

Then and Now: Activism in Manenberg, 1980 to 2010

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DECLARATION

I declare that 'Then and Now: Activism in Manenberg, 1980 to 2010' is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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ABSTRACT

This is a study of activists from Manenberg, a township on the Cape Flats, Cape Town, South Africa and how they went about bringing change. It seeks to answer the question, how has activism changed in post-apartheid Manenberg as compared to the 1980s?

The study analysed the politics of resistance in Manenberg placing it within the over arching mass defiance campaign in Greater Cape Town at the time and comparing the strategies used to mobilize residents in Manenberg in the 1980s to strategies used in the period of the 2000s. The thesis also focused on several key figures in Manenberg with a view to understanding what local conditions inspired them to activism. The use of biographies brought about a synoptic view into activists lives, their living conditions, their experiences of the apartheid regime, their brutal experience of apartheid and their resistance and strength against a system that was prepared to keep people on the outside. This study found that local living conditions motivated activism and became grounds for mobilising residents to make Manenberg a site of resistance. It was easy to mobilise residents on issues around rent increases, lack of resources, infrastructure and proper housing.

Thirty years later, the same group of activists started to rebuild Manenberg through the establishment of a social movement, called Proudly Manenberg Campaign (PMC). They adopted similar as well as new mass mobilising strategies to bring about real change in Manenberg. One crucial new option that activists of PMC had was to work with government. This was the preferred option rather than working against government. This strategy would bring some difficulties as local and regional governments changed.

This thesis has made use of oral interviews, official and unofficial papers, newspaper clippings and videos to create this short glimpse into Manenberg's history. This thesis has found oral histories to be an invaluable source for uncovering little known histories in Manenberg.

ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
CRC	Coloured Persons Representative Council
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Union
DA	Democratic Alliance
JOC	Joint Operational Centre
MAC	Manenberg Action Committee
MASCO	Manenberg Action Student Congress
MCPF	Manenberg Community Police Forum
MDCS	Manenberg Development Co-ordinating Structure
MEDT	Manenberg Education Development Trust
MPC	Manenberg People's Centre
MAYCO	Manenberg Youth Congress
MDM	Mass Democratic Movement
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe
NICRO	National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offender
NP	National Party
NSM	New Social Movements
PTSA	Parent Teacher Student Associations
PMC	Proudly Manenberg Campaign
PM	Proudly Manenberg
PPHC	Progressive Primary Health Care
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SADTU	South African Democratic Teacher's Union
SOYA	Students of Young Azania
SHAWCO	Students' Health and Welfare Centres Organisation
SRC	Student Representative Council
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UDF	United Democratic Front
UWCO	United Women's Congress
WECTU	Western Cape Education Trade Union

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis will take a look at two periods, the 1980s and the 2000s in Manenberg, Cape Town. For the 1980s it will focus on (pro-African National Congress (ANC) activists in Manenberg) and the struggle for democracy. In relation to the second period, the same activists of the 1980s established a social movement, called the Proudly Manenberg Campaign (PMC) in 2005 in Manenberg. A look at the strategies they adopted in the two periods will be explored. Below is a brief synopsis of the 1980s and the 2000s in relation to the political turmoil experienced under the apartheid regime and the democratic years under the ANC-led government. This chapter will also reflect on the aims of the thesis, the research question, the historiography and the research methodology employed.

A snapshot look at the 1980s in South Africa

The 1980s is synonymous with gross violations of human rights of South Africans who were fighting, protesting and who were simply detained because of their colour of their skins. Political activism in South Africa grew from strength to strength in the 1980s amidst the oppressive South African regime's constant policy of imprisoning activists without trial. The 1980s was a decade whereby communities were protesting against the apartheid government. Over this decade hundreds of people were killed, detained, injured, went into exile, experienced severe poverty and engaged actively in public protests. It was a period where sustained armed struggle initiatives from Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK, the armed wing of the African National Congress) and Azanian Peoples Liberation Army (Apla) cadres took place. It was a period whereby the state enforced the draconian laws and installed two separate state of emergencies curtailing activists movements. In the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which amongst other issues looked at human rights

violations from the period 1960 – 1994, it reflected that 21 290 individuals suffered gross human right violations.¹

In relation to atrocities committed, I want to briefly highlight incidents of the 1980s as this is one of the decades covered by my thesis.² In 1980, a release Nelson Mandela campaign was initiated by the newspaper *Sunday Post*. Several national and regional boycotts against apartheid education, rent increases and increase of bus fares took place. In 1981, the South African Defence Force (SADF) attacked houses in Maputo, killing ANC members. In November 1981, a successful boycott of the elections to the South African Indian Council took place. In 1982 more powers were given to the SADF which attacked houses in Lesotho killing more than 20 ANC members and 12 Lesotho nationals. In 1983 the United Democratic Front (UDF) was established in Mitchell's Plain, Cape Town. In November 1983 the white referendum approved government's constitutional plans and boycotts of elections to African local authorities occurred country-wide. And in 1984, widespread rent and transport boycotts occurred country-wide. In October 1984, over 80 per cent of voters boycotted elections to new Coloured and Indian chambers of parliament (tricameral parliament).³

Madeleine Fullard writing about the period 1985-89 argues that this period '...witnessed one of the most intense periods of violent confrontation between the state and the liberation movements inside the borders of South Africa in the twentieth century.'⁴ Township revolts, clashes with security police, schools being disrupted, detainment of activists, and the two state of emergencies were but some of what took place during this period.

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1. E. Doxtader and PJ. Salazar, *Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: The Fundamental Documents* (Claremont: New Africa Books, 2007), p.xii.
 2. The 1980s will however be more fully dealt with in chapter two.
 3. *Apartheid: The Facts*, IDAF Publications, London, 1991, p.118.
 4. M.Fullard, 'The State and Political Struggle: Strategies of Repression and Resistance in the Greater Cape Town area from 1985 to 1989', (Unpublished Masters Thesis, UWC, 2005), p.8.

It is also important to note the definition of mass mobilization in the context of the 1980s. Anthea Jeffrey attempts to provide such a definition as: ‘mass mobilization is seen as reflected, inter alia, in: mass rallies and meetings; protest marches; school boycotts and chalk-downs (strikes by teachers); rent and service-charge boycotts (‘rent boycotts’, for ease of reference); actions against homeland administrations and black local authorities; consumer boycotts; and stay aways.’⁵The period of the 1980s was thus a period of mass mobilisation and resistance around rent increases, worker problems, migrant labour, freedom of movement, increased bus fares, housing, access to proper water and sanitation services, and the apartheid education system.

Fullard who undertook a regional study of this period adds that ‘local studies which identify the events, people and places that shaped the political revolt are clearly necessary in the context of the current growing enthusiasm for heritage studies which give particular attention to the hidden history of persons and communities previously denied a historical presence.’⁶ Fullard’s urgings have inspired me to undertake a local study of activism in Manenberg in the 1980s.

The years 2000 and social movements

My thesis is also influenced by the book written and edited by Richard Ballard, Adam Habib and Imraan Valodia, called *Voices of Protest: – Social Movements in Post-Apartheid South Africa*.⁷ The decade of the 1990s and 2000s has seen a proliferation of social movements

5. Fullard, ‘The State and Political Struggle’, p.9.

6. A. Jeffrey, *Forum on Mass Mobilisation*, (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1991), p.3.

7. R. Ballard, A. Habib and I. Valodia, *Voices of Protest, Social Movements in Post –Apartheid South Africa*, (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2006), p.1.

in the aftermath of the emancipation of South Africa under the new leadership of the ANC. This decade has both seen improvements in infrastructure in the country to residents as well as communities in impoverished areas complaining of a lack of service delivery and of unfulfilled election promises. In their book several writers expand on popular social movements in South Africa after the new South Africa was established in 1994.

In the book, Steven Friedman and Shauna Mottiar write how the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), saw its 'role in fighting the stigma of HIV/AIDS and giving people living with it a sense of efficacy is itself an important contribution to changing roles in society.'⁸ The popular social movement advocated for free access to anti-retroviral (ARVs) drugs for AIDS patients in South Africa in the late 1990s. The writers also analyses some of the strategies used by the TAC in getting the state to distribute free ARVs treatment to HIV positive patients. Amongst the strategies used by TAC was taking the state before the South African Constitutional Court. Accessing this right made the fight more legitimate and raised the awareness of people living with AIDS within South Africa and globally. These and other combined strategies seemed to work as the South African government heeded the TAC's call several years later.

The thesis inspired by studies of other social movements focuses then on the PMC in Manenberg. The story of political and social activism in Manenberg is an ongoing one. There have been some reports of the PMC in newspapers and on radio but never any academic analyses of this movement. The PMC was established in 2005 in Manenberg as a result of the killing of Manenberg High School learner, Cheslyn Jones. Activists and community members

8. S. Friedman and S. Mottiar, 'Seeking the High Ground: The Treatment Action Campaign and the Politics of Morality' in Ballard *et al*, *Voices of Protest*, p.398.

had enough of the senseless killings of innocent people in the area. All these reports reflect on the ethos and aims of the PMC, which is to make a difference in the lives of residents in Manenberg. The PMC is perhaps unique in many ways as it is being duplicated elsewhere in South Africa and it received the full backing of the Western Cape government under the ANC led government in the Cape in 2005.⁹ It later entered into a collaborative alliance with the leadership of the Democratic Alliance (DA), but at times this relationship has been problematic.

Habib has pointed out how social movements often have to collaborate with government to accomplish their work, however, often this relationship is conflictual.¹⁰ Inspired by Habib's analysis this thesis sets out to explore PMC's relationship with government and to what extent it has impacted on the organisation. The PMC represents the ideals of dedicated activists who have become more mature and have left the struggle politics of old behind to forge ahead with a new vision of Manenberg in post-apartheid South Africa. It is precisely this new activism that I want to compare to the 1980s activism.

The research aim of this thesis is to analyse the politics of resistance in Manenberg, Cape Town to place it within the over arching mass defiance campaign in Greater Cape Town at the time and to compare the strategies used to mobilize residents in Manenberg in the 1980s to strategies used in the period of the 2000s. The thesis will also focus on several key figures in Manenberg with a view to understanding what inspired them to activism. It will also specifically follow individuals who remained active in the 2000s via the PMC. It will thus

9. http://wced.wcape.gov.za/comms/press/2007/87_safety.html (article on Proudly Manenberg and its relationship with the Western Cape Government).

10. A. Habib, 'State-Civil Society Relations in Post-apartheid South Africa', in Daniel *et al*, *The State of the Nation 2003 – 2004*, (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2003), p. 239.

also look at their ability in the 1980s to grasp the political will of the ANC in exile and translate this to residents in Manenberg, even though Manenberg at the time was a National Party stronghold. And then finally, twenty years later these activists are still active within Manenberg especially via the PMC. Among the activists profiled there are: Mario Wanza, Ganief 'Mickey' Adams, Shaheed Petersen, Faldielah de Vries, Owen Munro, Irvin Kinnes, Cameron Williams, Selwyn Daniels and Faghrudeen Johnson. My research question thus is to seek or to draw comparisons between the nature of struggles then and now.

Establishment of Manenberg, an apartheid styled township

The coloured township of Manenberg was established in 1966 at the height of the apartheid regime's forced removal programme. Manenberg is about 20km away from the city centre of Cape Town. It is separated from Nyanga and Guguletu townships by a railway line. It is flanked by another Coloured township Hanover Park on the west, Heideveld on the north and Nyanga on the east. Cape Town has all the hallmarks of an apartheid city, whereby the marginalized communities (Coloured, African and Indian) are located on the edges of the city. The roads, the public amenities, access to shops, access to railways, buses and access to employment were designed to put residents other than whites at a disadvantage. These policies helped keep people entrapped to this day. In putting these issues in a framework I will briefly sketch some of the major apartheid policies that played a role in the establishment of the apartheid city which gave rise to places like Manenberg and how these policies eventually gave rise to mass revolts within South Africa and Manenberg.

Anthony Lemon writes that before the apartheid city came about we had a segregation city. He quotes Davies' (1981) model of the segregation city. 'It incorporates a central business district (CBD) which includes a small Indian CBD on the edge of the white business area.'¹¹

He adds that the Coloureds never took up the business opportunity to do the same as the Indians but Africans were denied the opportunity. In this model we had whites occupying most spaces within the CBD area. There were several mixed residential zones close to the city centre where all races lived but there were already several segregated housing schemes and townships for Indians, Coloureds and African on the periphery of the city centre. The apartheid city evolved out of this but was more radical in its demarcation of spaces for the various racial groups. Each of the four racial groups in South Africa had to reside within a designated area as per the regulations of the Group Areas Act of 1950. The Group Areas Act (Act No 41 of 1950) implemented the grand design of physical separation of the races (Coloureds, Indians, Africans and Whites). It specified separate residential areas for the different racial groups. As a means of removing black communities living in 'white' areas to their own separate areas, it proved particularly effective. Buffer strips separated the residential areas.

In the case of Manenberg, it had a railway line that separated Manenberg, a coloured township from Nyanga, an African township. Lemon also articulates one of the National Party's reasoning behind the establishment of the Group Areas Act by stating: 'Group Areas exemplify the fundamental tenet of apartheid ideology that incompatibility between ethnic

11. A. Lemon, 'The Apartheid City', in A. Lemon (ed.), *Homes Apart: South Africa's Segregated Cities* (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 1991), p. 6.

groups is such that contact between them leads to friction, and harmonious relations can be secured only by minimizing points of contact.’¹² Thus this led to forced removals and the real impact of the Group Areas Act was only felt in the 1960s and 1970s. While there have been many books about forced removals John Western’s *Outcast Cape Town* towers above all in its discussion of the devastating consequences that removals had.¹³

Lemon’s reductionist view of the apartheid city is thus that the CBD was now exclusively white and it was surrounded by extensive white residential areas which could expand further. The coloured, Indian and African townships all lay on the edges of the city and mixed neighbourhoods were all but eliminated.¹⁴ So Manenberg like many other Cape Flats townships was such a township that was built away from the CBD of Cape Town. The roads, the public amenities, access to shops, access to railways, buses and access to employment were designed to put residents at a disadvantage. The result of this restricted people from moving freely. These policies helped caged people and controlled them. Commuting to work was long, tiring and dangerous and it ensured that the masses only entered the city during the morning and left at night. It also separated people, communities and fellow comrades.

Rashied Staggie, a former Hard Living gang boss in Manenberg, had this to say about life in Manenberg during the apartheid days. ‘Manenberg is a concentration camp. Bonteheuwel is a concentration camp...they [the apartheid government] built the concentration camps for the coloureds...to murder each other, rob each other, rape each other.’¹⁵

12. Lemon, ‘The Apartheid City’, p.8.

13. J. Western, *Outcast Cape Town*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996). See however the more recent oral histories of this period in S. Field *et al* (eds), *Lost Communities, Living Memories: Remembering Forced Removals in Cape Town*, (Cape Town: David Philip, 2001)

14. Lemon, ‘The Apartheid City’ p.11.

15. D. Lurie, *Cape Town Fringe: Manenberg Avenue Is Where It’s Happening*, (Cape Town: Double Storey, 2004), p.112.

Lemon argues that in the 1980s the state's 'legally enforced residential segregation came under increasing pressure.'¹⁶ He estimates that there was a 'surplus of 37, 000 housing units for whites in 1985, the shortage for Coloureds was 52, 000, for Indians 44, 000 and for Africans officially 538, 000, but in reality far more.'¹⁷ By this point Manenberg was already established, but it had a critical housing shortage. Cape Town known as the Mother City has had housing shortages since 1835 according to a document of the City of Cape Town written in 1993 entitled, 'Cape Town City Council's Involvement in Providing Housing for its Poorer Citizens.'¹⁸ As 'a result of the abolition of slavery, many coloured and Malay families who had previously lived on their masters' premises found it necessary to provide dwellings for themselves.'¹⁹ The document aptly describes what took place since 1835 where several housing projects were erected all over Cape Town stretching to the Cape Flats. By 1944 there were 2 661 Council-owned dwellings in 14 housing estates which catered for the City's poorer citizens.²⁰ This number increased to 27 524 dwellings being built by 1972.²¹

All these factors around the Group Areas Act as mentioned above and more, culminated into communities joining movements like the ANC, South African Communist Party (SACP) and APLA. Human rights abuses by the apartheid regime on citizens in South Africa fueled mass movements and resistance.

16. Lemon, 'The Apartheid City,' p.11.

17. *Ibid*, p.12.

18. City of Cape Town, *Cape Town City Council's Involvement in Providing Housing for its Poorer Citizens: A history of the various branches of the city engineer's and city planner's department that have been involved*, April 1993

19. *Ibid*, p.1.

20. *Ibid*, p.3.

21. *Ibid*, p.4; A. Younge, 'Housing Policy and Housing Shortage in Cape Town: 1942 – 1980', *Africa Perspective*, 1982, pp. 9-10. The article gives a comprehensive discussion on housing shortages in the city of Cape Town's housing crisis prior to the 1940s. She explains how the housing policy at the time 'has not simply taken the form of additions to existing stock, but has occurred as an integral part of an overall strategy to increase control over the 'coloured population' For her the central component of the strategy was the relocation of families that lived within the urban environment (city) of Cape Town, 'with the result that the shortages of housing had not been maintained in spite of high rates of housing provision.'

An absence of Manenberg's resistance historiography

We now know that very little academic has been written on the resistance movement within Manenberg. The South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET) brought out four volumes on *The Road to Democracy* but it fails to focus on any resistance activity in Manenberg.²² In the TRC report we do find one resident of Manenberg that testified before the TRC on 22 May 1997, who is named Riefaat Hattas.²³ Riefaat, 29 years old at the time of testifying before the TRC, spoke about the torture he endured as a student at Manenberg police station. Hattas was 17 years-old when he was arrested and tortured. He was released soon thereafter unlike countless others who were detained for undisclosed periods based on Section 29 and Section 50 during the state of emergency period. Surely, he was not the only person who experienced this. This began my search for an understanding of what happened in Manenberg in the 1980s.

A documentary called *Fruits of Defiance*²⁴ produced in 1990 is perhaps the first real significant look at what happened in Manenberg in the 1980s. It looks at a three-week period before the September 6, 1989 referendum was held and how Manenberg residents, especially the youth reacted to the call of the UDF, Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) and the ANC and its own networks within Manenberg to boycott the referendum and to increase the pressure on the state. The referendum was significant as all three Houses of Parliament (House of Assembly-White Vote, House of Representatives-Coloured Vote and House of Delegates-Indian Vote) were heavily criticised by activists. The election was marred by the Defiance Campaign of the MDM. The NP remained in power.

22. Sadet, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa* Vol 1, Vol 2, Vol 3, and Vol 4 (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010).

23. <http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/special/children/hattas.htm> (Hattas appeared before the TRC in Athlone on 22 May 1997).

24. B. Tilley and O. Schmitz, (SA), *Fruits of Defiance*, 1990.

After interviewing Manenberg High educator, Ganief ‘Mickey’ Adams, a high ranking member of the inner circle of activists in Manenberg during the days of the 1980s, he disclosed that he was in possession of an amateur video recording of a school event at the height of the state of emergency in 1985. This video depicts scenes of Manenberg students at a cultural event where they displayed anti-apartheid banners, read poems of solidarity and sang and toyi-toyi’d in a hall in Manenberg.²⁵

In the *Fruits of Defiance* documentary, the following phrases are repeatedly said by Dr. Alan Boesak and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, ‘our freedom is coming’ and ‘our march to freedom is unstoppable.’²⁶ These are profound and electrifying words. It was the resolve of leaders telling the masses that beyond the abuse, the detention without trial, the brutal beatings, killings of comrades – that there was hope. It was to be the beginning of the end for the National Party. Months later (February 1990), the ANC and other political parties were unbanned and political prisoners were later released from Robben Island.

Mark Swilling writes that the first few months in 1985 saw the political landscape change as township revolts took place almost everywhere. He terms this ‘urban civil warfare’²⁷ which basically led to the government declaring a state of emergency in July 1985. ‘The State of Emergency was part of the state’s attempt to buttress the powers and extend the utilization of the security forces in the townships.’²⁸ Jeremy Seekings writes how prior to the 1985 state of emergency mass mobilisation on a massive scale took place on the Pretoria- Witwatersrand-

25. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010. The video depicts that Manenberg High student leaders at the time used cultural events to mask political events in case the security police wanted to know what was happening in the area. It is another view into the lives of activists mobilising and educating students on the anti-apartheid struggle. Students at this event were defiant and ready to do battle, if needed be.

26. B. Tilley and O. Schmitz, (SA), *Fruits of Defiance*, 1990.

27. M. Swilling, ‘United Democratic Front and Township Revolt’, in W. Cobbett & R. Cohen (eds) in *Popular Struggles in South Africa*, (London: Villiers Publication, 1988), p.103.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

Vereeniging (P.W.V.) townships between 1980 and 1984. These protests and urban rebellion were against the state's implementation of giving black local councillors power, who in return were forced to 'implement rent and other increases, helped to undermine whatever legitimacy traditional forms of decentralised rule might have had. The resultant resistance and consequential state repression served to dramatise the links between local grievances and the balance of power at the national level. The result was both increasing resistance and ever greater politicisation.'²⁹

Swilling writing about the UDF argues that it should be seen not as the initiator of township revolts but as an articulator of common national demands.³⁰ For Swilling, the UDF was a driving force of resistance that came from below. Manenberg students and activists in the 1980s engaged the police and army in street battles, a sign that this was indeed resistance from below. My thesis will explore some of these sentiments in relation to Manenberg students and teacher activists.

Simultaneously, Colin Bundy's work on youth resistance in Cape Town³¹ reflects that thousands of young South Africans were detained, whipped, tear gassed, and fired upon in 1985. Even larger numbers were mobilised at rallies, in organisations, and behind street barricades. There has been widespread recognition of the distinctive contribution made by the youth within a broader political struggle. Bundy recalls one commentator stating that they are very frustrated and very angry. 'In a critical moment of our history, these passionate,

29. J. Seekings, 'The origins of political mobilisation in PWV township, 1980-84', in Cobbett & Cohen, *Popular Struggles in South Africa*, p.59.

30. Swilling, 'United Democratic Front and Township Revolt', p.90.

31. C. Bundy, 'Street Sociology and Pavement Politics: Aspects of Youth and Student Resistance in Cape Town, 1985', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (April, 1987) p.303.

dedicated, immature, politically untutored students have taken over. Now they are getting their political education very quickly?’³² Bundy argues: ‘in a repressive political context, where other forms of mobilisation and organisation are proscribed or harassed, social institutions like schools become important recruiting grounds for the teenage shock troops of a nation-wide political insurrection.’³³

Steven Robins wrote an article wherein he reflects on Manenberg’s unique story of poverty, gang violence, community activism and outcry for safe spaces. He reiterates what the media has coined about Manenberg, that it is ‘dysfunctional’. He explains in detail how townships such as Manenberg became ungovernable in the 1980s due to the call of the exiled ANC and the situation now whereby the ANC wants some sort of governance stability within townships. He labels this ironic and critiques the current government of steering away from places like Manenberg as it is labeled dangerous. ‘This socio-spatial divide is reproduced through investment strategies that tend to steer clear of the dangerous and desolate spaces of the Cape Flats ghettos.’³⁴

So as mentioned before not much is written about Manenberg during these times in any literature. There are some articles written about Manenberg and its socio-economic problems, its problems with gangs and how it (Manenberg) has been entrapped in a snare of despair.

Elaine Salo³⁵ reflects on the effects the forced removals had on residents on the Cape Flats by

32. Bundy, ‘Street Sociology and Pavement Politics’, p.303.

33. *Ibid.*

34. S. Robins, ‘At the limits of spatial governmentality: a message from the tip of Africa’, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol 23, No 4, p. 670.

35. E. Salo, ‘Negotiating gender and personhood in the New South Africa: adolescent women and gangsters in Manenberg township on the Cape Flats’, Paper presented at New Social Forms seminar, at Dept. of Sociology and Social Anthropology, University of Stellenbosch, on 3 September 2004.

stating that Manenberg's physical and social density also influenced its residents' perceptions of community, and differentially fashioned their social interactions with others within the supposedly homogenous racial area. In terms of other writings on Manenberg, Salo also writes an extensive analysis on the role mothers play in a society such as Manenberg, whereby gangsters respect mothers.³⁶ In another paper, entitled 'Taxi queens and gangsters'³⁷ she depicts how young girls are deemed taxi queens by being seen sitting in front with the taxi driver and gangsters. In a paper entitled 'Gangs and sexuality on the Cape Flats'³⁸ she again reflects on how people view Cape Flats gangsters in terms of sexual violence and what drives them to do these acts.

Since nothing has been written about the resistance movement apart from what I mentioned above, I have relied on oral interviews. One person led to me to another and often when one of the comrades stopped talking to me, the others followed. Interviews have been held with several of the activists, including the several key players on the 1980s. In total I interviewed sixteen people: Judy Kuhn, Mario Wanza, Ganief Adams, Faghie Johnson, Faldielah de Vries, Irvin Kinnes, Owen Munroe, Thurston Brown, Shaheed Petersen, Selwyn Daniels, Christine Jansen, Cameron Williams, Thurston Brown, Amelia September, a PMC Volunteer, and Emily Fairbairn. I had a questionnaire which had more than 70 questions. I divided the questions into two categories or time periods: anti-apartheid activism period: (1980 - 1993); post-apartheid period: (1994 – 2009). Interviewees had to tell me where they came from (if not originally from Manenberg) and where they were born, what drew them to activism, how they got involved, i.e., who recruited them and what were some of the main activities they did during this time. In asking some of the questions, I wanted to get a clear picture of the

36. E. Salo, 'Respectable Mothers, Tough Men and Good Daughters,' (PhD, Emory University, 2004).

37. E. Salo, 'Taxi queens and gangsters: negotiating personhood in a post-apartheid Manenberg', (Cape Town, 2003).

38. E. Salo, 'Gangs and Sexuality on the Cape Flats', (Cape Town, 2000), Paper presented at UCT: Graduate School in Humanities, 2000.

interviewee's involvement in early protest politics of the 1980s. Most of the interviewee's were members of the inner circle operating within Manenberg. Interviews were either tape recorded, hand-written or communicated via email communication. In deciphering these answers, more questions were formulated. Their recollection of what happened in the 1980s was checked via books written about this period.

Newspapers and websites provided supplementary sources. I have frequented the Manenberg High School's archives and found other names and events that reflected how Manenberg High School students and teachers played a key role in harbouring activists and banned materials as well as weapons. Further, I had access to photographs and videos taken by press photographers. In attempting to get answers on what exactly happened I had to ask specific questions relating to the period and activities in Manenberg. Whilst doing this, activists were at first reluctant to communicate their stories. Some felt that they wanted to forget, whilst others wanted to tell their side and to assist with the new changes currently occurring in Manenberg. The need to have a struggle history of Manenberg became important. The need to engage with the current leadership of the country became paramount as activists of the 1980s felt that the ruling party, the ANC went back on their original plans to free an oppressed people. Dr. Alan Boesak addressed an audience during the annual Ashley Kriel lecture at the University of the Western Cape in 2008, where he reflected on the ideals of activists almost 25 years ago when the UDF was launched. 'We grasped that we had arrived at a moment of singular importance in the history of South Africa, and that the struggle for justice, its meaning and destiny, was about to be put on the scales of history against our integrity as an oppressed people. We had come not only to register our protest. We had come

to fashion a dream, to spell out a vision, to make a promise.’³⁹ Boesak argued that the politics of the past have been forgotten by those in power. He referred to the politics of the past as the anti-apartheid struggles in the 1980s. ‘I remember the faces of those who came; I remember the joy and the songs, the determination and the steadfastness. I remember the years of struggle; the courage with which we faced the dogs, the teargas and the guns. I remember how we marched, were shot at, beaten to the ground, fell down, but stood up and marched again. I remember prison, and torture and pain. I remember the fear, and I remember the faith that overcame that fear. I remember death, the open graves and the tears, and I remember the strength of those who turned away from the grave...’⁴⁰ What Boesak was highlighting was how eager men and women were for freedom, for emancipation and for retribution. It is this story that I want to tell and want to localize in the context set out by Fullard. It is this story that I want to unpack as it happened in Manenberg on the Cape Flats.

Sean Field states that ‘oral history as a research method records the spoken memories and stories of people in the interview situation.’⁴¹ Barbara Truesdell reflects that ‘oral history interviews are grounded in memory, and memory is a subjective instrument for recording the past, always shaped by the present moment and the individual psyche.’⁴² Gary Minkley and Ciraj Rasool, while critiquing how social historians use oral history, also point out that some social historians have overcome the limitations of oral history and ‘continue to produce studies full of vigour and insight.’⁴³ This thesis has found oral histories to be an invaluable source for uncovering little known histories in Manenberg.

39. <http://www.africafiles.org/printableversion.asp?id=18643> – 5th Ashley Kriel Memorial Lecture held at UWC.

40. *Ibid.*

41. S. Field (*et al*), *Lost Communities, Living Memories: Remembering Forced Removals in Cape Town*, (Cape Town: UCT, 2001), p.169.

42. B. Truesdell, *Oral History Techniques: How to Organize and Conduct Oral History Interviews*, Center for the Study of History and Memory Indiana University, 1995 and updated 2007.

43. G. Minkley and C. Rasool, ‘Orality, Memory, and Social History in South Africa’, in S. Nuttal and C. Coetzee (eds), *Negotiating the Past. The Making of Memory in South Africa*. (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.95.

In Chapter One: Manenberg and its residents, I will briefly describe the political landscape in Manenberg since its inception taking into consideration early activism prior to the 1980s. I will also introduce several key role players, such as Faldielah de Vries, Christine Jansen, Irvin Kinnes, Mario Wanza, Faghie Johnson, Selwyn Daniels, Cameron Williams and Mickey Adams and the specific roles each played in the 1980s.

In Chapter Two: Resistance movement in Manenberg during the 1980s, I will analyse the resistance movement within Manenberg and focus on the strategies and tactics used to make Manenberg a militarized zone. I will expand on the methods and ideologies used to recruit residents to march for freedom as described by Dr Boesak and Archbishop Tutu.

In Chapter Three: Proudly Manenberg Campaign, I will look at the formation of the Proudly Manenberg Campaign by some of the key role players of the 1980s period. It will look at the strategies deployed to garner support for this movement. It will look at how political activism has changed and how activists helped to shape a new Manenberg in a different era.

My concluding chapter will address the research question and link the various chapters and draw all central arguments and conclusions.

CHAPTER ONE

MANENBERG AND ITS RESIDENTS

Introduction

This chapter provides a short account of living conditions in Manenberg since its inception in 1966. It points out several key moments and stages of community development within Manenberg. Its main purpose is, however, to identify key activists in Manenberg and to provide short biographical sketches. It is through these sketches that one seeks to ascertain what influenced them to become activists. The chapter seeks to draw connections between local conditions and activism.

Housing developments on the Cape Flats 1950 – 1974

Between 1950 and 1974 state housing developments proceeded at some pace on the Cape Flats. These segregated housing projects were meant to cater for not only the normal needs of the city population but to a large extent provided for the resettlement of Coloureds, Indians and Africans who would be forcibly removed from the racially integrated space of the city. Housing schemes continued to be built in places like Bridgetown, Retreat, and Nyanga West (Guguletu) in 1955 and 1957. During 1961 and 1962 respectively, work continued at Retreat and Bonteheuwel, where 1863 dwellings were completed in 1961 and a further 1427 dwellings in 1962. Houses were subsequently built in Guguletu, Heideveld (next to Manenberg), Kalksteensfontein, and Belthorn. In 1966, the first three storey flats (Courts) were built in Heideveld, Manenberg, Hanover Park, Lavender Hill and Parkwood. A 1981 City of Cape Town Council document further elaborates how houses were then built in Mitchell's Plain in 1974 and how it expanded its operations throughout the city.¹

1. J. Jacobs, 'Manenberg in the 1980s: A Micro-Study of Political Activity' unpublished Honours Mini-thesis, UWC, 2007; Council Housing in Cape Town, 1981, City of Cape Town, Annexure 5, p. 18.

Sprawling through documents of old City Council minutes of various committee meetings, I discovered that as far back as November 1964 Manenberg was already being planned.

Manenberg was established according to official City Council documents around 1966 when houses and double and triple storey buildings were built. The building phase lasted until 1970. Between the years 1966 to 1970 housing cost R7, 386 817 million for a population of 33 922 people in Manenberg. A total of 5621 dwellings were built.²

Judy Kuhn, the City Council Area Manager,³based in Manenberg explained and handed over a briefing document to me that showcased information about the idea of sub-economic housing in Manenberg. It meant that houses and flats did not have ceilings, no inside water and no doors to their rooms. The sub-economic housing which was called dual occupancy homes/flats consisted of one living room. There were 29 units built that had a living room bathroom into one and a kitchen. Other flats and houses had two living rooms and a shared toilet. In the same category 29 other houses were built which had their own toilets and a separate kitchen and living room. The double storey dwelling was another category of sub-economic housing. It had one living room/bedroom and a kitchen and 318 units were built. A further 636 houses were built which had one bedroom, a separate living room and a kitchen with another 636 houses which had two bedrooms, a living room and a kitchen. 366 cottages of superior quality were built that had two bedrooms, a living room and a kitchen. A further 91 of these were built that had three bedrooms, a living room and a kitchen.⁴

2. Jacobs, 'Manenberg', p.19.

3. Interview with Ms Judy Kuhn, 7 September 2007.

4. Jacobs, 'Manenberg,' p.19.

43 others were built that had a living room/bathroom and a kitchen and lastly a further 43 houses built that only had one bedroom, a living room and a kitchen. Another phase of housing took place where 340 double storey flats were built. These had two bedrooms, a living room and a kitchen. A series of triple storey 'korre' (courts) were built which had 858 flats with one bedroom, a living room, a kitchen and a toilet with 726 flats having two bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen and a toilet. A set of 11 detached cottages were built which had three bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen and toilet. Later in the mid 1980s, because of housing shortages and problems around squatting in Manenberg a new kind of dwelling was built. It was called a maisonette (also known as the 'infill scheme') and 364 of these were built. These had three bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen and a toilet. It had hot water and it was superior to all the other housing within Manenberg.⁵ Not only did the cottages, courts and maisonettes (infill scheme) form part of the establishment of Manenberg other buildings and amenities sprang up. These were the different primary and high schools, the Silvertree Youth Centre, the Shawco building, shops, schools, several churches, clinics, housing estate offices, community centres and what would become the infamous Club Montreal venue in Sherwood Park.

It is argued here that the housing conditions and the basic design of Manenberg played a major role in how this community took it upon themselves to resist and partake in the call for making South Africa ungovernable.

5. Jacobs, 'Manenberg', p.20.

Early activism in the 1970s and 1980s in Manenberg

Community activists like Faldelah de Vries, Frank Gutuza, Rushdi Majiet, Keith Karl Dumas and others mobilized residents in Manenberg around the housing and living conditions.

Grassroots newspaper was a newspaper that was started in 1980. It gained a reputation for being part of the alternative press movement in the 1980s. It was the first of a series of anti-apartheid community newspapers, with a circulation that grew up to 20 000. The paper struggled financially, but was helped by small donations and advertising sold to small Cape Town traders. Eight months after *Grassroots* began its first organiser, Johnny Issel, was banned. The newspaper managed to survive until 1990. It is through *Grassroots* that we gain glimpses into activities in Manenberg and other townships.

A *Grassroots* article dated March 1980 'Manenberg Tenants Stand Firm' explains that 600 residents protested against broken toilets, unpainted homes and formed the Duinefontein Tenants Association (DTA). Mr. Rushdi Majiet was elected chairperson and he had a committee of twelve people who assisted residents in drawing up petitions against rent increases. The Association has elected a steering executive consisting of Mr. Frank Gutuza, a director of the Silvertree Youth Centre and Mr. Majiet as chairperson.⁶

From the 1970s right through the 1990s, numerous community and civic movements and organizations were established making inroads into garnering support for the betterment of Manenberg. These organizations were: Manenberg Civic Association, Manenberg Educational Movement, the Manenberg Youth Organisation, Manenberg Area Committee,

6. *Grassroots*, March 1980, p.5.

Call of Islam, Minister's Organisation, Manenberg People's Centre, Duinefontein Tenants Association, SHAWCO, Silvertree Youth Centre, Self Help Manenberg, Salvation Army, Community Counseling Training Centre, Urban Renewal Organisation and the Manenberg Community Police Forum. In the early days of Manenberg's existence there were already civic organizations that were trying to organize residents around issues such as rent.

Another headline in *Grassroots* read, 'Manenberg shows the way forward.' Different groups operating in Manenberg decided to work together to achieve unified action to deal with issues faced by residents in the area. The article mentions that the Manenberg Tenants Association and the Manenberg Educational Movement made a decision to work together. 'There was also the growing awareness of the need for a strong organisation which would be the voice of the people in Manenberg.'⁷ Another article read: 'Belinda Court organizes,'⁸ residents in the court constituted a court committee and rallied around maintenance issues and decided to work together. This was reminiscent of the old days in District Six, where people worked together.

Grassroots reported on one such incident, where the headline read: 'We have the power to fight evictions – Manenberg Civic.' The story focused on how residents marched to the rent offices demanding affordable prices. It states: 'Houses, security and comfort are basic human rights not privileges. In Manenberg, however, people have to fight to get and keep a roof over their heads. Here, evictions take place at a rate of twenty a week, a spokesperson for the Manenberg Advice office said.'⁹

7. *Grassroots*, May 1981.

8. *Grassroots*, October 1981, p.15.

9. *Grassroots*, July 1981, p.12.

While political organisations rallied around housing and rent issues, crime also escalated. Crime provided a further issue to organise around during this period in Manenberg. For two decades, Manenberg experienced the unintended consequences of apartheid, namely gangsterism, whilst community activists were striving for change. Manenberg during the 1970s and 1980s was plagued by gang violence, abject poverty, and lack of infrastructure. If housing and rent issues were significant then so was crime and gangsterism. My personal life history is of relevance here.

In the 1970s, we lived in a single bed-roomed ground flat in Lettie Court in Manenberg Avenue. We were six people in the house (two brothers and a sister, my parents and my mother's aunt). The flat had a kitchen, a slightly big bathroom and toilet and we used it as a sleeping area. We separated the bathroom and this sleeping area with a curtain. We had no geezer for warm water and had to boil water to have warm bath. We had a yard that overlooked the bus stop and Manenberg Avenue. My mother, Constance Jacobs, worked in a clothing factory in Observatory for most of the 1970s and my father, Derek Jacobs, worked as a butcher in Maitland. All of us as children attended Rio Grande Primary school, an Afrikaans medium school, even though we spoke mainly English at home. The school was a short distance to walk. All of us naturally progressed to Manenberg High and Silverstream High. It was here that our lives changed politically. Life in Manenberg was hard for us as a family during the 1970s and 1980s. Hardly any other relatives ever came to visit us as it was Manenberg, a known gangland. It took us another 15 years to get a transfer to a bigger flat which had two bedrooms.

Years later in an article I wrote for a newspaper in London, I recalled my earliest memory of Manenberg. In the 1970s and 1980s residents were gripped with the fear of gangsters. Gangs

held residents captive almost at will. The cracking of guns in the night and constant fear of being shot gripped everyone living in this notorious gangland. It was like being in Iraq; only here you had to avoid stray bullets instead of sniper shots. The worst thing is that you could not do anything about it. After 8pm, Manenberg became security conscious. Bars would go up, windows and shutters were securely closed. No-one dared walking at night. The streets were empty and in the distance you heard shots echoing. Gang members wreaked havoc, shooting opposing gang members and from time to time killing innocent people in the crossfire. In the mornings one discovered via the grapevine who had been shot – and in many cases killed. Fighting almost always was about who controlled the drug industry. The gangs were used by the political masters of the time.¹⁰

The peacemakers in Manenberg in the 1970s organized themselves into groupings that sought to protect residents at night against gangs. My father was a leader and chairman of the Lettie Court peacemakers. The peacemakers were set up to patrol these areas. They were easily identifiable by their orange jackets. They would be situated at both ends of the courts, guarding it, and preventing anyone with knives and pangas to enter the court. Most evenings the men of the court would patrol the area. Our court was aligned next to Manenberg Avenue and in between several gangs operated in the area at the time. These gangs were the Jumbo Kids, the Stallags 17s, the Jesters and the Americans. In those days gangs fought with knives, pangas and stones. Every evening it was hell on earth as gangs would rampage through the court, shouting, screaming and running, often breaking windows of flats on the ground floor. I remember my father had a baton that he would use on anyone trying to fight with him. The peacemakers ensured that residents were safe, they ensured that us as children could still play

10. *Hampstead & Highgate Express*, 'Taking Manenberg back from Murderberg', May 1995, pp. 21-22.

outside in relative safety. They would look after your place if you were not home. They would ensure your windows and doors were locked.

The peacemakers were labeled vigilantes. They worked without the cooperation of the police in the area. The peacemakers were the first line of vigilante groupings operating in Manenberg to protect residents from gang members. Police at the time were not trusted by residents. The peacemakers received overwhelming support from residents. Every Sunday evening my father's cupboard would be filled with pangas, knives and batons from gang members who were stopped and searched.

As part of an International Conference on Crime, Law and Community a workshop was held at the Early Learning Centre in Athlone in 1975 hosted by the National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO). Delegates were taken on a tour through the coloured townships of Manenberg and Bonteheuwel. At the workshop, Mr. Philip Davids represented the Manenberg Resident's Movement as well as the Students' Health and Welfare Centres Organisation (SHAWCO), which was based in Manenberg. Davids explained that the crime situation was fuelled by easy access to alcohol and the problem around gangsterism. A way of combatting this was to form street committees or 'peacemakers' to prevent crime from happening. 'The impact of this 'peacemakers' thing, as we are nicknamed, has dropped off a little bit but on weekends we still find people standing around and trying by their mere presence, to show the mobsters that there are still people around who are concerned about our own safety and well-being.'¹¹

11. *Living in Manenberg and Bonteheuwel*, (Cape Town, 1975), p.7.

Soweto Uprising, 1976

The year 1976 is a year that stands out in the history of this country. 'Afrikaans was the trigger that brought Soweto pupils out in protest; the reckless use of live ammunition by the police was the immediate cause that transformed a protest by school children into a massive uprising.'¹² Not being taught in your mother tongue and the disparities of per capita spending around education was seen as a catalyst for the uprising. 'In 1975-76 fifteen more times was spent on a white child than a black child.'¹³ On 16 June 1976, twenty thousand Soweto schoolchildren marched in protest against Bantu education, they were subsequently fired upon by security police. Students went on the rampage smashing and burning down many buildings, damaging beer halls, schools, clinics and libraries.

Demonstrations took place in black townships in Cape Town such as Gugulethu, Langa and Nyanga. Coloured pupils and university students demonstrated often leading to bloody clashes with police. Fullard mentions that the 1976 revolt in Cape Town resulted in an estimated death count of 137 people from August to December.¹⁴ 1976 became known as a year of turmoil and a turning point in the fight against apartheid in South Africa as 566 people died due to political violent incidents.

In 1976 security police were patrolling streets in Manenberg as well as students were busy with demonstrations as part of the wider anti-apartheid movement. This year had a significant impact on most activists in Manenberg who became active in the 1980s. The Avenue simultaneously became a symbol of liberation and oppression. It is this road whereby students, teachers and ordinary community members fought side by side against the security

12. H. Gilomee & B. Mbenga (eds), *New History of South Africa*, (Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers, 2007) p.364.

13. *Ibid*, p. 365.

14. Fullard, 'The State and Political Struggle', p. 28.

forces. It is the same road that the security forces shot and teargassed so many people; it is the same road that divides different gang territories. I remember in 1976 when the security forces were shooting teargas canisters in our yard in number 26 Lettie Court. I remember seeing these huge army men, bending down and shooting in the air. I remember my parents screaming that we should cover our eyes and that we should come inside the house. My older brother ran outside and picked up the cannister and threw it back. Our eyes were burning. I remember the vans, the yellow menacing casspirs with the young officials looking at us. Manenberg Avenue is where it all happened.¹⁵

Keith Carl Dumas is a name that speaks volumes in Manenberg in the 1970s. He started student revolts in the streets of Manenberg in the 1970s. A *Cape Argus* article on Dumas, who was interviewed in 2005 pointed out: ‘It was almost 29 years ago when Dumas and other militant young people walked on to the grounds of Manenberg High School and challenged their fellow pupils to strike, and ultimately take to the streets in support of those who had been killed by police on that terrible winter’s day in Soweto.’¹⁶ Interviewed Dumas states that in Manenberg in 1976 ‘we were very disorganized and there was not much information coming through about what happened in Soweto, except a few flashes on the television and in some of the print media.’¹⁷ Many of the activists of the 1980s ensured later that they indeed became organised.

15. My memory of 1976 in Manenberg.

16. *Cape Argus*, 17 June 2005.

17. *Ibid.*

Biographical sketches of key activists in Manenberg in the 1980s

During the 1980s in Manenberg, a core group of people became part of a resistance movement that would mobilize, persuade people, conscientize people and convince people to take up arms, to make Manenberg ungovernable. The group was part of a wider network of activists throughout the country. Some of them went into exile where they were influenced or trained by others and in turn they came back to influence others. A new culture of resistance was born. This section will introduce role players, such as Mario Wanza, Faghie Johnson, Owen Munro, Irvin Kinnes, Christine Jansen, Faldielah de Vries, Emily Fairbairn, Mark Splinters, Maqbool Moos and Mickey Adams and will try to probe the specific roles and influence they had in the 1980s in Manenberg Township. All the interviewees agreed that Manenberg has had a rich history in playing a significant role in the 1976 riots and the uprisings of the 1980s within the Western Cape.

While this section focuses on Manenberg, it should be acknowledged that all over the Cape Flats activists sprung up. Ashley Kriel, for instance, was an ANC operative who grew up in Bonteheuwel, Cape Flats. He was a youth leader who underwent military training in Angola and returned to South Africa with the sole purpose to build underground structures and to target key institutions of the regime. He was killed in 1987 in Athlone by the security police. In a tribute to the life of Ashley Kriel, Logan Wort writes that he was a product of the 1980s. 'A time that produced a special cadre of youth leaders, called upon to engage in a struggle that required dedication and leadership, courage and commitment, way beyond what could be expected from young people of that generation.'¹⁸ Manenberg too produced its own home-grown leadership.

18. L. Wort, *Ashley Kriel: Commemorative publication: Hamba Kahle Qabane Ashley Kriel*, (Cape Town, 2007), p.1.

As mentioned already, Manenberg had community and political activists operating in the 1970s. Jonathan Hyslop has argued that that ‘it was in the 1984-87 period that the revolt of the students had its greatest impact. Students and youth formed the shock troops of the outbreak, mounting pickets, organising mass action and engaging in street battles with the army and police.’¹⁹ Bundy mentions that student and youth movements always looked for ways to link with other organisations and other campaigns to fight the regime.²⁰ Activism in Manenberg was nurtured in the 1980s at the three high schools in the area, namely Phoenix High, Silverstream High and Manenberg High through politically aware and militant educators.

In the 1980s there were two distinct groupings in Manenberg, the one group which was more moderate and more visible and the other group which was an underground militant group who organised tyre burnings, throwing stones and petrol bombs at targets and later resorted to taking up arms. The latter were trained inside Manenberg. The first grouping consisted of thirteen people, who were mainly teachers and students from the three high schools in Manenberg. This group was called MASCO, who had several teachers in it. The second grouping, MAC, was more militant in nature and its membership was changing. Some activists belonged to both groupings playing both a visible and hidden role. They met secretly in the Manenberg library planning their military operations inside Manenberg.²¹ All members of the two groups constituted the inner circle of activists that operated in Manenberg in the 1980s.

19. J. Hyslop, ‘School Student Movement, State Education Policy 1972 – 87’, in W. Cobbett & R. Cohen (eds), *Popular Struggles in South Africa*, (London, Villiers Publication, 1988), p.183.

20. Bundy, ‘Street Sociology and Pavement Politics,’ p.303.

21. Jacobs, ‘Manenberg’, p.47.

Mario Wanza, Irvin Kinnes, Faldielah de Vries, Faghie Johnson, Mark Splinters, Maqbool Moos, Cameron Williams, Selwyn Daniels, Owen Munro and Mickey Adams were part of the first group, which was more moderate in nature. Shaheed Petersen, Mickey, Mario, Hattas, Faghie, Owen, belonged to the second more militant group. Thurston Brown was an opponent of the inner circle group as he believed that students came to school to be taught an education. He changed his philosophy years later.

Mario Wanza was born in Wynberg, Cape Town in 1966. He was one of three children. At the age of two his family moved to Manenberg. He lived in Manenberg for 27 years. Wanza's parents both worked at a leather factory. The Wanza family lived in a semi-detached cottage in Manenberg Avenue near the Lansdowne entrance. The house had two bedrooms, a kitchen, bathroom and a lounge area. Because of his family roots in Wynberg, Mario attended primary school in Wynberg at Battswood until standard four and he completed his standard five at Primrose Park Primary, just outside Manenberg. This was the same year his mother passed away when he was twelve years old. An early memory of prejudice came about when he took a *Cape Herald* newspaper article to primary school at Battswood, where his teacher told him that the newspaper was not considered as news. 'News was only news if it appeared in *The Argus* and *Cape Times*,' he said.²² His political schooling started here he says.

He spent his high school years at Manenberg High from 1980 - 1985. He played rugby for the school and was quite active in athletics. In 1982 when he was in Standard Eight he was recruited into the underground movement.²³ It was in Manenberg that Wanza got to know the

22. Interview with Mario Wanza, 24 March 2010.

23. Wanza was recruited into the underground movement by the following Manenberg High educators, Emily Fairbairn, Lawrence Haupner, Rashaat Job and Mickey Adams.

real effects of apartheid, the living conditions and the hardships ensured by all. Issues of high rent, lack of service delivery and gutter education. Local conditions drove him to join the ranks of the ANC and the UDF.²⁴In 1983 Wanza was one of hundreds of students present at the launch of the UDF in Mitchell's Plain. His peers at Manenberg High were Faghrudeen (Faghie) Johnson, Owen Munroe, Mark "Parker" Splinters, Maqbool "Bulle" Moos, Shaheed "Hiddie" Petersen and numerous others.

In 1985 during the first state of emergency, Wanza became the SRC President at Manenberg High. It is during this period where he displayed his dedication to the struggle; his ambition to liberate from within and to ensure that the notion of the people shall govern would be realized. Wanza mentions that hearing Oliver Tambo's radio speech on Radio Freedom on making South Africa ungovernable spurred him on.²⁵Wanza played a pivotal role in the 1980s period of activism in Manenberg. Today, he leads an army of Proudly Manenberg Campaign activists and volunteers as they seek to bring back the pride and dignity to Manenberg residents. Through his leadership and experience of the 1980s, he has assisted in making a difference in Manenberg.

Ganief "Mickey" Adams was born in 1958 in Waterkant Street, Cape Town and was one of six children. His family moved to Manenberg in 1968 after they were forcibly evicted from their Waterkant home. At the time he attended Vista Primary School in the Bo-Kaap area of Cape Town. He remembers during the mid 1960s, the news that they would be evicted vividly. He was told to look out for a blue beetle driven by a Mr. Louw, which eventually

24. Interview with Mario Wanza, 24 March 2010.

25. Interview with Mario Wanza, 11 February 2010.

arrived at their house. The family were told that they should move to Manenberg, a place they did not know existed. ‘We got notice and I was told to go check out our new home in Manenberg. It was my first train ride and what I saw was a dusty, sandy place with Silvertree Youth Centre one of the first brick buildings in the area.’²⁶The family ended up living in a one room bedroom flat in Joanna Court. Mickey explained that his grandmother was blind and the ‘apartheid agent’ gave them a flat near Nyanga train station in order for her not to walk too far from public transport. He remembers how even within Manenberg, which was for the poor, an economic hierarchy prevailed. There were those confined to flats while others better off could secure cottages. ‘We were not allowed to live in a cottage as my mother’s salary was one rand short of qualifying for a cottage.’²⁷

Mickey and his siblings went to school in the city and they had to now travel by train – back and forth. He encountered the separate train compartments on their journey to school and back. He encountered one of apartheid’s main goals to divide and rule. When the train reached Nyanga station, Africans went the other side and he and other Coloureds would exit the Manenberg side. Mickey matriculated in 1976 at Vista High. This was the year of the Soweto student uprisings and it was this event that politicised him and introduced him to politics.

In the 1970s Mickey was drawn to the Silvertree Youth Centre. It was here that he got involved in political meetings, in interfaith meetings between young people and it was here that he experienced mass meetings around high rent costs. In 1978 he was enrolled at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) where he studied to become a teacher. UWC was

26. Interview with Mickey Adams, 11 November 2009.

27. *Ibid.*

also a place where he found himself engrossed in debate and got to know the policies of the ANC. Today he still teaches at Manenberg High. Mickey states that he was lucky in that he used education to fight the apartheid system. 'If you are informed, you fight from an informed position and at Manenberg High we formed with other educators within the Western Cape, the Western Cape Education Trade Union (WECTU), with members such as Yusuf Gabru and Lawrence Haupner playing pivotal roles. This was seen as a precursor to the South African Democratic Teacher's Union (SADTU) in the 1990s'.²⁸In the early 1980s when Mickey started his job as a teacher at Manenberg High he became involved in changing the mindsets of students and residents on issues relating to apartheid policies. As an educator Mickey felt that he could fight the system from the inside by freeing the minds of students. He played a pivotal role in the sporting sector, the religious sector, the safety sector and he served on the interim RDP forum post the 1994-elections in Manenberg. It is the period of the 1980s that has defined Mickey as an activist, community leader and educator. He too played a role in the constitution of the PMC.

Faghie Johnson was born in 1967 in Salt River and moved to Manenberg when he was one-year old. The Johnson family had thirteen children with seven sisters and six brothers. He has lived his whole life in Manenberg. The Johnson family lived in a semi-detached cottage with two bedrooms, a bathroom, kitchen and lounge. Faghie lived behind the house of Wanza in Wye Road, Manenberg. He attended primary school at Sherwood Park Primary School, otherwise known in the area as Tafalha Primary and naturally progressed to Manenberg High School. The one clear memory of growing up in the 1970s was the burning of buses and children running during the 1976 riots in Manenberg.

28. Interview with Mickey Adams, 11 November 2009

In 1981, whilst being in Standard Six, he became very concerned about what was happening in the country at the time. 'I didn't know much but felt I needed to join the SRC at Manenberg High. I can remember that Mr. Paul Joemat and Mr. Kevin Patel, who took care of our political education during the time. They would take us to meetings where I met people like Archie Gumede, Trevor Manuel and Cheryl Carolus amongst others who I found very inspirational.'²⁹ Joemat and Patel worked at the Manenberg Advice Office and were members of the ANC. Faghie says that: 'Mario Wanza and others saw the potential in me and would always encourage me and others to make a difference in the SRC at the time.'³⁰ Faghie was at Manenberg High from 1981 – 1986 and served as a member of the SRC. He was a part of the inner circle in Manenberg in the 1980s where mass mobilization strategies were discussed and implemented. At High School, like Wanza, he played rugby and was involved in athletics. Over three decades Faghie has been involved in several organizations in Manenberg such as the Manenberg SRC, Manenberg Youth Organisation, Manenberg Advice Office, SANCO Manenberg, Manenberg People's Centre, Call of Islam, Manenberg Anti-Crime Forum, Manenberg Community Police Forum (MCPF), Manenberg Education Development Trust (MEDT)³¹ and PMC.

Christine Jansen was born in Denver Road, Lansdowne near Savio College³² in 1962. The Jansen family lived in a semi-detached cottage that had six-houses attached to one another. A fire broke out in 1968 destroying all six houses. The family moved to Manenberg in 1968 and settled into a flat, which had two-bedrooms, a kitchen, bathroom and a lounge. She lived

29. Interview with Faghie Johnson, 11 March 2010.

30. *Ibid.*

31. The MEDT helps learners in matric at the three high schools in Manenberg to get into colleges, universities and technikons by providing bursaries and mentorships. The MEDT members are past student activists from the three main high schools in Manenberg, who actively make their time available to assist learners. More than 30 learners from Manenberg have been sent to colleges, universities and technikons through this programme.

32. The old Savio College is being used by the South African Premier League Football team, Santos FC as a training base in Lansdowne.

together with her parents, grandmother and five siblings in Red River Walk. Her father worked as a labourer at PG Plumbing and her grandma worked as a cook at Savio College. She attended Red River Primary School from 1969 - 1975 and Manenberg High from 1976-1980. Her political awareness came to fore when her grandmother travelled in a bus that was stoned during the 1976 riots. She later became active in several organizations in Manenberg. At high school she became involved in the SRC, the drama club and the Youth Movement. It is at the same high school that she met the members of the first group, such as Mickey Adams, Selwyn Daniels and Rashaat Job who became active throughout the 1980s.³³ She also relates how white liberal leftist teachers played a role in her political awareness at the time such as Lawrence Haupner, Emily Fairbairn, and Marilyn Budell. After matric she enrolled for a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of the Western Cape. In Manenberg, she became involved with the United Women's Organisation, SANCO, Manenberg Youth, Manenberg Civic organisation, Manenberg Area Committee, Manenberg Advice Office, SAYCO, Manenberg Health Forum, the Edith Stevens Wetland Park initiative, Manenberg Urban and Agriculture Committee, Manenberg Drug Action Committee and she is the secretary of the Klipfontein Sub District Health Forum. Her political philosophy was always left of the ANC and her motto is 'Socialism now.'³⁴

Today, Christine is a respected member of the community, a real community activist and a member of the Manenberg Advice Office which tirelessly works to inform, educate and assist residents of Manenberg on a daily basis in a post-apartheid society.

33. Interview with Christine Jansen, 8 March 2010.

34. *Ibid.*

Faldielah de Vries³⁵ was born in District Six in 1951 and lived there until 1974. She attended school in the Cape Town area and was a high school student at Harold Cressey in Roeland Street, Cape Town. It is here that she became involved in politics. The school was boycotting classes due to a Bonteheuwel High teacher being fired in 1966. She also witnessed first-hand the forced removals from District Six from the late 1960s and 1970s. At the end of 1974, aged 23 years old, married, and with three young children, Faldielah and her family moved into Manenberg in Thames Avenue. The house had one bedroom, a kitchen, bathroom and a lounge area. She became active in the civic meetings. Issues such as evictions, housing conditions and rent were discussed by the Manenberg Civic Association. Her peers were Paul Joemat, Aunty Let, Aunty Lizzie, Aunty Wya, Kevin Guavas, Kosie, Gert David, David Fredericks, Irvin Kinnes and many others.

She became involved with several community structures in Manenberg and within the Western Cape. Faldielah was instrumental in the establishment of the Manenberg Advice Office in the 1980s, the PMC in 2005 and other civic organizations.

Late last year Faldielah and others launched the Manenberg Development Co-ordinating Structure (MDCS). It is a body that has positioned itself in coordinating all kinds of community work and disbursing funds for community projects. She is a keen campaigner for human rights in Cape Town. She believes in the 'each one, teach one' concept and feels she can assist in providing political and governance knowledge and skills to the community so that they could take up the struggle to know their rights and to make use of it. 'We lack

35. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

sufficient political knowledge in our communities and we need to know our constitutional rights in order to access it for the betterment of ourselves.’³⁶Faldielah explains how her life of activism began in Manenberg. The area was notorious for its gangsters. At a community meeting held at the NG Kerk in Manenberg Avenue, a place where many community meetings were held before the Manenberg People’s Centre (MPC) was built, issues around housing problems and high rent payments were discussed. She remembers that two inner circle members were present at the meeting. They were Maqbool and Irvin Kinnes. ‘I asked a question and it was not satisfactorily answered. I remained quiet. At this time I was approached by Irvin. He asked my details and the next day he visited my house and explained to me what they were doing in Manenberg. I then joined their ranks.’³⁷She later moved to Erica Court near the MPC and it is here that many of the clandestine meetings took place. ‘We met here and at other places, but my parents were scared at the time that the security police would find out and arrest me. They were worried what would happen to my three children. I use to retort, my friends and comrades would take care of them.’³⁸

Faldielah also remembers the group was visited by Trevor Manuel and Johnny Issel at one or two meetings. ‘Within the group we had differences some were Trotskyites whilst others were Marxists, but when it came to working together that is what we did and our differences did not matter.’³⁹Mickey echoes her views when he fondly remembers the times they met in Faldielah’s house where he says it was often done in secret.⁴⁰

36. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Ibid.*

40. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010.

Owen Munro was born in 1966 in Crawford. In 1970 the family moved to Manenberg in a single bedroom council flat in Ruth Court. Years later they moved into a two-bedroom council flat. Owen attended the English-speaking medium Red River Primary School and attended Manenberg High from 1980 – 1985. His earliest memory of the struggle was the 1976 riots in Manenberg. The rioting that occurred in Manenberg left a lasting impression on him. At high school he became a member of the inner circle of activists who planned and plotted disruptions around Manenberg and surrounding areas. His peers were Mark Splinters, Mario Wanza, Irvin Kinnes, Maqbool Moos and Faghrudeen Johnson and others. He has been a member of the following community organizations in Manenberg since the 1980s: the Manenberg Advice Office, the Manenberg People’s Centre, Manenberg Community Police Forum, SRC at Manenberg High, the Manenberg Sports Council and PMC since 2005. In 1996 he ran as the local ANC candidate in the local elections in Manenberg but lost to the NP’s candidate, Mrs Du Plessis.⁴¹

Irvin Kinnes was born at Somerset Hospital in Cape Town in 1965. He was one of thirteen children. He grew up in Bonteheuwel and Greenhaven Bush until he was three years old. The family then moved to Manenberg in 1968. He attended primary school at Primrose Park. He was a pupil at Manenberg High from 1979 to 1981 and then completed his remaining years at Spes Bona High in Athlone from 1982 – 1983. Irvin’s earliest memory of the struggle was when he was young boy during the 1976 riots in Manenberg. He remembers inhaling teargas and pepper spray which came from the armed security police as they kept shooting at demonstrators in Manenberg Avenue. Irvin was influenced by the following

41. Interview with Owen Munro, 10 March 2010

activists: Sharief Cullis, Keith Dumas, Michael O' Connor, Mr. Jenneker, Mr. Frazer, Mrs. De Wet, Oswald Hopkins, Christene Jansen, Cay Dumas, Nicky Van Driel, Matthew Cloete, Marilyn Budow, Rashaat Job, Faldelah De Vries and many others. It was during these times that Irvin got involved in the following organizations operating in Manenberg in the 1980s and 1990s: Manenberg Action Committee, Manenberg Educational Movement, Manenberg Youth Movement, and the Manenberg Civic Association. Kinnes has an unwavering and deepening belief in the people of Manenberg. As he says, 'Its people are the embodiment of resilience and defiance.'⁴² Today, Irvin is a criminologist and still active in the community of Manenberg.

Shaheed Petersen was born in Manenberg in 1971 where he lived in a single bedroom house with his mother and other siblings. He is a former student activist and a member of the PMC. He related the story of how he was recruited into the ANC. 'I was recruited by a former ANC exile comrade Celeste Patel and under her tutelage I got to know the inner workings of the UDF and ANC within the Western Cape. I in turn recruited other hard core student activists who were not afraid to take up arms and make the government ungovernable.'⁴³ He has been an active member of the PMC since 2005 and played an instrumental role in leading many a mass march through the streets of Manenberg.

42. Interview with Irvin Kinnes, 9 March 2010.

43. Interview with Shaheed Petersen, 11 November 2007.

Cameron Williams was born in January 1958 in Strawberry Lane, Constantia.⁴⁴ He and his parents lived with his grandmother until he was eleven years old. He was the only child. His parents sold flowers in Constantia and his father worked as a machine operator at Metal Box, Maitland. He went to Constantia Primary School until Standard Four and the family had to relocate due to the Group Areas Act to Manenberg. The family settled into an upstairs flat (duplex unit) in Pam Walk, which had two sleeping rooms, a kitchen, lounge and bathroom. He completed his primary schooling years at Red River in 1970 and from 1971 – 1976 he attended Silverstream High. After matric he attended Hewat College of Education in Athlone and got involved in student politics, specifically the anti-Labour party campaign of the late 1970s.⁴⁵ In 1980 he got a teaching job at Manenberg High where he later became a member of the inner circle within Manenberg. Meeting new people, activists and other comrades was exciting. ‘At times a person will just tell you that you must be at a certain venue. When you got there a national comrade will address the meeting. Information got to you in various ways and the message was always...destabilise the community. Get the community behind you and let them see the government as the enemy. Let them see that what you are doing is for their interest and for the generations to come. Let the government know and realise that the community are in control and not them.’⁴⁶

Cammy, as he is known, was arrested by the security police due to his involvement in demonstrations. He was an active member of WECTU at Manenberg High. He is also a founding member of the MEDT and the PMC since 2005.⁴⁷

44. R.E. van der Ross, *Buy my flowers! : The story of Strawberry Lane, Constantia*, (Cape Town: Ampersand Press in association with the University of the Western Cape, 2007).

45. The anti-Labour Party campaign was initiated by supporters of the underground movement in Cape Town. Prof Richard van der Ross was the Labour Party leader when it was formed in 1965. It was a Coloured party. The party dissolved when the 1994 democratic elections occurred. Many of its members became National Party (NP) members.

46. Interview with Cameron Williams, 10 March 2010.

47. *Ibid.*

Selwyn Daniels was born in Woodstock in 1958. He is the eldest of six children who were all born in Woodstock in their rented house. Daniels' mother was working as a domestic worker and his father as a welder. At the age of nine years the family moved to Manenberg in Elsieskraal (near the Klipfontein Road) in 1968. The Daniels' family lived in a semi-detached cottage which had only two rooms and a bathroom. Daniels went to Easter Peak Primary School from 1968 – 1972 and he matriculated from Silverstream High School in 1977. After matric he studied at Hewat College of Education in Athlone where he got involved in teacher politics. He was also politically active within several structures within Manenberg such as WECTU, Manenberg Advice Office, the UDF and the MAC.

Daniels used to address students at public forums at Manenberg High during the turbulent 1980s mimicking Alan Boesak's voice. He left Manenberg High to take up a post as the area manager within the Western Cape Education Department. He too like the other progressive teachers used his political awareness in the classroom where they knowingly freed the mind of students. He says 'We used the education system to politicize our students; it had to be done at the time.' In 1988 Daniels was detained in Cape Town on his arrival from Zimbabwe for carrying banned literature in his luggage. Daniels was part of the inner circle leadership that met clandestinely at various locations in and outside of Manenberg.⁴⁸

48. Interview with Selwyn Daniels, 13 September 2010.

Emily Fairbairn,⁴⁹ a white female, was born in Hermanus in 1955 and was one of four sisters. She attended the local primary school in the area. At the age of ten her family left for Johannesburg where she attended the Waverley High School. She returned to Cape Town to complete her high school career at Rustenburg Girls High School in Rondebosch, Cape Town. Whilst in Johannesburg she became aware of the injustices of the time fairly quickly through the pass law raids whereby police targeted Africans without their documents. The raids and searches for passes indicated to her things were not fine in Johannesburg. Emily's political education was further enhanced through her aunt's involvement in the Black Sash movement of the 1960s. As a student at the University of the Cape Town, she witnessed first-hand the brutality of the security police in Cape Town near St George's Cathedral after a peaceful protest march in June 1972. Police decided to break up the march and charged at students, beating them. This later created an impetus in her fight against the apartheid government. She had comrades in the white leftist movement who included Jenny Schreiner and Desi Angelis. In the United Women's Congress (UWCO) she knew Mama Zihlangu, Zou Kota and within the general UDF movement she had interaction with amongst others Headley King, Daphne Williams, Jono de Vries, and Alan Roberts.

Emily's connection with Manenberg began when she took up a position at Manenberg High as a school teacher in 1979. She explains: 'My own sense of what was happening in the country fuelled me to come and teach at a school like Manenberg. I was opposed to gutter education and the teaching fraternity at Manenberg High was progressive and highly politicized. I felt at home.'⁵⁰ Her fellow teachers were Lawrence Haupner, Selwyn Daniels,

49. Interview with Emily Fairbairn, 12 March 2010.

50. *Ibid.*

Rashaat Job, Mickey Adams and students such as Mark ‘Parker’ Splinters, Mario Wanza, and others. She was also involved in the SACP underground structures, the WECTU and later SADTU. Fairbairn says that her involvement was different from the others, yet she recruited students at Manenberg High to the movement, one of them was Mark ‘Parker’ Splinter. She was seen as an outsider at all times. Her involvement, however, was of strategic nature for she convinced Wanza, Splinters and others to join the movement. She housed MK cadres at her house in Observatory at the time and she met in other structures in Cape Town around the central issues of mass mobilization of people to join civic organizations, the UDF and women’s organizations.⁵¹

Mark Splinters and Maqbool Moos were two pivotal role players in the anti-apartheid movement within Manenberg. However, they could not be contacted for interviews. Mark or Parker as he is known, works for the South African Police force and is highly ranked. He is still involved in Manenberg through connection with the PMC and the MEDT. He was pivotal in the 1980s and 1990s in the Manenberg civic movement and the establishment of the Manenberg People’s Centre. He grew up in Grieta Court, Manenberg. He was another member of the inner circle. He became the SRC chairperson in 1986 at Manenberg High.⁵²

Maqbool Moos was active in the 1980s in the communities of both Manenberg and Bonteheuwel. He is still in contact with many of the 1980s activists. He lived in Madge Court in Manenberg during the 1980s in an overcrowded one bedroom flat which had a bathroom, a kitchen and lounge area. He was a firebrand at school and his political maturity was evident for all to see. He was often fearless, dedicated to making fellow students and residents

51. Interview with Emily Fairbairn on 12 March 2010.

52. The information provided was based on many discussions with their comrades and friends, and fellow activists, such as Wanza, Munro, Shaheed Petersen and Joseph Aranes – an activist based in Bonteheuwel.

realise the injustices of apartheid. He too was another member of the inner circle within Manenberg during the turbulent 1980s. Maqbool is currently working for the South African Embassy in the United Arab Emirates (AUE) in Abu Dhabi.⁵³

Thurston Brown⁵⁴ was born in District Six in 1957 and after the forced removals the family moved to Bonteheuwel, a mere 7 km north of Manenberg. He attended primary school at Bramble Way and went to high school at Arcadia and Bonteheuwel High (1974 – 1975). In 1976 he was a first year student at the UWC. It was here that he was truly thrust in the political quagmire of the Soweto student uprising of 1976. Student politics at the time revolved around the ANC and Black Consciousness of Steve Biko. 'I felt aligned to the ANC movement and joined several student marches. I remember one specific march in Modderdam Road, where a squatter camp was demolished. Students marched in solidarity for the community.'⁵⁵

After receiving his teaching diploma he went to teach at Manenberg High. Brown is still teaching at Manenberg but he has strong views today on militancy in schools on how best to deal with social problems in the community.

53. The information provided was based on many discussions with their comrades and friends, and fellow activists, such as Wanza, Munro and Shaheed Petersen. I met Maqbool six months ago and was surprised to see him alive. I always thought he was killed by the security police. At the time of our meeting he met other activists and freedom fighters in the city especially those who operated in Bonteheuwel and Manenberg.

54. Interview with Thurston Brown, 18 March 2010. He was not a member of the inner circle. He was more conservative in his approach to the use of militancy at Manenberg High during the 1980s. His views changed over the passing years.

55. *Ibid.*

Out of all the activists interviewed only one was born in Manenberg, the rest were born all over the city of Cape Town. Some of them came to Manenberg when they were young and experienced the harsh realities of an apartheid township or ghetto as a result of forced removals taking place from the mid to late 1960s and 1970s in South Africa. Most of them cite this occurrence as significant moment in their lives as they moved into single or double storey flats, houses or cottages as described in the early parts of this chapter. Their experience of having to move to another place and leaving what they knew behind lingers still in their memories. All of them expressed this as a catalyst in their yearning to know why this happened to them.

Almost all of their parents were working class members of society who worked in factories, panel shops or selling fruit or vegetables and flowers. Whereas some of them went to English medium schools where they had come from – most of them now had to either adapt in going to schools in the neighbourhood which only had Afrikaans, which further fuelled their defiance in later years. A few of the activists still went to school outside Manenberg as their parents tried to hold on to their past.

Mickey Adams best describes his experience of moving to Manenberg for the first time when he and his brother had to take a train ride from Cape Town station to Manenberg, their new home. Upon their arrival at Nyanga station, he saw the triple storey flats (korre) for the first time. 'I just saw sand. Jy vriet sand. Slaap met sand. (You eat sand and you sleep with sand) There was no infrastructure. Everything was raw in our two-bedroomed flat in Joanna Court.'⁵⁶

56. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010.

Almost all activists interviewed say that the 1976 riots in Manenberg and surrounding areas were perhaps the single most unifying moments when they became politically aware of the struggle against apartheid. It is this one event that has shaped the activism of all of the interviewees. Each one of them had a different memory that has been woven into their psyche. Some of the older activists either left high school at the time, or were entering university – they were active in youth structures and used these structures to feed their minds on the anti-apartheid struggle. Mickey Adams remembers the 1976 riots well when a teargas cannister was shot into their house causing the curtains to be on fire in the front room and everyone in the house panicking and their lungs filled with smoke. Christine Jansen remembers the story of her grandmother who told her that the bus she was travelling in was set on fire by demonstrators. Thurston Brown became acutely aware of the Black Consciousness Movement of Steve Biko at UWC and was shaken by the reaction of the police to a mass protest of a squatter camp in Modderdam Road, near UWC, where the police demolished the squatter camp. Irvin Kinnes remembers the 1976 riots all too well too, as he remembered inhaling teargas and pepper spray as armed security police kept shooting at demonstrators in Manenberg Avenue. It was these images of buses being alight, local shops being looted, security police and army personnel shooting at children and parents, and the stone throwing of the militant youth of Manenberg and other neighbourhoods that remained with them.

Callinicos writes that ‘little understanding is expressed of the actual experience of black people living in a colonial and apartheid world...’⁵⁷ She also writes ‘life stories have the

57. L. Callinicos, ‘Testimonies and transitions: women negotiating the rural and urban in the mid-20th century’, in N. Gasa (eds), *Women in South African History*, (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2007). p.154.

power to provide vibrant insights into the wider context of society.⁵⁸ Callinicos in her biography of Oliver Tambo, points out that ‘biography...bestows agency. When we focus on one individual, we are given the opportunity to examine the particular circumstances, the life choices and values chosen in a particular life. It is here where personality, character and an inner life are revealed.’⁵⁹ Through the biographies of the many activists I interviewed, I hope to bring about a synoptic view into their lives, their living conditions, their experiences of the apartheid regime, their brutal experience of apartheid and their resistance and strength against a system that was prepared to keep people on the outside.

Most of the activists interviewed lived in small, inhumane and overcrowded houses. They had to fend for themselves. The memory of their parents having to get up early in the morning to go to work via the trains, buses or very often having to walk to work kept the fuel burning deep inside them. The rent boycotts in Manenberg in the early 1970s, the emergence of the Silvertree Youth Centre as a venue for change, the many sport clubs that was used as political fodder to aspiring militant youth in Manenberg spoke volumes of the kind of activism that took place there and this helped shape their politics.

One aspect that needs to be repeatedly mentioned is that Manenberg had always had a history of resistance, from the early days of the late 1960s when residents moved in to the 1980s. And later in the 1980s the involvement of outsiders, like Emily Fairbairn, Paul Joemat, Lawrence Haupner and others who recruited many of the activists to the movement, helped change the way students and teachers looked at the struggle against apartheid in Manenberg.

58. L. Callinicos, ‘Testimonies and transitions’, p. 153.

59. L. Callinicos, *Oliver Tambo: Beyond the Engeli Mountains* (Claremont: David Phillip, 2004). p.15.

The life histories show how individuals influenced each other with a network ultimately emerging. These short sketches point to how particular circumstances led to individuals making important choices about how they would respond and what values and ideals they came to embrace.

CONCLUSION

This chapter looked at the living conditions in Manenberg which later gave rise to revolts, to gangsterism and many other social ills. Manenberg is a working class community. The state knew what they were doing in boxing in people like this, but could not have anticipated the consequences of such ghettoisation. While the 1960s was a decade of political quietness, things would change in the 1970s and by the 1980s the spaces that were built to control the working class erupted.

Manenberg Township did not just evolve - it came about as part of the South African government's drive to enforce the Group Areas Act, by keeping Coloured, Indian and Africans away from the city centre, away from mixing with each other and to control the movement of the people. Residents in Manenberg lived under deplorable conditions with a high unemployment rate, poor housing conditions and a lack of resources and this gave a group of activists in Manenberg the opportunity to exploit this to their advantage. The apartheid government successfully scattered people to inhuman, barely livable townships, which lacked the basic requirements to live a decent life. It is these spatial developments all over South Africa that helped shaped a strong resistance movement inside South Africa, while black leaders were either imprisoned or in exile.

The chapter also had a look at early activism in Manenberg around issues such as high rent, poor housing conditions and access to resources. Through short life histories, this chapter has sought to

firstly identify key individuals in Manenberg's resistance history and, to provide some understanding as to how local conditions were crucial to their politicization. The local conditions could also spur these activists to make Manenberg free. In chapter two the focus will be on how they sought to accomplish this.

CHAPTER TWO

RESISTANCE IN MANENBERG DURING THE 1980s

Introduction

This chapter firstly looks at the ANC's strategy for mass mobilisation in the 1980s and it will then examine the resistance movement within Manenberg. It will explore the strategies and tactics used to make Manenberg a militarized zone. The chapter will be divided into three time periods (early 1980s, mid 1980s and the late 1980s), and it will focus on the protest actions and strategies used by various teachers, students and others. It will also try to answer the following question, how did the community activists interpret the ANC's call for mass mobilization in Manenberg?

Apartheid deprived the majority of people of South Africa of their constitutional rights as citizens of this country. It divided people, enforced draconian laws and sought to create divisions amongst the different racial groups. The apartheid government was successful in scattering people to inhuman, barely liveable townships, which lacked the basic requirements to live a decent life. It is these spatial developments all over South Africa that helped shaped a strong resistance movement inside South Africa, while black leaders were either imprisoned or in exile. It gave the working class of this country a vehicle to fight against the state and to make the change for a better future. Manenberg was such a community and through a young and vibrant group of students and teachers for a while, Manenberg became free. In the 1980s marches, school boycotts, chalk-downs, rent boycotts, consumer boycotts, and stayaways were the order of the day in South Africa and Manenberg echoed this pattern. Bundy states that teargas, beatings, and detentions provided a crash course in class struggle.¹ These violent tactics used by the security police increased on a daily basis in the mid 1980s. The use of orators like Desmond Tutu and Alan Boesak helped garner the support of the masses and they

had a way of motivating people into action. A strategy that the underground movement in the Western Cape employed was to use high profile members of the movement to visit communities that were sympathetic towards them. Manenberg was no different.²

Mass mobilisation methodology of the ANC

Jeffrey points out that ‘during the period 1961 – 1973, the aim of mass mobilization, as reflected in the ANC document *Operation Mayebuye*, was to generate, in conjunction with Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), an armed insurrection of the people, aimed at the forcible overthrow of the apartheid state.’³ She then writes after this failure, the ANC shifted its attention to a concept of a people’s war model. In 1984, the ANC adopted the idea of the four pillars of people’s war, which included: ‘the activities of underground structures (cells, street and area committees, people’s courts); united mass action; armed action by Umkhonto we Sizwe; and international isolation of South Africa.’⁴

The ANC aimed to link up with the generation of activists in youth and student bodies, in the trade unions, in township civics whose protest campaigns were redefining anti-apartheid policies. Further the publicity of MK attacks was to act as a secondary means to deepen mass mobilization.⁵ Exiled ANC leader, Oliver Tambo wrote in 1978 in his Politico-Military

1. Bundy, ‘Street Sociology and Pavement Politics’, p.27.

2. Struggle veterans like Johnny Issel and Trevor Manuel were among the high profile UDF and ANC members informing and alerting activists about the strategies of the movement. See P. Green, *Choice, Not Fate, The Life and Times of Trevor Manuel*, (Johannesburg: Penguin Books, 2008)

3. Jeffrey, ‘Mass Mobilisation’, in *Spotlight*, no. 7/92, p.3.

4. *Ibid*, p.4.

5. <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?doc=ancdocs/misc/trc05.html> - The ANC: Stages of Struggle and Policy Foundations, 1960-1994.

Strategy Commission report, 'The armed struggle must be based on, and grow out of, mass political support and it must eventually involve all our people. All military activities must at every stage be guided by and determined by the need to generate political mobilization, organisation and resistance, with the aim of progressively weakening the enemy's grip on the reins of political, economic, social and military power, by a combination of political and military action.'⁶After this report, protest action increased throughout South Africa, culminating into protest action against the tricameral parliament initiative by the regime.

The ANC started with massive mobilization strategies throughout the country. From early September 1984, in response to attempts to increased rent and electricity levies by the revived Black Local Authorities introduced by the Pretoria regime, an unprecedented united front of trade union, political, civic, youth and student organizations had mobilized against these moves; apartheid was in a state of general crisis, and the strategic initiative had unmistakably shifted towards forces for change. There was a growing sense that the country was approaching a crossroads.⁷ This strategy seemed to have filtered throughout South Africa where cadres, activists and community leaders took it upon themselves to protest. Jeffrey, however, mentions that there was a downside to not participating in mass actions from residents and community members, which often resulted in people being necklaced through kangaroo courts, which were prominent in the 1984-86 cycle of unrest.⁸ Mass action often brought about clashes with the police resulting in injury and deaths. An example of this is when Alan Boesak organised a march from Athlone stadium to Pollsmoor prison in Cape

6. <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?doc=ancdocs/misc/trc05.html> - The ANC: Stages of Struggle and Policy Foundations, 1960-1994.

7. *Ibid.*

8. Jeffrey, 'Mass mobilisation', p.8.

Town on 28 August 1985. Boesak and other UDF leaders were arrested and the crowd reacted and 28 civilians were killed by the security police. This resulted in several clashes with the police with two residents from Manenberg being killed.⁹

In 1985, the ANC wrote a pamphlet entitled 'Take the Struggle to the White Areas.' It provided insight into the ANC's thinking in that the masses had to venture into white areas to demonstrate their plight and attack certain white institutions. The pamphlet made reference to strengthening workers' organizations and engaging in united action in the factories, mines, farms and suburbs; spreading the consumer boycott to all areas of the country; forming underground units and combat groups in places of work and taking such actions as sabotage in the factories, mines, farms and suburbs, and disrupting the enemy's oil, energy, transport, communication and other vital systems; systematic attack against the army and police and the so-called area defence units in the white areas; and well-planned raids on the armouries and dumps of the army, police, farmers and so on to secure arms for units.¹⁰

Stephen Davis explains how the ANC in exile over a period of 30 years tried to direct the liberation struggle inside South Africa. One key strategy to mobilise was the use of radio broadcasts. However, this created problems between the two alliance partners. Davies writes: 'I argue that leaders within the ANC and SACP generally agreed that radio was an essential component of armed struggle, even if they disagreed about how best to put its perceived potential in good use.'¹¹The radio referred to is Radio Freedom, which broadcasted from

9. Fullard, 'The State and Political Struggle', pp.39-40.

10. <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?doc=ancdocs/misc/trc05.html> - The ANC: Stages of Struggle and Policy Foundations, 1960-1994.

11. S. Davis, 'The African National Congress, its Radio, its Allies and Exile,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 35, Number 2, June 2009, p.349.

Lusaka, Zambia. It is the same medium which Oliver Tambo used extensively throughout the 1980s to encourage, to warn and to mobilise the comrades back in South Africa as well as those living in exile. 'In the absence of any obvious 'underground' counterpart in South Africa, Radio Freedom played a critical role in this new era of 'armed propaganda'¹² did much to build the organisation's appeal to the masses during the early 1980s. Activists in Manenberg used these messages to recruit members and to strengthen others. These men and women were buoyed by a statement from the banned ANC leadership in exile which stated that there was a possibility of a guerrilla war within South Africa and that it called upon members of the youth and other militants to take up arms and establish no-go areas close to the state. The statement read: 'Make apartheid unworkable! Make the country ungovernable!'¹³ The same radio station was used to propagate the goal of making South Africa ungovernable in 1985.

Anti-apartheid campaign: the tricameral parliament

Tambo was acutely aware of what was happening on the ground within South Africa. He had to build the movement into a populist movement whereby all people would join it. Tambo and the ANC was mindful of what Botha at the time was doing in respect to the tricameral parliament.¹⁴ For him the regime wanted to maintain a system that would continue to rule the lives of the masses and to exclude them from decision making powers. According to Tambo this system to rule and govern the masses, included organs of central and provincial

12. S. Davis, 'The African National Congress, its Radio, its Allies and Exile,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 35, Number 2, June 2009, p.349.

13. *Ibid.*

14. The tricameral parliament was instituted whereby a parliament was created which had three separately elected chambers, namely, a 178-member House of Assembly (white), a 85-member House of Representatives (Coloureds) and a 45- member House of Delegates (Indians). Each chamber would have power over their 'own affairs' but Botha was elected State President who had all the decision making powers and hence the tricameral parliament was called a puppet Parliament. Massive opposition to the tricameral parliament continued throughout the 1980s.

government, the army and the police, the judiciary, the Bantustan administrations, the community councils, the local management and local affairs committees.¹⁵ Tambo then called on all cadres to ‘attack and demolish, as part of the struggle to put an end to racist minority rule in our country.’¹⁶ Tambo used words such as ‘We must hit the enemy where it is weakest.’¹⁷ He also claimed small victories such as the so called Coloured Persons Representative Council (CRC)¹⁸ ceasing to exist as a result of extensive mobilization. At the same time as this call to attack apartheid outposts, inside South Africa, the UDF was established and launched in August 1983. Tambo and his call to denounce the tricameral parliament elections were deemed pivotal in the lives of the activists in Manenberg. It was the trigger that activists were looking for to actively recruit residents to the underground movement and therefore not vote in the upcoming tricameral elections. Activists in Manenberg adopted the four pillars of the people’s war.

Faldielah de Vries remembers how activists used to campaign in Manenberg against the tricameral elections in 1983. The inner circle (the group of activists responsible for mobilizing the community) held several secret meetings about organizing and planning mass action in Manenberg and surrounding areas. She recalls: ‘we would plan mass action, marches, strategies for the rent boycotts and we were planning public meetings where we would encourage people not to vote for the tricameral parliament.’¹⁹ At a meeting at the Catholic Church also in Manenberg Avenue, she addressed the community on why they

15. <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?doc=ancdocs/misc/trc05.html> - The ANC: Stages of Struggle and Policy Foundations, 1960-1994.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*

18. The Coloured Persons Representative Council was a co-opted government structure which would be authorized to legislate for Coloureds in areas as social welfare, education and local government.

<http://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv01538/04lv01828/05lv01829/06lv01934.htm>

19. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

should not vote. She and other leaders had to be inventive and disguise their messages as they never knew if the security police were in the audience. She recalls that: ‘At the time we could not encourage people openly not to vote. I used a tactic whereby I would explain that there was no money for the tricameral parliament and that they would be doing nothing for us as coloured people. I always use to end by saying, I am not sure about you but I would not vote for them.’²⁰

As already mentioned in chapter one, residents in Manenberg were already highly politically organised around working class conditions, i.e., issues around high rent payment for poor housing developments, unemployment, access to resources, crime and poverty. The early 1980s were no different and activists had to now mobilize residents against the tricameral parliament elections and the separate development it prescribed. According to Seekings, Boesak preached unity to popularise the UDF: ‘in order to do this we need a united front...’²¹ Boesak urged communities to say no to apartheid, to defy the tricameral parliament elections, but he wanted a unified response. In Manenberg activists tried various approaches to recruit, to educate and to politicise.

Mobilising activists through sporting clubs in Manenberg

Manenberg activists used one ploy to galvanise support for the movement in the early 1980s: they infiltrated the sporting fraternity in Manenberg. Mickey Adams and Irvin Kinnes (both inner circle members) played influential roles here. Mickey’s focus within the inner circle was getting involved in the education and sports sectors in Manenberg. ‘The motto at this

20. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

20. *Ibid.*

21. Seekings, *UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa*, p.49.

period was ‘no normal sport in an abnormal society’ and we believed in this.’²² Mickey recalls that the home of soccer in Manenberg was called the ‘Greens’²³ and it was a council owned sports field, big enough to host several soccer games and netball games at once. At the time it had no fence around the boundaries and the CRC promised finance to erect a wall around it. Mickey, at the time was the union chairman of soccer in Manenberg, and he called all the soccer clubs together to discuss this point. The CRC’s representative for Manenberg, a Mr. Petersen, who lived in Primrose Park and played football for Kiewiet Spurs, allocated money for the Cape Flats Union, a soccer union. Heideveld Football Club had already received funding to erect a wall around their main sports ground, but in Manenberg the union decided against it.²⁴ Mickey explains, ‘I brought all players together to make a political decision to either accept the money to finance the erection of the wall around the Greens or not. People like Irvin Kinnes (representing the Cape Action League), Harry Fischer, and Mr. Harding all agreed with me not to accept the money. We did not want money from the CRC at all in Manenberg. No money, no fence, and certainly no Berlin wall were [sic] our motto at the time. However, not everyone was happy with our decision.’²⁵

Mickey was a rebel and his knowledge about the ANC became evident in his beloved Benfica Football Club, where everyone knew that the club was more than just a football club. It was a political home for players. Mickey also recalls how the sporting fraternity in Manenberg took part in all the mass marches and boycotts in Manenberg as part of the mass mobilization strategy instigated by the inner circle.

22. Seekings, *UDF: A history of the United Democratic Front in South Africa*, p.49.

23. The Greens, is the name of the sporting field in Manenberg, it is flanked by Vygiekraal Road, (east), (south) Rd, (north) Rd and Manenberg Avenue (west). It houses 10 soccer fields and several netball courts. It is the also the venue where Nelson Mandela address residents of Manenberg in the run up to the first democratic elections in 1994. Shamefully, residents who supported the National Party stoned his motorcade as they protested against his visit to Manenberg.

24. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010.

25. *Ibid.*

Township revolts, the mid 1980s

Seekings argues that there was a shift towards militancy in 1985 within the structures of the UDF. In a statement by its leadership, the UDF felt that ‘the anger that is exploding all over the country bears testimony to our people’s readiness for mass action, and we must be committed to taking this forward.’²⁶ Swilling points out that the first few months in 1985 saw the political landscape change as township revolts took place almost everywhere, he terms it ‘urban civil warfare’²⁷ which basically led to the government declaring a State of Emergency in July 1985. ‘The State of Emergency was part of the state’s attempt to buttress the powers and extend the utilization of the security forces in the townships.’²⁸ Resistance in townships grew and was fuelled all the time by the security forces being present. The State of Emergency failed to bring order in townships. In fact it did the opposite and this led to a second State of Emergency being declared in 1986.²⁹ Swilling writes that it was also during this period where UDF activists began organizing ‘alternative organs of people’s power’³⁰ and it started towards the end of 1985. ‘The structures of ‘people’s power’ involved sophisticated forms of organisation based on street and area committees.’³¹ This was duplicated in Manenberg township and elsewhere but the leadership was detained and hunted down by the security police.

26. Seekings, *The UDF, A history of the United Democratic Front in South Africa*, p. 128.

27. Swilling, ‘Popular Struggles in South Africa,’ p.103.

28. *Ibid.*, p.103.

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*, p. 104

School boycotts, formations of SRCs and teachers organisations

The period between 1985 and 1988 witnessed unprecedented violence and mass mobilization. Fullard echoes this, by stating: ‘In brief, the years 1985, 1986 and 1989 saw the highest levels of public street protest and ‘unrest’ in the greater Cape Town area.’³² Hyslop argues that in the Western Cape ‘a network of Parent Teacher Student Associations (PTSAs) was established which was largely responsible for creating a greater degree of student-community solidarity than was experienced elsewhere in the country.’³³ Political alliances with parents were crucial for the students’ movement at the time. The Students of Young Azania (SOYA) argued ‘we must build representative student organisations to work through our problems with our parents and progressive teachers.’³⁴ Faldielah de Vries, an inner circle member, showed a keen interest in the affairs of the youth in Manenberg. She recalls how she and others confronted the three high school principals and teachers in the area, who were not cooperative with the anti-apartheid sentiment in Manenberg and who were signaling out student leadership to the security police. ‘We engaged them like we engaged with any other member of society who did not share the same views as us, often we convinced them to join us.’³⁵ She also recalls several incidents of police brutality in Manenberg, such as the killing of two kids whilst looting a shop in Vistula Avenue as a result of the boycotts and unrest in the area. It was the violent actions of the state in fact, that became the most effective agent of unity between parents and students.

The 1980s were no different to that of the 1970s in Manenberg; however, more militant students came to the fore. At this point Christene Jansen, Gail Reagon, Ashraf Kallis, Owen

32. Fullard, ‘The State and Political Struggle’, p.26.

33. Hyslop, ‘School Student Movement, State Education Policy 1972 - 87’, p.199.

34. Bundy, ‘Street Sociology and Pavement Politics’, p.318.

35. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

Munro and others had left Manenberg High though some of them remained active in Manenberg via community structures. But in their absence other leaders took over such as Mario Wanza, Maqbool Moos, Faghie Johnson, Mark Splinters, Wayne Reagon, Shireen Daniels, Graham Geduldt, Jeanette Isaacson, Nippie Moses and then there were some who lived outside Manenberg but had great influence in the running of campaigns such as Mr. Paul Joemat. Joemat in fact played a pivotal role in educating activists in Manenberg about the ANC. There were other students from all the three high schools, which were Manenberg High, Silverstream High and Phoenix High, who were very militant such as Shaheed Petersen, 'Uier', Yvonne, Celeste Patel, Quinton Michaels, 'Ali', Riefaat Hattas, 'Kardoef', Watson, Pang, Shahied Gardien, Dion Brink. These were but a few prominent and behind the scene activists who dedicated their lives for the struggle.³⁶

Hyslop also mentions that at the same time when PTSAs were established, 'a mass based local teacher's organisation, the Western Cape Teachers Union (WECTU) was formed to draw teachers in to political action.'³⁷ Bundy states that: 'Students found larger numbers of teachers and principals supporting (or at least not obstructing) them: a tendency which found organisational expression in the formation of WECTU.'³⁸ Mickey Adams and some of the militant teachers at Manenberg High belonged to WECTU. But other teachers differed with this approach, such as Thurston Brown, the current school principal at Manenberg High, who recalls his role in the 1980s as an educator at the time. 'I was not happy with the way other educators were using learners to fight their struggle. I was of the opinion that learners had to be in school and not in the street burning tyres. I felt that if you educate a child, it would

36. Interview with Mickey Adams, 10 November 2007.

37. Hyslop, 'School Student Movement, State Education Policy 1972 – 87', p.183.

38. Bundy, 'Street Sociology and Pavement Politics', p.320.

liberate the child and in so doing it will have a domino effect in the community.’³⁹ He often disagreed with fellow teachers about this. ‘We use to have lively debates and arguments in our teachers meetings at the time. I was often mistakenly identified as anti-struggle, yet I came from a working class community just like Manenberg. I came from Bonteheuwel.’⁴⁰ This shows complexities in the debates around the school boycotts.

Mickey saw conservative teachers as enemies of the liberation movement. ‘There were coloured teachers who were in a comfort zone, who had access to education and university, who closed their eyes to the realities in the classroom and beyond. I considered them as part of the enemy and we differed a lot in the approach to teaching the kids. We never asked students to fight for us, we educated them. I was clear in my engagement with the kids. I gave them their rightful access to information. We got the kids through matric within the apartheid system.’⁴¹ He said that some of the teachers did not want to commit class suicide and that some of them were sympathetic to the ideals of the CRC.

Manenberg High was at the epicenter of the struggle initiatives taking place in Manenberg as many of the inner circle were based at the school. Many of the planned activities took place at the school. Brown does agree with Mickey that there were many students who were politically mature and aware of the history of the struggle.

Wanza displayed a youthful exuberance and passion for the struggle and he was often invited

39. Interview with Thurston Brown, 18 March 2010.

40. *Ibid.*

41. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010.

to student meetings at various high schools in Athlone and Mowbray and he also became active in school meetings with the other two high schools in Manenberg, namely Silverstream High and Phoenix High. He was inspired by Gail Reagon, who was the SRC leader at Manenberg High in the early 1980s. His memory of his recruitment into the movement is a bit sketchy: 'I was a reluctant recruit but soon was exposed to how things were done.'⁴² It is here that he was exposed to "Education before Liberation", to SACOS's slogans around 'No sport in an abnormal society.' Wanza failed Standard Nine in 1984 and repeated it again the following year. At this time, he was already involved in the UDF. 'We met in various places at the time, to avoid being picked up by the security police. When the UDF was formed in 1983, I became the youth's representative for the education sector and I had to manage most of the Cape Flats area. '...it is here where I was involved in student politics.'⁴³

SRC's were established in schools. This was a sure way of getting political messages to students. Wanza, Faghie, Owen Munro served on the SRC at Manenberg High either at the same time or at various times. Maqbool Moos and Parker served during the mid to late 1980s. The use of slogans on school buildings and at public meetings in Manenberg became another weapon to garner support from the masses. Among the slogans were: 'Liberation Before Education', 'an Injury to one is an injury to all', 'UDF Unites, Apartheid Divides', 'We Stand by the UDF', 'WE stand by SANCO', 'Release Section 29 Prisoners', 'Forward to People's Power', 'Don't Vote in Apartheid Elections', 'Defend, Consolidate, Advance,' 'Fighting Apartheid from protest to challenge', 'Boycott Elections', 'Forward to Freedom', 'Welcome Home Combatants', 'Unban ANC', 'State of Emergency or State of Terror', 'Long Live the

42. Interview with Mario Wanza, 22 February 2010.

43. *Ibid.*

UDF: Ban Apartheid’, ‘Kill Apartheid not Detainees’, ‘The People Shall Govern’, ‘They Will Never Kill Us All’, ‘We Won’t Fight in the SADF’. Bundy mentions that the slogan ‘liberation before education’ was cited throughout rallies and boycotts during the period of July and December 1985.⁴⁴ Already we could see activists in Manenberg using mass mobilisation strategies orchestrated by the UDF through its affiliates and Tambo’s ANC. Student mass meetings, secret cell meetings, court meetings, and street meetings to educate, inform and politicize the communities into action, took place. ‘Upon hearing the message from Tambo on Radio Freedom, we planned and immediately Manenberg was different. We made sure that it would burn,’ said Mario.⁴⁵ Mickey echoes this sentiment, ‘we met, we planned and not only did we disrupt the schools, we targetted state establishments. Since the announcement, the ANC was truly inside Manenberg.’⁴⁶

Bundy argues that students played an important part of the struggle in the 1980s. ‘Student and youth movements consciously sought ways of linking with other organisations and other campaigns.’⁴⁷ An example of this was on 17 September 1985, where ‘mass action by students, teachers, parents and children in a symbolic re-occupation of the closed schools, was the high water mark of this development. It also provided a dramatic cameo of community militancy.’⁴⁸ Mukesh Vassen argues that, ‘It is obvious that every recent period of major upheaval (1976-7; 1980; 1984-86) has not only been initiated by the youth and student, but that they remained at the helm of each of them.’⁴⁹ In Manenberg this was definitely the case, as students took leadership roles during the mid 1980s, with the likes of Wanza, Faghie,

44. Bundy, ‘Street Sociology and Pavement Politics’, p.319.

45. Interview with Mario Wanza, 10 November 2007.

46. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010.

47. Bundy, ‘Street Sociology and Pavement Politics’, p.319.

48. *Ibid*, p.319.

49. M. Vassen, ‘Beyond the Barricades: The 1985 schools boycott and the vicissitude of the Athlone Students’ Action Committee (ASAC)’, (Unpublished Honours Thesis, UCT, 1995), p.28.

Parker and Bulle. Teachers began to express themselves more politically in the classrooms. Bundy says of this period that ‘alternative education and awareness programmes took place during class boycotts in 1985.’⁵⁰ He also argues that the state of emergency issued in 1985 was perhaps a catalyst for what was to come. Students and teachers assessed the state of emergency as: ‘This apparent show of strength by the state is merely the last kick of a dying animal.’⁵¹

During the period 1985 to 1989 MK operatives were extensively active within the Western Cape. They were, Fullard explains, ‘made up of externally based members infiltrated into the region for varying time periods and a locally based clandestine membership.’⁵² Fullard indicates that ‘MK cadres conducted crash courses for eager volunteers inside the country. Some of these recruits had sketchy political understanding of the nature of the struggle in comparison with those cadres who had gone through the intensive political and military training provided in camps in exile. Some supporters had loose connections with MK units, and drifted in and out of structures; they were never thoroughly under the discipline of the ANC and MK, yet commanders on the ground sometimes found their contributions indispensable.’⁵³ Shaheed Petersen and his small militant grouping were not trained outside the borders of South Africa as most ANC cadres, but inside Manenberg. ‘We got trained in people’s backyards, how to throw a hand grenade, how many seconds it would take to detonate and the timing of the throw was all important.’⁵⁴ Bundy writes that there were thousands in Cape Town who would learn how to make a petrol bomb as mentioned above. ‘...the street sociology of taunting armed soldiers; the pavement politics of pamphlet

50. Bundy, ‘Street Sociology and Pavement Politics’, p.319.

51. *Ibid.*, p.323.

52. Fullard, ‘The State and Political Struggle,’ p.103.

53. Fullard, ‘The State and Political Struggle,’ p.103.

54. Interview with Shaheed Petersen, 11 November 2007.

distribution and slogan painting; the geography of safe houses and escape routes; and the grammar and dialectics of under-cover operations.⁵⁵

Activism in Manenberg took a serious turn as some of them became radical and militant. Petersen mentions that they used self made petrol bombs, threw stones and burnt tyres. Almost every day mass protests took place.⁵⁶ Whilst the one grouping MASCO organised mass marches through the streets of Manenberg to voice their anger at being kept in the township like animals, the other MAC grouping used these marches to attack the security police in their casspirs and police vehicles. Adams reflects that at the same time of the formation of WECTU in 1985, MASCO and the MAC was formed. Adams explains the reasons behind the formation of these bodies. It was all about recruiting students in the fight against one common enemy Apartheid and to an extent it was also used as a front for the ANC operations within Manenberg. There was no normal schooling in 1985 during the first State of Emergency and a call for no final exam to be written was adopted and accepted by most teachers and students.⁵⁷

Mickey recalls this period where he and other teachers refused to invigilate the students during the final exams. The South African Defence Force patrolled the school during the final exam period as other students wrote.⁵⁸ The slogan 'liberation before education' became meaningful during this period of the year-end exams. Hundreds of students refused to write their final exams. At Manenberg High there was a heavy police presence on school during the period of the exams.⁵⁹

55. Bundy, 'Street Sociology and Pavement Politics', p.321.

56. Interview with Shaheed Petersen, 11 November 2007.

57. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010.

58. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010.

59. A personal recollection.

Petersen and others would drive around at night and set tyres alight throughout all major streets in Manenberg. ‘We drove in a light brown Mercedes Benz with tyres and petrol in the boot. When we did not see tyres burning we would stop and place tyres in the road and set it alight and then move along. The community never stopped us. They supported us. It was all flames, fumes and screams.’⁶⁰ Petersen said of this time ‘we did everything in sync, there was no real ill discipline in our group and we knew where we stacked our petrol, our tyres and our bottles. As soon as the casspirs patrolled the area we retreated and retrieved our petrol bombs and we would throw it at them and set up barricades in the streets for the casspirs to stop, so that we could stone them and throw petrol bombs at them.’⁶¹ As soon as Petersen wore his trademark blue overall and balaclava, students in Manenberg Avenue used this as a signal to start burning tyres in Manenberg Avenue. In August 1985 he climbed on top of the Rent Office in Manenberg Avenue and threw a petrol bomb down the chimney setting it alight. Later that same evening he and others tried to petrol bomb another council facility, called the Manenberg bath house, near the swimming pool in the Manenberg Avenue.⁶²

Fairbairn also remembers how Manenberg students after seeing Guguletu going up in smoke, would likewise do the same in Manenberg. The two communities were closely knit. ‘Whilst the security forces saw smoke in Manenberg they were dispatched to our side giving relief to Guguletu, who was harassed by the police. This was done strategically from our students. The same would happen if the security forces were surrounding Silverstream and Phoenix High Schools, students from Manenberg High would set on a march in support of their fellow students – inevitably the security forces met students in the Avenue and clashes would happen.’⁶³

60. Interview with Shaheed Petersen, 11 November 2007.

61. *Ibid.*

62. *Ibid.*

63. Interview with Emily Fairbairn, 10 February 2010.

Wanza fondly remembers the inner circle meetings. ‘At the time of these secret meetings, we had to hide ourselves, we could not freely move around Manenberg. We used teacher’s vehicles to go and mobilize students from other schools such as South Peninsula, Athlone High and others.’⁶⁴ Mickey said ‘we knew what was in store for us, yet we continued on this path. We hardly slept at home. It was tough at first but you got use to it.’⁶⁵ The inner circle members became known to the security forces and had to constantly be on the move. They used simple methods to disguise them from the police from changing clothes every day, to wearing clothes inside out, and pretending to be Muslim by wearing a fez and a scarf while some of them were being driven out of school in different vehicles. Wanza echoes this and said that they were prepared for anything and the way the students at Manenberg, Silverstream and Phoenix High responded to the call for liberation, for freedom made it worthwhile. ‘We burnt hundreds of yellow pages in a show of solidarity against the pending Springbok tour games in 1984’⁶⁶ Faghie, Wanza, Mickey, Cammy and Mr. Fortune all remember the burning of the yellow pages incident. It was an event that galvanised everyone present. It was a show of students taking up issues that had an impact on the wider society at the time.

Following these incidents there was sporadic fighting and clashes with the police in Manenberg. Most of the interviewees mentioned that at one point or another they suspected fellow students and teachers of being informers. Petersen recalls a story of how they found out that the former president of the Manenberg Residents Association and police reservist was a threat to them. ‘We knew that he knew about our activities, we targetted him but he

64. Interview with Mario Wanza, 7 November 2007.

65. Interview with Mickey Adams, 9 November 2007.

66. Interview with Mario Wanza, 7 November 2007.

was always illusive. I was on the hit list of the police at the time and I was smuggled out of Manenberg. I resurfaced in Kensington.’⁶⁷The militant group targetted other informants in Manenberg where a police man’s house was petrol bombed and a Silverstream High student suspected of being a police informer were almost necklaced. ‘A tyre was placed around his neck and petrol was poured over him, the students were baying for his blood, but the school principal at Silverstream High managed to rescue the boy,’ explained Petersen.⁶⁸ It would have been Manenberg’s first necklacing.

There were incidents where teachers and students were picked up by the security forces such as Riefaat Hattas, who testified before the TRC of his treatment by the police. Riefaat, 28 years old at the time of testifying before the TRC, spoke about the torture he endured as a student at Manenberg police station. He was released soon thereafter unlike countless others who were detained for undisclosed periods based on Section 29 and Section 50 under the State of Emergency period.⁶⁹Manenberg was on fire. The inner circle members had succeeded in their job in making Manenberg ungovernable and recruiting more members to its fold. Hattas talking before the TRC said the following: ‘when we got instructions via MK structures to declare full-scale war, we took action 24 hours a day.’⁷⁰

In another close encounter, Mickey mentions that they met at the homes of educators like Selwyn, Buckton, Job and Cammy. One such meeting was held on a Saturday morning to plan mass action at Manenberg High at Cammy’s house in Strandfontein. ‘We discussed

67. Interview with Shaheed Petersen, 11 November 2007.

68. *Ibid.*

69. <http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/special/children/hattas.htm> – 22 May 1997 (Youth Hearings – Riefaat Hattas).

70. *Ibid.*

issues around the way forward at the school, how to plan a boycott and how to manage strained relationships with other teachers at our school.’⁷¹He explains how the following day, three teachers that were present at the meeting were arrested by the security police. They were Lillian Buckton, Selwyn Daniels and Cheryl Boer. These teachers were detained for 90 days without trial as was the common practice of the state at the time. Mickey’s wife was contacted by a fellow teacher’s wife warning them that the security police were on their way to arrest him. ‘I managed to escape and moved into Mitchell’s Plain and spent about nine months away from home.’⁷²

Support for the ANC in the Western Cape was traditionally weak as opposed to the support in the Eastern Cape, but slowly but surely the ANC became popular. ‘In some cases, youth / student support for the ANC rose directly from groupings affiliated with the UDF, with an explicitly ‘charterist’ position.’⁷³ Wanza helped spread the word about the ANC and was instrumental in setting up youth and education sectors on the Cape Flats. He speaks of clandestine meetings that took place in Athlone, the Quaker Peace Centre in Mowbray, Samaj Centre in Gatesville and in Bokmakierie. ‘It was us who spray painted our school walls, vibracrete walls in Manenberg Avenue, with slogans and Mandela’s face. I was never picked by the security police.’⁷⁴

Since there was so much unrest within Manenberg, Guguletu and Heideveld, the Manenberg Police Station became a Joint Operational Centre (JOC). Its sole purpose was to crush the revolutionary threat. Fullard points out that the Manenberg Police Station was used during

71. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010.

72. *Ibid.*

73. Bundy, ‘Street Sociology and Pavement Politics’, p.321.

74. Interview with Mario Wanza, 7 November 2007.

1985 as a JOC, especially during the Trojan Horse incident on 15 October 1985. The station is situated at the Klipfontein Road entrance to Manenberg and next to Guguletu and Heideveld another coloured township. As in Alexandra, outside Sandton, Johannesburg – the security forces easily blocked off entrances to these townships and could easily raid houses and set on counter insurgency moves into these three townships.⁷⁵ At the amnesty hearings before the TRC in 1997, several of the leadership of the Public Order Police such as Brigadier Christiaan Loedolff (he was a major in 1985), and Colonel Cornelius Adolf Janse Odendaal testified that they operated from the Manenberg Police Station. Loedolff confirms this before the hearing. ‘Myself and the Commanding Officer of the South African Police and the South African Defence Force contingent, were tasked with unrest control in a particular area, planned from a joint operational centre in Manenberg and we operated from that centre.’⁷⁶ Fullard mentions that the overall tendency of the police was to ‘characterise crowd control as a para-military function.’⁷⁷ Activists in Manenberg relate how they were continuously tracked, searched for and harassed by the security police operating from the Manenberg Police Station. But activists had a counter strategy in the advent of being picked up. Activists in Manenberg received coaching on how best to deal with the security police when arrested. Faldielah relates a story about how two human rights lawyers from the Legal Resources [sic] Centre from Cape Town, Leanne Delahunt and Ms Fortune, gave them tips on how to deal with the security police if they were arrested. ‘We gave them [lawyers] power of attorney in case any one of us were detained or killed.’⁷⁸ A strategy employed was that they had ‘to give the state exactly what they knew already. And to always sign a statement by putting our signatures at the last word of the document, so that the police could not add

75. Fullard, ‘The State and Political Struggle’, p. 47.

76. <http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/special/trojan/loed.htm> - Loedolff appearing before the TRC on 21 May 1997 at Athlone

77. Fullard, ‘The State and Political Struggle’, p.28.

78. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

anything further to the statement.⁷⁹ Faldielah and Mickey knew the unintended consequences of being part of the struggle: it meant not being able to raise your children, having to flee the country, having to endure constant scrutiny of your movements, having to be unsure if your family was taken care of.

Not only were students and teachers targets of the security police, but ordinary residents who were deemed to be propagating anti-apartheid notions. Faldielah recalls a close call for her when she was in danger of being picked up by the security police. ‘In a planned meeting in the Elsieskraal hall in Manenberg in 1986, I was due to attend, but for some reason could not go, at that very meeting two security police officials were present. Upon realizing this, Mrs. Ruqieha Magemann took over the meeting and changed the agenda from speaking about the planned rent boycott to how to survive economically in the mid 1980s, whilst the country was enduring economic sanctions.’⁸⁰ Faldielah recalls that the following morning Mrs. Magemann was picked up by the security police at her home and taken away for questioning. ‘Mrs. Magemann told me that she was asked about the leadership in Manenberg in exchange for money. She never told them anything.’⁸¹ But the real joy for Faldielah was that even when leaders were detained or otherwise engaged, there was always someone else taking up the leadership role and continuing the battle.

Part of mass mobilisation strategy formulated by the inner circle members was to capture the young minds of students. In the guise of a cultural event held at the Silvertree Youth Centre in the heart of Manenberg, student leaders from Manenberg High promoted the agenda of the

79. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

80. *Ibid.*

81. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

ANC. A video of the event was taken and simply called 'Manenberg SSS: Cultural Day.'⁸²In the video, student leader Maqbool addressed the group of students gathered by calling for greater involvement in the fight against apartheid. Students from the various classes had to make a banner, sing a song and read a poem for the detainees, for Mandela and others and for freedom. Not too far away were several of the inner circle members watching over proceedings such as Owen Munro, Mario Wanza, Mark Splinters, and Mickey Adams. In the video students are reminded of the atrocities caused by the regime. People are urged to join the movement and make Manenberg ungovernable. Revolutionary songs were sung to spur everyone on. 'I was amazed at high levels of maturity from some of these students and how they understood complex working class issues, such as poverty, high rent, overcrowdedness, unemployment, housing and gutter education,' said Mickey.⁸³

Faldielah explains her involvement in the inner circle and sheds some light on the dynamics of the various camps and strategies discussed and implemented by them. She was active in the civic movement and played a role in the area committee under the auspices of the UDF and the ANC. 'Our role in this committee was to coordinate and organise events. It was always a collective strategy which included planning and having a programme of action for all mass events in Manenberg.'⁸⁴ This process gave them interaction with the youth/student sector in Manenberg. Youth and civic issues were becoming intertwined and no longer was there a sense of it as a youth fight or a civic fight, according to Faldielah. 'Part of the group was the Minister's Fraternity, the Call of Islam, the Manenberg Civic Association, WECTU, the Advice Office and MASCO members.'⁸⁵Faldielah saw her role within this area committee

82. A homemade video that is in the possession of Mickey Adams, Manenberg SSS, Cultural Day.

83. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010.

84. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

85. *Ibid.*

as a recruiter of women, and adults and often times she recruited the youth. ‘I was the older figure in the group to the likes of Faghie, Bulle, Parker, Owen, Mario and Irvin.’⁸⁶

Often the inner circle members met outside Manenberg. Faldielah recalls one such occasion where they convened at the John Power campsite for a weekend away strategy meeting in Strandfontein. Each sector had to prepare food for the entire group. ‘My group had to make the breakfast the Saturday morning, the Call of Islam group made lunch which consisted out of mince curry, needless to say the food went off and everyone was sick of [sic] food poisoning.’⁸⁷This memory sticks in her mind. Amidst the turmoil that occurred nationally, the clandestine group met secretly and enjoyed a camaraderie that is sadly lacking today. Mickey Adams explains that the secret group met at Manenberg High, in several prominent churches in Manenberg Avenue, at different homes, mosques, crèches, at the SHAWCO building, at the Silvertree Youth Club as well as in safe houses all over Cape Town. ‘We were joined by the then UDF leaders of the time Johnny Issel, Trevor Manuel and others. This was when they could move around as the UDF leaders were serving banning orders.’⁸⁸ These meetings helped them continue with the job at hand, by making all residents in Manenberg aware of the strategies of the state. ‘We often had to do door to door campaigning around issues that affected residents in Manenberg. It was a strategy that started to work. We soon started to organise workers around the bus boycotts and students in the area assisted us in telling their parents and other relatives to not use bus services in the 1980s.’⁸⁹

86. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

87. *Ibid.*

88. *Ibid.*

89. *Ibid.*

Another tactic used in the 1980s was smuggling information in and out of the country. Mickey recalls when Selwyn Daniels went to Zimbabwe to meet the ANC in exile he sent banned materials and information to us via Dr. Andre Odendaal, who was still lecturing at the UWC's history department. 'This was a method used by others who were in exile, who had to get messages from the ANC to cadres in South Africa,' said Mickey.⁹⁰ Upon Daniels' return to Manenberg, he addressed students at Manenberg High and told them about his time in jail and how he wrote a letter to the then South African President, P.W Botha, urging him 'to let my people go' – a direct link to Moses in the Bible talking to Pharaoh, the Egyptian king, to let the Israelites leave Egypt.⁹¹ Daniels brought back information from the ANC that assisted them in making South Africa ungovernable.

The mid-1980s was a period of militant resistance from students all over the country; in Manenberg this was no different. Apartheid, however, was still in place. But the mobilizing tactics of the ANC in townships across South Africa boded well for the future. Militancy increased on a daily basis and activists in Manenberg were kept together by the inner circle. Leadership roles changed, but the momentum of organising never stopped.

90. Interview with Mickey Adams and Cammy Williams, 24 March 2010.

91. It was this specific day that changed my life forever. I was drawn to the struggle ever since this day. I remember it vividly. We were at a school that was politically very active and on this day Mr Daniels read his letter. He read it in the 'voice of Dr Alan Boesak' which made it more dramatic. The entire school was moved by his words. He was an inspiration to us all as he recalled his meeting with the ANC in Zambia. He related his travels and told us to be defiant, to be vigilant and to believe. The school held several such meetings over the period of 1983 – 1989, sometimes under police surveillance. This is a personal recollection.

The Defiance Campaign in Manenberg in 1989

Fullard gives an overview of what happened during the time of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) in the Western Cape. She writes that the Defiance Campaign against apartheid laws was launched nationally by the MDM. Protest actions took place as early as March that year. Between mid-July and mid-September increased protest actions took place culminating in the anti-election campaign that took place on 6 September 1989.⁹² On 6 September 1989 general elections were held and Coloureds, Indians and Whites would vote for their own section of Parliament.

Leading up to the elections, activists broke their banning orders by appearing in public, partaking in mass actions and attending funerals of slain comrades. Fullard describes briefly that on 8 August the UDF was declared 'unbanned' at a rally held in St. Georges Cathedral.

On 12 August 1989 marchers were teargassed in neighbouring Hanover Park. On 19 August, thousands of people set off to defy the 'whites only' beaches at Strand and Bloubergstrand in what Fullard calls 'beach apartheid defiance'. On 23 August church leaders, including Archbishop Desmond Tutu, were teargassed on a march in Guguletu. On 30 August, 170 women were arrested during a protest march in the city of Cape Town. On 2 September days before the 6 September elections in what became known as 'Purple Rain' day, marchers to the city were sprayed with purple water. Fullard reports that more than 500 people were arrested by the police on that day. For Fullard this was reminiscent of the 1985 experience.⁹³ Jeffrey further describes how country-wide mass protest marches were held under the banner

92. Fullard, 'The State and Political Struggle', p.54.

93. *Ibid.*, p.55.

of the ANC and the SACP. For Jeffrey the Defiance Campaign was to ensure that the ANC would bring the NP to its knees and that the 'transfer of power to the people could be achieved.'⁹⁴ Activists in Manenberg believed this and sought ways and means to bring this about. Parker and Bulle were still holding the fort and recruited students actively with the help of educator's at all three high schools.

Teachers' involvement in the Defiance Campaign in 1989

During the Defiance Campaign several incidents happened at Manenberg High school that help shaped the politics in Manenberg. By this time, Mario, Owen, Faghie and others had left high school and several militant educators took up the mantle. Teachers rallied students to partake in marches, in demonstrations and encourage their parents not to vote in the elections. Pamphlets with the following headlines were handed out to students at the various schools in Manenberg: 'Teachers! Take action on 5th, 6th September against racism, oppression, exploitation and police brutality', 'Strike Against the Racist Election', 'Forward with the Spirit of Defiance', 'Forward to people's education for people's power', 'Down with Apartheid Elections', 'Defy racist laws – crush apartheid oppression', 'Forward to the Student/Teacher Alliance.'⁹⁵

Manenberg High educators that became active during the Defiance Campaign were:

Mr. Selwyn Daniels, Mr. Mickey Adams, Mr. Rashaat Job, Mrs. Cheryl Boer, Cameron Williams, Dexter Hanekom, Lawrence Haupner, Ms. Emily Fairbairn, Mr. Howard Adams, Mrs. Joanne Arendse, Ms. Faseega Solomons, Mrs. Beverley Travill, Mr. K Baker, Mr. F

94. Jeffrey, 'Mass Mobilisation', p.4.

95. C. Williams Papers, Pamphlet drawn up by the Education Sector of the MDM, September 1989.

Alias, Mr. A Adams, Mr. L Bernard, Mrs. Mary-Anne Breda, Mr. H Adams, Mrs. L Buckton, Mr. L Collair, Mr. N Daniels, Ms. A. Dreyer, Mr. R Erasmus, Mr. T Fortuin, Mr. Dexter Hanekom, Mr. S Hendricks, Mr. A Rashaat, Mr. A Petersen, Mr. Jonovan Rustin, Ms. C Backman, Mr. A.C.T. Truebody, and Mr. Thurston Brown. Some of them endured police harassment, arrests, brutality and constant surveillance.⁹⁶

Teachers at Manenberg High used the tactic of writing letters to various people to elucidate happenings at their school at the hands of the oppressors. One such letter was written on 18 August 1989 just days away from the September 1989 elections. It was motivated by the arrest of three students. The letter was addressed to the Manenberg Police Station Commander and teachers demanded the release of students, Bernard Jackson, Masimo Damonze and Roberto Abrahams. The letter stated that the arrests has disrupted their preparation for the September exams.⁹⁷ Thurston Brown explains: ‘We were concerned as teachers about the repeated effects the arrests of these would have on the entire student body, we had to act as teachers and we did.’⁹⁸ A delegation of teachers comprising of Mr. Jonovan Rustin, Mrs. Mary-Anne Breda, Mrs. Cheryl Boer and Mrs. Faseega Solomon went to deliver the letter to the station commander. They wrote another letter to Minister of Education, Mr. Alan Hendrickse, detailing police brutality experienced by students and teachers. After a long discussion who amongst the teachers should take the letter to the Minister, it was decided to send it via registered mail.⁹⁹

96. Interview with Cameron Williams, 24 March 2010.

97. C. Williams Papers, A letter written by teachers at Manenberg High on 18 August 1989 to the Manenberg SAP station commander. The authors of the letter were Thurston Brown, Rashaat Job and Mrs. Beverley Travill.

98. Interview with Thurston Brown, 18 March 2010.

99. Interview with Cameron Williams, 24 March 2010.

The teacher fraternity within the inner circle decided to use lessons learnt from the 1983 anti-tricameral parliament campaign strategy. It acknowledged the fact that not enough parent involvement was initiated in 1983 and this would be an area whereby they would work on. Hence, teachers from all three high schools in Manenberg devised a programme of action against the upcoming 6 September 1989 elections. In a written document entitled 'Anti-Election, a simple plan of action was devised to ensure that all parents in Manenberg should not go to the polling stations to vote in the elections.¹⁰⁰ At the time it was illegal to call for mass action, boycotts or speak out against the state. However, teachers took the risk.

In the written document several reasons were given for residents not to go to the polling stations and the opposition to the tricameral parliament was explained. The tricameral parliament was based on race and excluded Africans. The document re-emphasised the dominance of the minority white race, it depicted the lack of resources at schools amongst disadvantaged communities and it mentioned the brutality of the security police in enforcing banning orders, and restriction of movement of activists. The MDM demanded the unbanning of all organizations and the lifting of all restrictions, the unbanning of individuals, and the complete pull out of troops out of townships and the lifting of the state of emergency.¹⁰¹

In continuing their efforts to informing parents and guardians of students, teachers wrote another letter which students took home, encouraging them not to vote. The letter said the following: 'We must not be fooled by the so-called elections of the white government. Do our

100. C. Williams Papers, Anti-1989 elections material drawn up by Manenberg High teachers.

101. *Ibid.*

votes count in a parliament elections? Our answers to these questions are a definite ‘no’.

Teachers and students have decided not to vote in the upcoming elections due to the current government not providing proper housing, a proper education system and facilities for schools in Manenberg.¹⁰² Again the issues close to activists’ hearts were living conditions, gutter education and lack of resources, which they knew would mobilize the community.

Not only were letters written to various people, pamphlets were drawn up by teachers in the fight against the apartheid regime. Pamphlets had messages explaining the atrocities and human rights abuses committed by the regime. These pamphlets were distributed during 1-4 September 1989 and were written by Rashaat Job and Cammy Williams.¹⁰³ Cammy recalls that a planned picket between all three high schools in Manenberg scheduled for 5 September 1989, failed miserably as only students from Manenberg High pitched. However, this did not deter teachers and students as they marched down Manenberg Avenue, displaying banners, poster and ANC flags. Some of the writings on the posters and banners, were: ‘Bread not Bullets’, ‘Vote for the Mass Democratic Movement’ and ‘Support Restricttees.’¹⁰⁴

Another pamphlet drawn up by the education sector of the MDM just days before the 6 September elections stated that: ‘we students, teachers and academics condemn the police provocation and brutality at our institutions, the detentions of students, teachers, academics and MDM leaders, the rugby mercenaries and FNB, the closing of Zonnebloem Teaching College, the silence of the commercial press and their refusal to print our press statements

102. C. Williams Papers, A letter, dated 1 September 1989, written by Ms Roshin Ramawoothar, Howard Adams and Abduraghman Adams, written to parents in Manenberg.

103. C. Williams Papers, Pamphlet drawn by Manenberg High teachers (Rashaat Job and Cammy Williams) which was distributed between 1-4 September 1989 in Manenberg.

104. Interview with Cameron Williams, March 2010. Students and teachers at Manenberg High carried banners, posters and flags on a march through Manenberg Avenue in 1989.

and report on what is happening in our townships.’¹⁰⁵ Teachers stayed away in their hundreds on the 5th and 6th September 1989. In a September 1989 MDM newsletter, it was reported that 4500 teachers in the Western Cape stayed away from attending school/work. ‘Approximately 4500 teachers heeded the call according to an overall statistical estimate reported from various regional structures i.e. Athlone Central, Athlone East, Southern Suburbs, Northern Suburbs, Mitchell’s Plain, Townships and Boland.’¹⁰⁶

The MDM wrote in a newsletter that during several peaceful protests, marchers were violently stopped by police action. ‘On their undemocratic election day, hundreds were wounded, over 350 arrested and 25 shot dead (at the time of going to print). Amongst those killed was a 12 year old Std 5 pupil from Bonteheuwel, a 17 year old youth, a Std. 3 handicapped pupil from Eros and a 17 year old youth from Fairmont High. There have been teachers detained, including Gareth Rossitter and Greame Bloch.’¹⁰⁷ The same newsletter on its front page mentions 29 people were killed by the security police.

A documentary called *Fruits of Defiance*¹⁰⁸ provides an important recording of the role of Manenberg in the 1989 Defiance Campaign. The documentary depicts anti-apartheid stalwarts and clerics Boesak and Tutu playing leading roles in galvanising communities not to vote in the 6 September elections. A general call from the leaders of the MDM was that the defiance campaign must continue and more and more pressure should be placed on the state. This happened and it moved into Manenberg.

105. C. Williams Papers, Pamphlet drawn up by the Education Sector of the MDM, September 1989

106. C. Williams Papers, MDM Newsletter, September 1989.

107. C. Williams Papers, MDM Newsletter, September 1989.

108. B. Tilley and O. Schmitz (SA), ‘*Fruits of Defiance*’, 1990.

The documentary show security police shooting protesters randomly injuring residents in Manenberg. In the documentary Mark ‘Parker’ Splinter and Maqbool Moos, members of the inner circle, make the point that Manenberg is a working class community, which has decided to rise up against the state. He argues it only depends on the community on how determined they are for freedom. Issues such as poor housing, unemployment, high rent, and houses falling apart after twenty years helped to cement a fragmented community in standing up for their rights.¹⁰⁹ The documentary shows how activists had running battles with the security police. Roads were barricaded and pockets of students and residents would lure police into areas, where the police casspirs were stoned. The documentary also shows other Cape Flats townships – all in flames and busy with protest action.¹¹⁰

Soon after the 1989 elections on 5-6 September 1989, the Nationalist Party was reinstated into power. Days later thousands of people gathered at the Grand Parade in Cape Town to be part of a historic peaceful protest march on September 13, 1989. It is here that Dr. Alan Boesak mentioned the prophetic words, that ‘...our freedom was coming...’¹¹¹ Soon thereafter, marches took place throughout the country.

Faldielah de Vries recalls her involvement in the MDMs anti-elections campaign during September 1989 in Manenberg. She was a volunteer at the Progressive Primary Health Care (PPHC) crisis centre set up at the Moravian crèche in Manenberg Avenue. ‘A Dr. Holland and several others helped bird shot and rubber bullet victims. In those days we had connections everywhere with doctors who helped victims without it going on official records

109. B. Tilley and O. Schmitz (SA), *Fruits of Defiance*, 1990.

110. *Ibid.*

111. *Ibid.*

at the hospitals. There were so many unselfish heroes at this period of our struggle and Dr Holland and Dr. Maharaj were but a few.’¹¹² Faldielah and others were always around giving guidance to the young turks, who were fighting the security police.

The September 1989 elections and subsequent police brutality, as depicted in the documentary *Fruits of Defiance*, is a stark reminder of the role activists played in Manenberg. The decade of the 1980s saw residents, students and teachers openly defy the security police making Manenberg a site of resistance. After the successful MDM campaign against the NP, the newly elected President of South Africa, FW de Klerk began his reforms after international and national pressure swept through South Africa. Activists in Manenberg were keenly watching events unfold, ready to take up arms when the call came from the ANC.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we discovered how lessons learnt from the 1970s and early 1980s made the late 1980s easier to manage for activists in Manenberg. These lessons were how to involve parents, workers and keep holding street and court meetings to inform residents on new strategies and methods. Handling divisions amongst moderates and militants became a necessity as often this was a hotly contested arena whereby the more militant youth wanted clashes with police to happen almost daily in Manenberg. The lesson learnt in this was how to handle differences and conflict within the group around ideologies.

Two prominent groupings were formed in Manenberg during the 1980s, which were the MAC which was more militant in nature and the MASCO, a think tank grouping that led the

112. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

strategy around mobilizing residents to heed to the call of the ANC and the UDF. Activists in popularizing the policies of the ANC went into townships recruiting members and strengthening structures. Activists ensured that a core grouping would lead the resistance movement on different fronts. Strategies employed were: setting up of street committees, court committees, infiltrating sporting bodies and making these places of political learning. Lively debates occurred amongst the members of the inner circle as they deployed members into factories, schools, gangs and religious bodies – all with the aim to mobilize the community. Cultural events at schools were organized only to hear messages from activists about how to stay focused on the struggle against apartheid. Culture and politics thus became closely intertwined.

Activists were briefed at various secret meeting by members of the Western Cape UDF leadership at various secret venues inside and outside of Manenberg. It is perhaps significant that Manenberg High was the epicenter of resistance as most of the Manenberg youth leadership stemmed from this high school. High schools in Manenberg were sites of resistance and Manenberg Avenue became a symbol of their battle with the police. Strategies were deployed by the MAC grouping to lure the police in following students as they marched down Manenberg Avenue, only to be ambushed by the militant grouping. Petrol bombs were the weapons of choice for activists. Tyre barricades kept casspirs at bay as they tried to chase activists through the streets of Manenberg.

Students and teachers worked together as did students and workers in supporting each other's campaigns. It was their understanding of the seriousness of the struggle that led some activists take up arms. Some of them chose the education sector to win students and parents over, and some went into union organizations. One thing was clear if a leader was detained or

hunted – others took over. The flames were kept burning. Residents were still being mobilized around housing and rent issues. Manenberg had a common enemy and it was easy to mobilize residents as they saw the brutality of the security police murdering activists outside Manenberg. Manenberg became a militarized zone, whereby residents were in control of their lives.

Successful campaigns against the 1983 and 1989 anti-tricameral parliament elections gave activists the confidence to continue resisting and recruiting members to the underground movement. Teachers in Manenberg played a bigger role in the latter campaign as student leaders left school. They filled the void left by Wanza, Owen, Jansen, Kinnes, Petersen, Bulle and Parker. Militant teachers ensured that the legacy of the student activists kept going as they continued to recruit, mould and mentor students in the 1989 campaign. On 15 October 1989 several Rivonia trialists like Walter Sisulu and other political prisoners were released by President F.W. de Klerk. For Parker and Bulle the release of the political prisoners and the unbanning of the ANC in 1990 did not mean the end of the struggle against apartheid. In the documentary, *Fruits of Defiance*, they look forward to tasting the freedom that they longed for and sacrificed their lives for.¹¹³ Manenberg during the latter part of the 1980s had a strong teacher and student base. Sporting bodies and the Manenberg Advice Office were highly politicised and began to show leadership by giving residents advice about their social problems – often politicising and organising residents.

In chapter three we will focus on how activists sought to improve local conditions in a democratic context.

113. B. Tilley & O. Schmitz (SA), *Fruits of Defiance*, 1990.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PROUDLY MANENBERG CAMPAIGN

Introduction

This chapter will briefly look at the early 1990s in Manenberg. I will broadly sketch the landscape around social movements in South Africa and what they represent in a post-apartheid context. The rest of the chapter will focus on the formation and activities of the PMC or otherwise also known as Proudly Manenberg (PM). Thus, it will effectively look at the strategies deployed to garner support for this movement and how activism has changed and how these men and women have helped to shape a new Manenberg in a different era.

Social Movements in South Africa

Lisa Thompson and Chris Tapscott have pointed to an ongoing upsurge in mobilisation and collective action in states of the global South since the latter half of the twentieth century.¹ Since democracy in 1994 we have seen an increase in the number of social movements being established in South Africa. During the presidency of Mandela and later Mbeki we have seen improvements in infrastructure in the country to residents and communities in impoverished areas. However, protests over lack of service delivery and of unfulfilled election promises also became a key feature of their presidencies. Ballard *et al* expand on several popular social movements in South Africa after the new South Africa was established in 1994. 'Unlike in many other transitional societies where the political honeymoon tended to drag on for decades, new social struggles in South Africa emerged surprisingly quickly.'² The social movements of post-apartheid South Africa have alerted

1. L.Thompson and C. Tapscott (eds), *Citizenship and Social Movements: Perspectives from the Global South*, (London: Zed Books, 2010),p.1.

2. Ballard, *et al*, (eds), *Voices of Protest*, p.1.

government to the immense housing backlog, to the diverse municipal services that people need, access to water, access to medical assistance and proper housing.

The definition of social movements varies. Here are a few definitions taken from various sources. ‘The term new social movements (NSMs) is a theory of social movements that attempts to explain the plethora of new movements that have come up in various western societies roughly since the mid-1960s (i.e. in a post-colonial economy) which are claimed to depart significantly from the conventional social movement paradigm.’³ A social movement consists of a number of people organized and coordinated to achieve some task or a collection of goals. Often the participants are interested in bringing about social change. Compared to other forms of collective behavior, movements have a high degree of organization and are of longer duration.⁴ Ballard *et al* argue that social movements inexplicably ‘represent the interest of the poor and marginalized, and apply pressure on the government to put greater attention to the welfare of these groups.’⁵

Eddie Cottle explains the emergence of social movements within South Africa and the role of the opposition ‘as the offspring of the former revolutionary movements.’⁶ He goes into detail about whom and what these social movements were called. It varied from shack dwellers in Durban, the Anti-Eviction Campaign (AEC) in Cape Town, the Anti Privatisation Forum (APF) in Gauteng and Cape Town, the TAC and the Landless People’s Movement (LPM) to mention a few. He also argues the point that ‘The African National Congress government

3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_social_movements

4. <http://www.learningtogive.org/papers/papers59.html>

5. Ballard, *et al*, (eds), *Voices of Protest*, p.413.

6. Quoted in Gorm Gunnarsen, Patrick Mac Manus, Morten Nielsen and Hans Erik Stolten, ‘At the end of the rainbow? Social identity and welfare state in the new South Africa’,

http://www.sydafrika.dk/lib/getImg.php?c_id=4725

and its allies believed that the main challenge of post-apartheid was to move from ‘Resistance to Reconstruction.’ They maintained that the end of apartheid signaled the end of mass struggle politics and ‘resistance’. That it was now time to ‘reconstruct’ the social, economic and cultural life in South Africa and build a new nation.’⁷ However, not long after the first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994, the new social movements emerged as a response to a lack of service delivery and land reform challenging the very ‘reconstruction’ they were supposed to participate in. Cottle further articulates that ‘the composition of the social movements has been determined as a response to neo-liberal policies such as evictions from homes, squatter settlements and farms, electricity and water disconnections, access to land, unemployment, health issues, housing, general lack of services and the need for communities to provide immediate defense of their livelihoods.’⁸

Ballard *et al* also points out that ‘much activism in South Africa is directed against government policy on distributional issues, particularly with regards to the inability of many poor South Africans to access basic services.’⁹ In this regard they refer to government’s policy on privatization and cost recovery which breaks down service delivery to the poor, hence protest action. A problem arises in this arena, where ‘political leaders and public officials have intimated that these movements undermine democracy because of their engagement in extra-institutional action.’¹⁰ On the other hand, social movement activists describe social movements as arenas of ‘free democratic debate and participation’.¹¹

7. Quoted in Gorm Gunnarsen *et al*, ‘At the end of the rainbow?’ http://www.sydafrika.dk/lib/getImg.php?c_id=4725

8. *Ibid*.

9. Ballard, *et al*, (eds), *Voices of Protest*, p.399.

10. *Ibid*, p.399.

11. *Ibid*, p.398.

Ballard *et al* point to stimuli for the existence of social movements: firstly, Congress of South African Trade Union's (COSATU) opposition to Mbeki's GEAR policy; secondly, government's failure to ensure service delivery to its poorest citizens; and thirdly resisting negative reforms government implements.¹² They mention several social movements that fit the above-mentioned arguments, such as the TAC, the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee and the Anti-Eviction Campaign. These social movements fought along the lines of social and rights based justice. They opposed government's privatisation strategies around areas such as electricity. They resisted government's reforms on the economic policies, which never really benefited the poor, but more the rich class in South Africa. Ballard *et al* provide a reason why there is a sudden growth of new social movements: '... old avenues of opposition were absorbed into the post-apartheid government, thus leaving opponents of the government without a 'voice' with which to express or a mechanism to organise opposition.'¹³ Ballard *et al* also point out that the reason why these social movements exist is because 'these institutions are essentially the products of the post-apartheid moment.'¹⁴ Social movements are different from the anti-apartheid movement which sought to capture the state. These new social movements seek to hold government to constitutional enshrined rights.

Steven Robins argues that perhaps of all the social movements post-1994, the TAC was by far the most successful as they adopt a rights-based approach. 'Although post-apartheid South Africa witnessed the emergence of a proliferation of NGOs and social movements in the land,

12. Ballard, *et al*, (eds), *Voices of Protest*, p.2.

13. *Ibid*.

14. *Ibid*, p.400.

housing, labour and health sectors, amongst others, TACs innovative forms of rights-based activism captured the imagination of South African and international health and development agencies, governments, and civil society organisations.¹⁵ Thompson and Tapscott add what is important is how these movements interact with the state and how notions of citizenship and claim to rights are broadly understood.¹⁶ For them two key strands of mobilisation emerge. Firstly, the dominant type, which embrace self-organized collective action around issue-based socio-economic rights. They arise in response to state-initiated development programmes that sacrifice individual or collective socio-economic rights in the name of national interest, and which by forcefully suppressing protest action, also effectively trample on political rights. Secondly, the other form of mobilisation is by social movement groups or representatives in spaces created by government, either for socio-economic or political rights, or to ensure and extend these rights through participatory democratic processes.¹⁷

Some researchers suggest the new South African government did indeed meet most of its targets set out in rebuilding the state and the country. ‘...the ANC government has succeeded in decreasing poverty in 21 poorest nodes in South Africa. The achievement needs to be acknowledged and applauded, even though it is simultaneously fair to ask if poverty reduction could have gone faster or deeper.’¹⁸ Cottle, however, disagrees and mentions that by 2005 South Africa experienced a nation-wide spate of community unrest specifically in relation to a lack of service delivery and housing. The then Minister of Intelligence, Ronnie Kasrils was quick to charge that the unrest in the country was due to a third force that was

15. S. Robins, *From Revolution to Rights in South Africa*, (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009), pp. 3-4.

16. Thompson and Tapscott, *Citizenship and Social Movements*, p.4.

17. *Ibid*, p.6.

18. A. McLennan and B. Munslow, *The Politics of Service Delivery*, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2009), p.163.

trying to undermine the new democracy and destabilize the country. The National Intelligence Agency (NIA) probe into the social unrest drew large-scale condemnation by social movements, COSATU and the printed media.¹⁹ Cosatu's Western Cape secretary, Tony Ehrenreich argued that the 'current state action harks back to old apartheid tactics or is an attempt to undermine the right to legitimate protest. The criminalisation of dissent became widespread practice at all levels of government. There was an increased feeling by communities and social movements that the more they had dialogue with state structures (reconstruction politics) the more these were merely tactics to delay progress.'²⁰

The formation of the Proudly Manenberg Campaign

As the 1980s student activists moved on, they became involved in non-governmental organisations and established a place like the Manenberg People's Centre in 1987. It was a building that housed organisations such as the Manenberg Advice Office and the Manenberg Civic Organisation. These organisations helped residents with rent problems, unemployment problems and offered training for residents. They offered free counselling and provided a haven for those who did not have food.

One aspect of life in Manenberg in the 1990s was that it was a place divided along political as well as criminal lines. With regard to the latter, gangs sought support from residents to build their power. Irvin Kinnes relates a story of how the late Rashaad Staggie, twin brother of

19. Quoted in Gorm Gunnarsen *et al*, 'At the end of the rainbow?' http://www.sydafrika.dk/lib/getImg.php?c_id=4725
20. *Ibid*.

Rashied Staggie threw money out of his car window when he drove down the famous Manenberg Avenue.²¹ Kinnes describes this as part of Staggie's strategy to win over the community. Manenberg residents crowded the streets whenever Staggie drove down Manenberg Avenue.²² The gangs operating at the time in Manenberg were the Hard Livings led by the Staggie brothers and the Ugly Americans. The warfare was normally about drug trafficking zones, turf war and power. Gang wars kept most activists busy in forging peace through meaningful negotiations. These activists were members of the inner circle during the 1980s and they continued the fight against apartheid going even though national negotiations were happening at Codesa in 1992.

Another feature of the 1990s was the fierce political campaigning for the 1994, 1995 and 1999 elections between rival local ward councillors for the ANC, NP and the then DP in Manenberg. During the presidency of Mandela a government of national unity was established, which included parties made up from the ANC, the NP, and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). The incoming government had to address the problems of the past quite quickly. It introduced a programme called the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).²³ After the 1994 elections several meetings were held from May to September in Manenberg by activists. As a result the Manenberg RDP forum was established at the

21. I. Kinnes, 'National and local trends, from urban street gangs to criminal empires', *Monograph* No 48, June 2000.

22. I too witnessed this several times as a reporter working for the community newspaper called *Cape Docta* in Manenberg.

23. The RDP was a socio-economic policy framework, implemented by the African National Congress (ANC) government of Nelson Mandela in 1994, after months of discussions, consultations and negotiations between the ANC, its alliance partners the Congress of South African Trade Unions and the South African Communist Party, and wider civil society. The ANC's chief aim in developing and implementing the RDP was to address the immense socioeconomic problems brought about by its predecessors under the apartheid regime. Specifically, it aimed to alleviate poverty and address the massive shortfalls in social services across the country. The RDP attempted to combine measures to boost the economy, such as contained fiscal spending, sustained or lowered taxes, reduction of government debt, and trade liberalisation, with socially minded social-service provisions and infrastructure projects. In this way, the policy incorporated both socialist and neo-liberal elements, but could not be easily categorised in either camp.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reconstruction_and_Development_Programme

SHAWCO building in Manenberg on 6 September 1994.²⁴The RDP Forum was in line with what was happening elsewhere in the country. The Manenberg RDP Forum decided to choose 13 departments to tackle the huge task of implementing projects and to put services under one umbrella. Serving on the first RDP Forum in Manenberg were two members of the 1980s inner circle activists, Mickey Adams and Faldielah de Vries.²⁵

Due to internal squabbles, power brokering and bureaucratic messes the RDP Forum failed to take off in Manenberg. Two years later in 1996, Mr. Frank Gutuza the interim chairperson of the RDP Forum, wrote a letter to the residents of Manenberg. In the letter published in the Manenberg local community newspaper, *Cape Docta*, he asked each resident to give the RDP Forum its full support. 'We need your support and would very much like you to be aboard as we tackle our next phase of development.'²⁶ He also chose to rebuke those who have become anti-RDP and development in Manenberg. The letter states: 'For a number of various reasons many people who have been involved with the Manenberg RDP have left – some after having done some good work in trying to serve the community. Others after having done very little to try and develop the forum, left. Yet, others have left to do the popular thing of standing on the outskirts, to criticise, find fault, pull down or try to destroy.'²⁷ Gutuza then asked the local ward councillors to join forces with him in serving on the Forum. Gutuza then suggested that Manenberg should be divided into different zones as residents complained that activities were only taking place in certain sections of Manenberg. 'As part of our vision we have broken Manenberg into zones or even smaller cells to deal effectively with the issues at hand and to have residents come out to meetings in their areas.'²⁸ The zones identified, were the

24. *Cape Docta*, September 1994.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Cape Docta*, June 1996.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*

Sherwood Park and the Downs area; the Central area from the Downs Road up to Thames Avenue up to Ruimte Way and pass the SHAWCO building and stopping at the Post Office; the Police station down to Delpport Farm; and Primrose Park, the left hand side of Ruimte Way. All in all Manenberg was divided into 10 zones. This division was to inspire PMC for it too resorted to zonal areas to effect change in Manenberg.

However, the RDP Forum never got off the ground as it had too many problems getting it working and the South African government changed its policy from the RDP of the Mandela Presidency to the policy of Thabo Mbeki's GEAR. GEAR stands for the Growth, Employment and Redistribution, which was Mbeki's macroeconomic strategy. It has a target to grow the economy, to bring down inflation and produce employment.

Wanza, Mickey and others became acutely aware of these problems in Manenberg in the 1990s and the early 2000s and already discussions were held to begin to rid Manenberg of the stigma of a forgotten place. At this time the MEDT was established to help pupils from all three high schools in Manenberg to get bursaries, mentorships and a chance to better their own lives by studying at a tertiary education. The leadership of MEDT comprised of several of the 1980s activists such as Cammy Williams, Faghie Johnson and Irvin Kinnes. They called upon ex-residents, activists and funders to come back into Manenberg and begin to plough back. This group played an instrumental role in the establishment of the PMC months later.

As mentioned earlier Manenberg was in the grip of gang war for long periods and activists tried to resolve these matters via peace meetings throughout the mid-1990s to early 2000s, through working with the police and gang bosses in the area. Gangs were now led by youngsters who were more brutal and callous. One incident made residents and activists

acutely aware that enough was enough, something had to be done. Cheslyn Jones, a Manenberg High School student was stabbed to death in July 2005. Manenberg was sitting on a time bomb waiting to explode. Gang warfare was threatening. Activists working in the area had to do something about this. Teachers at Manenberg High recall how they met to discuss ways to combat this. ‘We felt that as educators we again could not be spectators and see how much we have achieved be broken down by gangs roaming freely in Manenberg, whilst its residents were living in fear.’²⁹

Mario Wanza explained the birth of the PMC: ‘The people of Manenberg had come together in response to the social and economic crisis that persists in this community. We had enough of being portrayed in a negative light in the media as residents. The death of Cheslyn is not in vain.’³⁰ He further stated that: ‘This campaign does not belong to any one section of our community because it is born out of the desire of all groups to restore the dignity and respect of all Manenberg's residents.’³¹ Thus the key goal of the PMC was to combat the pervasive stigma attached to the community.

The same activists that operated during the 1980s responded to the challenges facing Manenberg by establishing one body that complemented other work done in Manenberg by other community activists. Wanza, Kinnes, Faghie, Owen, Mickey, Faldielah and others began to consider how best to rebuild Manenberg. They met over several weeks on how to go about this.

29. Interview with Thurston Brown, March 2010.

30. *Cape Argus*, 23 September 2005.

31. Interview with Mario Wanza, 11 November 2007.

Current chairperson of the PMC, Amelia September³², recalls the day the activists met. ‘At this meeting was all the old activists Owen Munro, Mario Wanza, Irvin Kinnes, Faldielah de Vries, Faghie Johnson, Mark Splinters and others. All the activists that were operative in the MEDT came together and I could see as an outsider, they were serious, prepared and ready to work. They believed that change was about to happen. I felt it when the meeting was adjourned.’³³

The inaugural conference of the PMC committed itself to a vision of ‘building a vibrant, proud and dignified Manenberg through creating opportunities. Proudly Manenberg aims to implement a turn-around strategy in Manenberg, so that where there is underdevelopment we bring development, where there is unemployment we create jobs, where there is crime, grime and violence we create an environment based on caring and sharing and which is clean and green.’³⁴

Thurston Brown who was somewhat conservative in the 1980s was one of those who were present at the inaugural meeting. He played in a role in crafting its mission statement. He together with many ex-student activists believed that ‘we need to adopt the same militancy displayed pre-1994 to today’s current political landscape in Manenberg and everywhere else and things will change.’³⁵

32. Amelia September was not part of the activists group of the 1980s; in fact she resided in the community of Factreton-Kensington. She became a unionist and quickly had to adapt to speaking a language workers had to understand and could relate to. She became involved in COSATU and eventually within the ANC structures. She moved to Manenberg in 1996 and became active in community structures.

33. Interview with Amelia September, 18 March 2010.

34. Interview with Mario Wanza, 24 March 2010.

35. Interview with Thurston Brown, 18 March 2010.

Wanza reflects that the other main inspiration behind the establishment of PMC was on the premise of the Freedom Charter where the people shall govern. ‘Post-1994, we, as activists, took a back seat and allowed the ANC to govern. But since then we can no longer sit still and be quiet. Pre-1994 we believed in the Freedom Charter of 1955, where it states ‘the People shall Govern’³⁶, this has not happened. As comrades we have said that we will regroup, we will awaken the working class communities and we will build these communities to rightfully take up their place in society.’³⁷

Activists in Manenberg in 2005 had a new home, a new base to work from and it was a legitimate social movement. In its vision statement it promises to develop business opportunities, create jobs, rid Manenberg of crime and make Manenberg ‘clean and green’. PMC became active in local politics, and as we will see clashed with the City of Cape Town, the Western Cape Provincial Government and the local ANC structures in getting their voice heard.

The strategies of the PMC

One of the established social movements, the TAC which predated PMC by six years adopted strategies that drew on the past but also responded to the new democratic context of the present. Friedman and Mottiar have analysed the strategies used by the TAC in getting the ANC-led government to distribute free ARVs treatment to HIV positive patients. TAC through its strategy of national and international pressure on international pharmaceutical firms got them (firms) to abandon their plans to prevent the South African government from importing cheaper generic medicines.³⁸

36. Interview with Mario Wanza, March 2010.

37. *Ibid.*

38. S. Friedman and S. Mottiar, ‘Seeking the High Ground’ in Ballard *et al*, *Voices of Protest*, p.23.

The PMC made use of similar tactics used during the 1980s by engaging communities through street committee and zonal meetings. PMC adopted the zonal approach of the RDP Forum but divided Manenberg into five zones only. It created several focus sectors: youth, education, faith, business, environment, health, sports, arts and culture, safety, gender and housing to further their reach and work. ‘The idea behind the zones and sectors was to mobilise residents in their zones around issues such as the youth, business, faith, education and to get them involved in making changes to their lives.’³⁹ The various sectors have community meetings in their areas across Manenberg.

Another tactic used to garner support from residents has been the successful greening projects. All over Manenberg palm trees, and community gardens have been planted. Urban renewal initiatives have taken place, whereby the courts (korre) have been renovated and painted. Streets are cleaner now and the area is relatively calmer and safer through visible community participation in keeping schools and other public places free from gangs and crime. ‘Manenberg is changing for the good and this was proven when PMC launched the first ever commercial community gardens in Manenberg’s zone 3 on 14 February 2008. This, the first of five community gardens planned in Manenberg has a spiritual and educational theme.’⁴⁰ Opening the community garden was then MEC for Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Tasneem Essop. The next day, Premier Rasool mentioned the community garden in Manenberg in his state of the province address on 15 February 2008.⁴¹ It was the beginning of a good working relationship with the provincial government at the time for PMC. In the 1990s Rasool ran his ANC constituency office in neighbouring Heideveld.

39. Interview with Mario Wanza, 24 March 2010.

40. *Proudly Manenberg*, Vol. 2, No.2, March 2008. (PMC Newspaper published monthly in Manenberg).

41. *Ibid.*, p.1.

The Western Cape Provincial Government between 2005 and 2009 was governed by the ANC under the leadership of Premier Ebrahim Rasool and later by his replacement Lynne Brown, whilst the city was governed by the DA since 2006. Since 2009, the provincial government is managed by the DA, under the leadership of Premier Helen Zille.

Susan Booysen writes about the various waves of service delivery protests that occurred since 2004. She argues that ‘the protest action was an unprecedented development, unmasking pent-up anger with service delivery and representation, more than a decade into South Africa’s democracy.’⁴² Social movements have adopted similar tactics used against the apartheid regime, which are mass marches, protests and militant action. Only this time it is against a democratically elected government. Images of police officials shooting at defenseless protesters is a reminder of where we came from not too long ago. PMC also took to the streets around the issue of the Bambanani Volunteer Programme⁴³ of the provincial government. In September 2008, PMC staged a march to the offices in Cape Town of the MEC of Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Garth Strachan demanding more action from government. In a memorandum handed over to him, the PMC said that since its inception three years ago many promises had been made and none had been fulfilled. PMC wanted the government’s Bambanani volunteer programme replaced by community safety workers and to have its workers paid more than the R50 given to Bambanani workers in Manenberg. Demands to meet the then ANC Premier of the Western Cape, Lynne Brown, fell on deaf ears.⁴⁴ The march gave PMC a high profile as it was widely covered in the media. This was not to be the only march undertaken by PMC. Often marches were about a lack of municipal service delivery in Manenberg.

42. McLennan and Munslow, *The Politics of Service Delivery*, p.109.

43. Interview with Mario Wanza, March 2010. The Bambanani Volunteer Programme, is the brainchild of former MEC for Community Safety, Mr. Leonard Ramatlakane, to assist the police and other law enforcement agencies in combating crime.

44. *Athlone News*, 17 September 2008.

Given the democratic context, PMC negotiated with government to increase employment.

Wanza points out: ‘Negotiations with government around job creation has worked and also not worked. Over a thousand jobs have been created since 2005 around the greening, recycling and safety sectors in Manenberg alone. We have over 100 volunteers working in our offices all aimed at making Manenberg a better place to live in.’⁴⁵

In an open letter to Helen Zille who was the mayor of Cape Town in 2009, PMC pointed out: ‘Proudly Manenberg has attempted to work through the channels suggested by the City but poor service delivery persists. Proudly Manenberg decided to embark on an Operation Clean-up campaign in which we handed over a memorandum to the City of Cape Town outlining our plans for improved service delivery, job creation and a clean, green and safe Manenberg. Instead of engaging Proudly Manenberg on our plans, the Mayor chose to use her budget address to launch an attack on the organisation. The mayor needs to wake up to the stark reality of what the people of Manenberg face on a day to day basis.’⁴⁶

The MPC’s annual report mentions the following about working with government: ‘both province and city – it remains a challenge. PMC has pushed the idea of partnerships but the government does not understand this concept of partnership. They always want to be bosses of the people and withhold and manipulate resources. The failure to implement our safety plan is a result of this. The relationship with government continues to be a site of struggle but we are continuing to engage with officials and politicians in all spheres of government. There is a difficulty in matching our values of a bottom up approach, based on community participation, with government’s tendency to top down.’⁴⁷

45. Interview with Mario Wanza, 24 March 2010.

46. *Athlone News*, 8 April 2009.

47. *Annual Report 2008 of PMC*.

Wanza is still critical of government in the sense that most communities still do not own anything, however he does argue perhaps we rely too much on government. He is happy to be working with PMC and through his and other activists methods he feels that they are getting closer to the 'people shall govern' concept of the ANC.⁴⁸ However, up to 2005 very little infrastructure repairs had been done by the city council. Manenberg had shops and flats, cottages and duplexes that were derelict, falling apart and needed urgent repairs. The sports grounds had no fencing, no regular maintenance for children to play on. The lack of city participation in maintaining the streets of Manenberg has brought about a similar feeling of back in the 1980s. Rent was increasing in Manenberg, backyard dwellers increased, overcrowding in Manenberg increased. PMC had much to do to alleviate these problems and they had to work with government and other business partners to achieve this.

Wanza and others felt that working with any government in the province and the city that can assist them in achieving their own goals was not in contravention of their aims which were to create opportunities for business, to create jobs and to bring about change in Manenberg. In 2007, PMC announced together with the ANC provincial government that they will be creating jobs opportunities in Manenberg. The alliance with the government at the time was good. 'The Proudly Manenberg programme has inspired the Western Cape government to start an intense upliftment programme in 15 areas in the province. The idea is to speed up service delivery, build safer communities and start programmed that will improve the quality of life of the people of those areas.'⁴⁹ As part of this initiative, several government departments were planning to visit Manenberg between 16-18 October 2007 to ensure critical

48. Interview with Mario Wanza, 24 March 2010.

49. *Ibid.*

documents such as IDs, marriage, birth, death certificate applications were processed. The provincial government was planning to sponsor several projects in the area such as the Proudly Manenberg Homecoming Festival. It sponsored the creative street projects to the tune of R257 150. It created 400 jobs for residents to work on the greening project and it also supported the PMC by placing adverts in their monthly newsletter.⁵⁰

Activists did not have problems working with the ANC government at the time. Only when PMC approached the new DA-led government in 2008/9 for the continuation of these projects, did some have a problem. However certain members became critical of PMC's alliance with the DA-led government, amongst them was 1980s stalwart Mickey Adams: 'It was always felt that such decisions be taken within a collective.'⁵¹ Mickey Adams is weary of the changes within PMC and wishes everyone to be cautious and be more ANC-aligned as in the 1980s. A lot of the old guard has taken a back seat and have been watching from a far. He asks the question, 'Haven't we compromised on the idea that the people shall govern when we want to work hand in hand with the DA?'⁵² Critics of the PMC felt that it was in bed with the DA and hence the Western Cape ANC felt that they could not partner with the PMC on projects.⁵³ Some saw the DA's assistance to PMC as an election ploy. Wanza responded to criticism against the PMC: 'the NGO would accept help from any political party that shared the organisation's objectives of improving social conditions in such disadvantaged communities. The organisation's constitution is clear; we are not aligned to any political party.'⁵⁴ Wanza and Fairbairn have been at the forefront of making known to the outside

50. *Proudly Manenberg*, Vol 3, October 2007. (The Western Cape Government placed a quarter page advert outlining their relationship with the PMC).

51. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010.

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Peoples Post*, 9 December 2009.

54. *Cape Times*, 6 April 2009.

world how local government were constantly blocking efforts to bring about sustained change in Manenberg. ‘Our vision has been simply to not just change the way others view Manenberg, but community members’ themselves.’⁵⁵

In the last five years from 2005 – 2010, the PMC has created over a 1000 volunteer jobs through the help of government structures. They have created 60 sustainable jobs for office bearers, sector leaders and administrative staff. They have signed an agreement with the National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs for funding to pay for projects. This department is responsible to build and enhance the governance system in order to enable sustainable development and service delivery. The PMC zonal system is still working, the various sectors built such as business, education, sports, health, housing and arts & culture has grown.⁵⁶

Perhaps an indication of the influence PMC has had in several other townships in the Western Cape can be best described by Wanza’s desire to see citizens in South Africa governing. PMC officials have been meeting with other communities, such as Bonteheuwel and Knysna, in setting up a similar structure.⁵⁷ This came about as a result of PMCs popularity and its struggle roots.

There have also been many failures in negotiating with government. The issue of lack of service delivery in Manenberg, fixing dilapidated housing complexes, inadequate housing, safety concerns, better policing, and having sufficient street lights have all been issues that

55. Interview with Mario Wanza, 24 March 2010.

56. *Ibid.*

57. *Ibid.*

government has failed to deliver on. When they could not get any results from government, PMC adopted tactics by involving residents to march to the provincial parliament in the city.

To nullify the attacks from within, PMC leadership launched a People's Charter in December 2008, with the aim to let Manenberg become a vibrant, proud and dignified place to live in. In setting up the charter, PMC volunteers went door knocking and asked residents what they wanted to happen in Manenberg. PMC held community meetings with residents and their concerns were taken into account in the drafting of the document. 'The only difference with today's way of doing things than in the 80s is that we can do this in the open as opposed to when we wanted to recruit residents of the community into the movement.'⁵⁸ Another way of popularizing PMC has been the handing out of t-shirts, calendars and caps. PMC volunteers from various sectors are seen in walking around in different coloured t-shirts representing the sectors, an example, a blue t-shirt depicting branding of the business sector.⁵⁹ The use of branding on their t-shirts is a ploy used extensively throughout the 1980s. It immediately creates an identity with PMC. The use of branded banners and flags became synonymous with PMC's intention to capture the appeal of the masses. It worked.

In a further ploy to engage residents around their programme, the PMC created a newspaper, aptly called '*Proudly Manenberg, the people's voice.*' The newspaper which is a monthly edition, is a four page spread, that reflects all PMC's new plans, news and community initiatives and feedbacks of various campaigns. It always reflects on issues such as building a new Manenberg, building democracy, being part of the new Manenberg, building street

58. Interview with Mario Wanza, 24 March 2010.

59. PMC volunteers walking around in Manenberg with t-shirts and caps.

committees, and dealing with crime and the drug problems. In an editorial in September 2008, Wanza wrote how Manenberg residents participated in several protest actions in the city and joined forces with COSATU. 'For many people it was their first protest. For others it was going back to the 1980s when the struggle was against apartheid. Now, today the struggle is against poverty and unemployment.'⁶⁰

Another successful ploy that the leadership of PMC employed was to rely on high profiled speakers to address their AGMs. In 2007, MEC for Public Works and Transport, Marius Fransman and in 2008, COSATU's provincial secretary in the Western Cape, Tony Ehrenreich, addressed residents and activists. Ehrenreich spoke volumes on how PMC was a beacon of hope to them on how to organise a community into action. A year later, the Minister in the Zuma Presidency, Mr. Trevor Manuel, who heads the National Planning Commission, was the keynote speaker. Manuel said Manenberg had 'a rich but painful history and that the community was a shining example to the rest of the country. Manenberg shows the power a strong community has when faced with trying circumstances. The people are taking on issues that they do not agree with, and that is admirable. While there is still lots to be done, they have proven that unity is power and that democracy starts within their communities.'⁶¹ Manuel also called upon the memories of the 1980s especially pointing to, the student, sports and worker organisations in Manenberg.⁶² He said that the struggle for

60. *Proudly Manenberg*, September 2008.

61. My notes whilst being a guest at the 4th Annual General Meeting of the PMC at Phoenix High School, Manenberg, September 2009. Trevor Manuel was the key note speaker at the AGM.

62. *Ibid*, (Manuel in the 1980s was the UDF's secretary in the Western Cape and he visited the members of the inner circle at several venues within Manenberg and outside).

democracy was under pressure and that the change that occurred pre-1994 was through the hard work of communities such as Manenberg. Democracy cannot be on behalf of the people, it must be with the people. We must walk with the people of Manenberg as a government.’⁶³ The visit by the Minister helped smooth over disgruntled activists’ view of the ruling ANC, as activists felt the ANC has lost touch with the people, hence the service delivery protests.

The unravelling of PMC

Wanza mentions that a parallel structure to PMC has been established in Manenberg since 2009, which is called the MDCS, which is managed by Faldielah de Vries and others.⁶⁴

Ironically the MDCS was launched on 24 September 2009 at Phoenix High, the same venue PMC uses to host their AGMs every year. Speaking at the launch was former resident and inner circle member Irvin Kinnes and Cape Town mayor, Dan Plato.⁶⁵

In a newspaper interview Faldielah outlined the aims of MDCS, which was to serve as a capacity building body and not run any projects. At the time of the launch 23 organisations had signed up. ‘This structure was formed by organisations within Manenberg. It is a co-ordinating structure, which will assist in facilitating, and make sure that there is not more than one organisation doing the same thing. We will also make sure that whoever gets funding will be monitored and the funds spent in total transparency.’⁶⁶ In Manenberg alone in 2010 there are more than 40 organisations, including schools and feeding schemes who are trying to bring about change in Manenberg, including PMC.

63. My notes whilst being a guest at the 4th Annual General Meeting of the PMC at Phoenix High School, Manenberg, September 2009. Trevor Manuel was the key note speaker at the AGM.

64. Interview with Mario Wanza, 25 October 2010.

65. *Athlone News*, 30 September 2009, p.9.

66. *Ibid.*

Faldielah feels that not enough is done on the original issues PMC and other organisations were meant to do. The housing issue is still critical, the problem of back yard dwellers is even worse and is a time bomb waiting to explode. She says: ‘the MDCS is respectful of all organisations and their autonomy and everyone is welcome to their meetings since they have an open policy.’⁶⁷ Mickey adds that even though PMC has lost some of its momentum and locality within Manenberg, it is still an avenue whereby job creation and poverty matters can be resolved.⁶⁸ Part of the controversies surrounding the PMC over the past year (2010) stemmed primarily from factors already alluded to, however, the main factor for former committee member Faldielah de Vries has been the alleged mismanagement of funds received from local government for projects in Manenberg.⁶⁹

A popular Sunday newspaper ran the same story about allegations of mismanagement of funds amongst the leadership of the PMC. The newspaper reports that PMC received R2m for a six-month project from the Independent Development Trust (IDT), a body that is established to assist community projects country-wide. On the insistence of interest groups the IDT has requested a forensic audit into the PMC’s handling of their money. The article states that 500 workers were supposed to be paid a R1000 per month. This did not happen and a further R97000 has been found in a savings account, which PMC did not declare. IDT officials state that PMC wanted more than just the R2m for other projects and staged a sit-in at its offices. Since the incident an interim chairperson for the PMC, Adiel Peters, has been appointed whilst the investigation was ongoing. Peters expresses the view that the PMC had no proper financial systems in place to handle funding. Wanza, however, maintains that is wrong and that if he had to leave, PMC would collapse.⁷⁰

67. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

68. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010.

69. Interview with Faldielah de Vries, 22 March 2010.

70. *Sondag Son*, 16 May 2010, p.4.

Tensions around PMC increased in Manenberg and, in July 2010, former disgruntled PMC members staged a revolt ousting PMC out of their offices based at the Manenberg People's Centre. Supporters of Wanza were harassed and intimidated with violent clashes between the two groupings. A Wanza supporter's house was vandalized and she has remained frightened ever since.⁷¹ Months later Wanza maintains his innocence and he has continued with projects. He called on those accusers to come with proof. Wanza is aware that former activists have gone underground or pulled out. Wanza says: 'It is indicative of the process of building people's power.'⁷²

In September 2010 city council officials evicted several residents from their homes due to not paying their rent arrears. PMC immediately organised residents and this sparked hundreds of residents into protest action with the demand that rent arrears be scrapped. They occupied the rent offices and marched to the courts to protest.⁷³ The action taken by PMC, echoes Mickey's sentiments, that PMC still has a role to play in organising people around living conditions unlike any other body in Manenberg.⁷⁴

Wanza points out: 'We haven't stopped operating. We have faced several challenges to divide and rule us, to create disunity and to make us look like we are after power. The DA-led government has been applying the tactics of old.'⁷⁵

71. Interview with PMC Volunteer, 20 August 2010.

72. Interview with Mario Wanza, 25 October 2010.

73. Interview with PMC Volunteer, 30 September 2010.

74. Interview with Mickey Adams, 24 March 2010.

75. Interview with Mario Wanza, 25 October 2010.

People's Post reported that a breakaway group tried to attend the PMC's fifth annual general meeting held in November 2010, because they wanted the issue of finances to be addressed. The report stated that Wanza indicated that no financial report was going to be discussed as it was still being audited. The finances of the organization have been identified by the breakaway group as a crucial source of discontent. The report also suggests that PMC will field a candidate for local by elections.⁷⁶ This was an indication of a new strategy of the PMC and one that will have to be followed. Immediately after the AGM, a PMC volunteer explained: 'I decided to quit from an organisation that is changing from bad to worse and that is not the Proudly Manenberg that I belonged to.'⁷⁷

Today, Wanza and others run the PMC from their newly built Manenberg Waterfront office in Vygieskraal Road, situated in zone one, which is bordering Lansdowne Road. While there are those critical of the PMC, more and more PMC volunteers have been seen walking, talking, working and mobilizing residents around political rights as citizens of this country.

Conclusion

In this chapter we looked at the formation and upsurge of social movements within South Africa and how these movements raised pertinent issues in the new dispensation since 1994. The formation of these social movements is crucial in the context of nationalism in that it brought about new debates wherein government had to engage its citizens. South Africa post-1994 was busy with rebuilding and undoing the injustices of the past. The ANC was in power now and it had several policies to implement. It was now a government which had to appease

76. *People's Post*, 16 November 2010.

77. Interview with PMC Volunteer, 16 November 2010.

expectations of election promises. The Mandela and Mbeki presidencies were affected with service delivery protests, protests against lack of reform on health care, especially in the area of HIV/AIDS and on housing, clean water and access to proper education and other resources. These social movements engaged the ANC-led government on constitutional rights, on human rights issues in terms of their living conditions. South Africa, a developing country, with two economies included the rich and excluded the poor.

This chapter looked at the conditions during the 1990s and early 2000s in Manenberg and how activists from the 1980s continued to work and improve the lives of residents. During this period, activists remained low key due to their reliance on government to make changes for residents. Wanza mentioned that they took the role of the new government for granted and waited on them to govern. They expected the notion of the 'people shall govern' to reflect the new policy of the ANC government. A decade after democracy, activists of the 1980s again reunited and armed with a purpose took control of their community and launched the PMC.

The establishment of the PMC became necessary during a period where gangs in Manenberg had full control of daily life. A killing of a student ignited old passions of activists. A demand for change from residents was heeded upon and activists began their journey to redemption. Activists began to adopt strategies of the past to recruit, to rebuild lost confidence and self belief in residents. But it needed to begin to understand the principle of working together with government on achieving its goals. It also adopted strategies used during the mid 1990s of the failed RDP programme in Manenberg. PMC improved on the zonal sector approach and successfully got residents to believe in themselves. Creating jobs and sustaining it became a burden for the PMC management. It was seen as a vehicle for change. It was hailed by social partners as a way to engage communities. It was seen by government as a partner, however,

the politics in the Western Cape made it difficult for PMC to function. Often after signing agreements with government officials, elections would derail plans and honouring of past agreements often led to clashes and protest action by PMC members. It is also working with the DA-led government that has led to several activists repositioning and distancing themselves from PMC. Internal revolt and intimidation took place in a bid to unravel the PMC. Today, wounded and rattled, PMC still continues with its mandate amongst criticism. In the words of Mario Wanza, 'ons kap net aan (we will continue to work no matter what).'⁷⁸

78. Interview with Mario Wanza, 25 October 2010.

CONCLUSION

Local conditions and localised resistance in the 1980s

This thesis set out to look at the role of several key political activists in Manenberg during the 1980s and how they influenced the lives of residents within Manenberg. It also set out to identify the politics of resistance and mass mobilisation strategies in Manenberg during the 1980s. It looked at specifically how local conditions spurred activists into action. Manenberg, like many other townships in South Africa, could be described as a disadvantaged community. Often living conditions and living on the margins of society drive people to resist, to react, to mobilise against the state. It is the living conditions that became a common motivating determinant in the lives of activists in Manenberg during the 1980s and 2000s.

I was firstly motivated to do this thesis based on Fullard's view that further localized studies should be done to explore what exactly activists did in their communities during the 1980s.¹ In responding to Fullard, I attempted to localise a township experience during the 1980s struggles by reflecting about activists based in Manenberg, Cape Town. Activists from Manenberg were dedicated to making Manenberg ungovernable. The story of Manenberg and its resistance movement does provide an insight as to how activists internalized ANC policies, recruitment strategies and how they believed that one day through their efforts they would be freed. The brutality of the 1980s was real for activists and residents of Manenberg.

A focus on a local area brings to the fore new actors on the historical scene and highlights the significance of otherwise neglected spaces such as local schools and public spaces.

1. See introduction.

I have focused on the establishment of Manenberg in chapter one in 1966. Residents came from all over the city to be resettled in a raw, dusty and barren township. Residents came from areas such as Strawberry Lane, Constantia, Wynberg, Claremont, Crawford, Lansdowne, District Six, Sea Point, Green Point, Waterkant Street, Woodstock, Salt River, and the Bo-Kaap to be resettled after being forcefully removed as a result of the Group Areas Act.

The biographical sketches of key activists operating during the 1980s reveal that each member of this group had similar experiences whilst growing up and living in squalor in Manenberg. Their paths crossed because of their common drive and search for truth. The thesis looked at ordinary men and women who used their living conditions as a spring board to speak out, to act out and to manifest their anger through joining like-minded people into a movement that addressed their concerns and desires. It is these ordinary people that have changed Manenberg and who continue to change Manenberg on a daily basis. The value of biography is that the reader can ascertain from their lived experiences what really happened in Manenberg in the 1980s and what motivated people to act.

In chapter two, I looked at resistance in Manenberg during the 1980s. It explained how the exiled ANC through its mass mobilisation strategies came to a place called Manenberg. The ANC in exile realized that the apartheid regime perfected their divide and rule strategy in order to win the hearts of the Coloureds and Indians by introducing a tricameral parliament. This tricameral parliament excluded the majority Black population. The ANC then had to make use of mobilisation strategies to declare war on the apartheid government. Already involved in an armed struggle, the ANC decided on a people's war strategy by attracting young disgruntled militants to be trained in warfare and to make white areas ungovernable.

No longer were townships only sites of struggle, but comrades had to make white areas sites of struggle. The apartheid state retaliated by instituting the state of emergencies in 1985 and 1986, seeking to crush the UDF and other underground movement leadership. This brought about more resistance from the youth and country-wide clashes with the security police reached unprecedented heights. The student uprisings of the mid 1980s brought about new changes in the struggle as students partnered with parents and other workers in making known their dissatisfaction with apartheid laws.

In Manenberg this was no different. Manenberg became a site of struggle of resistance. It was on fire. It brought about a militancy that residents could identify with and endorse. Clashes with the security police became a common site in Manenberg. Manenberg Avenue was where it happened. Activists recruited new members into the movement. Activists in Manenberg met at various undisclosed venues and often were spoken to by members of the UDF and ANC leadership. Burning down municipal buildings and targeting sites of the apartheid state was a strategy used by the more militant grouping operating in Manenberg. These fearless activists were not trained in Angola, Zimbabwe or Zambia. They were given military training inside Manenberg. They were trained how to throw, plant and detonate bombs and use AK 47s in combat. They were trained in guerilla warfare tactics by ambushing casspirs and police vans into alleys in Manenberg Avenue. The influence of the UDF was evident amongst activists as many of them were involved in UDF structures in Cape Town. As old leaders left high school, new leaders took over, often more militant and hard core in their approach often being mentored by inner circle members who were teachers.

The Defiance Campaign orchestrated by the Mass Democratic Movement was taken forward by teachers operating at the three high schools in Manenberg. The message for activists was

simple. The enemy for activists was simple. It was the apartheid state and it was easy for activists to recruit new members. Teachers at Manenberg High took the forefront during the 1989 Defiance Campaign. Protest marches, the writing of protest letters to officialdom and hosting of mass meetings were but a few of the initiatives and methods used to conscientize residents and students around the apartheid state. There were many marches to white-only beaches. A march to Cape Town took place during the purple rain event and the subsequent 13 September march where speaker after speaker predicted freedom was coming soon. Months later in 1990, FW de Klerk unbanned the ANC, Pan African Congress (PAC), AZAPO, and SACP and other organizations and released political prisoners from Robben Island.

PMC as a social movement

This thesis was also inspired by Ballard *et al's* work on social movements in South Africa.² Activists who organised and recruited members of the community as in the 1980s established a social movement called the Proudly Manenberg Campaign in 2005.

In chapter three I discussed the establishment of the Proudly Manenberg Campaign. I took a look at the development of social movements in South Africa, the actual reason for the formation of the PMC, strategies used by the PMC and lastly the unravelling of the PMC. The chapter sketched a period whereby post democracy Manenberg too grappled with the new notion of democracy and change. Government policies such as the RDP were adopted but it never got off the ground in places like Manenberg. Elections came and residents participated in these new democratic practices in the knowledge that change would be

2. See introduction.

affected. This never happened. During this period the role of activists was diminished in the new South Africa in Manenberg. Activists who had moved on from students politics went into working for NGOs. NGOs started to play a role in making some changes in the 1990s, but problems around living conditions, crime, unemployment, overcrowding, lack of resources or access to resources were still prevalent. Manenberg again became a place forgotten from the rest of South Africa. Gangs again became powerful and they were the one's recruiting and mobilising residents to be active partners in their criminal activities. Gang bosses seized the opportunity to provide shelter, care and money to residents in return for silence and selling their drugs and guns. Initial efforts to combat these practices by anti-crime forum members were resisted by residents who protected gang bosses. Community activists managed to take control again of Manenberg in the 2000s.

During the 1980s and during the 2000s similar living conditions have been prevalent in Manenberg, Cape Town. In Manenberg very little changed over the last three decades. Housing conditions in Manenberg did not improve. Flats and cottages that had no geezers in the 1980s still had no geezers 30 years later. Overcrowdedness was a problem in the 1980s and still exists today, with the added problem of shack dwellers and backyard dwellers in Manenberg. The population in Manenberg increased, the socio-economic situation in Manenberg deteriorated. It is these circumstances that prompted activists to take action to make a change.

In essence, during the 1980s, in relation to living conditions within Manenberg, the fight was primarily against apartheid. In the 2000s the fight has been to improve local conditions and to build and develop a new image for Manenberg. As we have seen the fight to develop a positive image of Manenberg has been successful, but the battle to improve living conditions

is still problematic against the backdrop of high inflation, unemployment and fiscal constraints.

Chapter 3 pointed to how the PMC was formed soon after the killing of a student in July 2005. Activists seized the opportunity to mobilise residents around their fears and yearning for a crime free Manenberg. Through efforts of activists of the 1980s, several meetings were held in the run up to the establishment of the PMC involving several prominent residents, NGOs, religious bodies and teachers.

The PMC involved residents in decision-making processes. The use of zones and sectors akin to the post-apartheid period of 1994 was adopted and perfected. What is relevant here is that often communities form a partnership as a result of their hardships, the lack of resources, and socio-economic conditions wherein they find themselves. For communities dealing with unemployment, housing shortages, poverty, and hunger often becomes mobilising factors. Activists schooled in the 1980s and the NGO period of the 1990s became acutely aware as to how to approach residents to join this new movement, called PMC. And the first four years support for the PMC was unprecedented in Manenberg. Never before was there a period where there was such hype and excitement about making a real change in Manenberg. PMC activists used popular slogans and phrases reminiscent of the 1980s into getting parents, workers and students active again. The use of 1980s sloganism and branding themselves with PMC t-shirts, caps and banners became a popular method to draw large numbers of people to attend their meetings, sporting, social and cultural events.

Reclaiming the streets from gangs became a popular theme through the last five years in Manenberg. Planting trees and plants became a way of life in Manenberg over the last three years. Hundreds of temporary employment was created through these greening projects.

Training of volunteers to be vigilant on the streets, to alert safety sector leaders of criminal activities became a big part of the success of PMC. PMC did what no other state institution could do for residents and PMC's popularity soared.

However, as with any movement there is often mistrust, a lack of cooperation and jealousy and a yearning or potential for greed. All this happened within the PMC, which led to its unravelling. Disgruntled 1980s activists felt that the current leadership of PMC was swaying away from its original mandate. Others felt that PMC leadership were misusing public funds and enriching themselves. Whilst others felt that working with the DA-led government was contrary to the principles set out. These feelings were turned into mass action and revolt by former members of the PMC. A new wave of protest took over in Manenberg. The current leadership of the PMC was sidelined to the periphery of Manenberg. However, they have continued to work on projects in Manenberg. According to the current leadership of the PMC nothing has changed within its operations and visibility in Manenberg. The only real difference now was the forced relocation of their head quarters from Scheldt Street (housed within the Manenberg People's Centre) to the new premises at the Manenberg Waterfront, Vygieskraal Road.

Then and now: activism across the decades

In the 1980s the approach to leadership was collective decision-making. A core group of people made decisions on how best to move forward. The leadership style included aspects whereby everyone in the group could replace the other in case they were arrested. Everyone was groomed to take over the leadership role. The group encouraged vigorous debate but it always followed in the prescribed notion of consultative leadership.

During the period 2005 – 2010 the same approach was adopted. Meetings were held as explained in the chapter three to decide on the aims and vision of the PMC. The only difference now was that the leaders were elected by the people of Manenberg. They brought with them years of experience in leading non-governmental organisations in Manenberg during the 1990s and early 2000s. As during the 1980s and early 1990s the entire leadership of PMC has started mentorships within the organization. They have appointed youth leaders in positions that required them to lead from the front. PMC has been successful in attracting both young and old residents into the movement into leadership capacities.

The activist group of the 1980s was inexperienced, raw and unsure of themselves with a militant approach to everything. Their main objective was to make South Africa and Manenberg ungovernable. They had to break things. They were busy planning to overthrow state institutions and leaders. Manenberg was on fire in the 1980s. Creating chaos was but one of the inner circle's methods. Developing future leaders was another and being grounded in the philosophies of the ANC was crucial to the success of the anti-apartheid movement in Manenberg.

Activists have been trying for years before 2005 to rebuild Manenberg. However, only since 2005, did a real concerted and coordinated effort take place to make Manenberg a place to live in. Activists were wiser and more experienced now. They had more experience of leading organizations and organizing residents than in the 1980s. They have cut their teeth in smaller organizations such as the Manenberg Advice Office, the Manenberg People's Centre, the Community Police Forum and others. They were better equipped to speak to communities in a language that residents could understand.

Violence has no place now in the strategies of the PMC. This is in contrast to the more militant social movements. The PMC created a new way of doing things unlike in the 1980s where the underground movement had to operate in secret. In the last five years the organization had to adapt to the political situation in the province and city. Since PMC's establishment, the city and province had undergone several political leadership changes between the ANC and DA. This has been a serious challenge for PMC which sought to bring about change by mobilising from below but also by developing partnerships with government.

Activists have been trained on negotiations with government and business in realising PMC's ideals of 'building a vibrant, proud and dignified Manenberg through creating opportunities'.³ All PMCs sectors had established partnerships with government departments since then several community gardens have been designed and planted and a tourism route has been established to bring tourists to Manenberg. However, these partnerships have been hampered with the change in government in the province and city.

PMC activists also made use of the media to further their aims, often leading to government making changes as a result of media exposure. Media activists like Oryx Media and the Manenberg Media Group have been approached to assist in helping to produce the Manenberg newsletter and other media.

Another aspect of organizational development has been the four annual general meetings held in Manenberg since its inception in 2005. Over the last four years members within the PMC

3. <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=5753401381#!/group.php?gid=5753401381&v=info>
Proudly Manenberg Campaign has a Face Book group

have been reporting on their zonal and sector activities. Strict controls over PMC funds and the adoption and implementation of the movement's constitution has been exercised.

The 1980s group met in secret venues to plan their strategies. Often these hide-outs were in Manenberg itself. They had to be schooled in the politics of the underground movement. They were trained politically by various comrades sent into Manenberg. They had to survive and their intelligence networks had to be in peak operational order for them to avoid being picked up. Strategies in organizing campaigns were often discussed and decided upon. Hardly anything was left for chance and activists were given training on how to persuade residents, students and parents to the movement. Activists were part of a wider anti-apartheid movement and often received training on strategy planning, guerilla warfare, and ensuring that the programme against apartheid would continue in the event of anyone of them being arrested. They were linked to the UDF and the underground ANC in Cape Town, the Western Cape and nationally.

Today, the same group no longer meets in hide-outs, parking lots, and secret locations but in public spaces once taboo to meet in. They have had the full backing of the community in establishing the PMC with great fanfare. They have ensured that residents become ambassadors for the PMC. Activists have gone back to adopting strategies of taking issues to the people and for them to decide on a path of action. Across all zonal sectors, monthly and weekly meetings have been held with reports and community feedback going back to the steering committee of the PMC. Partnerships have been established with local businesses in the area in funding some projects such as the Consol Glass partnership which has funded several safety projects and the building of the Manenberg Waterfront in Vygieskraal Road.

PMC has also met with other working class communities in establishing a similar programme of action like the PMC in Bonteheuwel and Knysna.⁴ Yet in the 2000s activists operating in Manenberg seemed to be isolated from other networks, even though many of them are still ANC members. PMC has been localised within the struggles in Manenberg. The only indication that PMC has had outside influences has been the visits of high profile ANC government officials and ministers at their annual general meetings. PMC made use of their networks in reviving an activist forum in the city in September 2010, after considerable marketing very few of the old guard from the 1980s turned up.⁵

In trying to combat the notion that the PMC is an ANC-aligned organization, the PMC elected an activist, Amelia September who has not had any ties to the 1980s inner circle in order not to marginalize other groupings. The use of religious bodies, sports bodies, education forums and youth sectors have given the PMC more legitimacy in Manenberg. Local buy-in has been easier since September's appointment. In the 1980s too they worked with sporting organisations.

In the 1980s, there was close co-operation between teachers and students and schools were the centre of activism. Recruits were assembled in secret locations and exposed to the policies of the underground movement. Street and court committees were set up everywhere in Manenberg. SRCs were set up to legitimize their plight as students. It brought to the attention of teachers and other bodies operating at the schools, conditions and disparities that were not in line with white schools. Arts and cultural events were planned and schools, religious institutions and community centres became recruitment centres. Mural paintings of

4. Interview with Mario Wanza, 24 March 2010.

5. *Ibid*, 25 October 2010.

the imprisoned Mandela, the struggle icon, were used by the SRC's at all schools in Manenberg to raise a spirit of defiance amongst the youth. Banned pamphlets, posters and other material were often distributed at school to educate students about the movement. Schooling in the 1980s on the surface looked normal, but it was far from it. The use of slogans, political speeches, pamphlets and toyi-toyi'ing were tools that were used by the inner circle to incite students into action.

While schools were the centre of activism in the 1980s, this is no longer the case. PMC now works on a much broader level. Today, PMC activists have not forgotten the plight of residents. They have helped countless residents save their houses, jobs and tried to create an environment that residents could thrive in. They have walked, marched with and led residents around civic issues such as rent increases, opening the rent and clinic offices. They have donated their time and energy, handed out t-shirts emblazoned with the PMC logo and slogans on it. Residents have had open access to their offices for advice, for help and for guidance. The PMC adopted a strategy to strengthen the zones and sectors by encouraging residents to take up the mantra of 'the people shall govern.' The leadership has become aware of how the residents feel and think of their projects and they have been quick to allay the fears of the people through their street and court communities. In doing this – it has become fairly easy to mobilize residents and get them involved in projects planned in Manenberg. The strategy of street and court committees has thus survived over the decades.

In conclusion, we can identify similar mobilising strategies such as marches, zonal meetings, street and court committees, the use of sporting clubs, using t-shirts, and the use of prominent speakers at PMC functions used by activists in the 1980s and 2000s. In fact certain activists within the PMC yearn for the defiant politics of the 1980s. An incident depicting this was the

25th anniversary of the UDF two years ago. PMC activists came in their numbers and shouted slogans of the 1980s reminding speaker after speaker about the many sacrifices it took for the country to be free.⁶ PMC has called upon citizens to embrace the charterist movement in re-claiming the principle of ‘the people shall govern.’

In the advent of democracy in this country, however, new forms of mass mobilisation strategies also came to fore such as securing employment, greening the environment and engaging with government and business. The PMC has had to learn how government operates and how to manage corporate funding. This has been a learning curve for activists.

PMC has indeed contributed to the rich new history of social movements in South Africa. It has not just rallied residents around one issue, but it has tackled all major issues in Manenberg and it has divided its resources and expertise to tackle these problems. For the leadership of PMC working with government was the preferred option rather than working against government to ensure that changes determined by the community are affected. Whilst some in government do feel that social movement activists are counter-productive to democratic practices, activists feel that through the use of the courts, especially, the Constitutional Court – citizens thus have recourse to effect changes within government. But the PMC did not have to go through this avenue to achieve their goals.

This thesis has not specifically focused on the various kinds of leadership and who played what specific role, due to the fact that activists operated on a consultative basis. However, within the PMC leadership – Wanza showed his true potential when he accepted his

6. The 25th anniversary of the UDF was celebrated on 20 August 2008. PMC activists and volunteers converged in Rocklands, Mitchell’s Plain, the same venue the UDF was launched in 1983.

leadership position. He and others tried to make Manenberg safe, free of the stigma of gangsterism and most importantly they tried to do the impossible beautify a ghetto and make people develop some pride in where they live. This has been Proudly Manenberg's biggest contribution: to reverse the long enduring image of Manenberg (developed in apartheid times) as a place with no hope. It has become a place of possibility.

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