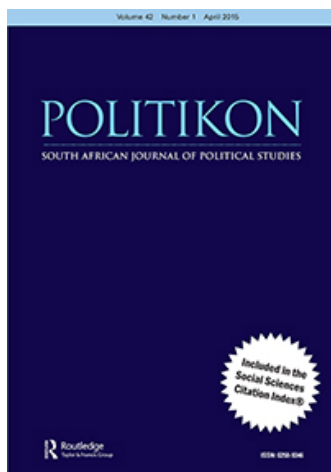


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### The Natal Indian Congress, the Mass Democratic Movement and the Struggle to Defeat Apartheid: 1980-1994

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# The Natal Indian Congress, the Mass Democratic Movement and the Struggle to Defeat Apartheid: 1980–1994

ASHWIN DESAI\* AND GOOLAM VAHED\*\*

**ABSTRACT** *The Natal Indian Congress (NIC) was revived in 1971 in the context of what has become known as the ‘Durban moment’. This period also witnessed the emergence of the Black Consciousness Movement and an independent trade union movement inspired by the 1973 Durban strikes. Despite a government crackdown and opposition from anti-apartheid groups that asserted that ethnic identities were a relic of the past, the NIC attracted younger activists through the 1970s and by the early 1980s, had survived the banning and detention of its leadership to become involved in civic struggles over housing and education, and in mobilizing against government-created political structures. It also played a pivotal role in the United Democratic Front formed in 1983. This did not mean that the NIC was monolithic. The 1980s spawned vibrant and often vicious debates within the NIC over participation in government-created structures, allegations of cabals and, as democracy dawned, differing opinions of the future of an organization that first came into being in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In critically interrogating this crucial period between 1980 and 1994, when mass-based struggle was renewed, two states of emergency were imposed and apartheid eventually ended, this article adds to the growing historiography of the anti-apartheid struggle by focusing on an important but neglected aspect of that story. It focuses on the internal workings of the NIC and the relationship between the NIC, the emergent Mass Democratic Movement and the African National Congress (ANC) in the context of broader political and economic changes.*

## Introduction

The 1970s witnessed a revival of political mobilization by internal anti-apartheid forces in South Africa. The Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), led by Steve Biko, inspired a groundswell of student activism on Black campuses. It was

pioneering in that it sought to bring Africans, Coloureds and Indians into one political unit under an overarching singular identity of Black. In the midst of the rise of the BCM the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) was revived, while an independent Black trade union movement emerged in the aftermath of the 1973 Durban strikes. Together, this confluence of influences has come to be known as the 'Durban moment' (Keniston 2013). As the 1970s unfolded, the BCM was hounded by bans and imprisonment and, tragically, Biko died in police custody. The trade union movement was more cautious in its political approach, while continuing to make gains on the shopfloor. The 1970s were a period of consolidation for the NIC which survived the banning of many of its leaders and accusations by the BCM that it was an ethnic body fitting into the logic of apartheid, to enter the 1980s with its organization relatively intact (Vahed and Desai 2014).

In the revived NIC of the 1970s, people such as Mewa Ramgobin, George Sewpersadh, and subsequently Pravin Gordhan and Zac Yacoob, all professionals, came to the fore. The NIC initially concentrated on 'bread and butter' issues, particularly housing and education, through civic organizations. It gained momentum in the early 1980s with campaigns such as the Release Mandela Campaign (RMC, 1980), the anti-South African Indian Council (SAIC) campaign (1981), and the national education boycott of 1980, which radicalized many students, some of whom subsequently found a political home in NIC structures. For most of the 1970s, professionals led the NIC. This began to change from the late 1970s when a younger generation of 'home grown' civic activists and students began to take up leadership roles within the NIC. Many were involved in youth organizations, trades unions or the BCM and helped to widen the concerns of the NIC and in the process of mobilizing the masses.

This article examines the trajectory of the NIC from 1980 to 1994, a period that witnessed sustained anti-apartheid mobilization, two states of emergency, the unbanning of the liberation movements, the release of Nelson Mandela and negotiations that led to the country's first democratic elections. This is an important story of how an organization founded by the apostle of non-violence, Mohandas K. Gandhi in 1894 and which continued to pay homage to him, harboured Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) fighters who were committed to armed struggle; and, which survived divisive debates over participation in government-created structures to become an inspiring force in the United Democratic Front (UDF). The key question is whether the NIC was able to capture the imagination of the Indian masses to the extent that they embraced its mother body, the ANC, during the 1994 elections and if not, why not? In addressing these questions, this article adds to the historiography of the anti-apartheid struggle by developing a better understanding of the internal workings of the NIC as well its relationship with the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), the ANC and its appeal in the Indian community. The article relies on contemporary newspaper reports as well as interviews with activists conducted at different times by different people. While we are aware that such material has to be treated with care as oral testimony can be problematic, particularly in areas that are so ideologically contested, we have sought to mitigate this by relying

on a diverse range of voices as well as recent academic research in the form of articles and dissertations.

### **Into the 1980s**

Between the Durban strikes of 1973 and the Mass Democratic Movement's (MDM) defiance campaign of 1989, a long wave of popular protest surged across the South African political landscape. It eroded familiar landmarks and opened new channels, it lapped on the beach-heads of white power, and its high tide left a residue of aspirations and expectations. (Bundy 2000, 26)

In the aftermath of the 1976 Soweto Rebellion, the state adopted a series of repressive measures to quell the ongoing protest. While this had important effects like eroding the power of the BCM, the state failed to gain control of Black townships, while the labour movement continued to make gains across the country.

By the early 1980s, the National Party (NP) government was facing a mounting economic crisis. On the political front, the international anti-apartheid movement had grown in power and the ANC became a more effective organization with a presence in many countries around the world. Internally, 1980 was greeted with a massive education boycott, which ushered a new cycle of youth activism (see Seekings 1993). The protests began in the Cape in April 1980 against the third-class status of Black education and spread rapidly across the country. The University of Durban-Westville (UD-W), Springfield College of Education, M. L. Sultan Technikon and many schools in Natal joined the boycott. The NIC forged links with student leaders and community organizations. The state responded by detaining activists, including NIC leaders and students. Yunus Shaik, a student at UD-W, was detained for almost 10 months with NIC leaders such as Thumba Pillay, Farouk Meer and M. J. Naidoo at Modderbee in Benoni. Shaik described this as an important moment in intergenerational politics:

That was a difficult experience because you really didn't know whether you were going to be released, whether you'll sit for the exams, don't sit for the exams. But it was good because my political education underwent a qualitative transformation. I had an older generation there who shared with us an entire nation's history of struggle. I got to locate the struggles we were in at the time to the struggles that went before. I also got exposed to different political thoughts. There was not much written literature to tell you who the ANC was and what their programme was. You didn't even have a copy of the Freedom Charter. So it was an oral history that had to be handed down. This intergenerational contact meant that we could start raising community issues and engaging in community struggles, so you take the struggle out of the university into the communities. We had the energy for that as youngsters and take guidance out of an older generation. That connection began to impact on us. And we fanned out across the community but we focused on working-class communities in particular. We became alive to the fact that the heart of the struggle could not be located on the middle-class and the intelligentsia.

Thus a new layer of activists broadened out from their university bases and became involved in community struggles.

## Grassroots politics

A main avenue of protest in the late 1970s was civic organizations that emerged to take up struggles around high rents and transportation costs, poor living conditions and lack of amenities. The NIC, Democratic Lawyers Association and Anti-SAIC Committee were central to these struggles through the 1980s (see Seekings 2000a). In most 'units' of Chatsworth, for example, residents formed housing associations to take up struggles for housing and amenities. They coordinated their struggles through the Chatsworth Housing Action Committee (CHAC) which was formed to oppose the 15% rent increase announced by the Durban City Council in January 1980. George Sewpersadh and Farouk Meer of the NIC were members of CHAC (*Post*, February 13, 1980). Other NIC members were active in these struggles in Phoenix. Yusuf Vawda notes that the NIC got involved when the residents of Tin Town in Springfield were affected by floods and were moved to Phoenix:

It became evident that they were getting these blockhouses which were hardly comfortable or even good from a health standard. As people moved in, they encountered numerous problems. These houses were barely shells. The facilities were non-existent. There were no real roads there so you had to trudge through mud to get to your house if it rained. There were no telephones and certainly no recreational amenities. Schools were starting to go up [but] the people were still commuting to the old schools they were going to. That became a fairly big preoccupation with many of us and in the course of interacting with people in that new settlement we became involved in establishing mainly community-based organisations to campaign and work around people's civic demands. The big break was the establishment of the Phoenix Working Committee which was the umbrella organisation of the Phoenix community to campaign against the Government and the City Council. So those became some sort of big campaigns.

While Phoenix to the north and Chatsworth to the south of Durban were established as 'Indian' townships, the latter was established in the early 1960s and the former in the mid-1970s. There was thus a significant gap in terms of infrastructure, township-based leadership and economic status. As Freund (1995, 84) points out, Phoenix was 'less successful [than Chatsworth] because it is newer, because it emerged at a time when economic growth was starting to falter seriously, and because its population tended to be poorer from the outset'.

Maggie Govender, then a young activist from Chatsworth, points to the importance of these organizations. She notes that the CHAC 'took up a whole range of community issues, ranging from the sale of houses, rent struggles, discriminatory rates'. The CHAC also had a political element to it. Its slogan, 'Houses, Security and Comfort' was 'straight out of the Freedom Charter'. Govender believes that housing struggles in sub-economic areas

increased [residents'] political understanding of what was going on. People like Mrs Naicker, Mrs Reddy, ordinary women who were at home, would get onto a public platform, and talk and they commanded tremendous support. It was a good period to build grassroots leadership.

Vawda also noted the impact of the campaigns in Phoenix:

Sometimes it would be the very first time that women would have an opportunity to speak . . . the women came to the fore. There were some very colourful characters. I remember Mrs Maharaj and some elderly gentlemen, Mr Luke Naidoo, Mr J.M. Singh, who then became the Chairperson of the Phoenix Working Committee, Mr Jackie Nair; who were really people who came in who had very difficult lives, who struggled, working people, but who saw the need to become involved in sort of organising.

The NIC gave impetus to the formation of Durban Housing Action committee (DHAC). At a meeting convened by the NIC on 29 March 1980 to discuss rental increases and high rates, 20 housing committees, including those from Phoenix, Newlands East, Merebank, Chatsworth, Cato Manor, Asherville and Sydenham Heights joined forces to form DHAC. D. K. Singh was elected chairman, with Virgil Bonhomme and Pravin Gordhan as joint secretaries (*Natal Mercury*, April 1, 1980). Pressure from DHAC caused the Council to postpone rental and rates increases. Civics portrayed this as a great victory in widely distributed pamphlets (*Post*, August 30, 1980). The reason that housing became such a crucial arena of struggle was that the extended family had been destroyed by the end of the 1970s and was, as Freund put it, just 'a cultural idea, an idiom, . . . but it lacked physical substance' (Freund 1995, 86). This meant that, in a context of economic contraction, families could no longer share costs such as rent. There was thus a need for more housing, but also cheaper housing, which became a bare necessity. For families used to cheap survival on the urban peripheries such as Tin Town and Cato Manor, where transport costs were minimal, constantly increasing rents and service delivery charges imposed by a state seeking to recover its costs, as well as higher transport costs, were a massive blow.

These activities did not go unnoticed by the state. For example, Yunus Mahomed and Pravin Gordhan were arrested and held *incommunicado* in late 1981. Gordhan lost his job as a pharmacist at King Edward VIII Hospital (*Natal Mercury*, January 9, 1982). Other members of the NIC executive who were imprisoned or banned in 1983 included A. S. Chetty, R. Ramesar and George Sewpersadh.

Mobilization against rent and service delivery hikes brought the masses into the more general political struggle against the state and facilitated cross-racial (mainly Coloured and Indian) campaigns. It also gave NIC activists a toehold in the townships and credibility because they were addressing bread-and-butter issues of immediate concern to the working classes. Political changes during this period provided an added impetus for mobilization.

The anti-SAIC campaign (1981) and protests against the Tricameral Dispensation (1983) created further momentum for the NIC. The first SAIC elections were held on 4 November 1981. The NIC, which for a time wavered about participating in the elections, eventually decided to boycott the SAIC and carried out an extensive campaign through the anti-SAIC committee which stressed that the SAIC and Local Affairs Committees (LACs) were puppets of the government and yielded

little benefit to the masses. The turnout for the elections was around 10% (*Leader*, November 13, 1981). As Murray (1987, 206) points out:

The 1981 national Anti-SAIC conference held in October in Durban was not only a watershed for coalition-building politics but also prefigured the formation of the UDF (United Democratic Front). The 109 organisations represented pledged their 'non-participation in any constitutional arrangement that does not arise out of a national convention' and declared unswerving support for the principles contained in the Freedom Charter.

Opposition to its schemes did not deter the government of P. W. Botha to push ahead with constitutional reforms that divided parliament into three racially separate chambers: one for Indians, one for whites and one for Coloureds. African political representation was confined to the Bantustans. The system ensured that whites always had a majority, a point consistently hammered home by the NIC. For example, in its statement on constitutional reforms in February 1982, the NIC noted that government-created bodies were 'offered merely as a sop to the aspirations of the black people. [They] have no real power . . . and will continue to be rejected by the realists' (*Cape Argus*, February 25, 1982). The anti-SAIC campaign was central to inspiring the UDF, which was launched on 20–21 August 1983 in Cape Town.

### **Widening the struggle**

The Wilson Rowntree boycott (1981), RMC of 1980, Anti-Republic Celebrations Campaign of 1981, the formation of the UDF in 1983 and its million signature campaign (MSC, 1984), the launch of the Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU) in 1985 and the tenth anniversary of the Soweto Rebellion (1986) all served to deepen local struggles and facilitate the development that was later referred to as the MDM. The RMC was organized to publicize the plight of political prisoners and indirectly gave voice to the ANC. It also gave NIC activists a chance to work across racial divides (*Leader*, May 2, 1980).

The decision to push for a broad united front was taken formally at a Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) conference in January 1983. One of the reasons cited for this move was an address to South Africans by ANC President Oliver Tambo on 8 January 1983 in which he called for the masses to organize into a powerful mass democratic organization (Barrell 1993, 285). By now, some within the NIC, such as Pravin Gordhan, were in contact with the ANC and embraced this call (Barrell 1993, 285), a call echoed by the guest speaker at the TIC conference, the Reverend Allan Boesak. The UDF's launch in March 1983 was preceded by intensive preparation in which NIC and TIC members played key roles. Farouk Meer recalls that the immediate aim was to coordinate a challenge to the tricameral elections which were set for August 1984. The regional UDF structures in Natal were formally constituted on 14 May 1983 and included three NIC members.<sup>1</sup>

This marked a strategic shift within the NIC which now formally allied itself to a national political organization that went beyond its ethnic base. It may be argued



that, while some of the campaigns that followed had a national profile, this would be to the detriment of its grassroots organization within its core support base among the Indian masses. It may further be argued that support for the NIC did not automatically translate into support for the UDF, although there was respect for those individuals involved in the UDF. At the same time, these were heady days for NIC activists as they had a greater sense of working in tandem with Africans and moving beyond the confines of greater Durban. However, it would appear that they were aware of the need to carry the community with them as a crucial debate inside the UDF illustrated.

This debate had its precursor in earlier times in the NIC, when it was announced that the SAIC would be a fully elected body. Some in the NIC called for participation. It was the issue of participation that once more raised its head. The state had announced that it would hold a national referendum to test whites' opinion on the new constitutional proposals and that it was also considering a referendum among Indians and Coloureds. The NIC and TIC argued for participation (Murray 1987, 219). This represented recognition that they needed to connect with their base inside the community they purported to represent, hoping through this to create momentum in any future move to hold tricameral elections. Other UDF affiliates, like the SAAWU, argued that given that Africans were excluded from the proposals, a referendum should be boycotted. A choice was avoided by the state's decision not to hold a referendum among Indians and Coloureds. However, as Murray (1987, 219) points out:

Tactical differences over these issues indicated that while UDF affiliates adhered to a common opposition to *apartheid* they did not possess a uniform political outlook with respect to mounting an effective challenge. The UDF leadership was thus confronted with the substantial task of forging a common program and a unified strategy without alienating significant blocs of its affiliated organisations.

The UDF responded to the state's attempt at co-optation by launching a MSC against apartheid and the tricameral elections in early 1984. While the target was not met, the rallies and home visits by students and volunteers helped to mobilize the masses against the new dispensation. The lead-up to the first elections on 20 August 1984 was used to commemorate the first anniversary of the UDF and the 90th of the NIC. Voter turnout was around 20% among Indians (*Leader*, August 24, 1984). The UDF saw this as a victory for its boycott campaign and the NIC as a vindication of its move into the UDF. As Howarth (2005, 205–206) points out, the UDF became a rallying point

for the unification and symbolic condensation of a number of disparate struggles . . . .The UDF's symbolic significance stretched further than its more narrow organisational profile suggested . . . . Although it would be inaccurate to argue that the UDF co-ordinated and directed the explosion of mass resistance against the state in its various manifestations . . . the existence of such a political force, especially given the national prominence it had achieved in opposing the government's reform programme, undoubtedly fuelled and accelerated mass protest.

For the NIC, while its transition into the UDF saw it break out of an ethnic enclave, 'national' politics became a big part of the leadership's work and attempts to build local branches took a backseat.

### State repression

The tricameral system was Botha's attempt to broaden the political system to include Indians and Coloureds as junior partners while narrowing the boundaries of dissent. Alongside this, the Bantustan system was designed in such a way that Africans would supposedly exercise their rights in these 'tribally' circumscribed areas. Rather than heading off resistance, the tricameral system stirred country-wide mobilization. The state turned to its old repressive ways and began to detain UDF activists. Thirty-five UDF/NIC leaders were arrested on 21 August 1984, a week before the elections, and charged under the Internal Security Act (*Rand Daily Mail*, August 29, 1984). A court application by the NIC resulted in the release of the detainees on 7 September but the Special Branch secured new orders for their re-arrest.

In a dramatic move that seemed to catch the state off-guard, six of the UDF/NIC members, Archie Gumede, George Sewpersadh, Mewa Ramgobin, M. J. Naidoo, Billy Nair and Paul David, took refuge in the British Consulate in Durban on 14 September 1984. Sewpersadh, Nair and Ramgobin left the Consulate on 6 October and were re-arrested (*The Citizen*, November 1, 1984). Farouk Meer was tasked with attending to the medical needs of those in the Consulate and was a conduit between them and the outside world. According to one newspaper report, a consular official was present to ensure that Meer only discussed medical issues while Ursula David claimed that the consulate was holding back letters to their husbands and had banned all visits to the Consulate (*The Citizen*, November 12, 1984). Facing international pressure, the government withdrew its detention notices and Gumede, David and Nair were welcomed back by more than 6000 people on 12 December 1984 (*Leader*, December 21, 1984). Reflecting on this episode in 1990, M. J. Naidoo wrote that

it is axiomatic that the 1984 British Consulate 'sit-in' by the NIC brought international focus to the evils of the apartheid system and the repressive security laws. It gave new impetus to anti-apartheid groups both locally and abroad, and renewed calls for the release of Nelson Mandela and other leaders reverberated throughout the progressive world. (*Natal Witness*, May 22, 1990)

While this is indeed the case, such high-profile moments in which NIC leaders were prominent did not necessarily translate into building mass support for the organization within the Indian community. In fact, the detention of leaders might have alienated many in the community which itself was going through profound changes. More and more graduates were coming out of UD-W, building houses in middle-class areas like Reservoir Hills and generally improving their status as a professional class. Furthermore, it also meant a loss of opportunity to strengthen township branches.

Freedom was short-lived for those who escaped the Consulate. Within days, the government re-arrested five of those who had originally holed up in the Consulate and made a number of additional arrests in February 1986. In all, 16 activists were charged with treason in what came to be known as the Pietermaritzburg Treason Trial.<sup>2</sup> The state's case was weak and charges against 12 of the accused were dropped in December 1985 and those against the remaining four in June of 1986. Although the state lacked a sound case, the accused spent almost a year in prison (see Catholic Institute for International Relations 1985).

Another restrictive measure was the state of emergency that the government declared on 21 July 1985. This was a particularly difficult period for the hundreds of activists who were arrested, such as Maggie Govender who described her June 1986 arrest as

a major eye-opener in the community because the police came heavily armed. They surrounded the school with military vehicles. This was June 17th. I remember it was the [policeman] jumped up and said 'you are arrested under the State of Emergency'. I had a Head of Department who was progressive, Rex Aiyer, and he went to the staff to say this is what happened. Two of the children ran to a relative's home to tell them. This is important [because] while this was happening the police were sending people to my home [so] my mother-in-law burnt everything that looked political and my husband [Charm] had come home, they told him to leave. My son was one year and one month and he was breastfed. They didn't allow me access to my son. His breast-feeding had to stop. I was kept in solitary confinement. After three months and a few weeks I was released without charge.

Hundreds of lives were affected through the use of this deliberate strategy. However, the UDF continued to act as a lightning rod for protest and threw up new layers of leadership.

### **Resistance underground—Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK)**

Within the Indian community, a small number of activists were attracted to MK from the late 1970s and formed an underground command structure in Durban. Their planned operation, code-named Operation Butterfly, was overseen by Ivan Pillay, who, in turn, was under the command of Jacob Zuma, and included the likes of Pravin Gordhan, Mo Shaik, Yunus Shaik, Abba Omar and Vejay Ramlikan (see Houston 2010).

What would come to be known as the 'Lenny Naidu Unit' was formed towards the end of 1984 in Chatsworth by young activists such as Lenny Naidu, Derek Naidoo and Richard Vallihu. Two operations were carried out in Chatsworth. A limpet mine was placed outside the home of politician, Amichand Rajbansi on 4 August 1985, while the magistrate's court was bombed on 13 December 1985. The cell was unravelled within months when a member of the unit was arrested. Lenny Naidu (1964–1988), after whom the unit was named, went into exile in February 1987, first to Lusaka, then to Angola for military training and to Swaziland in May 1988. On 8 June 1988, Lenny Naidu, Lindiwe Mthembu, Makhosi Nyoka and Nontsikelelo Cothoza were gunned down on the road

between Houtkop and Piet Retief while seeking to cross the border into South Africa (Neela and Leo Naidu 2002).

The break-up of the Bayview cell did not put an end to underground activity. Yunus Shaik and his brothers, Mo and Chippie, were also detained for their role in the underground in Durban. At the Kabwe Conference of 1985, the ANC decided to intensify the armed struggle and sent Ebrahim into the country to assess the situation. After Ebrahim had spent about six months in the country, taken care of by the Shaik brothers, preparations were made for him to leave. Ebrahim escaped, but Mo and Yunus Shaik were detained for nine months from June 1985 to March 1986, while Chippie was detained for 18 months.

Some of the activists were involved in Operation Vula, a secret project initiated by Mac Maharaj, Oliver Tambo, Ronnie Kasrils and Joe Slovo, following the ANC National Executive Committee's 1986 decision to bring arms into the country and create political awareness about the ANC. Maharaj entered South Africa in August 1988 for this purpose. He recruited a number of NIC activists. The ANC was already in negotiations with key government and white capital figures but was also hedging its bets by preparing for the eventuality of a protracted armed struggle. Operation Vula was active mainly in Natal between August 1988 and May 1990 and provided logistical support for the war in KwaZulu-Natal. Forty people, including Pravin Gordhan and Billy Nair, were arrested in July 1990 (O' Malley 2007, 349–386).

These activities show that a number of NIC activists were involved in the underground structures of the ANC and MK despite the fact that at the public level the NIC held fast to its Gandhian principles of non-violence. This activity meant that there was a great deal of secrecy; this created tensions in the public work of the NIC as it appeared to some that they were being left out of discussions. Furthermore, the tight grouping of Indians in the ANC underground gave them privileged access to exile politics and this increased antagonism towards them from some African comrades. To complicate matters further, different underground groupings began to align themselves with different groups in exile, exacerbating tensions.

Liberation struggles are untidy and full of contradictions, with personalities jostling for power and tensions between the legal and illegal. Much of this came to bear inside the NIC.

### **The 'cabal'**

The NIC was not a tight grouping of activists that read from the same script. It was replete with factions, leadership splits and contestations over tactics and strategies. Charm Govender recalled a secret October 1987 workshop at the Aryan Benevolent Home (ABH) in Chatsworth where the NIC top brass conceded that the organization had failed to muster grassroots support. According to Naidoo (1997), criticisms of the leadership at this meeting included the NIC's failure to become a mass-based organization as a result of its failure to develop properly

functioning branches in Chatsworth and Phoenix which rendered the organization ineffective when leaders were arrested; the failure to adopt a clear programme and instead to react to issues; and, the continued dominance of leadership by middle-class professionals, now joined by university students.

While many of the leaders of the UDF were NIC members, many Indians saw the UDF as a militant organization whose culture of confrontation led by African students was something they could not identify with. According to Naidoo, one of the accusations that emerged at this workshop was that a cabal that sought to marginalize old activists by influencing the election of officials determined the NIC's policy-making. Charm Govender also pointed to 'factionalism comprising essentially of a Pravin Gordhan apparatus and a Roy Padayachie apparatus'. He believes that this may have had its origins in the leaders' contact with different ANC factions in exile while, locally, Gordhan was influential in Phoenix and Padayachie in Chatsworth. Charm described these divisions as 'very sharp and took the form even of antagonism and disrespect'. There were accusations, according to Charm, of 'cabal's operating . . . groups meeting in secret, groups trying to engage in machinations against each other. It had a destructive effect because you dislocated the struggle to how to make sure that the influence of the other was reduced'. Local newspapers reported regularly on NIC 'cabals'. The origins of the allegations and subsequent divisions are clouded by who one speaks to but essentially it appears that members with their base in Chatsworth were jostling for control with the old entrenched middle-class professional elite from the city.

Matters came to a head at the NIC's November 1988 conference when M. J. Naidoo, who was president, Rabi Bugwandeen, R. Ramesar and R. B. Chaudhry, was ousted from the executive. Yunus Carrim told reporters that the conference showed that the NIC was paralysed ideologically, its structures were undemocratic, its leadership disunited and that there were personality conflicts. He called for the youth to be given leadership positions (*Natal Mercury*, December 25, 1987). In a letter to the *Daily News* (January 14, 1988), 'NIC Feminist, Merebank' also bemoaned the fact that the executive was dominated by men.<sup>3</sup> M. J. Naidoo told *The Weekly Mail* (January 29, 1988) that 'the election was a sham. I am talking about six or seven people who in the past referred to themselves as the "think tank"'. Farouk Meer refuted the allegations and stated that decisions were made by the NIC's Organizing Committee, which consisted of 50 members. One of the resolutions passed at this conference was that 'members of the House of Delegates and their allies have no political future in South Africa and should meet the same fate as collaborators in other social struggles: public isolation and social disgrace'. History, of course, would prove otherwise.

According to Kumi Naidoo, the working class South Indians and younger activists in Chatsworth and Phoenix felt that they were marginalized while the old elite carried on as if it was 'business as usual' on the one hand. On the other hand, the old-elite executive argued that the closing of space for political organization and outright repression meant that it had to operate in secrecy (Naidoo

1997). While not referring to a cabal, Bhana (1997, 148) also points to the NIC's organizational shortcomings:

In the last few years its structures remained too centralised, and its leadership much too removed from the rank and file to build a base of mass support. Having to answer to an ill-defined, loose constituency of supporters, the leaders did not face the rigours of accountability. They tended, therefore, to impose from above, rather than structure from below through the medium of 'town hall' type meetings.

Members of this so-called cabal would pay a price once the ANC was unbanned. A confidential 1990 ANC report noted Indian and White dominance of the UDF: 'The problems of disunity within the ranks of the MDM due to the manipulating role of certain Indians and Whites regarded as leaders in the struggle, has reached a level of such seriousness that it is clear that we need to address it immediately and decisively'. It recommended a strategy 'aimed at isolating certain individuals and at the same time undermining their power base. Our aim should be to make them feel comfortable in their positions while we prepare to finally rid our structures of them'.<sup>4</sup> With specific regard to Natal, part of the explanation for tensions between the ANC and UDF was that in the African townships the ANC did not rebuild its base on UDF structures, but with those involved in the ANC in the 1950s and that this was based on the fusion of civics and MK structures (Francis 2011, 53–54).

There were a number of crosscutting issues at play in terms of NIC membership. Some members were part of the ANC underground, acted in secrecy and gravitated to one another; some older members were probably more comfortable working within the Indian community and holding the line against collaboration; and others were 'political animals', who quickly entered the ANC and stepped onto a bigger stage for their activism. The organizational culture bred in these circumstances made it easy to both act as a grouping and be accused of acting like a cabal. Whatever the case, Jerry Coovadia points to the price paid by some named as part of this so-called cabal:

There was a lot of criticism of the UDF that it was believed that there were too many Indians mostly, some whites, that controlled it. And there was also a perception that there was a cabal of Indians who controlled both the direction and resources of the UDF. That led to a lot of differences between the returning ANC, the Trade Union Movement and the UDF. Those of us who were Indian in the UDF paid a price. As the branches of the UDF fell away and new branches of the ANC were created many of us, let me speak for myself, I was too deeply wounded to participate in an organisation where my bona fides were being questioned. I wasn't the same sort of political animal that many of my colleagues were, who could take that political heat, because you need a special make-up to participate in the cut and thrust of political affairs. It wasn't that I withdrew willingly. My sensitivities were so deeply wounded having to fight off these types of accusations which are deeply racist. I had participated in the struggle because . . . my conscience told me it was the right thing to do and it was my innate sense of wanting freedom for all our people, that's what drove me. I didn't make money out of it, in fact, it kept my career back.<sup>5</sup>

While the issues festered and were to be carried over into post-apartheid South Africa, circumstances made these accusations less and less important. While criticism of the NIC for failing to establish branches in the townships is valid, it only partly accounts for the failure to get the Indian masses to support the ANC after 1990. Indian fears of the African majority were real and influenced the behaviour of the mass of Indians as South Africa headed towards non-racialism. A crucial reminder to Indians of their vulnerability was the outbreak of violence in Inanda in 1985.

### **Inanda violence, 1985**

Attempts to forge broadbased resistance, tenuous at the best of times, suffered a major setback as a result of the August 1985 racial violence in Inanda, a township north of Durban that adjoins the Phoenix Settlement established by Gandhi in 1903 (Hughes 1987). Demonstrations in townships across Durban following the assassination of UDF activist Victoria Mxenge turned into attacks on Indians in Inanda, many of whom were evicted from their homes, while Indian-owned shops were looted and destroyed and the Phoenix Settlement burnt down.<sup>6</sup> This incident attracted international attention and was portrayed as racial violence. Indians and Africans lived in close proximity in Inanda which served as a toehold for many Africans who worked in the city and many of whom relied on Indian landlords for accommodation and purchased goods from Indian shopkeepers. The Inanda violence must be seen in this context. At the same time, the form that it took identified Indians as targets. Besides the general political confrontation, a number of interests coalesced that saw the removal of Indians as beneficial, including African landlords and shopkeepers.

However one seeks to understand the 1985 Inanda attacks on the ground, the festering memory of the 1949 Indo-Africans riots touched a raw nerve among many Indians who saw this as a 'racial' attack despite activists' efforts to underplay the racial dimension (see Edwards and Nuttall 1990).

Furthermore, while apartheid increasingly hemmed Indians into racially circumscribed areas on the outer edges of the city, it did foster economic mobility. The period after 1960 was witness to increased educational opportunities at the ML Sultan Technikon, UD-W and Springfield Teacher Training College, young women entering the workforce, particularly in the clothing and textile industries and the rise of artisan and professional classes as new careers opportunities opened up in engineering, accounting, architecture and a host of other fields. Indians also moved up in the ranks of the civil service as the LACs, SAIC and House of Delegates opened new doors and more schools and improved chances for promotion.<sup>7</sup> The role of ethnic politics, notwithstanding the low voter turnout during elections, was important as people like Amichand Rajbansi had a visible presence in the Indian townships where they developed a specific power base which promoted ethnic and racial identity and which became apparent post-1994.

As the NIC sought to build structures on ground as an anti-apartheid force seeking majority rule, this inevitably created challenges for the organization. This was made all the more difficult in the aftermath of the Inanda violence as its platform of non-racialism seemed to have limited purchase; indeed, some might even argue that it exacerbated tensions between Africans and Indians as the NIC was identified with attacks on people such as Chief Buthelezi (Desai 1996, 85). According to Naidoo (1997), the riots ‘exposed the serious organisational weaknesses of the NIC. Its leadership was distant from the people affected by the riots, and it had no influence or grassroots presence in the area that could calm anxieties’. Conversely, the assistance provided by Rajbansi and the House of Delegates to refugees, increased their standing not only with many of the affected Indians but also with the broader community schooled in memories of 1949 and the expulsion of Ugandan Asians by Idi Amin.

The Daily News’ political correspondent, Graham Spence noted that whereas the turnout for the tricameral elections in 1984 had been 6% there was a 38% turnout in a by-election in 1988. While the NIC argued that the banning, imprisonment and exile of leaders during the state of emergency meant that it could not carry out mass campaigns against the elections, Spence observed that the NIC

failed on one basic issue—that of allaying the insular Indian community’s fears of group security if an African majority were in power. Many Indians tacitly support the Group Areas—not necessarily because of racism, but rather a fear of being swamped by blacks. These fears were fuelled significantly by the 1985 Inanda Riots and the New Year’s Day racial incidents on the former Indian beach last year. (*Daily News*, January 6, 1988)

Surveys also pointed to a social distance between Indians and Africans (Horowitz 1991, 82). An April 1987 study by Markinor found that 53% of Indians worried ‘really often’ or ‘quite often’ while 27% worried ‘sometimes’ that Africans would again attack Indians and 53% ‘strongly disagreed’ that Indians would be safe under the African majority rule (Jeffrey 1989, 6). A 1992 survey by the Human Sciences Research Council found that over 70% of Indians would support the NP while a mere 12% supported the ANC (*Post*, April 15–18, 1992). A July 1990 survey of Durban’s Indians found that 63% were in favour of segregated neighbourhoods and schools (Charney 1991, 26). As the first democratic elections loomed so did many Indians’ fears of majority rule increase.

### **Non-racial democracy and the future of the NIC**

The unbanning of the ANC and other political organizations by former President F. W. de Klerk when opening Parliament on 2 February 1990 marked a major moment in South African political history. The ANC and NP were forced to the negotiating table as a result of the changing global and local situation. This included the thawing of the Cold War, collapse of Communist governments, resolution of the Namibian struggle, change of leadership within the government, the economic and social impact of sanctions and a changed sense on all sides as to what was possible (Lieberfeld 2000, 19–20).



As the transition to democracy unfolded, questions were asked about the nature and composition of extra-parliamentary opposition. This included debates about the continued existence of the NIC and the UDF. For most of 1990 there was a talk of the UDF redefining its focus to concentrate on socio-economic issues while the ANC focused on political negotiations. By early 1991 it was clear that the UDF was redundant and it formally disbanded in August 1991. According to Seekings (2000b, 261),

the UDF was dissolved not by design on the part of the top leadership, but because of the breadth and depth of opposition and even hostility to the UDF leadership and the UDF as a co-ordinating body. Diverse groups within the broad Charterist movement saw the UDF as the vehicle of leaders whom they did not like and who, they were pretty sure, did not like them either—as a body which pursued strategies and tactics that they disapproved of, and which controlled resources that should be reallocated elsewhere.

In the heady days of the unbanning of the ANC and the setting of branch structures, many in the UDF joined the organization that had inspired them through the long apartheid years. These were the years when the language changed from defiance to development, from ‘ungovernability’ to ‘ready to govern’ and the ANC had to show that it could exercise control and produce stability. UDF leaders had to contend with returning exiles with their own networks and camaraderie. The homegrown leadership mostly gave way. COSATU followed the lead of the ANC while civics too quickly became the embryos of ANC branches. In this sense, the UDF simply faded away as most of its supporters inexorably filtered into the ANC (Seekings 2000b, 283). Others have argued that the UDF’s demise was a deliberate move by the ANC, as it sought to rein in any discordant voices in a period in which it sought to reach an accord with the NP (Bond and Saul 2014).

However, the NIC enjoyed a slightly longer shelf life. Differences of opinion emerged within the NIC about its future. Mewa Ramgobin, who was vice-president of the NIC, told Sechaba Magazine in April 1990 that the unbanning of the ANC meant that ‘there may be a limited lifespan for the NIC, especially as the democratic movement is now seeking to build non-racial constituencies for the creation of a future non-racial, democratic and united South Africa’ (Ramgobin 1990, 8). He told reporter Nicola Cunningham-Brown that to lead Indians into a non-racial democracy it was ‘essential to have unity in action—direct participation through membership of the ANC’. Ramgobin warned, however, that the government and the media had presented the ANC as ‘the bad guy’ which made it ‘difficult to recruit Indians to the organisation’. Farouk Meer also said that the NIC would be disbanded after it had completed its task of acting as the facilitator for the ANC in establishing a presence in the Indian townships (*Daily News*, May 11, 1990). NIC executive member, Yunus Carrim echoed this when he said that the NIC would not ‘mechanically disband’ but would ‘phase out so that its dissolution is part of an overall campaign that ensures that a significant strata of the Indian community is drawn into the ANC’ (*Natal Witness*, May 12, 1990). This reflected recognition among some activists of the genuine fears among many Indians about

majority rule and that, given the effects of apartheid which fostered division, the community could be brought into the fold of the ANC through the midwifery of the NIC.

M. J. Naidoo, who had been ousted as NIC president in 1988, called on the NIC to stop prevaricating on disbanding. People were sceptical of the dithering 'vibes emanating from the NIC ranks, such as the NIC should disband, the NIC should phase itself out (whatever that means), the NIC structures are debating the issue'. He warned that endemic violence in African townships which was spilling over into Indian areas was heightening fears among Indians, and that working under the 'umbrella' of the ANC would 'alleviate the tensions and remove their [Indian] fears. The NIC, as NIC, cannot play a role in this regard' (*Natal Witness*, May 22, 1990).

A joint meeting of the NIC and TIC in June 1990 recommended that the organizations disband and join the ANC. Mewa Ramgobin explained that this would strengthen the hand of the ANC at the negotiating table (*Financial Mail*, June 11, 1990). This decision was reversed when the national executives of the NIC and TIC met with an ANC delegation which included its internal leader, Walter Sisulu, South African Communist Party (SACP) general secretary, Joe Slovo, secretary general, Alfred Nzo, Thabo Mbeki, who was head of internal communications, and southern Natal chairman Jacob Zuma, at UD-W on 17 March 1993. They resolved that the NIC and TIC should not disband but use their structures to mobilize support for the ANC. This was an acknowledgement that the ANC had to address that fears of minorities (*Daily News*, March 18, 1991). Reporter Veven Bissetty described the announcement as a 'bombshell' in a context where the UDF was disbanding. The ANC Youth League was also critical of the decision and issued a statement that

no ethnic or racial group, no matter how well intentioned, should ethnically prepare itself to join the ANC. The League views the decision as a strategic error that might lead to polarization of the national liberation forces. It is our view that more effort should be concentrated towards building the ANC into a cohesive and truly non-racial movement. (*Natal Mercury*, March 21, 1991)

Farouk Meer of the NIC countered that disbanding or continuing the NIC was not the main issue; rather, their concern was that with South Africa undergoing rapid political transformation they wanted to find 'ways and means to mobilize the different sectors of the community. We are looking at the best method to mobilize the Indian community, either to become members of the ANC or, failing that, to support its policies'. The NIC wanted to win Indians to the side of the ANC rather than recruit members (*Natal Mercury*, March 21, 1991).

The ANC held its first full conference in South Africa since 1959 at UD-W from 2 to 6 July 1991. Nelson Mandela was formally elected ANC president at this conference. The future role of the NIC was debated. Delegates accepted that the organization was an anachronism and that they had to start a phasing out process but only after they helped to muster support for the ANC in the run-up

to the elections. An NIC/TIC delegation, consisting of Farouk Meer, Yusuf Vawda and Pravin Gordhan attended the preparatory meeting for the Convention of a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) in December 1991. They worked closely with the ANC and attended their caucus meetings. They were also represented in the working groups. A joint NIC/TIC delegation was also represented in the steering committee for organizing CODESA 1, which became the management committee after CODESA 1. There was a lull in negotiations until the March 1992 white referendum gave the NP the mandate to continue negotiations. CODESA 2 followed between April and August 1992. Despite several setbacks which threatened to derail negotiations, Booysen (1992, 76) shows that by October 1992 'the ANC was in the process of achieving basic democratic conditions. In the course of 1992 especially, the Government lost its ability to seize the initiative in the transition process'. CODESA was to culminate in the country's first non-racial elections in 1994.

The NIC's failure to disband was a concession that Indian support for the ANC could not be taken for granted. In fact, the NIC's throwing its lot behind the ANC did not result in the Indian masses following suit. M. J. Naidoo had a point when he wrote in 1990 that 'in the past five years ... oppressed South Africa has literally been on the march. The Indian community has not kept step with it' (*Natal Witness*, May 22, 1990); although it could be argued that even in the previous two decades, except for a small rump, Indians were wary of what lay ahead. Caught between the economically dominant whites and numerically powerful Africans, it seemed that many Indians felt extremely vulnerable. Working-class Indians in particular were apprehensive of the African majority rule and seemed to fear that just as apartheid had denied them opportunities; they would be marginalized by affirmative action. In Chatsworth, long-time activist Charm Govender noted that before the 1994 elections he could 'see the community displaying a lot of unease about having majority rule and they then, in the election, reflected this unease by voting in a significant majority for the National Party (NP)'. Sam Pillay, another ANC stalwart, pointed out that ANC members 'spent a lot of time and effort spreading the word about the ANC but it was very difficult to break the thinking of the Indian people'.

Critics would argue that the ANC failed to address Indians' genuine fears and concerns. In contrast, despite the low turnout for the tricameral elections and being the subject of ridicule by the NIC, Amichand Rajbansi enjoyed support among working-class Indians. He formed the Minority Front (MF) that focused exclusively on the interests of Indians. His simple and powerful message was that he understood their concerns and would speak up for them. Nationally, large numbers of Indians voted for the NP in the April 1994 elections. While it is impossible to isolate the Indian vote nationally, the results of the Chatsworth electoral area show that at the provincial level 19.42% of eligible voters cast their vote for the MF and 44.6% for the NP; at the national level 64.32% of Chatsworth voters cast their vote for the NP (Desai 1996, 87). This does not mean that they supported the white minority rule but it reflected their

own fears and concerns about the future. The fact that the NIC failed to deliver for the ANC made the case of those supporting its continued existence much more difficult. Exacerbating this was the move by some in the ANC to seek an alliance with Rajbansi.

The NIC celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1994, within months of the election, and debated its continued existence. Was there a role for the NIC in a deracialized South Africa? Should the organization drop the 'I' to give meaning to the idea of non-racialism? Dr K. Goonam, vice president of the NIC in the 1940s, argued that 'now it is time to let go. It [the NIC] failed miserably in mobilising Indian support for the ANC in the April election. People just no longer have any faith in the organisation' (*Leader*, August 26, 1994). Others disagreed. Abdul Randeree, a long-time official, felt that the 'the movement still has a vital role to play, even in politics, and can make a valuable contribution to society if future' (*Leader*, August 26, 1994). Many Indians were reluctant to let go of their ties to this racially exclusive organization.

Marlan Padayachee of the *Post* (December 7–10, 1994) asked: 'Has the NIC reached a cul-de-sac?' Many felt that in the view of the peaceful transition to a non-racial democracy, the NIC should cease functioning as a political party without mass support and 'leave the political scene on a high note in its history 100th anniversary year'. A number of NIC members served in the country's first non-racial parliament. Ela Gandhi, Mewa Ramgobin, Pravin Gordhan, Yunus Carrim and Billy Nair were in the National Assembly while Ismail Meer was in the KZN Provincial Legislature. Just 150 people turned up for the NIC's march through Grey Street (now Yusuf Dadoo Street) to celebrate its 100th anniversary and there was a poor turnout at the KwaMuhle Museum. Thus, journalist Padayachee concluded that, the NIC had reached a 'cul-de-sac'.

Opinion was divided among NIC members canvassed by reporter Padayachee. Roy Padayachie, Dr K. Goonam, M. J. Naidoo, J. N. Singh and Billy Nair felt that the organization should disband. Padayachie suggested that the NIC should relinquish its political role and instead become a 'vehicle for the cultural enhancement and development of the community. It can also play a monitoring role to ensure that the community is making progress in integrating itself with the emerging new South Africa'. M. J. Naidoo's brother M. D. Naidoo, Thumba Pillay and Hassim Seedat, among others, felt that it would be premature to disband. M. D. Naidoo said that 'the time has not arrived for the NIC to fold. The Indian, who is in the minority, must jealously guard against the failure to implement a non-racial policy that the ANC was party to since the 1940s'. Thumba Pillay felt that the country was just six months into transition and that it was 'too early to determine the future of an organisation that had served the cause of democracy for a century'. The NIC could 'articulate the aspirations of the community and address its fears and concerns'. Ironically, MF leader, Amichand Rajbansi, assured Indians that they were 'safe and secure' under President Nelson Mandela. In fact, the NIC never formally disbanded but simply faded into the folds of history.

## Conclusion

'Indianness' was constructed from the late nineteenth century in South Africa through a combination of state policies as well as self-identification. The NIC's racial exclusivity for long periods of its history possibly buttressed racial identities. Its attempts to forge a broad Black political alliance in the 1950s were derailed by the incarceration of leaders and spatial segregation and material inequalities under apartheid that increased social distance between Indians and Africans. Neither Black Consciousness in the 1970s, nor the resurgence in working class organization in the 1970s and 1980s nor the non-racialism of the Congress tradition forged a non-racial identity. Indeed, many Indians were concerned about the possible consequences of the majority rule.

Thomas Blom Hansen's assessment that post-Soweto-1976, 'the vast majority of Indians embraced the notion that the community was indeed their actual horizon for any political action' (Hansen 2012, 294) has much resonance. Indians were mobilized in the 1980s over issues such as housing, education and opposition to government created political structures. This drew the mass of Indians into activism as these were bread-and-butter issues. This was not sustained as a result of censorship, imprisonment, bans and some activists going into exile to join the banned ANC. The NIC leaders' decision to engage in underground ANC activity was an important turning point as they removed themselves from the sort of townships where they could have built on their mass support through democratic structures. At the same time, as Hansen (2012, 75) notes, township politics was a 'hothouse of monopolistic cronyism' in which individuals such as Rajbansi and his party, the MF, remained popular.

The legacy of 1949 and the 1985 Inanda violence compounded Indian fears. Individual Indians featured prominently in the major resistance organizations but failed to take the Indian masses with them. Many Indians feared the consequences of majority rule. Historically, Indians and Africans have had a troubled relationship. Hansen (2012, 97) describes the relationship as one of 'apprehensive co-existence' in which, under the white gaze, Indians and Africans became 'categorical strangers'. In a context where society is viewed through the prism of race, that relationship remains marked by competition rather than interaction.

The NIC never formally disbanded. While there were occasional calls for its revival through the 1990s, there were no real takers. Wealthier Indians have begun to send their children to study or live abroad while they continue to live and work in South Africa. Some working-class Indians gravitated to local civics and neighbourhood watches to ensure that they are able to live in a secure environment and keep things 'the same'. Some civics, especially in Chatsworth, did develop a militant posture against evictions and water and electricity disconnections in the early 2000s but have largely buckled down to work within the system, hoping to make incremental gains.

These developments bring to the fore the pioneering role that the NIC played in the 1980s in taking the organization into the MDM and seeking to play a role in the struggle to defeat apartheid and usher in the majority rule. The number of NIC

activists may have been small but their influence was large; whatever its limitations at the grassroots level the NIC did give credence to the slogan 'Apartheid Divides, UDF Unites'. The NIC's links with the ANC in exile and its adoption of the Freedom Charter meant that it kept the memory of the Congress Alliance alive under difficult circumstances. These schools of resistance earned some in the NIC a lofty status in the annals of liberation iconography and paved the way for them to enter the portals of Mandela's government. Twenty years into democracy, when race divisions are still with us, and an assertive African nationalism sometimes turns its torch on the 'privileges' of Indians in accessing state tenders, a critical interrogation of the role of Indians in the struggle against apartheid is needed more than ever. This article adds to existing work while encouraging further research.

## Notes

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1. The executive committee comprised Archie Gumede (President), Jerry Coovadia (Chairperson), Virgil Bonhomme (Vice-Chairperson), Rabbi Bugwandeen and Victoria Mxenge (Treasurers) and Yunus Mahomed (Secretary).
2. The 16 were Mewa Ramgobin, George Sewpersadh, M. Naidoo, Essop Jassat, Aubrey Mokoena, Curtis Nkondo, Archie Gumede, Paul David, Albertina Sisulu, Frank Chikane, Ebrahim Saloojee, Ismail Mohamed, Richard Gqwete, Sisa Njikelana, Samuel Kikine and Isaac Ngcobo. The latter four were members of the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU) while the others were members of the UDF/NIC/TIC.
3. As Hassim has counselled, a missing dimension in the historiography of the liberation struggle is the absence of discussion on 'women's roles in the civics or of women's organisations in alliance with the civics' and the need for a "gender corrective" to these histories' (Hassim 2003, 49; see also Patel 1988; Meer 1998). Given its specific focus, this article does not examine this important dimension of the story.
4. The following individuals were identified as part of the Cabal. Natal: Pravin Gordan, Zac Yacoob, Alf Carrim, Yunus Mohammed, Farouk Meer, Jerry Coovadia, Billy Nair, Diliza Mji, Sikhumbuzo Ngwenya, Curnick Ndlovu; Transvaal: Ismail Momoniat, Laloo Chiba, Casim Saloojee, Eric Molobi and Amos Masondo; Western Cape: Jonathan de Vries, Hadley King, Cathy Macrae, Ebrahim Patel ('Dullah Omar is also currently exceeding his vested authority and seems to be part and parcel of the Cabal'); National: Azhar Cachalia, Mohammed Valli, Murphy Morobe and Titus Mafolo. Report and Recommendations of Commission on the Cabal, 14 March 1990, Mac Maharaj Documents and Reports, O'Malley Archives. Available online from <http://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv03445/04lv04015/51lv04154/06lv04181.htm> (accessed on 5 March, 2014).
5. When asked to probe this issue further, Professor Coovadia replied by email on 7 April 2014, 'I neither have the heart or the resilience to overcome my huge disappointment at the opportunism which characterised the years of change from the NIC/UDF to the ANC.'
6. According to Hughes, this violence resulted in 2000 Indian refugees, the death of four Indians, destruction of 44 Indian businesses and many homes. Hughes points out that the casualties would have been much higher were it not for the fact that Indians simply fled the scene of the attacks.
7. A survey in 1992–1993 revealed that Indians were much better placed relative to Africans, as they were concentrated in higher paying jobs. The average household income of Indians in 1991 was R2476, three times that of Africans which was R779 (SAIRR 1993, 192). Further, whereas 49.9% of Indians earned over R2000 per month in 1991, the proportion for Africans was only 6.8% (SAIRR 1993, 192).

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- Gandhi, Ela, May 18, 2002—interviewed by Vino Reddy.

A. DESAI AND G. VAHED

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