the Dar-es-Salaam based PAC leadership was only able to arrange for training of its guerrillas, without much noticeable organisational presence. What emerges from the discussion so far is that the PAC was an organisation which was scattered all over the world and only with loose links to the center. This situation persisted up to the 1980s when desperate attempts by the PAC leadership under John Nyathi Pokela were made to develop procedures aimed at centralising authority and activating the controlling powers of the Dar-es-Salaam based headquarters.

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52 This is revealed in the research conducted by B. Leeman, published in the Mail and Guardian, 3-9 November, 2000, Harare, pp. 24-25.
53 PAC Archives: ‘London Mission Records’: Also indicated in ‘Reviewing the state of the Party, undated article, PAC Tanzania; The problems with the PAC London Mission seem to have persisted to the 1980’s – see Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, 1982, p. 12.
55 Interview with Malcom Dyan and Comrade Mchitheka, Gugulethu Township, Cape Town, 16 December 2000.

One of the important initiatives in which the exiled PAC became involved jointly with the ANC of South Africa, the South African Indian Congress and the South West Africa National Union (SWANU) of Namibia was the formation of the South African United Front in June 1960. Leading members from both the ANC (Oliver Tambo, ANC President), Yusuf Dadoo (President of the South African Indian Congress) and PAC leaders such as Nana Mahomo and Peter Molotsi met in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia to discuss and agree on the formation of the South African United Front in June 1960. In spite of the fact that existing oral evidence indicates that the formation of the front of liberation movements from South Africa and Namibia occurred as a result of the insistence of African leaders like Nkwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, it also appears that the liberation movements themselves saw tactical benefits that could accrue from the initiative. The South African United Front was formed in June 1960 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The South West African People’s Organization (SWAPO) was admitted in January 1961 as a member of the co-ordinating body. “However it never participated actively and withdrew some months later”. The aims of the Front of Liberation movements were to “effectively isolate the murderous regime of South Africa” and to project to the international community “a united voice of all political opponents of Apartheid, irrespective of political affiliation”.

From the very outset hostilities, especially between the ANC and PAC, emerged. The PAC’s membership in the Front was an uncomfortable one; it accused the ANC of dominating the structure. ANC sources indicated that at the meeting of liberation

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61 Interview conducted by Walters Toboti with T.M. Ntantala; interview with Elliot Mfaza, 26 July, 1998.
movements in June 1960, in Addis Ababa, “by unanimous decision, it was agreed that the ANC should as, a senior organisation, lead the Front”.\(^{62}\) Even if it was the case, problems of ideology and power would obviously have cropped up. Sellstrom concurs that besides the issue of ANC ‘dominance’ in the structure, questions of an ideological nature arose. “PAC criticism was based on the same arguments that originally led to the breakaway, i.e. that the ANC was dominated by white communists and that it saw the struggle in class terms, not as a national struggle with the objective “Africa for Africans“\(^{63}\). The PAC thus raised questions about the ideological orientation of the Front which was dominated and led by the ANC. From the perspective of the ANC, the formation of the South African United Front (SAUF) was “an historic step whose significance was hailed by all oppressed people of South Africa, Namibia and the progressive world”.\(^{64}\) On the other hand, the Front evoked fears and panic on the part of the South African government and its allies. They could not “disguise bitter fears of isolation through the worldwide impact of the United Front and the struggle of people at home. Panic measures were adopted, including a hurried knocking together of a South African Foundation which undertook to parry the impending isolation”\(^{65}\).

The South African United Front was a shortlived initiative, due to the rivalries between the ANC and the PAC. “After a public attack in February 1962 by the PAC on the ANC at a conference in Addis Ababa – attended by Nelson Mandela – the SAUF collapsed. It was formally disbanded by the member organisations at a meeting in London the following month. From then on, the ANC and PAC embarked on separate and essentially antagonistic courses”\(^{66}\). Different views are expressed by PAC members about the failure of this initiative. One view is that the Front would not have worked in future given the personality and leadership style of P.K. Leballo who later became the Chairman of the PAC. In most instances he took critical organisational decisions alone and would

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\(^{62}\) ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Statement of the African National Congress of South Africa on the question of unity with the Pan Africanist Congress, p. 14; ANC Archives, Fort Hare: The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa; whom does it serve?, Morogoro, Tanzania, undated, p. 6.

\(^{63}\) Tor Sellstrom: Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, p. 499.

\(^{64}\) ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Statement of the African National Congress of South Africa on the question of unity with the Pan Africanist Congress, p. 14

\(^{65}\) Ibid.

\(^{66}\) Tor Sellstrom: Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, p. 499
influence a few people who he knew would obviously tow his line.67 This corroborates J. Bolnick’s description of the character and personality of Leballo, who he described as “controversial”, “an intelligent fabricator of information” and “a mesmerising orator” who skilfully concentrated powers in the PAC around himself.68 The extent to which the human frailties of an individual at the helm of organisational leadership can account for the failures and mistakes of the entire organisation, is a broad question, but is implied in this instance. The extent to which the role played by PAC members in the SAUF could have been negatively influenced by Leballo’s leadership, is indeed difficult to assess at this point. Another contending view, based on oral evidence is that “the PAC had no choice but to walk out of the Front” because it was “being swallowed by the ANC”.69 It could not continue with its membership without losing face as an independent organisation. The SAUF thus collapsed but during the short period of its existence, the PAC was able to derive few benefits from the international community. In October 1960, “only four months after the formation of the SAUF’ Mahomo paid a visit to Sweden and addressed the Social Democratic Laboremus association in Uppsala, together with Oliver Tambo of the ANC and Jariretunda Kozonguizi of SWANU. On that occasion, Mahomo established relations with the newly formed South African Committee (SSAK) in Sweden and later with the Social Democratic Party”.70 It was through these connections that Mahomo, in 1963, was able to raise 100 Pounds Sterling from the Metalworkers Union of Sweden. The PAC was given the donation to help them “meet the immediate needs of refugees” and the same Union agreed to purchase a Land Rover “and ship it to the movement in Dar-es-Salaam”.71 The donation from the Swedish trade Union was among the first donations received by the PAC from support organisations abroad. It went a long way towards the provision of basic needs for PAC exiles in Lesotho and Tanzania. The

67 The interview with E. Mfaxa 25 July 1998, probably the oldest member of the PAC still alive, attest to this. Mfaxa also indicates that even the meeting Leballo had with journalists in Lesotho in April 1963, is something he solely did without involving or informing the leadership of the organisation.
69 This view was expressed by two PAC members interviewed, Z Mchitheka and Tekere, in Langa Township, Cape Town, 16 and 21 December 2000, respectively.
support received by the PAC from Sweden was, “however a once-off affair” as it was never repeated despite the numerous official representations by the PAC to request Swedish financial aid.\textsuperscript{72} The divisions and internal conflicts within the PAC detracted the Swedish from lending any further assistance to the organisation. This issue will be developed further in Chapter 4 which examines aspects which were fundamental to the generation of internal conflict in the PAC.

In summary, this chapter has examined how the PAC landed in exile. It also outlined how the first exile leadership structure of the PAC (the Presidential Council) was constituted. The conditions under which the first group of PAC exiles lived and how the first group of PAC militants started their ideological and military training has been outlined. The strategic documents developed by members of the Presidential Council have been analysed. Developments in other part of the world, where there was PAC presence, have been surveyed. The formation of the South African United Front which involved mainly the PAC and the ANC, and why it collapsed has also been examined. It appears from the way in which the PAC was reconstituted as a liberation movement in exile, that numerous cracks existed and the potential for conflict was embedded in the foundation. Problems of factionalism, power struggles, divisions between the rank-and-file and the leadership of the organisation, as well as ideological disagreements were manifested at a very early stage. There were no mechanisms of co-ordination between the center and the various missions scattered all over the world and there was dissatisfaction from the very outset about how the National Executive Committee conducted the affairs of the organisation. These issues came out clearly during the 1970’s and 1980’s as will be shown in the following chapters. At the same time there was a commitment among PAC members to fight the liberation war to the bitter end. It is this commitment which carried the PAC through into the 1990’s when it was unbanned, together with other liberation movements, by the South African government.