Chapter 4

The generation of strained intra-PAC relations in exile 1962-1990

Preamble

This chapter consists of four sections. Each section covers a specific period, starting from 1962 and ending in 1990. The periods covered are 1962 – 1979; 1979 – 1981; 1981 – 1985; 1985 – 1990. The four periods represent the various phases of leadership in the PAC firstly by Potlake Kitchener Leballo (affectionately called ‘PK’), Vusumzi Make, John Nyathi Pokela (affectionately called ‘Poks’) and Johnson Mlambo respectively. The premise which informs the discussion, in all four of the sections, is that the organisational structures, policy formulation procedures, management of organisational resources, financial planning and controls in the PAC, were poor. Ideological conflicts, power struggles and political blackmail, which occurred, could have been minimized if organisational systems and procedures had been solid. This accounts for why the ANC, having gone through similar experiences of splits and dissidence, was able to survive and ultimately emerge stronger than the PAC after the lengthy exile period. The generation of strained relations within the PAC attests to the poor organisational structures, policies and leadership ineptitude which led to the poor management of resources, including finances, and deep-seated factionalism. This is, of course, not to discount the limited innovations and improvements made, especially during the era of Nyathi Pokela.

However, the topic remains illusive and difficult to examine, in the sense that its permutations are wide-ranging. This is because of the fact that there was not merely one but several, conflicts taking place, almost simultaneously, on a variety of distinctive levels. The sheer length of the conflict with many dramatis personae appearing, re-appearing and disappearing and with multiple levels of activities often out of phase with each other, presents problems of comprehension and sequence. Added to this problem is the fact that, the views expressed in the primary sources are conflicting. This is because documentary materials about what happened were produced by people who were
personally involved with PAC internal matters. They could afford to be factual but not impartial given their positions in the organisation and the degree of interest vested in the internal conflicts. The unevenness of details in existing archival materials also makes it difficult to balance perspectives. Hence, this chapter critically examines what appears to be standard perspectives in archival material and secondary sources. Where possible, this is corroborated by oral evidence. This chapter delimits the scope of the topic by identifying three major points around which to structure the analysis. These include the constitution and role of leadership; the management of organisational resources, including finances; and the internal enemy psychosis.

The problem with secondary literature on this subject is that it is fraught with gaps. Contemporary scholarship on exile liberation movements in Southern Africa has not critically worked out the detail of the generation of internal conflicts within exile liberation organisations. Lodge’s attempt in Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, though very informative, is broadly framed and lacks the detailed historical perspective.\(^1\) It amounts to a narrative description of conditions of exile rather than an analysis of how and why internal relations within the PAC, in particular, became strained in the way that they did at various moments during the lengthy period of exile. What can be derived from Lodge’s analysis is a generalized political theory of the interrelationship between the conditions of exile, political ideology and strategies of national liberation movements such as the ANC and the PAC. The same can be said about the work of Thomas G. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart. At one level, their work provides the best construction design for an intelligent understanding of the generation of strained intra-PAC relations during the period of exile. At another level, it leaves the researcher hungry for the details their research does not provide. Without providing much detail, for instance, Karis and Gerhardt contended that “the record of the PAC in exile was not illustrious. Its scattered and quarrelsome leaders failed to create stable structures or a continuity of respected leadership. Its years in exile are primarily of interest as a case study of the perils faced by a movement unprepared for revolutionary work, dependant on foreign goodwill, only

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\(^1\) T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South since 1945* – see chapter 12-‘Revolutionary Exile Politics’, pp. 296 – 307.
indirectly in touch with developments at home, and lacking in leadership, organisation, strategy and ideological clarity”. This view is also expressed by Tom Lodge, but in a different tone, as he mentions “hairsplitting doctrinal disputes”, “opposition into factions and personalities” characteristic of the general problems South African liberation movements experienced in exile. The extent to which these views assist the development of an understanding about the generation of conflict within the PAC, remains slim. Hence, this chapter focuses on how the strained intra-PAC relations were generated, by examining the sources, and the patterns and deduces underlying dimensions not mentioned in existing scholarly works.

As already indicated, sources on the generation of conflict within the PAC cannot be intelligible without a clear periodisation; but this does not mean that the various periods identified were distinctly separated, without any connecting threads of continuity. The periodisation, as already outlined, is intended to categorise the available primary evidence on this particular topic, on the basis of identified thematic issues that consistently emerge from the sources. This chapter does not accept that relations within the PAC began to be strained in 1962. As indicated in Chapter 2, from the date the PAC was formed and its first National Executive Committee constituted, divisions within the organisation permeated it. In other words, the chapter recognises that the seeds of division were already laid in the period prior 1962. This chapter focuses on why and how the strained intra-PAC relations were generated within the context of the circumstances of exile. The reason why 1962 is used as a starting point is that it is only from that date that a functioning PAC structure developed in exile. As Lodge indicates, “until late 1962, there was very little organised activity by PAC members in exile”.

Common issues which permeate the themes of analysis, in all the various periods, include the following:

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3 T. Lodge: *Black politics in South Africa since 1945*, p. 296.
Membership in the Central Committee was a highly contested terrain because it brought status, access to resources and privileges (e.g. accommodation, transport and sometimes cash) which were, otherwise inaccessible to ordinary PAC members. Individual interests were always at the forefront; they tended to override and supercede the organisational imperative to be a successful liberation movement. This was a dominant trend in the leadership echelons of the PAC during the exile period, irrespective of who was at the helm of the organisation. Besides the position of the Chairman of the organisation, for instance, the other lucrative position which resulted in seriously strained relations within the leadership of the PAC, was that of Chief Representative to the United Nations Observer Mission in New York. The position was usually assumed by a Director of Foreign Affairs. There were numerous other positions over which PAC leaders fought because such positions appeared more lucrative than others, but the allocation of such positions depended on the Chairman’s support. Hence people with interest in these positions would always make overtures of loyalty and support for the Chairman.

Secondly, the PAC developed operational guidelines for each of its various departments. In the absence of clear policies, these were supposed to fill the gap but unfortunately, the heads of the departments, members of the Central Committee and their close friends and relatives, were always the first people to flout the regulations. PAC members outside this circle were forced to observe the regulations and some were punished severely for minor breaches. This situation laid the seed of deep division, factionalism and the syndrome of an internal enemy. The latter was exacerbated by the fact that the PAC had no system of screening or checking the previous political records of new recruits.

Thirdly, the organisation lacked strategic focus. Strategy is about the future and is about setting a clear vision which focuses organisational activities. Having examined the minutes of the planning sessions of the PAC, one notices how the meetings always degenerated into group fights, mudslinging and apportioning of blame. There was hardly a chance to define in clear terms the kind of future the organisation was working towards and relating the vision of the future with the state of the organisation. PAC leadership planning sessions, tended to be too operational in focus and there was no discussion of
long term strategy. This was a problem throughout the exile period. Without long-term strategy, it was inevitable that the mobilisation and deployment of resources would also be shortsighted.

These issues cut across the thematic categories which this chapter has identified. Of course, there may be aspects of the internal conflict which have been missed or which cannot be squeezed into the relatively tight confines of the themes identified in this chapter. Perhaps future research on this subject will uncover and analyse such issues.

4.1.1. Background and Profile.

Potlake Kitchener Leballo “maintains a position of reverence, albeit precariously, in the pantheon of South African radical names”. 5 Hence in this section, the contention is that it is critically important to understand P.K. Leballo, in order to grasp the generation of strained intra-PAC relations during the period 1962-1979 and beyond. 6 The quality of his political leadership during this period left an indelible mark on the character of the exiled PAC. This was the case given the assumption that the quality of political leadership matters more with young organisations than with well-established ones. Young liberation organisations, in most instances, are relatively unstable and therefore more susceptible to being shaped by their leading figures.

Leballo was born in Lesotho on December 19, 1922. He studied at Lovedale in the Eastern Cape where he was exposed to South African politics. Thereafter he taught at an Anglican mission school in Lady Selborne in Pretoria. In both institutions, Leballo had severe conflicts with white Anglican ministers. This had resulted in his expulsion from Lovedale in 1946 following a student uprising in which Leballo participated. Given his experiences in Lovedale and the often paternalistic manner in which Leballo was treated at the mission in Lady Selbourne, Joel Bolnick concluded that it was not surprising “that Leballo became an impassioned opponent of co-operation between African nationalists and white radicals”. 7 In addition to this, Leballo’s attitude was hardened by his wartime experiences. “Forced to endure racial discrimination while enlisted in an army that was

6 The Leballo period can be divided into shorter periods according to important events which occurred; for instance, 1962 to 1964 was the formative period which was relatively uneventful, except for the March 1963 press conference which resulted in the arrest of many PAC members; 1965 to 1967 marked the serious manifestation of internal conflict hence the summoning of the Moshi conference; 1968-1979 which began with Villa Piri expedition, resulted in the death of Gerald Kondlo – the first commander of APLA and also culminating in the expulsion of Leballo from the PAC in 1979. This chapter is mindful of this detailed periodic sequence in its examination of the Leballo era.
ostensibly fighting to rid the world of race hatred and oppression he had been sufficiently embittered to earn an early repatriation on the grounds of rebellious behaviour”. In addition to his wartime experiences, his role in the formation of the PAC, “which has often been denigrated contributed to his handling the organisation as his personal property”. He was a founder member of the PAC and was arrested with Sobukwe, the President of the PAC, on March 21, 1960. He served a two-year jail sentence after which he was granted permission to go to Maseru in Lesotho, in August 1962.

This particular section highlight the riddles of Leballo’s leadership and shows how they were concretely reflected in the management, use of funds and other organisational resources, the composition and role of the leadership as represented by the Central Committee, and the internal enemy syndrome. To resolve the riddles of Leballo’s leadership during his period as chairperson of the exiled PAC is an elusive goal hence the attempt to delimit the broad scope of issues through the identification of thematic categories in order to structure the analysis and concomitant narrative. However this section does not provide an examination of the mythology, both positive and negative, which surrounded Leballo, as a person and his period of leadership in the PAC. J. Bolnick covers this, even though not comprehensively. He fails to link his analysis with internal practices of the exiled PAC during Leballo’s leadership period.

Suffice to say that Leballo’s personality and character contributed towards the discreditation of the PAC during the period 1962 to 1979. Leballo was an extremely controversial person. As Jack Halpern puts it, “but political jail sentences were not the only ones that Leballo served in South Africa; he had also been sentenced for fraud, forgery and uttering. He has the reputation for personal instability which may account for his calling of the Maseru press conference in the first place, for the exaggerated claims

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which he made, and for the denials with which he followed them a few days later”.  The Johannesburg *Sunday Express* described Leballo as a “liar, fool, braggart”.  The controversies around Leballo’s personality and leadership style were raised again in the report to the OAU Liberation Committee, in November 1967. The report which was compiled by C.L. Lekaje testified that “truthfulness is not one of his attributes”.  The report pointed out that “Leballo’s lying and inconsistency go hand in hand, and this has embarrassed the PAC as a whole”.  However, B. Leeman, even though in a defensive tone, provides a different view about Leballo’s personality and role in the PAC. First, he engages Halpern’s criticism and description of Leballo’s personality. He argues that “Jack Halpern blamed the raid on Leballo’s “personal instability” and his love for “exaggerated claims”. At the same time, Halpern studiously ignored the 8,000 arrests that resulted from Mandela’s ultimatum in 1961, calling him “widely admired and even revered for his courageous underground leadership”. Leeman develops his argument even further and points out that “Leballo’s success in inflaming the most wretched, the most violent and the most ‘ungrateful’ sections of the African population brought him more hatred from the liberal-elitist establishment than it reserved for the system it ostensibly opposed. His tutor at Lovedale and comrade in arms in North Africa, Professor Macquarrie and Motsukoe Pheko (a PAC leader, and now the current President of the PAC) both linked Leballo to the Nazis, while the South African liberal press, with its prejudice about who should be African leaders – graduates, army officers, ordained ministers or chiefs – derided his hopes for freedom, addressing him as “self-appointed” leader of the PAC”. In other words, Leeman argues for and demonstrates that there was an ongoing smear campaign against Leballo, since April 1963. It involved myth-making exercises “put about by the PAC’s most implacable opponents”. He then concluded that “Leballo, despite his reputation for urgency and spontaneity, reoriented the party towards the idea of a lengthy struggle reliant on the same “illiterate” and “semi-illiterate” masses’

11 Jack Halpern: *South African Hostages*, p. 27.
12 *Sunday Express*, 31 March 1963.
13 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: ‘Confidential- A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA), p. 7.
17 B. Leeman: Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania, p. 181.
(based on the Chinese model) “to whom Sobukwe had appealed. The crises within the PAC in exile thereafter were primarily caused by this radical shift in emphasis, which was not acceptable to the bulk of the personnel in the external missions”. Unfortunately, the evidential basis of Leeman’s argument is remarkably slender. As will be shown in this chapter, material from within the PAC and also from outside, confirm that Leballo’s personality was an important factor in the turbulence and strained intra-PAC relations which predominated during the period 1962 to 1979.

4.1.2. The Composition and Role of the exile leadership as represented by the National Executive Committee (Central Committee) of the PAC.

The external leadership of the PAC was constituted at the end of September 1962 when Leballo, having been released from exile in Northern Zululand, proceeded to Basutoland in August 1962, and “unilaterally declared Maseru the headquarters of the PAC”. “This caused great consternation in the ranks of the PAC but under the circumstances the most that could be done was to protest in hushed tones owing to the fact that the organisation had been declared illegal”. Leballo proceeded to convene a Presidential Council consisting of himself as Acting President, “J.N. Pokela, M.P.L. Gqobose, Z.B. Molete, E. Mfaxa, N.M. Ntantala and T.T. Letlaka”. From the very outset, it appears that appointments to the Presidential Council were not conducted in a democratic manner. As Lekaje indicated in his submission to the African Liberation Committee (A.L.C) of the O.A.U, Leballo, “appointed his admirers, to be members of the Presidential Council. This Council then assumed the duties of the National Executive Committee”. According to Lekaje’s submission, Leballo knew that the designations were unconstitutional but he proceeded because of his greed for power. After the 1963 press conference which

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18 B. Leeman: Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania, p. 182.
19 PAC Archives: ‘Confidential- A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA) p. 1; Elliot Mfaxa, in an interview conducted with the author implied the same issue when he indicated that Leballo took important decisions alone without consulting the leadership of the PAC.
20 Ibid. p. 1.
21 B. Leeman: Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania, p. 178.
22 PAC Archives: “Confidential- A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA) to the African Liberation Committee”, p. 2.
crippled the newly formed exile movement, Leballo used the powers he derived from his position of leadership in the National Executive Committee to shield himself from a possible commission of enquiry into the 1963 “deadly fiasco”. 23

Between 1962 and 1967, the National Executive Committee led by Leballo sanctioned activities by PAC members which were divisive within the organisation. A case in point was the involvement of PAC members in the affairs of the Basutoland Congress Party (BCP). The latter was a nationalist movement for the liberation of Lesotho from British colonial rule. It competed with the moderately conservative Basutoland National Party (BNP). Leballo, being a Basutoland national was, instrumental in the formation of the BCP and contributed to its Pan-Africanist outlook. When the PAC was formed, “fraternal and solidarity ties with the Basutoland Congress Party” were developed. 24 “However, during Leballo’s administration he encouraged participation by the PAC members in the activities of the said Basutoland Congress Party, which culminated in the PAC members being involved in Basutoland politics. Leballo as a Mosotho (citizen of Lesotho) had every right to do so. In fact, on a number of occasions he addressed BCP gatherings there. As a result of this involvement one PAC man was killed in the Rotho ambush in the company of the BCP, where the latter held a rally”. 25 Some members of the PAC in exile felt that Leballo was using the PAC, including its resources, as a ladder to a possible position of power, in case the BCP was to be the government of Lesotho. This strained the relations within the PAC, but the situation continued unresolved until Leballo was deposed from leadership in 1979. Other PAC members, based in Lesotho, saw a strategic significance for the PAC in the relationship. As Mr Mfaya indicated “without the fraternal relationship with the BCP, life would have been impossible for PAC members in Lesotho”. 26

The period 1962 to 1964, which could have been used for establishing systems and procedures to mould the PAC into an effective exile liberation movement was utilised

23 PAC Archives: “Confidential- A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA) to the African Liberation Committee, p. 3.
24 Ibid
25 Ibid.
26 Interview with Mr Elliot Mafaxa, 25 July 1998, Kingwilliams Town
negatively, to lay the foundations for disorder. The Leballo period of administration is blamed for this. Leballo, who “most greedily” craved for “absolute personal power over both the whole Party and the entire army, as opposed to the PAC’s founding principles of collective leadership, common responsibility and democratic centralism”, failed to live up to the challenges of his leadership role.27

A few important documents setting out the basic organisational systems and procedures (as indicated in chapter 3) were generated during this period. It needed a visionary leadership to manage their implementation. The Lesotho group, for instance, produced a concept document about “Self-reliance and the mobilisation of resources in the PAC”.28 This particular document addressed a wide ranging number of issues regarding how the PAC should operate in a co-ordinated fashion in exile. It addressed issues such as the functions of the departments within the PAC and also identified common objectives and collective responsibilities of certain departments. By implication the document suggested the development of “departmental clusters” on the basis of identified common objectives. The National Organiser’s department, the Foreign Affairs’s department, the Publicity and Information department and the Economic Affairs Department, for instance, were among the departments that were recommended to collaborate closely in order to make the PAC viable in exile.29 In addition to this, “Guidelines on PAC Cells Abroad” were developed during this formative period (1962-1964) but only found their way to becoming official policy in the 1980’s, the post-Leballo period. It was the absence or poor implementation of procedures, guidelines and policies, which created grounds for strained relations and conflict within the PAC. The turbulence, which occurred from 1965 onwards, was nurtured during this period.

The early draft policy or procedure documents of the PAC are all remarkably thin on the issue of co-ordination and control of funds. The issue about the management and use of

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28 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: M. Gqobose: ‘Self-reliance and the mobilization of resources in PAC’, undated.
29 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: M Gqobose: ‘Self-reliance and the mobilization of resources in PAC’, undated, pp. 7-9.
funds seem to have been the major bone of contention within the organisation during the exile period. Except for the PAC constitution, the PAC needed to establish a set of guidelines on managing donor funding from various sources scattered all over the world, an issue which the PAC Constitution (developed under conditions of legality inside South Africa) did not cover. This issue will be covered more elaborately in the sub-section about the ‘use and management of funds within the PAC’.

During the formative period in exile, the PAC leadership also failed to develop and portray a positive political image of the organisation. This caused great discontent among rank and file PAC members, some of whom felt the organisation was losing the reputation it had under Sobukwe’s leadership. What worsened the situation was that “in Maseru, Leballo made dubious friends who consequently became involved in PAC affairs”. Hans Lombard, for instance, a South African white Afrikaner, “who carried British passport”, was given a letter of credence by Leballo as a PAC roving representative. “Leballo let him into many Party secrets”. The role Hans Lombard played was controversial and it is alleged that he knew of the pending arrests which followed Leballo’s press conference. The ANC, a political rival of the PAC dubbed Lombard “an Apartheid agent and informer” yet a friend of the PAC. Another incident which caused great discontent within the ranks of PAC members involved an academic from the United States who knew Leballo in Lesotho. The young American academic “used to help PAC refugees from Maseru to Botswana in his land rover. In 1966 this American academic came as far as Mbeya” (one of the PAC camps in Tanzania where trained cadres were accommodated). The PAC membership was disgruntled with the incident, given that Leballo was known to have nothing to do with Americans, in the literal sense. Lekaje, an opponent of Leballo explained the incident as that “as far back as 1958” Leballo worked for the American government in the Library of the US Consulate in Johannesburg. “So his continued allegations that persons are informers or CIA agents should be taken with a pinch of salt for it can easily be a ruse to cover up his own

31 Ibid.
32 PAC Archives: ‘Confidential- A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA) to the African Liberation Committee, p. 3.
activities”. By implication Leballo was an informer himself. In this instance, a PAC member was corroborating a point made by the exile ANC about Leballo. Unfortunately, this assertion about Leballo is not verifiable from the documentary sources and oral information used in this research.

These incidents did not only tarnish the political image of the PAC but depleted the morale of the PAC exile community. The ANC, in one of its propaganda documents, painted a worse picture of the PAC. The formation of the PAC was described in the following manner:

“At the end of 1958, a small band of disruptive adventurists that had for some time been active within the ranks of the African National Congress finally broke away. Early in 1959, after a lengthy meeting held in the luxurious premises of the library of the United States Information Service (USIS) in Johannesburg, they decided to form a ‘revolutionary’ political organization which they called the ‘Pan Africanist Congress’. Thus the dark schemes of American imperialists subversion of the successful development of the national liberation revolution against apartheid fascism were clearly exposed to the light of day”.

At that point, the PAC’s Information Department which was in charge of propaganda could not respond. The department was hardly functioning before 1982 when Nyathi Pokela made efforts to revitalise the PAC departments and re-organise the PAC. This meant that the PAC had no counter-propaganda of its own.

In August 1964 another incident occurred which damaged the political stature and credibility of the PAC further and thus defined more clearly the lines of difference between the rank-and-file membership and the leadership. During this particular year, “Leballo was granted passage through South Africa in a chartered aircraft. He made a stop over in Johannesburg for about 30 minutes and his aircraft was heavily guarded by

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33 Ibid., p. 4.
the South African regime, he being the only man who had ever threatened military action on South Africa whilst in a neighbouring territory. The South African government appeared to have been more than benevolent in his case”.

This incident raised many political questions about Leballo and his leadership team. One of the questions was how it could be possible that a man who was so ‘dangerous’ and highly wanted by the South African government be allowed by the same government not to only pass through South Africa but also stop over in Johannesburg. In general terms, this can be explained in terms of the conditions of the release granted to Leballo by the SA government. Leballo was released from banishment to Northern Zululand on the grounds that he was a Basutoland national and was therefore allowed to go back to his country. Whatever the nature of his political activities, the South African government also had a political agenda to nurture which foregrounded the détente approach of the John Voster era. To the rank and file membership of the PAC, the incident raised suspicion; “their confidence in the revolutionary integrity of their leadership was shaken”.

What can be regarded, in broad terms, as the formative period of the PAC in exile ended without any consolidation of achievements made. Members of the PAC were still loosely scattered all over the world. Some of them had completed military training but were not deployed anywhere. “The upheavals in the PAC forced them to look elsewhere”. Some decided to pursue academic careers but expressed their preparedness to return to the PAC once the party machinery was streamlined.


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36 PAC Archives: ‘Confidential-A Statement concerning the disputes within the Pan Africanist Congress (SA) to the African Liberation Committee, p. 5; ANC Archives, Fort Hare: The ANC of South Africa: ‘The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa; Whom Does It Serve? p. 11.

37 Of course this is despite Leballo’ claims, as explained by Leeman, that he escaped from South Africa. Elliot Mfaxa also concurred in an interview, 21 July 1998, Kingwilliams Town, that Leballo was released by the SA government to go back to his “native land”.


40 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J Lekaje - Confidential: p. 7.

41 Ibid.
This section provides an explanation of the reasons behind the first expulsions which occurred in the PAC, and focuses on the case of J.D. Nyaose in 1965.\textsuperscript{42}

Among the early expulsions from the PAC in exile was that of J.D. Nyaose. It took place on the 12\textsuperscript{th} of August 1965. J.D. Nyaose, a founding member of the PAC, was the national President of the Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa (FOFATUSA), a position which he continued to occupy while in exile. FOFATUSA was a free and independent “national labour militant movement not affiliated into the PAC”.\textsuperscript{43} “The Trade Unions affiliated to the FOFATUSA have been engaged in the struggle since the early forties, described as National Trade Unionism in the country; they decided to come together in October, 1959, when they formed the Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa”.\textsuperscript{44} J.D. Nyaose also held the position of chairman of all party conferences of the PAC and also Secretary for Labour as well as a member of the party’s central committee. His expulsion on arbitrary grounds was the foretaste of things to come in the sense that it demonstrated how the centralisation of power and authority in the hands of one person, i.e. P.K. Leballo, was used to victimise opponents, critics and sometimes innocent members of the Party.

The main issue which led to Nyaose’s expulsion from the party was his refusal to surrender the independence of FOFATUSA, to the PAC. He was not prepared to “surrender, even to allow discussions of FOFATUSA matters, property, offices and funds by leaders of the Party who were not members of the trade union themselves, not appointed officials, who were in fact anti-trade unionism”.\textsuperscript{45} On August 11\textsuperscript{th} 1965, Nyaose and his group attended the Indonesian Independence celebrations to represent FOFATUSA. The following morning Leballo and P.N. Raboroko (a member of the Central Committee) met and decided to expel Nyaose and suspend all PAC members of FOFATUSA. Circular letters and cables signed by Leballo were circulated in Dar-es-Salaam and to the Africa Liberation Committee of the OAU announcing the situation.

\textsuperscript{42} The point is made by T. Lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 309.
\textsuperscript{43} PAC Archives, Fort Hare: J.D. Nyaose: ‘Circular Letter No.1: Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa at Home and Abroad’, p.3.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{45} PAC Archives, Fort Hare: JD Nyaose: Circualar Letter No.1, p. 1.
One circular to the department of Home Affairs in Tanzania requested the Tanzanian government not to allow FOFATUSA to open and operate a labour office in the country.\(^{46}\)

J.D. Nyaose responded by addressing the matter to the African Liberation Committee of the OAU. In his response, he emphasised the unconstitutionality of the decision taken by Leballo and Raboroko. He argued that “since the Acting-President Mr Leballo’s expulsion order signed by himself and Mr P.N. Raborko, was not based on any order of decisions handed to the Central Committee (NEC) by three members of the Disciplinary Tribunal of Justice, in terms of the Pan Africanist Congress Disciplinary Code and relevant constitution, the expulsion letters and circulars and cables were in fact null and void. The basic documents of the PAC, are binding to members and leaders alike. I could not be expelled by Messrs Leballo and Raboroko, including any other NEC member other than the Disciplinary Tribunal of Justice members”\(^{47}\). In spite of this protest, Nyaose and his group could hardly win over the support of Tanzanian authorities because of the support Leballo enjoyed with the Tanzanian government. With the help of the Home Affairs Ministry in Tanzania, Leballo was able to get some PAC trade unionists either imprisoned or declared illegal in Tanzania. The response from the African Liberation Committee (ALC) to Nyaose’s submission was also not useful. The ALC dismissed the conflict between Nyaose’s group and Leballo as an internal PAC matter which should be resolved internally by the PAC. This meant that Leballo could continue with the victimisation of party members who disagreed with him. Following the expulsion of J.D. Nyaose and the suspension of PAC trade unionists, a spate of suspensions and expulsions occurred within the PAC. Nyaose defied his expulsion order and refused to move away from the Party until he was officially reinstated and integrated into the new National Executive Committee at the Moshi unity conference in September 1967.

The expulsion of the Botswana PAC group in 1965 occurred almost simultaneously with the Leballo – Nyaose feud. The PAC Bostwana group was mostly comprised of people

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\(^{46}\) PAC Archives, Fort Hare: JD Nyaose: Circular Letter No.1, pp. 1-6.

\(^{47}\) Ibid, pp. 2-3.
who were victims of arrests which followed the March 1963 Leballo press conference. This group requested, in a memorandum signed in July 1963, that a conference be summoned “where a postmortem of the Maseru debacle, the streamlining of the organisational machinery and the general revitalisation of the party” could be discussed. The request for such a conference was not only rejected “but the signatories to that memorandum were subjected to continual persecution culminating in the suspension of the core of that group in 1965”. Most of the members of the group fled and sought political asylum in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia.

As the period 1965 to 1967 drew to a close, tensions within the PAC leadership had reached boiling point. No one within the ranks of the PAC National Executive was bold enough to call for unity within the ranks of the leadership in order to depose Leballo, in spite of the fact that there were rampant signs within the organisation that the PAC membership was “fed up with him”. “In July 1967 A.B. Ngcobo and P.N. Raboroko attempted to assume control of the Dar-es-Salaam office, and the ensuing scuffle was followed by the temporary closure of the office by the OAU/ALC”. All these events eventually led to the summoning of the leadership conference at Moshi in Tanzania in September 1967.

4.1.2.2. The Moshi conference as a source of future conflict.

The Moshi conference, summoned with the support of the ALC of the OAU, was intended to be a unity conference and to seal the longstanding grounds of contention within the ranks of the leadership of the PAC. Instead, it endorsed some of the expulsions Leballo had started. At that conference the expulsion of A.B. Ngcobo was confirmed. A new structure called the ‘Revolutionary Command’ was set up to replace the Presidential Council and its headquarters were established in Lusaka (Zambia) in December 1967.

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48 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: CJ Lekaje - ‘Confidential’, p. 4.
49 Ibid.
50 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: CJ Lekaje - ‘Confidential’, p. 6.
51 T. Lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 311.
52 ANC Archives, Fort Hare: The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa; Whom Does It Serve? pp. 1-24; T. Lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 311.
Re-establishing the links with the internal struggle in South Africa became the reason for relocating the headquarters to Lusaka and establishing the Revolutionary Council. However this arrangement was shortlived because the PAC was expelled from Lusaka by the Zambian government in 1971 because of its internal conflicts.

The summoning of the Moshi conference generated tensions within the PAC. As expressed in C.J. Lekaje’s submission to the ALC, PAC members “never expected that the leadership who had ample time of meeting would have to be brought together by the ALC”. What dismayed the general membership even further, was the fact that they were the ones who asked, four years ago, for a conference of the same nature as the Moshi conference and yet they were left out when the conference was held. The general membership also questioned the credentials of people who were invited to be part of the deliberations at the conference. Among the issues raised by PAC members was about “an ex-South African beauty queen” who “was flown from London at enormous cost to attend the Moshi meeting. She participated in the discussions. Yet one senior party official (whose name is not mentioned in the records) took all the trouble to be at Moshi but was refused participation in the conference. To make it worse, he was asked to refund the ALC Secretariat the costs of traveling to Moshi”.

In addition to this, the general membership also raised concerns about the fact that the PAC leadership did not seek a fresh mandate from them before attending the conference. The conclusion to which the general membership had come was that the Moshi conference created “greater doubts and a sense of uncertainty”. It “widened the rift between the leaders and the led”.

Problems regarding the composition and role of the PAC leadership remained unresolved over the period 1968 to 1979. The leadership of the PAC under Leballo never reached a stage where it functioned as a collective. Leballo’s leadership style was divisive in the

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53 However it should be noted that PAC headquarters in Lusaka existed for a short time as the organisation was chased out of Zambia in 1970 due to its inactivity inside South Africa and its tendencies of internal conflict. For more details on this matter, see, T. Lodge: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, pp. 305-314.


sense that he would select from the Executive Committee whoever he needed for a particular purpose, to work exclusively with him and ignore or sideline the entire Committee. This resulted in a situation in which the National Executive Committee was perpetually divided within itself. The Moshi conference provided no drastic solutions. P.K. Leballo continued to rule the PAC even though there were signs that the Executive Committee and the general membership of the organisation were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with his leadership. Up to this point, the Tanzanian government and the African Liberation Committee of the OAU were still prepared to grant him the benefit of the doubt, provide support and advice to his leadership, but this did not continue for too long as will be demonstrated in sections that follow.


During the early days of the PAC inside South Africa, it was normal practice and the duty of each member to guard the organisation against infiltration by Apartheid spies and ensure strict discipline among the membership. The Oath of Allegiance was an important reference in this regard. PAC members formed close-knit cell structures and general meetings served as a source of inspiration and guidance. In exile, these practices were weakened, firstly by the uncertainty of the exile environment, as well as the unclear future and direction of liberation struggle. PAC members from different regions and backgrounds in South Africa, found themselves thrown together in a single, but diverse, exiled political community. Without organisational policy or strategy on how to handle and accommodate ‘differences’ among themselves, disorders of an obsessive-compulsive nature were fermented. Hence the term ‘syndrome’ is used in this section to designate a ‘sickness’ of a non-pathological nature within an organisation. Leballo can hardly escape the blame for this; he perverted the sound principles of strict discipline and the commanding powers vested in the President of the PAC as indicated in the PAC
Constitution and Disciplinary Code.\textsuperscript{58}  

The tendency to label, tag and spread distorted impressions about critics, potential competitors for power, independent thinkers and people who did not fit with any faction, were the negative spin-offs resulting from a perverted interpretation, deliberate or not, of the PAC Disciplinary Code.\textsuperscript{59} During the exile period, this tendency assumed serious proportions. It was sown and germinated during the Leballo era and especially during the early formative period in Maseru. It soon crystallised into a subculture within the organisation. Even after Leballo was deposed, it remained a fatal weapon in the power struggles, which characterised the operations of the PAC until it was unbanned in 1990. During the period 1962 to 1979, Leballo used the ‘internal enemy’ allegations as a bulwark against critics and possible attacks, given the kind of blunders he committed as head of the organisation which cost not only people’s lives but damaged the reputation of the PAC as an organisation.

The March 1963 “press conference” in Maseru, is an important starting point if one seeks to understand fully the birth of the internal enemy syndrome in the PAC and the divisive impact the syndrome had on the entire organisation. At the “press conference”, Leballo revealed to the world that on a certain day in April he would command an army of 15000 men trained in Basutoland and would invade South Africa. He declared that the people of South Africa were ready for such an uprising. Leballo made all these statements on the eve of the release of Mangaliso Sobukwe, the founding President of the PAC, from prison. “The people of South Africa believe that the design of the press conference was to have Sobukwe further kept in prison as it happened soon after the fatal press

\textsuperscript{58} See: Pan Africanist Congress: \textit{Disciplinary Code}, pp. 91-92. For a detailed discussion of the weaknesses of the Disciplinary Code and the PAC constitution itself, refer to the discussions in chapter 2. On the whole Leballo perverted the clause in the Disciplinary Code which states “where normal processes of free discussion fail to curb factional tendencies, then firm iron discipline should come into play, and factional elements, no matter how important, should be chopped off without ceremony’. He also found loopholes on the clause about ‘Democratic centrism’. It is defined in PAC Disciplinary Code to mean “that the power of directing the Pan Africanist Congress is centralized in the National Executive Committee which acts through the President who wields unquestioned power as long as he acts within the confines of the organisation’s democratic decisions.

\textsuperscript{59} Pan Africanist Congress: Disciplinary Code, p. 91.
conference despite the fact that he had completed his prison term”.\(^{60}\) Many people inside and outside South Africa suffered when the South African government, assisted by the Basutoland police arrested more than 10 000 PAC members or suspected PAC members throughout South Africa. These people were tried, convicted and the severity of their sentences was unprecedented in the history of South Africa. “These sentences ranged from 3 years, 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years, 25 years, 30 years and 33 years; also life imprisonment was imposed on some and death sentences on others. As a direct result of the outburst more than 74 men have since been hanged by racists in South Africa”.\(^ {61}\)

Against this background, it can be assumed that Leballo was insecure, firstly about his personal safety and secondly about his leadership, stature and power within the organisation. Inventing the myth about an internal enemy was critical not only as a necessary divisive offensive but as a weapon against opponents within the PAC. PAC members who were critical of the Leballo administration in Basutoland “never had their grievances and complaints attended to in a manner fitting any well-run administration. Instead, they were given labels and tags implying that they were collaborating with the fascist government in South Africa”.\(^ {62}\) More often than not such members would “just disappear” and the Leballo administration would spread rumours that persons had deserted and had “gone back to their masters in South Africa”, because they were “political renegades who were South African police informers”.\(^ {63}\) Some of these members fled to other independent African states as refugees and others were alleged to have been ‘liquidated’ by Leballo and Templeton Ntantala. However, certain members who incurred the disfavour of the Leballo administration because they were against the ‘liquidation’ of other members, knowing what would befall them, left Basutoland on their own for Botswana. Whilst in transit through South Africa some were arrested by the South African Police and were convicted and given severe sentences. A case of one Qoba

\(^{60}\) PAC Archives, Fort Hare: CJ Lekaje: ‘Confidential’, p. 2.

\(^{61}\) Ibid. p. 2; Also confirmed in the interview conducted by the author with Malcom Dyan – now a member of parliament- formerly a PAC member who was affected by the March 1963 Leballo press conference; Also see the speech of Dr M. Pheko, former PAC Deputy President at the unveiling of the tombstone of the Mpendulo sons killed in a raid on APLA bases by the South African defence force in Northcrest in Umtata, 1995.

\(^{62}\) PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J. Lekaje: ‘Confidential’, p. 3.

\(^{63}\) Ibid.
is singled out by C.J. Lekaje in his submission to the ALC of the OAU. This man, “on his arrival in Botswana he found that the Leballo clique in Maseru had already sent messages to the representative in Botswana” to the effect that the people who had ran away from the PAC camps in Dar-es-Salaam and Basutoland were South African informers and should not be given any kind of assistance.  

“The representative in Botswana also wrote to Dar-es-Salaam confirming receipt of the message of the Maseru message. The Qoba group wrote to the National Executive in Dar-es-Salaam where they pointed out the atrocities that were being perpetrated in Maseru and requesting to be cleared”. This never happened, instead Qoba was arrested by the South African police while en-route to Swaziland where he wanted to seek political asylum.

In 1966, at a PAC camp in Mbeya, Tanzania, the PAC members raised their dissatisfaction with the leadership of the PAC. Instead of addressing the concerns raised at the meeting, Leballo once again emphasised “how he will deal with the enemies of the revolution who had infiltrated the party”. Shortly thereafter, “three members of the PAC, among them an expectant woman, were declared prohibited immigrants in Tanzania and no reason was given for this (but the general opinion was that the leadership must have made such a recommendation)”.

P.K. Leballo continued with his labelling and myth-making exercise even after he was deposed. The later section of this chapter will demonstrate how the internal enemy syndrome reached a climax and resulted in open physical clashes and shedding of blood amongst PAC members in what became known as the ‘November 1977 Coup d’état’ an incident which precipitated the downfall of Leballo. In a press statement released from Libya, in August 1982, Leballo continued, even after he was deposed, to label PAC

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64 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J. Lekaje: ‘Confidential’, p. 3
65 Ibid.
66 Interview with C de Tekere, Langa Township, 22 December 2000; See also PAC Archives: C.J. Lekaje -’Confidential’, p.4.
67 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J. Lekaje: ‘Confidential’, pp. 4-5.
leaders who came after him, i.e. Vusi Make and J.N. Pokela as either conniving with “US Imperialists” or were “imported from racist Apartheid South Africa”.  

4.1.4. The Management of Funds and other Organisational Resources.

To a large extent, the financial problems, which troubled the existence of the PAC during the entire exile period, date back to the Leballo era. Even though Leballo ‘successfully’ set up a formal PAC structure in exile, the co-ordination and management of funds generated from various sources remained a problem. It seems that there was no built-in mechanism or organisational capacity to deal specifically with the management of finances.

To begin with, the exiled PAC received money from various sources and these included, international solidarity groups, trade unions, the African Liberation Committee of the OAU and sympathetic governments and church organisations. As far back as 1963, Nana Mahomo, one of the two external representatives (the other one was Peter Molotsi) of the PAC, appointed in March 1960, received an amount of £100 from the KF and Metalworkers Union of Sweden to help the PAC meet the needs of refugees. The same month, Metall (a trade union of Sweden) agreed to purchase a Land Rover and ship it to the movement in Dar-es-Salaam. These funds never reached the PAC hence Mahomo was suspended in August 1964, charged with misappropriation of funds, “attempts to create personal loyalties and sources of personal operation”. This was not the only amount the PAC received from the Nordic countries. Between 1977 and 1992 the total contribution to the PAC was £24 million. “In 1983, the Finnish government under the Social Democratic Prime Minister Kalevi Sorsa, as an exception, granted the organisation FIM 200, 000 as refugee support in Tanzania”.

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69 PAC Archives: Fort Hare: Press Statement by PK Leballo, Libya, August 1982.
73 Ibid.
This is intended to illustrate that it is perhaps not true that the PAC, because of its Africanist stance “was not salable to the Western World” and was therefore not able to get funding. In comparison to the ANC, it received less but nonetheless, did receive support from European countries. As will be demonstrated later in the discussion, the PAC mismanaged its funds, misused its resources both human, financial and organisational; hence it lost critical opportunities to make the kind of political victories or gains it was entitled to during the long exile period. There is no attempt to promote a narrow internalist view of the PAC’s problems but it is sought to underline the fact that even though there were definite external challenges, the PAC leadership was to blame for a larger part of the failures.

The mismanagement, misuse of funds and organisational resources was initially exposed by C.J. Lekaje, in his elaborate submission to the OAU Africa Liberation Committee. The points he highlighted were confirmed in a detailed report submitted by A.B. Ngcobo, the Treasurer-General to the Moshi conference in September 1967. The report refers first to the breach of article 4(e) of the PAC constitution which stated that “the National Executive Committee shall at the end of each year prepare estimates of revenue and expenditure for the ensuing year and that such estimates shall be submitted to the annual conference for consideration”. It proceeded to state that “the National Executive Committee shall at the end of the financial year cause the Treasurer-General to prepare and submit audited accounts to the National conference for consideration”.

In the light of these constitutional stipulations, A.B. Ngcobo argued that the National Executive Committee had no grounds to request a financial statement from the Treasurer-General at the Moshi conference, and especially given the fact that they failed to give him

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74 See D.B.A. Mahlangu: ‘From South Africa To Azania’, p. 56.
75 This is confirmed by Tor Sellstrom: Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Vol. 1, pp. 498-499.
the necessary support as prescribed in the constitution. Besides that Ngcobo listed the numerous fund raising missions in various parts of the world which never reported the funds generated to him nor deposited the funds into the party’s account. To be more specific the Treasurer-General pointed out that “in October 1964 a mission to the U.A.R (United Arab Republic) realised a sum of £5000. This money was never handed to the Treasurer-General nor deposited into the party account. Neither was the explanation of its disbursement made available to the Treasurer-General”.78 This mission, was led by P.K. Leballo, the acting President of the PAC. Another grant was given to J.D. Nyaose (an amount of £10 000) in February 1965 following the PAC’s first visit to China in July 1964. Again the amount was neither deposited into the Party’s account nor received by the Treasurer-General.79 The report proceeds to site three more instances in which large amounts of money donated by countries which were committed to the fight against Apartheid, and in support of the PAC, were misappropriated by the leadership of the PAC. These involve the £20 000 from the Chinese government donated to the PAC delegation led by P.K. Leballo with Messrs Z.B. Molete and A.G. Ebrahim. The donation was received in two installments of £10,000 each. The entire amount never reached the office of the Treasurer-General or the account of the Party. This was corroborated in a report to the ALC of the OAU submitted by C.J. Lekaje where he indicates that in August 1965, he went with Leballo to the Chinese embassy to collect a sum of £10 000 for the PAC. Lekaje signed for the money but on the way back, he was “instructed by Leballo not to disclose this to the Treasurer-General”.80 By coincidence, Lekaje and Leballo met the Treasurer General at the bank and when he asked them what their mission had been, “Leballo lied to him and said the ALC had rung him so that he can arrange for an overdraft”.81 In October the same year, the PAC received another donation of £5000 from the Chinese embassy in Dar-es-Salaam. The money was collected by C.J. Lekaje in the company of Messrs Raboroko and Ntantala. According to Lekaje’s submission to the ALC, the two gentlemen “decided how this money was to be used”

despite the fact that they knew that the organisation had a Treasurer-General who managed the funds of the organisation.\footnote{\textit{PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J. Lekaje: ‘Confidential’, p. 9.}}

The labour delegation to China in May 1965, led by J.D. Nyaose received an amount of \textsterling\text{10 000}.\footnote{\textit{PAC Archives, Fort Hare: A.B. Ngcobo: Report of the Treasurer-General, 1967.}} This was subsequently the subject of great controversy between the union and the PAC, hence Nyaose’s expulsion from the Party referred to earlier on. It was contended that the money belonged to the Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa (FOFATUSA). All the same, the money was never reflected in the records of the PAC. In December 1965, Leballo returned from Accra via Cairo and gave a verbal report that the party had been given \textsterling\text{5000} by the Ghanaian government and that he decided to send it all by courier to Maseru.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}} He could not provide the proof requested by the meeting to demonstrate that the money was indeed couriered to Maseru and was received by the PAC structure there. Mr Leballo further reported that he had collected \textsterling\text{2,500} enroute to Dar-es-Salaam and that he had given some of it to the cadres in Cairo and had paid his bill at the New Metropole Hotel. The latter sum he claimed was for the cadres in Mbeya to start their homeward journey. There was a further \textsterling\text{5000} from the ALC. About \textsterling\text{2 500} of this money was dispatched to Maseru at Leballo’s insistence. Another \textsterling\text{1 500} was given to Ntantala to take to Mbeya. \textsterling\text{700} was retrieved from the ALC money that had been left by J.D. Nyaose when he was expelled. All these transactions took place during the absence of the Treasurer.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}} In May 1966, the PAC received \textsterling\text{1 500} from the ALC. About \textsterling\text{350} of this amount was used as a deposit on a house in Livingstone street in order to minimise costs on accommodation in Tanzania. This was subsequently retrieved and the party continued to waste money on exhorbitant rentals.\footnote{\textit{PAC Archives, Fort Hare: CJ Lekaje: ‘Confidential’, p. 9.}}

The list of instances in which funds donated by various countries in support of the struggle against Apartheid were mismanaged and misappropriated within the PAC, is
long and depressing.\footnote{See: PAC Archives, Fort Hare: AB Ncobo: Report of the Treasurer-General, pp. 1-2; C.J. Lekajæ: ‘Confidential’, pp. 8-10; ANC archives, Fort Hare: The ANC of South Africa: ‘The Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa; Whom Does It Serve? pp. 1-11.} Despite all these financial inputs from various sources the state of finances within the PAC, remained unsatisfactory throughout the exile period. What happened during the periods of Vusi Make, J.N. Pokela and J. Mlambo is not explained in sufficient detail in the primary sources, but it is highlighted that the PAC still had financial difficulties and the management and use of resources had not improved.

Mismanagement, recklessness and corruption were not limited only to funds, but involved moveable property acquired by the organisation. In December 1965, for instance, “one David Sibeko drove a party vehicle whilst unlicensed and smashed it beyond repair. No inquiry was ever held. In August 1966 Sibeko drove another party vehicle whilst unlicensed and knocked down a pedestrian. The victim was hospitalised; under mysterious circumstances the victim was reported to have absconded from hospital”.\footnote{PAC Archives, Fort Hare: CJ Lekajæ: ‘Confidential’ p. 5.} This created the impression among PAC members that the disappearance of the victim was deliberately done in order to defeat the ends of justice. David Sibeko continued to drive PAC vehicles without a licence and the leadership knew about this but failed to act. In another incident, in May 1966, the PAC vehicle overturned about 8 miles out of Mbeya. “It had been driven on public roads for about three months after its license and insurance certificate had expired. The repairs of the vehicle came to £300. Because this accident took place when the vehicle was in the hands of the favored group, nothing happened”.\footnote{Ibid.}

The amount of money donated to the PAC and which the organisation could not account for, is staggering and destroys the sympathies of whoever may want to plead on the party’s behalf. The fact that all PAC leaders implicated in the report never repudiated its contents but instead agreed to suspend the Treasurer-General is important. It was decided to appoint a commission of enquiry, which consisted of Z.B. Molete, J.D. Nyaose and P.N. Raboroko (who were all implicated in varying degrees in the maladministration of funds). This casts doubts over the integrity of the inquiry which followed. Nonetheless,
the Commission of Inquiry was abandoned in 1968 because of the fears that should it investigate Leballo on the basis of the revelations made in the report of the Treasurer-General, members of the Commission might also be expelled from the organisation. The situation within the PAC after the Moshi conference was summed up clearly by the ‘World Muslim News’ in the following manner:

“During the period leading up to Leballo’s removal the entire situation within the organization was characterized by virtual terrorism in the sense that some PAC members who owed personal allegiance to Mr Leballo had been armed and were involved in acts of violence and thuggery against those who were regarded as not being loyal to Leballo.” 90

4.1.4.1. The Dawn Of A New Era.

The legacy Leballo left behind was one of factionalism, cliquism and mutual political blackmail, particularly within the ranks of leadership and the army. The army itself was deeply divided to such an extent that during the post-Leballo era, it was very difficult to unite the cadres. There were divisions within the PAC army between the new cadres mostly from the June 16 Soweto uprisings, and the old guard from the 1960’s. This division worsened in 1977. In November 1977 Leballo instigated an uprising by new APLA recruits who lived at Itumbi camp in the district of Mbeya in Tanzania. The coup was against the APLA High Command headed by Templeton Ntantala, the Deputy Chairman of the PAC. It appears that there was competition between Leballo and Ntantala over the control of the army. Ntantala had the support of the old guard and well established sections of the army. Leballo on the other hand, had won the loyalty and support of the new recruits. This he did by frequently visiting the camp in Mbeya, making “inciting speeches there”, telling the new cadres that “he was giving them the right to go to Dar or Mbeya without bothering to get appropriate authority and that nobody had the power or right to stop them or refuse them permission to leave the camp. He then in subsequent weeks began drawing a few cadres to Dar”. 91

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91 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: ‘Crisis in the PAC’, p. 2.
On a date unspecified (in the sources) in November 1977 at 2am, “a whole gang of new recruits attacked the residences of all the other Central Committee and High Command members”. One member of the High Command was stabbed, others were manhandled and the keys to the High Command’s cabinets and offices were taken. The uproar which occurred during the fighting alerted the police, the Prime Minister’s Office (Julius Nyerere) and the OAU Liberation Committee. The interference of the OAU Liberation Committee and the Tanzanian government helped restore order for a short while. At a PAC meeting which involved the mutineers, a discussion about the removal of the Ntantala’s High Command and its replacement by a new one was entertained. A decision was taken by the PAC leadership present at the meeting to retain the High Command but the cadres rejected the decision. The Central Committee met in December 1977. The aim of the meeting was to mend the immanent split and develop a policy to manage the cadres. The meeting resolved that a consultative conference should be summoned in April 1978. Another Central Committee meeting was held in January 1978 and the major aim was to prepare for the Consultative conference in April. At that meeting Leballo surprised everyone as he made a ruling “that called for the final and total overthrow of the whole High Command, that is Commanders both in Tanzania and out of the home front”. This came as an instruction to the Central Committee. The decision was endorsed at the Arusha Consultative Conference in April 1978. T.M. Ntantala the leader of the army and a number of highly trained cadres were expelled from the PAC. They formed the Azanian People’s Revolutionary Party (APRP) on the 29th August 1979. This research does not analyse the development of the APRP and its activities. When Pokela arrived in 1981, he held a series of talks with the APRP assisted by Frontline States. He managed to persuade the APRP to dissolve as a structure and its members returned to the PAC in 1982. The November 1977 incident marked the last straw of Leballo’s dictatorship in the PAC and the OAU could not tolerate him any further. Hence Leballo was eventually deposed in May 1979.

92 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: ‘Crisis in the PAC’, p. 5.
93 Ibid., p. 2.
Despite the issues already covered, it must be pointed out that there were numerous achievements which could be counted and credited to the period of Leballo’s leadership. The establishment of diplomatic relations with China, was a result of Leballo’s political maneuverings. For a long time after Leballo had gone, the relationship with China proved beneficial to the PAC, especially in the arena of the PAC military training and ideological strategy. Besides that a limited number of PAC men were sent to various places for military training; there were “about 30 in Nairobi, 20 in Addis Ababa, and another 15 scattered in about 4 or 5 African states. This does not include the more than 30 men in Botswana”. Some were in Europe (approximately 20) and over 100 in the United States of America. In November 1974, the PAC lobbied successfully and obtained the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations General Assembly. In July the following year, the OAU Kampala meeting adopted as official policy a lengthy document prepared by the PAC in which it argued for the illegality of South Africa’s international status. Subsequently Libya and Ghana offered the PAC training facilities, hence 100 PAC cadres were flown to Libya for military training, the same year. In other words, even though things did not work well within the PAC, there was limited achievement in certain areas.

On the 30th April and 1st May 1979, the Central Committee of the PAC held an extraordinary session in Dar-es-Salaam at which it was decided to appoint a Presidential Council charged with the responsibility of fulfilling the duties of the Acting President. This structure superceded the Revolutionary Council set up at Moshi in 1968. Besides that the PAC headquarters had been moved from Lusaka back to Dar-es-Salaam in 1971. Kenneth Kaunda was not prepared to host an organisation so deeply divided within itself, such as the PAC. The appointment of the Presidential Council was ostensibly meant to cover the period when Leballo was going to be absent for medical treatment abroad. In reality it meant the overthrow of Leballo and the ushering in of a new era in the leadership of the PAC. The Presidential Council consisted of Vusi Make, David Sibeko.

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95 See PAC Archives, Fort Hare: ‘New Road Of Revolution’, pp. 1-2.
96 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: C.J. Lekaje: ‘Confidential’, p. 7.
98 Ibid. pp. 303-326.
and Ellias Ntloedibe, all of whom were members of the Central Committee. The trio which was to lead the PAC after Leballo’s removal from power, had the support of the Tanzanian government and the Tanzania led OAU African Liberation Committee. In 1979, the Tanzanian government and the ALC were fully convinced of the centrality of Leballo to the problems of the PAC and they deemed it necessary to intervene in order to assist with the rehabilitation of the organisation. Hence it was the Tanzanian government which announced in the press and over the radio that Mr Leballo had resigned from the leadership of the PAC on grounds of ill-health.\(^99\) This was despite the fact that there was no letter of resignation from Leballo. Leballo tried to put up a fight for his position and indicated in a counter-statement that he never resigned from the leadership of the PAC.\(^100\) Fortunately he was already out of Tanzania and the Tanzanian authorities would not allow him back into the country.

The intervention of the Tanzanian authorities in PAC matters and the removal of Leballo from leadership widened rifts within the PAC. The majority of cadres within APLA, most of whom were fairly new recruits who had joined the ranks of the PAC as students who fled South Africa following the June 16, 1976 Soweto uprisings, were still loyal to Leballo and could not accept the leadership of the trio. It appears as though they saw in the leadership of the trio the usurpation of the party’s constitutional leadership role, because the PAC constitution, as discussed in chapter 1, did not make provision for an executive presidency.

The period of rule of the trio was very short and as a result can hardly constitute a significant historical period. Within one month, starting from 1 May 1979 to 1\(^{st}\) June 1979, the trio’s administration was already saddled with serious problems which were epitomised in the assassination of David Sibeko, a member of the ruling trio. The African Liberation Committee literally had to intervene and take over the management of the PAC until Vusumzi Make was formally appointed as the new Chairperson of the PAC in August 1979. Before examining the Vusumzi Make era, it will be useful to provide an

\(^{99}\) World Muslim News, 2 May 1979; Interview with Mr E Mfaxa; Daily News, Tanzania, 1 May, 1979.  
\(^{100}\) PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Press Statement by P.K. Leballo, Tripoli, Libya, 25 August, 1982.
overview of the circumstances which surrounded the death of David Sibeko and the trial which ensued.


The murder of David Sibeko, a member of the Presidential Council which ruled the PAC and the trial which ensued, exacerbated tensions and widened rifts within the PAC. At this stage it appeared that the organisation had reached a climax in the long history of problems it had experienced since its inception.

As highlighted above, the murder of Sibeko occurred just after P.K. Leballo was forced to resign. The resignation, as already indicated, was spearheaded by the Tanzanian authorities who also played a very influential role in the ALC of the OAU. The decision to sack Leballo was apparently not accepted by the army (APLA). The army was not prepared to co-operate with the three-man Presidential Council. Groups of PAC soldiers from Southern Tanzania roamed the streets of Dar-es-Salaam, without authority either from the political leadership or the army’s command. It is not clear whether the latter had lost control of the army or whether the army’s command was covertly supporting disloyalty to the new Presidential Council.

The actual circumstances surrounding the murder of Mr Sibeko are ambiguous. From the reports of the trial it appears that he was shot by a PAC cadre called Titus Soni Alias Joe, a former bodyguard of the deposed PAC chairman, P.K. Leballo, on the 1st of June 1979.101 This happened at the Sea View flats in the city of Dar-es-Salaam in the presence of Mr Sibeko’s colleague, Mr Vusumzi Make. Six PAC cadres (including Titus Soni) from Itumbi PAC military camp, had traveled to Dar-es-Salaam to escort two of the three members of the Presidential Council to a meeting at Itumbi camp. The meeting was called by the soldiers who wanted to discuss the internal situation in the PAC. It is not clear why the six men were armed and why they came late at night. These are the questions which Sibeko raised with them and in the ensuing scuffle he was shot dead. In

a trial which took place in Dar-es-Salaam, the ambiguous position of Vusumzi Make, the owner of the flat in which the murder occurred (in his presence), was raised as a concern. Apparently Make was not threatened or even forced to go to Itumbi camp by the cadres who shot his colleague, David Sibeko.

The case was tried by the Tanzanian court and a 15-year jail sentence was imposed on the APLA six for the murder of David Sibeko. On appeal the sentence was reduced to 10 years. The APLA six included Titus Soni, Daniel Monogotle, Gilbert Ntlapho, Abraham Tatu Reuben Zwane, James Hlongwane and Shindo Mahlangu. The funeral of David Sibeko and the imprisonment of the six cadres deepened the tension within the organisation. This provided space to opportunists within the PAC who began to cast themselves, in a messianic role, as saviours of the Party. Their actions dominated during the era of Vusumzi Make as will be shown in the following chapter.

In summary, the problems in the PAC were of a longstanding nature traceable to the formation of the organisation in April 1959. Although Leballo’s era left a shadow which continued to haunt the PAC after he was deposed, it cannot be concluded that for almost two decades, the history of the PAC revolved around the ‘personal imbalances’ of one individual. “For one thing we can be certain: almost before the ink was dry on the document signed in 1959 which created the formation of the Pan Africanist Congress, there were already signs of internal conflict”. The number of expulsions from the organisation in the first month marked the beginning of a series of schisms as (elite) factions competed for control of the Party. From the thematic issues identified in this research, the contribution of the ‘Leballo factor’ in damaging the PAC in exile is clearly exposed without however, absolving the entire leadership of the PAC and the ambiguous role of Tanzanian authorities. The failures of this period became the burden of the next phases of PAC leadership. Hence, when the PAC was unbanned in 1990, it was still recovering from deadly scars of the Leballo era.

103 D.A.B. Mahlangu: ‘From South Africa to Azania’, pp. 81-82; also see Chapter 2 – PAC: Formation Banishment and Road to Exile.

4.2.1. Background and Profile.

Vusumzi Make, the Joshua Nkomo (of Zimbabwe) look-alike was relatively unknown within the circles of the ‘traditional/longstanding’ PAC constituency. Even during the time of serious conflict in the PAC in 1967-1968, his faction was small and relatively isolated. Make had the background of a University Professor. He taught at the University of Liberia between 1968 and 1974 when he rejoined the PAC in 1974. He had been a member of the PAC since the establishment of its headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania in 1964 but left the movement during its crisis period in 1968. “Make’s golden opportunity to sneak back into the PAC’s activities came when President Tolbert of Liberia permitted Vorster to visit that country in the 1974 ‘spirit of détente’. President Tolbert engaged the services of Make, after Vorster’s visit, to contact the PAC leadership and assured it that Liberia had not sold out, and that Liberia would go on giving increasing material support to the Azanian liberation movement”. Make established contacts with Leballo and conveyed Tolbert’s invitation and assurances of continued material support to the PAC. Leballo, seeing the attractive financial prospects in the opportunity, immediately designated Make his Special Envoy in Liberia. “Thus, when Leballo finally went to see President Tolbert, and consequently collected some $10 000 from the Liberians, Make was back in the center of PAC activities”. It is not clear what eventually happened to the money, only Make and Leballo knew. All the same, what this meant was that there was satisfaction from three sides: President Tolbert was satisfied that at least the PAC, a member of the liberation movement had not taken Vorster’s visit to Liberia in a bad light; Leballo was also happy with the money and other benefits from Liberia and Make had derived out of the deal impeccable credentials for re-entry into the PAC. Ever since his re-entry into PAC exile politics, Make was well-known for his tendency to save his skin and always played it safe in PAC crises and in the politics of the

104 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Feature: South Africa, undated, no page numbers.
Azanian Revolution in general. It seems, he was always careful to read the balance of forces and quickly determine where to stand.

When he was appointed Chairman of the PAC with the backing of the ALC of the OAU, Vusumizi Make started his one year and five months period of chairmanship (beginning in August 1979 to January 1981) from a very low point. Firstly, he was implicated in the murder of David Sibeko. Ordinary PAC members questioned his role and asked why he was left out by the cadres from Itumbi camp, if their mission was to eliminate the post-Leballo Presidential Council, as Make argued in his testimony during the trial. Secondly, he was not known among the cadres in the army camps. The latter point was to be the major source of many problems he encountered during his short term of office. The support from the army, was a vital area in political leadership during the exile period and especially in the PAC, where force and fear had become important attributes for sustained leadership of the organisation.

4.2.2. The Composition and Role of the exile leadership as represented by the National Executive Committee (Central Committee) of the PAC.

Vusumzi Make’s short period of leadership was characterised by “indecision, corruption, factionalism and cliquism”. The extent to which many of these were the result of a perpetuation of the recent Leballo era is easy to assume but difficult to measure, given the scantiness of documentary evidence covering this particular period. At the same time from the existing evidence it is clear that many of the organisational rehabilitation efforts which J.N. Pokela developed when he took over as chairperson in February 1981, were initiated under the leadership of Vusi Make. One of the first challenges Make’s leadership had to deal with was the situation within the army. Members of APLA who were still loyal to Leballo, some of whom were dismayed at the death of David Sibeko,

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107 The recommendations of the Arusha Conference was that the title ‘Acting President’ be designated ‘Chairman of the Central Committee’, see PAC in Perspective, Series No. 4, July 1978, p. 33.
109 ANC Archives, Fort Hare (Howard Pim Library): Henry Isaacs: Memorandum:To all Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC. Re -Guideline of the Department of Foreign Affairs, New York, 17 February 1982, p. 4. (Box 2: File no. 22)
refused to accept the Vusumzi Make led National Executive Committee.\textsuperscript{110} Even though this will be thoroughly examined in chapter 6 where a detailed analysis of the relationship between the political leadership and the army will be given, it is worth mentioning at this stage that in order to restore order within the PAC camps, the Tanzanian troops were deployed by the Tanzanian government. The Tanzania troops were deployed to the APLA camp in Chunya where they opened fire on disloyal PAC cadres who were on parade, brutally killing eleven in cold blood and critically wounding more than forty.\textsuperscript{111} The survivors were arrested, split up, detained and incarcerated in different towns in Tanzania. All this was done, rightly or wrongly, to assist the new regime and rehabilitate the PAC.

No major changes occurred in the constitution of the National Executive Committee during the Make era. At a plenary session held in April 1980, seven months after Make was appointed chairman, a few additions to the executive committee were made. These included, D.D.D. Mantshontsho, Count Petersen and Ellias Ntloedibe. Mantshontsho became Administrative Secretary, Count Petersen became Secretary for Education and Manpower Development and Ellias Ntloedibe, Secretary for Publicity and Information. This means that the key members of the executive structure were as follows:

Vusumzi Make – Chairman  
D.D.D. Mantshontsho – Administrative Secretary  
Henry Isaacs – Director of Foreign Affairs (replacing the late David Sibeko)  
E.L. Makoti – Secretary for Defence  
E. Ntloedibe – Director of Publicity and Information  
Erret Radebe – Director of Finance  
N.M. Muendane – Member of the Central Committee  
E.R. Sibeko – Member of the Central Committee  
E.M. Zulu – Member of the Central Committee

\textsuperscript{110} APLA Notes, Pretoria, 21 December 2001.  
However, the composition of the Central Committee became a source of conflict within 12 months of the assumption of duties by the said committee. The general membership of the PAC, through its committees and structures of representation, assured Make of loyalty and co-operation. To his dismay, when he addressed PAC members at Ilala party residence, in Dar-es-Salaam, (in his all-round New Year speech, 1980, of the Party), “all secondary differences that were there in the Leballo era” resurfaced. Questions and demands were raised and put before his leadership team. The PAC membership argued that “the leadership alone as an element in the Party cannot be justified to arrogate to itself a decisive role in the institution of the alternative to Leballo”. The PAC membership urged Make and his executive committee to drop two new members of the National Executive Committee, Mantshontsho and Ntloedibe, because “their role in the past twelve months was a manifestation of their miserable failures”. They argued that theirs were “neither mistakes nor deviations but utter failures”. They also demanded that they be involved in the future decisions about the appointment of people to positions of leadership in the Party. The same kind of demand for democratic participation in the election of Central Committee members was made during the era of Leballo and it continued as to be made during the eras of Pokela and Mlambo as will be discussed in the sections that follow.

The failures of Mantshontsho and Ntloedibe were not clearly spelt out, except that frequent reference was made to their historical roles and associations. The fact that Ellias Ntloedibe was once a close associate of Leballo was raised as an issue against him during what was supposedly the ‘new era’ of reconstruction in the PAC. Ntloedibe was described as a person “who has a long history of opportunism” and that his outlook was
based on where his interests as a person lay. Vusi Make had to sift through all these generalizations and take a decision, something which he failed to do. The criticisms were not only limited to the two members of the executive he recently appointed. They also involved Fezile Ntlapho, a PAC representative in Egypt. The membership demanded his immediate withdrawal as he failed to live up to his responsibilities in Egypt. Criticisms were extended directly to Vusumzi Make as the Chairman of the party. The membership criticised him for not being fully resident where the headquarters of the movement were and his unavailability when “the outside world and members of the party wanted to see him through correct channels”. Other issues raised were tacit criticism of his personal conduct and his failure to project a good image of the PAC in the media.

Other issues which the PAC leadership had to deal with and were raised by PAC members in the camps involved the coordination and management of the various departments within the organisation. Examples which were enumerated included the Department of Defense. The inefficiency of this department was raised as a point of dissatisfaction. Besides the task of undoing the legacy and influence of Leballo in the army, training courses and military traditions brought to APLA by cadres trained in different parts of the world needed to be blended together into a uniform APLA tradition. This could not be done without the intervention of the PAC national executive committee. The PAC leadership under Vusi Make was also failing to revive diplomatic relations with countries such as Libya, which was of strategic significance to the PAC army. All these factors added together, made the relationship between the army and the political leadership exceptionally difficult.

There was also dissatisfaction with the PAC Department of Finance but this will be dealt with when the issue of finances during the Make era is examined. The other Department singled out for criticism was that of Foreign Affairs headed by Henry Isaacs. The PAC leadership was criticised for not assisting this department to develop a foreign-relations strategy in line with the ideology of the organisation. The strategy of the said department was said to be concentrating more on Western countries than on African countries. A

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117 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 30 April 1979, p. 7
118 Ibid.
request, though cast as a demand, was made that the office of Pan African Affairs be revived and more PAC missions be opened in Africa. Even though this made ideological sense, in terms of improving the political image of the organisation, materially “it made little sense” as many African countries were too poor to provide the kind of financial support the PAC needed.\footnote{Interview with Comrade Tekere, Langa Township, Cape Town, 21 December 2000.}

A long list of complaints and demands for immediate intervention were made with regard to the Department of Education and Manpower Development headed by Count Petersen. The main criticism and challenge brought to the attention of the leadership was about a lack of policies on Education and Manpower Development. The general membership of the PAC also criticised Make’s leadership for failing to step-up its activities in the Frontline States in order to recruit the kind of manpower needed by the organisation.\footnote{PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/tan/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 30 April, 1979, p.14.}

Corrupt behaviour on the part of the leadership including the chairperson himself, was raised by PAC members as a point of concern. This involved incidents of “excessive drinking and womanizing” at the Kijitonyama Residence which housed Central Committee members.\footnote{Ibid.} Other issues which challenged Make’s leadership included conditions in the camps, (an issue which will be examined in chapter 5 of this research), lack of consultation and open discussion with members of the Central Committee. Most importantly, one of the points articulated in the document sent to the Central Committee to communicate dissatisfaction with Make’s leadership, referred to the Party’s Constitution. The point made was that in 1959 when the Party was formed, a constitution was adopted which suited conditions inside the country of a mass organisation operating openly. No provision was made for the army since the conditions did not allow for that. The responsibility was therefore placed on Make’s leadership to look into the issue of revising the constitution of the PAC in order to suit exile conditions.
Coupled with the above-listed demands of the PAC general membership, was the demand for transparency within the organisation’s leadership echelon. The “secrets of the leadership” regarding the performance of its executive officials was challenged.¹²² There was a demand for clarity on the core functions of each and every position within the Central Committee and that performance measurement and evaluation be done so that all those leaders who could not live up to their responsibilities could be identified and removed from the leadership structure.¹²³

All these demands pointed to a need to develop a well-functioning administrative structure within the PAC, review the operations of various departments and create systems which allow for transparency and access to information. The issues raised were of such critical significance that it amazes one to find no documented response from Make’s Central Committee addressing these issues. Oral information gathered through the research could only confirm the negativity towards Make’s leadership which pervaded the organisation but not the responses of the leadership to the situation.

4.2.3. The Internal-Enemy Syndrome.

This kind of organisational sickness continued to manifest itself even during Vusi Make’s short period in office. It manifested itself as labeling within the leadership structure and also between the leadership and rank-and-file membership. One of the reasons, for instance, why Ellias Ntloedibe was among those singled out for criticism, ostensibly on the grounds of poor performance, was not only that he was a great ‘embezzler of Party funds’ but also was deemed “an enemy agent within the Party”.¹²⁴ Allegations that the Botswana PAC group was full of ‘BOSS’ agents were rife during this period, even though unsubstantiated. This divided opinions within the Party. Ellias Ntloedibe was among the PAC leaders who flouted those claims to the point of irritating ordinary PAC membership who started demanding evidence and investigation of such allegations. What

¹²² PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 30 April, 1979, p. 4.
¹²³ Ibid, p. 6
¹²⁴ Ibid.
becomes apparent is that it was not his performance which was an issue but his involvement in the smear campaigns against members of the PAC who were not in the Executive Committee. Vusi Make, did not use this age-old Leballo weapon against anyone during his term of office. May be he saw no need to do so as it was clearly pointed out in leadership caucuses that “a new Son of the Soil has to be identified to lead the PAC out of the quagmire before its too late”. 125 So he had little ambitions about his position as Chairman of the Party. He knew that the PAC was looking for a new leader whilst he was there. Hence he tended to involve himself in his ‘own’ businesses and was absent from Party meetings. 126 On several occasions he was away from the movement, “making money for himself or acquiring more education in West Africa, Britain and United States”. 127 It is not clear who funded all his trips; was it the organisation or his own pocket? During the Pokela era, Make was also investigated for the misuse/misappropriation of organisational funds. 128

During this period, the internal enemy syndrome manifested itself also in the form of ideological differences within the organisation. These started during the Leballo era in the mid 1970s when the ‘New Road of Revolution’ was adopted by the PAC Central Committee late in 1975 as the new revolutionary outlook of the Pan Africanist Congress. The ‘New Road of Revolution’ which was basically a rehash of Marxism-Leninism and Maoism adapted to the African conditions of the struggle for liberation in South Africa. It originated from the political education seminars held in the PAC military camps. T.M. Ntantala was instrumental in this initiative. The rationale for the ‘New Road of Revolution’ was that “the external mission was in political decay, ideological chaos and organisational disarray”. 129 Leballo was bound to pay lip-service to the ‘New Road of Revolution’ during his time and because of the divisions which predominated his period in power, splits along ideological lines could not surface the way they did during the era of Vusumzi Make.

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125 Interview with Mqojane, Umtata, 23 June 1995.
126 PAC Archives: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, undated, p. 14.
127 Ibid, pp. 7-9
128 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee meeting, Dar-es-Salaam, December, 1-7, 1982, p. 2.
129 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Pan Africanist Congress of Azania: The New Road of Revolution, PAC Department of Information and Public ity, Dar-es-Salaam, 1975, p. 1
Divisions between the ‘Marxist-Leninist-Maoists’, Maoists and ‘traditional Africanists’ of the Sobukwe days re-emerged. As a result, labeling and tagging tended to depend on where one stood in the ideological divide. Some of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists (who were regarded as ultra-left) broke and joined with T.M. Ntantala who was expelled by Leballo at the 1978 Arusha ‘unity’ conference (in Tanzania) to form the Azanian People’s Revolutionary Party whereas others remained within the PAC and were in many instances victims of persecution and disfavor in the organisation. The dominant ideological tendency in the PAC was “Maoist in outlook but Africanist in content”. The impact of these ideological strands was that by the time Make handed over Chairmanship to Pokela in 1981, the entire organization suffered a two-way ideological split. The notion of the “struggle of the Two-Lines, i.e. Revolutionaries versus Liberal Nationalists”, emerged. Make was not able to traverse the ideological divide in the PAC, rise above ideological labels and cast himself as a uniting figure. Hence he was criticised by the general membership for his failure “to provide political and ideological leadership”.

130 Interview with Mr Gqobose, Port Elizabeth, 1 August 1996.
131 Interview with Malcom Dyan, Cape Town, 11 September 2000; Interview with Z Michitheka, Cape Town, 2000; also see T. Lodge: Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, pp. 295-317.
132 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Feature: South Africa, unnumbered and undated.
133 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC: T.M. Ntantala is Gone; But his ideas will conquer, Azanian People’s Revolutionary Party, Zimbabwe, undated, p. 2.
134 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 30 April, 1979, p. 6.
4.2.4. The management, use of funds and other organisational resources.

The management of funds within the PAC did not improve during the Vusi Make era. A Department of Finance set up to deal specifically with the management and use of organisational funds, was both chaotic and dysfunctional. It operated under the most mysterious circumstance with only one Director who seemed to be doing everything from banking, withdrawals, acting as cashier and auditing. It had no structure and the only other two people, besides the Director, were Mgweba and Tsietsi. Their main functions, besides handling petty cash and entry books were never defined.\[135\]

Hence the list of demands from the general membership of the PAC to the Central Committee included the following:

“How much the party had in its bank account
What were the sources of funding for the organisation
How were the funds divided and used for the various departments or how the decentralisation was supposed to function
How the Department of Finance raised funds other than those from existing resources.
How the party representatives abroad coordinated with the Department of Finance and how much control the Director of Finance had over funds that came or were raised by PAC offices abroad.
Whether the Department of Finance was helping the families of PAC members who were bread-winners and have in one way or other been victims of the Apartheid government in South Africa because of involvement in PAC activities
Whether the various departments had a right to organise funds for their exclusive use”.\[136\]

All these problems, as indicated in the questions raised above, stemmed from the chaos which dominated the Leballo era. The leadership of the PAC under Vusi Make was not capable of solving the problems nor implement the recommendations made by the general membership of the PAC. The party missions and representatives continued to

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\[135\] PAC Archives. Fort Hare: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, undated, p. 6.
\[136\] Ibid, pp. 10-11.
supply the Headquarters with money instead of the reverse and the up-to-date reports on
the usage of funds by the overseas missions were not provided either to the executive or
to the general membership of the organisation. Funds collected by representatives in the
various regions of Africa, were still unaccounted for and were never directed to the
headquarters.

The recommendations which came from within the PAC itself were sound and useful if
they were to be implemented. They recommended that the Director of Finance should be
more pro-active in terms of identifying institutions that are likely to support the programs
of the PAC and should start going on fund-raising trips. It was also suggested that the
Finance Department should create a Finance Committee under the Chairmanship of the
Director to help him with the organisation and management of funds. The Committee
would also advise other departments on how to manage their monies and compile
financial reports. The Central Committee was urged to assist the Department of Finance
develop policies (and ensure that they were adhered to) in order to prevent interference
and confusion where financial matters were concerned. It was recommended that the
Director of Finance should focus more on matters of strategy and restructuring of the
Finance Department than on mundane tasks which could be done by cashiers or ordinary
staff. These recommendations fell on deaf ears, not only because Make was not receptive
to them, but the attitude of the Director of Finance was also an issue. He lacked
understanding of the party’s policies, ideological stance and programs and was always on
the defensive.

The misuse of organisational resources, especially vehicles, also continued during this
period. Some were driven without insurance and in some instances were abused by
officials who got drunk during working hours. A recommendation was made by members
of the Party that in order to “regulate and control all Party vehicles in the headquarters”
there was a need to appoint a transport officer who would work under the supervision of

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137 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Minute of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, undated, pp. 10-11.
the chief representative in Tanzania. A logbook system to monitor the movement of all party vehicles was also suggested.

Surprisingly, the leadership of the PAC acted on none of these suggestions during this period. Hence the same recommendations were made when Nyathi Pokela was elected to be the Chairman of the organisation in February 1981. The questions are whether these anomalies were deliberately left unresolved and in a sense perpetuated because they benefited the leadership of the PAC or some individuals within it; or was it simply a question of incapacity and ineptness on the part of the leadership of the organisation. As the Vusi Make phase approached its end, “rather than there be direction, organisation and cohesion”, the Central Committee of the PAC under his leadership became even more indecisive and corrupt, as was reflected in the inability of the Director of Finance to account for almost a quarter of a million dollars which disappeared from the funds of the organization.  

Factionalism, cliquism, mutual political blackmail and the formation of temporary alliances based on expediency dominated the ranks of leadership during the time of Vusi Make. His political wit and his tendency to involve himself in his own private business away from the headquarters, created a chance for opportunists both within the ranks of the National Executive Committee and in the army. Make’s weak leadership gave a chance for the pre-eminence of what was called “militarism” in the PAC. This referred to the initiatives of the cadre movement in the organisation. Some of the cadres saw the divisions within the leadership as an opportunity to gain positions of power within the organisation and the army. Hence, some of them tended to align themselves with one of the factions or cliques within leadership. Again, it was the members of the PAC army who on behalf of the general membership of the PAC made a review of the 12 months of Make’s leadership and demanded the immediate removal of D.D.D. Mantshontsho as Administrative Secretary and Ellias Ntloedibe as Director of Publicity and Information.

138 PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/1/164/9: Minute of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 30 April, 1979, p. 15.
139 ANC Archives: Henry Isaacs: Memo - To All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC, Re-Guidelines of the Department of Foreign Affairs, New York, 17 February, 1982, p. 4.
Ultimately allegations were made against four other members of the Central Committee which the leadership agreed to investigate.

The lack of direction from the Chairman of the Central Committee was the outstanding characteristic of this period. Hence the cadre movement seemed to have been more pro-active in terms of suggesting the way forward. The point of concern was that the cadre movement ‘was not a homogenous movement’. “Among them were very many opportunists who were exploiting the genuine grievances of the cadres and calling for the dismissal of the entire Central Committee in the hope that they would be given leadership positions”. 141

In the long list of incidents of corruption which were not investigated by the PAC leadership under Vusi Make was the issue around Mrs Elizabeth Sibeko (the wife of the late David Sibeko) and Leaseane Makhanda. The two senior members of the PAC were members of the Central Committee. A cheque of $5000 was stolen from the account of the PAC UN observer mission. For this incident, the PAC’s Director of Foreign Affairs blamed the two ladies. This matter was brought to the attention of the Central Committee but no action was taken to investigate the matter further. 142 Serious personal struggles between Henry Isaacs, the Director of Foreign Affairs, on the one hand, Ike Mafule, PAC Chief Representative in West Africa and Mrs Sibeko on the other hand was a microcosm of the extent to which personalities, gossip and ‘grape-vine’ could distort the vision of a greater picture, and dissuade focus from national issues to petty interpersonal squabbles. Underlying the superficially petty interpersonal relations were serious political agendas which involved scheming and jockeying for positions of power within the Central Committee.

Nevertheless, there were positive spin-offs for the PAC during the era of Vusumzi Make. Firstly, he lacked the demagogue stature and the self-imposing dictatorial predisposition of his predecessor, which in one way or the other was an advantage. It meant that

141 ANC Archives: Henry Isaacs: Memo -To All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC, p. 4.
142 See - ANC Archives : Henry Isaacs -Memo: To All Representatives, Offices and Branches of the PAC p. 5.
ordinary PAC members were free, for the first time, to criticise their leadership openly without fear of suspension. In fact it is during Make’s era, that longstanding grounds of dissatisfaction with the internal situation in the PAC were unearthed, confronted and propositions made for solutions. Make’s failures stemmed from his indecision and his preoccupation with interests other than those of the PAC.

The ‘failures’ of Vusumzi Make became the burden of the era of Nyathi Pokela. The fact that the ordinary membership of the PAC had enough time to ponder over the problems of the PAC during the Make era, meant that the burden of expectations about what should happen during the era of Pokela was high and somewhat unrealistic. These issues will be examined in the following section.

4.3.1. Background and Profile.

John Nyathi Pokela, born in 1922 in Herschel in the former Transkei was one of the founder members of the PAC. In 1966 he was sentenced to imprisonment on Robben Island.¹⁴³ He was charged for his political activities in the Eastern Cape, especially for his role in the Poqo activities in 1963. On Robben Island he became well respected for his persuasive skills and his efforts to unite PAC factions in Robben Island prison. On his release from prison in 1980 he was propelled into the leadership of the PAC in exile as the “only person of stature available who had not been tarnished by the earlier internecine squabbles which characterised the leadership of the deposed and expelled former chairman Potlakile Leballo”.¹⁴⁴ Vusumzi Make, the then chairman of the PAC willingly stepped down at the end of January 1981 in favour of Nyathi Pokela who assumed the reigns of leadership of the party from the beginning of February 1981 until his death, after a short illness at Parirenyatwa hospital in Zimbabwe. He was buried by the former President of the PAC Dr Stanely Mogoba who at that time was the Bishop of the Methodist church of Southern Africa. Pokela was given a full state funeral by the Zimbabwean government as an honour for the good work, President Mugabe claimed, he had performed in uniting the PAC which was on the verge of complete collapse.¹⁴⁵

Pokela assumed the leadership of the exiled PAC following widespread dissatisfaction within the entire organisation with the former chairman, Vusumzi Make. The leadership of Vusumzi Make was characterised by “indecision, corruption and factionalism” some of which were the relics of the Leballo era.¹⁴⁶ Pokela’s arrival in exile encouraged and inspired the majority of PAC members inside and outside South Africa. Talks about revitalisation and reorganisation of the PAC became rife. His arrival raised the morale of the membership and motivated many PAC members who had either resigned or had

¹⁴⁴ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: Feature: South Africa, undated.
¹⁴⁶ PAC Archives, Fort Hare: World Muslim News, 7 May, 1982.
decided to retreat to the margin, to return to the party and be active again. It was, however a grave mistake to assume that the generalised enthusiasm and euphoria would by itself bring about reorganisation and reconstruction. The PAC with a past history “of disorganisation, chaos, anarchy and ineffectiveness” presented a formidable challenge to Pokela. He had not been thoroughly briefed about the status of the PAC in exile “where plots and intrigues, scheming and maneuvering among and within the organisation’s many factions” were the stock-in-trade. The expectation that Pokela was going to be the “Messiah” of the PAC was not met, but the basis for order and a sense of direction about where the organisation was supposed to go was laid. As Elliot Mfaya puts it, “at least Pokela, because of his stature, his dignity and charisma, the respect we had lost as an organisation was restored”. This point is also made by Henry Isaacs in his “Memo: re-guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs”: that it was a “flattery” to expect Nyathi Pokela to be the “Saviour” of the PAC. He stated that “no individual can save an organization, let alone one with revolutionary pretensions. To say this is not to denigrate Comrade Pokela, or belittle the vital role that he has already played and the great contribution he has already made in a short time in effecting a certain degree of stability in the PAC”. A combined effort of the leadership and the membership was what was needed to bolster the initiatives and the vital role Pokela needed to play in reconstructing the PAC, but these were not forthcoming.

As in the preceding periods, the era of Nyathi Pokela was fraught with numerous developments and activities whose impact on the PAC this chapter may not outline in an all-comprehensive manner. As discussed in the preceding chapters, the Pokela era will be examined within the confines of the three identified themes; i.e. the role of the leadership, the internal enemy syndrome and management, use of funds and other organisational resources. A number of other interesting developments occurred during this period,

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148 Ibid., p. 1.
150 Interview with Elliot Mfaya, Kingwilliams Town, 26 July 1998.
151 ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Henry Isaacs-Memo: To all representatives and branches of the PAC, p. 13.
especially on the diplomatic and international front. These will not be captured as the scope of this research is clearly defined and issues to be covered already demarcated.

4.3.2. The Composition and Role of the exile leadership as represented by the National Executive Committee (Central Committee) of the PAC.

Ever since his arrival at the PAC’s external headquarters in February 1981, Nyathi Pokela was surrounded by “all sorts of elements—both in the Central Committee and among cadres who had been jockeying for positions of influence”. Unfortunately, he was ill-advised and misled in a number of instances as will be outlined in the course of the analysis of events.

To understand the composition and role of the PAC leadership during this period will be important. This research examines and takes as a point of departure the minutes of the various plenary sessions of the PAC, held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania since February 1981 but focuses largely on the one held in December 1-7, 1981. Of course in November/December 1981, the PAC Central Committee met but the issues raised were only tackled head-on at the plenary session which took place in December 1982. Between the dates of these important meetings, Pokela spent a lot of time focusing on diplomatic relations. He visited numerous countries, to introduce himself as the new leader of the PAC and to mobilise resources for the PAC. Among the first diplomatic visits he undertook was to Iraq in June 1981. The outcome of that visit caused tensions and divided opinion within the leadership of the PAC. While in Iraq, Pokela openly expressed support for Iraq in the conflict with Iran contrary to the official position of the PAC which was the maintenance of ‘neutrality’ in the case of conflict between two members of the Non-Aligned Movement. Shortly after the outbreak of the war between Iraq and Iran, “the ambassador of Iraq to Tanzania requested a statement of solidarity from the PAC in return for which he indicated that the $50 000 which the PAC delegation had requested during their visit to Baghdad in January 1980 would be released.

152 ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Henry Isaacs-’memo’: To all representatives and branches of the PAC, p. 7
immediately”. This was a very difficult position for the PAC. From a practical point of view, the PAC desperately needed the money to fund its operations and projects. On the other hand, the difficulty was that the new regime in Iran, as well as sections of the opposition within the government of Iran, supported the struggle and the political case of the PAC. In addition to this, most exiled liberation movements openly opposed the Iraq-Iran war on the grounds that the war was not in the interest of the masses of the people in both countries. Moving from a purely pragmatic point of view, Pokela decided to issue a statement in support of Iraq. This proved to be harmful to the long-term diplomatic interests of the PAC. Hence at the OAU summit held at the end of June 1981, the full participation of the PAC was jeopardised. Besides that, the move also alienated the PAC from some of its longstanding and vital supporters like Libya. Libya and Syria supported Iran in the war against Iraq and the PAC had to take a stand in opposition to them. After this incident, it became difficult to normalise the relations between the PAC and Libya.

The incident was not only a diplomatic problem for the PAC but also became a bone of contention within the Central Committee as opinions about the new Chairman’s wisdom conflicted. A faction identified with Henry Isaacs and Mike Muendane strongly condemned Pokela’s diplomatic moves in the Middle East as a display of short-sightedness and miscalculation, whereas the pragmatists within the PAC felt it was a risk which had to be taken given the practical financial constraints of getting the operations of the organisation viable in exile. At any rate, despite the step taken by Pokela, the PAC had already incurred hostilities from certain quarters within the Middle East. At the United Nations, the delegation of Tunisia was hostile to the PAC on the grounds that the PAC received support from Libya. What was evident from the above is that the PAC had not developed a clear strategy on how to handle diplomatic relations. Established relations with countries in the Middle East for instance, were based purely on exploiting funding opportunities that existed rather than on a long-term political strategy. This attested to the failure of Pokela’s predecessors and the diplomatic arena became one of the challenges of his leadership. His insistence that each department should develop a set

153 ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Henry Isaacs-Memo: To all representatives and branches of the PAC, p. 8.
154 Ibid.
155 Ibid.
of guidelines, even though vehemently opposed by some members of the Central Committee, was an attempt to deal with this situation.

An interesting question at this point is who constituted the leadership of the PAC during the era of Nyathi Pokela. The constitution of the National Executive Committee of the PAC, in terms of the caliber of its members, was important during the difficult moments of Pokela’s leadership. He inherited an organisational structure with positions filled by individuals who were implicated in various acts of corruption. Most of them were not included in the new PAC leadership structure because they were subject to investigations undertaken by a Commission of Enquiry headed by Pearce Gqobose. The old structure was outlined in the previous section of this chapter. The extra-ordinary Central Committee meeting of the PAC, held in Dar-es-Salaam in February 1981 decided to revise the structure of the Central Committee in a very remarkable way. This later became the source of conflict at the level of leadership as will be demonstrated later in this section. Key figures in the Central Committee structure of Vusumzi Make were removed and replaced by new persons. More people were added to the structure to make it more inclusive of all critical functions within the organisation.

Among the positions added to the Central Committee were those of the Chief Representative of the PAC at the Tanzania Headquarters, the Chief Representative to Guinea, (MrVus Nomdolo), and Chief Representative to Botswana. Replacements of some members of the Central Committee also emerged as a recommendation of the extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee in February 1981. Mrs Elizabeth Sibeko was removed from the Central Committee. A delegation of the Central Committee was set up and sent to the USA to explain to PAC supporters why she was removed from the PAC Central Committee. The same happened with Fezile Nhlapho who was removed as PAC Chief Representative in Cairo. New appointments which were of strategic importance to the PAC, were also made. Joe Mkwanazi was appointed Administrative Secretary of the PAC, Gora Ebrahim was appointed Director of Publicity and Information

156 ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee Meeting, External Headquarters, Dar-es-Salaam, December 1-7, 1982.
and also a member of the Central Committee, Ngila Muendane was appointed Director of Labour and Social Affairs and Thobile Gola was appointed member of the Central Committee and acting Chief Representative at External Headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam. Vus Nomdolo was elevated to the status of Chief Representative and member of the Central Committee. The same was done with Benedict Sondlo who held the position of Administrative Assistant and was appointed member of the Central Committee.  

A few international appointments recommended by Henry Isaacs, the Director of Foreign Affairs were ratified. These involved the appointments of Thobile Moremi as Assistant Representative in West Africa with special responsibilities for Gambia; the appointment of Nomakwezi Ganya as Assistant Representative with special responsibilities for Switzerland and Austria; Sedibeng Shange was appointed Acting Representative in the Scandinavian countries; Dan Mdluli was appointed Chief Representative in Canada; Puledi Shoba was appointed assistant representative in the USA with special responsibilities for the West Coast and Vus Ndlovu was appointed assistant representative with special responsibilities in Texas and environs. Sipho Majola was appointed as Chief Representative to the Arab Republic of Egypt in Cairo and Mosoeu Magalela as Chief Representative to the Sudan with special responsibilities for the Azania Institute. The former Chairperson, Vusumzi Make, was appointed Deputy Chairman of the PAC in spite of the fact that he was still under investigation for the misuse of organisational funds during his tenure as Chairperson of the party. This created dissatisfaction among the rank and file membership of the PAC who questioned the basis of such a decision. At this very first meeting Erret Radebe who occupied the position of Director of Finance resigned on the grounds that he had been a victim of the many accusations for the mismanagement of finances in the PAC. His resignation was accepted and he was immediately replaced by Themba Lawrence Mgweba as Director of Finance and member of the Central Committee.

158 ANC Archives, Fort Hare: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee Meeting, External Headquarters, Dar-es-Salaam, December 1-7, 1982, pp. 1-3.
159 Ibid, p. 2.
At another plenary session of the Central Committee held in Dar-es-Salaam in December 1-7, 1981, additional appointments were made to the Central Committee. These included the appointment of Victor Sabelo Phama as Secretary for Defence; Zolile Hamilton Keke as Chief Representative to the United Kingdom and Ireland; EL Makoti as Director for Publicity and Information to replace Gora Ebrahim who was appointed PAC Permanent Observer representative to the United Nations; Ike Mafole as Chief Representative to the United States of America and the Carribean and Mlindazwe Nkula was appointed Chief Representative to Iraq.\textsuperscript{161}

The structure as it existed, covered a wide range of areas of diplomatic and strategic significance to the PAC. The only problem was that the criteria for the appointments was never clarified with the general membership and the cadres in APLA. They continued to question how certain individuals were appointed to the Central Committee. Hence the rift between the leadership and the general membership of the party remained a problem even during the most promising era of Pokela. He suggested a few drastic moves to close this gap and to reconcile the leaders with the led. These included monthly meetings with cadres and emphasised that cadres should be free to voice their concerns in these meetings without fear of victimisation. He also suggested that a quarterly report on the activities of the PAC at home and abroad be developed and circulated to all branches. A Consultative Conference Committee was also established and it consisted of the “Administrative Secretary, one Chief Representative, one cadre, each from Dar-es-Salaam, Bagomoyo and the Itumbi camp”.\textsuperscript{162} Most importantly, Pokela decided to set a date for the discussion of a Memorandum presented by the cadres to the previous Chairman in which the cadres listed their concerns and dissatisfactions with the leadership and the operation of various departments.\textsuperscript{163} A concept paper regarding the organisation and functions of the PAC officials, prepared by a team led by Ike Mafole was also accepted by Pokela. The document responded to many of the concerns raised by the ordinary membership of the PAC. It will be useful to outline and analyse the concept

\textsuperscript{163} PAC Archives: PAC/Tanz/1/164/9: Minutes of the Administrative Committee of the PAC, 1979.
document briefly because it formed the basis of the many changes Pokela wanted to introduce within the PAC. The intended reforms resulted in dissent within the ranks of the leadership, hence the numerous resignations which subsequently occurred. Unfortunately primary documents do not present a full picture of the extent to which the reforms were carried out to the letter. Only a few changes are covered, as will be discussed later in the section.

The reform document is entitled “Proposals for organisation and re-organisation of the PAC”.\(^{164}\) It identifies the lack of organisation as a major problem of the PAC in exile. It also contends that the “starting point of the reorganisation process should be a clear definition or determination of functions and tasks of the existing departments or functional units. This should be based on the departmental and organisational goals”.\(^{165}\) The document also suggested the need for the centralisation of the leading organs or departments within the PAC. Its conception of centralisation was premised on geographical and physical convenience. This means that the leading organs of the party were to be brought within the same geographical area or under the same roof or within a geographical radius that would facilitate or enable constant consultation between different heads of departments and the Chief Executive or Chairman of the PAC. It was assumed that this would enable the Central Committee to play its executive role of discharging the fundamental functions of planning, staffing, budgeting, co-coordinating, organising and directing. In practical economic terms, this would assist in limiting expenses on air travel and telephone bills which characterised the PAC operations at its headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam.

However, the document also suggested controversial arrangements which placed Pokela in a difficult position when he started implementing them to the letter. These included the idea of strengthening the Chairmanship by conceding to it “executive prerogatives of demoting and dismissing unpopular or inefficient or ineffective members of the Central

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The Chairman would have the powers to reshuffle the Central Committee whenever the need arose. In addition to that the Chairman would have his “own staff which should constitute the Chairman’s inner-circle or brain-trust or advisers”. All these views were adopted and an implementation schedule was agreed upon despite the fact that the army and the rank and file membership of the PAC were not prepared to detract from the maxim they adopted during the era of Vusumzi Make, that consultation at all times, was a necessity, before major decisions affecting the organisation were adopted and implemented.

The problems of ill-discipline in the army camps, dissidence from within the ranks of the army, expulsions and resignations of key officials from leadership positions, emanated, even though not exclusively, from the program of implementing the above stated recommendations and proposals. Conflict and dissent manifested firstly from the ranks of the Central Committee. This is evident from the deliberations at the Plenary session of the Central Committee meeting in Dar-es-Salaam, in December, 1982.

From the very outset, it became apparent that there had been serious deliberations before the meeting to pre-empt its discussions and outcomes. A faction within the Central Committee led by Henry Isaacs, Director for Foreign Affairs and Mike Muendane, former Chief Representative for the PAC in the United Kingdom, was at the forefront of challenging the decisions of the previous Central Committee meetings. They also challenged the basis of the Central Committee restructuring which the Chairman wanted to introduce. They further invoked management allegations which were intended to cast doubt on the integrity of Nyathi Pokela.

The first issue to be examined was the recommendation that all heads of Departments should be based at the Headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam. Mike Muendane and Henry Isaacs opposed this decision and recommendation of the Central Committee on the grounds that “the work of the Departments is based on how it can be made more effective. This cannot

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167 Ibid.
be achieved from Dar-es-Salaam as one cannot be accessible while there”. They argued that there was no validity in the assumption that the Central Committee would be more effective if all its members were based at the Headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam and that the accessibility of leadership to people from South Africa would be further limited because Dar-es-Salaam was known to the South African government as the Headquarters of the banned PAC. The Chairman of the PAC retorted that the decision had already been taken by the Central Committee and he was just confirming it at that particular meeting. Henry Isaacs explained their position even more emphatically, pointing out that the “centralisation of heads of departments at headquarters” would not make for better consultation and facilitation as there were already heads of departments at headquarters yet there was not consultation. He cautioned that the Central Committee was “riding a horse which” they would “not be able to control. He therefore requested that he be relieved of his responsibilities as Director of Foreign Affairs, the Representative to the United Nations and as member of the Central Committee”.169

Isaacs decision to resign, did not come as a surprise to some members of the Central Committee. Joe Mkwanazi, for instance, a longstanding member of the PAC National Executive, responded to Henry Isaacs’s statement about his resignation by pointing out that “whenever people expressed a different opinion” from Isaacs, he always threatened to resign and that had in many cases dampened the spirit of the Central Committee.170 Enoch Zulu also a Pokela loyalist, supported Mkhwanazi and argued that it was not new in the PAC than when a person was removed from one task to another, there would be dissatisfaction and threats of resignation. He indicated that incidents such as the refusal to cooperate with the Chairman of the Party led to the expulsion of the PAC from Zambia. Zulu suggested that it should be an accepted principle that if decisions were taken, the interests of the party and the revolution should be paramount and should supercede those of individuals.171

169 Ibid.
170 Ibid.
The contention within the Central Committee did not end with the issue about the location of Headquarters. There was a lengthy argument about reshuffles within the Central Committee. The Chairman suggested a reshuffle of the Central Committee with the intention of intensifying the PAC’s programme of infiltrating South Africa, an escalation of APLA military action and establishing recognisable PAC related activity inside South Africa. He suggested that Edgar Motau should be sent to Iraq; Sipho Majola to Syria; Nomadolo to Libya; Paxton Motaung to Conakry Guinea and Keke Nkula ‘assisted by Bassie and Jesus to Zimbabwe’. Henry Isaacs and his faction within the Central Committee opposed this arrangement on the grounds that the Chairman seemed to have little knowledge of the performance histories and reputation of the people he was suggesting for critical leadership positions. They argued that in the case of Edgar Motau, the Chairperson had not taken into consideration his history in Addis Ababa, in Ethiopia and in Dar-es-Salaam. Representation in Iraq, they argued, required honesty and efficiency and had reservations about the appointee as far as these were concerned. Isaacs’s faction also criticised the Chairman’s decision to appoint Gora Ebrahim to the United Nations and Ike Mafole to the United States. They emphasised their histories of failure in the various positions they held before Pokela became Chairman. A counter argument advanced by Pokela ‘loyalists’ in the Central Committee was that the very people who were basing arguments against reshuffles on performance were themselves not models of good performance, given their histories in the organisation. The fact that the PAC’s UN mission was a one-man show was cited as an example of this. The arrogance and status consciousness displayed by Isaacs in the UN Observer Mission and Muendane’s dealings with funders independently of the instructions and rules of the organisation were listed as issues which raised skepticism about their arguments in the Central Committee.

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173 Ibid, p. 22.
This situation within the Central Committee led to another resignation, this time by Mike Muendane. He requested the Central Committee to allow him time to complete the task he was given by the PAC, i.e. setting up a labour union and then be relieved of his duties as Director of Labour and Social Affairs in favour of Hamilton Keke. The latter had already been appointed to replace him as Chief Representative in the United Kingdom, hence Muendane was appointed as Director of Labour and Social Development.

Muendane indicated that he was happy to serve as Chief Representative of the PAC and besides that, for health reasons, was not able to move with his wife to Tanzania. His resignation was not accepted by the Central Committee. The Committee indicated that PAC leaders should be prepared to take instructions and may not be deployed where they preferred. Enoch Zulu emphasised that “some Comrades have left their families” because the work of the party had to be done.\(^{175}\) It was at that point that Muendane launched a series of accusations which cast doubt on the integrity of the Chairman. Firstly he argued that the Chairman was not following the leadership “protocol” in the organisation.

According to Muendane, the Chairman addressed a Trade Union Congress in Canada and made arrangements to make a follow up on the meeting with Canadian Trade Unions. Muendane felt he was deliberately sidelined and left out, yet he was the Director for Labour and Social Affairs. He also indicated that the Chairperson had a clique with whom he confides and plans what should happen in the organisation. “Decisions adopted by the meeting had been discussed outside the meeting and Cde Mgweba was involved. Mgweba predicted changes and changes have taken place and here we are”, Muendane argued.\(^{176}\) Muendane’s Central Committee faction contended that there was an “inner circle of the leadership” close to the Chairperson and that there were plots aimed at ousting certain individuals outside the circle.

The impression that can be derived from the scenario above was that the root cause of the problems during the period of Pokela was that he used ‘old bricks’ to lay the foundations of a new edifice. The tendency within the Central Committee of Pokela’s time was to read the arrangements of the new era through the glasses of past experiences, whether


\(^{176}\) Ibid. p. 25.
deliberately or not. Pokela explained to the Central Committee what happened, in relation to the accusations which were leveled against him. His trip to Canada, where he addressed a Trade Union Conference was not arranged by him but by representatives in Canada. In addition to that Muendane was in West Africa during the time of the Conference in Canada. To echo the sentiments expressed by the Chairman, Mkwazazi pointed out that Muendane made no initiatives to liaise with PAC representatives in Canada, if he wanted to be part of the conference. Mkwazazi also leveled a series of personal attacks against Muendane accusing him of arrogance, hoarding PAC monies in London and treating PAC members badly. He indicated that the only reason for Muendane’s negativity to the discussions in the Central Committee meeting was that he did not want to move from the luxury and comforts of London. The same argument was used against Henry Isaacs as well. It seems as if during the exile period, there were positions in the PAC which were seen as ‘cushy’ and as a result competition for them was fierce at leadership level. These included positions of the Chief Representative in the United Kingdom, in United States of America, in mainland Europe as well as in the United Nations. Hence there were serious battles when people had to be redeployed to other positions within the organisation. With the restructuring that Pokela implemented in order to revive the PAC, the issue of redeployment arose as the major bone of contention.

The importance of all the above is that it shows how factional strife which militated against all the good efforts of Nyathi John Pokela emerged and unfolded. As Henry Isaacs correctly pointed out, “where factionalism and cliquism, plotting and intrigue, exist at the level of leadership, then it filters down to the lower echelons of the organisation”. This is a bit of an overstatement if one were to use it to describe the era of Nyathi Pokela. Factionalism continued to exist but it was more controlled when compared to the previous periods. In short, no concrete decisions could be reached at the December 1981 plenary session because it degenerated into chaos.

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177 ANC Archives: Henry Isaacs: Memo: To all representatives, offices and branches of the PAC, Re - Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, p. 7.
Among the important decisions which were implemented based on the deliberations of the extraordinary Central Committee meeting (in February 1981), was about the re-incorporation of the T.M. Ntantala group, expelled at the Arusha PAC conference in 1978, into the fold of the PAC. This became an important landmark of Pokela’s era. The widespread perception that he united the PAC in exile stemmed from this important intervention. This is summed up in a document entitled “Work In Progress” (WIP) in which it is stated that the “early 1980s saw greater stability in the PAC, with the low-key and modest John Pokela assuming leadership after a long prison sentence on Robben Island. Pokela was able to bring Ntantala and the military breakaway back into the PAC fold”. Pokela’s letter to the Zimbabwean High Commission in Tanzania also indicated that the problem of disunity with the APRP had been solved. “The spirit of Unity prevailed on both sides and made it possible to go thus far” and that the PAC and the people of Azania would continue “to appreciate the comradely close relations with the people of Zimbabwe through their vanguard party ZANU (PF)”. For the successful re-unification of the PAC, which led to the dissolution of the Azanian People’s Revolutionary Party (APRP), Pokela received accolades from the Frontline States and the OAU, which had attempted for years to unify the PAC.

The reinstatement of the Ntantala group within the ranks of the PAC, even though widely applauded, did not proceed without problems. Firstly “certain individuals in the Central Committee and among the cadres” half-heartedly accepted the unity with Ntantala’s group because of the fears that the expelled members who had been in positions of leadership before the expulsions in 1978 might either demand back their positions or would be appointed to leadership positions again, thus increasing the competition at leadership level. The assurances made by T.M. Ntantala, the leader of the group, about their return to the PAC being unconditional made little impression on the members of the Central Committee. After the integration, these people remained the victims of what had been referred to in the previous chapters as the ‘internal enemy syndrome’. This will be demonstrated further in the following section.

The critical question which emerges and should inform further research is whether the leadership structure and personnel in the PAC’s Central Committee as outlined in this section, really had the qualities required to lead the PAC, given the critical juncture in which the organisation found itself. The organisation was at a critical point in the sense that, there was a legacy of complete inefficiency and chaos which had to be turned around. What brought complications to what can be referred to as the era of transition in the PAC’s exile history (i.e. 1981-1985), were individual personalities, ideological trends and traditions within the Central Committee. Two diametrically opposed but complementing tendencies existed. The one was characterised and constituted by the actions of people who knew how to play it safe and save their skin. These people knew how to play the power game, shout the right slogans, carry favour with the right person or group so that they do not lose positions or could be migrated to much better positions. On the other hand were those who were honest, not opportunist or belly-crawling but loyal to the organisation and its foundation principles. Pokela fell within the latter group within the PAC. The extent to which he was able to discern who was an opportunist and who was honestly committed to the revitalisation of the PAC under his leadership, was a difficult exercise in which he failed. Other leaders in his situation might well also have failed given the slippery texture of PAC leadership politics during the exile period.

The most important initiative he could be credited with during his time, was that he initiated a process which led to the formulation of a leadership code of conduct for the PAC. The code of conduct, which did not supercede the constitution of the organisation, aimed at eradicating mistrust, mutual fear, group blackmail and even opportunism. It aimed at “regulating relations between and among the members of the Central Committee and the delegation of powers in the event of the absence of the Chairman”.\footnote{PAC Archives, Fort Hare: PAC/Tan/1/164/3: On the need of a new pattern and style of work; rational use of funds and care of party personnel, 10 January, 1982.} This code was formulated in stages. The beginning of 1984 was the time when it was intended for implementation. It is difficult to assess the extent to which it was followed to the letter.
Hence a close examination of the situation at leadership level, before and after the death of Pokela in 1985 did not yet reveal signs of improvement.

4.3.3. The Internal-Enemy Syndrome during the era of Pokela.

During the era of Pokela the internal enemy syndrome manifested itself in forms which led to violence amounting to human rights atrocities, especially within the ranks of the army and among the rank and file membership of the organisation. As discussed in the previous chapters, internal enemies within the PAC were usually identified on the basis of their previous histories within the organisation, close association with Leballo (the first Chairman of the PAC), ideological trends and even disloyalty to the dominant faction in the leadership of the organisation. The outcomes of the work of a PAC Commission of Inquiry chaired by M. Gqobose, in 1983, also gave another dimension to the way the syndrome manifested itself during this period.

Ideological divisions within the PAC resulting from the 1975 adoption of the strategy document ‘New Road for the Revolution’ under Leballo’s leadership, persisted during the era of John Pokela. The latter was able to traverse the ideological divide and earned the respect among the cadres for his ideological sharpness and his understanding of the Marxist-Leninist- Maoist political tenets. Of course the political education sessions in Robben Island during his 12 year prison term came in handy. His ideological acumen could provide a central point of ideological convergence within the organisations. All the same, the divisions, labeling and name-tagging on grounds of perceived ideological orientation continued to form the basis of serious tensions and division within the ranks of the PAC. The division between “traditional African nationalists” led by A.B. Ngcobo and the “revolutionary Socialists” led by the likes of Sabelo Phama, the Secretary for Defense, continued. After the death of Pokela and during the era of Johnson Mlambo, the tension eventually led to the split by “African Nationalists” who formed a short-lived forum called the Sobukwe Forum. ¹⁸¹ This will be covered in the next section.

¹⁸¹ Interview with Z. Michitheka, Langa, Cape Town, 15 December, 2000
The serious role played by ideology in dividing the PAC into camps was also emphasised by Benny Bunsec, a senior official of the PAC, when he argued in his letter to Henry Isaacs that “the root source of the problem is an ideological and political one”. He stated that it was a question of “a bourgeois versus a proletarian ideology”. He gave the example of Hamilton Keke and Mkwanazi to illustrate his point that people talked radical ideology when they were not in positions of power within the organisation but once they obtained positions in the Central Committee they changed the language. The point which can be derived from Bunsec’s analysis is that the PAC members did not trust each other. Hence the idea of an ‘internal enemy’ syndrome was observed through all the various phases of the organisation’s existence in exile. In most cases the internal enemy was a question of perception and only in a few isolated cases was it real.

An interesting case to analyse, in this regard, is that of Henry Isaacs. He resigned from the PAC Central Committee on grounds which combined issues of principle, personal concern and power struggle. On personal grounds, what can be deduced from his writings is a sense of bitterness and hurt based on the fact that he put a lot of effort towards profiling the PAC in the United Nations (UN) and also in some quarters of the black American community. He then wanted to cling to the ‘fame’ which he established despite the reorganisation which the PAC wanted to effect. Besides that, being in the UN was a comfortable position and close to the real corridors of power, at an international level. As Director of Foreign Affairs, Henry Isaacs wanted to call the shots on all issues relating to the PAC and international relations, i.e. from appointments to the management of funds. In other words he did not see himself as part of a collective leadership, guided by a chairman with superior prerogatives and decision-making powers. At another level, Isaacs’s decision to resign was based on principled grounds. When he resigned he made it clear that he was not prepared to be part of the Central Committee until the organisation was restructured drastically and until a conference was called allowing for “a people’s

183 Ibid.
184 See, ANC Archives: H Isaacs: Memo - To all representatives, office and branches of the PAC, re-Guideline for the Department of Foreign Affairs; See also, H. Isaacs: ‘Struggle within the struggle- An inside view of the PAC of South Africa, pp. 1-36.
leadership” to emerge. Henry Isaacs was labeled in many ways by PAC members. He was referred to as “a revolutionary turned into an American government spy”, a “CIA agent whom history has exposed” and an enemy of the revolution. The critical question is whether there was any substance to these allegations. The confidential letter written by Benny Bunsec to Henry Isaacs points to some of the relative merits of the allegations of an ‘internal’ enemy, particularly in Isaacs’s case. Bunsec pointed out that reliable sources within the PAC indicated that they have seen a letter from Henry Isaacs to the World Council of Churches, advising them not to support the PAC. In addition to that, Isaacs also ‘gave evidence before a Select Committee in the US against the PAC. As Bunsec indicated “as far as I know the terms of reference of that Select Committee is to gather information about ‘communist subversion’ in Southern Africa”. These issues according to Bunsec, were serious allegations which if true, could completely discredit Henry Isaacs and his entire political career.

What is illustrated in this instance is that the internal enemy in the PAC was largely a figment of imagination built on isolated but limited elements of truth. Oral information collected during the period of research, as well as primary documents consulted, provided no evidence regarding the alleged spying activities of Henry Isaacs. One informant noted that the main reason for Isaacs’s resignation was “hunger for power. He wanted the Chairperson to listen to him and act according to his plan. He wanted to manipulate Poks but Poks was firm and that hurt Isaacs’s ego”.

The group which suffered most from the allegations of the internal enemy was that of the former members of the Azanian People’s Revolutionary Party (APRP). Surveillance of the former members of the APRP became the order of the day. The process of the integration of the former expelled members of the APRP was hampered by suspicions among PAC members that the APRP had not really been dissolved and that its architects were simply adopting a low-profile, biding time to challenge the leadership. This was exacerbated by the rumours in Dar-es-Salaam in December 1981, about the discovery of

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186 APLA Notes, Pretoria, 21 December 2002.
188 Ibid.
189 APLA Notes, Pretoria, 21 December, 2002.
the interception of a document outlining the APRP strategy “for the seizure of the strategic leadership positions” within the PAC Central Committee.\textsuperscript{190} When attempts were made to verify the rumours, there were vigorous denials from members of the Central Committee in Dar-es-Salaam. The reality of the situation was that the former Chairperson of the APRP, Mokoena, was found in the PAC camp reading “some very sensitive documents of the APRP which mapped out strategy and tactics of operation within the PAC and their home-going program objectives”.\textsuperscript{191} These were inflated within the PAC and resulted in witch-hunting and harassment of former APRP members and some of them ultimately resigned from the PAC. T.M. Ntantala, the founder and leader of the APRP who had been appointed Chief Representative of the PAC in Zimbabwe to utilise his contacts there and strengthen the PAC-ZANU relations, was removed from his position and ended up a refugee in Zimbabwe once again. He and a few APRP members who, out of volition decided to leave the PAC, managed to secure a piece of land in Zimbabwe for subsistence. It was not long before the matter was resolved by Pokela’s leadership. Ntantala was brought on board once again and was appointed PAC Chief Representative in Uganda.

The work and outcome of the Commission of Inquiry into the irregularities and corruption during the era of Vusumzi Make also provided grounds for the development of perceptions on internal enemies. Vusi Make, the Deputy Chairperson of the PAC under Pokela’s chairmanship, was also labeled an enemy agent. Reference was made to the way in which the PAC was bankrupted during the time of his Chairmanship but subsequently he emerged “as a business tycoon”.\textsuperscript{192} This generated hostilities against him, especially from the ranks of the general membership and cadres. They were not only dissatisfied with his leadership between 1979 and 1981 but had also suspected his complicity in the murder of David Sibeko. As a result of these rumours Vusi Make, was for most of the time, absent from the meetings of the Central Committee. He deliberately chose to play a peripheral and almost invisible role because, as he argued, he wanted the Commission of

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\textsuperscript{190} ANC Archives: Henry Isaacs: Memo – To all representatives, office and branches of the PAC.
\textsuperscript{191} PAC Archives: APRP: ‘T.M. Ntantala is Gone; But His Ideals will Conquer’, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{192} PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Da-es-Salaam, December 1-7, 1982, p.6.
\end{flushright}
Inquiry to complete its findings and get his name cleared. In his letter to the Commission of Enquiry and Central Committee, Make indicated that he would like to “place certain facts on record” and “to refute certain allegations and misinformation” but unfortunately, because of the financial constraints under which the Commission operated, it became difficult to get Make to appear before it and give his side of the story.

During the entire era of Pokela, Vusi Make remained in the shadow of PAC operations and was alienated from his comrades by the labels and name tags thrown at him. The most violent outcomes of the labeling and name tagging was that some people were killed because they were alleged to be enemies of the Party. “More persons were murdered in factional strife in the PAC during the four years under Pokela than in 17 years under Leballo. Between June 1982 and January 1985 at least six persons were murdered, their physical elimination sanctioned or condoned by the PAC leaders who accused or suspected the victims of being “dissidents”. The reasons behind the alleged murders were all political and ideological. One case referred to is that of a certain Mahoyi who was murdered in Dar-es-Salaam on suspicion of continuing with the agenda of the APRP. A number of other PAC militants were threatened with death when they had political differences with the leaders of the organisation. These issues are elaborated in chapter 6.

The problem with all the issues raised above is that they originated from a few sources and existing oral information does not corroborate them. Most of the interviewees contacted during this research were either evasive when these issues were raised or they completely denied that they ever happened. Even if they happened, the question is who sanctioned these actions. One informant strongly argued that Pokela “cannot even be suspected of complicity in activities such as those, if they ever happened” and secondly

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195 ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: The struggle within the Struggle: An inside view of the PAC of South Africa, p. 10; Also see PAC Archives: Report of the meeting of USA chapter of PAC, held in New York on November, 30, 1985. None of my informants was in a position to confirm these incidents and they seemed not to be aware of the USA chapter of the PAC. One argued that it might have been the formation led by ‘the bitter Henry Isaacs’.
196 ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: The struggle within the Struggle: An inside view of the PAC of South Africa, p. 11.
“they would not have escaped the attention and investigation by the Tanzanian government which had established a special task force called Tanzanian Special Defense Unit to provide security of liberation movement personnel”.\textsuperscript{197} What discredits this view is the fact that Benedict Sondlo, an administrative assistant and member of the Central Committee was murdered in July 1984 in the PAC office in Dar-es-Salaam by Pokela’s bodyguard.\textsuperscript{198} He had earned himself the wrath of PAC militants for being opportunistic and changing tunes in accordance with who was in power. Pokela was aware of this incident as Sondlo was part of Pokela’s majority faction. The Tanzanian authorities only threatened to close the PAC office in Dar-es-Salaam, but no further political steps were taken. The PAC persuaded the Tanzanian government to consider the incident as a criminal one and deal with Sondlo’s murderer in accordance with Tanzanian criminal laws. The matter was accordingly dealt with by the Tanzanian authorities.

While Pokela made creative and honest efforts to bring stability and order to the PAC, there were attempts to undermine his efforts. Personal envy, mindless vengeance and vindictiveness, were all part of the elements which made the internal conflict within the PAC complicated and even difficult to solve. This caused serious tension for Pokela, who shouldered huge expectations from the Frontline states, the OAU and the rank and file membership of the PAC, inside and outside South Africa. He was expected to get things right within the organisation. Of course, he succeeded in setting standards and procedures for the running of the affairs of the organisation but failed to bring about internal peace and stability. Even during his time, the organisation was in turmoil. What was remarkable about his leadership is that he was able to manage the turmoil much better than his predecessors. The intervention by the Tanzanian troops and the OAU Liberation Committee was limited and marginal. PAC internal problems were sorted out (whether successfully or not) by the organisation itself.

\textbf{4.3.4. The management, use of funds and other organisational resources.}

\textsuperscript{197} APLA Notes, 21 December 2001.
\textsuperscript{198} ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: The struggle within the Struggle: An inside view of the PAC of South Africa, pp. 13-14.
The 1981 concept document on the “organisation and re-organisation of the PAC” defined the parameters of the new regime in the administration of finance within the exiled PAC. The document pointed out that “the Director of Finance is in charge of all party property (movable and immovable) and financial resources. His major function is to organise funds for the party. In this respect, he had to find various sources of funds, prepare the party budget and submit the party’s financial statements at the end of every financial year”. In addition to this, the Director of Finance was also tasked to control the use of all Party resources. Given that these proposals were adopted by the Central Committee of the PAC, they became the framework upon which the management of resources and funds in the PAC was to be based.

The extraordinary Central Committee meeting which Pokela chaired on his arrival as the new leader of the PAC in exile, decided, in line with the above mentioned proposals to establish a Finance Committee. In addition to this it was also decided that “all party funds would be divided as follows: defense 50%, administration 30% and publicity and information 20%’ (the 50: 30: 20 ratio)”. The use of party funds was also regulated in the sense that there were funds earmarked for operations, for humanitarian use (e.g. food, medicines, etc.) as well as administrative purposes such as postage, telephones, etc. If funds were sent without specification, it was agreed that first preference should be given to “operations as that was the main thrust of PAC work in exile”. All funds, according this arrangement were to be handled only by the Finance Committee. In addition, it was also recommended and agreed that “all representatives must submit financial reports and inventories of PAC property to the Director of Finance” on an annual basis.

The picture which emerged from the reports on finance and management of resources within the PAC at the end of 1982 revealed serious problems. Between March and

202 ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: Memo: To all representatives, office and branches of the PAC, Re-Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, p. 36.
November 1981, the organisation operated literally without funds, except for the amount paid to it by the OAU Liberation Committee. The coordination of funds which were coming from sources other than the OAU was still very poor. An international organisation called IDAF (International Defense and Aid Fund), for instance, wrote to the PAC headquarters to inform them that they have donated some money to the organisation and it was received by Mike Muendane in England.\(^{203}\) When Muendane was asked by the Director of Finance, Comrade Mgweba, to send the money to Headquarters, Muendane indicated that he had already distributed the money.\(^{204}\) Another amount of 15 000-00 pounds given to Muendane by donors in Europe was not accounted for.\(^{205}\) The same happened with the amount of $15000,00 sent from Australia to Henry Isaacs. The latter never sent the money to PAC Headquarter and he also never accounted for how it was used.\(^{206}\) Another amount of $15 000-00 donated to the New York office of the PAC to assist its Publicity and Information Department was never sent to the Headquarters despite many frantic requests for the release of the funds.\(^{207}\) These incidents attest to why PAC internal publications such as Azania Today and Azanian Combat, have gaps. They do not cover the entire exile period of the organisation. There were periods when these publications were not printed due to a shortage of funds. There is an abundance of these internal publications during the period starting from 1984 to 1990.

These irregularities happened despite the fact that regulations were drawn up at Central Committee level and the above two officials knew about them. The tendency to draw up policies and regulations and not adhere to them characterised the way the PAC functioned in exile. This situation did not improve even during the era of Johnson Mlambo. One of the reasons might have been that there were numerous precedents of that nature which were known to the Central Committee and for one reason or the other were left uninvestigated. Isaacs, for instance, raised the issue about money Mrs Sibeko received on behalf of the PAC from the UN (the wife of the late David Sibeko, former

\(^{203}\) PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Da-es-Salaam, December 1-7, 1982, p. 12.
\(^{204}\) Ibid.
\(^{205}\) Ibid.
\(^{206}\) Ibid. p. 8.
\(^{207}\) Ibid. p. 9.
PAC representative at the United Nations) at a meeting of the Central Committee in February 1981. He brought forth detailed evidence of all the money paid to Mrs Sibeko and family by the Observer Mission to the United Nations during the period January to November 1980. 208 The matter was not given the attention it deserved by the Central Committee of the PAC. If it had received serious attention, other Chief Representatives would have found moral significance and obligation to record and send the funds they received to the Headquarters. Besides that, even during the era of Pokela the PAC had not identified the need to develop a database of its funders hence it was not possible to trace the sources of some of the funds.

The Central Committee responded to these problems by emphasising the decision taken in February 1981 about the centralisation of control of all funds and other resources received by the PAC. The argument advanced by Muendane against the idea of centralising the control of funds was that offices in London and New York had expenses to be catered for. He also wanted to be guaranteed that when funds were sent to the Headquarters, their offices would be supplied with funds given the fact that besides paying for logistics such as water and electricity, “people also pass through these centers and need to be catered for”. 209 Towards the end of 1982 the PAC received an amount of $150 000, 00 from Iraq. The organisation decided to invest it in property. Houses were bought by the PAC in Tanzania and also in London. The London house was mortgaged for 27 years. A car was also bought for the organisation. In December the same year the PAC also received $ 502,361 from the government of Nigeria. The Swiss organisations called CERN and the Swiss Red Cross also donated an amount of Swiss Fr. 50 000-00 to support PAC projects such as schools and farming in Lesotho. 210 In addition to these funds other donations received by the PAC during this period involved the support given to all families of political prisoners, those detained and those executed, by the Holland based Azania Komittee.

208 ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: Memo: To all representative, office and branches of the PAC, Re -Guidelines for the Department of Foreign Affairs, p. 28.
210 Ibid, p. 15.
The details of how these funds were used are not explicitly stated save to say that greater allocations were to be made to the military to assist the activities of APLA inside South Africa. In other words an agreement was reached to deviate from the 50: 30: 20 ratio in favour of more support for the army and also improving conditions in the camps. The extent to which these decisions were implemented will be examined in the following chapters.

However, there were still clear instances of misuse of party funds. The Director of Labour and Social Development in 1982, for instance, hosted a wedding reception using a portion of the PAC funds donated by the Norwegians. In addition to this he made several appointments to his department without consulting the Central Committee.\(^{211}\) Even though he was rebuked by the Central Committee for these activities, there were no steps taken to tighten control of spending by that particular department. Hence during the time of Johnson Mlambo the PAC still complained about financial mismanagement and poor recording of transactions. From the Leballo era to the Mlambo era, there was never even a single instance when the PAC indicated that its finances were improving. This is despite the fact that there were always PAC officials who had enough money and thus could afford breakfast, lunch or dinner at the most exquisite hotels or restaurants. They could afford drinks (alcohol), evenings at clubs or at the beach, yet their organisation was pleading poverty. This raises questions about where funds for personal or group luxuries came from when the organisation they claimed to be committed to, was struggling without funds.\(^{212}\)

Past trends and practices in the use of and management of funds and other organisational resources, definitely indicate a marginal improvement during the Pokela era. At the same time there is no doubt that the arbitrary manner in which funds were used in the past continued. The new systems and processes which were put in place, brought about a certain degree of order which even though inadvertently, opened new avenues of misuse and misappropriation of funds. Examples abound of departmental workshops which were

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\(^{211}\) PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Da-es-Salaam, December 1-7, 1982, p. 16.

claimed to have been hosted, but no reports were submitted to the Central Committee. It was a question of learning about the new system in order to be able to manipulate it in accordance with its rules.

It is clear from the issues discussed above, that the Pokela era was probably the most critical one during the exile period of the PAC. It marked the transition from the old way of doing things to the new; the conflict between entrenched leadership traditions and organisational culture and an ascendant but fragile outlook. On the whole the balance of forces between continuities and discontinuities favoured the former, hence it makes sense to describe the era of Pokela as symbolising a besieged transition to the new era. What is most important is that during this period, systems and processes necessary to run the organisation were put in place and for the first time the PAC developed a “programme” of action for each year. This became the tradition within the PAC leadership since 1982. The sudden death of Pokela in June 1985, disrupted an interesting developmental processes within the PAC which he had initiated and led. It became the challenge of his successor, Johnson Mlambo to proceed with the program.

4.4.1. Background and Profile.

Johnson Phillip Mlambo, born in Johannesburg, was one of the founder members of the PAC. “At a very early age he was chairman of the Daveyton branch, (near Benoni) of the PAC. In 1963 he was arrested and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment on the infamous Robben Island for sabotage and plotting to overthrow the South African regime by violent means. While on Robben Island he was tortured and humiliated but this did not dampen his commitment to the struggle for the liberation” of South Africa. In 1964, his ill-treatment which involved such inhumane acts such as being “buried alive” up to the neck “and urinated upon by the sadist white warders” exposed internationally the plight of political prisoners on the infamous Robben Island. Such exposure before the General Assembly of the United Nations led to the slight improvement of prison conditions due to international pressure put on the South African government. After completing his sentence Mlambo escaped from South Africa and joined the external mission of the PAC where he was appointed Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the position he held until the time of his election as chairman of the PAC at the extraordinary session of the Central Committee of the PAC on August 12, 1985.

Isaacs described Mlambo as “another Robben Island veteran” but “an unknown quantity”. Isaacs further predicted that his tenure at the helm of the PAC was likely to be inauspicious, given the kind of statements Mlambo made shortly after fleeing into exile. The references were about the statements he made to the Zimbabwean journalists when asked about the implications of the Nkomati Accord signed between South Africa and Mozambique in March 1984, where both countries undertook to prevent guerrilla operations against each other from their respective territories. Mlambo argued that the

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215 ANC Archives: H. Isaacs: Struggle within the Struggle, p. 58.
non-aggression pact did not affect the PAC because the organisation was inside South Africa. To Mlambo’s political critics his statement was a sign of political naiveté given the broad implications of the Nkomati Accord for the liberation movements in South Africa. His statement was seen as symptomatic of the “self-delusion” which had plagued the PAC from the time of its formation; a wishful thinking about mass political support inside South Africa. To the PAC supporters Mlambo’s statement was “a tactical one”.  

It was an indication of a long-term strategy which was to mark the period of his leadership; i.e. taking the PAC inside South Africa by establishing an active underground network and intensifying APLA military activities. Besides that, Mlambo’s response was seen to be in line with the PAC’s strategy adopted in February 1984 based on the thesis of “an internally based and conducted struggle”.

Mlambo inherited, from Nyathi Pokela, a party with structures and relationships, some of which were working well whilst others were not. Johnson Mlambo had a burden of expectations to live up to. First, his predecessor had designed a structure, conceptualised processes, organisational goals and priorities but his untimely death meant that they were not implemented. Mlambo was expected, in Robert Mugabe’s words, “to pick up and sharpen even more Comrade Pokela’s spear”. This was not an easy task for Mlambo who lacked the political stature and admiration of African statesman which Pokela enjoyed. As in the previous chapters, his tenure of leadership of the PAC will also be examined along the three themes; leadership, internal enemy syndrome and management of funds and other organisational resources.

4.4.2. The composition and role of the exile leadership as represented by the National Executive Committee (Central Committee) of the PAC.

During Mlambo’s era there seems to have been little preoccupation with internal leadership squabbles. The major focus was on what was happening externally to the

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216 APLA Notes: 22 December 2002, Umtata.
organisation. When Mlambo assumed the reigns of power in the PAC, a number of developments were taking place within South Africa. The PAC leadership, in its quest for relevance, had to respond to these developments. These included, among others, the Sebokeng, Sharpeville and Boipatong upsurges of October to November 1984 as well as the Uitenhage funeral march where a massacre occurred on the 21st March 1985.219 These events attracted political attention nationally and internationally and focused political initiatives on what was happening in South Africa. This marked the beginning of serious competition among exile liberation movements for visibility and popular support inside South Africa. The ANC had responded to the developments inside South Africa, since the 1983 tri-cameral elections, with the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF).220 The left wing political groups led by the Azanian People’s Organization (a formation of the Black Consciousness Movement) formed the National Forum which the exiled PAC embraced as articulating the aspirations of the ‘Azanian’ masses and its ideological standpoints.221

Besides the developments at the home front, Mlambo, as his predecessor, decided to begin his term of office by consolidating relations with countries which have provided financial and material support to the PAC over the past years. Hence a month after his appointment, Mlambo headed a PAC delegation to China on the 22 September to the 4th October 1985.222 After that he attended a UN conference in Paris and then proceeded to Belgrade to attend the Party Congress of the League of Yugoslav Communists. Immediately after his return he led PAC delegations to Uganda, Nigeria, Yugoslavia, Libya, Zimbabwe and Iran.223 He also undertook trips to West Germany and Sweden in response to invitations by support groups in those countries.


220 Indian and Coloureds (the minority ethnic groups) were allowed to participate in the Whites only parliament hence the term tri-cameral parliament.

221 See Pokela’s comments on Unity with the Black Consciousness Movement in PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee Meeting at External Headquarters, Dar-es-Salaam, December 1-7, 1982.


Mlambo also headed a PAC delegation which met with the Group of Eminent Persons from the Commonwealth Secretariat, in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania in April 1986. The Group of Eminent Persons had initially met with the South African government with the purpose of exploring grounds for the possibility of a negotiated political solution to South Africa’s problems. Mlambo expressed the position of the PAC on political negotiations in South Africa and the conditions which the broad liberation movement expected the National Party government to fulfil in line with the decisions of the Commonwealth Accord in the Bahamas the same year. These included that the National Party government should undertake to dismantle Apartheid, terminate the state of emergency, release political prisoners unconditionally, lift the ban on political parties and initiate the suspension of violence. The PAC’s position as articulated by its chairman was that it would support a peaceful transition on condition that the NP government was prepared to meet all the conditions laid down by the Commonwealth Accord and that the basis for negotiations should be the principle of majority rule.

After April 1986, Mlambo began to focus more on what was happening in the PAC, and especially at the leadership level. Most of the issues he had to deal with and decide on, were the result of processes which were initiated by John Pokela. One of these issues was the Commission of Inquiry into the mismanagement and misappropriation of funds during the era of Vusumzi Make. One of the persons under investigation was the Deputy Chairman of the PAC Vusumzi Make himself. The investigation by the Commission was hampered by the severe lack of funds. Its tentative findings implicated Vusumzi Make in the mismanagement of PAC funds hence the late Nyathi John Pokela requested him to step down from the position of Vice Chairman but allowed him instead to remain a member of the Central Committee. Mlambo had to ensure that this decision was carried out and communicated to the general membership of the PAC who were at that

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226 Ibid. p. 1.
point demanding that Make be expelled from the PAC. Other PAC leaders implicated in the mismanagement of PAC funds, and who were requested by PAC membership to step down, were Count Petersen, Edwin Makoti and Mike Muendane.\textsuperscript{228} Muendane was later absolved, on the basis of new evidence which was brought to the Commission.\textsuperscript{229}

The outstanding problem Mlambo had to deal with and which divided his leadership team was the position of Vusumzi Make in the PAC. The Central Committee decided to suspend Make’s membership of the Central Committee, not only because it was demanded by the general membership but also because of his non-attendance of Central Committee meetings. “His failure to heed calls from the Headquarters and his activities which tarnished the image of the party” were raised as grounds for the suspension.\textsuperscript{230} Make had been requested several time by the Central Committee to come to meetings so that the allegations made against him by the office of the President of Botswana (that he was involved in the selling of mandrax) could be discussed with him. Make never came to Central Committee meetings and continued to dispute the fact that he was ever invited to Central Committee meetings. The Chairman, Johnson Mlambo and Secretary for Defense, Sabelo Phama, were tasked to meet with him and discuss his position within the Party and the allegations made against him. The two were to recommend to the PAC Make’s future status. It is important to note that even though there seems to have been unanimity within the Central Committee about the suspension of Make from the leadership, there were some elements who were still committed to him and continued to feed him with information on whatever decisions were taken by the Central Committee.\textsuperscript{231} Even though PAC members believed Make was becoming an embarrassment to the PAC, some were still committed to him. Hence early in 1987 rumours abounded within the PAC of an “attempted coup to unseat the PAC leadership”.\textsuperscript{232} This was linked to a faction within the PAC which was still loyal to

\textsuperscript{228} PAC Archives: Minutes of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee, Dar-es-Salaam, December 1-7, 1982, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{229} PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/27/1: Decisions of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee held in Iringa, 1985.
\textsuperscript{231} APLA Notes: Pretoria, 21 December 2001.
\textsuperscript{232} PAC Archives: Letter from Dan Mdliuli to the Chairman of the PAC- Johnson Mlambo, 1 June 1987.
Vusumzi Make. Members of this faction were mostly “people with high educational qualifications, the so-called “professors of the organisation”.\textsuperscript{233} Indicated to have been part of this was the late PAC stalwart and intellectual, Peter Raboroko. This rumour divided the PAC even further, something which was not new to the organisation during its turbulent exile history. The Mlambo majority faction argued, “one wonders why Vusi Make wants to be the captain again. When he had his chance he blew it. What fresh ideas for liberating Azania does he have”.\textsuperscript{234} What this shows is that mutual mistrust within the PAC survived well into the Mlambo period as well. What this means is that when the ban was lifted on the PAC in 1990, its internal power struggles and divisions had not been sorted out.

During his period, Johnson Mlambo also made new appointments and reshuffled the leadership. This happened against simmering discontent, firstly about his own appointment and secondly about the summoning of a consultative congress which Pokela promised to organise, but never did. Some people in the PAC expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that the decision about who to appoint as the successor of Pokela was made the preserve of a few selected within the Central Committee and was never discussed neither at the full sitting of the Central Committee nor at a general meeting of PAC members.\textsuperscript{235} This seemed to have been a tradition within the PAC because even with all Mlambo’s predecessors the same route was followed. So the fundamental flaw of not following the democratic route of gaining consensus from the majority was customary in the PAC, hence leadership squabbles, disunity and financial mismanagement were trends none of leaders in the PAC could root out.

The leadership reshuffles and appointments made by Mlambo included the following: J.R. Moabi was confirmed as Secretary for Finance and L.T. Mgweba, Chief Representative in Iraq was to replace K.M. Nkula who was appointed Chief Representative in the London office. During this period the Mission’s name was changed

\textsuperscript{233} APLA Notes: Pretoria, 21 December 2001.
\textsuperscript{234} PAC Archives: Letter from Dan Mdluli to the Chairman of the PAC- Johnson Mlambo, 1 June 1987.
\textsuperscript{235} This is clearly articulated in the letter from Dan Mdluli – PAC Chief Representative to Canada, to Johnson Mlambo, 28 August, 1985.
to the United Kingdom and Ireland Mission. Hamilton Keke was transferred from the
London office to Libya as Chief Representative and retained his membership of the
Central Committee. Immediately before Keke’s transfer to Libya, the UK mission of the
PAC was fraught with internal squabbles over how much direct authority should the PAC
headquarters have over its overseas missions. Vusumzi Nomdolo was deployed to
Lesotho as Chief Representative to replace Mpazamo Yonna who was recalled to the
Headquarters. Ike Mafole was also recalled from the United States to the Headquarters to
serve as Education Administrator and retained his membership in the Central Committee.
Willie Nkonyeni was appointed as Assistant Chief Representative in East Africa, whereas
Mike Diale was appointed Acting Chief Representative in France. Maud Jackson was
appointed Chief Coordinator of Women Affairs with Joyce Sifuba as deputy. Zakes
Mofokeng was appointed as Labour Coordinator in Switzerland and Sydney Mabusela
was to be Chief Representative in Syria.236 In the field of education, two new
appointments were made. J. Vanda was appointed Principal of a school which was to be
built in Ruvu camp and B. Jordaan was appointed as Curriculum Specialist. Elliot Mfaxa
remained the Head of the Department of Education and Manpower Development. Walters
Toboti was appointed the Chief Representative of the PAC in Zimbabwe.237 Ramudi
Maphai was appointed Deputy Chief Representative in Zimbabwe only in May 1987.238
He was replaced in 1989 by Thobile Gola who continued to run the office until 1992.239
T.M. Ntantala (former leader of the APRP) was also appointed Chief Representative of
the PAC in Uganda.240 All other appointments in the Central Committee made under the
leadership of Pokela remained unchanged during the first year of Mlambo’s leadership.
Of course in 1987, Nomdolo was replaced as Chief Representative in Lesotho by Rodney
Funeka. Besides the few publicly known reshuffles which were made, the composition of
the leadership still remained unstable until 1990 when a new National Executive was

236 PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/27/1: Decisions of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee held in
Iringa, Tanzania, 1985.
237 PAC Archives: Letter from Johnson P Mlambo to Dr Witness Mangwende – Minister of Foreign
238 PAC Archives: AG Ebrahim (Secretary for Foreign Affairs): ‘Re-Appointment of Cde Ramudi Maphai
as Deputy Chief Representative’, 19th May 1987.
239 PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/27/1: Decisions of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee held in
Iringa, Tanzania, 1985.
240 PAC Archives: Joe R. Mkhwanazi (Administrative Secretary): ‘Letter of Appointment’ to TM Ntantala,
24 November, 1986.
constituted under the leadership of Zephania Motopeng and Mlamli Makwethu, all ex-Robben Island prisoners. The two stalwarts spearheaded the formation of the Pan Africanist Movement, inside South Africa in 1988. The reason for the instability at the level of the Central Committee during Mlambo’s era was the level of political blackmail and mutual mistrust within the organisation which resulted in frequent resignations and reshuffles.

Having restructured the leadership committee of the PAC, Mlambo had to attend to the issue of the summoning of a Consultative Congress. This was also delayed and serious preparation only got underway in 1989, just on the eve of the unbanning of liberation movements by the De Klerk led National Party government of South Africa. The Consultative congress was intended to derive a fresh perspective for the PAC given the fact that developments inside South Africa were pointing towards the possibilities of political negotiations. Secondly, it was intended to examine the constitution of the PAC as well as administrative guidelines. Thirdly and most importantly, it was intended to heal the rift between the leadership and the army as well as the rank and file membership of the Party. The dispute between the leaders and the led was longstanding and was rooted in the tradition and practices of the organisation. As indicated, far back in 1980 during the era of Make, the cadres and general membership wanted to be consulted on the appointment of a new leadership. This never happened even during the time of Mlambo. This insistence on democratic participation continued to create an ever widening rift within the ranks of the PAC general membership, hence Mlambo’s attempt to speed-up the summoning of a Consultative Conference. An ad hoc committee which consisted of Philip Kgosana (who also returned to the PAC on the eve of the 1990 unbanning), Sydney Mabusela, Ike Mafole and Moss Palweni was set up. The preparations for the consultative conference helped the PAC to focus on critical issues such as the composition of membership lists in PAC regions, branches and cells and also the audit of party documentation. As a result of the preparatory work for the Conference, in areas

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where there were no PAC branches, they were set up and elections conducted to appoint delegates to the conference.

The conference was finally held in 1990. Its major focus was not the Party’s internal problems, but the prospects of a negotiated settlement in South Africa dominated the agenda. This question divided the PAC into the left and the center. The latter group advocating a moderate to pragmatic stance and the former emphasising a revolutionary path. It is the revolutionary route advocated by the left within the Party (especially the military) which won majority support. The PAC’s stance on negotiations thus reflected an element of hostility towards the very idea of a negotiated settlement. Gora Ebrahim, the PAC’s Secretary for Foreign Affairs indicated that the PAC would not be found “even within the spitting distance of negotiations”.²⁴² The PAC’s stance on the whole issue of negotiations was summed up by Joe Mkhwanazi, the PAC’s Administrative Secretary in his address to the International Conference on Peace and Security in Southern Africa. He stated that “No ruling group or class in history has surrendered of its own accord. It has to be forced to surrender. Moreover, for the national liberation movement to seriously enter into any form of dialogue or negotiations with the Apartheid regime of South Africa, it must do so from a position of strength, and not one of weakness”.²⁴³ As a result the organisation never participated in talks about talks between the ANC and the government. This subject will not be explored in this research since it falls outside the scope of the period covered in this research.

The most important issue to draw attention to is that when the PAC was unbanned and participated in the 1994 elections, it had still not dealt with the turbulence of its past. Wrangles within its leadership (especially the group from exile) were not settled hence it was decided at its 1990 conference to elect Mlamli Makwethu, a non-exile, to be its Deputy President and Zaphania Motopeng (also a non-exile) as its President. Despite the dramatic developments of 1990, the organisation never reflected on its history and

²⁴² Cape Time, March 1990.
developed practical solutions to them. In fact the Mlambo era can be described as the period when the PAC needed to prepare itself for “normal” politics. To that effect the organisation needed to confront its own shortcomings and become more self-critical. Instead, the leadership of the PAC during that period, misinterpreted the emotional appeal of its radical and militant language, in some sections of the Black community and especially among the youth, as a sign of popular support or as easily translatable into a realistic support base for the organisation. Hence little effort was put into mending the leadership divisions in the organisation. According to one informant, “the PAC needed a truth commission of its own before it could even participate in the 1994 elections”. The indecision of the leadership on whether or not to participate in negotiations despite the clear indications from a casual assessment of the balance of forces, deterred sympathisers and when the PAC decided to join the negotiations in Kempton Park, it had already lost ground which would have probably enabled it to command a competitive edge over its adversaries.

The most important innovation in the composition of the Central Committee which occurred during the time of Mlambo was the setting up of a full department on women’s affairs. As far back as 1962, the PAC had a women’s wing which was a marginal operation in the political affairs of the PAC in exile. This of course cannot be interpreted to mean that women were not actively involved in the politics of the PAC in exile. It was only in 1977 that the PAC women’s wing seriously began to reorganise itself. This began with a series of seminars, the first one held in Harare in 1978, Zimbabwe and the second one in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. “Both these seminars addressed the issue of women squarely and both came with recommendations”. The most important seminar, of which the recommendations included those of the two preceding seminars, was held in 1988. It recommended that the PAC women’s wing should be upgraded to a full department with a full-time secretary who should be a member of the Central Committee. According to the recommendations, a conference or seminar was to be held every three years to elect new office bearers. In addition to this, a

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244 Interview with Comrade Tekere, 22 December 2000, Cape Town.
245 Interview with Mrs Gqwetha (the wife of Sabelo Phama), 3 October 1995, Umtata.
246 PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/159/12: ‘Brief History of the PAC Women’s Section’, p. 2.
system of financial administration and guidelines which facilitated accountability at regional and national levels was to be established. The instability in the organization is the reason why this matter was only taken up ten years later.

The recommendations were approved by the PAC Central Committee in 1989.\textsuperscript{247} A structure of the women’s department consisting of 14 personnel was appointed by the secretary for women affairs and was ratified by the administrative committee of the Central Committee. The position of Chief Coordinator of Women’s Affairs was upgraded to that of Secretary for Women Affairs and Maud Jackson was appointed to this position. Mambhele Mfaxa, the wife of Elliot Mfaxa was appointed Regional Coordinator for Women Affairs in Zimbabwe. Joyce Sifuba was appointed deputy chief coordinator for Women Affairs. These appointments followed the resignation of Fitho Ntantala, the wife of T.M. Ntantala, from the position of chief coordinator for women affairs. The activities of the PAC women’s department were critical to the practical survival of PAC militants, especially during the late 1980, when APLA began to make attacks, even though only sporadically, on the South African government. The women’s department played a leading role in facilitating the implementation of development projects in the PAC camps and also with the improvement of living conditions in the camps. These issues will be covered in detail in chapter 5 which examines living conditions inside PAC camps.

Despite this initiative, the overall performance of the PAC leadership during the era of Mlambo did not significantly improve. Improvements, were only marginal, on the military front, as will be demonstrated in chapter six and also on the diplomatic front, something which led to increased material support for the PAC.\textsuperscript{248} The PAC leadership under Mlambo failed to resuscitate the image of the PAC and keep pace with political developments inside South Africa. Hence, some members of the PAC felt that all Central Committee members “stand accused individually and collectively as leaders”.\textsuperscript{249} Opportunism and incompetence at the leadership level still prevailed. This was demonstrated by the way the PAC was slowly losing ground to the ANC as the favourite

\textsuperscript{247} PAC Archives: Minutes of the Central Committee Meeting 18-24 September 1989, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{249} PAC Archives: Letter from Ezekiel K Mothupi to the Chairman of the PAC, 27 January 1987.
and ally of ZANU (PF) in Zimbabwe. The attitude of the Zimbabwean government towards the PAC and the Black Consciousness Movement, was becoming unfavourable during the last half of the 1980s. According to Mothupi, “the Zanu government seemed to have lost confidence in the PAC as a revolutionary movement capable of making a revolution, and they appear to have been taken for a ride by the ANC’s imperialist sponsored publicity that they believe that the ANC is actually destined to take power in Azania”. This shows that the PAC’s diplomatic relations were weak in Southern Africa and the PAC cells established during the Pokela era in the Frontline states had limited impact.

Another crisis occurred within the ranks of the leadership of the PAC on the eve of negotiations. The crisis germinated and started in the London and New York offices of the PAC. These offices had complained since the time of Pokela about what they saw as over centralisation of powers by the PAC headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam. This involved the decision to centralise all funding. This meant that funds were to be distributed from the headquarters. In addition to this, some elements within the leadership detested the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist rhetoric which the leadership of the PAC and the majority of PAC members embraced as the ideology of the organisation. Some members of the PAC mission in London and New York as well as some longstanding African Nationalists in Tanzania, led by A.B. Ngcobo, formed themselves into a loose-knit organisation called the ‘Sobukwe Forum’. The Forum demanded the reinstatement of Africanists and PAC leaders who were expelled from the Party and advocated the return to the basic doctrines of Pan Africanism as enunciated by A.P. Mda and Robert Sobukwe. Their leading exponent inside South Africa was the late Selby Ngendane. He was gunned down, allegedly by APLA militants outside his house in Umtata. The reason for the killing of Ngendane was the perception that he was very “dangerous because he was articulate, and

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250 PAC Archives: Letter from Ezekiel K Mothupi to the Chairman of the PAC, 27 January 1987.
251 PAC Archives: PAC overseas Mission; Interview with Elliot Mfasha (22 July1998) and Peter Raboroko (July 2000).
252 APLA Notes, Umtata, 20 December 2002.
if he had lived, the PAC would be upside down and the Forum would have taken over. The solution was to eliminate him”.

In summary, the leadership of the PAC during the era of Johnson Mlambo did not resolve the problems of the PAC. The formation of the Sobukwe Forum on the eve of the unbanning of the PAC meant that the conflicts of the exile period were transferred into South Africa. The non-exile membership of the PAC found themselves caught in the middle and some made conscious choices to support one of the factions among former exiles. In that way disunity within the PAC reproduced conditions for its perpetuation.

4.4.3. The management, use of funds and other organisational resources.

It is not clear whether the problems pertaining to the management of funds persisted in the same manner during the period of Mlambo as it did during the previous periods. It is only implied in the complaints which came forth from certain members of the PAC leadership. Before these issues are examined, this section will focus firstly on the main sources of funding for the PAC during this period.

Based on the work done during the time of Nyathi John Pokela, especially during the period July 1984 to September 1984 when the connections with the support groups in America were strengthened, the PAC under the leadership of Mlambo was privileged to draw financial and other material support from the Azania Support Committee in Toronto, Canada; the Biko-Rodney-Malcom Coalition and the African-Liberation-Day Committee all in the United States of America. In addition to support received from these organisations, the PAC also received a grant of US$ 26000 in December 1986 from the Program to Combat Racism, of the World Council of Churches. In June 1986, the PAC received a donation in the form of clothing from Barabara Muller, President of

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253 APLA Notes, Umtata, 20 December 2002.
255 PAC Archives: Johnson Mlambo’s Letter to James Mutambirwa, acknowledging receipt of the money from the World Council of Churches, 8th December, 1986.
Kumfendes Afrika based in Zurich, Switzerland. In the late 1980’s the PAC-Swiss connection was vital for the survival of people in the PAC camps. In addition to these donations, there were regular contributions which the PAC received from the Afro-Arab Solidarity Group based in New York; China provided military support, scholarships for training at the military academy in Beijing as well as funding, hence in March 1986 the Chinese government donated US$10 000 to the PAC delegation in Harare, Zimbabwe.

In December 1986, the PAC women’s department toured Australia together with the PAC Chief Representative in Australia, Maxwell Nemadzivhanani. The PAC was able to raise an amount of $10,486. This was in addition to £15000,00 raised by J.R. Moabi in his fundraising tour in the United Kingdom in December 1985. The amount was immediately dispatched by the Chief Representative to the PAC headquarters in Tanzania. This was something unusual to PAC’s overseas missions, who despite the regulations with regard to centralised financial control, continued non-reporting and non-dispatching of funds received from donors or raised through PAC cultural activities to the headquarters. The tendency among most of the overseas missions was to distribute the funds on their own, contrary to the standing regulations of the organisations. This tendency dominated the entire exile period of the PAC. It was predominant in the London and New York PAC offices. The amount raised through the PAC Australia tour was divided into two; $4000 was dispatched to the PAC Australia office and the remainder to the tune of $6000.00 was dispatched to the PAC headquarters in Tanzania. In addition to all these funds, the PAC also received an amount of US$ 37 000 per quarter from the OAU Liberation Committee, since 1964. This was in addition to the unspecified standing contribution from the W.E.B. du Bois Foundation in the USA.

256 PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/81/10: A letter of gratitude from Johnson Mlambo to Barabara Muller, President of Kumfendes Afrika in Switzerland, 1986; PAC/Tan/1/81/11: Letter from Barabara Muller to Johnson Mlambo about a consignment of clothes to be sent to the PAC camps in Tanzania, 1986

257 Interview conducted with Tekere, 1 May 2000, Cape Town.

258 Tekere, one of the interviewees in this research, received his certificate in military science from the Chinese academy in Beijing in 1988.

259 PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/41/14: Letter from Joe Moabi, Secretary for Finance to Maxwell Nemadzivhanani, thanking him for the role he played during the tour to Australia by PAC Women.


261 PAC Archives: Johnson Mlambo’ Letter to Suppiah Dhanabal, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Singapore, requesting for additional funds for the PAC, May 1985.

Inside South Africa, the PAC also received a donation, of an undisclosed amount, from the All-Africa Teachers Organization (AATO) in 1987. The money was derived from the pledges made by each member of this organisation to support the liberation movements in South Africa and Namibia. The AATO developed a fund for this purpose called the Liberation Movements Fund and was targeted to assist mainly SWAPO, the ANC and the PAC. The money from this fund was divided every year among the three organisations. In the case of the PAC, the fund was aimed at manpower development within the organisation through focus on research, administration (i.e. the day to day administration of the PAC’s Department of Education and Manpower Development), Publicity and Information which involved planning and research activities to assist in the production of reading material for the general public and members of the PAC on matters associated with education and manpower development. A sum of Z$ 145 was contributed by participants to each of the organisations and to the PAC in particular in Harare in June 1987. This was in addition to the annual subscriptions and donation from PAC members gainfully employed in South Africa and abroad.

Despite these funds, the PAC needed more funds and prepared further motivation for funding which were sent to various countries such as Singapore and Spain. Hence a request for financial assistance was submitted to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Singapore in 1985. The PAC needed funds to assist the organisation’s offices in Lesotho, Botswana and Zimbabwe. The request emanated from the realisation that the PAC’s regular sources of funds, that is, US$ 37 000 per quarter from the OAU Liberation Committee and US$ 30 to 40 000 annually was not sufficient for the overall administration and publicity of a national liberation movement. The PAC needed an additional US$ 36 000 per annum for each of the three offices. Alternatively, the organisation requested donations in the form of office equipment (e.g. telex machines) in order to assist in the smooth functioning of the organisation in countries such as Lesotho, Botswana and Zimbabwe. The other request made was to the Bishop Tutu Refugee Fund.

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264 Ibid.
265 PAC Archives: Johnson Mlambo’ Letter to Suppiah Dhanabal, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Singapore, requesting for additional funds for the PAC, May 1985.
in the United States of America. The funds requested were to be used to improve living conditions inside the PAC camps and especially at the PAC’s largest camp at Ruvu in Tanzania.\textsuperscript{267} A similar request was made to the government of Spain in September 1986. The PAC requested from the Spanish a combi for the organisation’s Youth League, a combi for the women’s wing, a car for the PAC Chief Representative, and clothing for the refugee community.\textsuperscript{268} In 1988, the PAC sent J.D. Nyaose, one of its founder members and veterans to Switzerland to raise funds for the following projects in PAC camps in Tanzania:

A children’s home for children born of PAC parents and money for the building of the school ($200,000), as well as the equipment and medicines for a medical clinic in Musuguru/Kitonga Multi-purpose center in Tanzania and assistance with food and clothing for refugees.

Even though it is not clear whether Nyaose was successful in his endeavours, what needs to be underlined is that, as Barabara Muller puts it, “the PAC in Switzerland was always embraced by leftist inclined solidarity groupings even if the financial contributions were not that high”.\textsuperscript{269} According to the interview with Gqobose, the PAC was in most instances “lucky to get what it requested from most governments and organizations except in those instances where it had to compete with the ANC; the ANC would in most cases get the money alone or the PAC would get very little”.\textsuperscript{270}

From what is outlined above, the picture which emerges is that the PAC was not without funds or donors. If one totals the amounts indicated above, it is clear that during the period of Mlambo alone, the PAC received approximately US$150,000–00 from international organisations. Despite that the PAC continued to plead poverty. Hence from 1987, the organisation embarked on a programme of belt-tightening in order to reduce

\textsuperscript{267} PAC Archives: PAC/Tan/1/82/11 – Letter from Joe Moabi, PAC Secretary for Finance to Cobin Seavers of the Bishop Tutu Refugee Fund, in the US, 1986.
\textsuperscript{268} PAC Archives: Letter written by Waters Toboti, PAC Chief Representative in Zimbabwe to the Ambassador of the Spanish government in Harare, Zimbabwe, September 1986.
\textsuperscript{269} Interview with Barabara Muller, Basel, Switzerland, 13 October, 2002.
\textsuperscript{270} Interview with Mr Gqobose, Port Elizabeth, 1 August 1996; See also PAC/Tan/1/43/23 - Report from Dan Mdluli, PAC Chief Representative in Canada, to Central Committee of the PAC, August 1985, pp.1-2.
expenses. The organisation suspended all renovations and house improvements, all major vehicle repairs, all conferences paid for by the party, all student loans and weekly petrol allocations were reduced by “200/-ts per vehicle”.\textsuperscript{271} In addition to this the planned visit by the PAC Secretary for Finance to the USA, the Caribbean and Canada was also suspended due to lack of funds. Some vehicles were grounded for almost a year and these included a Toyota Hi-Ace TZ 83078 and a Datsun TZ 71602.\textsuperscript{272} Even though these arrangements lasted much longer than ordinary PAC members expected, they were reviewed every three months, even though the general membership was in most cases not consulted. It was also during this same period that the PAC developed stricter control procedures with regard to the use of vehicles. The tendency to misuse PAC vehicles was still on the rise and stricter control measures were needed to bring these practices under control. This tendency was more rampant in the PAC’s Publicity Department. Regulations which were initially drawn up for this department were extended to the entire organisation. A small committee whose task it was to regulate the use of organisational vehicles, was set up and Reggie Khumalo was appointed as its coordinator. The coordinator was to have “absolute control over both the driver and the car” and was “fully accountable for all its movements without exception”.\textsuperscript{273} The loophole which the leadership of the PAC opened in the regulation was that the use of organisational vehicles in social engagements, e.g. cinemas, outings and party receptions was not strictly forbidden, but was made subject to negotiations. This opened an opportunity for continued mismanagement of official vehicles. Fixing them was a huge cost to the organisation.

4.4.4. The internal-enemy syndrome during the era of Johnson Mlambo.

As indicated in the previous chapters, the internal enemy in the PAC was something which was constructed by factions within the organisation. It manifested itself as attitudes which determined intra-group cohesion and inter-group hostility. In other words, one was

\textsuperscript{271} PAC Archives: ‘Memo to All Heads of Departments and Staff, Subject-Reduction of Expenses’, 1987.
\textsuperscript{272} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{273} PAC Archives: ‘Regulations governing the use of Publicity car’, 4 October 1986.
an enemy of the PAC, a sell-out or a spy as long as he or she was outside a particular faction or ideological tradition. In most instances there was hardly a grain of truth in the internal enemy allegations but in other instances, the allegations had a limited element of truth.

Labelling and name-tagging which started during the era of Leballo continued to the time of Mlambo. During this period it contained serious ideological elements. Underlying the ideological issues were power struggles based on the control of party funds, gossip and rumour mongering. The most interesting instance was in the PAC London office. This particular office was run for a long time by Mike Muendane. Even after the reshuffles made by Pokela, which saw Muendane being shifted to the portfolio of Secretary for Labour, the latter continued to have an influence on what was happening in the PAC in the United Kingdom. This culminated in his suspension from the Central Committee on the 19th of March 1987 and the Department of Labour was temporarily placed under the office of the Chairman until September when Elizabeth Sibeko was appointed as Secretary for Labour and member of the Central Committee.\(^{274}\) Muendane was not only suspended from the Central Committee, he was also suspended from all activities of the PAC for a period of twelve months as from the 13th of April 1987. As indicated in the letter from Joe Mkwanazi to Herbart Ruitenberg of the Netherlands, “no matter how unpleasant it was to take such a decision, it had to be done in the interest of the struggle.”\(^{275}\)

The suspension of Muendane evoked wide and simmering discontent within the PAC. Issues of ideology combined with questions around the Central Committee’s disciplinary procedures and the unfairness of suspension of a number of PAC stalwarts which occurred in the past, laid the foundation for a new split within the organisation. It was on this basis that a group of Africanists in London, Dar-es-Salaam and United States of

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America came together and formed themselves into the ‘Sobukwe Forum’ (as explained in the previous section). The Forum was not intended to be an organisation outside the PAC. It was to be an internal lobby group within the PAC whose aim was to take over the leadership of the organisation. The Forum invoked issues of ideology as justification for their existence. In addition to this, the members of the Forum also raised issues of political alliances with organisations such as the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA) and its internal (inside South Africa) organ, the Azanian People’s Organization and Inkatha Freedom Party, as points for consideration within the PAC. The Central Committee of the PAC had long been divided on the issues of forming strategic alliances with organisations such as the BCMA. When the Forum was formed these issues had to be confronted and debated within the organization even though no final positions were arrived at.

The formation of the Sobukwe Forum marked the beginning of open confrontation between nationalist and Marxist-Leninist-Maoists in the PAC. The confrontation was not limited to the elite and leadership of the organisation, but affected the rank and file membership of the PAC in the camps and in the army. The main lines of argument which formed the basis of the conflict between members of the Sobukwe Forum and the leadership of the PAC, were the following:

The Forum members disagreed with the Dar-es-Salaam PAC because they believed that the latter espoused a Marxist-Leninists ideology and was also infiltrated by Trotskytes and Maoists. The members of the Forum claimed that they were “the true PAC” and they described themselves as “African nationalists or Africanists”. They also disagreed with the formal PAC structure and leadership on the question of a negotiated political settlement in South Africa. To the Sobukwe Forum, negotiations provided the possibility of a solution to the country’s problems and were a “once in a life time opportunity” that needed to be seized.

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277 Ibid; Interview with D.D.D. Mantshontsho, former member of the PAC Central Committee during the era of Vusumzi Make, Umtata, 15 February 1995.
The Forum also wanted to forge alliances with Mangosuthu Buthelezi’s Inkatha Freedom party, despite the controversy of the latter’s position in relation to collaboration with the National Party government. The Forum also indicated its intentions to form alliances with the Azanian People’s Organization and with Nationalists within the ANC in preparation for participation in the negotiations.279

In other words, the Sobukwe Forum touched on and provided ‘answers’ to longstanding questions which formed the basis of simmering divisions within the PAC. In a way the Forum’s approach and political stance, especially on the question of negotiations, set the PAC leadership thinking and caused greater uncertainty as to whether the ‘leftist’ inclined position on negotiations would be sustainable in the near future. The formation of the Pan Africanist Movement (PAM) inside South Africa on the 1st to the 3rd of December 1989 helped boost the PAC’s morale and commitment to its position on negotiations as the participants at the first congress of the PAM, endorsed the PAC’s position “that as for now, there exists no basis for genuine negotiations”.280

It is interesting to note that the ANC of South Africa was the first liberation movement to experience the kind of internal split which the PAC only experienced in 1989. In the case of the ANC the split was led by some ‘Leftist’ group who formed themselves into what was called the Marxist Workers Tendency (MWT) of the ANC. This group was dissatisfied with the ANC’s moderation during the middle to late 1980’s. They believed the ANC was “in fact only moving from tactics to betrayal”.281 “Five MWT members were expelled from the ANC in 1985, but following an amnesty, the tendency now appears to enjoy official toleration”.282 Unlike the PAC, the ANC dealt with the emergence of the Marxist Workers Tendency head-on, hence the MWT leaders were expelled but later accommodated after the unbanning of liberation movements in February 1990.

280 ANC Archives (University of Fort Hare): Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, n.d.
281 Interview with a former member of the ANC’s Marxist Workers Tendency (MWT), Cape Town, 20 December, 1995.
282 The Weekly Mail, Vol. 6, No. 21, 8-14 June 1990.
There are interesting points of comparison between the MWT of the ANC and the Sobukwe Forum of the PAC. Both were ‘entryist’ in approach. This meant that they would work within their mother organisations and would eventually constitute a dominant faction to take over the leadership of the organisation. While secrecy surrounded the MWT’s position, with the Sobukwe Forum it was not the case. The latter was nationalist and popular in its political disposition. The MWT, on the other hand, was “hostile to Africanism” which was nationalist at the core.\textsuperscript{283} The Sobukwe Forum sought unity amongst all African Nationalists irrespective of the organisations they came from and the Forum detested the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist inclination which dominated the main body, i.e. the PAC. With the MWT this was the opposite, the main body, i.e. the ANC, was predominantly African Nationalist inclined but found no attraction to the advent of the Sobukwe Forum. In the same way the PAC found nothing attractive in the MWT, even though the basis of the rhetoric was similar. Instead, through the PAM, the PAC established good relations with a relatively new leftist organisation called the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action.\textsuperscript{284}

The inability of the PAC to deal with ideological pluralism within its ranks manifested itself not only in the form of the split which resulted in the formation of an organisation within an organisation, (as was the case with the Sobukwe Forum), but also led to biting and inhumane treatment of all those PAC cadres in the camps who were rumored to be ‘nationalist’ and positive towards the “sell out arrangement with the Pretoria government” which was about to take place inside South Africa.\textsuperscript{285} The letter from Dan Mdluli to the Chairman of the PAC reveals this situation. Mdluli raised questions about “the call to branches to attempt to bring back PAC members, and even those ‘under tables’”.\textsuperscript{286} Mdluli argued that this could not be achieved and that the organisation needed to look at mistakes of the past and find out why so many people were alienated from the PAC. He pointed out that new reports have reached him about “continued beatings which

\textsuperscript{283} The Weekly Mail, Vol. 6, No. 21, 8-14 June 1990.
\textsuperscript{284} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{285} Interview with Comrade Zimbiri (NjeMdaka), Umtata, 18 November 1998.
\textsuperscript{286} PAC Archives: Letter from Dan Mdluli to Johnson Mlambo – Chairman of the PAC, 18 September, 1987.
occur with the connivance or orders of Mlambo” even though he did not believe Mlambo would let that happen.\textsuperscript{287} This was so serious in the PAC camps to the extent that the Tanzanian authorities had to intervene to stop the practice.

As already indicated, the internal enemy myth also fed from the long drawn out debate about political alliances. A case in point was the internal debate about forming an alliance with the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA) which on ideological grounds appeared closer to the PAC. Both organisations believed that a liberated South Africa would be called ‘Azania’.\textsuperscript{288} They both revered Mangaliso Sobukwe as the ideological icon and believed in African/black leadership of the struggle, in a way which conveyed connotations of ‘racial’ exclusivity. Most importantly they were both opposed to negotiations, even though they both modified their stances after February 1990.\textsuperscript{289} None of the PAC leaders in exile ever addressed the question of relations with the BCMA comprehensively. In the late 1980’s, with AZAPO’s unwavering opposition to the political tactics of the United Democratic Front, PAC leaders started embracing AZAPO as the creation of the PAC. This caused internal divisions within the leadership of the exiled organisation. Again Dan Mdluli’s letter to the Chairman of the PAC captured the internal debates on this issue succinctly. Mdluli argues that “the UDF exists for the ANC. It is up to the PAC to grab the hand of friendship from AZAPO, not by lip-service as in the past. Unless unity of PAC-BCM is taken seriously, and not opportunistically, AZAPO will be destroyed; that is not in the interest of the PAC. There is absolutely no grounds for those who stalled the PAC-BCM alliance. Obviously there are fears in some Central Committee members that BCM recruits would outnumber PAC cadres in the camps”.\textsuperscript{290} Underlying these fears were ideological positions: to the nationalists, the BCM was too Marxist for any alliance with the PAC. Whereas to the radicals within the PAC, the alliance between the two organisations was being delayed unnecessarily for reasons of power.\textsuperscript{291} The question of alliance with the BCM only served to consolidate

\textsuperscript{287} PAC Archives: Letter from Dan Mdluli to Johnson Mlambo – Chairman of the PAC, 18 September, 1987.

\textsuperscript{288} Even though the historical origins of this name remains unclear.

\textsuperscript{289} See ‘PAC Does About Turn: Talks are ‘inevitable’ in Cape Argus, 11 June, 1990.

\textsuperscript{290} PAC Archives: Letter from Dan Mdluli (PAC Chief Representative-Canada) to Johnson Mlambo, 28 August, 1985.

\textsuperscript{291} Interview with M Dyan, 11 September 2000, Cape Town.
the grounds of mutual distrust within the PAC leadership and was never resolved after the
organisation was unbanned in 1990.

The divisive trends of the periods preceding Mlambo’s assumption of leadership in the
PAC were not resolved under his leadership. Hence the feeling among some PAC
members interviewed in the course of this research was that the PAC needed a “truth
commission of its own” before it could participate in the normal politics of South Africa,
post 2 February 1990. The financial position of the organisation was also in bad shape
and politically the organisation was uncertain about its stance on negotiations.
4.5. THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP DIVERSITY ON THE PAC.

The four leadership periods identified in this chapter had a significant impact on the PAC in terms of defining the stature or profile, capacity and overall strength of the organisation. The PAC emerged from the four leadership periods weakened, incapable of comprehending and adjusting to the dynamic landscape of the politics of national liberation in South Africa. Hence, by the time the PAC was unbanned, it had not been able to assert itself as the sole and authentic representative of the people of South Africa before the eyes of the world. Yet the ANC and SWAPO, having been exposed to similar conditions of exile were able to elevate themselves and project images as the authentic representatives of their people before the international community. This is not without regard to the fact that the four periods of leadership were different, each coloured by the style, political outlook and personality of the chairman at the helm of the organisation. All the same it is possible to reflect on the leadership in the PAC as a singular phenomenon given the permeating threads of continuity and their cumulative effects on the PAC as an organisation. Moving along this perspective, the impact of the four leadership periods on the organisation, (when considered together) was that the PAC remained distanced from the process of popular struggles which occurred inside South Africa during the period covered in this research. It was only in 1989 through the formation of the Pan Africanist Movement, led by Clarence Makwethu, that the voice of PAC began to be heared in the circles of popular mobilisation inside South Africa. The fact that one would hardly hear anything about the PAC during this period was largely due to the leadership battles which rocked the organisation during this period.

The longest leadership period in the PAC was that of P.K. Leballo starting from 1962 and persisting to 1979. During this period, his power imposed itself as a totality which dominated all PAC structures and conferred on them their meaning. It was during this period when the foundations and initial impressions of the PAC were portrayed to the international community. The initial impressions as discussed in section 4.1, were not beneficial to the organisation. As early as 1967, the conflict within the PAC confronted the OAU Liberation Committee as a problem which required attention. Hence the Moshi
unity conference was summoned in September 1968, at the insistence of the OAU Liberation Committee. The Moshi conference instead of providing a solution generated more internal problems. In the final analysis all the problems centered around Leballo’s leadership style. He portrayed a sense of personal ownership of the organisation. Instead of building a core of leadership within the organisation, he constantly manipulated members of his executive committee depending on the kind of scheme he wanted to implement. He did all these things in complete disregard for whatever systems and procedures the organisation had developed. As a result of his activities together with a few executive members closely associated with him a type of organisational ethos and psyche which was later difficult to amend, emerged and was nurtured over the 17 years of Leballo’s leadership. The organisational ethos which germinated and crystallised during this era was based on the twin concepts of ‘divide and rule’. These concepts found realisation during the leadership period of Leballo, in their crudest meaning. The priority during this period was Leballo, the person and his position as Chairman of the PAC; everything else was secondary. The PAC was important only in so far as he remained its leader. As a result an authoritarian political culture, a “typical case of liberation without democracy”, rank and file alienation from the leadership, mutual mistrust, and political blackmail developed and by the time Leballo was ousted, they had crystallised into a solid political tradition of the exiled PAC.²⁹² What this shows is that the PAC in exile failed to start on a solid footing. Leballo sought to establish himself as the uncontested leader of the PAC in exile but in the minds of PAC members the sacrosanct character of Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe, the founding President of the PAC (who was in Robben Island prison), could not be removed. Leballo tried, but failed, to elevate himself to the level of Sobukwe whose personality and leadership they identified with the organisation’s true nature. Unlike the other liberation movements such as the PAC and SWAPO of Namibia, the PAC went into exile before it could establish a stable core of political leaders, bold and assertive enough to keep the levers of power firmly within control of the team.

²⁹² The concept is used by Colin Leys and John S. Saul in their book, The Two-Edged Sword, p. 43.
The period of Vusumzi Make was in many respects supposed to be a period of transition to a more just period within the PAC, but it was a short, very delicate and confused time. It was delicate in the sense that without the Tanzanian authorities constantly on guard, the PAC army would probably have taken over the running of the affairs of the PAC. Hence in section 4.2 reference is made to rise of the cadreship movement during the era of Vusi Make. The period also showed signs of confusion because many aspects of organisational improvement which were for the first time addressed through open discussions, were left unresolved because of the indecision of the PAC chairman, Vusumzi Make. His indecision could not be linked to his inability to lead the organisation, but to the fact that he was not confident about PAC political affairs given his constant absence from the organisation to attend his personal matters. Vusi Make seemed to have developed an impression that his period of leadership was simply a temporary arrangement, while the PAC was still on the look-out for a person to lead the organisation. Nothing dramatic occurred during this period but its significance was that it created a fairly safer space for the exchange of ideas about the nature of re-organisation needed to get the PAC to function as a viable liberation movement. The negative aspect of this period was the disappearance of $1million which could not be accounted for by the PAC Central Committee. This added more strain to an organisation which all along pleaded poverty. The cadres and rank and file members were struggling to meet basic requirements like food, medicines and shelter. Hence, when Nyathi John Pokela arrived to take over the chairmanship of the PAC from Vusi Make, the rank and file PAC members expected him to perform the miraculous role of a saviour.

The Pokela period of leadership of the PAC, was the most promising one, primarily because of his political reputation as an ex-Robben Island stalwart completely untouched by the internal conflicts of the PAC and his charisma and knowledge of the PAC thinking and goals from the time it was founded. Indeed Pokela had all these qualities which earned him the respect of leaders of Frontline states and liberation organisations. His leadership boosted the morale within the PAC. Problems relating to the accountability of the leadership to the led remained unresolved. His period was also coloured by a litany of complaints about Central Committee members whose conduct and performance in
various positions were not satisfactory. He started implementing changes which were met with resistance at Central Committee level. These involved developing guidelines for the various departments, centralising the control of funds, moving all members of the Central Committee to the Dar-es-Salaan headquarters and also developing a leadership code of conduct. At least basic procedures and systems for the running of the organization were defined even though there were problems of monitoring their implementation. His period ended before it could bear tangible fruits. He died in June 1985 and was succeeded by Johnson Mlambo, another ex-Robben Island prisoner.

Mlambo’s time as a leader was eventful only with respect to military activity. The PAC’s homegoing program was implemented during his period, hence the increase in the number of recorded APLA attacks from the late 1980’s to 1993. He also tried to set up diplomatic initiatives, a subject which has not been examined in detail in this research. Mlambo’s leadership period was more externally focused than that of his predecessors. This was due to the nature of political developments which dominated South Africa in the late 1980’s. The prospects for a negotiated political solution to the South African question were high on the agenda. The rise of mass political unrests inside South Africa forced the PAC to prioritise visible political activity inside the country in order to establish a physical and psychological presence. The organisation did not want to lose ground to the ANC which was dominating the internal political scene through its political, church and cultural structures. Mlambo only partly implemented the official PAC organisational systems and procedures, which contributed to the perpetuation of intra-PAC conflict until, and after, the organisation was unbanned.

In short, the period of Mlambo was one of political expediency. Unfortunately, the organisation was not ready for that. Internal conflicts in the PAC did not subside but continued, hence the formation of an organisation within an organisation in 1989, i.e. the Sobukwe Forum, led by A.B. Ngcobo in exile and Selby Ngendane inside South Africa. The case of the PAC under the leadership of Mlambo was one instance in which the expression, ‘learning to fly before acquiring the basic walking skills’, applied. Age-old questions about leadership accountability, management of organisational funds and
resources, ideological rifts, intrigues and mutual mistrust remained unresolved. In spite of Mlambo’s attempts to implement a programme of action intended to shift the organisational focus away from the stalemate within the organisation was not overcome. Hence the PAC performed unsatisfactorily in the democratic elections held in 1994.