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**Practical Solidarity:
Connections Between Swedish Social Democratic Women and
Women in the African National Congress of South Africa,
1960-1994**

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Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

July 2015

I declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own.

Emma Elinor Lundin

ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses the struggle to increase women's participation in public and political life by focusing on the activism of women within the Swedish Social Democratic Party (SAP) and the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) from 1960 until 1994. It argues that internationalism was key to these women's success, providing them with a source of support and funding as well as a stage to develop policies away from overwhelmingly patriarchal national settings. Creating and steering political trends and discussions in international fora, and bolstered by the approval of others in the international community, the women who feature here gained a foot in the door of power and created environments conducive to their presence, abilities and voices.

To uncover the tensions generated by women's activism, the thesis investigates the social constructions of gender and how these fluctuated over the period discussed. Women's attempts to increase their collective representation unveil the inner workings of mass-mobilising political organisations like the ANC and SAP. The thesis also discusses the impact of ideological developments in this era on women's activism in SAP and the ANC and the increasing popularity of 'identity' liberation philosophies like second-wave feminism and black power. It finds that both were concepts these left-wing organisations struggled with, as they seemed to put individuals ahead of the collective.

The thesis adds strength to the argument that women have been actively removed from history while their contributions have been consciously silenced in order to portray these political organisations as cohesive and united structures without inner divisions. Nevertheless, women's attempts to become political leaders and senior members of party, parliamentary and government structures brought conflict and frustration, with every appointment fought for and hard lessons learned along the way. By recovering this history, the thesis challenges national and organisational myth-making, within Sweden and SAP as well as South Africa and the ANC. It argues that the narratives of these political women's activists complicate organisational and national histories, which emerge as oversimplified constructions of progress and unity.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAM	Anti-Apartheid Movement
AAWC	All African Women's Conference
AIC	Arbetarrörelsens Internationella Centrum (SAP's international forum)
AMS	Arbetsmarknadsstyrelsen (the national labour market board)
ANC	African National Congress of South Africa
ANCWL	African National Congress Women's League
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
AP	Afrikaner Party
ArAB	Arbetarrörelsens Arkiv och Bibliotek (the Labour Movement Archives and Library)
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AWB	Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
BCM	Black Consciousness Movement
BWL	Bantu Women's League
C	Centerpartiet
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPSA	Communist Party of South Africa
CUSA	Council of Unions of South Africa
FCWU	Food and Canning Workers' Union
FEDSAW	Federation of South African Women
FEDTRAW	Federation of Transvaal Women
Fort Hare:	Liberation Movement Archives at the University of Fort Hare, Alice, South Africa
FOSATU	Federation of South African Trade Unions
FP	Folkpartiet
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
H	Högerpartiet

HNP	Herenigde Nasionale Party
HRC	Human Rights Committee
ICSDW	International Council of Social Democratic Women
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IRDD	ANC's Internal Reconstruction and Development Department
ISAK	Isolera Sydafrika Kommittén (Isolate South Africa Committee)
Jämfo	Delegationen för jämställdhetsforskning (the commission for research on equality)
KDS/KdS	Kristen Demokratisk Samling/Kristdemokratiska Samhällspartiet
KFML	Kommunistiska Förbundet Marxist-Leninisterna
LO	Landsorganisationen (the Swedish Trade Union Confederation)
LoN	League of Nations
M	Moderata Samlingspartiet
Mayibuye	UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Centre, University of the Western Cape, South Africa
MDM	Mass Democratic Movement
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe
Mp	Miljöpartiet de Gröna
MP	Member of Parliament
MPLA	Movimento Popular da Libertação de Angola
MPNP	Multi-Party Negotiation Process
NAHECS	National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre, University of Fort Hare
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCAW	National Council of African Women
NEC	National Executive Committee
NIB	Nämnden för internationellt bistånd (the board of international assistance)
NOW	Natal Organisation of Women
NP	National Party
NUM	National Union of Mineworkers
NUSAS	National Union of South African Students

NWEC	ANC National Women's Executive Committee
NyD	Ny Demokrati
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OMM	Organização da Mulher Moçambicana
PAC	Pan-African Congress
PAIGC	Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde
PAWO	Pan-African Women's Organisation
PEBCO	Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation
RENAMO	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACTU	South African Congress of Trade Unions
SADET	South African Democracy Education Trust
SADF	South African Defence Force
SAIC	South African Indian Congress
SANNC	South African Native National Congress
SAP	Socialdemokratiska Arbetarepartiet
SASO	South African Students' Organisation
SI	Socialist International
SIDA	Styrelsen för internationell utveckling (the board of international development, later the Swedish International Development Agency)
SIW	Socialist International Women
SKP	Sveriges Kommunistiska Parti
SKSF	Sveriges Kristna Socialdemokraters Förbund (also known as Broderskapsrörelsen)
SOMAFCO	Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College
SSKF	Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Kvinnoförbund (also known as S-Kvinnor)
SSU	Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Ungdomsförbund
SUL	Sveriges Ungdomsorganisationers Landsråd (national council of Swedish youth organisations)
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
TCO	Tjänstemännens Centralorganisation (the Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees)

TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UCM	University Christian Movement
UDF	United Democratic Front
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UWC	University of the Western Cape
UWO	United Women's Organisation
V	Vänsterpartiet
VEETU	Voter Education and Elections Training Unit
VOW	<i>Voice of Women</i> (ANC Women's Section journal)
VPK	Vänsterpartiet Kommunisterna
VU	Verkställande utskott (SAP's national executive committee)
WIDF	Women's International Democratic Federation
WNC	Women's National Coalition
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union

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INTRODUCTION

On 27 April 1994, South Africa held its first ever democratic elections, resulting in a landslide victory for the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC). A few months later, on 18 September, Sweden's previously dominant Socialdemokratiska Arbetarepartiet (the Social Democratic Party, SAP) ousted a coalition led by conservative party Moderata Samlingspartiet from government. Apart from bringing in new governments, the elections also heralded a new era for gender politics: for the first time, both SAP and the ANC had enforced gender quotas in their selection of prospective members of parliaments.

The quotas, which broke new ground in both countries, were put in place to ensure a fair representation of citizens in positions of power. In the wake of the elections, the immediate outcome seemed promising. In Sweden, SAP's 'zipped lists' had ensured that every second candidate on the MP ballot list was a woman. The election resulted a minority SAP government, in which Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson split the ministries evenly between 10 female and 10 male ministers. Earlier generations of SAP women had had to settle for portfolios for which women were considered 'natural experts', i.e. family and welfare. However, in 1994 Carlsson awarded several of the most prestigious offices to women, including that of deputy prime minister, foreign minister and justice minister.¹

In post-election South Africa, more than 26 per cent of the parliamentary seats were won by women, pushing the country up 134 places — from 141st to seventh — in the ranking of female parliamentary representation worldwide.² This was the direct result of cross-party women's mobilisation, and particularly that of ANC women, whose efforts resulted in 30 per cent of their party's MPs being women.³

¹ A full list of female cabinet ministers and their posts, from 1946 until 1994, is available as appendix C. Biographies of individuals mentioned throughout this thesis are available in appendix D.

² Britton, Hannah E. 'Coalition Building, Election Rules, and Party Politics: South African Women's Path to Parliament' *Africa Today*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (Winter, 2002), p. 33

³ The ANC won 62.5 per cent of the vote, resulting in a total of 252 seats out of a possible 400. The first government under ANC leader Nelson Mandela (1994-1997) as President of South Africa was a Government of National Unity under the terms of the interim constitution of South Africa (1994-1997). Out of 33 ministers (including two Deputy Presidents), three were women: Nkozasana Dlamini-Zuma minister of health; Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele minister of housing; and Stella Sigcau minister of enterprise.

Since the 1990s, gender quotas have played an important role in the political liberation of women across the world. Where in use, quotas have ensured a significant increase in female parliamentarians, making legislative bodies increasingly representative of the people that they aim to serve. The point of this argument is not, however, that women are automatically represented or even best served by other women. It is to point out that part of the vital role of democracy is to ensure that it looks and acts representative of the people that it serves. In order to break patriarchal and ethnic holds on power, a fair representation of women and minorities is an important factor in creating support for democratic structures. In Sweden, gender representation in parliament has gradually increased, apart from in 2010 when male-dominated anti-quota and anti-feminist nationalist party Sverigedemokraterna (Sweden Democrats) won its first seats.⁴ Furthermore, the successful implementation of quotas has encouraged their use in other arenas. As this thesis was finalised, the SAP-Green Swedish coalition government elected in the autumn of 2014 promised to follow Norway's lead in introducing boardroom quotas should women still hold less than 40 per cent of the seats there in 2016.⁵

The final chapter of this thesis outlines why and how SAP and ANC women were able to impose gender quotas in the selection of prospective parliamentarians in the early 1990s. Still, the thesis is much more than a study of quotas: it investigates women's liberation in decision-making fora. The crucial contribution of political women to this liberation trajectory remains overlooked. Assessing the changing role and remit of women in party and parliament, in both the ANC and SAP, the thesis aims to fill a gap left by the focus on non-parliamentary feminism in the second half of the 20th century. In doing so, it also seeks to answer what role international communities — imagined, existing and created — played in the quest for political equality by women's activists. What shape did this struggle take, and what impact did it have on the lives of women in SAP and the ANC from 1960 until 1994? By inserting this research into the narrative of women's social, economical, cultural and political liberation in the second

⁴ Statistiska centralbyrån 'Riksdagsval 1922-2010. Valda efter kön'. The proportion of MPs not born in Sweden has also increased, from 1.7 per cent in 1982 to 8 per cent in 2010. In 2010, 14.7 per cent of the population of Sweden was born abroad. Statistiska centralbyrån 'Riksdagsval 1982-2010. Valda efter födelseland' and 'Utrikes födda i riket efter födelseland, ålder och kön. År 2000 - 2014'.

⁵ 'S och MP överens: Kan bli lag om kvotering 2016' *Sveriges Radio*, 30 September 2014

half of the 20th century, political women's activism is placed within the greater movement towards emancipation that stretches back to the Enlightenment.

Using a comparative transnational lens, the thesis also explores and exposes the implied ties that increasingly bound women's activists around the world together during this time. What role did cultural exchanges, imagery, inspiration, case studies and collaborations across border play? This study is a case study in itself, aiming to show the impact of this transnational discourse and environment on two closely interconnected yet separate groups of women's activists. Focusing on SAP and the ANC, this thesis aims to recreate both local and international discussions about women's liberation from 1960 until 1994. The social constructions of class, gender and ethnicity are all vital in this story, offering insights into perceptions of oneself and others, and the pervasiveness of racism and misogyny. Geography, too, plays an important role, connecting and disconnecting the protagonists throughout the decades in focus.

The selection of these two organisations was determined by their close yet previously unexplored relationship. In 1973, a SAP government under prime minister Olof Palme launched a direct aid programme that helped fund the ANC until 1994.⁶ Before 1973, SAP and ANC activists already collaborated across organisational lines through individual connections and friendships. This will be explored in chapter one. These connections had far-reaching benefits and consequences, shaping the lives of SAP activists as well as those of ANC members and the organisation of both parties. The longer history of Swedish-South African exchanges — originally instigated by Christian missionaries and strengthened through Swedish support for the Afrikaner quest for national self-determination in the 1899-1902 South African War — will also be taken into consideration.

A study of this geographical scope over a long period of time necessitates engagement with multiple historiographies, including both Swedish and South African. It has also been necessary to look beyond historical studies and incorporate research from a wider range of academic disciplines. The thesis uses feminist, gender and

⁶ A total of 896 million SEK was sent to the ANC 1973-1994. See Sellström, Tor *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa – Volume I: Formation of a Popular Opinion 1950–1970* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999), p. 254. This corresponded to two thirds of all contributions to the ANC's civil mission, see Thörn, Håkan *Solidaritetsens betydelse: Kampen mot apartheid i Sydafrika och framväxten av det globala civilsamhället* (Stockholm: Atlas, 2010), p. 29

postcolonial theories to challenge national and organisational myth-making. The importance of these schools of thought will be further discussed in separate sections below.

THE SWEDISH HISTORICAL AND HISTORIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

Though Sweden's colonial legacy is much less visible than that of the Dutch and British empires — which informed the gendering of its subjects in South Africa — it has still had a great impact on ideas about nationality, power and culture, and the gendering of these. In recent years, Swedish colonialism, Swedish involvement in the transatlantic slave trade and the impact of long-standing worldwide trade relations have become the subjects of a new wave of historical research.⁷ This includes Jonas Sjölander's investigation into Swedish trade unions' responses to unionised employees of Swedish companies in South America, which argues that colonialism informed Swedish views of capitalism and growth, and split the working class across ethnic lines.⁸ This further complicates the idea of a historically static, benevolent and non-racist Swedish approach to non-Swedes.

Sweden's involvement in colonialism does not make it unique; but neither does Sweden's history make it exceptional. Swedish historiography, however, has long suffered from stereotypical generalisations earmarking it as a particularly 'kind' state. This is particularly true for research written in non-Scandinavian languages. As Mary Hilson has written,

many of the academics who have studied the Nordic region have done so from an explicit position of approval or admiration for societies that seem to differ in important ways from other parts of the world.⁹

⁷ Sweden's colonial possessions included New Sweden along the Delaware River and forts along Africa's Gold Coast in the 17th century, and the Caribbean island Saint-Barthélemy, which was under Swedish rule 1784-1878. The settlement of Swedish Lapland in the early-modern period at the expense its indigenous Sámi population is also part of these activities. See, e.g. Rydén, Göran (ed.) *Sweden in the Eighteenth-Century World: Provincial Cosmopolitans* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013); Naum, M. & Nordin, J. (eds.) *Scandinavian Colonialism and the Rise of Modernity: Small Time Agents in a Global Arena* (New York: Springer, 2013); Nilsson, David *Sweden-Norway at the Berlin Conference 1884-85: History, National Identity-Making and Sweden's Relations with Africa* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2013)

⁸ Sjölander, Jonas 'Solidaritetens omvägar: Facklig internationalism i den tredje industriella revolutionen – (LM) Ericsson, svenska Metall och Ericssonarbetarna i Colombia 1973-1993' Akademisk avhandling för filosofie doktorsexamen vid Institutionen för humaniora, Växjö universitet 2005 *Acta Wexionensia* No. 72 (Växjö University Press, 2005), pp. 34, 36

⁹ Hilson, Mary *The Nordic Model: Scandinavia Since 1945* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), p. 23

This emphasis on Nordic exceptionalism tends to ignore other aspects and narratives, and fails to connect Swedish experiences of and interactions with other nations. The *Sonderweg* approach is partially informed by the influence of SAP on the writing of Swedish national history.¹⁰ It may also be a result of early comparisons between SAP and other Nordic social democratic parties, which make the Swedish labour movement appear less conflicted.¹¹ SAP was without a doubt the most important political movement in Sweden during the 20th century. Founded in 1889 by labour movement organisations calling for an eight-hour working day and universal suffrage (which, as elsewhere, excluded women at the time), the party formed four governments led by Hjalmar Branting and Rickard Sandler in the 1920s. SAP's real era of dominance began in 1932, when Per Albin Hansson formed the first of three successive governments.¹² It marked the start of an uninterrupted run of electoral wins that kept SAP in power until 1976, instigating reforms that helped transform Sweden into a modern industrial nation while investing heavily in what would become one of the world's most developed welfare states.¹³ Throughout this time, SAP was challenged in parliament by the Swedish Communist Party (SKP/VPK) and the bourgeois bloc, which was made up by conservative party Högerpartiet/Moderata Samlingspartiet, liberal party Folkpartiet, agrarian party Bondepartiet/Centerpartiet and — from 1964 — the Christian Democrat Kristdemokraterna.¹⁴ In 1981, green party Miljöpartiet de Gröna (MP) was founded, and in 1991 populist right-wing party Ny Demokrati (New Democracy, NyD) was set up to challenge the established parties. Throughout the 20th century, SAP remained highly sceptical of its socialist bloc colleagues in VPK, arguing that a party faithful to Moscow

¹⁰ See, e.g., Aspling, *Sven 100 år i Sverige: Vägen till Folkhemmet* (Stockholm: Tiden, 1988) and Misgeld, K., Molin, K., Åmark, K., Bergström, V. (eds.) *Socialdemokratins samhälle: SAP och Sverige under 100 år* (Stockholm: Tiden, 1989), both published to coincide with SAP's centenary in 1989. This was also extensively discussed by Åsa Linderberg in her 2001 thesis, *Socialdemokraterna skriver historia: Historieskrivning som ideologisk maktresurs 1892-2000* (Stockholm: Atlas, 2001).

¹¹ Nils Elvander argues that this comparative stability was due to the leadership under one man, Hjalmar Branting (1860-1925), from the start. Elvander, Nils *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse* (Stockholm: Liber, 1980), pp. 43-47

¹² Swedish governments from 1932-1994 are listed in appendices B and C.

¹³ See Tingsten, Herbert *The Swedish Social Democrats: Their Ideological Development* (Totowa: Bedminster Press, 1973), pp. 246-335; Sejersted, Francis *The Age of Social Democracy: Norway and Sweden in the 20th Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), pp. 82-85, 207-210; Elvander *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse*, pp. 140-151.

¹⁴ Information about political parties in Sweden 1960-1994 is available in appendix A.

and with an undemocratic belief in communist could not be trusted.¹⁵ Still, as this thesis will show, SAP often relied on VPK MPs to help push reforms through parliament, though formal governing arrangements were exclusively made with Centerpartiet and Folkpartiet. When SAP was in opposition during this era, the subsequent bourgeois coalition governments were headed by Centerpartiet's Thorbjörn Fälldin (1976-1978; 1979-1981; 1981-1982) and Folkpartiet's Ola Ullsten (1978-1979).¹⁶

SAP's four parallel organisations — youth party SSU, women's organisation SSKF (more recently known as S-Kvinnor), Christian brotherhood SKSF and student organisation S-Studenter — is one reason for the party's influence on everyday life in Sweden during the period investigated here.¹⁷ Another was its close relationship with the large and boisterous trade union organisations LO (Landsorganisationen; the blue collar trade union collective) and TCO (Tjänstemännens Centralorganisation; the white collar trade union collective). With reservation for figures being inflated as members of affiliated unions were included regardless of whether they were SAP supporters, SAP had 907,502 registered members just as Sweden's population nudged past the eight-million mark in 1969.¹⁸ Just over half a million members were lost in the space of one year when the automatic party inclusion policy was abandoned in 1990,¹⁹ but the party's dominance in numbers and the reach of its organisational tentacles ensured a connection to grass-root members that no other Swedish party could replicate.

This numerical strength, combined with SAP's unbroken hold on power from 1932 until 1976, goes some way to explain how SAP had a near-hegemonic influence on Swedish politics in the postwar era. In turn, this influence has resulted in the aforementioned confusion of Swedish and SAP history, which has been increasingly

¹⁵ In 1973, journalists exposed military surveillance of solidarity groups and leftists movements in Sweden, remarkable not just because of its undemocratic elements but because of its overlap with SAP, whose members were among the alleged spies). See also Östberg, Kjell *När vinden vände: Olof Palme 1969-1986* (Stockholm: Leopard förlag, 2009), pp. 148-152

¹⁶ Regeringskansliet 'Sveriges regeringar under 100 år' originally available at www.regeringen.se/sb/d/4393/a/30170 (last accessed 16 February 2015); currently through Web Archive at web.archive.org/web/20140929042950/http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/4393/a/30170 (accessed 28 June 2015)

¹⁷ SKSF stood for Sveriges Kristna Socialdemokraters Förbund; it was known as Broderskapsrörelsen (the Brotherhood Movement). In 2011, it became Socialdemokrater för tro och solidaritet (Social Democrats for Faith and Solidarity). S-Studenter is officially Socialdemokratiska Studentförbundet.

¹⁸ Statistiska centralbyrån 'Folkmängden efter region, civilstånd, ålder och kön. År 1968 - 2014'

¹⁹ *Socialdemokraterna: Verksamhetsberättelse 1995-1996* (Stockholm: Socialdemokraterna, 1997), p. 465.

questioned in the aftermath of SAP's ideological crises of the 1980s and 1990s.²⁰ Nevertheless, SAP's ascendance was not the radical shift it might have been. In her 2001 thesis on the creation of SAP historiography and the party's quest for hegemony, Åsa Linderborg uses Gramscian theories to argue that instead of representing a radical shift, SAP was deeply influenced and constrained by preexisting bourgeois hegemonies. According to Linderborg, SAP has

confirmed and strengthened, rather than challenged, the social liberal hegemony. In this ambition they have been largely assisted by the national and international humanities.²¹

A close look at SAP reveals a party much more conflicted and less inevitably associated with progress and consensus than normally portrayed. Stefan Nyzell's recent micro-history of strike conflicts in the southern Swedish city of Malmö in the 1920s clearly shows that it is only with hindsight and through historiographical reconstruction that the history of the early Swedish labour movement - both before and after the First World War - appears as a roadmap to democratic reform and conciliation. Nyzell writes:

In this country of mutual understanding, there has simply not been room for violent social and political conflict. (...) Collective violence as part of politics within Swedish history [has] been played down, while occasions of consensus and absence of violence have been pointed out and stressed.²²

By investigating violent clashes between strikers and authorities in this way, Nyzell manages to reincorporate contemporary conflict alongside groundbreaking moments like the Saltsjöbaden Agreement of 1938, which saw LO and employers' organisation SAF lay down rules to prevent strikes.

This thesis seeks to challenge SAP and Swedish historical understandings by emphasising the complex and complicated quest for political independence and influence undertaken by Swedish and SAP women in the 20th century. A brief history of

²⁰ These will be explored in chapters three and five, but included the questioning of SAP economic policies and its stance on neutrality at the end of the Cold War by party members as well as opponents and the public.

²¹ Linderborg *Socialdemokraterna skriver historia*, p. 477

²² Nyzell, Stefan "“Striden ägde rum i Malmö” Mølllevångskravallerna 1926: en studie av politiskt våld i mellankrigstidens Sverige" *Skrifter med historiska perspektiv*, volym 10 (Malmö Högskola, 2009), pp. 402, 405. Compare this to the emphasis on consensus between workers and employers in Malmö in Billing, P., Olsson, L. & Stigendal, M. "“Malmö — vår stad” Om socialdemokratin lokalpolitik' in Misgeld, etc. *Socialdemokratin samhälle*, pp. 125-126

Swedish women's political emancipation begins with the passing of a law to include women in universal suffrage in 1919. The first election to the directly-elected 230-seat Second Chamber with women's participation was subsequently held in 1921, and saw five women elected as MPs.²³ In May 2015, the Swedish parliament's gender balance, with 43.6 per cent women to 56.4 per cent men, placed it fifth in the world ranking compiled by the Inter-Parliamentary Union.²⁴ That is, as this thesis will show, a direct result of the introduction of gender quotas in the selection of prospective MPs, now a practice endorsed by a majority of the parliamentary parties.²⁵ In 1987, Helga Hernes used the term 'state feminism' to explain the increasing institutionalisation of gender equality in the Nordic states.²⁶ But while gender equality has progressed further in Sweden than in many other countries, it is far from a completed project. Every step and gain along the way has been fiercely contested.

Swedish histories of international activism, and particularly its early and decisive support for the anti-apartheid cause, are of vital importance to this thesis, and require a short introduction. The connections between SAP and the ANC grew out of a multitude of personal encounters and contacts made in international fora or through interactions with South African students in Sweden, and will be further explored in chapters one and three of this thesis. This was not, however, the start of Sweden's exchanges with South Africa, or even the birth of the solidarity movement through which Swedes sought to help those persecuted by the South African apartheid state. Those origins lie within the media and cultural establishment. The editor of the Stockholm daily newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, Herbert Tingsten, the journalists and novelists Pär Wästberg and Sara Lidman, and missionary Gunnar Helander brought the effects of apartheid into Swedish homes during the 1950s and 1960s.²⁷ The latter wrote for Christian publications while Tingsten's *Dagens Nyheter* published both Lidman and Wästberg. Although politically independent, *Dagens Nyheter* was closely affiliated to Folkpartiet, a party whose

²³ For an extensive history of the Swedish suffrage movement see Florin, C. & Kvarnström, L. (eds.) *Kvinnor på gränsen till medborgarskap: Genus, politik och offentlighet 1800-1950* (Stockholm: Atlas, 2001)

²⁴ Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Women in National Parliaments' 1 May 2015. The top four were Rwanda (63.8 per cent women), Bolivia (53.1 per cent), Cuba (48.9 per cent) and the Seychelles (43.8 per cent).

²⁵ SAP, Vänsterpartiet and Miljöpartiet all enforce quotas top-down, while Folkpartiet, Moderaterna and Kristdemokraterna recommend selection by quota. While both Centerpartiet and Sverigedemokraterna are without quotas, the former at least attempts to work for an equal gender balance.

²⁶ Hernes, Helga *Welfare State and Woman Power: Essays in State Feminism* (Oslo: Norwegian University Press, 1987)

²⁷ Sellström *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa – Volume I* pp. 129, 130

members played seminal roles in the Swedish anti-apartheid movement. Folkpartiet's influence should not be neglected, but in the context of this thesis it is important to note that Folkpartiet never wielded a similar influence or had the same impact on Swedish society as SAP. Furthermore, Folkpartiet did not connect to its South African counterparts – neither the Liberal Party of South Africa nor the Progressive Party. Although instrumental in securing the continuation of the official Swedish aid programme in support of African liberation movements during SAP's terms in opposition 1976-1982, Folkpartiet could not and would not have replicated SAP's mass-movement-inspired public and financial support for anti-apartheid leaders. Despite the fact that, in the end, it was the ANC's non-racialism and relative respectability that allowed western anti-apartheid groups to make it an ally, its strong ties to the South African Communist Party and an inherent radicalism made it an unnatural partner for Folkpartiet.²⁸

The Swedish solidarity movement was an amalgamation of students and activists from all walks of life and a federation of organisations that did not necessarily have anything but anti-apartheid activism in common. At first glance it looks very similar to other such movements formed in the wake of the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960. The Swedish movement, however, quickly gained characteristics that set it apart. Its most unique trait was the full support of both government and parliament. Sweden's anti-apartheid movement became a vital partner in the ANC's struggle thanks to the amount of professional politicians that swelled its ranks. This ensured that many Swedish parliamentarians and successive government ministers were deeply engaged in the struggle and pushed it higher up the Swedish legislative agenda.

The importance of this overlap with state agencies has been underlined by different scholars, including the Nordic Africa Institute's Tor Sellström, Swedish sociologist Håkan Thörn and the authors of *The Road to Democracy in South Africa* – a series of volumes detailing South African history published by the South African Democracy Education Trust and UNISA Press.²⁹ The latter argues that there was

²⁸ See Sellström *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Volume I*, pp. 234-235. The British Anti-Apartheid Movement – a pressure group rather than a political party – faced the same issues. See Gurney, Christabel 'The 1970s: The Anti-Apartheid Movement's Difficult Decade' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (2009), pp. 471-487; Fieldhouse, Roger *Anti-Apartheid: A history of the movement in Britain* (London: The Merlin Press, 2005)

²⁹ Sellström *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Volume I* pp. 22, 513; Thörn *Solidaritetsens betydelse*, pp. 43-44

no closed divide between ‘the downstairs’ and ‘the upstairs’ of civil society and state [in Sweden]. (...) There was, as described by [South African academic and ANC activist Raymond] Suttner, ‘a compact forged between civil society and [the] state/government [which] was a unique feature of [the] Nordic support’.³⁰

The overlap facilitated SAP-ANC exchanges, especially as it made SAP able to secure parliamentary support for its anti-apartheid policies. The Swedish anti-apartheid movement’s heterogeneous character — a result of its broad appeal across almost all political parties as well as non-political organisations — also meant it had a vast base that could mobilise quickly when needed.³¹ In comparison, Elizabeth Williams’ research into the British Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) shows that it failed to attract supporters from black communities in Britain by refusing to emphasise parallels between racism in Britain and South Africa.³²

Meanwhile, Sweden's enthusiasm for international diplomatic channels – from the League of Nations to the United Nations and beyond – also played a significant role in shaping Swedish responses to international crises like apartheid. Alliance-free, the Swedish government and its diplomats sought to use Sweden’s small-state status to reduce “superpower tension and fostering peace in international relations”.³³ This will be further explored in later chapters.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORICAL AND HISTORIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

The South African political landscape from 1960 to 1994 was radically different to the Swedish, and the ANC’s ability to make its voice heard — let alone have an impact on national politics — was very limited.

Apartheid did not appear from thin air in 1948; nor did South African women’s opposition to segregation, which had by then long been a part of South African society.

³⁰ Sellström, Tor ‘Sweden and the Nordic Countries: Official Solidarity and Assistance from the West’ in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa: Volume 3, International Solidarity – part 1* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2008), p. 431

³¹ Conservative Moderata Samlingspartiet provoked outrage in 2011 with a policy programme that claimed it had actively worked for universal suffrage and against apartheid, when, in fact, it had been an advocate against the demands of suffragists and anti-apartheid activists.

³² Williams, Elizabeth ‘Anti-Apartheid: The Black British Response’ *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (2012) – special issue: the ANC at 100 – pp. 685-706

³³ Hilson *The Nordic Model*, pp. 18; 123

The 1948 Afrikaner nationalist coalition followed in a line of governments attempting to enforce segregationist social practices in law, passing the Population Registration Act (which imposed mandatory racial classifications on South Africans), the Mixed Marriages Act, the Amended Immorality Act, and the Group Areas Act in quick succession on its ascent to power.³⁴ While doing so, it faced organised opposition from distinct political groups and parties: from white liberals in the United Party (reformed in 1959 as the Progressive Party); from the predominantly white members of the Communist Party of South Africa (reformed as the underground South African Communist Party – SACP – in 1953); from the South African Indian Congress and the South African Coloured People’s Congress; and from black Africans in the African National Congress (ANC), formed in 1912 by mission-educated men.³⁵ They sought to hold on to an ever decreasing black African share of power and were, as Anne McClintock has written,

drawn from the tiny urban intelligentsia and petite bourgeoisie, its members were mostly mission-educated teachers and clerks, small businessmen and traders, the kind of men whom Fanon described as ‘dusted over with colonial culture’.³⁶

By the mid-1950s, the ANC changed its strategy: inspired by successful bus boycotts in the Johannesburg township of Alexandra in 1943 and 1944 and the increased urgency of the political and social realities of the time, a new generation of leaders — Nelson Mandela (1918-2013) and Walter Sisulu (1912-2003) among them — founded the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) in 1944.³⁷ They were inspired by the spontaneous protest activism in South Africa’s townships at the time, which included squatter movements,

³⁴ See Magubane, Bernard ‘Introduction: The Political Context’ in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa: Volume 1, 1960-1970* (Unisa Press, University of South Africa & South African Democracy Education Trust, 2004), pp. 1-51

³⁵ See Walshe, Peter *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa: The African National Congress, 1912-1952* (London: C. Hurst, 1970); Feit, Edward *South Africa: The Dynamics of the African National Congress* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962) and *African Opposition in South Africa: the Failure of Passive Resistance* (Stanford: Hoover Institution on War, Revolution & Peace, 1967)

³⁶ McClintock, Anne “‘No Longer in a Future Heaven’: Women and Nationalism in South Africa” *Transition*, No. 51 (1991), p. 114

³⁷ Feit, Edward *Urban Revolt in South Africa 1960-1964* (Northwestern University Press, 1971), pp. 16-17

civic organisations, activities under religious auspices, and radical trade union protests. This will be further explored in chapter one.³⁸

Missing from many accounts but in many instances very actively present at the time were the women, who organised separately at grass-root and local levels, shaping and influencing the fight against segregation at all stages. By the time the ANC began to accept women as full rather than just auxiliary members in 1943 — 31 years after its founding — women had decades of experience of organising and mobilising opposition to government policies. Throughout these decades, and like many other women’s groups around the world at the time, South African women found that it was only by organising on their own that they could make themselves heard and set their own agendas away from the overwhelming influence of the patriarchally-minded men of their generation. Thus, their

first tentative inclusion into African nationalism stemmed less from the invitation of men than from their own politicization in resisting the violence of state decree.³⁹

This proved an important lesson in the future, in which separate mobilisation and lobbying became key to the women’s movement’s success, while simultaneously invoking discussions about their divisive agency.

Although it emerged dominant during the last decade of the anti-apartheid struggle and continues to have an overwhelming impact on democratic South Africa, the ANC had no clear-cut path to political influence or power after being banned by the apartheid regime in 1960 and forced into exile. It was also not the only South African national liberation movement, though that is how post-1994 historiography has portrayed it. In the writing of post-apartheid national history, the ANC is regularly afforded space at the expense of the Pan African Congress (PAC), the radical black power-inspired Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) in the 1970s and other non-

³⁸ For the importance of churches, see Walshe, Peter ‘South Africa: Prophetic Christianity and the Liberation Movement’ *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (1991), pp. 27-61; Gaitskell, Deborah ‘Power in Prayer and Service: Women’s Christian Organizations’ in Elphick, R. & Davenport, R. (eds.) *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social and Cultural History* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 253-267. For the role of women in the squatter movements, see Bonner, Phillip ‘The Politics of Black Squatter Movements on the Rand, 1944-1952’ *Radical History Review*, Vol. 46, No. 7 (1990), pp. 92-94.

³⁹ McClintock “‘No Longer in a Future Heaven’”, p. 115

ANC affiliated organisations and individuals.⁴⁰ An awareness of this appropriation of acts and influences has informed the research for this ANC-centric thesis.

The ban on its activities in 1960 transformed the ANC into a clandestine, underground movement that launched an armed campaign against its oppressors while also encouraging activism and resistance within South Africa's borders.⁴¹ This transformation was far from successful: the organisation was almost wiped out both politically and militarily after the arrests of Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela and the other defendants in the infamous Rivonia treason trials in 1963. The underground movement was exposed and in tatters; many members – both men and women – escaped into exile, first in Tanzania, and then Zambia. Exile life was difficult: abrupt relocations and desperate isolation from those who remained at home added to tension caused by a constant threat from South African secret service agents. During its banning – which ended in 1990 – the ANC struggled to stay connected to and influence opposition groups based in South Africa, while continuously organising and positioning its exile movement for a takeover by either violent or political means. This will be further outlined in chapters two and four. It was in exile that contact was made with activists in Sweden and other countries. Of these, Zambia was highly influential, while anti-apartheid supporters in the USSR, Eastern Europe, the US and the UK also played a role in transforming the ANC into a viable government-in-waiting.⁴²

African nationalism — as understood by the ANC, PAC and BCM — was shaped by its constant conflict with the most dominant force in the apartheid nation-state: Afrikaner nationalism. Afrikaner nationalism also had “a clear gender component” according to Anne McClintock, who points to its preferred language of ‘brotherhood’, and strong, white powerful men in contrast to the idea of a muted, suffering mother of the people.⁴³ White women, while “complicit in deploying the power of motherhood in the exercise and legitimation of white domination” were both “colonizers and colonized,

⁴⁰ This excessive focus on ANC documents has led to non-ANC groups, individuals and histories being overlooked. See Hyslop, Jonathan ‘On Biography: A Response to Ciraj Rassool’ *South African Review of Sociology*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (2010), p. 105. PAC, known today as the Pan African Congress of Azania, it was formed in 1959 by a group of ANC Africanists who argued that only black Africans should rule South Africa.

⁴¹ Ellis, Stephen ‘The ANC in Exile’ *African Affairs*, Vol. 90, No. 360 (Jul., 1991), pp. 440, 441, 442

⁴² Macmillan, Hugh ‘The African National Congress of South Africa in Zambia: The Culture of Exile and the Changing Relationship with Home, 1964-1990’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (2009), pp. 303, 304

⁴³ McClintock “No Longer in a Future Heaven”, pp. 107, 109

ambiguously complicit in the history of African dispossession”, McClintock states, adding that some of them “crossed into the forbidden territory of anti-apartheid activism”.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, feminist-informed mobilisation across ethnic and apartheid divisions was only made possible in the early 1990s, after the ANC’s bans were lifted, and this is further explored in chapter five. Even so, political scientist Shireen Hassim’s extensive research into women’s access to power and influence on political structures in South Africa has shown that power struggles between feminists and nationalists within the then recently reestablished ANC Women’s League were at the heart of its failed attempt to become an “effective political vehicle” for ANC women in the post-transition era.⁴⁵ Recent research into the rise of the postcolonial-inspired Black Consciousness Movement of the 1960s and 1970s illustrates this point further. As Daniel R. Magaziner and Ian MacQueen argue, the BCM rhetoric was highly gendered as it sought to address ‘black emasculation’.⁴⁶ MacQueen illustrates this through the BCM-influenced South African Students’ Organisation (SASO), which saw feminism as “‘Western discourse’ which resonated discordantly with Black Consciousness’s identity politics”. He adds, however, that some BCM women used the language of male black empowerment to challenge gender norms.⁴⁷ This was an effective method: by adopting an Angela Davis-inspired, tough feminism, some BCM women rose through the ranks and created space for their own voices to be heard.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, Rachel E. Johnson’s research on youth mobilisation in the 1970s shows that most young women still played important roles in “the production of a masculine youth politics” by engaging fully with the gender roles prescribed by the movement. That, Johnson adds, “complicates our understanding of that masculinity and highlights the importance of power structures shaping the sayable”.⁴⁹

The growth of BCM in the late 1960 and 1970s signposted a generational change within apartheid resistance. It was not until the brutal repression of the Soweto

⁴⁴ McClintock “No Longer in a Future Heaven”, pp. 110, 111

⁴⁵ Hassim, Shireen *Women’s Organisations and Democracy in South Africa: Contesting Authority* (Madison: Wisconsin University Press, 2006), pp. 4, 5, 13

⁴⁶ Magaziner, Daniel R. ‘Pieces of a (Wo)man: Feminism, Gender and Adulthood in Black Consciousness, 1968-1977’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (2011), pp. 49, 58

⁴⁷ MacQueen, Ian ‘Re-imagining South Africa: Black Consciousness, Radical Christianity and the New Left, 1967-1977’ University of Sussex PhD thesis (2010), pp. 77, 76, 98

⁴⁸ MacQueen ‘Re-imagining South Africa’, pp. 93, 92, 98

⁴⁹ Johnson, Rachel E. ‘Making History, Gendering Youth: Women and South Africa’s Liberation Struggles After 1976’ PhD thesis, Department of History, University of Sheffield (April 2010), pp. 146, 147

Uprising in the summer of 1976 that the ANC became aware of its dominance; another sign of the disconnect between internal and external anti-apartheid activism. When researching the apartheid-era ANC, one must contemplate exile existence and how life in exile changes ideology, but also the sometimes fraught relationship between activists on the ground in South Africa and those who had crossed the country's borders. It is also important to recognise that the hardship of life in exile — in camps run by ANC-affiliated guerrilla movement Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) or in the diplomatic missions in African cities, Europe, the Americas and at the UN — was highly determined by the gender of the exiles. It was common knowledge that men sought sexual favours from female comrades, which created problems both in the camps and in the underground organisation and archival sources show that sexual violence was not uncommon.⁵⁰ Furthermore, Carla Tsampiras has used sexual health sources from ANC camps in the 1980s to show that women were considered responsible for preventing unwanted pregnancies, and for bringing children up in difficult circumstances, often giving birth in Tanzania where childcare facilities were provided and where children could remain when their mothers were posted elsewhere.⁵¹ Arianna Lissoni and Maria Suriano's research on Tanzanian women's relationships with both the ANC and ANC men gives a rare insight into these everyday experiences.⁵²

The structural gendering of the movement has been translated into the writing of the movement's history too. Raymond Suttner argues that despite the fact that women were vital to the survival of the underground movement that remained within South Africa's borders after 1963, the liberation struggle has been portrayed as masculine with only periodic sightings of women.⁵³ This is extensively explored in this thesis, which shows that Albertina Sisulu and Winnie Mandela — best known as the wives of the aforementioned imprisoned ANC leaders Walter and Nelson — were indeed leaders of the movement themselves, organising resistance and protests as well as welfare to support detainees and their families. Women's activism often focused on strengthening

⁵⁰ Suttner, Raymond *The ANC Underground in South Africa, 1950-1976* (London & Boulder: First Forum Press, 2009), p. 96

⁵¹ Tsampiras, Carla 'Sex in a Time of Exile: An Examination of Sexual Health, AIDS, Gender, and the ANC, 1980-1990' *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (2012), pp. 655, 656. See also Suttner *The ANC Underground in South Africa*, p. 128

⁵² Lissoni, A. and Suriano, M. 'Married to the ANC: Tanzanian Women's Entanglement in South Africa's Liberation Struggle' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (2014), pp. 129-150

⁵³ Suttner *The ANC Underground in South Africa*, pp. 105, 34, 63, 64, 4

their communities, and built on earlier experiences of trade union activism in South Africa.⁵⁴ By mobilising on their own and in communities rather than in large, visible organisations, women could assert themselves in the anti-apartheid movement while also effecting real change, while avoiding large-scale detection by the authorities. Their actions, however, are still often attributed to male leaders. Janet Cherry — a human rights activist with personal experience of the anti-apartheid struggle — writes that consumer and bus boycotts

are a particularly interesting form of mobilisation where gender roles are concerned: in poor communities where women are usually the primary consumers, in holding responsibility for obtaining and preparing food for their families, it could be envisaged that a boycott enforced by young men would be resented if not openly by older women, who in many cases are their mothers. Yet this was clearly not the case.⁵⁵

As chapter two will explore, this activism had roots and precedent in the radical activities of 1930s and 1940s.⁵⁶

The process of removing women as actors and attributing their actions to men in the writing of history is an intriguing problem with a multitude of causes, which this thesis will seek to address. In the context of this research, one of the most important factors for the removal of women from history is, as Georgina Waylen has found, the fact that the political is:

defined as masculine in a very profound way, which makes it hard to incorporate women on the same terms as men and excludes many of those activities that women are involved in as not political.⁵⁷

A clear example of this is the neglect of women's use of violence in conflict, including during the apartheid struggle. Some researchers believe that women's 'inherent'

⁵⁴ For more about the importance of trade union organisation, see Berger, Iris *Threads of Solidarity: Women in South African Industry, 1900-1980* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992)

⁵⁵ Cherry, Janet "'We were not afraid": The Role of Women in the 1980s' Township Uprising in the Eastern Cape' in Gasca, Nomboniso (ed.) *They Remove Boulders and Cross Rivers: Women in South African History* (Johannesburg: HSRC Press, 2007) p. 297

⁵⁶ See, e.g., Wells, Julia C. *We Now Demand! The History of Women's Resistance to Pass Laws in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1993) and Walker, Cheryl *Women & Resistance in South Africa* (Cape Town & Johannesburg: David Philip, 1991).

⁵⁷ Waylen, Georgina *Gender in Third World Politics* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1996), p. 3

biological ‘instincts’ make non-violence their natural choice.⁵⁸ Others, Karen Beckwith among them, point to the examples set by militant women in the Black Panthers movement and among the British suffragists to show that women have often initiated violence. Beckwith argues that although the ties between women’s rights movement and non-violence are “deep and enduring” they are in themselves a result of the gendered nature of social movements, which curbs women’s access to violence as a means of progress and revolution.⁵⁹ Furthermore, violence exaggerates gender ideologies and, as Jeremy Seekings has argued, among the reasons why women were kept out of township politics in the 1980s was the fact that they were collectively accused of being unable to keep secrets. Women were instead designated ‘appropriate’ gender-specific roles “of ‘mother’ or ‘peace-keeper’”, just as the tension “between the politics of organisation and the politics of confrontation” seemed to be in the latter’s favour.⁶⁰ But one must not dismiss these ‘mothers’ either: Anne McClintock points out that throughout the 1960s and onwards, black women increasingly identified themselves as mothers of the revolution and “militant protectors of their communities and activist children” – phrases that soon made its way into official ANC rhetoric.⁶¹

Gendered assumptions and patterns, however, have played a great role in deciding which women will be remembered in popular history. Raymond Suttner has identified a “general tendency [within] liberation discourse to be masculinist and (...) to elide recovery of freedom with the restorations of manhood”. “In many ways,” he writes:

the patterns, cultures and identity of [the ANC] have been developed over many decades, and an unpacking and probing of the gendered culture of the ANC will go a long way to understanding the complexities of the past as well as those of the present.⁶²

⁵⁸ See, e.g., Gilligan, Carol ‘In a Different Voice: Women’s Conceptions of Self and of Morality’ and Ruddick, Sara ‘Maternal Thinking’ in Tietjens Meyers, Diana (ed.) *Feminist Social Thought: A Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 547-582 and 583-603, as referenced by Beckwith, Karen ‘Women, Gender, and Nonviolence in Political Movements’ *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Mar., 2002), p. 75

⁵⁹ Beckwith ‘Women, Gender, and Nonviolence in Political Movements’, pp. 75, 76, 80

⁶⁰ Seekings, Jeremy ‘Gender Ideology and Township Politics in the 1980’s’ *Agenda*, No. 10, Women’s Emancipation and National Liberation (1991), pp. 87, 82, 83

⁶¹ McClintock “No Longer in a Future Heaven”, p. 116

⁶² Suttner *The ANC Underground in South Africa* pp. 105, 104

Women's silence in the historical record could be interpreted as fuel for men's "fantasies and furnished the idiom in which deviant masculinities were disparaged".⁶³ Rachel E. Johnson, however, argues that it is the content of "history itself that has gendered youth".⁶⁴ Women's lack of presence, she adds, is "not just a banal twist in the historical record but rather an active, contested and ongoing process", which won't be solved solely by the addition of women to the record, as that "would misunderstand the nature of young women's absence from struggle history".⁶⁵

Women who were not afraid to be controversial still found themselves in a movement that interpreted their gender as the most important component of their identities. As long as the liberated black person was seen as synonymous with the liberated black man, women had to become "one of the boys" and be given "honorary male status" before they could be recognised as leaders.⁶⁶ Women had to assert themselves against both white society and male BCM activists, and "young women's symbolic absence was vital for constituting the masculinity young men associated with confrontation".⁶⁷ The women who were successful in doing so are the ones that will feature in this thesis; many others remain invisible here.

The constraints placed on women's activism is one of the reasons why international connections were of a particular significance for female activists, as argued in this thesis. Operating within very male-dominated structures (political parties or liberation movements that subordinated women as a matter of course), women found a receptive audience in the informal international women's movement. The international community created through these networks gave them an environment in which they could further their careers within and without their parties. Connections were made both before and after the introduction of apartheid policies in 1948, and meant that South

⁶³ Brady, S. & Arnold, J. H. *What Is Masculinity? Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 22

⁶⁴ Johnson 'Making History, Gendering Youth', pp. 243, 244, 246, 119, 120

⁶⁵ Johnson 'Making History, Gendering Youth', p. 6

⁶⁶ MacQueen 'Re-imagining South Africa', pp. 79, 80

⁶⁷ Magaziner 'Pieces of a (Wo)man', pp. 55, 56

African women's activism had an impact beyond the country's own borders.⁶⁸ Towards the end of the struggle, contact with post-liberation states in Africa had a direct impact on South African women's struggles for equality, with Hannah E. Britton arguing that

Informed by examples of failed post-liberation gender movements in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Angola, South African women's groups worked collectively and individually to advance gender equality.⁶⁹

Contacts with women of other movements and nationalities inspired ANC women's ability to evolve from "silent backbone to a force of considerable power and public influence".⁷⁰ Back issues of *Agenda* — the South African gender equality journal — from the early 1990s and correspondence between women's groups in South African archives both show a widespread awareness and acknowledgement of the fact that women's emancipation and national liberation have rarely gone hand in hand.⁷¹ Anne McClintock's warning in 1991 that "no nationalism in the world has granted women and men the same privileged access to the resources of the nation-state" certainly rang true.⁷² These ideas and patterns will be further explored in chapter five.

FEMINISM AND GENDER

As a study of political feminist awakenings and liberation movement politics, this thesis is both indebted to and part of a growing body of feminist and gender history. It is, in fact, an attempt at writing political history informed by the social and cultural 'turns' of the last 30 years.

A relatively recent development, the study of women's roles in history is a product of the feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which produced highly regarded

⁶⁸ Patricia van der Spuy and Lindsay Clowes' research on the influence of female Indian nationalist activists shows that women's transnational connections date back to the 1920s. van der Spuy, P. & Clowes, L. "'A Living Testimony of the Heights to Which a Woman Can Rise': Sarojini Naidu, Cissie Gool and the Politics of Women's Leadership in South Africa in the 1920s' *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (2012), pp. 344, 362. Teresa Barnes' research shows that early South African women's activism had a direct impact on women in Southern Rhodesia. See Barnes, Teresa "'To Raise a Hornet's Nest': The Effect of Early Resistance to Passes for Women in South Africa on the Pass Laws in Colonial Zimbabwe' *Agenda*, No. 5 (1989), pp. 41, 45, 51, and "'Am I a Man?' Gender and Pass Laws in Urban Zimbabwe, 1930-80' *African Studies Review*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (Apr., 1997), pp. 59-81

⁶⁹ Britton 'Coalition Building, Election Rules, and Party Politics', p. 33

⁷⁰ Britton 'Coalition Building, Election Rules, and Party Politics', pp. 35, 36

⁷¹ See, e.g. 'Editorial' *Agenda*, No. 10: Women's Emancipation and National Liberation (1991), p. 112

⁷² McClintock "'No Longer in a Future Heaven'", p. 105

scholars like Sally Alexander and Sheila Rowbotham in the UK, Yvonne Hirdman and Maud Eduards in Sweden, and Belinda Bozzoli and Cherryl Walker in South Africa.⁷³ This movement restored women's legacies and biographies, but this pioneering research left much to be explored by later generations of historians. One such area is the relationship and role of power structures in forging identities, the focus of a 1986 journal article by Joan W. Scott. In 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', Scott argued that analysis is required

not only of the relationship between male and female experience in the past but also of the connection between past history and current historical practice.⁷⁴

'Gender', Scott added, is not a synonym of 'women' but "a way of referring to the exclusively social origins of the subjective identities of men and women".⁷⁵ That the cultural differences between men and women are social constructs rather than incontestable biological facts and that history thus needs to be studied with a clear view of the gendering of its subjects (whether male or female) in contemporary and current circumstances inform ideas about gender and power throughout this thesis.

Academic communities in Sweden and South Africa have also been influenced by feminist methodologies and interpretations. In Sweden, the historian Yvonne Hirdman published her 'gender system' theory in the 1980s, arguing that it is vital to actively disassociate the male experience from any notions that it is truer and less biased than the female experience.⁷⁶ At the time, Hirdman was a member of a small but growing group of female researchers who studied the roles of women in the early Swedish labour movement, challenging the lack of female voices in its historiography. Others included Ulla Wikander and Eva Karlsson, who highlighted gender bias within both the labour movement and its subsequent history production, and Christina Carlsson Wetterberg, who established that the early Swedish labour movement was defined by men who saw

⁷³ See, e.g. Alexander, Sally *Becoming a Woman and Other Essays in 19th and 20th Century Feminist History* (London: Virago, 1994); Rowbotham, Sheila *Women, Resistance and Revolution* (London: Allen Lane, 1972); Eduards, Maud *Kvinnor och politik: Fakta och förklaringar* (Stockholm: Publica, 1977). Hirdman, Bozzoli and Walker are cited throughout this thesis.

⁷⁴ Scott, Joan W. 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis' *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 91, No. 5 (Dec., 1986), p. 1055

⁷⁵ Scott 'Gender', p. 1056

⁷⁶ See e.g. Hirdman, Yvonne 'Könlös forskning: Kvinnorna och SAP ur ett genusperspektiv' *Arbetarhistoria* No. 52, Vol. 13 (1989), pp. 4-6. According to Hirdman's memoirs, this was inspired by Gayle Rubin's sex/gender-system, explored in a 1975 article. See Hirdman, Yvonne *Medan jag var ung: Ego-historia från 1900-talet* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2015), p. 309

female politicians as representatives for ‘women’ as a distinctly homogenous interest group.⁷⁷ A decade later, Åsa Lundqvist’s study on gender, industrialisation and the welfare state in Sweden added indispensable insight into how the early labour movement favoured a “male-breadwinner model with a housewife system”.⁷⁸ These are all notions that will be explored extensively throughout this thesis.

Using gender as an analytical tool also provides a stable framework to challenge norms and lazy, yet pervasive, stereotypes about Swedish society as one of the most egalitarian in the world. Swedish historian Gunnel Karlsson’s thorough mapping of the inner workings of SSKF, SAP’s women-only organisation, highlights party women’s ambitions and frustrations during the 20th century.⁷⁹ Furthermore, Petra Pauli and Kristina Lindholm’s more recent research projects have explored the wider social and cultural contexts of these interactions. Lindholm’s 2008 PhD thesis on women’s representation within youth organisation SSU focused on congress minutes and membership statistics to show that SSU was far from the radical gender equality advocate it claimed to be. Lindholm also argues that it was not until the 1990s that feminism became a force to be reckoned with within the party.⁸⁰ That goes some way to explain why SAP enforced gender quotas ahead of the 1994 elections and not before. Following Lindholm’s argument, Petra Pauli’s study of SAP leadership trajectories during the 20th century points to a recruitment pattern actively working against female advancement. Pauli too holds the 1990s up as a decade of real change, arguing that gender barriers were made flexible by the promotion of well-known female political and trade union leaders to higher office, where they challenged the idea of a male leader norm.⁸¹ These theories are tested in this thesis, which is also informed by more personal

⁷⁷ Wikander, Ulla ‘Periodisering av kapitalismen – med kvinnor’ *Arbetarhistoria* No. 51, Vol. 13 (1989), pp. 7-11; Karlsson, Eva ‘Konferens med kvinnoperspektiv’ *Arbetarhistoria* No. 51, Vol. 13 (1989), p. 1; Carlsson Wetterberg, Christina ‘Likhet och särart: den tidiga arbetarrörelsens kvinnopolitik’ *Arbetarhistoria* No. 51, Vol. 13 (1989) pp. 50, 52, 54

⁷⁸ Lundqvist, Åsa ‘Conceptualising Gender in a Swedish Context’ *Gender & History* Vol. 11, No. 3 (November 1999), p. 586

⁷⁹ Karlsson, Gunnel *Manssamhället till behag?* (Stockholm: Sveriges socialdemokratiska kvinnoförbund/Tidens förlag, 1990); Karlsson, Gunnel *Från broderskap till systemskap: Det socialdemokratiska kvinnoförbundets kamp för inflytande och makt i SAP* (Lund: Arkiv förlag, 1996); Karlsson, Gunnel “‘Politiska kvinnor’: Anteckningar om Ulla Lindström och Inga Thorsson” *Arbetarhistoria*, No. 4 (2010) pp. 23-29

⁸⁰ Lindholm, Kristina ‘SSU och könspolitikens gränser, 1970-2000: Diskussionerna om kvinnorepresentation i Sveriges socialdemokratiska ungdomsförbund’ PhD thesis, Linköpings universitet, Institutionen för tema, Tema Genus (Linköping, 2008), pp. I, 78, 92

⁸¹ Pauli, Petra ‘Rörelsens ledare: karriärvägar och ledarideal i den svenska arbetarrörelsens under 1900-talet’ Avhandling från Institutionen för historiska studier i Göteborg (1 juni 2012), pp. 173, 175, 177, 178

and recent stories told by party members. SAP was and remains a large, slow-moving and male-dominated body, which has only ever elected one female party leader. Mona Sahlin's party chairmanship 2006-2011 coincided with SAP's first years in opposition since the early 1990s. Sahlin faced an often hostile press, and resigned after failing to win the general election of 2010. Meanwhile, a 2012 report by government agency Statistiska Centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden) showed — among other things — that only three out of the 30 most common professions employed equal numbers of men and women.⁸² The findings add urgency to Mary Hilson's argument that as long as unequal pay and segregated professions remain a problem in Sweden, it is debatable

whether the combination of structural circumstances, the wage-earner benefit system and extensive family policies has actually helped to challenge traditional patterns of gender relations and promote gender equality.⁸³

In South African historiography, the use of gender as an analytical tool was pioneered by Shula Marks and Belinda Bozzoli in the 1980s and 1990s.⁸⁴ As in Sweden, it opened up the field to new subjects and sources, but it also deepened understandings of postcolonial and postmodernist theories. Alan Cobley has noted that feminist scholars were among the first to use these methodologies,

perhaps because notions of discourses of displacement, knowledge and power in colonial society (...) were easily recognisable and were easily grafted onto their work on the female subject.⁸⁵

It was through the study of early female politicians in the 20th century that myths about the ANC being an all-male structure could be dispelled. It is true that women were officially only admitted as full rather than auxiliary members as late as in 1943, 31 years after the founding of ANC precursor the South African Native National Congress

⁸² An example of segregated professions are secretaries, of whom 97 per cent are women, and carpenters and joiners, of whom and 99 per cent are men. Statistiska centralbyrån *Women and Men In Sweden: Facts and Figures 2012* (Örebro: Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2012), p. 63

⁸³ Hilson *The Nordic Model*, p. 108

⁸⁴ See e.g. Bozzoli, Belinda 'Marxism, Feminism and South African Studies' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 9, No., 2 (Apr., 1983), pp. 139-171; Marks, Shula 'Not Either an Experimental Doll': *The Separate Worlds of Three South African Women* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987). Also: Manicom, Linzi 'Ruling relations: Rethinking state and gender in South African history' *Journal of African History*, Vol. 33, No. 3, (1992), pp. 441-466

⁸⁵ Cobley, Alan 'Does Social History Have a Future? The Ending of Apartheid and Recent Trends in South African Historiography' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Sep., 2001), p. 621

(SANNC), but women had been present from the very start. This has been argued by Julia C. Wells, Cheryl Walker and other researchers who began studying leading women and women's protests in the early 20th century during the apartheid era.⁸⁶ Charlotte Manye Maxeke was one such leading woman; a member of the SANNC executive well before 1943. Post-apartheid archive access has, as Nomboniso Gasa made clear in 2007, proved Wells' points, showing that

although women did not have formal membership until 1943, they were de facto members who participated fully, including in leadership elections.⁸⁷

Prominent ANC activist Frene Ginwala argued in 1990 — just as her party was entering negotiations for the transition to democracy, in which she had fought hard for women to play a role — that the exclusion from membership was “not surprising nor exceptional for the times”.⁸⁸ Women's absence, Ginwala added, “from political institutions does not necessarily lead to their absence in the political arena”.⁸⁹ However, women's exclusion from official histories has sometimes enabled them to liaise, network and organise. Meghan Healy-Clancy stresses that “women played critical roles” in making nationalism “ideologically and practically possible” as they were able to travel across South Africa and connect with people from around the world. Contemporary gender norms – women's unimportance in the eyes of the state – was a facilitating factor, as it gave women “space to think, talk and write about nation, race and unity”.⁹⁰

The study of female political subjects through a gender lens comes with its own set of problems. This thesis focuses on a group of women who defined themselves as politicians or political activists, and for whom political awareness and activism constituted a vital part of identity. Prior to the increasing visibility of the second wave feminist movement from the late 1960s and onwards, few of these subjects would have

⁸⁶ Wells, Julia C. ‘Why Women Rebel: A Comparative Study of South African Women's Resistance in Bloemfontein (1913) and Johannesburg (1958)’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Oct., 1983), pp. 56, 55; Erlank, Natasha ‘Gender and Masculinity in South African Nationalist Discourse, 1912-1950’ *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (Autumn, 2003), pp. 661-662; Lodge, Tom *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945* (London: Longman, 1983), pp. 24-25; McClintock, “‘No Longer in a Future Heaven’”, p. 114

⁸⁷ Gasa, Nomboniso ‘Let them build more gaols’ in Gasa (ed.) *They Remove Boulders and Cross Rivers*, p. 145

⁸⁸ Ginwala, Frene ‘Women and the African National Congress, 1912-1943’ *Agenda*, No. 8 (1990), p. 77

⁸⁹ Ginwala ‘Women and the African National Congress’, p. 78

⁹⁰ Healy-Clancy, Meghan ‘Women and the Problem of Family in Early African Nationalist History and Historiography’ *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (2012), pp. 450, 456, 452

defined themselves as feminist.⁹¹ The implications of that will be explored throughout this thesis, but it takes note of Cherryl Walker's statement that, "if we are to understand gender relations and the position of women historically",⁹² it is necessary to view the past through modern gender theory in order for the full picture of contemporary social and cultural identities to appear. This thesis will not, however, punish what some might perceive as ill-informed protagonists. This is in contrast to those who, like Swedish-Polish academic Krzysztof Bak has observed,

tend to build their critiques of antique and medieval authors on theories constructed at least a thousand years after the death of the concerned authors. Too often, students fail to take that kind of meta-reflection into account. In their eyes, the old authors are simply evil or stupid.⁹³

Acknowledging such tendencies — even when it concerns subjects alive at the end of the 20th century — is important as *not* doing so severely limits our understanding of the creation of women's identities and their political perception and participation.

POSTCOLONIAL CRITICISM AND COMPLICATIONS

Feminist and gender theories, though very helpful for the rewriting of history, also have their own limitations, and have been subjected to criticism for their sometimes racist and heteronormative assumptions.⁹⁴ To further expose power struggles and relationships, therefore, this thesis also makes use of postcolonial theory, and in particular postcolonial feminist theory. This challenges the idea that 'western' or European peoples' experiences are normative for the rest of the world, as well as

⁹¹ Walker *Women & Resistance in South Africa*, p. xiv; Cock, Jacklyn "Another mother for peace" – Women and peace building in South Africa, 1983-2003' in Gasa (ed.) *They remove boulders and cross rivers*, p. 277

⁹² Walker *Women & Resistance in South Africa* p. xxiv

⁹³ Bak, Krzysztof 'Svenska studenter har alla svar – men inga frågor' *Dagens Nyheter* (11 March 2013). My translation.

⁹⁴ See, e.g., Mohanty, Chandra Talpade 'Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses' *Boundary 2*, Vol. 12/13, No. 3/1 (Spring/Fall 1984), pp. 333-358; hooks, bell *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (New York: South End Press, 1984) and *Ain't I a Woman? Black Women and Feminism* (New York: South End Press, 1981); Lorde, Audre *Sister Outsider: Essays & Speeches* (Berkeley: Crossing Press, 1984)

unveiling the cultural tensions and conflicts created by colonialism.⁹⁵ If South African gender structures appear more complex, conflicted and multi-layered than their Swedish counterparts, that is arguably a result of the former's colonial heritage and history. Colonial discourse, argues Georgina Waylen, was "highly gendered", with European women seen as the "inferior sex in the superior race."⁹⁶ In 2012, Patricia van der Spuy and Lindsay Clowes wrote that the colonial state viewed gender relations in Africa as a "key physical expression of 'savagery' and backwardness". They built on Judith Butler's "understanding of sexuality as a performance of gender in which racial hierarchies can only be maintained through the policing of interracial heterosexual interactions".⁹⁷ These philosophies and practices have long legacies, visible during the apartheid era though the patriarchal allegiances between the state and leaders of rural African communities, who collaborated in their need to control (black) women's movements.⁹⁸

However, these patriarchal manifestations were far from static. Imposed on women and young men by both local rulers, customs *and* government policy, the attempts to reinforce patriarchal rule were constantly challenged. Anne Mager argues that as land dispossession and endemic poverty became long-term issues among black communities in apartheid South Africa, they created an environment in which disadvantaged young men increasingly fantasised about becoming "powerful beings capable of conquering those weaker than themselves". Their frustrations led to inter-group rivalry and the assertion of power over girls, rather than conflict with their elders.⁹⁹ It stands to reason that the levelling of income differences and extension of the Swedish state in the same period could thus be one reason for the country's earlier acceptance of working women and women in positions of power.

⁹⁵ Among the most notable postcolonial theorists of the 20th century are Franz Fanon (1925-1961) and Edward Said (1935-2003). Notable postcolonial feminist historians whose writings have infused this thesis are Chandra Talpade Mohanty (b. 1955), Cynthia Enloe (b. 1938), Antoinette Burton (b. 1961) and Anne McClintock (b. 1954).

⁹⁶ Waylen *Gender in Third World Politics*, pp. 49, 46

⁹⁷ van der Spuy & Clowes "A Living Testimony of the Heights to Which a Woman Can Rise", p. 348. See also Butler, Judith *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1990) and *Bodies that Matter: The Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (London: Routledge, 1993).

⁹⁸ Sapire, Hilary 'Engendering Segregation: "Black Women's Work" in the Urban American South and South Africa in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries' *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (2000), p. 42

⁹⁹ Mager, Anne 'Youth Organisations and the Construction of Masculine Identities in the Ciskei and Transkei, 1945-1960' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 4, Special Issue on Masculinities in Southern Africa (Dec., 1998), p. 666

As mentioned above, feminist discussions also come under justified criticism for their western-centric focus. Nomboniso Gasas argued as late as in 2007 that

the dominant feminist historiography and ethos looks at South Africa through problematic lenses informed by the Euro-American and Occidental feminist paradigms.

Problematic readings emerge, Gasas argues, when

what happens in the local is viewed only through these knowledge tropes, as if they are the only relevant way of measuring and reading feminist and women's struggles in South Africa and elsewhere.¹⁰⁰

Georgina Waylen's work on women's formal and informal political engagement in the Third World (a phrase that she is rightly apprehensive about using) shows that:

black women have provided a powerful challenge to much of the work of white feminists, arguing that their analyses were imbued with racist and ethnocentric assumptions.¹⁰¹

This thesis will attempt to avoid stereotypical tropes, instead letting the activists who feature use their own vocabularies and definitions as true to their contemporary understandings.

Over the past decade, critical ideas about masculinity have been fused with gender theory, as the latter cannot be fully understood without taking the gendering of men into account. Studying the creation and performance of masculinity is undoubtedly a necessary part of a socio-cultural study of the ANC and SAP. This is especially so as masculinity is "an ideological practice cloaking itself in the guise of inescapable necessity".¹⁰² Indeed, in 1998, South African historian Robert Morrell argued that colonialism both created new and transformed old masculinities, making race and class vital and pitting white men against black men. When key institutions survived colonialism, this created the

¹⁰⁰ Gasas 'Let them build more gaols', p. 130

¹⁰¹ Waylen *Gender in Third World Politics*, pp. 3, 8

¹⁰² Brady & Arnold *What Is Masculinity?*, p. 1

basis for an African masculinity that in certain geographical and social areas disputed hegemony with white masculinities.¹⁰³

Masculinity, like femininity, is a fluid and invented performance of gender identity, thus both historical and contemporary gender relationships must be assessed for a thorough understanding of gender conflicts. These are not always violent or even coercive: gender struggle, Antoinette Burton writes, “is simply, and often joyfully, a feature of everyday life and, by extension, of ordinary historical practice as well”.¹⁰⁴ However, ideas about masculinity, and particularly the idea of threatened masculinity, explain why political activists working for the emancipation of disadvantaged people have held back the specific liberation of women. Research shows that women often struggled to make their voices heard in both socialist (SAP) and nationalist (ANC) settings as women’s work for the advancement of both their gender *and* their ethnic group or class was deemed divisive, disruptive and bourgeois. Karen Beckwith calls this the feminist liberation movement’s ‘double militancy’, pointing out that women who work in two political fora – within a group to advance their own cause and alongside men to gain a more ‘general’ liberation – cause intraorganisational tension. This has the effect that women are held back within male-dominated parties, by men who question women’s trustworthiness and priorities.¹⁰⁵

*CHALLENGING NATIONAL MYTH-MAKING:
A COMPARATIVE, TRANSNATIONAL HISTORY*

The fluidity of gender and the contrast to the rigid histories that have been shaped through patriarchal interpretations form part of the motivation for this thesis. However, the questioning of structures and assumed historical truths is also very important in the study of nationalist discourse and settings. Anne McClintock’s argument that “all nationalisms are gendered, all are invented, and all are dangerous”¹⁰⁶ plays an important

¹⁰³ Morrell, Robert ‘Of Boys and Men: Masculinity and Gender in Southern African Studies’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 4. (Dec., 1998), p. 605

¹⁰⁴ Burton, Antoinette ‘Thinking Beyond the Boundaries: Empire, Feminism and the Domains of History’ *Social History*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Jan., 2001), p. 71

¹⁰⁵ Beckwith, Karen ‘Beyond Compare? Women’s Movements in Comparative Perspective’ *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Jun., 2000), p. 443

¹⁰⁶ McClintock “No Longer in a Future Heaven”, p. 104

role in this thesis. Discussing African nationalism, McClintock has written that it was “the product of conscious reinvention, the enactment of a new political collectivity by specific cultural and political agents.”¹⁰⁷ This thesis argues that the statement is applicable to Swedish nationalism, too. Though each nation-state has its own parameters and distinct interpretations, the process of creating, spreading and enforcing ideas about the nation remain very similar across the world. History as a subject plays a great role in this process. This thesis therefore seeks to add to a growing body of research that questions the stereotypical and reductive national histories of Sweden and South Africa, as well as exposing the roles of SAP and the ANC in enforcing their own interpretations as unbiased historical truth. Their attempts to do so have been successful, for many reasons. The focus in this thesis on SAP and the ANC stems from the two organisations’ lasting dominance in their national contexts: SAP’s long and often uninterrupted periods in power throughout the post-Second World War era, and the increasing strength and viability of the ANC’s claim that it was the only credible alternative to the apartheid rule. However, in contrast to histories enforced by the organisations, both were constantly challenged, as this thesis will show.

The history of contact and collaboration between female members of SAP and the ANC is currently a blank space in the historiographical debate: so far, there has been no specific research published on the topic. Instead, the historiography is compartmentalised into broad general themes that can be defined as social movement history; Swedish international history, and ANC history. In debates about gender and women, meanwhile, national parameters dominate. As American political scientist Karen Beckwith has pointed out, researchers are reluctant to focus on the impact of connections across borders.¹⁰⁸ In a similar fashion, anti-apartheid historiography often disembodies the organisations and individuals involved in the struggle by emphasising various actors’ national histories rather than their cross-border activities. A key aim here is, therefore, to connect this dissertation’s many layers and actors across continents in order to show the impact of international connections during the second half of the 20th century — a time of rapid globalisation — and to allow the anti-apartheid movement to emerge as a truly transnational phenomenon. It challenges historiographical

¹⁰⁷ McClintock, Anne ‘Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family’ *Feminist Review*, No. 44 (summer 1993), p. 73

¹⁰⁸ Beckwith ‘Beyond Compare?’, pp. 432, 431

assumptions about women's place and agency within SAP, the ANC and the anti-apartheid movement, while also revealing why and how transnational activities became an important tool for several generations of female politicians and political activists.

This thesis has been informed by a comparative, transnational approach. This is particularly suitable for research that challenges the emphasis on national and organisational exceptionalism, which has infused so much of the research into SAP, Swedish, ANC and South African history over the past century. It is also a suitable method to highlight tendencies and patterns that might not have been picked up on had only one example of a trend (in this particular case one organisation or one nation) been investigated.¹⁰⁹ On the benefits of comparative history, Stefan Berger has written that:

Overall, developments in one country can be explained better by comparing them with developments in others. No other historical method is so adept at testing, modifying and falsifying historical explanation than comparison. No other method demonstrates so effectively the range of developmental possibilities.¹¹⁰

However, that is not to say that this project has actively sought to find synchronised patterns in the development of women's liberation philosophies in the two separate countries that form the basis for the study. Nor does it seek to draw generalising conclusions from the comparison. Instead, this is two case studies in one, organised in an attempt to show the variety and diachrony that, for natural reasons, ought to become apparent in any transnational comparison. It is, of course, a coincidence that both Sweden and South Africa scheduled general elections in 1994; that SAP were ousted from government for the first time in 44 years just months after the Soweto Uprisings of 1976 forced a reorganisation and remobilisation of the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa and beyond. These are coincidences that have made this thesis marginally easier to write, as they tie national histories together chronologically. The connections between Sweden and South Africa, SAP and the ANC — through financial and cultural relationships, personal friendships and ideological sympathies and solidarities — form the basis for their comparison. As geographical distances diminished in an increasingly globalised and connected world, these connections grew stronger and increasingly

¹⁰⁹ Berger, S. & Patmore, G. 'Comparative Labour History in Britain and Australia' *Labour History*, No. 88 (May, 2005), p. 9

¹¹⁰ Berger, Stefan 'Comparative History' in Berger, S., Feldner, H. & Passmore, K (eds.) *Writing History: Theory and Practice* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010), p. 191.

numerous.¹¹¹ Their long-term impact on Swedish and South African politicians should not be underestimated.

The focus on nation-states as the frame for comparative, connective history in the era of global turn has been criticised, as it continues to benefit the national paradigm in historical research.¹¹² Nevertheless, it is necessary here as the goal of SAP and ANC activists was to influence and govern their nation-states. The thesis is, however, a transnational study rather than an international one, as it focuses on connections between activists that were predominantly informally built outside international or supranational environments. It is not a study of formal diplomatic environments. By tying the ANC and SAP together in the informal transnational anti-apartheid movement — which spanned continents and connected activists across the world in national, transnational and international environments — another opportunity to further the understanding of the historical implications of women's transnational connections has been provided. Through this research, it has become clear that ANC and SAP women were part of another informal worldwide movement that sought to establish majority-rule democracy and liberation for both women and men. This had its origins in 18th-century Enlightenment philosophies, which informed the American and French revolutions, and the subsequent calls for universal suffrage and fair representation. Though for a long time in the hands of men only, through the 20th century women's social, economical and legal emancipation was pushed higher up the agenda. It was a process lined by conflict, which has disappeared through the privileging of male experiences in former historiographies. Over the past couple of decades, researchers, informed by the social and cultural turns of the 1960s and 1970s, have challenged established truths and doctrines in the academy on this topic. In 1970 Stein Rokkan identified four thresholds that mobilising groups must overcome in parliamentary systems: legitimisation, incorporation, representation and executive power.¹¹³ In 2004, Nina C. Raaum added that women have had to cross *two* legitimisation thresholds: one prior to obtaining the vote (similar to men) and an additional one before political

¹¹¹ This includes communications and travelling, widespread mass-media and increasingly well-educated populations.

¹¹² See, e.g., Müller, L. & Rydén, G. 'Nationell, transnationell eller global historia? Replik till Stefan Eklöf Amirell och Rolf Torstendahl' *Historisk Tidskrift*, Vol. 129, No. 4 (2009), p. 662

¹¹³ Rokkan, Stein *Citizens, Elections, Parties: Approaches to the Comparative Study of the Processes of Development* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1970)

representation (different to men).¹¹⁴ This has been visible throughout the careers of the women portrayed in this thesis. Furthermore, in 2001, Christina Florin and Lars Kvarnström criticised T.H. Marshall's assertion that the trajectory of citizenship rights moved from civil rights in the 18th century to political rights in the 19th century and social rights in the 20th century. Marshall's theory did not take women's experiences into consideration, or he would have seen that women's rights were granted in the opposite direction: from social and economical to political and civil. Discussing Swedish women's emancipation, Florin and Kvarnström wrote:

It was not until women became actors on the labour market and present in parliament, government and bureaucracy that they could use their civil citizenship to speak for their own cause, formulate their own discourses and participate in the realisation of gender political reforms.¹¹⁵

As this thesis will show, these were experiences mirrored by women who had been excluded from power by the apartheid regime and the patriarchal organisation of political structures.

Using a comparative approach also allows us to fully understand politics as a social activity that invents and reinforces social differences: the idea of 'an other' is vital for the definition of a group tied together by a common cause. These groups can be perceived as 'imagined communities', using a concept originally defined by Benedict Anderson in the 1980s to describe the appeal of nationalism,¹¹⁶ but applicable also to the perceived social and cultural connections within a seemingly tight-knit community. The international anti-apartheid movement, interacting SAP and ANC members, and intra-SAP/ANC groups of women's activists were all to some extent 'imagined communities', as memoirs by and discussions with activists in both South Africa and Sweden make clear. Indeed, for Håkan Thörn "the most crucial aspect of [the anti-apartheid movement] was its construction of transnational networks and forms of action".¹¹⁷ Thörn stresses the importance of individuals – key activists who were

¹¹⁴ Raaum, Nina C. 'Gender Equality and Political Representation: A Nordic Comparison' *West European Politics*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (September 2005), p. 893

¹¹⁵ Florin, C. & Kvarnström, L. 'Inledning: Kvinnor på gränsen till medborgarskap' in Florin & Kvarnström (eds.) *Kvinnor på gränsen till medborgarskap*, p. 38

¹¹⁶ Anderson, Benedict *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983)

¹¹⁷ Thörn, Håkan 'The Meaning(s) of Solidarity: Narratives of Anti-Apartheid Activism' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (2009), p. 417

connected across various historical, cultural and political contexts – in making the movement global and transnational. Thörn also places the anti-apartheid movement in a historical context that stretches from the anti-slavery campaigns of the 18th and 19th centuries to the creation of supranational political institutions and the subsequent anti-capitalist protest movements of the 21st century.¹¹⁸ In a similar way, women’s late 20th century liberation also tapped into a longer history of activism that proved a source of strength and inspiration.

Despite what may look as diminishing national identities in the wake of inter- and/or transnational contacts, ‘othering’ continued to play an important role, as this thesis will show. Through the creation of a ‘them and us’ narrative, the anti-apartheid movement emphasised cultural differences, which, Thörn argues, shows how globalisation does not always weaken nation-state identities but rather strengthens them.¹¹⁹ Toni Weis’ research into the motivation of East German support for African liberation fronts shows that although solidarity “was meant to describe a relationship among equals, based on the idea of reciprocity and the membership in a shared moral community”, it again cemented pre-existing ideas about ‘Africa’ as ‘the other’.¹²⁰ This is true also in the Swedish context, as will be explored in chapter one.

There are other reasons, too, to challenge the predisposition to study history from solely national perspectives. In 2001, Alan Cobley argued that social history has become part of a modernist agenda to justify state expansion and interaction, adding that the South African government sees “history as a tool for nation-building, rather than as an autonomous discourse or as an end in its own right”.¹²¹ That is a symptom also visible in the Swedish context, where the emphasis on consensus at the expense of conflict has created an environment in which some intellectuals fail to ask the appropriate questions of their material. “Swedish students,” Krzysztof Bak wrote in newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* in March 2013,

are aware of the existence of history, but they have a fairly definitive and claustrophobic understanding of it. Their reasoning goes something like this: history has

¹¹⁸ Thörn ‘The Meaning(s) of Solidarity’, p. 420; Thörn, Håkan ‘Solidarity Across Borders: The Transnational Anti-Apartheid Movement’ *Voluntas*, Vol. 17 (2006), p. 285; Thörn *Solidaritetens betydelse*, p. 27

¹¹⁹ Thörn *Solidaritetens betydelse* p. 28

¹²⁰ Weis, Toni ‘The Politics Machine: On the Concept of “Solidarity” in East German Support for SWAPO’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (2011), p. 352

¹²¹ Cobley ‘Does Social History Have a Future?’, p. 624

worked long and hard with one aim in sight: to produce me. Now that I am here, history has retired.¹²²

By finding an alternative approach to question dominant narratives and by using the previously silenced histories of female politicians and activists, this thesis attempts to expose the failings of these national, unconnected histories.

SOURCES

The comparative silence of women in historiographical ANC and SAP accounts during the 20th century became increasingly perplexing during the course of researching this topic. Archives and newspaper cuttings from the relevant era show that female political activists were very much present and making their voices heard, in Sweden, South Africa and beyond. The challenge has been to contextualise these, which has led to interviews with several of the most prominent activists of the era. Birgitta Dahl and Annie Marie Sundbom have kindly agreed to be interviewed several times over the past four years (three times in the case of Dahl, and twice in the case of Sundbom), while a phone interview with Anna-Greta Leijon and correspondence with Lena Hjelm-Wallén, trade union activist Gertrud Sigurdson, former SSKF leader Maj-Lis Löow and Maj Britt Theorin have added further insight into gender-informed tensions within SAP. South African interviewees have proved more difficult to track down: an interview with Frene Ginwala has proved very insightful, while one promised by Jessie Duarte did not take place before this thesis was submitted. Requests sent to Lindiwe Mabuza, Cheryl Carolus and Thenjiwe Mtintso went unanswered, leading to an emphasis on published auto/biographical accounts. Of these, Mamphela Ramphele's *Across Boundaries: The Journey of a South African Woman Leader*, Ray Alexander Simons' *All My Life and All My Strength*, Ruth First's *117 Days*, *Walter and Albertina Sisulu: In Our Lifetime*, and Ellen Kuzwayo's *Call Me Woman* have proved the most insightful.¹²³

¹²² Bak 'Svenska studenter har alla svar'

¹²³ Ramphele, Mamphela *Across Boundaries: The Journey of a South African Woman Leader* (New York: The Feminist Press, 1996); Alexander Simons, Ray *All My Life and All My Strength* (Johannesburg: STE Publishers, 2004); First, Ruth *117 Days* (London: Virago Press, 2010); Sisulu, Elinor *Walter & Albertina Sisulu: In Our Lifetime* (London: Abacus, 2003); Kuzwayo, Ellen *Call me woman* (London, Women's Press, 1985)

However, despite female and feminist academics' work to challenge the dominance of men's histories, popular history is still a thoroughly male-dominated affair.¹²⁴ Thus, most of the auto/biographical accounts that feature here are published by small, independent publishing houses and hard to come by outside specialist libraries and the second-hand market. While the leading men of the Swedish labour movement have been subjects of numerous biographies and documentaries, the women of the movement remain on the sidelines. One man dominates the field completely: in 2011, the 25th anniversary of the unsolved murder of Olof Palme in 1986 coincided with the launch of several biographies charting his rise through the 1950s and 1960s and the impact of his time in government. Of these, historian Kjell Östberg's *I takt med tiden: Olof Palme 1927-1969* and *När vinden vände: Olof Palme 1969-1986*, Henrik Berggren's *Underbara dagar framför oss* and journalist Göran Greider's *Ingen kommer undan Olof Palme* have proved the most useful for providing an insight and background into the male perspective on the conflicts of the era.¹²⁵ SAP women's autobiographical accounts are much more difficult to come by. The few accounts that have been published have several things in common: they tend to be written after a dramatic event (these include Mona Sahlin's *Med mina ord* and Anna-Greta Leijon's *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!*, both written in the 1990s after their authors had been forced to resign, and Ulla Lindström's *Och regeringen satt kvar!*, published after her resignation in 1966), and have titles and narratives that aim to tell their protagonists' stories 'in their own words'.¹²⁶ However, despite the prolific publishing patterns of their male counterparts, many prominent female politicians have not published their version of events.¹²⁷ When asked why they have not done so, several of the activists interviewed for this thesis (of which only Leijon has published her memoirs), have offered answers that mirror Elaine Unterhalter's argument that women take a very humble approach to autobiographies.

¹²⁴ In January 2015, *Dagens Nyheter* showed that only 13 per cent of named protagonists in Swedish secondary school history books were women. Delin, Mikael 'Kvinnorna saknas i skolans historieböcker' *Dagens Nyheter* 15 January 2015

¹²⁵ Östberg, Kjell *I takt med tiden: Olof Palme 1927-1969* (Stockholm: Leopard förlag, 2008); Östberg *När vinden vände*; Berggren, Henrik *Underbara dagar framför oss: en biografi över Olof Palme* (Stockholm: Nordstedt, 2010); Greider, Göran *Ingen kommer undan Olof Palme* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2011)

¹²⁶ Sahlin, Mona *Med mina ord* (Stockholm: Tiden Athena/Rabén Prisma, 1996); Leijon, Anna-Greta *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* (Stockholm: Tiden, 1991); Lindström, Ulla *Och regeringen satt kvar! Ur min politiska dagbok, 1960-1967* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1970)

¹²⁷ Pierre Schori's 700-page autobiographical account is one of the most recent male SAP memories, see Schori, Pierre *Minnet och elden: en politisk memoar med samtida synpunkter* (Stockholm: Leopard förlag, 2014).

They tend not to feel the need to tell their story, and rarely feel they have something exceptional to tell. This stands in contrast to men's creation of heroic mythology, and makes women's works not just less likely to appear, but less likely to gain attention once published.¹²⁸

It is important to recognise the potentially controversial use of personal histories within historical research. In 2010, Ciraj Rassool argued that the fashionable emphasis on leaders' lives left much to be desired as there have been

no attempts to explain individuality and leadership theoretically or to understand how individuals were produced and leaders constructed.¹²⁹

The reliance on biographies for eyewitness accounts is also problematic as "the agency of a network usually cannot be reduced to the agency even of its leading members".¹³⁰ Nevertheless, biographies give useful insight into how the actions of individuals shape a movement, which, in return, impacts participants' own identities.¹³¹

A further controversy caused by the use of auto/biographies is their inherent bias.¹³² A limited array of sources creates a reliance on facts that are at best selective and at worst distorted. As far as it has been possible, claims made by these sources have been cross-checked at archives in both Sweden and South Africa. These archives have been indispensable sources of official 'facts', while interviews with activists from both parties have provided anecdotes, insights and a testing ground for theories.

In the process of researching this thesis, three archives have been particularly important. Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek (the Labour Movement Archives and Library; ARAB) holds all papers belonging to SAP and its lateral organisations as well

¹²⁸ Unterhalter, Elaine 'The Work of the Nation: Heroic Masculinity in South African Autobiographical Writing of the Anti-Apartheid Struggle' *The European Journal of Development Research*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (2000), p. 163

¹²⁹ Rassool, Ciraj 'Rethinking Documentary History and South African Political Biography' *South African Review of Sociology*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (2010) p. 38

¹³⁰ Keck, M.E. & Sicking, K. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca & London, Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 216.

¹³¹ Thörn 'The Meaning(s) of Solidarity', p. 422

¹³² For a discussion of this in the anti-apartheid movement, see Seekings, Jeremy 'Whose Voices? Politics and Methodology in the Study of Political Organisation and Protest in the Final Phase of 'Struggle' in South Africa' *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 62, No. 1 (2010), pp. 11, 12; Saunders, Chris 'Liberation Struggles in Southern Africa: New Perspectives' *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 62, No. 1 (2010), p. 1. Jocelyn Alexander and JoAnn McGregor's 2004 article on personal narratives from Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army shows that divisions between political groups and guerrillas are entrenched in historiography and biographical writing. See Alexander, J. and McGregor, J. 'War Stories: Guerrilla Narratives of Zimbabwe's Liberation War' *History Workshop Journal*, No. 57 (Spring, 2004), pp. 90, 91, 93

as some personal archives. ARAB also holds annual reports and congress reports from all SAP organisations (particular attention has been paid to those belonging to SAP, SSKF and SSU), which give insight into party debates and policies. The magazines and journals published by labour movement organisations – including SSKF’s *Morgonbris* – were the leaderships’ communiqués with grass-root members and activists, and as such offer insights into both leadership philosophies and rank-and-file discontent.

Neatly organised and abundant, archive files make it perfectly clear that plenty of women found space within, and took responsibility for, the anti-apartheid struggle and the development of the Swedish welfare state. But the placement of files concerning women's movements and female members of political parties also indicate the value placed on research into topics involving them. Files belonging to SSKF are slow to appear (it can take up to two weeks for ordered material to arrive on researchers’ desks), and plenty of material donated by activists over the years remains uncatalogued and is thus inaccessible. An example are the personal files collected and donated by Annie Marie Sundbom. Sundbom’s 120-volume archive — detailing her involvement with African liberation movements and journeys across the world on behalf of SAP and SSKF — remains still unavailable, though Sundbom has kindly made copies of it available to me.

Despite the perilous nature of ANC’s exile existence, during which the organisation and its members were under constant threat from the apartheid regime, plenty of material has survived the abrupt relocations and attacks on ANC offices in various cities around the world. Despite their limitations, these official sources help build a picture of the organisational structures, their weaknesses, strengths and limitations. The archives of the Lusaka and London offices have made it to the UWC Robben Island Museum Mayibuye Archive in Bellville, one of Cape Town’s eastern suburbs. The collection holds papers belonging to the ANC’s Women’s Section, which aimed to organise female members into separate units for pastoral care and political education. Again, there is a discernible difference between the organisation of the papers belonging to the ANC head offices. While the files from the latter are neatly bound and almost entirely made up of photocopies of the original material, the Women’s Section material is much less neatly organised and predominantly made up of originals. Mayibuye also holds the collective archives for the Women's National Coalition

(WNC), an umbrella organisation for South Africa's various women's movements and organisations created in April 1992 to forge a collective voice for women during the creation of a new, democratic constitution. The WNC archive gives great insight into the role the ANC played during the transition to democracy, the limitations to its powers and the way the party worked to emerge in power. The Mayibuye's Oral History Collection – Hilda Bernstein's interviews on the experience of exile – has also been an important source for this thesis, particularly the interviews with ANC activists who lived in Sweden (Billy and Yolise Modise, and Madi Gray) and prominent women's activists (Ruth Mompati and Frene Ginwala). Findings at the Mayibuye Archive have been complemented by the extensive holdings at the Liberation Movement archives of the National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre (NAHECS) at the University of Fort Hare in the Eastern Cape. NAHECS has records from all ANC missions abroad - giving a vital insight into the preoccupations and working practices of the ANC Stockholm Office as well as Women's Section groups around the world — as well as other archives, many of which cover the period until 1996 or even later. It should be noted that files concerning women and women's organisations are much more readily available at Mayibuye and NAHECS, as all files are stored on the premises, then they are in Sweden. However, a lack of funding and consent from important donors have put restrictions on the material available. Some personal archives — including that of Frene Ginwala — are currently closed indefinitely, and it is difficult to get a complete overview of archive holdings.

ISSUES AND OMISSIONS

The limited scope of a PhD thesis has made it necessary to narrow down the large material available on this topic. Some of these distinctions have been discussed earlier in this section, and include the perilous nature of studying a movement by focusing on individuals. It is also important to emphasise that this is a study of elite women, and women who became part of the political elite. It is vital that readers' recognise that these are not 'average' accounts, as the majority of women - and men - within SAP and the ANC remained outside the organisational rooms of real power.

Another distinction has been drawn between violent and diplomatic activists. This thesis does not feature many female MK cadres, whose experiences of exile and the gendering of the ANC's armed forces would add further understanding to the overall gender balance within the movement. This is, again, because the scope of the thesis does not allow for their inclusion.

A note on language is also needed. Interviews with Swedish politicians have been conducted in Swedish and also translated into English by the author. An experienced journalist, I have followed journalistic interviewing conventions rather than those established by oral historians. This is partly because the interviewees are all experienced politicians comfortable in the public eye. It is also a result of the inherent difficulties in translating oral history records. Interviewees have therefore not been given the opportunity to approve their quotes as used in this thesis. None of them have asked to do so, and I am very grateful for the trust interviewees have shown in the project. I have attempted to give a true version of their accounts at all times; all the interviews have been recorded, and any mistakes in interpretation or translation are mine alone. With the exception of Stefan Nyzell and Åsa Linderborg, who have been quoted from their publications' English summaries, I am also responsible for the translation of all direct quotes from Swedish publications.

Furthermore, although it goes against my personal and political convictions to describe a person by their ethnicity, it is near impossible to give a fair account of apartheid oppression without including a reference to it. For that reason and where necessary, ANC members and other South Africans have been described as 'black African', 'Indian/Asian', 'coloured' and 'white'. Readers are advised to remember that this is a dubious practice and does not at any point give any insight into a person's identity beyond the level of melanin in their skin as determined by their DNA.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

The five chapters of this thesis are arranged along national and chronological lines, with a final chapter amalgamating the two. Chapter one outlines the development of SAP women's activism from circa 1960 to 1976, providing the background for the first connections between SAP and the ANC. The chapter will also look at the generational

shift in Swedish society around 1968 and how the party responded to this, as well as women's responses to the party's attempts to enable and constrict their agency.

Chapter two looks at the history of women's activism in the ANC, from the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960 to the Soweto Uprising in 1976. The chapter explores the role of women before and after banning in 1960, and the generational shift made visible in Black Consciousness mobilisation towards the end of the period. By showing how events throughout this 16-year period changed the ANC's organisational culture and ideological tendencies, and how this impacted the position of women in the movement, this chapter will argue that there was a constant tension between what women wanted to achieve and what they were kept from achieving during this period.

Chapter three focuses on SAP and Swedish history from 1976 to 1991. It will detail the accelerated pace of events abroad and at home that shaped SAP's position within Swedish society and its policies. The chapter will also show the impact of a small but decisive generational change in the 1980s, which culminated after the murder of prime minister and SAP chairman Olof Palme in 1986. It will also discuss the impact of the economic downturns in that same decade, SAP's nine years of opposition (1976-1982; 1991-1994), and nine years in power (1982-1991). The chapter will in particular focus on the impact these events had on women's quest for gender equality within the party, and how their activism played a key role in returning SAP to power in 1994.

Chapter four discusses ANC women's history from 1976 to 1994; from the brutal repression that followed in the wake of the Soweto Uprising to the unbanning of the ANC in 1990. By doing so, it will establish how events during these years impacted the position and role of women within the ANC, both in exile and within South Africa itself, and the reasons behind ANC women's ability to participate in and have an impact on the negotiations with the apartheid government 1990-1994.

Chapter five addresses the South African period of transition to democracy – 1990-1994 – as well as SAP's second term of opposition. The latter lasted between 1991 and 1994 and saw the party engage with gender theory on an unprecedented scale. The debates preceding the arrival of the gender quota policies in time for the 1994 elections will be outlined, as well as the impact of international work and connections on both groups of women, gender equality legislation from that era, and its legacies.

CHAPTER ONE

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONALISM: SAP WOMEN 1960-1976

INTRODUCTION

The gender debate has not ploughed any deep furrows in our political landscape.¹³³

When I was young, it was all about men, everything. (...) Men in dark suits who lack experience — and that's important — they know nothing about everyday life. They don't know about childcare or schools or care for the elderly, traffic issues or housing areas. Women and equality brought that competence to Swedish decision-making assemblies.¹³⁴

These two statements, made by two prominent SAP politicians born 28 years apart, offer insights into the achievements of women's activists within the party in the 1960s and early 1970s. On paper, the careers of Ulla Lindström (1909-1999) and Birgitta Dahl (1937-) look remarkably similar. They both served their party in parliament over the course of several decades; both were appointed to cabinet positions; and both were deeply involved in and engaged by international politics. Nevertheless, their experiences were vastly different: Lindström belonged to a generation from which only a very small number of women managed to forge careers in party and parliament at all. Dahl, on the other hand, was merely one of an impressive number of successful women of her generation. Lindström's diaries seethe with frustration at the tight gender roles that assigned women and men to stereotypical duties in parliament and society in the 1960s. Conversations with Dahl, however, reveal how those same gender roles were broken down by women and men alike during that very same decade.

How was that possible? The growing awareness of women's subjugation on account of their gender spread throughout the 1960s but — as this chapter will show — women's successes in the workplace, parliament and party hierarchy were not a coincidental or even automatic result stemming from that realisation. SAP women's achievements were informed by their own hard work, determination and a generational shift that changed the mood in their favour.

¹³³ Lindström *Och regeringen satt kvar!*, p. 293

¹³⁴ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (11 December 2012).

This chapter assesses how and why younger SAP women — Dahl's generation — were promoted more quickly into party and government structures in the 1960s and 1970s. It will also explore why SSKF women and other SAP women were treated differently by the party elite, and what this tells us about the structural gendering of SAP's party politics in the era. Overshadowed by more publicly active second-wave feminism in the wake of 1968, SAP women's parliamentary and party activism for the liberation of women has been overlooked in the historiography. This chapter — and thesis — uncovers the importance of their work in creating the legal framework for gender equality.

Furthermore, this chapter argues that internationalism and international solidarity held the key to success for SAP women in this era. While these two aforementioned generations had different working methods and reasons for becoming internationally active, international venues provided both an outlet for SAP women's political ambitions and a stage for their political skills, both of which ran the risk of being overlooked at home.

The chapter stretches from 1960 until 1976, when SAP was ousted from government after 44 years in power. It examines the SAP's internal party organisation in the period in part I, including the source of the frustration felt by the older generation of women, the question of 'women's issues', and the impact of the younger generation's arrival on the scene. Part II provides the national context against which gender activism within SAP took place: from the party's changing electoral fortunes and the greater impact of women in parliament to SAP's loss in the 1976 general election. The gender awakening of the era, the influence of non-parliamentary second-wave feminism and the growing strength of parliamentary women's activism is then discussed in part III. Part IV focuses on SAP women's internationalist history, how their attitude changed from being paternalistic to collaborationist, and their emphasis moved from international organisations to active solidarity with liberation movements across the world. It also assesses the importance of internationalism for women's ability to reach higher office and a greater status within the party.

The source material on which this chapter builds comprises SAP activists' auto/biographies. These include Ulla Lindström's diaries, the memoirs of Gertrud Sigurdson, Inga Thorsson, Anita Gradin and Anna-Greta Leijon, as well as interviews conducted with Birgitta Dahl, Leijon, Maj-Lis Lööv, Maj Britt Theorin and Annie Marie

Sundbom. These interviews have bridged gaps and silences in the historical records, allowing each activist to give their own version of accounts. These reveal the hard work and frustration behind the scenes and across the world that laid the foundations for the increasing influence of women in SAP in this era.

PART I

PIONEERS WITHOUT PATHS TO POWER

Sweden was a country in the midst of radical change in the 1960s. The Swedish Social Democratic Party — Socialdemokratiska Arbetarepartiet, or SAP — had been in near-continuous power since 1932, steering the introduction of a series of reforms that transformed the country from an agricultural nation to a modernising, industrialised state. The reforms challenged and changed the foundations of Swedish society, and included investments in a compulsory and free-of-charge school system, housing, health and work security schemes.¹³⁵ While society was in flux, party structures were not. SAP was a male-dominated organisation in which only members who had progressed through the ranks of the Social Democratic Youth League — Social Demokratiska Ungdomsförbundet, or SSU — were selected for senior party or cabinet roles. One of the four lateral organisations under the SAP umbrella (the others being women’s organisation SSKF, the students’ organisation S-Studenterna and the Christian organisation SKSF), SSU had a thoroughly male dominated hierarchy of its own.¹³⁶ Meanwhile, women — who in 1960 made up just 27 per cent of the party’s 800,000-strong membership — were hardly represented at all at the top of the hierarchy.¹³⁷ Only one out of seven National Executive Council posts was held by a woman: Ulla Lindström, who was also the Erlander cabinet’s sole female minister. A veteran politician, staunch supporter of women’s involvement in national and international politics, and an MP

¹³⁵ Esping-Andersen, Gösta ‘The Making of a Social Democratic Welfare State’ in Misgeld, K., Molin, K. & Åmark, K. (eds.) *Creating Social Democracy: A Century of the Social Democratic Labor Party in Sweden* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1993), pp. 35-66; Elvander *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse*, pp. 140-151; Lundberg, U. & Åmark, K. ‘Social Rights and Social Security: The Swedish Welfare State, 1900–2000’ *Scandinavian Journal of History*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (Sep 2001), pp. 157-176.

¹³⁶ A detailed account of SSU gender politics can be found in Lindholm ‘SSU och könspolitikens gränser, 1970-2000’

¹³⁷ The actual number of women was 215,314 out of a total of 801,068 members. Socialdemokratiska partistyrelsen *Berättelse för år 1959* (Stockholm: Tiden-Barnängen, 1960), p. 18; Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1969* (Borås: Sjuhäradsbygdens tryckeri, 1970), p. 110

since 1946, Lindström had become Sweden's third ever female minister in 1951.¹³⁸ Despite near-constant lobbying on her behalf, Lindström remained the sole woman in Erlander's second (1951-1957) and third (1957-1969) cabinets before ultimately resigning in 1966. She vacated her parliamentary seat in 1970.

SAP women with political ambitions faced a sharp uphill struggle in an organisational structure that was not set up to provide senior roles to women. Lindström's career trajectory and the many hurdles she had to overcome as she tried to influence government policy and recruit more women into the upper echelons of the party pointed to a greater landscape of frustration felt by senior SAP women in this era. These are detailed in Lindström's two aforementioned diaries — published after her 1966 resignation — which show that despite Lindström's unique position as the sole female cabinet and NEC member, the party's male establishment was not unanimously pleased to see her at the top table.¹³⁹ On the contrary, many of them considered her a woman first and a politician second. During her terms as deputy minister,¹⁴⁰ Lindström was given responsibility for areas in which women were considered natural experts: children and family policy. Lindström felt such a traditionalist remit limited her and other women's abilities to rise through party ranks, while simultaneously cementing the idea that female politicians were only interested in and suitable for so-called 'women's issues'.¹⁴¹ As long as women were confined to these, and as long as these were taken care of by a woman, Erlander would never even consider adding a second female minister to his cabinet, Lindström argued. She also pointed out that female politicians needed to prove themselves more capable than male party comrades before their names were even put forward. In 1966, she sarcastically remarked in her diary that she believed Sweden would sooner abolish its monarchy than recruit five or six female ministers to serve alongside one-another.¹⁴²

Mikael Sjögren has found that Lindström's parliamentary records show that she rarely strayed from the line laid down by the party leadership.¹⁴³ Nevertheless, her

¹³⁸ Lindström followed in the footsteps of Karin Kock-Lindberg, who served as deputy minister and later minister of rations 1947-1949, and Hildur Nyström, who served as Minister of Education in 1951. See appendix C.

¹³⁹ Lindström, Ulla *I regeringen: ur min politiska dagbok 1954-1959* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1969); Lindström *Och regeringen satt kvar!*

¹⁴⁰ In charge of a specific portfolio, but without the support of a ministry.

¹⁴¹ Karlsson "Politiska kvinnor", p. 26

¹⁴² Lindström *Och regeringen satt kvar!* pp. 139-140, 191, 293

¹⁴³ Sjögren, Mikael 'Statsrådet och genusordningen – Ulla Lindström 1954-1966' *Historisk tidskrift*, No. 123, Vol. 1 (2003), p. 24

presence was enough to cause concern and fury among male party colleagues and members of the press, who used a highly gendered vocabulary to variously describe her as meddlesome, hysterical and quarrelling. These are words that were never used to describe a man in her position, but they were not reserved for the cabinet minister only.¹⁴⁴ While Lindström was the sole woman in government, she was far from the only SAP woman visible in Swedish politics at the time: Lindström was joined in many of her battles by fellow SAP-members Alva Myrdal and Inga Thorsson.¹⁴⁵ Born in 1915 and thus six years Lindström's junior, Thorsson had worked at the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva before returning to Sweden to become the chairperson of SSKF in 1952. She was a formidable woman unafraid of sparking debate within the party at large, and benefited from an unusually high level of education among women at the time.¹⁴⁶ Once installed at SSKF, Thorsson embarked on a mission to turn the organisation into a campaigning, internationalist structure informed by her own passion for disarmament and peace, and her experience within international organisations.¹⁴⁷ The most important project during the first decade of Thorsson's SSKF leadership was a forceful, convincing and within the party very controversial campaign to stop Sweden acquiring nuclear weapons. Thorsson mobilised widespread popular support for the cause, forcing SAP to take a non-proliferation stance or risk public anger. However, in doing so, SSKF provoked fury among sections of the party loyal to the idea that no decision should be made and no campaign fought. This was an attempt to stop inter-party debates from revealing rifts between party factions for and against nuclear armaments publicly.¹⁴⁸

Thorsson's mobilisation attracted new members, revitalising the organisation to the point where it was the sole SAP lateral party organisation whose membership did not diminish during the 1950s. In 1959, SSKF had 72,799 members — a record high number that still stands — and these were organised into 1,484 local women's clubs (under the scope of the local *arbetarekommun*, or workers' council) across the

¹⁴⁴ Lindström *Och regeringen satt kvar!* pp. 198-199

¹⁴⁵ On Myrdal, see, e.g., Hirdman, Yvonne *Det tänkande hjärtat: boken om Alva Myrdal* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2006); Bok, Sissela *Alva: ett kvinnoliv* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1987); Lindskog, Lars G. *Förnuftet måste segra! Lars G. Lindskog samtalar med Alva Myrdal om skilda epoker i hennes liv* (Stockholm: Sveriges Radio, 1981).

¹⁴⁶ Thorsson was the sole girl in her baccalaureate class of 1933. See Lindskog, Lars G. *Att förändra verkligheten: Porträtt av Inga Thorsson* (Stockholm: Tidens förlag, 1990), pp. 20, 195

¹⁴⁷ Lindskog *Att förändra verkligheten*, pp. 31, 35

¹⁴⁸ Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap*, p. 187; Östberg *I takt med tiden*, p. 117; Elvander *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse*, p. 204

country.¹⁴⁹ The powerful and influential youth league SSU, on the other hand, lost nearly half its members during that same decade, with numbers falling to 57,000.¹⁵⁰ The 1950s — often perceived as a breathing moment between the destruction of the 1940s and radicalism of the 1960s — was thus a vital and active period in SSKF's history. Nevertheless, only one-third of SAP women were members of the organisation, for reasons that will be outlined below.¹⁵¹

1960s: RENEWAL AND SLOW PROGRESS

Thorsson used *Morgonbris* — SSKF's members' magazine, which had a print-run of about 50,000 in the 1950s — as a vehicle to spread awareness of her solutions for the problems facing SAP and Swedish women. A recurring theme was calls for women both to make themselves heard and to be listened to. In a 1961 article headlined 'How long must we have "women's issues"', Thorsson wrote:

'Women's issues' are not [just] women's problems and business. The lack of resolution has negative effects on society as a whole. (...) Men and women should discuss and solve these together, because they are vital issues for society.¹⁵²

Like Lindström, Thorsson felt that the automatic assignation of female members to 'women's issues' limited not just their career opportunities but their ability to become involved in traditionally male-dominated policy areas that had a direct impact on women's lives. These included issues of national security and taxation, both close to Thorsson's heart. However, Thorsson's position was marginalised. By going against the party leadership in the nuclear armaments debate, Thorsson and SSKF were weakened despite their promising numerical strength. SSKF was not considered an incubator of policies and leaders of the future. Men affiliated to SSU, S-Studenter and the trade union organisations remained overwhelmingly favoured by SAP recruitment strategies. SSKF was considered quarrelsome and irrelevant; a group of women who should know better than meddle in policy areas of which they had little experience.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1969*, p. 112

¹⁵⁰ SSU membership figures had fallen from an all-time high of 101,324 in 1948. Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1969*, pp. 111-112

¹⁵¹ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamhetsberättelse 1995-1996*, pp. 464-465, 468

¹⁵² Thorsson, Inga 'Hur länge skall vi ha "kvinnoproblem"' *Morgonbris*, No. 6 (1961), p. 5

¹⁵³ Pauli 'Rörelsens ledare', p. 187

Thorsson paid a personal price for her activism. Having finally been elected an MP in 1956, she served just one term before giving her seat up to become the social welfare commissioner of Stockholm City Council in 1958. The party elders argued that it was a promotion; Thorsson and Lindström treated it as a demotion, caused by perceptions of Thorsson as unpredictable and uncomfortable in the aftermath of the nuclear weapons debate.¹⁵⁴ It was little consolation that she was the first woman to serve in that role. Thorsson, still hoping for a cabinet post, had resisted the offer throughout an intensive persuasion campaign that involved calls from Erlander. In 1990, she told her biographer, Lars G. Lindskog, that she finally relented when the leadership told her that they might think less of women in general if Thorsson turned the post down:

‘You are the first woman to get the opportunity to become a commissioner, and you turn it down! What will that make us think of women?’

That statement, Thorsson said, more or less forced her to relent.¹⁵⁵ She served as a commissioner until 1962, when she left to join the foreign office’s development aid office.

Thorsson’s experience — and that of Alva Myrdal — shows that top-ranking party and government positions remained unattainable even for the most visible SAP women throughout much of the 1960s. However, the mood of the nation was changing. A younger generation born in the years immediately preceding or following the Second World War, who had benefited from the reforms of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s — most importantly the improved access for talented girls and boys from all social backgrounds to further education — began to rise through the ranks of political organisations and institutions. These youngsters demanded access in a much more direct fashion than their predecessors.

Birgitta Dahl, born in 1937, is a member of that generation. She began her political career as a student at Uppsala University by becoming a member of Laboremus, the well-renowned local S-Studenter group. Through Laboremus, Dahl met both Anna-Greta Leijon (born in 1939) and Lena Hjelm-Wallén (born in 1943): three women who would break loose from the rigid structures that hampered the advancement

¹⁵⁴ Lindskog *Att förändra verkligheten*, p. 15

¹⁵⁵ Lindskog *Att förändra verkligheten*, p. 52

of their elders, forging stellar careers within the party, parliament and government. Dahl, Leijon and Hjelm-Wallén were part of a larger group of younger politicians who rallied around the necessity of women entering the workforce, and who lobbied for the reforms that would enable them to do so. They were also part of a generation that bonded across gender lines in anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist activism (this will be outlined in part IV of this chapter), while also sharing outrage that class inequalities remained present in Swedish society despite 30 years of SAP-led reform.¹⁵⁶ Many promising members of this generation never graduated from university, but were recruited into party and parliament structures while still at university. This was a conscious strategy from the party leaders, who — as Petra Pauli’s research has shown — sought to secure the labour movement’s upward trajectory and hold onto power by recruiting academics from working-class backgrounds into its ranks.¹⁵⁷ Recruited on account of their various areas of expertise, the leadership failed to recognise that these youngsters also sought gender equality reforms, and had a passion for self-organised activism much in line with the radical tenor of the times.¹⁵⁸ It was a generational shift, cemented at the SAP congress of 1969 where Erlander tendered his resignation as party leader and prime minister in favour of Olof Palme. Born in 1927 and 26 years younger than his predecessor, Palme took the helm at a time that later proved to have been a high point for Swedish Social Democracy. In the 1968 election to the Second Chamber, SAP had won 50.1 per cent of the vote (this will be explored in part II of this chapter). Furthermore, in a country where the population had just nudged past eight million, SAP had over 900,000 members, of which 231,000 — or 25.4 per cent — were women.¹⁵⁹ Many of these would seek greater influence over the decade ahead.

1970s: CONFLICT AND REFORM

The 1960s, as described above, can be characterised as the incubator of radicalism. The 1970s, on the other hand, was a period of concerted effort to transform the ideals of the previous decade into practice. SAP appeared powerful and revitalised during the first

¹⁵⁶ Author’s interviews with Birgitta Dahl (31 August 2011; 11 December 2012; 16 September 2014), Anna-Greta Leijon (20 January 2013) and Lena Hjelm-Wallén (7 September 2011).

¹⁵⁷ Pauli ‘Rörelsens ledare’, pp. 133-136

¹⁵⁸ Author’s interview with Birgitta Dahl (31 August 2011).

¹⁵⁹ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamhetsberättelse 1995-1996*, pp. 465, 468; Socialdemokratiska partistyrelsen *Verksamheten 1969*, pp. 36-37

few years of the new decade, but it was losing its electoral foothold. Challenged from both left and right, SAP struggled to maintain its position as a radical agent in Swedish society, having been in power for almost three decades.

Swedish industrial relations in the postwar era are often perceived of as calm and stable due to Saltjöbaden Agreement drawn up by trade unions and employer association SAF in 1938, which laid the foundations for negotiations between employees and employers over the next decades.¹⁶⁰ However, underneath the surface, discontent simmered. The welfare state was contested; neither the socialist parties nor their bourgeois opponents were content. As the radicalism of the 1960s tipped into the 1970s, it was pushed above ground by discontent over lagging welfare reforms and unequal employer-employee relationships. In the 1960s, the national economy had gone from strength to strength; in the 1970s, it began to suffer from overheating. The consensus-based labour market was disrupted by a wave of wildcat strikes following on from the 1969 downing of tools at the iron mine in Svappavaara, a mining community near Kiruna in the northern province of Lapland. Svappavaara's strikers were soon joined by others at nearby mines in Kiruna and Malmberget. The miners' employer was a state-owned company; their official union — with which they now broke — was SAP-affiliated. It was impossible for SAP to see the strike as anything but directed at government policy. Over the next few years, strikes broke out across the country at some of Sweden's most important factories: industrial giants Volvo, SAAB, Asea and LM Ericsson were all affected. Meanwhile, white-collar workers affiliated to trade union organisation SACO went on strike in 1971.¹⁶¹ Kjell Östberg has written about how discontent:

deepened and spread to new groups. It was no longer just students who joined the protests, but striking workers, angry housewives, *norrlänningar*, environmentalists from all parts of society, and militant women too.¹⁶²

This era of angry radicalism forms the backdrop to LO's decision to put forward a radical proposal of its own. In 1971, the LO congress set an expert group led by Rudolf

¹⁶⁰ Åmark, Klas 'Sammanhållning och intressepolitik: Socialdemokratin och fackföreningsrörelsen i samarbete och på skilda vägar' in Misgeld et al *Socialdemokratins samhälle*, pp. 59-65. See also Casparsson, Ragnar *Saltsjöbadsavtalet i historisk belysning* (Stockholm: Tiden, 1966)

¹⁶¹ Elvander *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse*, pp. 156, 158, 159-161; Einhorn, Eric S. & Logue, John *Modern Welfare States: Scandinavian Politics and Policy in the Global Age* (Westport: Praeger, 2003), p. 22

¹⁶² Östberg *När vinden vände*, pp. 37-38, 52-53. *Norrlänningar* are people from Sweden's traditionally SAP-sympathetic northern regions.

Meidner the task of examining the creation of wage-earner funds. In 1976, the group put forward a proposal that a percentage of profits made by companies should be redirected to publicly-owned funds controlled by the employees.¹⁶³ LO supported wage-earner funds wholeheartedly, but SAP was reluctant to support the policy; its radicalism might put parts of the electorate off. Although Philip Whyman suggests that electoral surveys show that the wage-earner funds did not affect SAP negatively in the 1976 election, it continued to be a controversial topic within the party for the next decade.¹⁶⁴

SAP's fear of losing voters to the middle nevertheless proved to be correct. Voters living in newly-built upmarket suburbs populated by the new middle classes were targeted by Moderata Samlingspartiet ahead of the 1976 election, while many young people in the countryside and beyond favoured Centerpartiet for its stance on nuclear power.¹⁶⁵ In its attempts to protect its legacy and find a middle way between socialist radicalism and bourgeois contentment, SAP was no longer the party of modernism and the future. Wage-earner funds caused rifts and embarrassment, while the interconnected topics of environmentalism and nuclear power policy came to a boiling point in the mid-1970s. The SAP government oversaw the rapid expansion of commercial nuclear power stations across the country in the 1970s, intended to fuel urban areas and industrial output.¹⁶⁶ Meanwhile, scores of young urban dwellers joined 'the green wave' in relocating to the countryside and attempting to live self-sufficiently there. Environmental campaigning organisations, many very newly founded, challenged SAP for municipal posts in various parts of the country, infringing on the established social-liberal vote.¹⁶⁷ As a new generation of environmental activists took stock of the disastrous ecological impact of progress thus far, SAP — which had brought wealth to Sweden through accelerated industrialisation — saw the future speed into the distance.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶³ Whyman, Philip *Sweden and the Third Way* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 65-66; Sejersted *The Age of Social Democracy*, pp. 372-378

¹⁶⁴ Whyman *Sweden and the Third Way* p. 73

¹⁶⁵ Östberg *När vinden vände*, p. 64; Elvander *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse* p. 322-323

¹⁶⁶ Reactors opened at Oskarshamn nuclear power plant in 1972 and 1974; in Barsebäck 1975 and 1977; in Ringhals 1975 and 1976; and in Forsmark in 1979. See Hirdman, Yvonne *Vi bygger landet: Den svenska arbetarrörelsens historia från Per Göttrik till Olof Palme* (Stockholm: Tiden, 1990), p. 291

¹⁶⁷ Arter, David *Scandinavian Politics Today* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), p. 119. For examples of municipal ecological parties that won municipal seats in 1973, see CyberCity Database 'Summa, alla kommuner 1919-2010 (1970-2010)', Institute of Urban History, University of Stockholm (available at <http://urbanhistory.historia.su.se/cybercity/valresultat/index.htm>; accessed 15 May 2015).

¹⁶⁸ This has been explored by Jenny Andersson in *När framtiden redan hänt: Socialdemokratin och folkhemsnostalgin* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2009).

Meanwhile, the welfare reforms of the 1950s and early 1960s, and what some perceived as the restrictiveness and homogeneity of the *folkhem* state were increasingly challenged by authors, poets, film-makers and comedians.¹⁶⁹ Per Anders Fogelström's very popular 1960-1968 literary Stockholm suite was one example, charting the lives of ordinary people in Stockholm from the 1860s until the 1960s, complicating the hagiographic history of the welfare state.¹⁷⁰ In the 1950s, the poets of Metamorfosgruppen ('the Metamorphosis Group') began publishing works exposing and celebrating the dark side of society. Inspired by Rimbaud, jazz, existentialism, situationism, decadence and drugs, the group lived as they wrote, with their works becoming homages to others who revolted against the disciplined materialism of the welfare state.¹⁷¹ Others threw light on Sweden's history during the Second World War: in 1968, author PO Enqvist published *Legionärerna*, a fictional account of Sweden's deportation of Baltic refugees to the USSR in 1946. Meanwhile, a 1963 film reform and the creation of the Swedish Film Institute fuelled a new wave of filmmaking that cast a critical eye on Swedish society.¹⁷²

Amid this environment of critical reflection and action, young Swedes were increasingly unlikely to follow their parents into the organised labour movement. As a result, SAP's lateral organisations lost strength. SSKF lost nearly 17,000 members during the course of the 1960s, and the organisation's future hung in the balance.¹⁷³ It was not until 1969 that then SSKF leader Lisa Mattson (whose election in 1964 will be further outlined in part II of this chapter) managed to get the SAP congress to confirm the organisation's role in the future. It was much like its role in the past: to serve as a

¹⁶⁹ *Folkhemmet* — the people's home — was the conceptual interpretation of an egalitarian society complete with a strong social security safety net. The phrase was first used by conservative Högerpartiet before being used in a speech by prime minister Per Albin Hansson in 1928. From then on, it has become synonymous with SAP's ideals underpinning the reform era of 1932-1976. Sejersted *The Age of Social Democracy* pp. 159-162

¹⁷⁰ Fogelström (1917-1998) was a journalist and author; the Stockholm suite contains *Mina drömmars stad* (City of My Dreams; 1960), *Barn av sin stad* (Children of Their City; 1962), *Minns du den stad* (Remember the City; 1965), *I en förvandlad stad* (In a Transformed City; 1966) and *Stad i världen* (City in the World; 1968).

¹⁷¹ The members of Metamorfosgruppen included — among others — Paul Andersson (1930-1976), Birgitta Stenberg (1932-2014) and Öyvind Fahlström (1928-1976). See Tenngart, Paul *Romantik i välfärdsstaten: Metamorfosförfattarna och den svenska samtiden* (Lund: Ellerströms, 2010).

¹⁷² The new generation of directors included Bo Widerberg (1930-1997), who gained worldwide acclaim for his films about an aspiring working class author (*Kvarteret Korpen*; 1963), a tragic 19th-century circus artist (*Elvira Madigan*; 1967) and the 1931 massacre in Ådalen caused by soldiers shooting at unarmed strikers in a demonstration (*Ådalen 31*; 1969). Jan Troell (1931-) gained fame as the director of working class drama *Här har du ditt liv* (1966) and the journey of Swedish emigrants to the US in the 19th century in *Utvandrarna* (1971) based on Vilhelm Moberg's novel of that name. See, e.g. Blomkvist, Mårten *Höggradigt jävla excentrisk: En biografi över Bo Widerberg* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 2011); Mälarstedt, Kurt *Regi, foto, klippning: Jan Troell* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 2011).

¹⁷³ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamhetsberättelse 1995-1996*, p. 468

link between the party and the female electorate, and to provide political schooling to its members.¹⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the party obviously still felt SSKF was redundant, and made plans to dismantle it. In early 1970, SAP's Allan Arvidsson and John Olof Persson asked Annie Marie Sundbom (born 1932) — a social worker and SSU veteran — to replace SSKF's secretary general, Ingrid Segerström. Sundbom was very surprised: "I couldn't understand why they wanted me," she said in 2011. Sundbom had never been an SSKF member and was — like so many other SSU alumni — of the opinion that the organisation was old-fashioned and not for her. But as it turned out, Arvidsson and Persson wanted her to dismantle the organisation. "I accepted when they promised that I could return to the workers' council if I didn't enjoy it."¹⁷⁵

Nevertheless, instead of sounding the death knell, Sundbom's arrival at SSKF's office proved fortuitous. She realised that local SSKF clubs were often the only SAP structures left standing in many small towns across Sweden that were struggling in the wake of depopulation. The organisation should not close down: it needed investment and expansion to keep these members active. Losing SSKF clubs meant SAP would lose its foothold outside the main city regions. Arguing that the clubs needed to be strengthened organisationally and politically, Sundbom organised meetings with SAP's treasurer on her own as she found SSKF-leader Mattson too cautious in her approach. Sundbom also joined the SSKF team that presented the radical family policy programme *Familjen i framtiden* ('the family of the future') at the 1972 SSKF congress. It sparked debates about paid parental leave (*föräldraförsäkringen*) and argued for the reduction of the working day from eight to six hours as it would help create a better work-life balance for both men and women.¹⁷⁶

Sundbom's experiences illustrate how the working environment for women within SAP changed in the 1970s. The numbers of women in the party dropped slightly, but those who joined, stayed and engaged in high-level party politics were afforded visibility and space that their predecessors — Lindström and Thorsson included — could only dream of. Birgitta Dahl, Anna-Greta Leijon and SAP-LO veteran Gertrud

¹⁷⁴ Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap*, p. 153

¹⁷⁵ Author's interview with Annie Marie Sundbom (6 September 2011).

¹⁷⁶ Author's interview with Annie Marie Sundbom (6 September 2011); Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1972* (Borås: Sjuhäradsbygdens Tryckeri, 1972), p. 59; Ohlander, Ann-Sofie 'Det osynliga barnet? Kampen om den socialdemokratiska familjepolitiken' in Misgeld et al *Socialdemokratins samhälle*, pp. 188-190

Sigurdson (1923-2015) all attribute this change to the ascent of Palme in 1968.¹⁷⁷

Daring to go against the older guard, Palme supported the advancement of women within the party, and was keen to promote some of them to higher office. The origins of his unusual openness for working with and alongside women are not clear, but it would appear that his background holds part of the key. Palme's widowed mother — Elisabeth von Knieriem — was remarkably well-educated and a political activist in her own right, albeit within liberal and conservative structures.¹⁷⁸ Palme was also deeply influenced by his wife, child psychologist Lisbet Palme who, in turn, was influenced by child psychiatrist Gustav Jonsson's ideas about social inheritance.¹⁷⁹

Palme's support for SAP women was nevertheless conditional. He was a political pragmatist, keen to keep up with and stay ahead of the popular mood. Thus, his support for equality campaigning stemmed both from personal convictions and less altruistic electoral calculations. It served Palme well when constitutional reform between the elections of 1968 and 1970 replaced the old two-chamber system with one large and directly elected single-chamber parliament. The reform ended SAP's parliamentary dominance: no longer would it be able to rely on its strength in the first chamber strength to pass laws. As a result, SAP only very narrowly held on to power in 1970 by forming a minority government.¹⁸⁰

In this new political landscape of narrow margins, ideological difference was increasingly important. By discussing equality as an unfinished welfare state project, SAP attempted to portray itself as the leader of continuous radical reform, despite its long, uninterrupted reign. Palme — an impressive orator — saw his chance to take back the initiative by actively working to improve the lives of the female electorate. In 1972, a year before the general election, Palme gave one of his most famous speeches on the subject during the SAP congress. In his speech, Palme stressed that so-called 'women's issues' were important for everyone. It came a decade and a half after Inga Thorsson said the same thing, but this time the message did not fall on deaf ears, and it inspired

¹⁷⁷ Author's interviews with Birgitta Dahl (11 December 2012) and Anna-Greta Leijon (29 January 2013); Näslund, Lena *I en värld av män: en biografi över Gertrud Sigurdson* (Stockholm: Hjalmarson & Högberg, 2000), p. 101

¹⁷⁸ See Östberg, *I takt med tiden*, pp. 18, 36, 43-44; Berggren *Underbara dagar framför oss*, pp. 58-68.

¹⁷⁹ Östberg *I takt med tiden*, p. 192

¹⁸⁰ Elvander *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse* pp. 127, 129; Östberg *När vinden vände*, p. 101; Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap*, p. 294; Statistiska centralbyrån 'Historisk statistik över valåren 1910-2014. Procentuell fördelning av giltiga valsedlar efter parti och typ av val', available at www.scb.se/sv/Hitta-statistik/Statistik-efter-amne/Demokrati/Allmanna-val/Allmanna-val-valresultat/12268/12275/Historisk-valstatistik/32065; accessed 14 May 2015)

many. In her 1991 memoir, Anna-Greta Leijon — who became an MP in the 1973 election — argued that the speech and the congress marked the changing attitude towards women in the party. Palme's stature was important; it was the party chairman who had decided to promote gender equality, which meant that even those who disagreed with him had to follow his lead. Leijon describes how the speech was received in the congress hall, writing that :

The old men on the bench in front of me squirm [in their seats], embarrassed and bored. But the speaker is our party leader and prime minister, and that stops the speech from falling on completely deaf ears.¹⁸¹

The congress also approved of the creation of a commission for gender equality, which was run by under-secretary of state Thage G. Peterson (b. 1933) from Palme's own office. This will be further discussed in part II of this chapter.

The 1972 congress preceded another narrowly won general election in 1973, which in turn heralded an era of legal reform to improve women's rights and status in society. These included the right to daycare for children; a new marital law that made husbands and wives equal before the law and simplified divorce proceedings; a parental insurance law that made parents equal guardians with equal rights to parental leave; and a new abortion law.¹⁸²

Attention turned to the next area of radical reform. At the 1975 SAP congress, the party programme was amended to include SSKF's call for a six-hour working day. Approved by the party, the proposal still met with resistance whenever its implementation was debated. SSKF was now brought into conflict with the trade union movement again: the latter monopolised debates about work and holiday regulation, and favoured the extension of holidays over a shorter working day. SSKF and other supporters of the six-hour day felt that an extra week of holiday was not what women or men needed. A shorter working day was needed to push men and women into successfully achieving a gender neutral work-life balance. The six-hour debate, as it became known, illustrates the reception of gender discussions within the party as late as the mid-1970s. Progress had been made — SAP women had gained more influence and power over the past decade — but the party organisation remained a slow-moving and

¹⁸¹ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 115

¹⁸² Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap*, p. 270

rigid vehicle when it came to addressing demands put forward by women as a group. Female members who discussed potentially divisive issues were again characterised as quarrelsome, especially when they strayed into traditionally male-dominated areas. A familiar pattern also emerged in the party leadership's attempts to silence public discussion. In an attempt to stop the bourgeois parties from benefiting from perceived internal rifts within SAP, the leadership needed six-hour activists to stop campaigning and allow the party to forget about this particular congress resolution.¹⁸³

PART II

ELECTORAL REALITIES

In 1960, SAP dedicated its congress to celebrating the party's recent achievements. These included the implementation of a building programme — *miljonprogrammet* — which replaced slum housing and increased the nation's housing stock by 253,000, and the shortening of the legal working week to 45 hours.¹⁸⁴ However, these successes were not always enough to secure electoral wins. As shown in figure 1:1 overleaf, SAP gained eight new seats in the election to the 232-seat Second Chamber in 1960, but a mere 5,000 votes separated the party from the combined tally of the bourgeois bloc.¹⁸⁵ SAP was awarded 114 seats; the bourgeois parties polled at 47.7 per cent, securing 113 seats combined. The communist party SKP, meanwhile — which SAP continued to refuse to work with although the two parties formed the socialist bloc — won five seats.¹⁸⁶

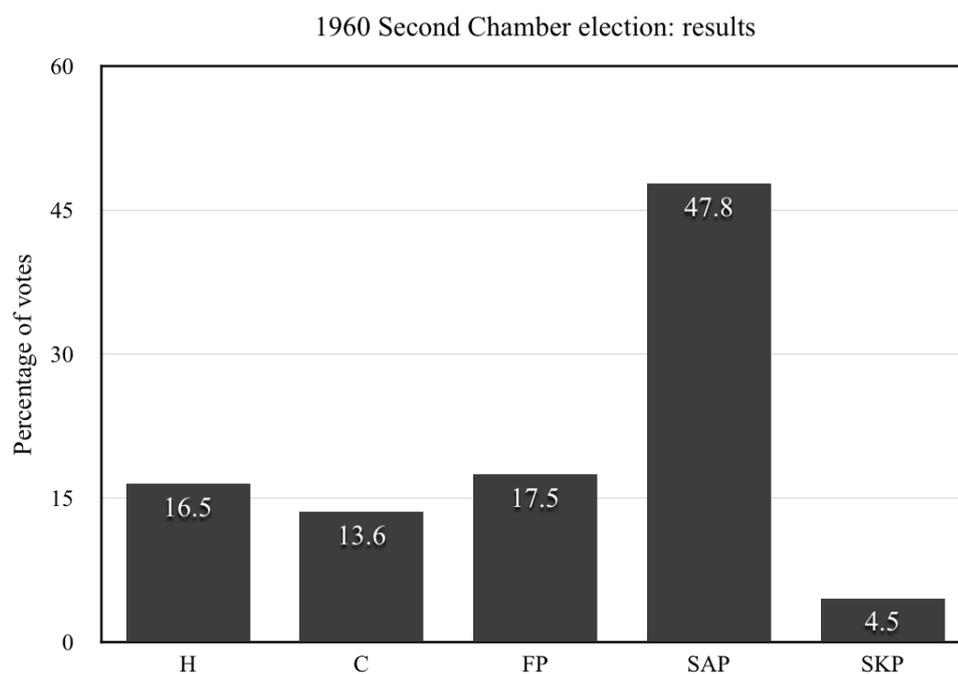
¹⁸³ Näslund *I en värld av män*, p. 137; Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap*, pp. 271, 276, 277

¹⁸⁴ Socialdemokraterna *Kongressprotokoll: Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetarepartis 21:a kongress, 1960* (Stockholm: Tiden-Barnängen, 1961), pp. 7-8

¹⁸⁵ Statistiska centralbyrån *Riksdagsmannavalet åren 1959-1960 — 1* (Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån, 1960), pp. 8, 10

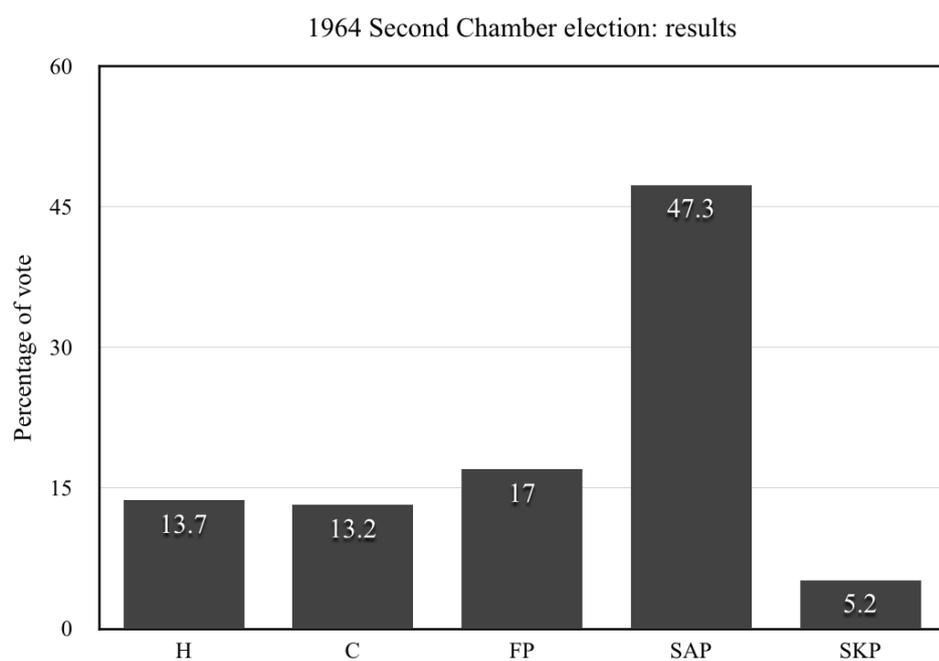
¹⁸⁶ SAP's refusal to collaborate with SKP was based on its fears of the USSR's supposed influence over the party, and its undemocratic tendencies. The refusal was only lifted in 2010, 20 years after the by then renamed Vänsterpartiet renounced communism. See Sejersted, *The Age of Social Democracy* pp. 194-198.

fig. 1:1



In 1964 Second Chamber election — seen in figure 1:2, below — SAP continued to lose ground. The party lost one seat, bringing its total in the second chamber down to 113. Högerpartiet lost seven seats and Centerpartiet one; Folkpartiet gained two and SKP gained three.¹⁸⁷

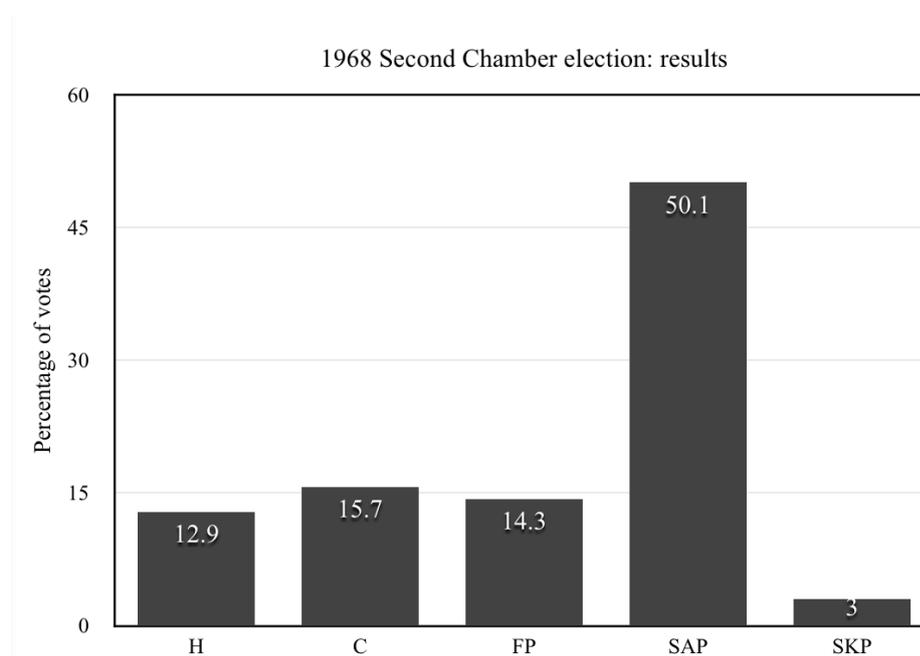
fig. 1:2



¹⁸⁷ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna val: Riksdagsmannavalet åren 1961-1964 — I* (Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån, 1965), p. 8

Towards the end of the 1960s, the loss of voters to both the communists and the liberal sections of the bourgeois bloc was seen as a threat that warranted an extra SAP congress ahead of the 1968 election. The result of that election was a convincing SAP victory, after which the party could form its first ever majority government. As figure 1:3 (below) shows, the only bourgeois party to increase its share of the votes in 1968 was Centerpartiet; the others, and the now renamed Vänsterpartiet Kommunisterna (the Communist Left Party, VPK; an attempt by SKP's party leadership to appear independent of the USSR in the wake of the Prague Spring), took a step back.¹⁸⁸

fig. 1:3



Nevertheless, figure 1:4 (overleaf) shows that the success of 1968 proved to be fleeting. Once the two-chamber system had been abolished, the first elections to the single-chamber parliament in 1970 saw SAP struggle to hold on to power. This trend continued throughout the decade, as shown in figures 1:5 and 1:6 (overleaf and page 72). SAP continued to refuse collaboration with VPK, but relied on the latter's numerical strength in parliament to push the socialist bloc up to a 50.1 per cent share of the seats.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ Statistiska centralbyrån *Riksdagsmannavalet 1965-1968: Del 1. Andrakammarevalet 1968, huvudresultat* (Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån, 1969), p. 5

¹⁸⁹ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valet 1970: Del 1. Riksdagsvalet den 20 september 1970* (Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån, 1971), p. 5

fig. 1:4

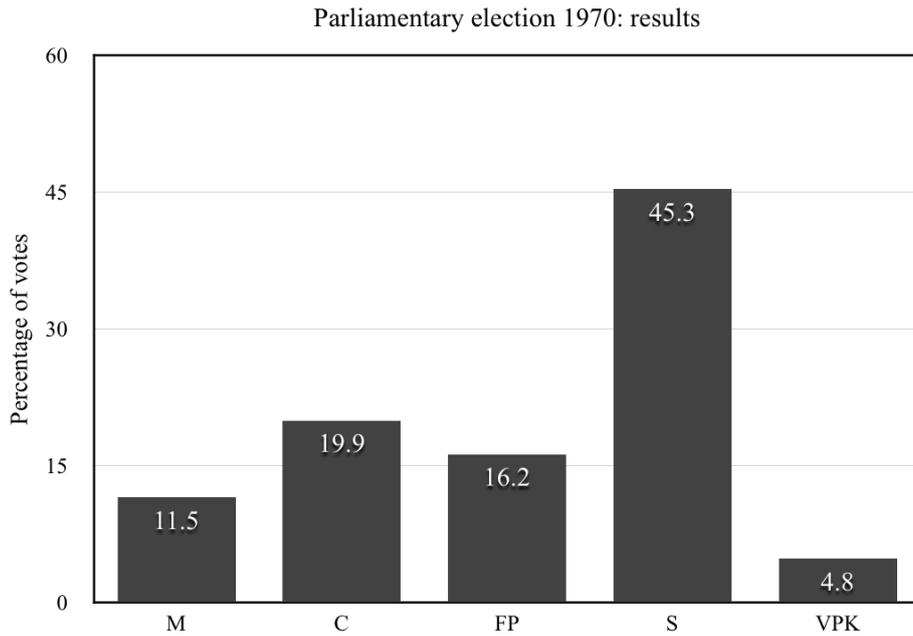
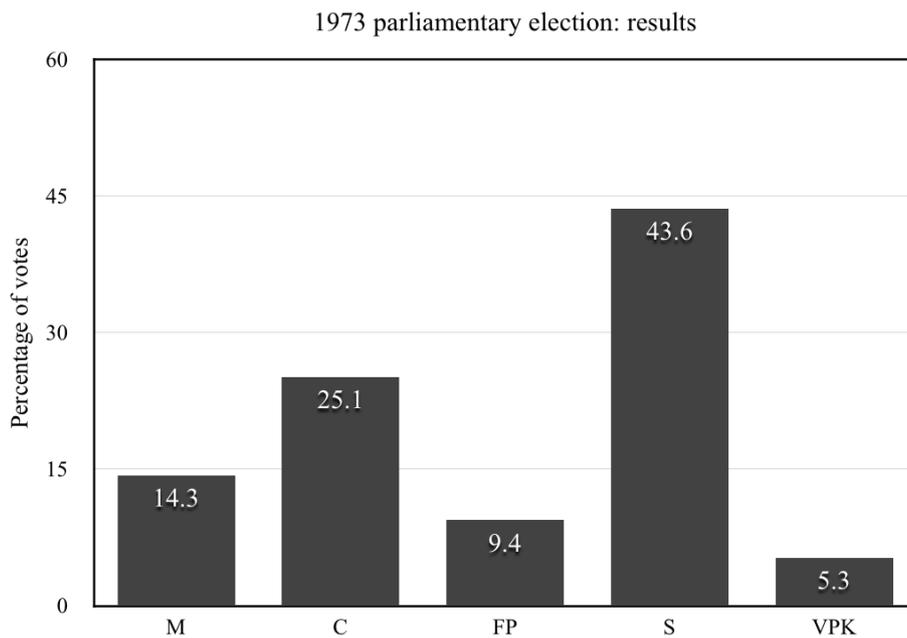


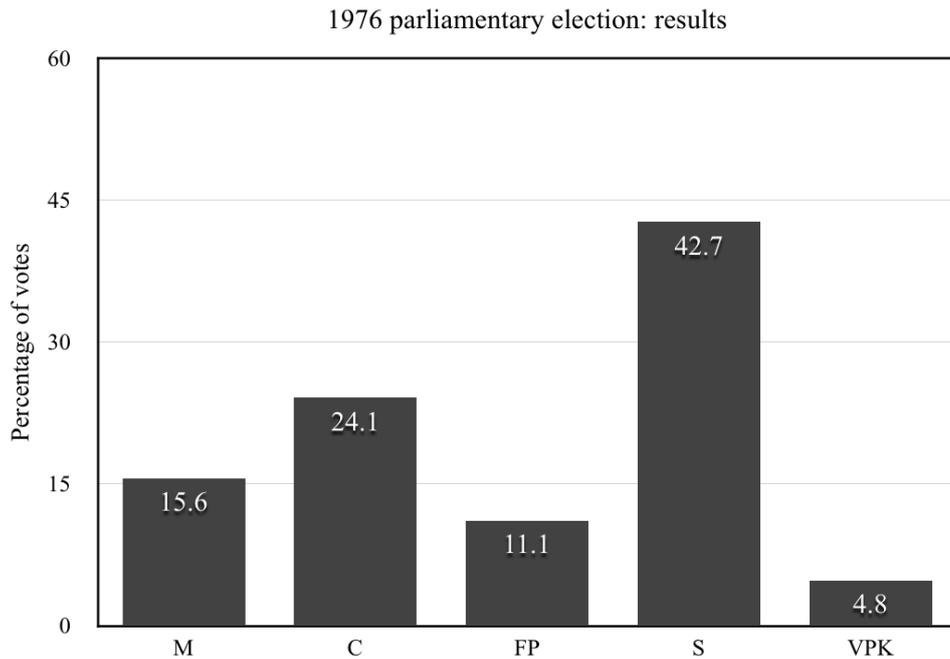
fig. 1:5



SAP's narrowing mandate continued after the election in 1973, which returned a completely hung parliament, split between 175 seats controlled by the bourgeois parties and the 175 controlled by the socialist bloc. SAP continued to reign as a minority government under Olof Palme, thanks to its 156 seats.¹⁹⁰

¹⁹⁰ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1973: Del 1. Riksdagsvalet den 16 september 1973* (Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån, 1974), p. 6

fig. 1:6



Worse was to come: in 1976 (figure 1:6, above), SAP was ousted from government and found itself in opposition for the first time in 44 years. Olof Palme had to relinquish the prime minister's office to Thorbjörn Fälldin. Fälldin's Centerpartiet was not as popular with the voters as it had been three years earlier but still the largest opposition party, and he governed a formal coalition with Folkpartiet and Moderata Samlingspartiet — the recently renamed Högerpartiet. Of these, only Moderata Samlingspartiet had increased its share of the vote in 1976. For the next three years, the bourgeois bloc held 180 parliamentary seats to the socialist bloc's 169.¹⁹¹

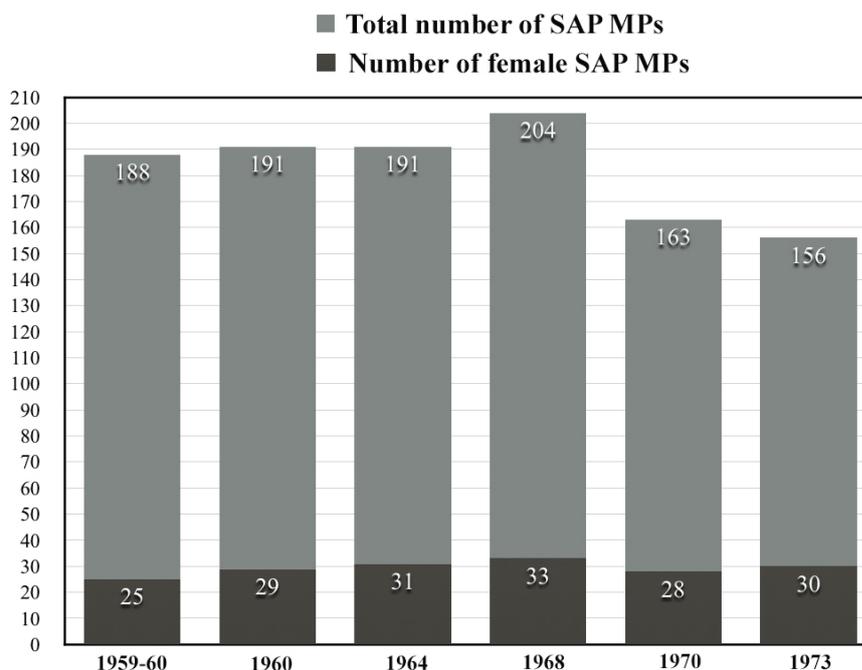
WOMEN MAKE AN IMPACT ON PARLIAMENT

While SAP's parliamentary dominance diminished, the proportion of female MPs rose frustratingly slowly, yet steadily. Figure 1:7 (overleaf) shows the number of SAP MPs

¹⁹¹ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1976: Del 1. Riksdagsvalet den 19 september 1976* (Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån, 1977), p. 6, 15

by gender (in both chambers 1959-1968; and the single chamber parliament in 1970 and 1973).¹⁹²

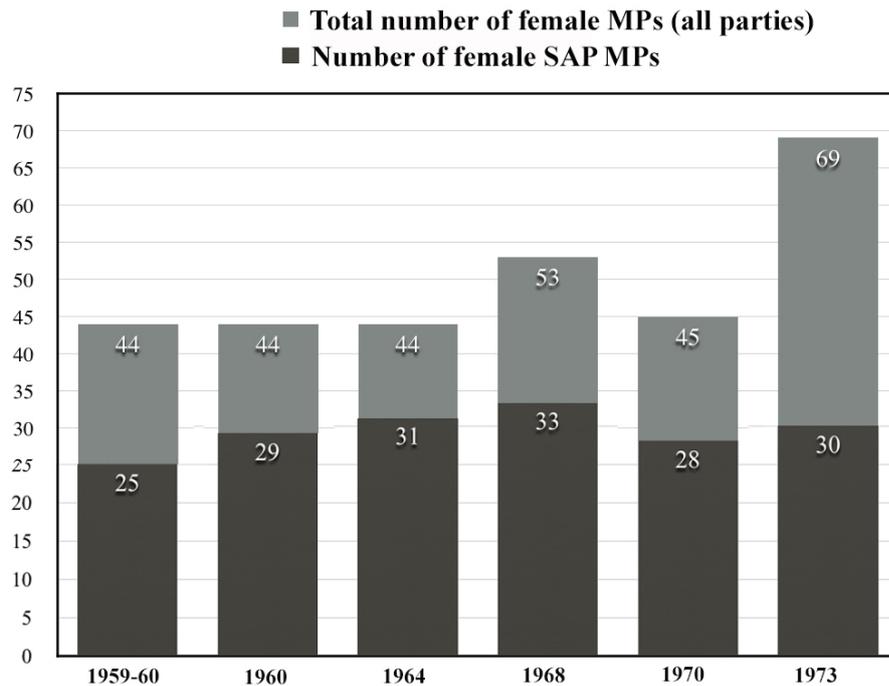
fig. 1:7: SAP's parliamentary gender balance, 1959-1973



Up until the election of 1973, SAP women made up the vast majority of female MPs, whose numbers remained low until the 1973 elections. Throughout the 1960s, the proportion of women in the first chamber had risen from 7.3 per cent to 11.3 per cent, while women's representation in parliament as a whole had risen from 11.5 per cent to 13.8 per cent. The first single-chamber parliament did little to change this: the proportion of women fell by 1 per cent. In 1973, 19.7 per cent of MPs were women. The sudden jump in 1973 — visible in figure 1:8, below — had two causes: greater awareness and mobilisation by women's activists; and an increased awareness by the parties' leaderships that they must open up their ranks to greater numbers of women.

¹⁹² The statistics for figures 7 and 8 are based on the lists of MPs published in parliamentary annuals from 1960 until 1973: *1960 års riksdag: Översikt på offentligt uppdrag utarbetad av Torsten Bjerlöw* (Stockholm: Kungl. Boktryckeriet P.A. Norstedt & Söner, 1960), pp. 9-17, 20-31; *1961 års riksdag: Översikt på offentligt uppdrag utarbetad av Torsten Bjerlöw* (Stockholm: Kungl. Boktryckeriet P.A. Norstedt & Söner, 1962), pp. 20-31; *1965 års riksdag: Översikt på offentligt uppdrag utarbetad av Torsten Bjerlöw* (Stockholm: Kungl. Boktryckeriet P.A. Norstedt & Söner, 1965), pp. 9-17, 20-31; *1969 års riksdag: Översikt på offentligt uppdrag utarbetad av Torsten Bjerlöw* (Stockholm: Kungl. Boktryckeriet P.A. Norstedt & Söner, 1970), pp. 9-17, 20-31; *1971 års riksdag: Översikt på uppdrag av Riksdagens förvaltningsstyrelse utarbetad av Torsten Bjerlöw* (Stockholm: 1972), pp. 9-27; *Riksdagens årsbok 74: Översikt på uppdrag av Riksdagens förvaltningsstyrelse utarbetad av Sture Lindmark* (Stockholm: Nordstedts Tryckeri, 1974), pp. 1-14

fig. 1:8: Female MPs, 1959-1973



The Swedish parliament had been comparatively gender equal from a European perspective even in 1960.¹⁹³ Nevertheless, the graphs above show that even during years when SAP increased its share of parliamentary seats — such as in 1968 — there was no impetus to translate this into more seats for women. Still, the 1968 election marks a significant breakthrough for SAP women, as this was the moment the younger generation arrived on the national scene. Several of them, including Lena Hjelm-Wallén and Birgitta Dahl, entered parliament for the first time. In the years leading up to the 1968 election, the number of female cabinet ministers had doubled. Upon Lindström’s resignation in 1966, she had been replaced by the 38-year-old Camilla Odhnoff. Odhnoff inherited Lindström’s portfolio of family, youth and immigration policy issues. Meanwhile, Alva Myrdal — by now a 64-year-old SAP veteran and international political celebrity — became Sweden’s first minister of disarmament.

The working environment for SAP women changed as Palme took over from Erlander as party chairman and prime minister in 1968. Within the party and its parliamentary group, women’s activists had been paving the way for equality reform. In

¹⁹³ Female MPs held 6 per cent of the seats in Denmark; 2 per cent in France; 9 per cent in both Germany and the Netherlands, and 4 per cent in the UK. 17 per cent of Finnish MPs were women, and Finland remained ahead of Sweden on this issue for the next few decades. See Stockemer, Daniel ‘Women’s Representation in Europe — A Comparison Between National Parliaments and the European Parliament’ *Comparative European Politics*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (December, 2008), p. 466

1967, the SAP congress had appointed Alva Myrdal to head an equality commission. At the next congress, in 1968, Myrdal presented her work thus far: inspired by young people's protests in Sweden and abroad, Myrdal exposed wage differences. At the time, 20 per cent of men but 70 per cent of women earned less than SEK 20,000.¹⁹⁴ She was less straightforward in her assessment of joint taxation, which had a severe and punishing effect on two-income households.¹⁹⁵ Myrdal's report stated that individual taxation *could be* desirable for younger women who ought to be able to support themselves thanks to their access to education. However, the report stressed that the older generation of women needed to be protected against the adverse effects of such a change.¹⁹⁶ Staking out a middle way between radicals and old-school members who worried that gender reforms would threaten the concept of family, Myrdal's commission continued to investigate methods for how to infuse practical politics with a radical mission to ensure equality between the genders. It was pioneering work, and well-received within the labour movement as a whole.¹⁹⁷ But Myrdal was coming to end of her career in national politics. Having reached retirement age, she was not reappointed to a cabinet post after Palme's 1973 reshuffle saw her disarmament portfolio swallowed up by a bigger ministry.

The next gender equality commission — set up by the 1972 SAP congress — proved to have greater longevity and far-reaching impact. Its chair, Thage G. Peterson, appointed newly elected MP Anna-Greta Leijon to head the commission's office. Gertrud Sigurdson — an MP since 1968 — also became a member. Peterson likened their task to that of a guerrilla, working from the prime minister's office to monitor and impose gender equality from above.¹⁹⁸ Leijon and Sigurdson turned themselves into a two-woman team, always sitting next to each other during meetings, lunches and more informal gatherings, and later though their work in the cabinet and SAP's NEC. With similarly short fuses, they earned the nicknames 'little cactus' and 'large cactus'.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁴ Socialdemokraterna *Protokoll: Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Arbetarepartis 23:e kongress, 1968* (Stockholm: Tiden-Barnängen, 1968), pp. 188-207; Hirdman *Vi bygger landet*, p. 313. SEK 20,000 was approximately £1,600 according to Camilla Odhnoff's report on 'The Economic and Educational Gaps' written for the seventh triennial congress of the International Council of Social Democratic Women (ICSOW) in 1969. See Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek (henceforth 'ArAB'): Socialdemokratiska Kvinnoförbundet, 2702/F/6/B/5.

¹⁹⁵ Joint taxation added a married couple's earnings together, with the effect that a couple reached a higher tax bracket together than they would have had if allowed to pay tax separately.

¹⁹⁶ Socialdemokraterna *Protokoll 1968*, pp. 196-199

¹⁹⁷ Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap* p. 268; Hirdman *Vi bygger landet* pp. 313-316; Östberg *När vinden vände* p. 13

¹⁹⁸ Näslund *I en värld av män* p. 227; Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap* p. 270

¹⁹⁹ Näslund *I en värld av män* p. 228

The work of the commission, Leijon later wrote, included:

coming up with ideas, instigating pioneering projects and getting others to open their minds to equality within their various areas of responsibility.²⁰⁰

As part of this, the commission set up a trial project to train 2,000 women in male-dominated professions between 1973 and 1976. It also made employers responsible for creating the conditions for gender equal workplace before necessarily having employees of both genders; an attempt to stop the discrimination of women (or men) on account of a certain facilities not being suitable for them.²⁰¹ They also established

how difficult it is to be a pioneer, and how important a community of like-minded people is for women who are looking to break through the barrier to the male-dominated world.²⁰²

The commission's work sparked media and public interest, and while commission members were sometimes ill-treated by opponents, Palme's staunch support was a source of strength. Palme's engagement made an impression even on those who were sceptical towards equality campaigning.²⁰³

However, not all methods were as public. In 1972, Anna-Greta Leijon benefited from a secret women's lobby within her workers' council in Järfälla, which allowed Leijon to be selected as the workers' council's congress representative ahead of its chairman. The latter, she wrote,

accepts defeat like a man. It's a women's coup. Of course, but no less honourable than the methods ordinarily used by large workers' councils to ensure the selection of their preferred candidates to congress. Sure, some think that we are a rowdy girl mafia, but we are just as dedicated to the party as old foundry workers.²⁰⁴

Elsewhere, local SSKF organisations began keeping records of potential female candidates to municipal and party positions, should an opportunity to put their names forward ever arise.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁰ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* pp. 115-117

²⁰¹ Näslund *I en värld av män* pp. 105-106

²⁰² Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 117

²⁰³ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* pp. 115-117

²⁰⁴ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 109

²⁰⁵ See, e.g., Arbetarrörelsens arkiv i Skåne: 'Malmö Socialdemokratiska Kvinnokrets — Kvinnorepresentation i styrelser och nämnder 1972' F:XVIII Malmö Socialdemokratiska Kvinnokrets — Utredningar 1966-1989.

In this new era of approved gender activism and narrow electoral margins, policies that SSKF had previously struggled to put on the agenda were now carried by the party as a whole. This happened at the expense of SSKF itself. Despite promises from Palme that the party would collaborate with SSKF to further the cause of women, this coincided with Annie Marie Sundbom being appointed to close the organisation down.²⁰⁶ This can be interpreted in two ways: either as an attack on a viable and vital part of the party organisation, thus a symbol of the silencing of women within the party; or as a confident party leadership attempt to remove an old-fashioned structure while revitalising the struggle for gender equality through the party's mixed-gender fora. It was a combination of the two: an attack on a less-than-viable lateral organisation, which was often unfairly blamed for party schisms.

As previously outlined, Annie Marie Sundbom's appointment led to a revitalisation of SSKF rather than its end. Nevertheless, SSKF women's position within the party remained highly contested. This was particularly noticeable amid the politics of the hung parliament elected in 1973. Palme — by now prime minister for five years — chose this as a time to restructure his cabinet. He dismissed Alva Myrdal and Camilla Odhnoff, whom he had inherited from Erlander, and appointed Anna-Greta Leijon as minister of labour affairs. Gertrud Sigurdsen, despite her own protestations, became Sweden's first ever minister of development aid. A family policy specialist, Sigurdsen felt Inga Thorsson was better suited for the portfolio. Palme did not agree. He also appointed Lena Hjelm-Wallén as minister of schools.²⁰⁷

All three of the new female cabinet ministers were perceived as experts: Sigurdsen was a trade unionist stalwart; Leijon and Hjelm-Wallén had university degrees. None of them had risen through SSKF: Sigurdsen got her political education from LO, Leijon and Hjelm-Wallén from Laboremus. Their expertise also had an impact on their political portfolios, allowing them to break through a glass ceiling that to previous generations had looked as though cast in concrete: 'women's issues' were nowhere to be seen. Nevertheless, all three encountered sexism and misogyny of various degree. Anna-Greta Leijon wrote in her memoirs that:

I am 34 years old and I wear — as fashion dictates — short skirts that end above the knee, I have long hair and glasses with thin metal frames. I live alone with my children,

²⁰⁶ Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap* p. 269

²⁰⁷ Näslund *I en värld av män* pp. 109, 111; Regeringskansliet 'Sveriges regeringar under 100 år'

who are seven and nine years old. (...) Some of the older, knowledgeable, formal minister officials are surprised [by her appointment] and do not approve of having someone they regard as a young and inexperienced girl as a boss. Permanent under-secretary Bengt Girell is deeply worried when he leaves his first weekly preparation meeting with the new minister. A few weeks in, he has changed his mind.²⁰⁸

Leijon felt much helped by Palme's support, but the prime minister and party chairman's defence of the women in the party was not unconditional.²⁰⁹ Like Erlander before him, Palme's closest aides — including his eventual successor Ingvar Carlsson — were all men. The vast majority of the politicians Palme appointed to higher office were men. While the women who rose to prominence — Birgitta Dahl among them — credit Palme and Carlsson's ability to collaborate with women, taking them seriously and promoting them where possible as a catalyst of change, others had a very different experience.²¹⁰ They include a group of female SAP MPs who acted as a lobby to sway parliament in their favour, against their party, in discussions about parental rights and responsibilities in 1976. On the topic of parental leave, the parliament was divided between SAP, whose congress had recommended mandated shortening working days and longer parental leave with a specific quota for fathers, and Centerpartiet, which argued that these were decisions that should be decided on an individual basis by each and every family.²¹¹ Nevertheless, as the general election loomed, the SAP government ignored its own congress mandate and sought to pass a parental leave proposition without any reference to the shortening of the working day or the father quota. When SSKF activists realised this, they rallied 18 SAP women (out of a total of 36 female SAP MPs) to sign a parliamentary motion that proposed that the additional eight month of parental leave be set aside for fathers only. The quota would, the motion argued, encourage fathers to take a greater proportion of the total parental leave entitlement themselves. SAP's party commission in charge of deciding which SAP motions would be passed on to parliament twice told the group to refrain from writing the motion. In frustration, the group bypassed the commission altogether, handing the motion straight to parliament. According to Gunnel Karlsson, Palme was furious: the party, he argued,

²⁰⁸ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* pp. 120, 123

²⁰⁹ Author's interview with Anna-Greta Leijon (29 January 2013).

²¹⁰ Author's interviews with Birgitta Dahl (31 August 2011 and 11 December 2012).

²¹¹ Socialdepartementet *SOU: 2005:73 Reformerad föräldraförsäkring — kärlek, omvårdnad, trygghet* (15 September 2005), pp. 116, 108; Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap* pp. 292-293. See also the Fällin government's statement 8 October 1976: Riksdagskansliet 'Riksdagens protokoll 1976/77:7'

looked weak and divided ahead of a difficult election; party discipline had publicly broken down at the worst time possible.²¹² Palme and many others were harsh in their criticism, and the affair showed the widening gap between some SAP women and the party leadership. Palme interpreted the group's actions as a rebellion; Gunnel Karlsson, on the other hand, argues that

From the women's perspective, this was a protest, born out of the desperation that they were not heard and had no influence unless they used disapproved or conspicuous methods.²¹³

The opposition to the motion was far from all-male, however. Gunnel Karlsson and Petra Pauli have argued that there were two kinds of SAP women at this time. The first were SSKF women, who were often considered troublemakers and an unruly, ill-informed lobby who were loyal to women rather than the party, with the result that few women from the organisation had access to higher office. The second were 'party women' who had embarked on careers through mixed-gender SAP organisations and who were considered loyal to the party leadership *by* the party leadership. This latter group included both Anna-Greta Leijon and Birgitta Dahl.²¹⁴ The rebel motion pitted these two groups against each other, as the party leadership selected Dahl — who had not signed it — to represent the party line in the eventual parliamentary debate against Gördis Hörnlund, who had been chosen to represent the rebel motion. Hörnlund had been an MP since 1960 and was a member of SAP's daycare commission, but was relatively unknown outside parliament.²¹⁵ Selecting Dahl as speaker was a masterstroke: it allowed the leadership to wrestle back the initiative from the 'rebellious' women's lobby. Nevertheless, its actions also sent a message that women who were seen to represent women's interests at the expense of the party could expect harsh treatment. Still, a large group of female SAP members struggled to find an outlet and audience for their opinions within the party.

Dahl was herself a strong activist for women's rights, but one that worked within established mixed-gender party environments to further the cause. She became a key campaigner ahead of the 1976 election, tasked with spreading awareness of the party's

²¹² Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap* pp. 292-300

²¹³ Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap* pp. 301-302

²¹⁴ Pauli 'Rörelsens ledare', p. 54; Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap* p. 301, 316

²¹⁵ Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap* p. 301; *1961 års riksdag*, pp. 20-31

pledge to extend parental leave to 12 months, five of which could be divided between parents as they saw fit. SAP also promised to increase childcare places by 100,000 and after-school places by 50,000 over the next decade if reelected.²¹⁶ SSKF's SAP congress-endorsed paternal quota was silenced, and throughout the 1970s and 1980s, it was 'party women' who had the greatest success in creating and shaping SAP's policies for gender equality.

PART III

WOMEN DIVIDED: THE HOUSEWIFE DEBATE

The history of SAP, its internal party structure and position in national politics were further complicated by the generational shift that took place in the 1960s and early 1970s. During the last few years of his party chairmanship, Erlander had attempted to combat potential conflicts by capitalising on the vitality and ideals of the party's younger members. He hired a group of university-educated young men to support, shape and sharpen his policies. The group — affectionately nicknamed 'Tage's Boys' — included Olof Palme (1927-1986), Ingvar Carlsson (1934-), Anders Ferm (1938-), Allan Larsson (1938-), Jan O. Karlsson (1939-) and Olle Svenning (1942-), most of whom went on to serve either as prime ministers, ambassadors, or cabinet ministers.²¹⁷ In the 1960s, they were young, idealistic — and male. The 1960s was a decade in which SAP women struggled to be heard and seen.

Outside of the chairman's and prime minister's office, the generational divide proved much more divisive. SSKF was particularly afflicted: its leadership's refusal to listen to the demands of the younger generation in the 1960s led to one of the most aggressive conflicts of the era. The root cause was the heterogenous nature of women's quest for equality, and the conflict stood between an older group of 'housewives' and younger, working women. As Åsa Lundqvist pointed out in her 1999 study, the Swedish labour movement had always favoured a traditional and patriarchal model of male

²¹⁶ Arbetarrörelsens arkiv i Skåne 'Protokoll fört vid Malmö soc. dem. Kvinnokrets möte 26/8 1976' A:1 Malmö Socialdemokratiska Kvinnokrets, mötesprotokoll 1975-1985.

²¹⁷ Berggren *Underbara dagar framför oss*, pp. 359-362

breadwinners and female housewives.²¹⁸ Improving wages for men would allow workers' wives to stay at home, where they would serve the welfare state through unpaid childcare and support their husbands with cooked meals and an orderly home. Sixty years after its founding, many SAP members — including older women, many of whom were born before the Second World War — still favoured this model, and worried that the emphasis on women's right to work overlooked their own contribution to the success of the movement. The younger generation, meanwhile, felt shackled by an infuriatingly outdated arrangement. They organised to push for the labour market reforms that would give them opportunities to become independent, self-sufficient wage-earners. The most important of these reforms were increased funds for council-run childcare centres, and an end to joint taxation laws.

The discussions between the two opposing groups were dangerously divisive, at various points threatening to tear SSKF in two. The issue also sparked a dramatic leadership election in 1967, complicated by the involvement of non-SSFK-affiliated SAP women. This, too, was symptomatic of SSKF's problems in the era: younger women were increasingly unwilling to join single-gender organisations. They saw themselves as equal to men, and wanted to work alongside men to change failing systems from within.²¹⁹ Inga Thorsson — a working mother herself — was convinced that the solution was to give every woman the right to choose whether to work in or away from home. "It is likely that plenty of women would be active in a capacity other than their current one if they really had a choice," Thorsson wrote in *Morgonbris* in 1961, continuing:

Many of those working in the home would be gainfully employed, many of the gainfully employed would change their occupation, and many would choose to work only in their homes. (...) A woman who chooses, out of her free will, to take on the responsibility to care and foster in her home, must be considered a properly valuable citizen by society — and be treated accordingly.²²⁰

²¹⁸ Lundqvist 'Conceptualising Gender in a Swedish Context', p. 586. See also Sejersted *The Age of Social Democracy* pp. 89-90

²¹⁹ Karlsson *Manssamhället till behag?*, p. 112; author's interviews with Birgitta Dahl (31 August 2011), Annie Marie Sundbom (6 September 2011), and Maj Britt Theorin (13 September 2011).

²²⁰ Thorsson 'Hur länge skall vi ha 'kvinnoproblem'?', p. 5, 33

It was a statement that did little to satisfy the younger generation, and the result was that SSKF was cut off from many of the politicians of the future. Birgitta Dahl — who had many friends who were SSKF members — was one of many who never joined it:

I was always against single-sex organisations. I also thought the organisation was weak and *tantigt* [frumpy] — it lacked policies on a range of issues.²²¹

The SSKF leadership was well aware of its failure to attract SAP's younger members, whose experiences of higher education and working life could have helped make SSKF relevant in this new era.²²² Nevertheless, some younger women *did* join SSKF. One of them was Anita Gradin (1933-), who became an SSKF member in the late 1950s as a means to put pressure on SAP municipal leaders who claimed Gradin's young daughter was not eligible for childcare. The reason was that Gradin could afford to stay at home as she had a husband who was employed. Gradin later wrote in her memoirs that:

I was furious. I (...) felt that both of us had an equal right to work. But the old men claimed that only single mothers and poor families were eligible for childcare. A married woman should be content to be supported by her husband. (...) I realised that I had to work through political channels to change it. I had previously not seen the need for a Social Democratic women's organisation, but I now joined the women's club in Gävle and participated in the meetings. The issue was very simple, really: we should all be able to combine gainful employment, family and children. But unless childcare is available, it just cannot work.²²³

Nevertheless, many SSKF women did not share Gradin's outrage, and her involvement in SSKF could strengthen the theory that the organisation was strongest in small towns and communities. That was where traditional organisational methods remained in place, which saw SAP members organised in the lateral organisation most relevant to them. This organisation — whether SSKF, SKSF or SSU — then looked after them, provided them with a political education and a collective from which it could attempt to influence local workers' councils, county and regional structures.²²⁴ SSKF strength in local structures did not, however, stop it from growing increasingly isolated at a national level.

²²¹ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (31 August 2011).

²²² 'De unga talar fritt om...' (uncredited article) *Morgonbris*, No. 7-8 (1963), pp. 4-5, 29-30; Eriksson, Nancy 'Behövs kvinnoklubbar?' *Morgonbris*, No. 5 (1963), pp. 6-7

²²³ Gradin, A. & Jacobsson, R. *Från bruket till Bryssel: Minnen från ett politiskt liv* (Stockholm: Premiss förlag, 2009), p. 34

²²⁴ Elvander *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse* pp. 211-212

The housewife debate reached boiling point when Thorsson announced that she would step down as SSKF chair in 1964. She set a leadership contest in motion in which one side of the argument was pitted against the other, in a competition between Nancy Eriksson (1907-1984) and Lisa Mattson (1918-1997). Younger, radical non-SSKF women were so worried about the potential implications of a win for Eriksson, the housewife faction's candidate, that they armed her opponents with information and strategies to stop her. Birgitta Dahl remembers

a struggle with many unpleasant aspects. A fierce battle in which we published articles and actively helped and supported Nancy Eriksson's opponents within the party.²²⁵

Mattson was the younger generation's candidate, within and outside the organisation. Anita Gradin later wrote:

Those of us who were younger and more radical saw Lisa as our candidate. Inga Thorsson did all she could to pour oil on troubled waters, saying that the two candidates did not represent opposing ideas, but that the organisation needed rejuvenation and that she therefore personally recommended Lisa Mattson, then 46 years old — Nancy Eriksson was 57.²²⁶

Thorsson's support swayed the votes in Mattson's favour at the deciding congress, and Mattson went on to lead SSKF until 1981. But SSKF's internal turmoil throughout the 1960s prevented it from being the independent, forceful voice many remembered from the 1950s nuclear arms debate. Other groups and organisations stood ready to fill the vacuum.

THE '68 GENERATION, THE NEW LEFT AND WOMEN'S LIBERATION

The younger generation of SAP activists was not the only post-war generation group that attempted to make its mark on Swedish politics in this era. The late 1960s and early 1970s saw the so-called '68-generation' and the 'New Left' — a motley crew of post-Stalinist socialists of various revolutionary pedigrees — increasingly shaped debates about equality, solidarity and gender in Sweden. They were part of a wider youth movement across the world, whose political perceptions were shaped by interconnected

²²⁵ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (31 August 2011).

²²⁶ Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, p. 41

historical events, in what M. Kent Jennings has described as ‘youth galvanising’ moments.²²⁷ These included the Vietnam War and the American civil rights movement, and oppression in South Africa and white settler-dominated Rhodesia. They radicalised and bound together members of this generational cohort across borders.

Against a ‘youth galvanising’ background, the events of 1968 — itself the galvanisation of frustration of and anger caused by ‘bourgeois oppression’, fuelled by the Tet Offensive in January and the murders of Martin Luther King in April and Robert Kennedy in June — do not come as a surprise. In Britain, dissent took the shape of house occupations and clashes with police outside the US embassy in London. In France, *les événements* peaked in May as students occupied universities and workers went on mass strikes, and culminated with riots and the dissolution of parliament. In Sweden, 1968 was a year of student revolts: these included the spectacular occupation of the University of Stockholm’s student union, a gathering to which Olof Palme — Erlander’s minister of education at the time — was dispatched to talk some sense into.²²⁸ Failing that, Palme attempted to engage the occupiers in a discussion about the virtues of democracy; as ever, SAP worried about the influence of the parliamentary communist party VPK and the Maoist Kommunistiska Förbundet Marxist-Leninsterna (KFML). The occupation ended peacefully after three days, but was followed later in the summer by protests against Ian Smith’s brutal regime ahead of a Davis Cup tennis match between Sweden and Rhodesia in a sleepy town of Båstad in southern Sweden.²²⁹

The return of French president Charles de Gaulle to the Palais d’Élysée in June, the brutal oppression of the Prague Spring by USSR and Warsaw Pact forces in August, and the massacre of demonstrators in Mexico in October quelled some of the urge to riot. However, the events of 1968 gave political radicalism a new urgency, which in turn infused the gender debate in Sweden. On 8 May 1968, a feminist network called Grupp 8 (‘group 8’) was set up by eight well-educated women fed up with the continuing lack of childcare, which stopped them from being able to practise their professions.²³⁰

²²⁷ Jennings, M. Kent ‘Generation Units and the Student Protest Movement in the United States: an Intra- and Intergenerational Analysis’ *Political Psychology*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (June, 2002), pp. 321-322

²²⁸ See, e.g., Berggren *Underbara dagar framför oss*, pp. 400-404; Östberg, Kjell ‘Sweden and the Long “1968”: Break or Continuity?’ *Scandinavian Journal of History*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (December 2008), pp. 339-352.

²²⁹ Östberg *I takt med tiden*, pp. 362-365, 285. See also the *Scandinavian Journal of History*’s special issue on Scandinavia and 1968: Vol. 33, No. 4. (December 2008).

²³⁰ Schmitz, Eva ‘Den nya kvinnorörelsen under 1970-talet’ University of Gothenburg Library’s historical portals (Love, Power and Sisterhood), available at www.ub.gu.se/kvinn/portaler/systerskap/historik/#uppkomst (accessed 15 May 2015). Original members of Grupp 8 included Barbro Backberger (1932-1999), Birgitta Svanberg (1930-2013), Ulla Thorpe (1925-1998) and Anita Theorell (1941-).

Inspired by the consciousness-raising work of the radical feminists in the Redstockings movement in the USA, Grupp 8 set up women's groups across the country and organised marches calling for free abortions and extended childcare services. Their activism helped push the gender struggle onto front pages, but while Grupp 8 brought new members into the feminist movement, SAP women were — and continue to be — unimpressed by the group's actual contributions to Swedish gender reform. In 2013, Anna-Greta Leijon stated that:

Of course, one mustn't diminish their role, but the long-term work for equality was undertaken by female trade unionists. Trade unionists played a huge role, although [their working methods] were less spectacular [than Grupp 8's].²³¹

Anita Gradin agrees:

With hindsight, it is easy to see why Grupp 8 might be perceived as the power that changed Swedish women's living conditions. They did play an important role as opinion-makers, but it was our everyday political work that changed the laws, and earmarked funds for childcare.²³²

SSKF leader Lisa Mattson, meanwhile, felt Grupp 8 made “unrealistic” demands, though she later conceded that “their gambits” made her own organisation look passive.²³³ Mattson's successor at the helm of SSKF, Maj-Lis Lööv, is decidedly more straightforward in her assessment, arguing that “Grupp 8 *kan slänga sig i väggen* [can take a hike]”.²³⁴ Nevertheless, SAP women remain largely invisible in the public memory of 1970s feminism and reform.

PART IV

POSTWAR INTERNATIONALISM: EXPORTING THE SWEDISH MODEL

Parallel to its many national platforms, SAP has long had an extensive international network, focused on the Socialist International (SI), the League of Nations (LoN) and

²³¹ Author's interview with Anna-Greta Leijon (29 January 2013).

²³² Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel* pp. 34-35

²³³ Mattson, Lisa '17 år som kvinnoförbundets ordförande' in Karlsson *Mansamhället till behag?*, pp. 204-205

²³⁴ Author's interview with Maj-Lis Lööv (13 September 2011).

the United Nations (UN).²³⁵ These were perfect venues for a small, neutral state without 20th century colonial possessions, which attempted to navigate a bipolar postwar world divided between communist and capitalist blocs.²³⁶ Furthermore, international diplomacy offered many Swedes an outlet for their voices: several Swedish politicians, from all parties and social classes, forged careers within the international community in the decades following the First World War.²³⁷

The international community was particularly important for SAP women. As contemporary gender norms blocked their advancement on the national stage throughout the postwar period and well into the 1970s, internationalism provided a stage for women's political and personal ambitions. In the 1950s, a small, informal network of internationalist-minded women — all appointed by Erlander's progressive foreign minister Östen Undén — was created, giving its members opportunities to collude behind the scenes to further the cause of women on the international stage. Inga Thorsson and Alva Myrdal were both members, as was Agda Rössel who was appointed Sweden's ambassador to the UN in 1958, becoming the first woman to serve in New York in that capacity.²³⁸

International engagements were sometimes the result of great disappointments. On resigning as SSKF chair in 1964, Thorsson was appointed Sweden's ambassador to Israel. She returned to Stockholm after just two years, desperate to work with what she perceived to be more important issues. Thorsson later told her biographer that she wanted to do something other than “just sending reports back to the foreign office in Stockholm from a small country like Israel”.²³⁹

Ulla Lindström saw an opportunity to use Thorsson's return to lobby Erlander into selecting Thorsson to fill the cabinet seat that Lindström herself was about to vacate.

²³⁵ See Johansson, Alf W. & Norman, Torbjörn ‘Sweden's Security and World Peace: Social Democracy and Foreign Policy’ in Misgeld et al *Creating Social Democracy*, pp. 339-374; Götz, Norbert *Deliberative Diplomacy: The Nordic Approach to Global Governance and Societal Representation at the United Nations* (Dordrecht: Republic of Letters Publishing, 2011); Ingebritsen, Christine *Scandinavia in World Politics* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006); Bergman, Annika ‘Co-Constitution of Domestic and International Welfare Obligations: The Case of Sweden's Social Democratically Inspired Internationalism’ *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 42 (2007), pp. 73-99.

²³⁶ See discussion on Swedish colonialism in the thesis introduction, p.18.

²³⁷ Examples of this are Hjalmar Branting (1860-1925) who was very active in the League of Nations while serving in the Swedish parliament and government in the interwar era; Dag Hammarskjöld (1905-1961), who served as Sweden's deputy foreign minister before being appointed UN Secretary General in 1953; and Alva Myrdal, who worked in various UN capacities from the late 1940s until the early 1960s.

²³⁸ Almgren, Nina ‘Agda Rössel: Ambassadör med rättvisepatos’ in Klingvall, M.-I. & Winai Ström, G. (eds.) *Från Myrdal till Lindh: Svenska diplomatprofiler* (Hedmora: Gidlunds förlag, 2010), pp. 29, 31, 33

²³⁹ Lindskog *Att förändra verkligheten* p. 91

Her mission failed and, disillusioned by her career prospects in Sweden, Thorsson accepted a position as UN commissioner for social development in New York. In a letter sent to Thorsson a week after she moved across the Atlantic, Lindström wrote:

Bearing in mind the political climate within the social democratic movement in Sweden at this time, I understand why you took the opportunity to accept the UN's offer. You have been given plenty of difficult work and I congratulate you, while also regretting the pig-headedness of the party leadership who did not take advantage of your abilities and political talent. But it is what it is.²⁴⁰

SAP women less famous than Thorsson, Lindström and Myrdal also struggled. For women like Anna Rudling — politician, journalist and editor of SSKF's *Morgonbris* 1950-1974 — internationalist engagement was the sole opportunity to exert political influence. A member of a generation of SAP women who was unlikely to be awarded high-ranking party or government positions, Rudling was one of many whose ambitions were not rewarded at home. Following Thorsson into Europe, however, Rudling was elected chair of SI's women's organisation — the International Council of Social Democratic Women (ICSDW; today Socialist International Women, SIW) — in 1966 and 1969.²⁴¹ Rudling's work and influence allowed SSKF a clear and influential voice in ICSDW debates, and — as will be shown elsewhere in this thesis — Swedish SAP women would continue to play important roles within SI and ICSDW/SIW over the next few decades.

International work did not exclusively take place abroad. At home, Thorsson had instigated an era of hands-on internationalism that trickled down to SSKF's grassroots. In 1963, representatives from SSKF, LO's women's council and Kooperativa Kvinnogillet (the co-operative women's guild) signed an agreement with the Israel Association for International Cooperation and the city of Haifa, undertaking the funding of a centre to offer an education in political skills to women from developing countries. The aim was for the students to then return home to implement European models of change there.²⁴² The centre became known as the Mount Carmel International Training Centre for Community Development, or simply 'Haifa' in SSKF shorthand. SSKF,

²⁴⁰ Lindskog *Att förändra verkligheten* p. 93

²⁴¹ Socialdemokratiska Arbetarepartiet *Verksamheten 1970* (Borås: Sjuhäradsbygdens tryckeri, 1972), pp. 53-56

²⁴² ArAB: Socialdemokratiska Kvinnoförbundet 2702/F/6/F/2 'Agreement signed in Stockholm and Haifa in March 1963'; Socialdemokratiska Kvinnoförbundet *Berättelse 1963* (Umeå: Tryckeriaktiebolaget City, 1963), pp. 23-24

which had been in discussions about the centre since 1960, took a very active role in providing financial and operational security to Haifa through funds from Swedish government agencies. Meanwhile, fundraising campaigns run by local SSKF clubs across Sweden served a dual purpose: they funded scholarships at the institute, while also infusing local work with an internationalism previously the preserve of the organisation's elite. Haifa continued to be funded by the coalition of women's organisations until 1970.²⁴³

FROM PATERNALISM TO COLLABORATION

Development aid was a cornerstone of Swedish foreign policy in the postwar era, building on the foundations of earlier Christian missionary work.²⁴⁴ The legacy of these missionaries is visible in SSKF's and SAP's attempts to export 'the Swedish Model': Anna Wieslander has shown that Sweden's attitude to countries in need of support was shaped by a feeling of "benevolent superiority", creating a development aid programme characterised by "naivety and optimism".²⁴⁵ The 'othering' of beneficiaries by the benefactors overlook and removed the former's political agency. Sweden was considered the benchmark of success; Africans were offered scholarships at Swedish universities — or in Haifa — so that they could learn how to develop their nations according to a 'Western' blueprint. Wieslander has stated that:

Swedish schools, organisations and churches [all of which were involved in exchanges on the African continent] tend to look at themselves as donors, implying an attitude of superiority. (...) [That] does not seem to have changed with the intensified contact.²⁴⁶

'Helpful paternalism' is, of course, not unique to Swedish aid programmes. However, it is highly visible in SSKF's engagement in Haifa. The organisation's first project outside Europe, it was a very one-sided exchange that cast Swedish women as experts and teachers while women from developing nations became students in need of rescue.

²⁴³ Mattson '17 år som kvinnoförbundets ordförande' p. 213; Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel* p. 71. 'Haifa' still exists today, as the Golda Meir Carmel International Training Centre.

²⁴⁴ Götz, N. & Ekengren, A-M. 'The One Per Cent Country: Sweden's Internalisation of the Aid Norm' in Olesen, T. B., Pharo, H. Ø. & Paaskesen, K. *Saint & Sinners: Official Development Aid & its Dynamics in a Historical & Comparative Perspective* (Oslo: Akademika forlag, 2013), pp. 21-49

²⁴⁵ Wieslander, Anna 'I Often Tell People I Have Been to Africa... Swedish-African Encounters Through the Aid Relationship' in Palmberg, Mai (ed.) *Encounter Images in the Meetings Between Africa and Europe* (Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2001), pp. 234-235, 246

²⁴⁶ Wieslander 'I Often Tell People I Have Been to Africa' pp. 246

Originally, the plan had been to set up the centre in Sweden, but Thorsson felt that it would not have been appropriate: the gap between Sweden and the developing world was far too wide to bridge, she said. The implication was that Sweden was too advanced for activists from developing nations to benefit from seeing it up close.²⁴⁷ Meanwhile, the increased engagement in international communities led to a reorganisation of development aid offerings in the 1960s, with the state taking on greater responsibility for the funding and running of aid programmes. In 1962, Ulla Lindström set up Nämnden för internationellt bistånd (‘the board of international assistance’, NIB), which dealt with these issues. In 1965, NIB became Styrelsen för internationell utveckling (‘the board for international development, SIDA). In 1966, Lindström resigned from her cabinet post having failed to pass a motion to raise Sweden’s development aid contribution to 1 per cent of GDP; the motion finally passed in 1968.²⁴⁸ By the end of the 1960s, amid growing opposition to the destruction of the Vietnam War and as horrific scenes from Biafra and beyond were brought into Swedish living rooms via TV broadcasts, development aid had become highly important state business.

The generational shift in the early 1970s brought younger activists to prominence within the party. In turn, these brought a new kind of internationalism with them. While sharing some of their elders’ ideals for international cooperation, younger SAP women lived in a significantly different world. Their internationalism was moulded in an era of decolonisation, and impacted by the testimonies of the destructiveness of imperialism that it laid bare. These youngsters were particularly incensed by the escalation of violence in Vietnam, and they saw rapid decolonisation across Africa — beginning with the independence of Ghana in 1957 — as inevitable and highly local achievements. Through their activism, they sought to encourage further liberation and believed that support from a neutral and non-aligned nation like Sweden would stop newly independent nations from falling into the spheres of influence of either of the two world superpowers.²⁴⁹

The younger SAP generation was also shaped by events at home. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, voices within Sweden began questioning the treatment and

²⁴⁷ Lindskog *Att förändra verkligheten* pp. 83-84

²⁴⁸ Lindström *Och regeringen satt kvar!* pp. 349-350

²⁴⁹ Author’s interviews with Birgitta Dahl (31 August 2011 and 11 December 2012) and Anna-Greta Leijon (29 January 2013).

‘othering’ of the country’s historic Roma and Sámi minorities. Both groups had precarious positions in Swedish society, and were disproportionately represented among those affected by abortion and sterilisation campaigns (in the case of the Roma, this continued until the mid-1970s).²⁵⁰ In the 1960s, the Swedish Roma began protesting their lack of inclusion in the welfare state. Author and activist Katarina Taikon (1932-1995) was particularly vocal, and

criticised the patronising attitude of the authorities towards the Gypsies and the ways the authorities tried to solve their social problems.²⁵¹

Taikon’s critique fed into a growing awareness of the Swedish state racist nationalism and the structural discrimination within the welfare state.

The arrival in Sweden of political refugees became another internal influence on the postwar SAP generation. Workforce migrants continued to make up the bulk of Swedish immigrants, but in the aftermath of military coups in Greece (1967) and Chile (1973), and as repression and violence spread in Lebanon, Turkey, Iran and Syria, political refugees began seeking shelter in Sweden. Many of these were active socialists, keen to continue their resistance through SAP or communist parties.²⁵² SAP’s leadership was, in turn, keen to infuse its organisation with the knowledge and experiences of these immigrants. In the southern city of Malmö, Greek social democrats formed their own local party group under the wings of Malmö Workers’ Council, while SSKF Malmö made several attempts to organise local immigrant women into its own structure.²⁵³

Younger SAP women brought with them a new way to work within the international community. They had greater access to national political platforms (in the

²⁵⁰ See Lantto, Patrik *Lappväsendet: tillämpningen av svensk samepolitik 1885-1971* (Umeå: Centrum för samisk forskning/Umeå universitet, 2012); Elenius, Lars ‘A Place in the Memory of Nation: Minority Policy towards the Finnish Speakers in Sweden and Norway’ *Acta Borealia*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (2002), pp. 103-123; Selling, Jan *Svensk antiziganism: fördomens kontinuitet och förändringens förutsättningar* (Limhamn: Sekel, 2013); Regeringskansliet/Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet *Den mörka och okända historien: Vitbok om övergrepp och kränkningar av romer under 1900-talet* (DS 2014:8); Runcis, Majja *Steriliseringar i folkhemmet* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 1998); Broberg, G. & Roll-Hansen, N. (eds.) *Eugenics and the Welfare State. Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland* (Ann Arbor: Michigan State University Press, 2005).

²⁵¹ Montesino, Norma ‘The ‘Gypsy Questions’ and the Gypsy expert in Sweden’ *Romani Studies* 5, Vol. 11, No. 1 (2006), p. 6. See also Mohtadi, Lawen *Den dag jag blir fri: en bok om Katarina Taikon* (Stockholm: Natur & Kultur, 2012).

²⁵² Nilsson, Åke *Efterkrigstidens invandring och utvandring* (Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån, demografiska rapporter, 2004:5), p. 24

²⁵³ ‘Års- och revisionsberättelse över Malmö Arbetarekommuns verksamhet 1967’ *SAP Forum Malmö*, No. 2 (February 1968), p. 12; Arbetarrörelsens arkiv i Skåne: ‘Protokoll fört vid klubbfunktionärsträffen torsdagen den 30 oktober 1975 på ABF’ A:1 Malmö Socialdemokratiska Kvinnokrets — Mötesprotokoll 1975-1985

shape of power in their local SAP clubs and in youth/student organisations), and they were less keen to adopt traditional diplomacy methods. Instead, they favoured direct action, even though — or perhaps because — their support for various national liberation fronts was controversial. They cultivated personal relationships with the figureheads of national liberation movements through their work in mixed-gender SAP organisations, and solidarity became a call to action for many. It was, for example, through Uppsala University's Laboremus that Birgitta Dahl established personal contact with many liberation leaders, including the ANC's Oliver Tambo. Occasionally, these connections were made through peace organisations in Vienna or Geneva, or the SI network. More often, they were the result of scholarship funds, which Swedish students used to grant members of liberation movements the right to study at Swedish universities.²⁵⁴ This created small but strong communities of liberation movement activists across university campuses in Sweden, which had a snowballing effect. In 2012, Birgitta Dahl remembered that:

They wanted to come here. That's how it works, when people are in a difficult situation. They try to get to places where they have friends. (...) Places where they can be supported.²⁵⁵

Younger SAP members left it to the holder of each scholarship to decide what to study, rather than dictating the terms. They also made sure that foreign activists were included in university politics, giving them a platform from which to educate other Swedes about their struggles.

Dahl's mindset and experiences illustrate those of other members of her generational cohort and their collective interest in international solidarity. According to her own account, Dahl's interest in these questions was sparked while she was still in school. She organised debates about the US civil rights movement and lectures about the Egyptian coup d'état in 1952:

²⁵⁴ Author's interviews with Birgitta Dahl (31 August 2011 and 11 December 2012). One scholarship went to Billy Modise, who later became the ANC's chief representative in Sweden. See UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Archives (henceforth 'Mayibuye'): 'Billy Modise, first recording' Oral History Collection, transcripts, vol. 8, Modise-Mphele.

²⁵⁵ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (11 December 2012).

I was curious about foreign countries and cultures, and read everything that I could get my hands on. Travel journals, adventure books, history books [cultural journal] *Folket i Bild* and [cooperative movement member magazine] *Vi*.²⁵⁶

Dahl studied history and political science in Uppsala, and focused her attention on Africa. She had to draw up her own study plans: her interests took her into uncharted territory in which her teachers had no expertise. “There was no one to help,” Dahl said in 2012. Once a divorce stopped her from pursuing a PhD, Dahl — needing to support herself and her young daughter — became a course assistant at the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala before joining SIDA and becoming the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation’s first administrative secretary.²⁵⁷

In 1969, Dahl left the foundation to become an MP, but her international engagement continued. In 1970, she was personally invited to visit recently liberated areas of Guinea-Bissau by the leader of the national liberation front — Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC) — Amílcar Cabral:

They had been made aware of my work for liberation movements and invited me. (...) I was the first parliamentarian from a democratic country to visit the liberated areas and the idea was that my presence would help legitimise their rule in those liberated areas.²⁵⁸

Dahl’s interest in Guinea-Bissau continued long after she returned to Sweden after spending three months with liberation troops. She wrote a book about her experiences, and stayed in regular contact with Cabral until his murder in 1973.²⁵⁹

Other SAP women have similar stories. Anna-Greta Leijon spent the summer of 1963 working as a secretary at the ANC’s London office. She had previously spent time with the leaders of the Basque separatist movement in Paris, helping them to smuggle material across the border into Spain. Leijon had made contact with the ANC at the Afro-Scandinavian Conference in Norway in 1962 — the first large gathering of representatives from African liberation movement and Scandinavian student politicians.²⁶⁰ Meanwhile, Annie Marie Sundbom — whose internationalism proved vital to SSKF’s regeneration in the 1970s — started her solidarity engagement thought

²⁵⁶ Author’s interview with Birgitta Dahl (11 December 2012).

²⁵⁷ NAI and the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation were both founded in 1962.

²⁵⁸ Author’s interview with Birgitta Dahl (11 December 2012).

²⁵⁹ Dahl, Birgitta & Andreassen, Knut *Guinea-Bissau: rapport om ett land och en befrielseörelse* (Stockholm: Prisma, 1971); Author’s interview with Birgitta Dahl (11 December 2012).

²⁶⁰ Author’s interview with Anna-Greta Leijon (29 January 2013).

Sveriges Ungdomsorganisationers Landsråd (the national council of Swedish youth organisations, SUL), which she represented at the 1966 World Student Youth conference in Tokyo. Many liberation movements were present in Tokyo, and Sundbom particularly remembers meeting Namibia's SWAPO there for the first time.²⁶¹ Her experiences there illustrate the importance of these personal connections:

We were sceptical of [SWAPO] because they had taken up arms, but we brought them [to Sweden]. Three or four years ago [in 2009/2010] I went to Namibia for the [SWAPO] congress. Ben Amathila introduced me as 'Annie Marie, the person who brought us to Sweden in 1966, opening the world to us. Before then, we only had China and Russia'. To get that sort of acknowledgement moved me. It shows that we did something.²⁶²

SSKF struggled to keep up with the mood in this new era. Sweden's support for Israel had been unquestioned and unquestioning since 1948, but in 1967 the Six-Day War changed politicians' and popular perceptions of conflicts in the Middle East.²⁶³ The focus turned to oppressed people in southern Africa and Vietnam, but SSKF's attention was still on Haifa. It was not until Sundbom was appointed its secretary general that the organisation slowly began aligning its activism with that of the party at large. International activism became a key component of SSKF's remobilisation in the 1970s. Sundbom travelled extensively, making contacts within traditional social democratic networks (she accompanied Anna Rudling and Lisa Mattson on their ICSDW/SIW missions) and with the liberation movements that SAP had chosen to support. In 2012, Sundbom said that the resurgence in cross-border activities was partly because it was an area in which she had personal experience. But, she added,

I think the older members realised that we needed to add something if we wanted to attract new members. It was easy to engage them once we started.²⁶⁴

SSKF built on its new contacts to commence close relationships with women in national liberation movements across the world. They secured funding for projects focusing on or run by women, and spread awareness of women's precarious positions. In 1976,

²⁶¹ Author's interview with Annie Marie Sundbom (10 December 2012). SUL is now LSU: Sveriges ungdomsorganisationer.

²⁶² Author's interview with Annie Marie Sundbom (10 December 2012).

²⁶³ See chapter nine in Holmila, Antero *Reporting the Holocaust in the British, Swedish and Finnish Press, 1945-50* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 149-171

²⁶⁴ Author's interview with Annie Marie Sundbom (10 December 2012).

SSKF arranged a special conference on women in liberation struggles, inviting Cuban, Mozambican, Tanzanian and Vietnamese women to come and share their experiences. Many of these stayed on for the SSKF congress that followed.²⁶⁵ Just before the general election of 1976, Sundbom travelled to Zambia to visit representatives from the ANC, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and SWAPO, all based there. She was joined on the trip by 27 SSKF delegates — one from each SSKF district — and today counts the trip as a highlight of her activism. The delegates came prepared, having participated in seminars before the trips, and were obliged to lecture throughout their districts about their experiences on their return. It was an adventure that strengthened bonds between both visitors and hosts:

It was very important. (...) Awfully important. We held over 500 meetings [on their return], and it permeated [the organisation]. And they had been able to meet women from the national liberation movements — no one had ever asked to see them before.²⁶⁶

Sundbom — who never became an MP or ministry official — also used her positions as a municipal politician 1973-1978 and head of Stockholm's City Council in the early 1980s to officially host visiting national liberation movement delegations.

If there were any liberation movements in Stockholm, that's where I met them — as mayor, which was my international title. And I have since been told that it meant a lot [for movements to be invited to the City Hall]. So you can make a difference without it being so remarkable.²⁶⁷

INTERNATIONAL STAGES AND FOREIGN OFFICE ACTIVISM

By the mid-1970s, women's activism resulted in a growing international awareness of women's subjugation on account of their gender. The international diplomatic community began to take note: in 1975 a UN Conference on Women was held in Mexico City with the explicit aim to put greater pressure on national governments to improve women's political and legal rights across the world.²⁶⁸ Gertrud Sigurdson led the Swedish delegation, travelling to the conference with the equality commission's

²⁶⁵ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1976* (Borås: Sjuhäradsbygdens tryckeri, 1977), pp. 66-67

²⁶⁶ Author's interview with Annie Marie Sundbom (10 December 2012).

²⁶⁷ Author's interview with Annie Marie Sundbom (10 December 2012).

²⁶⁸ UN Global Issues 'Women' <http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/women> (accessed 15 May 2015)

Anna-Greta Leijon and Olof Palme. In 2000, Sigurdson told her biographer that the conference was “fantastic”:

This was the first time ever that governments of the world discussed women’s issues together. It is possible that we didn’t solve any problems, but we put a spotlight on them. And that in itself was important enough.

She added:

The conference agreed to a world action plan, which clearly stated that a condition for equality was that men’s roles changed too. That was one of our demands, and we managed to get approval for it. It was a great success.²⁶⁹

Like the SSKF Zambia delegates, Sigurdson also travelled across Sweden on her return from Mexico to spread awareness of the conference. In Malmö, she told the local SSKF organisation that one of the Swedish delegation’s greatest successes had been a reinterpretation of the terms of childcare. It had been a priority for many participating countries, Sigurdson said, but most of them saw it as an obligation for women rather than a joint family issue. In the end, nine countries supported Sweden’s gender-neutral stance. Sigurdson added that she had relished the unusually calm debates at the conference, which she attributed to the large number of women present.²⁷⁰

Hands-on social democratic-infused solidarity led to a new kind of Swedish foreign policy under Olof Palme. It was — much like Palme’s public endorsement of gender equality — not solely inspired by altruism. SAP worried about the impact of the Vietnam war and the anti-imperialist movement that radicalised sections of the labour movement. Palme’s interpretation of Swedish neutrality was that it had to be active: a small, alliance-free nation like Sweden had to stand up to both the USSR and the USA, and offer support for other small nations caught between the two blocs.²⁷¹ Palme’s stance had great support. Many SAP politicians saw solidarity as a duty: they felt that it was only through luck that they had been born in a democratic country, and that this

²⁶⁹ Näslund *I en värld av män* p. 138

²⁷⁰ Arbetarrörelsens arkiv i Skåne: ‘Protokoll fört vid Malmö soc. dem. kvinnokrets möte i Moriska paviljongen den 24 nov. 1975’ A:1 Malmö Socialdemokratiska Kvinnokrets, mötesprotokoll 1975-1985.

²⁷¹ See Lödén, Hans ‘*För säkerhets skull: ideologi och säkerhet i svensk aktiv utrikespolitik 1950-1975*’ (Stockholm: Santérus, 2001), pp. 373–379; Bjereld, U., Johansson, A. W., & Molin, K. *Sveriges säkerhet och världens fred: Svensk utrikespolitik under kalla kriget* (Stockholm: Santérus, 2008); Östberg *I takt med tiden* pp. 258, 362-365; Makko, Aryo ‘Multilateralism and the Shaping of an ‘Active Foreign Policy’: Sweden during the preparatory phase of the CSCE’ *Scandinavian Journal of History*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (September 2010), pp. 310–329; Sejersted *The Age of Social Democracy* pp. 189-194.

gave them certain obligations. In an interview with the BBC in February 1976, Gertrud Sigurdsen — at the time the minister of development aid — said that:

We are a rich nation, but my government works for fairness and equality at home. That means that we have to do the same internationally too.²⁷²

One way in which Swedish government contributed was the instigation of a direct financial aid programme to benefit selected liberation movements in southern Africa in the early 1970s. This tax-payer funded contribution continued until the countries had been liberated; in the case of the ANC until 1994.²⁷³ Meanwhile, Guinea-Bissau won its independence in 1974, followed by Mozambique and Angola in 1975. When the Vietnam War finally ended in 1975, Sweden's attention turned towards the opponents of the military dictatorships in Latin America.

Active neutrality also became key to the Swedish population's perception of itself.²⁷⁴ One indication of this is that Sweden's foreign policy changed remarkably little after the ousting of the SAP government in 1976. Support for liberation movements continued, although the emphasis was on SIDA rather than official visits and exchanges. This was also thanks to the personal convictions of the bourgeois foreign ministers, Centerpartiet's Karin Söder, who served 1976-1978 and her successors, Folkpartiet's Hans Blix (1978-1979) and Ola Ullsten (1979-1982). Though divided on issues of economic, social and gender liberation, there was a remarkable consensus on issues of solidarity among Sweden's parliamentary parties. Only Moderata Samlingspartiet opposed the direct aid programme benefiting liberation movements.²⁷⁵

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown how SAP women were affected by generational and political changes – at home and abroad – in the 1960s and 1970s. It confirms that SSKF women were marginalised by the party at large, who treated SSKF-women as a divisive, troublesome women's lobby. This was partly caused by SSKF's very successful anti-

²⁷² Näslund *I en värld av män* p. 141

²⁷³ Sellström, Tor *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Volume II: Solidarity and Assistance 1970-1994* (Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2002), p. 580

²⁷⁴ This has been extensively explored by Mikael af Malmberg in, e.g. *Neutrality and Statebuilding in Sweden* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001) and Nikolas Glover in *National Relations: Public Diplomacy, National Identity and the Swedish Institute, 1945-1970* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2011).

²⁷⁵ Sellström, *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Volume II*, p. 71

nuclear mobilisation in the 1950s: by proving SSKF's ability to change party policy, the organisation's leaders had provoked fury, and became marginalised as a result. SSKF was not considered a feeder school for future office holders throughout this era. Thorsson, Mattson and Rudling were all elected MPs, but never held national political posts despite having ambitions to do so. Meanwhile, as Gunnel Karlsson has argued, the fact that individual women — most notably Ulla Lindström — were appointed to higher office did not mean that women as a group had access to power.²⁷⁶ Indeed, Lindström's futile lobbying for another woman to join the cabinet proves just that.

A lack of access to higher office meant that formal and informal networks proved important. The older generation of SSKF leaders' network was predominantly female, and helpful in giving them access to international stages. The networks of the younger generation of SAP women, however, tended to be mixed-gender. Nevertheless, they benefitted from strategising with women, as the election of Anna-Greta Leijon as congress ombudsman showed. The networks were one of the reasons younger SAP women were promoted in greater numbers to party and government post in the 1970s. But the most important was education. Early SAP-led government reforms made mixed-gender schools the norm and allowed women to access university in greater numbers than ever before, fundamentally changing women's opportunities. Among the older generation of SAP women, who had gone to school before the reforms were pushed through in the 1950s, only a very small minority had been to university, and almost all of them came from bourgeois rather than working-class backgrounds. Higher numbers of well-educated members from working- or lower middle-class backgrounds allowed the younger generation, including its women, to be recruited into party structures, as Petra Pauli has shown.²⁷⁷

Meanwhile, the ascent of Olof Palme and Ingvar Carlsson helped create an atmosphere which in turn enabled women to climb ladders within party and departmental hierarchies.²⁷⁸ But women who aimed to govern still struggled in the same structurally sexist environment that all working women faced: the lack of childcare; an all-too-great household workload; systematically lower wages and a lack of understanding for their needs. Birgitta Dahl has also pointed out that the working

²⁷⁶ Karlsson, *Från broderskap till systerskap* p. 335

²⁷⁷ Pauli 'Rörelsens ledare', p. 175

²⁷⁸ Östberg *När vinden vände* pp. 23, 25, 27-28

environment within the party was not favourable to women: meetings were regularly scheduled in the evening, which meant that women had to find — and pay for — out of hours childcare.²⁷⁹ However, as the number of women within reach of the cabinet, parliament and SAP headquarters rose, their ability to improve their working conditions rose with them, giving more women access to the top. And, as the outrage around the SSKF rebel motion in 1976 proves, women still met fierce resistance when acting as a collective to question norms and structures. The episode reveals the strength of the party's male power in discussions.²⁸⁰

The arrival of the 1968 movement, the establishment of the 'New Left' and Grupp 8 also helped push the gender debate higher up on the political agenda and into the general Swedish consciousness through publicity and demonstrations, and the appointment of more female cabinet ministers was certainly encouraging, but a lot of work remained before SAP gave both men and women the same opportunities automatically. In the meantime, it was SAP's traditionalist organisational structures and the limitations of the Swedish political landscape that made internationalism such a vital outlet for women's ambition and radicalism in the 1960s and 1970s. On the whole, for the older generation of women in the party, internationalism was the only outlet for political ambition. With the support of Erlander's very equality-minded Foreign Minister, Östen Undén, several prominent women — Agda Rössel, Inga Thorsson and Alva Myrdal — became ambassadors at a time when such appointments were still deemed controversial, allowing these highly capable women access to power and the opportunity to influence others, albeit on an international rather than a national stage. The younger generation of women were much more likely to be promoted to national offices than their elders had been, but internationalism continued to be the key to women's success. Birgitta Dahl, for example, is certain that her early international activism has played a vital role in what would become an enormously successful career:

It has been very important, that's clear. And it has been positive in the way that it was partially what made me famous. (...) My work in that area has contributed to and strengthened my position.²⁸¹

Anna-Greta Leijon, whose political career can be attributed to her labour market

²⁷⁹ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (16 September 2014).

²⁸⁰ Karlsson *Från broderskap till systerskap* pp. 301, 337

²⁸¹ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (11 December 2012).

expertise rather than her early internationalist activism, agrees with Dahl:

The international engagement that Olof Palme in particular made sure was very active within SAP has been important for many generations. We knew that the party did actual, real work, and that has been important for many. It's not all about making speeches; you have to follow up [with practical work], whether it's about equality of something else. (...) To me, [Palme] very much represents that combination of fiery ideology and the ability to combine it with real and everyday political work. You have to do both.²⁸²

Annie Marie Sundbom, who never held a cabinet post, nevertheless rose to the position of ambassador — first to the UN and later to Sierra Leone, Gambia and Liberia in 1992-1997 — thanks to her active international engagement. “It was the ideal position for me,” she says. “I couldn't imagine anything better.”²⁸³

Still, one of the most important divisions between the older and the younger generations was their conflicted views on international cooperation. The older generation, brought up in a pre-war world in which colonialism was the norm, saw the poorer parts of the world through paternalistic eyes. The key to success in Africa, it was felt, lay in the countries' abilities to turn themselves around according to a Swedish model. The younger generation were not so sure: they had seen empires wreak havoc in colonies across the world, while calls for national self-determination had resulted in oppression and war. Instead of lectures, they preferred donating funds and platforms to the people they wanted to help; a style of solidarity which suited the ANC and SAP's other international contacts much better than the work of their predecessors. The younger generation's direct exchanges with liberation movements implicitly but very influentially also spread a gender awareness. Annie Marie Sundbom found that African liberation movements were very male-dominated, just like SAP, but even the most macho of liberation fighters did not object to working with SAP women. Importantly, Birgitta Dahl argues that access to higher-ranking SAP and government officials was a great factor in Sweden's popularity among national liberation movements. In Dahl's case, it was being an MP that gave her enough power to make her gender irrelevant in the eyes of her liberation movement contacts.²⁸⁴ She — and many with her — used

²⁸² Author's interview with Anna-Greta Leijon (29 January 2013).

²⁸³ Author's interview with Annie Marie Sundbom (10 December 2012).

²⁸⁴ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (11 December 2012).

internationalism to create profiles for themselves within SAP, and now found that their successful careers were aiding their national liberation partners across the world in their struggles. This set the tone for the next two decades of political activism in Sweden and abroad.

CHAPTER 2

FROM BANNING TO SOWETO: ANC WOMEN'S ACTIVISM 1960-1976

INTRODUCTION

The 1955 march: they often talk about it but what people forget that this was the first time ever that Africans had protested in Pretoria at the Union Buildings, which was the heart of government. And it was very, very important, because, you know, they were led by women.²⁸⁵

At the time that the ANC was banned and forced underground by the apartheid regime in 1960, women within the organisation had a long history of building and staging successful protest movements behind them. As the above quote from the ANC's Frene Ginwala shows, female activists had also been pioneering organisers. Still, they continued to be sidelined by a male-dominated leadership and a political culture in which male views and experiences were seen as normative while women's views represented a special, minority interest. It is the legacy of this that has ensured that women's contributions are still often overlooked when ANC or anti-apartheid histories are written.

This chapter explores ANC women's history from 1960 until 1976, from the Sharpeville massacre to the Soweto uprisings. It assesses how women's activism within the organisation was impacted by the ANC's transformation into a banned underground and exiled resistance movement during this period. It shows that there was a constant tension between the spaces women's activists sought to engage with, and the role they were given within the patriarchal culture of the organisation. Women, on the whole, were seen as caretakers and supporters of the movement by its leadership, rather than experienced political leaders who served a distinct caucus with its own agenda and expertise.

The chapter seeks to answer questions about ANC women's activists' identities. How and why did they become politically active, and how did their activism shape their lives? It will also discuss how women's activism impacted the ANC in this era. What were the roles of women within the organisation, and how did these change over these

²⁸⁵ Author's interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014).

16 years? With a large part of the ANC's operations located in exile in the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, the chapter will also address the role and impact of international engagements on women's activists at home and abroad. It will identify the ideological philosophies with which women grappled during these decades, including second-wave feminism and black power movements. The chapter's emphasis on the importance of international work offers insight into a much neglected area of ANC women's activism. In seeking to find the reason behind women's key role in the ANC's diplomatic mission, it also asks what women gained from cross-border connections, and how they contributed to international discussions and fora. The chapter will show that international work and transnational connections were vital for the survival of the ANC at this time. Transnational activism gave ANC women public platforms that they used to develop their own policies, create their own networks and gain the influence needed to push their priorities up on the ANC's agenda.

The source material used here is an amalgamation of auto/biographical writings by and about prominent women's activists and ANC files deposited at the UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Archives and the Liberation Movement Archives at the University of Fort Hare. The biographies — including Elinor Sisulu's biography of Albertina Sisulu, and the memoirs of Ellen Kuzwayo and Mamphela Ramphele — are invaluable as archival sources explaining the thoughts and experiences of women in this era remain scarce.²⁸⁶ Hardly any archival material pre-dates the decision of the Morogoro conference in 1969 (discussed in part III) to give the ANC Women's Section formal status, hence the reliance on first-hand accounts. The aforementioned biographical writings have been supplemented by recordings from Hilda Bernstein's oral history collection deposited at UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Archives, with a particular emphasis on the interviews with Frene Ginwala and Ruth Mompati.²⁸⁷ The chapter also draws on an interview with Frene Ginwala in October 2014, intended to fill the gaps left by Bernstein's recordings.

The chapter comprises four main sections. Part I gives a background account into the history of apartheid, the ANC, and women's political activism in South Africa.

²⁸⁶ Sisulu *Walter and Albertina Sisulu*; Kuzwayo *Call Me Woman*; Ramphele *Across Boundaries*. See also Baard, Frances & Schreiner, *Barbie My Spirit is Not Banned* (Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1986); Ntantala, Phyllis *Life's Mosaic: the Autobiography of Phyllis Ntantala* (Johannesburg: Jacana, 2009).

²⁸⁷ Mayibuye: Oral History Collection, interviews on the experience of exile: transcripts.

Part II charts the development of underground politics within South Africa from 1960 until 1976, and the generational schism that pitted daughters against mothers in the early 1970s. Part III features a discussion about the ANC in exile, including the creation of an exiled women's movement and the importance of diplomacy and internationalism for the survival of the ANC as a whole. Finally, Part IV addresses the gendering of activists at home and abroad, and asks why women's quest for gender liberation was perceived as a threat to the anti-apartheid movement.

PART I

THE ORIGINS OF APARTHEID

In 1948, an Afrikaner nationalist coalition made up of D.F. Malan's Reunited National Party (Herenigde Nasionale Party, HNP) and the smaller Nicolaas Havenga-led Afrikaner Party [AP] came to power in South Africa, marking the beginning of 46 years of apartheid rule.²⁸⁸ Segregation of subjects on the basis of their ethnicity had been a part of South African society long before the election: The Natives Urban Areas Act, for example, came into force in 1923, declaring that black subjects were only allowed to live in cities as "temporary sojourners" and only when employed.²⁸⁹ The nationalist coalition quickly ramped up the legislative pace, turning segregationist practices into law through a profound and systematic reform programme. The new government introduced a vast number of laws largely aimed at controlling the freedom and movement of black people, and promoted white Afrikaner power at the expense of everyone else, despite the latter being a small minority (only 20 per cent of South Africa's population was white, of which about 60 per cent were of Afrikaner heritage).²⁹⁰ H.F. Verwoerd, who became prime minister in 1958, was appointed minister of native affairs in 1950 and oversaw the introduction of the Population Registration Act that imposed a 'racial' classification on South Africans, defining them as white, black, coloured or Asian. Verwoerd also oversaw the Mixed Marriages Act and

²⁸⁸ These parties merged in 1951, forming the National Party, which remained in power until 1994.

²⁸⁹ Lodge *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, p. 11

²⁹⁰ Magubane 'Introduction: the Political Context', pp. 13, 14, 17. See also Bonner, P., Delius, P. & Posel, D. *Apartheid's Genesis, 1935-1962* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1993), p. 29; Mabin, Alan 'Comprehensive Segregation: The Origins of the Group Areas Act and Its Planning Apparatuses' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1992), pp. 405-429

the Amended Immorality Act, which forbade marriage and physical relationships across the 'racial' boundaries previously imposed by the government.²⁹¹ These were followed by the Group Areas Act, which saw whole areas designated for one ethnic group only, forcing the relocation of masses of people and the subsequent destruction of neighbourhoods and livelihoods.

EARLY OPPOSITION TO SEGREGATION AND APARTHEID

Just as segregation had a long predated apartheid, so did anti-segregation opposition. In parliament, this was organised by white liberals in the United Party, which was ousted from power in the 1948 election and reformed in 1959 as the Progressive Party.²⁹² Meanwhile, the ethnically mixed Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) was not deterred by the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 and the subsequent banning and dissolution of the party, which reformed as the South African Communist Party (SACP) underground in 1953. Furthermore, the ANC, which had been founded in 1912 as the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) by mission-educated black men who sought to hold on to the ever decreasing black African share of power, also pressurised apartheid authorities.²⁹³ In the 1950s, the ANC joined forces with other distinct caucus organisers, including SACP, the South African Indian Congress and the Coloured People's Congress, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), the white radical Congress of Democrats and the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW), forming the Congress Alliance.²⁹⁴

A number of formal and informal political movements also attempted to represent South Africa's disenfranchised, who made up the vast majority of the population. Trade union organisations — including Ray Alexander Simons' Food and Canning Workers' Union (FCWU) set up in 1941 — capitalised on demographic and

²⁹¹ The previous Immorality Act, in place since 1927, forbade sexual relations between white and black citizens; the act of 1950 saw the ban extended to sexual relations between whites and all non-whites. In 1957 the act was extended to cover all 'immoral or indecent acts'.

²⁹² The Progressive Party was formed by a breakaway faction of former United Party members, including 11 UP MPs – Helen Suzman (1917-2009) among them – after the UP congress of 1959. Suzman remained the sole PP MP from 1961-1974, and would remain an MP until 1989. The PP was a precursor to today's Democratic Alliance (DA).

²⁹³ Bonner, Philip 'First Keynote Address: Fragmentation and Cohesion in the ANC — the First 70 Years' in Lissoni, A., Soske, J., Erlank N., Nieftagodien, N., and Badsha, O. (eds) *One Hundred Years of the ANC: Debating Liberation Histories Today* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2012), pp. 2-6

²⁹⁴ Karis, T. & Gerhart, G. *From Protest to Challenge Volume 3: Challenge and Violence 1953-1964* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1977), pp. 3-82

economic changes during the Second World War.²⁹⁵ Migration from countryside to city put pressures on infrastructure and services just as the apartheid authorities sought to make it near impossible for black people to stay in urban areas on their own terms. This conflict sparked a wave of active resistance organised by radical squatter movements in townships.²⁹⁶ The grassroots community activism in turn had a radical impact on the ANC. Inspired by successful bus boycotts in the Johannesburg township of Alexandra in the mid-1940s, a younger generation of ANC activists founded the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) in 1944.²⁹⁷ With Nelson Mandela (1918-2013), Walter Sisulu (1912-2003) and Oliver Tambo (1917-1993) at the helm, ANCYL refreshed ANC ideology by criticising the organisation's conservatism and calling for the mass-mobilisation of the urban working class.²⁹⁸ As the ANCYL generation rose through the ranks of the ANC in the late 1940s and early 1950s, their vision became dominant within the organisation. They also played a very important role in the 1952 Defiance Campaign. A Congress Alliance cause, the Defiance Campaign called on sympathisers to break apartheid laws and offer themselves up for arrest. Though it was not successful in taking down the apartheid system, the campaign publicised the Congress Alliance's aims and methods, and created a rush for ANC membership. The number of members quickly rose from 5,000 in 1949 to about 100,000 in the space of a few years, before stabilising around 30,000. This allowed the ANC an opportunity to emerge as a leader of a potential mass movement against apartheid.²⁹⁹

WOMEN'S ACTIVISM BEFORE 1960

Despite the rejuvenation in the 1940s and 1950s, the ANC remained a socially conservative organisation within which women struggled to be heard. It had a long male-dominated and patriarchal history: full membership had only been granted to women in 1943, 31 years after the ANC had been founded. However, a lack of full

²⁹⁵ Magubane 'Introduction: the Political Context', p. 10

²⁹⁶ For more on the history and impact of the squatter movement, see Bonner 'The Politics of Black Squatter Movements on the Rand, 1944-1952', pp. 89-115; Stadler, A. W. 'Birds in the Cornfield: Squatter Movements in Johannesburg, 1944-1947' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Oct. 1979), pp. 93-123. A depiction of life in these camps is available in Qotole, Msokoli 'Early African Urbanisation in Cape Town: Windermere in the 1940s and 1950s' *African Studies*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (2001), pp. 107-117

²⁹⁷ Lodge *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, p. 12; Beinart, William *Twentieth Century South Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 132-133

²⁹⁸ Sisulu *Walter & Albertina Sisulu*, pp. 480, 72

²⁹⁹ Magubane 'Introduction: the Political Context', p. 33

recognition had not stopped women from being active members, as the life of Charlotte Manye Maxeke (ca 1873-1939) shows. In 1901, Manye Maxeke became the first black South African woman to graduate from a university. According to her biographer, Thozama April, she “asserted herself as an intellectual in her own right within the group of educated African men that surrounded her”.³⁰⁰ Highly religious, she was a driving force behind the birth of the Bantu Women’s League (BWL) in 1918, which was recognised as the ANC’s women’s branch in 1931. Towards the end of the 1940s, BWL changed its name and became the ANC Women’s League (ANCWL). Manye Maxeke was a very influential role-model for several generations of women activists following in her footsteps. April goes so far as to argue that she “injected a gendered reading of society” into the politics of the movement in the 1910s and 1920s, “thus shaping public political discourse in the early twentieth century”.³⁰¹

Soweto community organiser Ellen Kuzwayo — who came to the ANC via youth and church organisations — was one of many ANC women of her generation to be directly influenced by Manye Maxeke. She shared Manye Maxeke’s faith, and the two met at the 1937 National Council of African Women (NCAW) conference in Bloemfontein.³⁰² Despite Manye Maxeke’s visibility, female leaders were still rare within the ANC. Kuzwayo later remarked on the conspicuous lack of women within ANCYL while discussing its foundation in her autobiography:

I wish I could explain why there seemed to be no outstanding women in the ranks of the ANC movement at that time. If they were present, for some reason or another I missed them.³⁰³

Women’s invisibility — which Kuzwayo only noted in hindsight — was a result of traditional patriarchal values that perceived them unsuitable for political work.³⁰⁴ Many women were still very active in political life, gaining seniority and leadership

³⁰⁰ April, Thozama ‘Charlotte Maxeke: A Celebrated and Neglected Figure in History’ in Lissoni et al. *One Hundred Years of the ANC*, pp. 102-103, 104

³⁰¹ April ‘Charlotte Maxeke’, pp. 97, 105, 104. The connection between Manye Maxeke’s Methodism and political activism has been explored by James T. Campbell in *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 249-294

³⁰² Kuzwayo *Call Me Woman*, pp. 101-102, 147-150, 160-167

³⁰³ Kuzwayo *Call Me Woman*, p. 139

³⁰⁴ The history of this has been explored by Shula Marks in ‘Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity: Natal and the Politics of Zulu Ethnic Consciousness’ in Vail, Leroy (ed.) *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (London: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 215-240

experience in populist grassroots protests and church organisations.³⁰⁵ Women were also active participants in violent protests, including in East London in 1952.³⁰⁶ Few rose to the top of the organisations that sought to bring together the fragmented, localised political struggles of the era, but women were afforded fame and notoriety when acting together as a collective. Before 1960, the most notable women's protest had been an effective campaign in 1913 against the proposal of extending movement-controlling passes to women. As a result, women were exempt from pass laws until 1956.³⁰⁷

Having been neglected by the franchise-focused ANC, separate mobilisation had proved to be of utmost importance in South African women's political and social resistance to apartheid regulation. It was only by organising on their own that women could make themselves heard and set their own agendas away from the overwhelming influence of the patriarchally-minded men of their generation. In doing so, they gained the strength and confidence to be even bolder. This was exemplified by Albertina Sisulu, who began her political career as a quiet wife before becoming a strident mother-of-the-nation. Reflecting on Sisulu's development, Kuzwayo later wrote:

Those of us who knew Albertina Sisulu in the 1940s never thought that some day we would see and experience the Albertina of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. I knew her then as the smiling and pleasant wife of Walter Sisulu, a kind hostess who served the committee members of the Congress with tea after long and intense meetings. Who would have thought then that in 1983 we would be talking about her as someone who had endured the longest banning order, amounting to 17 years?³⁰⁸

Women's particular subjugation to apartheid legislation was another reason behind separate mobilisation. As men left rural communities to work as migrant labourers in mines and on commercial farms, women struggled to survive on small or non-existent remittances. Enticed to the cities, which seemed to offer greater chances of employment, self-reliance and less social control, women found themselves overworked and underpaid. In some cases, this led to a political radicalisation, which in turn helped set women like Albertina Sisulu and Ellen Kuzwayo off on their political paths. Still,

³⁰⁵ See, e.g., Edwards, Iain 'Cato Manor: Cruel Past, Pivotal Future' *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 21, No. 61 (1994), pp. 417-418, 420-421

³⁰⁶ See, e.g., Mager, A. & Minkley, G. 'Reaping the whirlwind: the East London riots of 1952' in Bonner et al *Apartheid's Genesis*, pp. 229-251

³⁰⁷ See Wells *We Now Demand!*; Walker *Women & Resistance in South Africa*; Ginwala 'Women and the African National Congress 1912-1943', pp. 77-93. The extension of passes to black women was resisted by white authorities that felt black women should be under the control of black men.

³⁰⁸ Kuzwayo *Call Me Woman*, p. 245

women's calls for higher wages, better workplace conditions and free mobility were soon

subsumed and homogenised within a nationalist narrative that emphasised the primacy of the struggle for national liberation — the struggle against white rule.³⁰⁹

Women's specific grievances and experiences were thus easily forgotten and swallowed up in male-dominated spheres. Although it might not have been on purpose, it illuminates gender relations within the ANC: the organisation's male leadership deemed women's interest a minority question, while male interests were synonymous with those of the entire movement.

It was against this background that FEDSAW brought women's demands to the surface in the mid-1950s. Founded in 1954 under the leadership of Albertina Sisulu, Dorothy Nyembe and trade unionists Helen Joseph, Ray Alexander Simons, Lilian Ngoyi, Frances Baard and Sophia Williams-De Bruyn, FEDSAW was an umbrella organisation representing 230,000 women. A member of the Congress Alliance, FEDSAW became a dominant force in women's activism throughout the 1950s.³¹⁰ The Women's Charter, adopted at its inaugurating congress, spelled out FEDSAW's demands for women's rights while a concerted campaign against the extension of passes to women culminated in a 20,000-women strong march on the Union Buildings in Pretoria on 9 August 1956.³¹¹ This was the first time black South Africans had protested at the heart of the government in Pretoria; the participating women were going against the ANC leadership's direct wishes by courting arrests *en masse*.³¹² The march on Pretoria is the subject of one of the very few public memorials to women of the anti-apartheid movement, albeit one criticised for its narrow interpretation and lack of public access.³¹³

³⁰⁹ Hassim *Women's Organizations & Democracy in South Africa*, p. 20

³¹⁰ South African History Online 'Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW)', available at www.sahistory.org.za/topic/federation-south-african-women-fedsaw (accessed 17 June 2015).

³¹¹ These included the end of poverty, the raising of wages, the abolishment of racism and discrimination, and the removal of laws denying African women the right to own, inherit or alienate property. Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-131 'The Women's Charter, Johannesburg, April 17th 1954'

³¹² Author's interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014); Lodge *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, pp. 146, 145

³¹³ This is discussed in the thesis conclusion. See also Miller, Kim 'Selective Silence and the Shaping of Memory in Post- Apartheid Visual Culture: The Case of the Monument to the Women of South Africa' *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 63 No. 2 (2011), pp. 295-317; Marschall, Sabine 'Serving Male Agendas: Two National Women's Monuments in South Africa' *Women's Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 8 (2004), pp. 1009-1033; Coombes, Annie *History After Apartheid: Visual Culture and Public Memory in a Democratic South Africa* (London: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 105-115

Thanks to the groundbreaking activism instigated by FEDSAW, the ANC's organisational culture slowly opened up to women's voices. In 1955 Oliver Tambo, the ANC's Secretary General, provided ANC women with the first of a series of soundbites that they often quoted to justify their visibility and the existence of a women's movement within the ANC. Tambo stated that

the Women's League is not just an auxiliary to the ANC and we know that we cannot win liberation or build a strong movement without the participation of women.³¹⁴

Other indications of the trailblazing effect of women's mobilisation came in the form of the Congress Alliance's Freedom Charter in 1955, which closely resembled the 1954 Women's Charter in content, scope and execution, and committed the movement to the creation of a non-racial, socially-inclusive democracy.³¹⁵ Adopted at the Congress of Kliptown in June 1955, the Freedom Charter in turn acted as the foundation for the new, democratic South African constitution 40 years later.

RADICAL DEFENCE OF THE FAMILY: THE IMPORTANCE OF MOTHERHOOD

The younger generation's radicalism did not meet the approval of all South African women, however, and Kuzwayo and Albertina Sisulu both experienced being shunned as their activities grew in scope and visibility. Nevertheless, some of the rhetoric used by women in this era took very traditional tone, often focusing on maternalism and mothering of their communities. Political scientist Shireen Hassim has called the political resistance against apartheid "the crucible in which women's activism was born", and it is important to bear this in mind when investigating why women rallied as 'mothers' in opposition to the apartheid regime.³¹⁶ Feminists in the global north have been dismissive of the use of socially enforced stereotypes to further women's liberation. Second-wave feminism, which emerged in Europe and North America in the 1960s, saw many women there equate freedom with the removal of the shackles of

³¹⁴ Liberation Movement Archives at the University of Fort Hare (henceforth 'Fort Hare'): ANC Women's Section, Box 39, folder 153 'ANC Women's League Comprehensive Report - for Integration into NEC Report - to ANC National Conference - July 1991'

³¹⁵ African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) 'The Freedom Charter' www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=72 (accessed 17 June 2015)

³¹⁶ Hassim *Women's Organizations & Democracy in South Africa*, p. 11; see also Lodge, Tom 'Reflections on Black Politics in South Africa since 1945' *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (2012), p. 502

family life.³¹⁷ However, many South African women were endowed with strength and authority through motherhood, especially once the apartheid-endorsed labour migration system forced them to become the heads of their families.³¹⁸ Furthermore, being mothers gave them a degree “of social power and emotional satisfaction” as Cherryl Walker argued in 1991, adding that many women did not see a contradiction “between their self-identification as mothers and their involvement in political protest”.³¹⁹ In the long term, defence of radical motherhood became a part of the ANC’s rhetoric and propaganda, as black women were identified as mothers of the revolution and “militant protectors of their communities and activist children”.³²⁰ In the short term, however, the low status of black mothers in the eyes of the authorities meant that they found surprisingly large spaces for their political activities. As Meghan Healy-Clancy has argued,

just as historians have generally dismissed these groups as essentially stabilising and conservative influences, so too did officials of the segregationist state. To white officials, women’s organisations and discourse seemed docile — banal as bathwater, and as soothing to potential radicals.³²¹

That patriarchal ideas about women’s political agency and activities afforded women space to develop their opposition tactics in a patriarchal society was both surprising, and true.

However, identifying a large group of women as ‘mothers’ was not a perfect strategy, excluding as it did women who were unwilling to be, could not be or were not mothers. It also fostered the perception of social conservatism on their behalf, which was difficult to escape (a sign of this is that ANC women are still very much spoken of as the mothers and wives of more famous men).³²² It was also a practice that grated on

³¹⁷ See, e.g., Firestone, Shulamith *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution* (London: Cape, 1971); Rich, Adrienne *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* (London: Virago, 1977); Snitow, Anne ‘Feminism and Motherhood: An American Reading’ *Feminist Review*, No. 40 (spring 1992), pp. 32-51.

³¹⁸ Lodge *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, p. 139

³¹⁹ Walker *Women & Resistance in South Africa*, pp. xxi, xxii

³²⁰ McClintock “No Longer in a Future Heaven”, p. 116. See also Silva, Neluka “‘Gendering’ Terror: Representation of the Female ‘Freedom Fighter in Contemporary Sri Lankan Literature and Cultural Production’ in Boehmer, E. & Morton, S. (eds.) *Terror and the Postcolonial* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2010), pp. 329-344

³²¹ Healy-Clancy ‘Women and the Problem of Family in Early African Nationalist History and Historiography’, pp. 451-452

³²² A recent example of this is *The Guardian*’s review of the transition-era memoir of the former British ambassador to South Africa, in which Albertina Sisulu is only mentioned as ‘Walter Sisulu’s wife’. Jenkins, Simon ‘The End of Apartheid by Robin Renwick review – why Thatcher got it right on South Africa’ *The Guardian* 4 March 2015

several ANC-affiliated women. Among them was Ruth First, a staunch and influential CPSA/SACP and ANC member who worked as a journalist until banned from doing so in the early 1960s. First was one half of one of the apartheid resistance's most well-known couples alongside her husband, Joe Slovo, an important SACP/ANC strategist in his own right.³²³ Throughout her career and life, First struggled to escape from the vision of her as a wife and woman, believing that these stopped her from wielding greater influence. In 1980, First gave an eulogy at the funeral of Lilian Ngoyi, a well-known and visible ANC leader from the pre-banning era. Ngoyi was a role-model and inspiration to many in her generation and beyond, and First pointed out that

It is important to recognise that Lilian was an independent woman, and a political woman in her own right. I am not saying that the wives of political leaders do not play essential roles and make great contributions, but let us acknowledge that it is easier to play a leading role in the political movement if you are the wife of a leader. In the case of Mrs Ngoyi there was no Mr Ngoyi, and Mrs Ngoyi became Lilian Ngoyi the leader of the ANC, and this was out of her own independent contribution. This is very important to the younger women in the ANC. This is because women are essentially raised to believe that they play a secondary role and this could have the effect of demobilising half our potential membership.³²⁴

The 1950s proved to be a highpoint for early anti-apartheid resistance, with many strong and visible women's leaders and activists coming to the fore. The increasing vitality of the resistance, however, led to repression. In December 1956, 156 members of the Congress Alliance — including Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph and Ruth First — were put on trial for treason. Many of the defendants were already banned under the Suppression of Communism Act, but the scope of the trial led Nelson Mandela to call it “the largest and longest unbanned meeting of the Congress Alliance in years”.³²⁵ By the time the trial concluded in March 1961 it had become a rallying point for anti-apartheid activists both at home and abroad. This was the moment organised international anti-apartheid activism commenced, through the Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa set up to pay for the legal expenses of the accused and the maintenance of their families.³²⁶

³²³ Wieder, Alan *Ruth First and Joe Slovo in the War against Apartheid* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2013), pp. 108, 49

³²⁴ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-5.3 ‘Speech delivered by Ruth First at Lilian Ngoyi's memorial service, 1980’

³²⁵ Sisulu *Walter & Albertina Sisulu*, p. 157

³²⁶ See Cook, Al ‘The International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa’ in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa: Vol. 3, Part 1 — International Solidarity* (Pretoria: Unisa Press 2008)

Meanwhile, events outside the courtroom had changed anti-apartheid activists' ability to organise completely. On 21 March 1960, the Pan African Congress (PAC) — an ANC splinter group that questioned the party's stance on multi-racialism — organised pass protests that saw thousands of township residents march on local police stations to hand themselves in for arrest. When marchers in the township of Sharpeville to the south of Johannesburg reached their police station, policemen fired into the crowd, killing 69 people and injuring nearly 200. In the wake of the massacre and the protests it sparked, the apartheid government declared a State of Emergency and banned both the ANC and PAC, forcing both underground, and marking the start of new, dramatic and increasingly fraught chapter in ANC history.³²⁷

PART II

THE BIRTH OF THE UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT

The speedy banning of the ANC and the quickly changing nature of apartheid repression in the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre has led some historians to believe that the ANC was ill-prepared for its eventuality. Recent research by Raymond Suttner and Stephen Ellis, however, shows that although the ANC leadership were surprised at the timing of the banning, they had prepared for it for almost a decade.³²⁸ The personal experiences of many activists also proved invaluable in the new era of secrecy and repression: several of the ANC's most prominent activists had lived more or less continuously under banning orders since the 1950s, giving them plenty of practice of underground political activity. The ANC's alliance with the underground SACP, whose members had benefited from training in clandestine methods by European and Soviet communist parties, was also a source of strength.³²⁹ It was largely due to this

³²⁷ The context, events and consequences of the Sharpeville massacre have been recently explored in Lodge, Tom *Sharpeville: A Massacre and its Consequences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). PAC argued that black Africans be given preference over other ethnic groups in governing the country.

³²⁸ Suttner, Raymond 'The African National Congress (ANC) Underground: From the M-Plan to Rivonia' *South African Historical Journal*, vol. 49, no. 1 (2003), p. 130. Frene Ginwala argues that a sign of the preparedness for exile came as early as in 1952, when the office of Deputy President of the ANC was first discussed. At the 1958 ANC congress, the office was created and Oliver Tambo designated the person to leave the country in case the movement was banned. Author's interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014).

³²⁹ Suttner 'The African National Congress (ANC) Underground', p. 127

underground network and the organisation of the movement in exile that the ANC survived.

The ANC leadership that remained within South Africa's borders faced its own challenges. As possession of an ANC membership card had become a reason for arrest, and as state repression grew increasingly violent, pacifist protest methods seemed futile. As a result, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the ANC's military wing, was created. At the start, the MK was based within South Africa where it was directed under the command of Nelson Mandela and Joe Slovo, with Govan Mbeki and Jack Hodgson serving as deputies.³³⁰ Its success was limited: although cadres — only men at this time — were immediately sent overseas for military training thanks to SACP's communist contacts, the force was ill-equipped.³³¹ It was also in competition with another guerrilla movement to come out of the State of Emergency: PAC's Poqo, which was arguably the largest clandestine organisation of the 1960s, and the first African political movement in South Africa to take up arms.³³² MK, on the other hand, claimed responsibility for the work of others.³³³

This work came to an abrupt end on 11 July 1963 when security branch police stormed the ANC and MK underground base at Lilliesleaf farm outside Rivonia, arresting Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Raymond Mhlaba, Dennis Goldberg, Harold Wolpe and Rusty Bernstein.³³⁴ By the time their trial started in November 1963, the defendants also included Elias Motsoaledi and Andrew Mlangeni. The Rivonia Trial, which concluded in July 1964, reignited international anti-apartheid activism much like the Treason Trial a few years earlier and Nelson Mandela's statement from the dock on 20 April 1964 made him an icon of struggle across the world.³³⁵ Within South Africa, the trial was both a call to arms and a sign of the increasingly forceful repression meted out by the apartheid regime against its opponents. Life as an underground ANC activist was very dangerous: while the ANC headquarter regrouped abroad, the structure that remained inside South Africa was, as Raymond Suttner has pointed out, an organisation that sometimes suffered serious

³³⁰ Wieder *Ruth First and Joe Slovo*, p. 120

³³¹ Wieder *Ruth First and Joe Slovo*, pp. 120, 121

³³² Lodge *Black Politics in South Africa*, pp. 231, 241

³³³ Ellis, Stephen *External Mission: The ANC in Exile 1960-1990* (London: Hurst & Company, 2012), pp. 29, 30

³³⁴ Sisulu *Walter & Albertina Sisulu*, p. 199

³³⁵ ANC 'Nelson Mandela's statement from the dock at the opening of the defence case in the Rivonia Trial', available at www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=3430 (accessed 17 June 2015)

losses, often had to change modes of location and was staffed by individuals who often operated in isolation from others doing similar work.³³⁶

Activists and historians have been keen to point out that with its top leadership incarcerated, the ANC in South Africa was dangerously crippled — politically and militarily — and counted on the success of the exile mission for its survival (the activities in exile will be outlined in part III). However, within the country, survival was the result of the work of female members. These included Albertina Sisulu, Gertrude Shope, Greta Ncaphai, Hunadi Motsoaledi, Irene Mkwai, Tiny Nokwe, June Mlangeni, Beauty Makgothi, Rita Ndzanga and Eufenia Hlapanane. They took on great and exhausting responsibilities, performing

various special roles, such as organising safe accommodation for those who were on the run, finding safe storage for propaganda and publicity equipment, managing an elaborate communications system and courier network for the underground, and undertaking routine political chores such as gathering information about and attending to the welfare of victims of the struggle.³³⁷

Among Gertrude Shope's tasks was to connect SACP leader Bram Fischer with the ANC in Soweto; she was also responsible for transferring money between the two organisations.³³⁸ Albertina Sisulu was, according to Suttner, "fundamental to the continued existence of the cause", despite the fact that her involvement with FEDSAW and her marriage to Walter Sisulu — soon incarcerated for life on Robben Island — made her a target for security police.³³⁹ This is clear from the files accumulated in her name in police headquarters. In 1963, the Secretary of Justice wrote a memorandum to the Commissioner of Police, stating that: "it appears that the activities of both her husband and herself are the same. (...) She enjoys great support among the Bantu and is a very good speaker and organiser".³⁴⁰ Under near-constant surveillance, Albertina relied on the support and discretion of her closest neighbour to conduct meetings with colleagues, which often took place in their shared outhouse.

³³⁶ Suttner *The ANC Underground in South Africa*, pp. 62, 63, 64

³³⁷ Houston, Gregory 'The Post-Rivonia ANC/SACP Underground' in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa: Volume 1, 1960-1970*, p. 603

³³⁸ Houston 'The Post-Rivonia ANC/SACP Underground', p. 603

³³⁹ Suttner *The ANC Underground in South Africa*, pp. 62, 63, 64

³⁴⁰ Sisulu *Walter & Albertina Sisulu*, p. 269

The wall between the two toilets was so thin that one could easily conduct a conversation with the person next door. Metty [the neighbour] would keep a lookout for the security police while pretending to be busy in her garden.³⁴¹

Interference was one crippling problem; a lack of funds another. Albertina Sisulu, like so many other ANC activists on the ground in South Africa, struggled financially. Many financed their own activities and compensation was rarely forthcoming. A further problem was finding safe ways to contact with the ANC leadership, both the group incarcerated in Robben Island, and the exile organisation.³⁴² Albertina Sisulu became involved in the transporting of cadres for military training abroad, organised through an underground cell that she had established with John Nkadimeng.³⁴³

As the anti-apartheid movement regrouped, the apartheid state's crackdown continued. In May 1962, a General Law Amendment Act, better known as the Sabotage Act, passed through parliament, allowing security police to detain those it suspected of illegal opposition to the state for 12 days without trial. In May 1963, this was increased to 90 days; in 1965 to 180 days, and in 1967, the new Terrorism Act allowed for the indefinite detention with the authorisation of a judge.³⁴⁴ It was a weapon designed to break the organisations working against the apartheid state as well as individual activists and their family members. Before long, South African jails were crammed with political activists: at the end of 1962, 594 individuals had been held under the Sabotage Act; between 1963 and 1964, 1,604 were convicted under an assortment of laws for being members of or affiliated to the ANC.³⁴⁵

Prisoners were subjected not only to psychological pressure but outright violence and torture. On 5 September 1963, ANC member Looksmart Solwandle Ngudle became the first to die in detention.³⁴⁶ Ruth First and Albertina Sisulu were two 90-day detainees and First's prison diary, *117 Days*, is a detailed account of the psychological torture 90-day prisoners underwent. Many reached breaking point during their detention and some — like First — contemplated or attempted suicide. However, though they

³⁴¹ Sisulu *Walter & Albertina Sisulu*, p. 272

³⁴² Suttner *The ANC Underground in South Africa*, pp. 96, 97

³⁴³ Houston 'The Post-Rivonia ANC/SACP Underground', p. 606

³⁴⁴ The O'Malley Archives: 'Apartheid legislation 1960-1994: 1967 Terrorism Act'

³⁴⁵ Magubane 'Introduction: the Political Context', p. 41; Suttner *The ANC Underground in South Africa*, p. 65

³⁴⁶ In its final report, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission stated that Ngudle's death was "a direct or indirect result of such torture". Truth and Reconciliation Commission 'TRC Final Report, Volume 3, Chapter 5, Subsection 9' Available at <http://sabctr.c.saha.org.za/reports/volume3/chapter5/subsection9.htm> (accessed 17 June 2015)

shared the harrowing experience of what seemed as indefinite detention (many 90-day detainees were released only to be rearrested for a second stint in jail as soon as they left prison premises) and cruel isolation, the apartheid system colour-coded prisoners' experiences. White activists were inescapably privileged in the struggle against apartheid, including when detained, as a comparison of Ruth First and Albertina Sisulu's incarceration experiences makes clear.³⁴⁷ A white prisoner, First was kept in cells of comparatively good standard. On arriving at the Women's Central Prison in Pretoria from Johannesburg's Marshall Street prison, First found a large room that was

as bright as the previous cell had been gloomy. The bed had sheets. (...) The wardresses carried in an enamel water jug, a china cup and saucer and plate, a fork and a spoon, and a gleaming white tablecloth. My housekeeper instincts surged and I arranged these acquisitions in tidy rows, hung my jacket from the bars of the stair window, and placed my shoes under the bed.³⁴⁸

Meanwhile, as a black prisoner Albertina Sisulu was

locked up in a small, bare room. Three mattresses piled up on top of each other served as a bed. For the first week of her detention, she was fed rice, meat and vegetables with hot coffee twice a day — a luxurious diet by prison standards. When it became apparent she was not prepared to talk about Walter's whereabouts [this was before the Rivonia arrest], she was put on spare rations of porridge.³⁴⁹

In August 1963, Albertina Sisulu gave an interview in *Drum* magazine, describing

her detention as a curious mixture of loneliness and exposure. She had no contact with other prisoners, yet she felt that she had no privacy. 'Every time I wanted to wash, I had to cover the window with a small piece of cloth.' The loneliness was unbearable: 'There was nothing to read, nothing to do, nothing to occupy my mind — nothing except to think of what was happening to my children at home.' The police played on her anxiety cruelly. 'Security Branch men threatened that my children would be taken over by the State. I nearly lost hope.'³⁵⁰

³⁴⁷ Wieder *Ruth First and Joe Slovo*, pp. 83, 84

³⁴⁸ First *117 Days*, p. 65. The diary was originally published by Penguin Books in London in 1965, a year after First escaped into exile.

³⁴⁹ Sisulu *Walter & Albertina Sisulu*, p. 196

³⁵⁰ Sisulu *Walter & Albertina Sisulu*, p. 197

The increasing repression against anti-apartheid activists, the closing off of South Africa from the rest of the world through boycotts and its withdrawal from the Commonwealth in 1961 furthered the disconnect between internal and external ANC members. The border was bridged only by a few cadres moving in and out of South Africa, perilously crossing from land belonging to apartheid South Africa and that belonging to ANC antagonists in neighbouring countries.³⁵¹ Meanwhile, internal divisions were further complicated by an generational change visible towards the end of the 1960s, when a younger and much more radical group of students began infusing their activism with a new vocabulary of black pride. This was the Black Consciousness Movement, which grew out of student politics in the 1960s. A relative of the ecumenical black theology-inspired University Christian Movement (UCM) that had organised black students across South African campuses since its foundation in 1967, BCM advocated the freeing of minds as political and philosophical defiance against the apartheid state.³⁵² In December 1968, the BCM-influenced South African Students Organisation (SASO) broke away from the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), which was one of few remaining structures open to members of all ethnic groups in South Africa.³⁵³ SASO's most famous leader was Steve Biko (1946-1977), a black medical student at the University of Natal, who served as its president from July 1969. Although SASO was a student organisation, its tentacles into black South African societies made its doctrine one of the most influential in the anti-apartheid movement in the 1970s. Biko was a convincing political thinker and orator who, like the ANC, was committed to a non-racial future for South Africa.³⁵⁴

Despite Biko's protestations that BCM would free all South Africans and not just its black subjects, it remained controversial within the ANC, which was strongly committed to its multi-racial ideology. The generational divide furthered this confusion: many ANC activists' children — including those of Ellen Kuzwayo and Albertina Sisulu

³⁵¹ Dubow, Saul *Apartheid 1948-1994* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 84-86; Magubane, B., Bonner, P., Sithole, J., Delius, P., Cherry, J., Gibbs, P. & April, T. 'The Turn to Armed Struggle' in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa: Volume 1, 1960-1970*, pp. 53-145

³⁵² Biko, Steve *I Write What I Like: A Selection of His Writings* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), p. 3. Black theology addressed religion from the perspective of black people, as oppressed by white interpretations of the Bible.

³⁵³ Biko *I Write What I Like*, p. 3; Lodge *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, p. 322

³⁵⁴ Biko *I Write What I Like*, pp. 15-16

— were influenced by BCM-inspired organisations, with some becoming members of them. Unlike the Mandelas, the Sisulus, the Tambos and other senior ANC members, these young activists were around the same age of the apartheid state itself, and less than impressed with opposition to state repression. This generational cohort contained activists like Mamphela Ramphele, Nkozasana Dlamini-Zuma, Jessie Duarte, Cheryl Carolus, Thenjiwe Mtintso and others, many of whom (though not all) were politicised by BCM rather than the ANC. Over the next decade and a half, they became organisers for a number of anti-apartheid movements, including those allied to the ANC. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, many ANC activists worried about the influence of BCM on their children, and their increasingly militant and defiant response to apartheid oppression.³⁵⁵

BCM discourse was highly gendered. Seeking to address ‘black emasculation’, it equated the liberation of black South Africans with the liberation of black South African *men*.³⁵⁶ Ian MacQueen has nevertheless argued that some BCM women used its vocabulary of male black empowerment to challenge gender norms, with the result that a few succeeded in creating space for themselves within the male-dominated movement.³⁵⁷ Although Mamphela Ramphele never aligned her cause with that of the ANC, she makes for an interesting case study here, as she illustrates what drove BCM women’s activism and the characteristics and experiences that set them apart from their elders. A medical doctor, community organiser, academic and post-apartheid businesswoman and politician, she was politicised when, as a student at Natal University, she befriended several of SASO’s most prominent organisers, Steve Biko among them. In her 1995 autobiography, *Across Boundaries*, she writes:

I was keenly interested in the discussions, which were a political education for me. I learned about the true history of my country, the struggle to resist conquest, and later the struggle for equal rights with those who had conquered us, the stories of the heroes of the struggle (no women were included in these narratives at the time) (...). Given my rural background and lack of access to news media and political discussions till then, I had not fully grasped the relation between the personal and the political.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁵ Kuzwayo, *Call Me Woman*, p. 185

³⁵⁶ Magaziner ‘Pieces of a (Wo)man’, pp. 49, 58

³⁵⁷ MacQueen ‘Re-imagining South Africa’, pp. 75-99

³⁵⁸ Ramphele *Across Boundaries*, p. 57

Ramphela soon began to practice what BCM preached: shedding the wig she used to wear, she began using her African given name instead of her European.³⁵⁹ She was, however, a rare but vocal female SASO organiser, and later argued that her involvement helped to

transcend the naked anger which comes from waking up to the realisation of having been cheated out of a common heritage in one's society. (...) It was not an easy transition. To live with the knowledge of having been cheated and yet not to seek personal retribution takes a lot of energy and maturity.³⁶⁰

In 1973, an apartheid government crackdown on BCM structures included the banning of eight SASO leaders, who were forced to relocate to their places of birth.³⁶¹ In a twist of fate, the crackdown also led to the generational divide being partially bridged: Ellen Kuzwayo later wrote that it was when her son was arrested and banned to a small town near the border with Botswana in 1971 that she experienced “a fresh determination” in her commitment to “the struggle of the black man for as long as I live”.³⁶² Furthermore, in her memoirs — written 25 years after the event — Mamphela Ramphela described life under these banning orders as a mixture of isolation and surveillance, mirroring Albertina Sisulu's experiences:

The success of the security police's surveillance depended to a large extent on their ability to keep watch over one's every move. (...) When neighbours refused to cooperate, the security policemen had to take turns positioning themselves in the vicinity of the banned person's home, a less effective form of surveillance because of its higher profile.³⁶³

Though schisms between these two generations continued, bridges were built amid suppression.

³⁵⁹ Ramphela *Across Boundaries*, p. 57

³⁶⁰ Ramphela *Across Boundaries*, p. 65

³⁶¹ Ramphela *Across Boundaries*, pp. 82-83, 93

³⁶² Kuzwayo *Call Me Woman*, p. 189

³⁶³ Ramphela *Across Boundaries*, p. 93

PART III

THE ANC IN EXILE

It was Frene Ginwala who had masterminded Oliver Tambo's escape into exile in the immediate aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre in 1960. A member of South Africa's Indian community, Ginwala grew up in an activist environment where initial apartheid legislation and attempts to segregate South Africans met with protest from residents of all ages. In an interview in 2014, she remembered police raids on South African Indian Congress-run schools in areas designated for ethnic clearances, during which pupils flattened the tyres of police vehicle, as an early lesson in activism.³⁶⁴ Having studied for a law degree in England, Ginwala returned to South Africa in 1959 after a period of travel throughout Africa. She was called to Walter Sisulu's office to discuss the political activities she had seen on her travels across the continent. "He then told me that the ANC knew that it was going to be banned — or would be banned at some point," Ginwala said in 2014:

They had decided to set up an external mission. And because we were surrounded — South Africa was surrounded either by British colonies or the Central African Federation — the challenge was where and how far did one have to get out to not be sent back to South Africa.³⁶⁵

As Julius Nyerere, the leader of Tanganyika's quest for independence, already supported the anti-apartheid cause, Ginwala suggested that it could be a suitable location for an exile movement. She then organised assurances from members of Tanganyika's representative government that South Africans would not be returned should they make it across the border. On 21 March 1960 — amid a news blackout that meant that few South Africans outside Sharpeville were aware of the violence taking place there — Ginwala took a call from Walter Sisulu asking her to visit her parents in Mozambique:

So I said, 'yeah, sure, I'm going to go in a week or so'. He said, 'no, no, tomorrow morning'. I realised he was serious. So I said, 'OK, I'll do that'. (...) The next morning, I went to the airport and I bought a ticket to Lourenço Marques [the capital of

³⁶⁴ Author's interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014).

³⁶⁵ Author's interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014). CAF consisted of the self-governing British colony of Southern Rhodesia (today's Zimbabwe) and the British Protectorates of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi). The federation existed between 1953 and 1963.

Mozambique] and left South Africa. (...) So, in a sense, I was part of the external mission whether I wanted to or not.³⁶⁶

Aware of the risks of arrest warrants having been issued for the ANC members in the Central African Federation, Ginwala chartered a small plane to take Oliver Tambo and a few others across South Africa's border. Needing to refuel halfway, she chose Blantyre in Nyasaland as a stopover, later finding out that arrest warrants for all on board had been issued in Southern Rhodesia. As one of the first ANC members in exile, Ginwala spent the next 30 years away from home. She continued working closely with Oliver Tambo but was soon declared a prohibited immigrant by the Tanganyikan government and had to wait in London before being allowed in again in the wake of the country's independence in December 1961. Back in Dar es Salaam, Ginwala edited the state-controlled newspaper *The Standard* before being dismissed for a critical editorial and returning to the United Kingdom.³⁶⁷ Meanwhile, the exile movement grew in strength and importance: after the imprisonment of the internal leadership (as outlined in part III of this chapter) and the death of ANC President Albert Luthuli (b. 1898) in 1967, the external mission took on the responsibility for the ANC as a whole.

Throughout the history of anti-segregation and anti-apartheid mobilisation, international connections had been a source of strength and support for the protest movement, particularly for women. In their quest for space in which to voice their opinions and exert influence, South African women had long looked abroad for guidance. Gandhi and the suffragette movement stood for the inspiration at the time of the Bloemfontein protests in 1913; four decades later FEDSAW wasted no time in becoming a member of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), a leftist organisation founded in 1945.³⁶⁸ In the mid-1950s, WIDF had enabled Lilian Ngoyi to embark on a tour of several European countries to spread awareness of women's struggles in South Africa. She left the country illegally as a stowaway to do so.³⁶⁹

However, despite the important role women played in connecting the ANC to sympathisers around the world, they continued to face an uphill struggle. The ANC in

³⁶⁶ Author's interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014).

³⁶⁷ Mayibuye: Oral History Collection, transcripts, vol. 4 'Ginwala, Frene, first recording', pp. 15, 16, 17, 19; Author's interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014).

³⁶⁸ Wells 'Why Women Rebel', pp. 58, 70

³⁶⁹ Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archive, Box 39, folder 153 'ANC Women's League Comprehensive Report, for Integration into NEC Report, to ANC National Conference' July 1991

exile kept a strong hierarchical structure in place and was run by a small but powerful elite: both factors that are known to keep women from being promoted to higher office. The cause of women was not helped by the disbandment of the ANC Women's League in 1960 after which women in exile had to rely on an informal group organised under the supervision of Ruth Mompati at the ANC headquarters.³⁷⁰ Mompati had trained as a teacher and was politicised by a combination of opposition to the Bantu Education Act in 1953 (which introduced and enforced segregated education from primary school to university), her involvement in the Defiance Campaign, and being forced to work in service for a white family in her youth. In the 1950s, she married and moved to Johannesburg from the small town of Vryburg in the Western Transvaal and began working for Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo at their Johannesburg law firm. In 1962, Mompati — a divorcee with sole custody — went into exile. Originally intending to stay away for only a year, she left her children in the care of her mother and sister. However, after Mompati's ANC contact — Bartholomew Nhlapanne — became a state witness, she realised she was not going to be able to return. It took 10 years before her children were able to join her in exile.³⁷¹

In 1964, Mompati settled in Dar es Salaam and promptly organised a small women's group there, mostly made up of nurses and teachers who had arrived before her.³⁷² "They had tried to set up a women's organisation but they hadn't been able to succeed," she told Hilda Bernstein in 1990:

I think merely because most of them had not been very active (...) in the women's organisation at home. So when I came, we called the women and we organised a very strong women's organisation.³⁷³

It was a very small gathering to start with. The ANC Women's Section archive contains a story about how the chairperson, Edna Mgbaza "would drive around Dar collecting women from their residences for meetings once a month".³⁷⁴ But international connections were very important to this small group of women from the very start.

³⁷⁰ Hassim, Shireen 'Nationalism, Feminism and Autonomy: The ANC in Exile and the Question of Women' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (September 2004), p. 434

³⁷¹ Mayibuye: Oral History Collection, transcripts, vol. 8 'Mompati, Ruth, first recording', p. 84

³⁷² Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-53 'Paper presented at the ANC Women's National workshop on building a legal ANC Women's League in South Africa'

³⁷³ Mayibuye: 'Mompati, Ruth, first recording', p. 91

³⁷⁴ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-53 'Paper presented at the ANC Women's National workshop on building a legal ANC Women's League in South Africa'

Mompoti soon travelled around the newly independent states of west Africa; trips that were often organised by WIDF or the Pan African Women's Organisation (PAWO; itself founded in Tanganyika in 1962).³⁷⁵ The main target for the women's group's international work was other women's organisations, but they found that it "was an uphill educating these people about the ANC's objectives and the situation in South Africa."³⁷⁶ The independent former colonies were sceptical towards the ANC's commitment to a multi-ethnic democracy and many favoured PAC's more radical ideas for black liberation.³⁷⁷ Mompoti found the attitudes of women on the international scene

very interesting (...). [I]t also proved that (...) our struggle was not only struggles for women's rights and for the role of women in the struggles, but also the attitudes of women against the other women in your own organisation and women in national organisations. (...) We were able to educate one another.³⁷⁸

Apart from giving ANC women a platform to develop policies and learn from others who had experienced various kinds of oppression, international connections allowed them to find sources for financial and material support. Life in exile was hard, especially in the early 1960s when the international anti-apartheid movement was in its infancy. Many ANC members and supporters followed Oliver Tambo into exile, beginning new lives in Tanzania, Sweden, the United Kingdom and other countries where they were isolated from family and friends at home, and lived under a constant threat from South African secret service agents. Mompoti later said that:

There were very few countries that were giving us assistance, apart from Tanzania, of course, it gave us places to live and the OAU [the Organisation of African Unity, founded in 1963] giving us something, the only other countries were the Socialist Countries [sic], particularly the Soviet Union at the time. (...) We depended on them for a lot of things. (...) I remember that if we had three dresses, it was a lot but we used to think that we were very well off.³⁷⁹

This was also the era in which the first connections to the Swedish Social Democrats and SAP women were made, as detailed in chapter one of this thesis. The relationship

³⁷⁵ Mayibuye: 'Momapti, Ruth, first recording', p. 92

³⁷⁶ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-53 'Paper presented at the ANC Women's National workshop on building a legal ANC Women's League in South Africa'

³⁷⁷ These tensions were thoroughly covered in chapters three and four of Lissoni, Arianna 'The South African liberation movements in exile, c. 1945-1970' PhD thesis, School of Oriental and African Studies University of London (January 2008), pp. 139-266

³⁷⁸ Mayibuye: 'Momapti, Ruth, first recording', p. 92

³⁷⁹ Mayibuye: 'Momapti, Ruth, first recording', pp. 92-93

was facilitated by the fact that the ANC had its base in Dar es Salaam during its first few years of exile, where the Swedish embassy played host to the ANC and other liberation movements that had established a presence in the Tanzanian capital.³⁸⁰ As outlined in the thesis introduction, Sweden had long had connections in East Africa, originally through Christian missionaries and later through development aid projects. In 1961, Adelaide and Oliver Tambo visited Sweden for the first time while the 1962 Afro-Scandinavian Conference in Norway and the 1966 World Student Youth conference in Tokyo also brought SAP and ANC activists together.³⁸¹ Young ANC members were given scholarships at Swedish universities, organised and funded, often on an impromptu basis, by student organisations. Wherever exiled ANC members went, however, they brought scars inflicted by the apartheid regime. Billy Modise, the future Chief Representative of the ANC mission in Stockholm, was one of the students offered a safe haven in Sweden, taking up a place at the University of Lund in 1961. He found that life there was not straightforward:

When I came to Sweden for the first time in my life, the environment welcomed me and the environment was white. (...) I didn't know how to handle that situation because up to that point, the majority of whites who dealt with me, I had to protect myself from. I knew there was a threat in whatever relationships I had with them. Now overnight, somebody's so nice to me, (...) and I didn't know how to handle that because I had a load of suspicion and uncertainty in this white/black relationship.

That, Modise argued, was

the price of apartheid, you can't trust straightforward relationship, there must be a motive why this person who is white likes me, where normally he shouldn't.³⁸²

THE MOROGORO CONFERENCE: CHANGE AND CONFIRMATION

Billy Modise's story illustrates why and how tensions might arise within the ANC. The broad base of support for the movement meant that members were divided by linguistic and class lines; divisions that seemingly grew stronger in exile where conflicts over undue influence of minority groups led to great tension. As a result, the ethnic make-up

³⁸⁰ Sellström *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Volume I*, pp. 48, 49

³⁸¹ Sellström *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Volume I*, pp. 154, 157

³⁸² Mayibuye: 'Modise, Billy, first recording', pp. 5-6

of the movement was an important topic at the ANC's First National Consultative Conference in Morogoro, Tanzania, in 1969. Called in the wake of the controversial publication of the Hani Memorandum — in which well-known MK commissars criticised the movement's military leadership — in 1968, Morogoro addressed ANC leadership issues by confirming Oliver Tambo's position, electing him president. (Tambo had served as Acting President for two years, since the death of Luthuli).³⁸³ ANC statutes were also redrafted, extending membership rights to minorities — predominantly white and Asian South Africans — with the reservation that they could not serve on the National Executive Commission (NEC). The number of NEC members simultaneously decreased from 20 to nine, concentrating power in fewer hands. However, minorities could be — and were — elected to the Revolutionary Council, which was in charge of the MK.³⁸⁴

Morogoro also changed the conditions for women's activism in exile. Despite their importance to the survival of the organisation, women's activists had been neglected and overlooked throughout the 1960s. The combination of old-fashioned ideas about women's narrow political interests and capabilities, and the ever increasing social issues in the expanding ANC camps meant that women's activists had to focus on urgent social work rather than their political ambitions. Meanwhile, the group's informal status impacted its ability to operate: while Mompati became a member of ANC's NEC in 1966 and worked in the President's Office from then on, her women's group continued to be an informal gathering without an organisational mandate.³⁸⁵ That, in turn, meant that it did not appeal to some ANC women, with the well-educated and well-connected reluctant to join. Frene Ginwala, for example, was not impressed by the Women's Section, choosing to stay out of its way. In 1990, she told Hilda Bernstein:

There was something that had happened at home and I thought women as women, we ought to make a statement and I raised [it] with the secretary of the regional women's committee, who said, oh but that was political. And it really hit me and since a lot of

³⁸³ See Ralinala, R.M., Sithole, J., Houston, G. and Magubane, B. 'The Wankie and Sipolilo campaigns' in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 1*, pp. 479-540; Ndebele, N. and Nieftagodien, N. 'The Morogoro Conference: a moment of self-reflection' in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 1*, pp. 573-600

³⁸⁴ Ellis *External Mission*, pp. 76, 77

³⁸⁵ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-53 'Paper presented at the ANC Women's National workshop on building a legal ANC Women's League in South Africa'

what was being done was essentially what I would now describe as welfare, I was put off by that.³⁸⁶

Ginwala later changed her mind and became one of the most influential gender equality activists within the ANC: this will be detailed in chapter three. Meanwhile, the Morogoro conference brought a formal recognition of the importance of women's activists' work, as it approved of the formation of a Women's Section. This was to be headed by a Women's Secretariat, working out of the ANC headquarters.³⁸⁷ The Women's Section had strict parameters within which it could operate. It was classified as:

an auxiliary body of the ANC, working within its frame work [sic] (...) to enable women to initiate and carry out its own activities against the apartheid system, as long as it is in keeping with the policy of the ANC as a mother body.³⁸⁸

The Women's Section's mandate, as set by the ANC's NEC, was:

To mobilize all South African women into active membership of the ANC. (...) To mobilize political and material support from the international community. (...) To mobilize all South African women inside the country into active participation in the struggle for the destruction of the Apartheid regime and the creation of a democratic South Africa.³⁸⁹

The formal status of the Women's Section was promising. But the problems for women were far from over: their collective voice was still subsumed in the working practices of the male-dominated headquarters, and their individual career trajectories within the movement left much to be improved. In 1990, Ginwala told Hilda Bernstein that:

People don't take you seriously [within the ANC] as a woman. They don't take you seriously politically. They'll see you as a technician. (...) If a committee was set up and you were on it, they'd look around and they'd say that so-and-so who is a man would be the chair and you as the woman would be the secretary to take the notes. In fact for

³⁸⁶ Mayibuye: 'Ginwala, Frene, first recordings', p. 21

³⁸⁷ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-53 'Paper presented at the ANC Women's National workshop on building a legal ANC Women's League in South Africa'

³⁸⁸ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-5.2 'Letter from Florence Mophosho, Women's Section Lusaka, to secretary of ANC Women's Section London' 3 March 1981

³⁸⁹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-10.2 'Report of the Women's Secretariat of the African National Congress to the first conference of ANC Women in the external mission, Luanda, Angola, Sept 10.14.1981' [mislabelled as MCH02 in the archive]

many years, I used to make an absolute point of refusing to take the notes. People would say, oh but you're good at minutes, I said, well that's not my fault.³⁹⁰

Furthermore, fearing that women's demands could spark rifts within the still weak exile movement, women continued to be ignored by a leadership that supported the advancement of *some* well-educated and well-connected women — Ruth Mompati and Frene Ginwala among them — while failing to heed those women's calls for support elsewhere. In order to preserve unity, women's activism continued to be silenced outside women's-only organisations.

PART IV

DOUBLE MILITANCY AND TRIPLE OPPRESSION

Throughout the era covered in this chapter, ANC women struggled in their quest for gender liberation within their party. In this, they faced a set of problems similar to that of other women's activists around the world. Indeed, conflict over women's mobilisation within mixed-gender organisations is not unique to South Africa, Sweden, the global north or the global south: it is a long-term structural issue, caused in part by what Karen Beckwith has called women's 'double militancy'. As women have to work within women's groups to advance their own cause, and alongside men for a greater political purpose, they are often depicted as less trustworthy, or even as a fifth column representing women's interests ahead of the interests of their party.³⁹¹ As a result, and in order to not rock the boat, women have often had to put their collective grievances to one side, making them secondary to the causes of their class and/or ethnic group. It might seem as though an easy remedy for this would be to abolish women's structures completely and allow the mixed-gender organisation to carry on the struggle for gender liberation on its own. However, that would be a futile exercise, as women's voices have been both submerged and reappropriated in male-dominated parties, for example within BCM structures, where no women-only organisations emerged. Women were very much involved in the development and running of various BCM organisations, yet only a few became leaders in their own right. These were exceptional individuals: their intellectual

³⁹⁰ Mayibuye: 'Ginwala, Frene, first recording', pp. 20, 21

³⁹¹ Beckwith 'Beyond Compare?', p. 443

prowess and challenge to gender norms, they themselves apart not just from men but from other women.³⁹² Mamphela Ramphele was one such leader. Describing how she “became more daring” in her outfits, Ramphele wrote in her memoir that:

Once tested, the boundaries of conventional behaviour began to fall. I started experimenting with smoking cigarettes by offering to light for those needing a smoke. (...) I also started drinking beer and other alcoholic beverages shared by the group. I slowly but surely embraced the student culture of the 1960s (...) As a woman, an African woman at that, one had to be outrageous to be heard, let alone taken seriously.³⁹³

Ramphele’s academic mind, temper and aggression certainly set her apart from other women of her generation:

I became quite an aggressive debater and was known for not suffering fools gladly. Moreover, I intimidated men who did not expect aggression from women. Soon a group of similarly inclined women, Vuyelwa Mashalaba, Nomsisi Kraai, Deborah Matshoba and Thenjiwe Mtintso, became a force to be reckoned with at annual SASO meetings. Ours was not a feminist cause at the time — feminism was a later development in my political consciousness — but an insistence on being taken seriously as activists in our own right amongst our peers.³⁹⁴

Sexism was pervasive at the time and continues to influence the portrayal of women in both official and unofficial BCM history. Activists are most often identified as ‘youths’, regardless of their gender, thus effectively removing young women from the story. Meanwhile, both SASO organisation and BCM philosophy lacked the gender awareness that could have helped women rise within its ranks. Historian Daniel Magaziner argues that the “near total absence” of women in Biko’s writings is jarring, considering women’s importance both within BCM organisations and for the movement’s identity politics. Magaziner writes:

Men were the appropriate representatives for the black community; their manhood was what had been lost with apartheid’s assault on Africans’ possibilities. It was *his* problems that compelled action and only after this was acknowledged might there be space to see what this left for *her*.³⁹⁵

³⁹² Magaziner ‘Pieces of a (Wo)man’, pp. 47, 48, 56

³⁹³ Ramphele *Across Boundaries*, pp. 71, 57-58

³⁹⁴ Ramphele *Across Boundaries*, p. 66

³⁹⁵ Magaziner ‘Pieces of a (Wo)man’, p. 53

This was a pervasive philosophy at the time, mirrored in the experiences of many women involved in the 1968 movements across the world, who found that women's liberation became secondary to that of 'youth' and 'workers'; two categories almost exclusively defined as male.³⁹⁶ Biko's inability to officially recognise women's importance for his movement marks him as a man of his time. Meanwhile, where mentioned in historiographical accounts of the 1970s, BCM women tend to be reduced to wives and girlfriends. Having embarked on a relationship while married to others, Mamphela Ramphele continues to be referred to as 'Biko's girlfriend' regardless of her own role in the black consciousness movement before and after Biko's death. In an interview with the *Sunday Telegraph* on 20 January 2014, Ramphele said that this did not surprise her:

We still live in a man's world. If I had been the one who died, I would be gone and forgotten.³⁹⁷

Sheltered from events within South Africa – though desperately trying to keep up with them – and constantly wary of issues that could threaten to break the exile movement apart, black consciousness only had an impact on the ANC after the Soweto uprisings of 1976 sparked an exodus of young South African refugees. These youngsters joined an exile movement that they in return knew very little about.

Conventional histories of the ANC in exile during the 1970s hint at internal divisions, financial issues and the quest for influence on the diplomatic scene. However, by looking at the exile organisation through the eyes of women, the 1970s appears as a time of great ideological debate and policy formation. Women not only began to claim greater space for themselves and their thoughts, but also improved their status and representation within the organisation. The Women's Section expanded during the early 1970s, and — despite reservations about its relevance to African women — its vocabulary became increasingly informed by second-wave feminism. In 1971, Florence Mophosho succeeded Ruth Mompati as head of the Women's Section, and she oversaw its move from Tanzania to Lusaka (where the ANC's exile headquarters relocated)

³⁹⁶ See, e.g., Clifford, R., Gildea, R. & Warring, A. 'Gender and sexuality' in Gildea, R., Mark, J. & Warring, A. *Europe's 1968: Voices of Revolt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 239-257; Evans, Sara M. 'The International 1968, Part II — Sons, Daughters, and Patriarchy: Gender and the 1968 Generation' *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 114, No. 2 (2009), pp. 331-347

³⁹⁷ Laing, Aislinn 'Mamphela Ramphele interview: "South Africa needs me to fight again for freedom"' *Sunday Telegraph* (London) 19 January 2014

towards the end of 1973. In Lusaka, Mophosho reignited the women's cause alongside Ray Alexander Simons, Winnie Nkobi (best known, ironically, as the wife of ANC Treasurer General Thomas Nkobi, which illustrates the constricted role given to many women in ANC records and history), Jacqueline Molefe and Sophia Williams-de Bruyn, who were all elected to serve in the Women's Secretariat alongside Mophosho. Mophosho, who also became a member of ANC's NEC in 1975, knew many of her co-workers from FEDSAW, and had a large international network after spending four and a half years as the ANC representative at WIDF after going into exile in 1964.³⁹⁸ Under her guidance, the Women's Section attempted to build on the promises made at Morogoro, and Mophosho's knack for mobilising international support proved a significant strength over coming decades.

Another indication of the expanding role of women within the ANC is the growing number of women within the ranks of MK. Reliable figures are scarce: according to Stephen Ellis there were 800 MK soldiers in 1965, 1,000 in 1975 and 9,000 in 1980, while Raymond Suttner claims that 20 per cent of MK soldiers were women in 1989.³⁹⁹ In a letter in 1981, Florence Mophosho, argued that

the position of women in the military wing is that of equality with male counterparts, they are entitled to high positions on merit. Whilst awaiting their combat task, they are a distinct women's detachment and integrated into the general context of the army.⁴⁰⁰

In practice, however, MK remained thoroughly male-dominated with initiation processes that were designed to turn cadres into men, and despite a few well-known women within its ranks, heroism was starkly gendered.⁴⁰¹ Jacqueline Molefe — who became MK's chief of communications in the 1980s — was the only woman to ever serve at the military headquarters in exile.⁴⁰² Many of the new recruits were young, which added to their vulnerability. Ruth Mompati remarked upon that in her interview with Hilda Bernstein:

³⁹⁸ The Presidency 'Florence Mophosho: Companion of The Order of Luthuli in Silver' available at www.thepresidency.gov.za/pebble.asp?relid=7932 (accessed 17 June 2015)

³⁹⁹ Ellis, Stephen 'Mbokodo: Security in ANC Camps 1961-1990' *African Affairs* Vol. 93, No. 371 (Apr., 1994), p. 287; Suttner *The ANC Underground in South Africa*, p. 125

⁴⁰⁰ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-5.2 'Letter from Florence Mophosho, Women's Section Lusaka, to secretary of ANC Women's Section London' 3 March 1981

⁴⁰¹ Suttner *The ANC Underground in South Africa*, pp. 113-115, 121

⁴⁰² Geisler, Gisela *Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy Incorporation and Representation* (Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute, 2004), p. 52

You saw these young girls, coming in and you say to them, but you can't be going for training, have you come for school? They said, no we've come for training. And they were so ... you just felt so ... but it was difficult then.⁴⁰³

The gendered experience of exile and the camps has been further illuminated by Carla Tsampiras' research, which draws on sexual health sources from ANC camps in the 1980s.⁴⁰⁴ Women, Tsampiras has established, were considered responsible for preventing unwanted pregnancies, and for bringing children up in difficult circumstances.⁴⁰⁵ It was not until the late 1970s and early 1980s that an attempt was made to organise structured childcare which would allow mothers to return to the struggle. Raymond Suttner has pointed out that it was common knowledge that many men sought sexual favours from female comrades.⁴⁰⁶ Sexual violence – though taboo – was not uncommon. Meanwhile, the Women's Section was put in charge of the entire exile movement's welfare system, a task for which it was far too small and weak to handle effectively.

PRACTICAL SOLIDARITY: WOMEN TO WOMEN

Some help was on its way. Thanks to the efforts of FEDSAW, Lilian Ngoyi, Ruth Mompati (who became the ANC's WIDF representative in 1976 and stayed there for three years) and Florence Mophosho, by the 1970s ANC women were connected to all corners of the world.⁴⁰⁷ At the same time, a younger generation of politicians in the global north were starting to reach positions of power, which they used to set an agenda favourable to international causes like the ANC's. In 1972, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) released funds for what it called 'civilian' ANC camps in Tanzania and Zambia, making it the final southern African liberation movement to be awarded financing from the Swedish state. It marked the beginning of a 22-year period in which SEK 896 million was channelled from Sweden's tax payers via development

⁴⁰³ Mayibuye: 'Mompati, Ruth, first recording', p. 92

⁴⁰⁴ These include information film *As Surely As an A.K.* and a pamphlet entitled 'Meeting the Challenge of AIDS', both of which warned ANC members about the dangers of HIV/AIDS.

⁴⁰⁵ Tsampiras 'Sex in a Time of Exile', pp. 655, 656. For more on women's experiences in camps, see Lissoni, A. & Suriano, M. 'Married to the ANC', pp. 129–150. Mark Hunter has written about the gendering of the AIDS epidemic in *Love in a Time of AIDS: Inequality, Gender and Rights in South Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).

⁴⁰⁶ Suttner *The ANC Underground in South Africa*, p. 96

⁴⁰⁷ Mayibuye: 'Mompati, Ruth, first recording', p. 95

aid programmes to the ANC.⁴⁰⁸ Two years later, the ANC opened an office — again funded by Swedish tax payers through SIDA — in Stockholm, with Sobizana Mngqikana as the first Chief Representative.⁴⁰⁹ Meanwhile, the socialist bloc remained very important, with Cuba and the USSR offering support and scholarships to ANC women. Nevertheless, it was, as Hugh Macmillan has pointed out,

always something of a miracle that the growing ANC population in Lusaka was reasonably well fed and clothed, although funds were often squeezed, as [Jack] Simons pointed out, by the need to channel funds towards the ‘home front’.⁴¹⁰

In July 1972, women from across the African continent came together to discuss goals and methods at the All African Women’s Conference (AAWC) in Dar es Salaam. The conference gave ANC women a platform to convince potential supporters of the righteousness of their multi-ethnic cause. Adelaide Tambo delivered a greeting message infused with the contemporary vocabularies of both national liberation and women’s liberation, telling the conference that:

It is absolutely necessary that we continue to wage a resolute struggle for the immediate eradication of all the social prejudices that shackle the women as a distinct social group. Our complete liberation as a social and political force can only be to the benefit of our respective countries.⁴¹¹

Florence Mophosho, who also participated, then went on to outline the bleak reality of black womanhood in South Africa; a stark contrast to the optimism brought to the conference by the delegations from newly independent African nations that had broken free from the shackles of colonialism only a decade earlier.⁴¹² In its concluding recommendations, the AAWC urged that women be given “the social arrangements capable of enabling them to reconcile their responsibility as working mothers”. But it also appealed to them to “abstain from extravagance and (...) retain their originality”, before pleading

⁴⁰⁸ Sellström *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Volume I* pp. 252, 254, 248

⁴⁰⁹ Sellström *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa Volume II*, p. 398

⁴¹⁰ Macmillan ‘The African National Congress of South Africa in Zambia’, p. 319

⁴¹¹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-1.2 ‘Message of greetings to the All-Africa Women’s Conference Seminar in Dar es Salaam from Mrs Adelaide Tambo, All African Women’s Conference, Dar es Salaam, July 1972’

⁴¹² Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-1.2 ‘Mophosho, Florence: Speech to the All Africa Women’s Conference held in Dar es Salaam July 24-31, 1972’

to mothers responsible for the future of the younger generation to remain the guardians of African tradition and culture and hand down this patrimony to their children.⁴¹³

This, again, shows the pervasiveness of an emphasis on motherhood, supported by many women within the ANC, often — but not exclusively — of the older generation. The emphasis on biological determinism was both positive and negative: it allowed women to set themselves apart from men, making their dual mobilisation — in single-gender women’s groups and within the mixed-gender ANC as a whole — appear less threatening to the movement’s political unity and male dominance. However, it also meant that many of the issues they were mobilising around were classified as ‘women’s issues’, allowing the organisation at large to continue to ignore them, while also relying on the same women to resolve matters themselves without being given enough authority to do so effectively.

The traditionalism of the AAWC 1972 recommendations stand in stark contrast to the ANC Women’s Secretariat general report for 1972/73 — sent to ANC women’s groups around the world — which is one of the first documents that shows the influence of contemporary feminist debates on the Women’s Section. ‘Triple oppression’ — a term coined by Trinidadian Marxist and African-American feminist Claudia Jones to describe black women’s subjugation on account of their gender, class and ethnicity — got its first mention in the report, which also stated that “women cannot be ‘liberated’ before the whole of society is rid of all the evils of the capitalist system”. The report’s authors are highly critical of “tendency to accord a semi-slave status to the women”, denying them:

the opportunity of listening to the news, reading newspapers or even getting involved in any serious political discussion. All this is because of attitudes prevalent on the role of women in the struggle. (...) We must admit that there are not enough facilities created or opportunities opened for our women to fully develop into capable and confident individuals who can do as much as our men are doing for the struggle. Women are still restricted to typing jobs, whereas a gradual step-by-step process should be underdone to introduce them into minor administrative jobs. The women in MK are not given enough scope of action after completing their courses.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹³ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-1.2 ‘Recommendations adopted by the Conference, All African Women’s Conference, Dar es Salaam, July 1972’

⁴¹⁴ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-1.3 ‘General report of the ANC Women’s Secretariat for the period 1972/73’

The report also argues that life in exile is a dress rehearsal for the creation of a fair and just South African society:

We all are participants in the construction of the foundation of this new society. We should play a vanguard role in portraying in our own small communities the ideal relationship that we want to have in our beloved motherland. The struggle is to rid women of backward psychological outlooks. This is the struggle of all revolutionaries – men and women alike. The work should not only be left until ‘after we have gained our national liberation’. Now is the time!⁴¹⁵

In an era of growing optimism, the Women’s Section’s patience with the lack of progress was clearly running low.

The Women’s Section archive is full of letters sent to and from the Women’s Secretariat in Lusaka, but the most effective method available to the head office to spread awareness of its policy stance and philosophy was *Voice of Women*, a publication started by Florence Mophosho in 1974.⁴¹⁶ VOW, as it was called in ANC shorthand, was originally intended as a tool for the political mobilisation of ANC women in exile, and a rallying call for international supporters.⁴¹⁷ It was complemented by a women’s programme broadcast on ANC’s Radio Freedom highlighting:

issues and campaigns of the day, such as pass laws, forced removals, unemployment, poor pay, housing, rent increases, exploitation of domestic and farm workers, children’s education, repression, etc.⁴¹⁸

On top of growing confidence and a stronger organisation, ANC women’s activists were also strengthened by feminist-inspired international mobilisation. By 1975, the international women’s movement had become emboldened and influential enough for the international political and diplomatic community to take action. That same year saw

⁴¹⁵ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-1.3 ‘General report of the ANC Women’s Secretariat for the period 1972/73’

⁴¹⁶ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-53 ‘Paper presented at the ANC Women’s National workshop on building a legal ANC Women’s League in South Africa’. Other documents state that the journal was founded in 1971, see Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-22.5 ‘Report on Voice of Women for Publications Workshop – Lusaka, 8 June 1983’.

⁴¹⁷ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-5.2 ‘Letter from Florence Mophosho to Ilva Mackay, ANC Women’s Section London, 3 April 1981’; Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-22.5 ‘Report on Voice of Women for Publications Workshop – Lusaka, 8 June 1983’; Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-53 ‘Paper presented at the ANC Women’s National workshop on building a legal ANC Women’s League in South Africa’

⁴¹⁸ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-53 ‘Paper presented at the ANC Women’s National workshop on building a legal ANC Women’s League in South Africa’. For more on the importance of Radio Freedom, see Davis, Stephen ‘The African National Congress, Its Radio, Its Allies and Exile’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 35, Issue 2 (2009), pp. 349-373

the start of the UN Decade of Women, which sprung out a UN World Conference in Mexico City, held 19 June-2 July 1975. Attended by 133 governments and 6,000 NGO representatives, it aimed to address women's political, economic and cultural subordination.⁴¹⁹ It proved to be of great importance to the progress of women within the ANC. Frene Ginwala, who had been unwilling to join the Women's Section, was asked to travel to the conference to support Lilian Ngoyi who would attempt to leave South Africa to go to the conference. In the event, Ngoyi stayed at home; as did Ginwala. But the latter was on a path to become a gender activist:

I began (...) to understand why it was important to work with women and on the question of women (...). Most important I think [Florence] drew my attention to the fact that many women who have the training, are articulate and skilled and so on, tended to work in the movement but (...) tended to ignore the rest of the women. And (...) established that it had to be a part of my political life, it couldn't be something that I ignored.⁴²⁰

Despite being unable to send a delegate, the conference also had a direct impact on ANC fundraising. Previously, women had been forced to find creative solutions to their financial and material needs as, according to an ANC Women's Section document from 1988:

the traditional providers of assistance — i.e. governments, United Nations agencies, businesses, banks and foundations (...) [were] inaccessible to women. (...) Since the Decade for Women was proclaimed in 1975, institutions have been under pressure to direct increased attention to the ways in which they can assist women's groups and projects. (...) [W]omen now have greater opportunities to improve the financial bases for their organisations and projects with support from institutions that have ignored them in the past.⁴²¹

There were other reasons to look to the future with optimism: in its 1975/6 budget, the Swedish Social Democratic government increased its support to the ANC from 250,000 to 1 million SEK, aiming to cover expenses within South Africa as well as its exile

⁴¹⁹ UN Women 'Full Report: World Conference of the International Women's Year Mexico City, 19 June to 2 July 1975', available at www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/mexico.html (accessed 29 June 2015) and 'World Conferences on Women': available at www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/intergovernmental-support/world-conferences-on-women#mexico (accessed 28 June 2015)

⁴²⁰ Mayibuye: 'Ginwala, Frene, first recording', p. 21

⁴²¹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-19.4 'Ideas on Financing, signed by Theresa Chewa, Executive Officer' (date missing, but likely to be from 1988)

mission.⁴²² Even more promising was the 1975 collapse of Portugal's colonial empire and the subsequent independence of Angola and Mozambique. The latter, which shares a border with South Africa, was now governed by ANC ally FRELIMO, which led many in the exile movement to believe that military incursions into South Africa were imminent.⁴²³ However, dark clouds were gathering on the horizon. Discontented with Portugal's withdrawal from the region, the government in Pretoria embarked on a destabilising campaign to bring an end to the newly installed regimes in Luanda and Maputo, sparking civil wars that impacted the region over the course of two decades.⁴²⁴

Furthermore, in the townships of South Africa, a generation of youths and students organised protests against the oppression, discrimination and repression they faced on a daily basis. They were inspired by BCM philosophy and their protest was ignited by government's decision to make Afrikaans the language of instruction in schools. On the 16 June 1976 they were met by a brutal South African police force, who shot and killed demonstrators, sparking riots in townships throughout the country. Official figures stated that 176 lives were lost during the first week, with a total number of 575 dead and 2,389 injured throughout the course of the uprising, but these figures are contested.⁴²⁵ Scores were arrested as the crackdown on school children led to a rounding up of anti-apartheid activists, with many deaths in detention attributed to police brutality. The first BCM activist to be arrested in July 1976 was SASO's permanent secretary, Mapetla Mohapi, who died in detention. Mamphela Ramphele was one of many arrested under the new Section 10 of the Terrorism Act while both Thenjiwe Mtintso and Steve Biko were arrested under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act, which allowed the use of torture to extract information. Mtintso, having "received the worst treatment from the bully boys in the security forces", joined Ramphele at King William's Town prison before both were released on 28 December. A banning order forced Mtintso to live with her mother in Orlando East while, in April 1977, Ramphele was banned to a rural area in the northern Transvaal, where she had never been

⁴²² Sellström *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa Volume II*, p. 412

⁴²³ FRELIMO, Frente de Libertação de Moçambique or The Mozambique Liberation Front, was a Marxist party under the leadership of Samora Machel.

⁴²⁴ See, e.g., Larsdotter, Kersti 'Fighting Transnational Insurgents: The South African Defence Force in Namibia, 1966–1989' *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 37, No. 12 (2014), pp. 1024-1038; Baines, Gary *South Africa's "Border War": Contested Narratives and Conflicting Memories* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

⁴²⁵ Pohlandt-McCormick, Helena 'In Good Hands: Researching the 1976 Soweto Uprising in the State Archives of South Africa' in Burton, Antoinette (ed.) *Archive stories: facts, fictions, and the writing of history* (London: Duke University Press, 2005), pp. 304, 305; Lodge *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, p. 330

before.⁴²⁶ A month later, Winnie Mandela shared a similar fate by being banished to a remote region — Brandfort in the Free State — where she did not know anyone. On 12 September 1977, Steve Biko was killed in detention, and on 19 October 1977 all Black Consciousness organisations were banned.⁴²⁷ The ANC was not in a position to respond forcefully — a 1979 estimate has the number of ANC underground activists inside South Africa as numbering between 300 and 500 — but the brutal repression in South Africa’s townships led to a flood of young refugees swelling its ranks in exile, adding to the social problems the ANC already faced.⁴²⁸ Suddenly, after the promising start of the early 1970s, the road to victory looked exhaustingly long.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that although women’s activists were making progress under the leadership of Ruth Mompati and Florence Mophosho in exile, the situation on the ground in South Africa and the ANC’s rigid patriarchal culture meant that women’s quest for political equality was very difficult at this time. This was the case both within the apartheid state itself and within the liberation movement set up to fight for majority rule.

Women in the ANC had a long history of organising separately in single-gender groups by the start of the 1960s. This was a natural consequence of the fact that although some women played important roles in the organisation during its first 30 years of existence, they were excluded from full membership until 1943. Meanwhile, women had run their own projects and campaigns from the very start of the 20th century. Several generations — from Charlotte Manye Maxeke to FEDSAW veterans like Albertina Sisulu — gained expertise and experience within women-only groups. They also showed on several occasions, including in Bloemfontein in 1913 and Pretoria in 1956, that they were happy to go directly against the wishes of the male leadership of the movement if and when they saw it necessary. Furthermore, women were leaders in their own right: not just of women-only organisations, but of civic and church

⁴²⁶ Ramphela *Across Boundaries*, p. 111, 112, 119

⁴²⁷ Ramphela *Across Boundaries*, p. 136-137

⁴²⁸ Ellis *External Mission*, p. 116

organisation that on many occasions led the struggle against apartheid in townships and rural areas.

The banning of the ANC and the organisation's transformation into a clandestine, underground and exile movement naturally had a great impact on women's activism. In an environment in which the organisation struggled to survive, women's specific grievances were pushed to one side by the male-dominated leadership. Although women had supporters among some of the ANC's most influential members, including the ANCYL founders Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu, this support failed to raise the status of women within the organisation. Instead, women mobilised in small groups both inside South Africa and in exile to facilitate social programmes that ensured the welfare of a majority of the ANC's members, regardless of their gender. These small groups also allowed women to voice their political interests as a collective, and they sought overseas contacts in order to secure funding and support for their causes as little of either kind was forthcoming from the ANC. Nevertheless, this chapter confirms that ANC women on the ground within South Africa were key to the survival of the underground movement in the perilous era that followed banning in 1960. It has also argued that they were further radicalised by their treatment at the hands of the apartheid state. Church, youth and women's organisers became increasingly unafraid of provoking arrests and fury. They had to be radical to be heard, daring to go against ANC decrees and challenge the perception of political action as unsuitable for women.

The 1970s became a decade in which new ideas about nature and nurture rekindled the ideological fire of both women's and national liberation movements across the world. In South Africa, the black pride-infused Black Consciousness Movement shaped the political thinking of a new generation of activists, while ANC women in exile began using infusing their language and working practices with feminism. Much of this was a result of ANC women's international connections, established in the pre-banning era with WIDF and extended much further in the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre. Among the early supporters were countries from the Eastern Bloc, and Sweden. Financial aid from the latter, though not very extensive in the period covered by this chapter, alleviated some of the most pressing social issues that kept women from committing more time to pushing their collective political goals higher up on the ANC agenda. Meanwhile, as feminism and gender equality became more of a priority around the world as a consequence of the international mobilisation of second-wave feminism

in the 1960s and 1970s, South African women — including Frene Ginwala — were given opportunities to partake in international debates on the topic and further spread awareness of their subjugation within the apartheid state.

BCM philosophy also had a radicalising effect on black women's activism within South Africa. Though male-dominated and not readily accepting of women's political needs and views, BCM organisations taught its female followers not to accept the position they found themselves in, and induced a sense of fearlessness and determination that was visible in the township riots and political opposition to apartheid in the 1980s.

It took time for the ANC to recognise the importance of reestablishing a parallel structure for women within the organisation: almost a whole decade passed between the dissolution of the ANC Women's League and the Morogoro Conference's decision to endorse a Women's Section in exile in 1969. There are several reasons for this. As political scientist Shireen Hassim has argued, the ANC's organisational hierarchy and structure worked against ANC women, and their demands for an equal status showed the limitations of nationalism as a method for ensuring liberation for all.⁴²⁹ Political activism was highly gendered: a politician and liberation fighter was identified as a man, with the result that women were made to feel and look uncomfortable within the struggle. During the 1980s and 1990s (as will be outlined in chapters four and five) the Women's Section was able to put a greater emphasis on transforming ideas about women's participation into practice, marking the later decades as the time during which feminist and gender ideology started to become effective political tools. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, women still needed to liberate themselves first, and their male-dominated movement second. It was a tall order and, in combination with brutal apartheid repression that kept the ANC's attention elsewhere, it made it near impossible for women to rise through the ranks of the movement. Meanwhile, female leaders were not taken seriously: instead of taking care of their political talents, they were either relegated to look after so-called 'women's issues', i.e. social welfare projects, or considered office staff. Ginwala's route to becoming a gender activist shows that ANC women were sometimes part of the problem themselves: she admits that as a well-

⁴²⁹ Hassim *Women's Organisations and Democracy in South Africa*, pp. 454, 455

educated and fairly senior member of the exile movement, she overlooked other less high-ranking women and their struggles.

The chapter has also underlined tensions within the ANC as it was transformed from a mass movement to a clandestine organisation. Social, linguistic and ethnic divides were sources of antagonism within women's groups as well as the ANC. The ANC's broad base became a strength in the 1980s and 1990s, when it could be seen and heard to speak for South Africa as a whole. In the first perilous years of exile and underground existence, however, it was seen as a yet another source of destabilisation.

Despite the progress made between 1960 and 1976, the women's movement within the ANC was far too weak to enforce changes that would benefit its entire caucus. Their gains and recognition was predominantly symbolic; real influence was still out of reach. However, the experiences of the late 1960s and early 1970s dramatically opened the eyes of a generation of women who would not be silenced. Their politicisation and mobilisation in combination with growing international support proved vital over the coming decades.

CHAPTER 3

A QUIET REVOLUTION: SAP WOMEN'S ACTIVISM 1976-1990

INTRODUCTION

Annie Marie Sundbom: I just read in our report from Zambia that the men wondered why we wanted the women to join [the meeting], and we said that 'we are women and we want to know what they are doing'. And then they said 'well, look, we've brought these women today'. And tried to speak for them, but we said that we wanted women to speak [for themselves].

Emma Lundin: So an informal quota, really.

Annie Marie Sundbom: Yes, that was it.⁴³⁰

As SAP was ousted from government for the first time in 44 years in 1976, a new era of social democratic politics beckoned. Challenged from left and right, and increasingly enticed by neoliberal ideologies, SAP struggled to regain its power and confidence. For women's activists, this became an era of below-the-surface mobilisation. Yet another generational shift took place, as the postwar generation, born in the late 1940s and 1950s, entered national politics and attempted to mould it to suit their needs. This chapter explores the impact of this generation, their influences and activism. It also discusses the role of internationalism on SAP women's quest for gender equality. Following the meeting of Annie Marie Sundbom with southern African liberation movements in Zambia in 1976, during which her delegation successfully put a spotlight on women of the movements (see the quote above), how was the party's transnational activism impacted by its term in opposition 1976-1982? Why were international platforms important in a period during which greater numbers of SAP women appointed to the cabinet than ever before? Discussing younger SAP women's lack of enthusiasm for women-only mobilisation, the chapter addresses the tensions surrounding the party's self-perception and the working practices that barred many of its female members from powerful structures. The chapter concludes that while women were making gains, this

⁴³⁰ Author's interview with Annie Marie Sundbom (10 December 2012).

was far from a coincidence or the result of benevolent party politics: it was the result of hard work across many political fora, and infused by a new era of feminist-inspired academic research.

The chapter begins in 1976, when SAP lost its first general election since the interwar era. It ends in 1990, when a SAP government under Ingvar Carlsson fought what historian Francis Sejersted has called a ‘second Poltava’; a battle against high unemployment, a collapsing national economy and an increasingly fickle electorate.⁴³¹ The first section — Part I — covers the impact of the losses in 1976 and 1979, a new era in which SAP remained the largest parliamentary party but was a reduced political force. It also considers the rising number of female MPs and cabinet ministers throughout the 1980s, revealing a parliamentary-wide pattern of greater participation of women. Part II discusses the women’s activism of the era: the generational shift that also turned the tide in favour of direct quotas, and the prevailing misogynist and patriarchal attitudes that still met women’s calls for greater influence. Part III details the devastating impact of the murder of Olof Palme in February 1986, as well as a new ideological era for SAP in which neoliberalism became an increasingly influential philosophy. Finally, Part IV considers the internationalist policies of the party in this era. How was SAP’s foreign activism impacted by its loss of national power? What was SAP women’s role in the international community at this time? And what lay behind the increasingly loud calls for the implementation of gender quotas in the selection of candidates to party and national offices?

As in chapter one, chapter three draws on archival research at the labour movement archives in Stockholm (Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek) and Malmö (Arbetarrörelsens arkiv i Skåne), as well as election reports from the national bureau of statistics (Statistiska centralbyrån) and annual reports from SAP and lateral women’s organisation SSKF. It also builds on the auto/biographical accounts of SAP women active in this era: Anna-Greta Leijon, Anita Gradin, Gertrud Sigurdson, Margot Wallström, Margareta Winberg and Mona Sahlin. Importantly, Leijon and Sahlin both wrote their autobiographies in the early 1990s as they had been forced to resign from cabinet and party positions following political scandals. Their accounts were written ‘to

⁴³¹ Sejersted *The Age of Social Democracy*, p. 479. The Battle of Poltava of in 1709 saw the troops of Swedish king Charles XII surrender to Tsar Peter I’s forces. See Englund, Peter *The Battle the Shook Europe: Poltava and the Birth of the Russian Empire* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003).

set the record straight'; to give their accounts of their contributions to and importance within the party. The memoirs of Gradin, Sigurdson and Winberg, on the other hand, were written in celebration at the end of their long and successful careers. Filling in the gaps left by these auto/biographies, and offering contemporary insights from the perspective of hindsight, the chapter also relies on information gathered through interviews with Leijon, Annie Marie Sundbom and Birgitta Dahl.

PART I

A NEW ERA IN NATIONAL POLITICS

The end of 1976 marked the beginning of an unwelcome new era for SAP, as the party was ousted from government for the first time in 44 years. In her memoirs — written shortly after her dramatic resignation in the wake of a scandal surrounding the investigation into Palme's 1986 murder — Anna-Greta Leijon revealed the shock experienced by SAP members across the country:

During the election night of 1976, many struggle to accept the results. SSU members are crying in Kallhäll's Folkets Hus [a labour movement-run people's palace], and over at the central election party [minister of finance] Gunnar Sträng refuses to believe that this is anything but a bad dream.⁴³²

The party was inexperienced in opposition politics on a national level, and party members struggled to understand why the election had been lost and, subsequently, how the next one could be won. SAP's organisational confidence was dented, as was the confidence of many of its members, who struggled with powerlessness. As Anna-Greta Leijon made clear, this was a completely new situation for many:

The bourgeois are ill-prepared to govern, but we are equally ill-prepared for opposition. Social democrats are builders of society [*samhällsbyggare*]. Almost all national politicians have experience from city and county councils. Hardly anyone has experienced politics from lecterns only; many are even reluctant to walk up to them."⁴³³

⁴³² Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 169

⁴³³ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 174

Before long, SAP's National Executive Committee called a meeting to discuss the electoral loss and the party's political position, a meeting which Gertrud Sigurdson has characterised as unpleasant and unreal.⁴³⁴ Tensions and frustrations ran high in the aftermath of 1976, although some members of the party saw a term in opposition as an opportunity. According to Leijon, they argued that it

will strengthen the ideological profile, sharpen the arguments and allow indulgence in constructive self-examination.⁴³⁵

The election had only very narrowly been decided in the bourgeois bloc's favour (see figure 1:6 on page 72). SAP's share of the vote decreased slightly from 43.6 per cent in 1973 to 42.7 in 1976 and the party lost four parliamentary seats. As VPK lost two out of its 19 previous seats, the socialist bloc controlled only 169 seats to the bourgeois bloc's 180. Olof Palme vacated the prime minister's office for Centerpartiet's 52-year-old Thorbjörn Fälldin. Fälldin created his cabinet using representatives from his own party along with Folkpartiet and Moderata Samlingspartiet.⁴³⁶ Together, these parties were committed to the removal or revoking of SAP's influence on structures of society. Nevertheless, the new 16-minister strong bourgeois coalition government included two female ministers from Centerpartiet, while three out of five deputy ministers women (two from Moderata Samlingsförbundet, and one from Folkpartiet; see table of female cabinet ministers in appendix C).

SAP's 1976 loss has been much debated by political scientists and historians over the decades.⁴³⁷ Growing awareness of the ecological impact of mass industrialisation and pollution was part of the problem: Centerpartiet was sceptical about nuclear power, and its emphasis on the countryside spoke to many voters unsure about the modernising zeal of SAP. Another issue was the industrial downturn and the subsequent unstable labour market as unemployment figures began to rise.⁴³⁸ The complicated tax system also saw voters abandon SAP for its bourgeois opponents. Critics were bolstered by the much publicised arrest of film director Ingmar Bergman

⁴³⁴ Näslund, *I en värld av män* p. 151

⁴³⁵ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 169

⁴³⁶ Centerpartiet won a 24.1 per cent share of the vote in 1976 (down 1 per cent from 1973); Folkpartiet 11.1 (up 1.7 per cent) and Moderaterna 15.3 per cent (up by 1.3 per cent). Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1976 del 1*, p. 10.

⁴³⁷ See, e.g., Elvander *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse*, pp. 322-323; Einhorn & Logue *Modern Welfare States*, p. 113; Hirdman *Vi bygger landet*, pp. 323-326; Sejersted *The Age of Social Democracy*, p. 334

⁴³⁸ Statistiska centralbyrån 'Sysselsättning och arbetslöshet 1976-2004 (21 November 2005), p. 15

on charges of tax evasion and the publication of author Astrid Lindgren's satirical fairy-tale 'Pomperipossa i Monismanien' in daily centre-right tabloid *Expressen*, written after marginal tax landed at 102 per cent. These events, in January and March 1975, added weight to the bourgeois bloc's campaign against 'out-of-control' Swedish taxation.⁴³⁹ Meanwhile, SAP's preoccupation with wage-earner funds had a marginal impact on voters, but was a decisive factor in employer organisation SAF's decision to strengthen its presence in the election campaign.⁴⁴⁰ The electorate itself had changed: reform after the 1973 election lowered the minimum voting age from 20 to 18, allowing those born between 1954 and 1958 to vote for the first time in 1976.⁴⁴¹ Many of these youngsters saw SAP as the establishment; the party had, after all, been in power since long before they were born. Wage-earner funds were proving an insufficient reminder of SAP radicalism to make this generation cast their votes in the party's favour as class-based voting had begun to break down.⁴⁴²

According to Gertrud Sigurdson, at its first meeting after the election SAP's National Executive Committee discussed the certainty that Fälldin would break at least one election pledge immediately. Fälldin had dismissed the connection between high employment and affordable energy, and had promised both 400,000 new jobs and the closing down of all of Sweden's nuclear power stations.⁴⁴³ It was, in the end, Centerpartiet's campaign against nuclear power that brought the two-year-old coalition down on 5 October 1978. Unable to agree on nuclear power policy, Fälldin's cabinet resigned and was replaced by a minority Folkpartiet cabinet — controlling only 39 out of 349 parliamentary seats — which governed until the general election in the autumn of 1979.⁴⁴⁴ Out of the 20 new Ullsten ministers, six were women: two were in charge of

⁴³⁹ Bergman, Ingmar *The Magic Lantern: an Autobiography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 97-99; Lindgren, Astrid 'Pomperipossa i Monismanien' *Expressen*, 10 March 1976; Sejersted *The Age of Social Democracy*, p. 322

⁴⁴⁰ See Whyman *Sweden and the 'Third Way'*, pp. 65-79; Östberg *När vinden vände*, pp. 181-185; Arter, David *Scandinavian Politics Today* (1999), p. 158. SAP's Wage-Earner Funds Commission, led by Bernt Öhman, operated between 1974 and 1981. Andersson, Jenny *Between Growth and Security: Swedish Social Democracy from a Strong Society to a Third Way* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), pp. 106-107

⁴⁴¹ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1976 del 1*, p. 7

⁴⁴² Elvander *Skandinavisk arbetarrörelse* pp. 319-323; Einhorn & Logue *Modern Welfare States* pp. 130-131

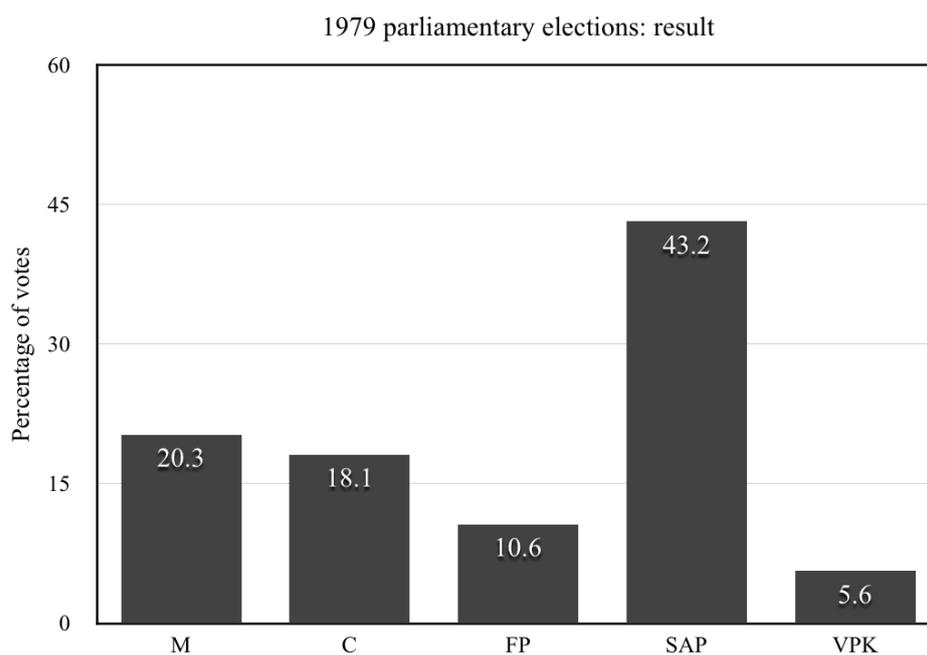
⁴⁴³ Näslund, *I en värld av män* p. 151

⁴⁴⁴ The minority Folkpartiet cabinet passed the parliamentary vote as only Moderaterna and VPK voted against it; SAP and Centerpartiet abstained. Ullsten's minister of justice, Sven Romanus (1906-2005) was previously a Supreme Court judge and served the government without a party affiliation. For more about the Ullsten cabinet, see e.g. Östberg *När vinden vände*, p. 202-3, Näslund *I en värld av män*, p. 160; Hirdman *Vi bygger landet*, p. 324

the housing and communications ministries, the rest deputy ministers of healthcare, salary policy, schools, and equality and immigration.⁴⁴⁵

The bourgeois government crisis in the autumn of 1978 gave SAP plenty of opportunities to portray itself yet again as the only credible government option. The party's election strategy was to show that the bourgeois bloc was incapable of governing. Nevertheless, SAP lost the election by a mere 8,404 votes.⁴⁴⁶ The percentages presented in figure 3.1 (below) translated to 154 SAP seats (an increase of two) and 20 VPK seats (an increase by three seats, and its strongest result since 1948). The socialist bloc's combined number of parliamentary seats was 174. The bourgeois bloc, meanwhile, lost five seats but retained 175 and the opportunity to create another three-party coalition under Fälldin.⁴⁴⁷ Out of the 21 new cabinet ministers, two were women in charge of the housing ministry and ministry of social affairs. Three were deputies: of healthcare, schools, and equality and immigration.

fig. 3:1



The big change within the bourgeois bloc was that the previously dominant Centerpartiet lost 22 seats while Moderata Samlingspartiet gained 18. The latter's 20.3

⁴⁴⁵ The number of cabinet ministers accounts for Ingemar Mundebo twice, as he served as both minister of finance and budget minister in the Ullsten cabinet.

⁴⁴⁶ Östberg *När vinden vände*, p. 211

⁴⁴⁷ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1979: Del 1, Riksdagsvalet den 16 september 1979* (Stockholm: LiberFörlag/Allmänna Förlaget, 1980), p. 7

per cent share of the vote made it its best election since 1932.⁴⁴⁸ Moderata Samlingspartiet emphasised welfare cuts, and the need to lower salaries and prices to levels seen elsewhere in the world. Swedish trade unions balloted workers in opposition to cuts and reorganisations. In April 1980, a lockout was imposed on 552,000 LO-members; another 100,000 went on strike. 11,600 public sector workers were subject to another lockout, while 5,000 committed to sporadic strikes. Before it was called off on 24 June, as the government persuaded employers' organisation SAF to agree to the mediators' offers, it had become the largest strike movement in Sweden since 1909.⁴⁴⁹ Less than a year later, in May 1981, the third bourgeois government resigned after Folkpartiet and Centerpartiet cut a deal with SAP to pass a tax reform opposed by Moderata Samlingspartiet.⁴⁵⁰ Its successor was a minority Folkpartiet and Centerpartiet coalition under Fällidin, with two female ministers out of a total of 14, while three out of the four deputy ministers were also women.⁴⁵¹

While bourgeois mismanagement of the economy played into SAP's hands, the new era of environmental activism proved a greater problem. Public outcry in the aftermath of the Three Mile Island nuclear reactor meltdown in 1979, coupled with the fall of the first Fällidin government, allowed SAP and Folkpartiet to unite around a call for a referendum on Sweden's future nuclear power policy.⁴⁵² The referendum took place on 23 March 1980 with voters given three options. Moderata Samlingspartiet's Linje 1 ('line one') was in favour of continuing investment in nuclear power until an alternative power source had been identified; SAP and Folkpartiet's Linje 2 sought a gradual winding down of nuclear power; and Centerpartiet's Linje 3 was determined to close down all Swedish reactors within 10 years. Linje 2 won a very narrow victory.⁴⁵³ However, despite officially winning, it can be argued that SAP's position in the nuclear power question further alienated Palme from the more radical elements of Swedish society. Indeed, the party's position showed that SAP, which had always seen and portrayed itself as the party of a future synonymous with industrial strength and technological progress, was struggling to keep up with the shift towards 'green'

⁴⁴⁸ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1979. Del 1*, p. 7

⁴⁴⁹ Hirdman *Vi bygger landet*, pp. 327, 328

⁴⁵⁰ Hirdman *Vi bygger landet*, pp. 325, 326

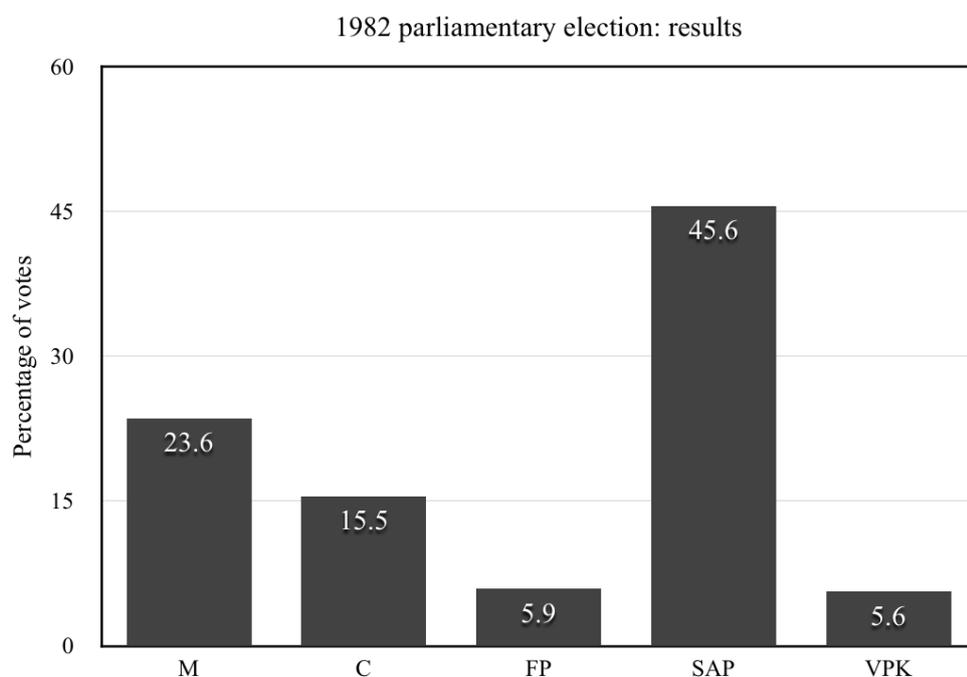
⁴⁵¹ Three out of the five were from the Centerpartiet; the other two from Folkpartiet.

⁴⁵² Sejersted *The Age of Social Democracy*, pp. 338-340

⁴⁵³ Statistiska centralbyrån 'Folkomröstningar, valresultat: Folkomröstningen om kärnkraften 1980', 16 May 2005.

thinking.⁴⁵⁴ As chapter one showed, SAP had struggled to connect to idealistic members of the ‘Green Wave’ movement, who relocated to rural areas from polluted inner cities, attempting to become self-sustainable with an almost millenarian zeal. In the early 1980s, their sentiments overlapped clearly with those of the anti-nuclear movement. The increasingly strong environmental lobby now became a real political threat. As pointed out in chapter one, a growing number of local ‘green’ parties had contested municipal elections throughout the 1970s. On 20 September 1981, a year after the nuclear power referendum and disappointed with the continued lack of progress, many of these groups came together to create Miljöpartiet (the ‘Environment Party’, Mp).⁴⁵⁵

fig. 3:2



Nevertheless, the bourgeois coalition’s handling of state finances allowed SAP to believe that its time in opposition would come to an end in 1982. As cuts to unemployment benefits mobilised greater parts of the Swedish electorate, the SAP-led 1 May celebrations of 1982 were “a mighty manifestation” with 800,000 participants in 400 places across the country.⁴⁵⁶ Gertrud Sigurdson later told her biographer that it:

was easy to argue against [the bourgeois coalition’s] politics and their budget deficit, and our own programme for the future gave alternatives. They included the wage-earner

⁴⁵⁴ Arter *Scandinavian Politics Today* (1999), pp. 107-108; Andersson *Between Growth and Security*, p. 65

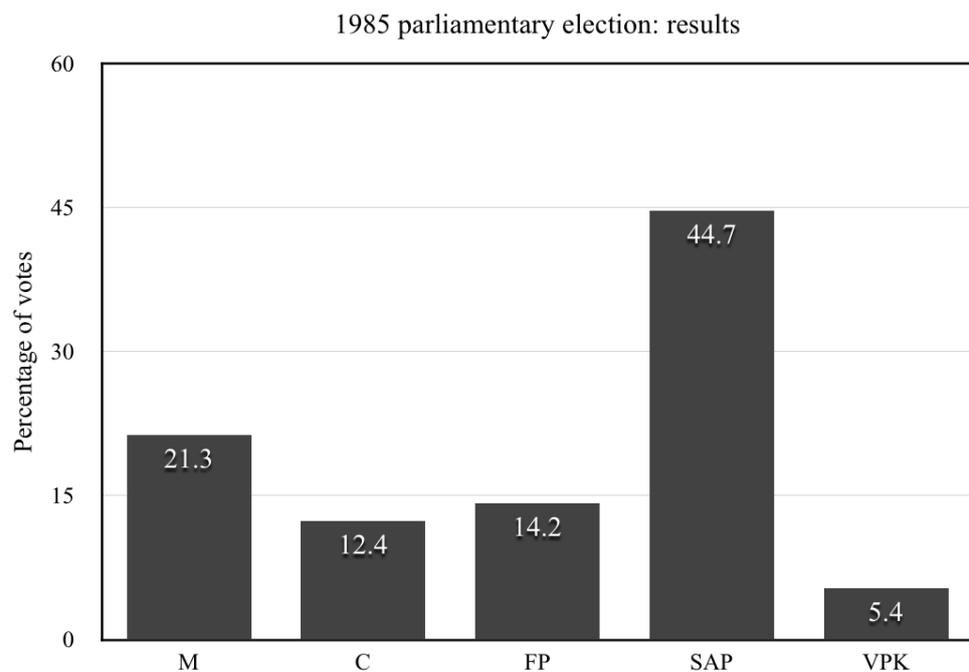
⁴⁵⁵ As of 1985, the party goes under the name Miljöpartiet de Gröna - the ‘green environment party’.

⁴⁵⁶ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1982* (Stockholm: Socialdemokratiska arbetarepartiet, 1983), p. 27

funds that were no longer just about influence and power, but increasingly about how the industry must have access to venture capital to help Sweden out of the [financial] crisis. These were points that were popular with our people.⁴⁵⁷

These were strategies that gave results. On 19 September 1982, SAP emerged victorious from the general election. Moderata Samlingspartiet again increased its mandates, but at the expense of Centerpartiet and Folkpartiet. As visible from figure 3.2 (above) the combined bourgeois bloc earned 45 per cent of the votes. SAP's 45.6 per cent — a modest but decisive increase from 1979 — gave it 166 seats, making it a larger parliamentary entity than the whole bourgeois bloc at 163. After six years, SAP was finally back in power.⁴⁵⁸

fig. 3:3



Despite losing 45,000 votes and seven parliamentary seats (from 166 to 159), SAP then held on to power in the general election in 1985 (see figure 3.3 above).⁴⁵⁹ This came as a surprise to many, as opinion polls in the run-up to the election had predicted that SAP's share would be as small as 39 per cent.⁴⁶⁰ In the end, as the votes were counted on 15 September, the party dropped only 0.9 per cent, from 45.6 to 44.7 per cent. The

⁴⁵⁷ Näslund *I en värld av män*, p. 173

⁴⁵⁸ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1982: Del 1 — Riksdagsvalet den 19 september 1982* (Stockholm: LiberFörlag, 1983), p. 8.

⁴⁵⁹ Down 45,699 — from 2,533,250 to 2,487,551. See Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1985: Del 1 — Riksdagsvalet den 15 september 1985* (Stockholm: LiberFörlag 1986), p. 8.

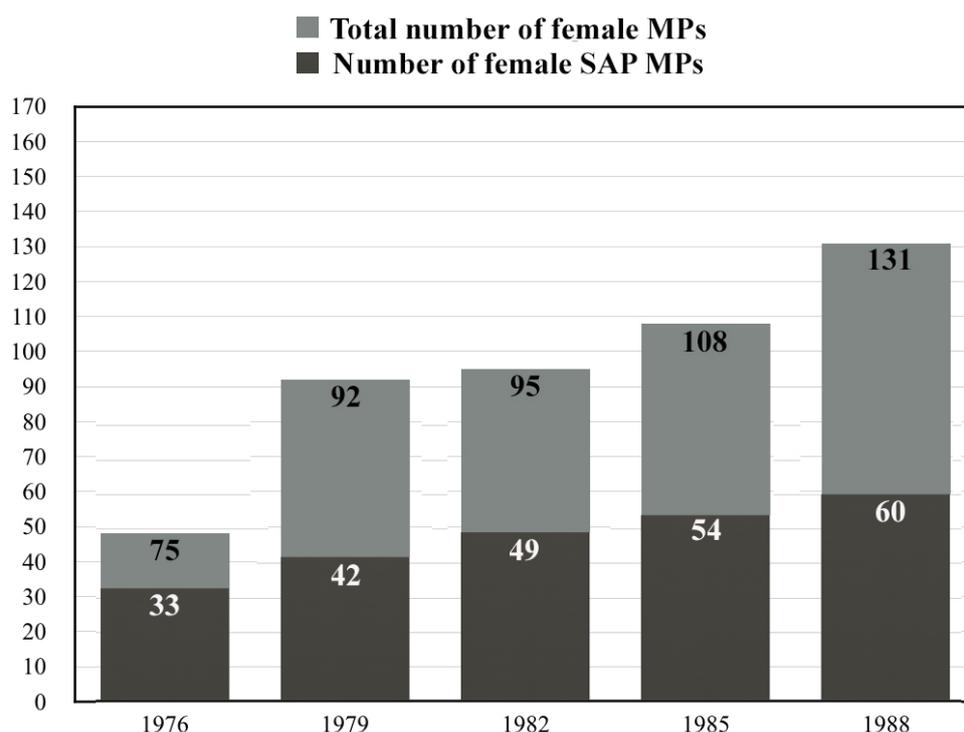
⁴⁶⁰ Östberg *När vinden vände*, p. 309

only party to gain any votes at all in comparison to 1982 was Folkpartiet, who increased its share from 5.9 to 14.2 per cent. Centerpartiet, meanwhile, continued its decline by dropping 4.9 per cent (from 17.3 to 12.4 per cent), ending up with 44 seats instead of its previous 56. The bourgeois bloc's 171 seats now outweighed SAP's 159, but VPK's 19 gave the socialist bloc a seven-seat margin hold on power.⁴⁶¹

WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT AND THE CABINET

Chapter one showed that the number of female MPs rose significantly after the election of 1973, as the bourgeois bloc selected more women to represent its parties. This upward trend continued throughout the 1970s and 1980s, as seen in figure 3:4 (below).

fig. 3:4 Female MPs 1976-1988

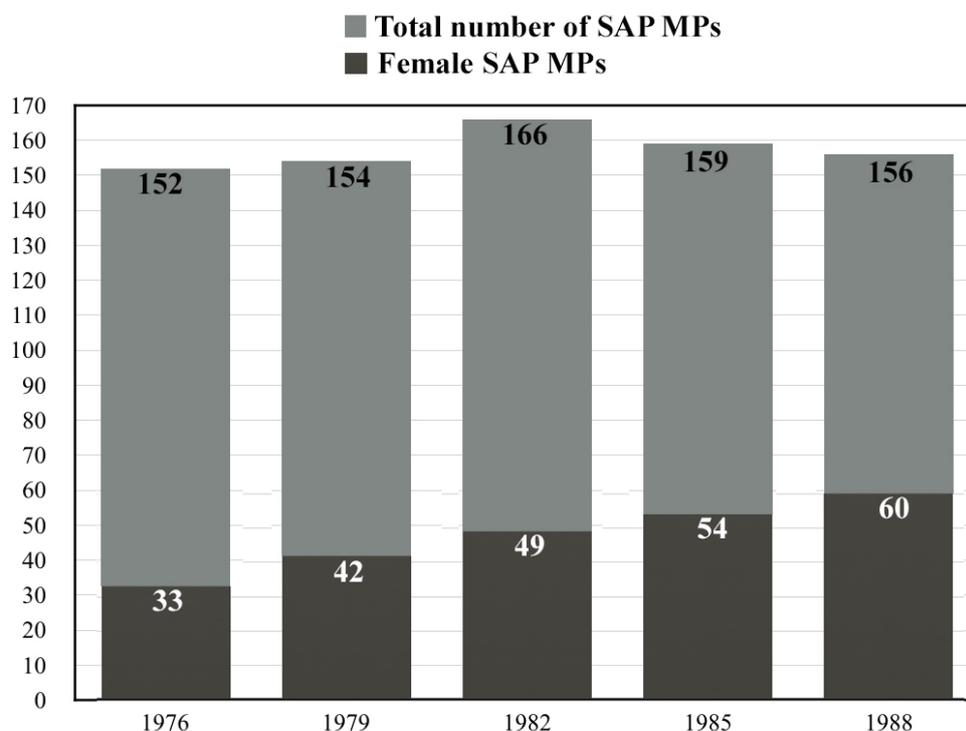


In 1976, when the total number of female SAP MPs rose by three, the number of female MPs overall increased by six. The number of female MPs then increased decisively in 1979, and marginally in 1982, by which time they made up 27.2 per cent of the 349 MPs. The majority continued to be SAP members: the proportion of female MPs within

⁴⁶¹ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1985: Del 1*, p. 8. Centerpartiet collaborated with Kristdemokratisk Samling (KdS) in the election, subsequently gave one of its seats to KdS leader Alf Svensson.

SAP's parliamentary group — shown in figure 3:5 below — rose from 27.3 per cent in 1976 to 38.5 per cent in 1988. Nevertheless, between 1973 and 1985, it was Centerpartiet that had the best gender balance among its parliamentary members.⁴⁶²

fig. 3:5 SAP's parliamentary gender balance 1976-1988



Women's parliamentary representation increased in 1985. The 97 female MPs elected in 1982 became 108 in 1985, ensuring that 31.2 per cent of all MPs were women.⁴⁶³ Exactly half of these were SAP women, who made up a third of the party's parliamentary group, despite the number of MPs in the latter decreasing after the election. SAP's parliamentary group reflected the party's composition as a whole: in 1985, the party accounted for 380,089 — or 31.6 per cent — of its 1,203,785 members being women. The real figure is likely to have been higher: Stockholm's workers' council confessed not keep track of the gender of its members, so accounted for all (including Annie Marie Sundbom) as men.⁴⁶⁴ The electorate, however — just like the population at large — had a slight majority of women and the question of whether the party's parliamentary group should represent the gender balance within the party, the

⁴⁶² Statistiska centralbyrån – Statistikdatabasen: Valda i riksdagsval efter region, parti och kön. Valår 1973-2010'. Folkpartiet's share of women dropped by over nine per cent (from 23.7 per cent to 14.3 per cent) and VPK's by 5 per cent (from 25 to 20 per cent).

⁴⁶³ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1985: Del 1*, p. 16

⁴⁶⁴ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1985* (Stockholm: Socialdemokratiska arbetarepartiet, 1987), p. 78

gender balance of the electorate, or that of the general population remained unsolved until the early 1990s.⁴⁶⁵

The parliament elected in 1985 was greatly impacted by the events on 28 February 1986 when SAP's prime minister, Olof Palme, was murdered in Stockholm. This will be further outlined in section III of this chapter, though a short discussion about the implications for the number of female cabinet ministers follows here. Ingvar Carlsson (b. 1934) — who had been by Palme's side since the 1960s — was unanimously elected as party chairman in the wake of the murder and Carlsson also succeeded Palme as Sweden's prime minister.⁴⁶⁶

As the table of female cabinet ministers from 1960 in appendix C shows, Swedish governments — whether led by SAP or the bourgeois parties — had continued the pattern of five female members since Palme created his first cabinet in 1969. In 1982, Palme had increased the total number of cabinet ministers to 22. Carlsson expanded this to 26, 16 of whom headed ministries. While there was considerable overlap between Palme's last and Carlsson's first cabinets, by the time the latter resigned in 1990 the number of female ministers had grown to eight. Five of these were newcomers: Ingela Thalén, who replaced Anna-Greta Leijon as labour market minister in 1987; Laila Freivalds, who replaced Leijon as minister of justice in 1988; Margot Wallström, who became deputy minister of church, consumer and youth policy issues in 1988; SSKF-leader Maj-Lis Lööv, who became deputy equality and immigration minister in 1989; and Mona Sahlin, who replaced Thalén at the labour market ministry in 1990. Thalén then became minister of social affairs, replacing Gertrud Sigurdsen. In her biography, Sigurdsen portrays this as a retirement:

I was 68 and ready to step down whenever it was deemed appropriate by Ingvar Carlsson. And it was appropriate now. (...) I still had my mandate in parliament and became an ordinary MP again. It was a way of cutting back [on politics] that suited me, particularly as people are so timid when faced with a former minister.⁴⁶⁷

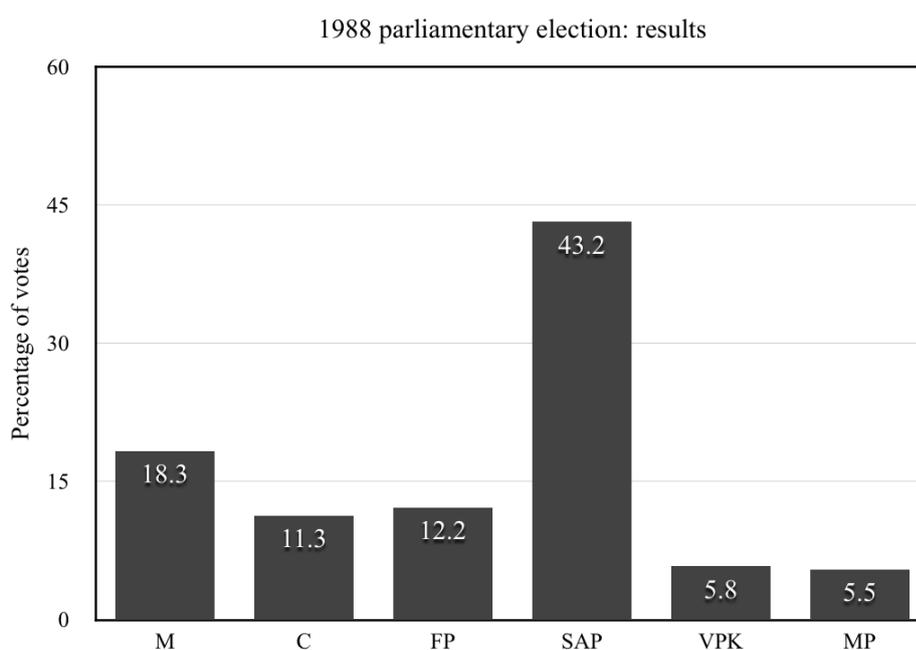
⁴⁶⁵ There is some evidence that the 1976 election marked the date when women started outweighing men in numbers of voters – see Öhrvall, Richard 'Kvinnorna förbi i valdeltagande', Statistiska centralbyrån, 6 March 2013

⁴⁶⁶ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 231

⁴⁶⁷ Näslund *I en värld av män*, p. 244; it is noticeable that Sigurdsen used a phrase like 'trappa ner' (cutting back) so often used when discussing addictive substances.

Anna-Greta Leijon’s exit from the cabinet was much more conspicuous. In October 1987, Leijon had replaced Sten Wickbom as minister of justice following a scandal caused by a convicted spy absconding to the USSR while on furlough.⁴⁶⁸ Within her new ministry, Leijon — who grew up by the Stockholm prison where her father was a guard — sought to ensure harsher punishments for violence against women and children.⁴⁶⁹ But Leijon’s career was also cut short by scandal, as journalists discovered illegal wire-tapping of suspects in the Palme inquiry. The wires had been planted by Ebbe Carlsson, a publisher and former press secretary to Wickbom’s predecessor as SAP minister of justice, Lennart Geijer.⁴⁷⁰ On 7 June 1988, Leijon resigned; within days, Thage G. Peterson — with whom Leijon had worked at the equality commission in the 1970s — was confirmed as her temporary replacement.

fig. 3:6



The Ebbe Carlsson affair cast a long shadow over SAP’s election campaign in 1988. SAP sought votes to increase parental leave, instigate safety measures at the workplaces perceived as most dangerous, increased mandatory paid holidays to six weeks, and work

⁴⁶⁸ Former security police officer Stig Bergling (1937-2015) — sentenced to life imprisonment in 1979 for selling Swedish military secrets to the Soviet Union — absconded while on leave from serving time near Stockholm.

⁴⁶⁹ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 237, 239

⁴⁷⁰ Geijer served in Palme’s first cabinet, 1969-1976.

to improve the environment.⁴⁷¹ Nevertheless, the party leadership later complained in its annual report that “the media establishment” ignored the fact “that the government’s financial politics during this term had been extraordinarily successful”.⁴⁷²

Despite the distractions from its core message, SAP remained in power. It lost three seats while VPK increased its share by two to 21 (the parties’ individual shares of the vote are presented in figure 3:6 above). Meanwhile, all the bourgeois parties lost a few seats each, with Moderaterna losing 10 MPs.⁴⁷³ Miljöpartiet crossed the parliamentary threshold for the first time and with a 5.5 per cent share was awarded 20 MPs. Although it refused to choose between the bourgeois and the socialist blocs, SAP could continue to govern thanks to the socialist bloc holding 177 of 349 seats.⁴⁷⁴ As the decade drew to a close, the proportion of women in government was at its highest yet, with women making up a total of 36.8 per cent of the cabinet.⁴⁷⁵

PART II

A NEW GENERATION OF WOMEN’S WORK

The increase of female MPs and cabinet ministers outlined above was the result of the continuous hard work of women’s activists in all parties. SAP experienced a generational shift, with members born in the late 1940s and 1950s rising through its ranks throughout this time. One member of this generation is Margareta Winberg, who in 1976 was invited to join the county council administration executive in the central province of Jämtland because SAP needed a woman or a young person to fill the position. “I was 29 years old and a woman, so I fitted the bill,” Winberg wrote in her memoir:

I thus got my first important assignment (...) because of my age and gender, thanks to a quota. I have never denied that and never been embarrassed about it either.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷¹ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1988* (Stockholm: Socialdemokratiska arbetarepartiet, 1990), p. 3

⁴⁷² Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1988*, p. 3

⁴⁷³ One of the 44 seats after the 1985 election had been filled by KdS’s leader Alf Svensson thanks to a pre-election collaboration pact. However, that pact ended in 1988. KdS polled at 2.9 per cent - under the parliamentary bar - and Svensson lost his seat.

⁴⁷⁴ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1988: del 1 – Riksdagsvalet den 18 september 1988* (Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån, 1989), p. 8

⁴⁷⁵ See appendix C.

⁴⁷⁶ Winberg, Margareta *Lärlarinna i politikens hårda skola* (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 2008), p. 31

Nevertheless, as one of three women in a 15-member strong executive, Winberg

often felt as though we were hostages, but that only strengthened my militancy for getting more women into politics.⁴⁷⁷

Winberg's radical attitude to gender equality mirrored that of many of SAP women who felt more was needed to strengthen the position of women in the party. Born in a working-class SAP-supporting home in the industrial town of Trollhättan, Winberg had been politicised by the death of her SAP-supporting father at the age of 56. He had been diagnosed with kidney failure, but was not given potentially life-saving treatment as "his life was worth less than others", Winberg later wrote. It had a dramatic effect on her:

After his death I promised that if I could do anything to ensure that people were valued equally, that we would get closer to equality, that people's views of others changed, then I would do just that. (...) *I became a social democrat*. Social inheritance and heritage gave me no alternatives.⁴⁷⁸

While other members of Winberg's generation broke the bonds their parents had to the old labour movement in favour of the New Left, she remained. Others did too: in 1979, a batch of young SSU recruits joined SAP's parliamentary group, including Margot Wallström and Göran Persson. Much like Winberg found in the provincial government, parliamentary life was not easy for newcomers. In 2012, Wallström told her biographer that she expected solidarity within her parliamentary group, but that "parliament sometimes felt like the loneliest place in the world". One of the main issues, Wallström argued, was that older parliamentarians should have done much more to support younger colleagues.⁴⁷⁹

The infusion of younger parliamentarians continued after the 1982 election, when yet another batch of SSU veterans became MPs. One of them was Mona Sahlin, who, using the terminology coined by Gunnel Karlsson explained in chapter one, was very much a model 'party woman'. She had risen through mixed-gender organisations and was at the time blind to the rigid patriarchal structures that continued to hold other

⁴⁷⁷ Winberg *Lärlarinna i politikens hårda skola*, p. 31

⁴⁷⁸ Winberg *Lärlarinna i politikens hårda skola*, p. 17 (italics are Winberg's own)

⁴⁷⁹ Ohlsson, Bengt *Margot* (Stockholm: Brombergs, 2013), p. 104

female SAP members back. In Sahlin's 1996 memoir, *Med mina ord* — written after her resignation in 1995 amid an expenses scandal — she explains that:

When I look back now I can see other patterns than the ones I experienced then. But I felt like one in the gang and the gang was mostly made up of guys and it was a gang on guys' terms. As chair [of SSU Stockholm], I was the person who made the decisions in meetings. But apart from that it was the guys' world – their jokes, habits, and ways to be and act. And us girls joined in. (...) Their jokes were often crude and sexist, but the girls rarely said anything. These were the rules of the game that we perceived we had to follow.⁴⁸⁰

Like Winberg, Sahlin had in some ways inherited her party affiliation — her parents had been SAP activists in the Stockholm area — but her politicisation was the result of international events rather than personal battles and disappointments. Sahlin lists the war in Biafra, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and the black power salute by John Carlos and Tommie Smith at the Mexico City Olympics in 1968, the influence of Martin Luther King and Olof Palme, and the war in Vietnam as her calls to politics.⁴⁸¹ At just 25, Sahlin was the youngest MP after the 1982 election, and like Wallström she found parliamentary life difficult. Sahlin particularly struggled with the unwritten rules that she felt outdated:

To dress well and show respect for parliament is one thing. Taste is another. For my generation, a nice pair of jeans and a shirt and blazer definitely counts as well-dressed. But that wasn't approved. You're also not allowed to read the paper in the parliamentary chamber, or eat an apple.⁴⁸²

Sahlin faced criticism defiantly: she had great confidence in her own ability, having, among other things, been the first woman to chair SSU Stockholm County.⁴⁸³ In 1982, she was, however, pregnant and a newly married mother of a four-year-old, and was criticised by some of the older women in the party, who suggested that Sahlin should have 'waited'. "Waited to do what?" Sahlin later wrote.

Have children? Or get elected? (...) I realised later why they were so mean. It was a great sadness in their own lives: they had been forced to choose, or felt as though they had been forced, between having children or a career. [But] if we did, it was almost as

⁴⁸⁰ Sahlin *Med mina ord*, p. 80

⁴⁸¹ Sahlin *Med mina ord*, pp. 15, 17

⁴⁸² Sahlin *Med mina ord*, p. 43

⁴⁸³ Sahlin *Med mina ord*, p. 21

telling these women that they could have chosen differently; that they too could have been mothers. They were sad, but took it out on us younger people with anger.⁴⁸⁴

Sahlin sought support from other SAP parliamentary youths. Sahlin, Margot Wallström and Anna Lindh — also elected to parliament in 1982 — created a network to

support each other, discuss motions and (...) promote youth issues in different ways. It wasn't looked upon with kind eyes by everyone. Margot even got called before the parliamentary group executive who wanted to know if this was a faction; a group within the group. The elders were upset that we, in their eyes, tried to take liberties and act disloyally. It was strange and a little bit shocking.⁴⁸⁵

The network was still in place when Lindh — minister of foreign affairs at the time — was murdered in 2003, by which time most of its members had become senior-ranking SAP stalwarts.⁴⁸⁶

RADICALS AND MOBILISATION BELOW THE SURFACE

In the aftermath of the 1976 election, gender inequality became a divisive battleground as SSKF continued to lobby for the congress-mandated six-hour working day to be introduced. At the SAP congress in September 1978, SSKF again outlined its arguments, stating that a shorter working day would allow men and women to share family and household duties equally. While the motion was met with some respect — the congress appointed a working group to examine the issue, in which SSKF was represented — its authors were not.⁴⁸⁷ One of them, Anita Gradin, later characterised the congress as a revolution as it passed a motion to support gender equality in principle. At the time, however, the debate that followed a separate motion that argued that a quota system could help enforce gender equality illustrates the divisiveness of the question. A large number of men left the congress hall to show their disinterest; the small number of men who stayed behind either spoke disparagingly about 'girls', or encouraged the congress to focus on more 'essential' topics.⁴⁸⁸ When the SAP national party board was restructured to set an example, increasing the number of female members from two to

⁴⁸⁴ Sahlin *Med mina ord*, p. 40

⁴⁸⁵ Sahlin *Med mina ord*, p. 39

⁴⁸⁶ Sahlin *Med mina ord*, p. 38-9

⁴⁸⁷ Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, p. 47

⁴⁸⁸ Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, p. 48

10 (out of a total of 28), it caused a lot of male anger and confusion.⁴⁸⁹ In her memoir, Gradin wrote of one individual:

who considered himself very ill-treated, and who angrily left the congress before it had ended and then resigned the chairmanship in [his] district.⁴⁹⁰

There was opposition from women too. Gertrud Sigurdsen feared the quotas would show that “women couldn’t cope with their tasks” if introduced with haste; “if they failed, it would have taken many years to return” to strength. Sigurdsen instead preferred that women be given experience in the party’s and trade union’s lateral organisations before progressing, just like she had once. Quotas, Sigurdsen later explained to her biographer, should only be introduced if women were still held back after that.⁴⁹¹ It was an opinion shared by many in the party, despite the fact that it had long proved futile in increasing the number of women in deciding fora. As shown in chapter one, some SAP workers’ councils — including Anna-Greta Leijon’s Järfälla — had already shown the impact of successful gender quota implementations on the representation of women, but congress voted to endorse quotas on a voluntary basis only.⁴⁹²

Women were increasingly visible in both parliament and the party. SSKF considered the 1979 election “a breakthrough for women as campaigners on all levels”, despite SAP’s failure to regain power.⁴⁹³ The organisation should also have been encouraged by the fact that ‘equality between women and men’ became a subsection in SAP’s annual report from 1980, following the decisions to improve gender equality at the 1978 congress. By 1980, all party districts and 149 workers’ councils had appointed equality groups, which

organised conferences and courses for the workers’ councils’ equality groups and have also convened meetings with the workers’ councils to discuss the structuring of the equality working methods.⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁸⁹ The national board translates to ‘partistyrelsen’, not to be confused with the smaller NEC (Verkställande utskottet, VU)

⁴⁹⁰ Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, p. 48

⁴⁹¹ Näslund *I en värld av män*, p. 139-140

⁴⁹² Kindenberg, Ulla & Rosberg, Laina *Varannan Damernas: Det började i Järfälla* (Stockholm: Premiss förlag, 2012), p. 57

⁴⁹³ Näslund *I en värld av män*, p. 187

⁴⁹⁴ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1980* (Stockholm: Socialdemokratiska arbetarepartiet, 1981), pp. 28-29

A handbook entitled ‘Equality between women and men’ had been written to “supply a foundation and guidelines for the local equality work”, discussing “among other things, equality in schools, equality at work and equality in political life”.⁴⁹⁵ It was a promising initiative, but a look at the practices of Malmö Workers’ Council — one of the first to introduce an internal equality commission — shows that it was not a shortcut. In January 1979, the local SSKF club reported that the commission had only met twice, and still did not have a programme to work towards. The chair of the meeting, Siv Carlström, added that “equality will take a long time to [achieve]”.⁴⁹⁶ Nevertheless, at a conference for equality group representatives in October 1980, SAP made great claims for past achievements, arguing that the early 1970s had marked a “breakthrough for equality”. Parental insurance (i.e. parental leave), extended childcare, improved financial support for students, and separate taxation for couples had been social democratic policies

aimed at creating work for everyone and therefore financial independence for both women and men (...) [We] can never accept policies that threaten equality. We don’t want to starve ourselves out of the crisis. The labour movement wants to make use of the most important resource of any country — people’s willingness to work.⁴⁹⁷

This self-congratulatory tone needs to be contrasted with the objective reality of SAP’s continuing working practices at this point. The Swedish labour movement’s long history of failing to recognise the systematic oppression of women’s voices within the party continued. While in opposition, the need to portray the party as a cohesive, organised and orderly unit — both internally and in the eyes of the electorate — meant that while some women’s activist demands had been appeased, others had been left on the shelf. Though on the rise in both parliament and party executives, many women’s voices were still systematically subsumed, and radical proposals ran the risk of meeting loud, organised opposition.

⁴⁹⁵ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1980*, pp. 28-29

⁴⁹⁶ Arbetarrörelsens arkiv i Skåne: ’Protokoll fört vid träff för representantskapsledamöterna i Malmö Arbetarekommun den 15 januari 1979’: A:1 Malmö Socialdemokratiska Kvinnokrets – mötesprotokoll 1975-1985

⁴⁹⁷ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1980*, pp. 29-30. The original document reads ‘socialdemokratin’, which is directly translated as ‘social democracy’ and is a phrase used to include the entire labour movement, not just SAP.

At the 1981 SAP congress, the divisions within the bourgeois coalition then in power worked in one woman's favour. As strikes swept through Sweden, SAP wanted to build as much credibility as possible in labour market policy and turned to its expert on the topic, Anna-Greta Leijon. She was elected to serve in SAP's NEC, where she and Gertrud Sigurdsen (who had been a NEC member since 1968) were the only two women among the seven regular members, and four out of 14 if including substitutes (the two female substitutes were Birgitta Dahl and Lilly Hansson).⁴⁹⁸ The congress electing Leijon had the greatest proportion of female representatives in SAP history: 121 out of 350 – or 35 per cent – of congress delegates were women.⁴⁹⁹ Once SAP returned to power in 1982, women were also —as previously shown — found in more cabinet posts than before. Importantly, Leijon argues that one reason for women's visibility was the precedent set by the bourgeois coalitions. Discussing appointments with Leijon, Palme told Leijon that “we can't have fewer women than the bourgeois”.⁵⁰⁰ The share of women in the cabinet landed at 25 per cent; less than the 31.6 per cent of Ullsten's short-lived 1978-1979 cabinet.⁵⁰¹ As a result, many women's activists and supporters within SAP and beyond deemed the 1982 government a disappointment. Though a radical shift for SAP, it was nowhere near enough for the times.⁵⁰²

However, once installed, the female cabinet ministers had a great impact. Leijon's ministry became known as ‘the women's house’ on account of the high number of women who worked there.⁵⁰³ She worked closely with the National Labour Market Board (Arbetsmarknadsstyrelsen; AMS), which was run by SAP's Allan Larsson, a personal friend of Leijon's (and later successor to Kjell-Olof Feldt as finance minister). Never afraid of promoting women within the party, Leijon managed to make Larsson promise to nominate more women to AMS management positions. Let down by his efforts, Leijon did what she could for the cause herself, selecting a female candidate as

⁴⁹⁸ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1981* (Stockholm: Socialdemokratiska arbetarepartiet, 1982), p. 22

⁴⁹⁹ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1981*, p. 7

⁵⁰⁰ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 189

⁵⁰¹ Regeringskansliet ‘Sveriges regeringar 1946-’; the gender ratio in Ullsten's cabinet had been boosted by his five deputy ministers, of which four were women: Ullsten stuck to the seemingly cemented Swedish practice of appointing only two ministry-leading female ministers.

⁵⁰² Östberg *När vinden vände*, p. 293

⁵⁰³ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 190; the Swedish term is ‘kärninghuset’, which falls somewhere between ‘women's house’ and ‘crones' house’

county labour director against Larsson's wishes, just to "do something to improve the situation".⁵⁰⁴

As immigration and equality minister, Anita Gradin was also in charge of an office in which women outnumbered men, so

we were designated the 'women's ministry' in the press – though no one commented that all the other departments ought to have been designated 'men's ministries' if that were the case.⁵⁰⁵

Gradin's saw the equal participation of women in working life as her most important task, later writing that "I knew what I wanted and I now had the tools".⁵⁰⁶ Swedish women had clearly gained from previous government bills and tougher trade union equal pay policies, but inequality was pervasive. In 1960, a female LO member made 60 per cent of a male LO member's salary; in 1977 that figure had risen to 87 per cent.⁵⁰⁷ Practical liberation was also held back by the lack of childcare investments. The bourgeois bloc had failed to extend and build more childcare centres, and Moderata Samlingspartiet had continued to push for childcare allowances as an alternative to childcare investments – in effect paying one parent (i.e. the mother) to stay at home with their children.⁵⁰⁸ As a result, this was no time for mere intellectual debates on women's subjugation. In 1983, Anita Gradin and Eva Karlsson created Jämfo, the Commission for Research on Equality.⁵⁰⁹ In her memoirs, Gradin argued that:

Jämfo commissioned research into couples' relationships in families with children, and women's conditions in working life. Researchers and decision-makers met in seminars to discuss various areas.⁵¹⁰

Armed with statistics revealing the low proportion of women on the boards of directors in state-run authorities and bodies — despite the fact that more women were now directly elected to political bodies than ever before — Gradin also appointed a commission under SAP MP Gerd Engman to write a report called 'Alternated Women' (*varannan damernas*). Published in 1987, the report argued in favour of the

⁵⁰⁴ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 192

⁵⁰⁵ Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, p. 89

⁵⁰⁶ Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, p. 89

⁵⁰⁷ Näslund *I en värld av män*, p. 185

⁵⁰⁸ Näslund *I en värld av män*, p. 201

⁵⁰⁹ This should not be confused with JämO — the office of the equality ombudsman — introduced by Centerpartiet's Karin Andersson in 1980.

⁵¹⁰ Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, pp. 92-93

implementation of quotas if boards did not create gender equality themselves.⁵¹¹ Gradin also initiated a project to get women into traditionally male-dominated employment areas as a means to even workplace and salary playing fields.⁵¹² In 1988, encouraging academic research by Swedish-Danish political scientist Drude Dahlerup applied the concept of critical mass theory to call for 30 per cent of all seats in political structures to be earmarked for women in order for them to be able to have an impact.⁵¹³ The connection to academia and the ability to reference an independent researcher in their quest for quotas became an increasingly important strategy for SAP women's activists from this moment.

Gradin was a rare SAP woman in that she was active both within the government and in SSKF, which continued to be overlooked as a pool for recruitment into party structures. In 1980, SSKF celebrated its 60th anniversary.⁵¹⁴ A year later, the congress marked a generational change as 63-year-old Lisa Mattson, SSKF chair since 1964, was replaced by the 45-year-old Maj-Lis Lööv. The leadership shift coincided with a turn towards more overt feminism within SSKF structures, which sometimes cost the organisation dearly. At the next congress, in 1984, SSKF published a political manifesto about sex and relationships that asserted that love and politics were not mutually exclusive and that “democracy and solidarity must also apply to the relationship between women and men”. Called ‘Liberate Love’ (*Befria Kärleken*) and ridiculed by the press, it focused on cohabitation, the need for specific research into women's illnesses, sexual education in nursery and primary schools, and awareness of:

pornography, rape, prostitution, incest and domestic violence against women. It featured abortion, contraception, counselling, insemination, prenatal care and maternity welfare. But very few of these discussions featured in the press, which neglected its seriousness and focused on the concept of ‘sexual peace’ instead. We felt political and trade union working conditions would be safer and warmer if women didn't have to put up with having their bottoms patted and other degrading overtures. That led to headlines about ‘frigid’ S-Women, christened ‘scruffy owls’ [*ruggugglor*] by the press. It was the same old strategy – ridicule.⁵¹⁵

⁵¹¹ Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet *SOU 1987:19 Varannan Damernas: slutbetänkande från Utredningen om kvinnorepresentation* (Stockholm: Allmänna förlaget, 1987); Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, p. 90

⁵¹² Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, p. 93

⁵¹³ Dahlerup, Drude ‘From a Small to a Large Minority: Women in Scandinavian Politics’, *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (1988), pp. 275–297; Dahlerup, Drude *Vi har ventet længe nok. Håndbog i kvinderepresentation* (Copenhagen: Nordisk Ministerråd, 1988)

⁵¹⁴ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1980*, p. 67

⁵¹⁵ Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, p. 61, S-Kvinnor is the currently used term for SSKF.

Throughout the 1980s, the SAP women who entered parliament continued to face challenges in their working lives. In 2013, Margot Wallström explained why she resigned as an MP in 1985. Unhappy with parliamentary life, its lack of community and traditional, unspoken and hierarchical rules, she argued that:

You have to opt out of something. It's like that all the time. Sometimes you get to a point where it stops and you can't do it anymore. That is what it was like when I entered parliament and Victor [Wallström's son, born in 1985] was born and I commuted weekly between [the family home in] Karlstad and Stockholm. (...) Suddenly I just felt: no, this isn't working anymore. I can't live like this.⁵¹⁶

A lack of support and opportunities, and the demanding life as a mother with young children, made Wallström go back to the western province of Värmland where she took a job as a bank manager. But, in 1988, on the invitation of Ingvar Carlsson, Wallström returned to parliament. The women's network Wallström had previously set up with Anna Lindh and Mona Sahlin again became very important to her. The ability to share problems with others and gain strength from a group seems to have played a great role for this younger generation of women. In the 2013 memoir, Wallström outlines how some of Carlsson's cabinet ministers used to meet and talk openly about their shortcomings. There was, however, a distinct gendered component to it:

Perhaps women know themselves better. Someone said that she wanted to improve her public speaking, another felt she needed leadership skills, a third needed to practise her English, and then we would give each other advice. And I remember that I thought to myself, I wonder if men would be able to sit and talk in this way? No way, I think. Not that generation. They might be able to take a lesson, meet some sort of coach, but they would never sit like that and talk about their own weaknesses in front of others.⁵¹⁷

Wallström was the first member of her generation to be promoted to a cabinet post, and later played a significant role in transforming Engman's 'Varannan Damernas' into official SAP policy in the early 1990s, a process which is explored in chapter five.

⁵¹⁶ Ohlsson *Margot*, p. 101

⁵¹⁷ Ohlsson *Margot*, p. 52

A NEW DECADE

At the 1987 congress, the generational shift that had occurred over the past few years was visible in the tributes to lost SAP leaders. These included Alva Myrdal, Tage Erlander and Olof Palme. The congress elected Thage G. Peterson to fill Palme's seat on SAP's NEC, while Lena Hjelm-Wallén filled the substitute seat vacated by Peterson. Plans were made to take the party into the 21st century, and the party also congratulated itself on successfully raising childcare and parental allowances, unemployment benefits and enforcing environmental laws to curb the use of pesticides in agriculture.⁵¹⁸ Some SAP structures had less to celebrate than others. A few weeks previously, the SSKF congress had discussed its declining membership rates, writing in its end-of-year report that:

The organisation's traditional working methods have proved to be a poor fit for women today who have to combine work and family on an average day, often with long journeys to and from work, heavy grocery bags and the main responsibility for children and their home. Our expectation is that when we meet for the congress in 1990, we will be able to present new activities and new questions that have brought new women to the organisation.⁵¹⁹

Malmö's SSKF group was one of many that lost members during these years (in 1987, numbers fell from 605 at the beginning of the year to 584 towards the end); a result of a high average member age and low recruitment:

It's no secret that the increased average age in our clubs is all the more noticeable as nomination committees work to fill seats on boards. (...) We note that we have improved contacts with the women in the unions and their large member groups. But the renewal and regeneration has to continue.⁵²⁰

By 1990, a new era beckoned as SSKF elected Margareta Winberg as its new chair. Winberg was 43 years old and replaced the now 54-year-old Maj-Lis Lööv. While this was less of a generational shift than previous leadership changes, Winberg had a tough campaign as influential urban SSKF members considered her "a country bumpkin

⁵¹⁸ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1987* (Stockholm: Socialdemokratiska arbetarepartiet, 1988), pp. 3, 4

⁵¹⁹ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1987*, p. 71

⁵²⁰ Arbetarrörelsens arkiv i Skåne: 'Malmö Socialdemokratiska Kvinnokrets: Verksamhetsberättelse 1987' A:V Malmö Soc. Dem. Kvinnokrets Verksamhets/revisionsberättelse 1975-1995

who didn't understand big city problems and opportunities".⁵²¹ Once installed in SSKF's head office, Winberg began working to ensure that the proportion of women in SAP's NEC — which was due to be elected at the party's own congress — increased. Only two of the seven full members were women; and both Leijon and Sigurdson were due to resign at the congress. A further two, Birgitta Dahl and Lena Hjelm-Wallén, were among the seven-strong substitutes.⁵²² When Ingvar Carlsson refused to meddle with the decisions made by the election committee appointed to find candidates, Winberg discussed the issue with SSKF's own NEC, who decided to lobby for Anna Lindh and Mona Sahlin to become SAP NEC members. Winberg later remembered that:

SSU, or course, agreed. (...) Anna's name was not a problem. The problem was Anna herself. She was reluctant to run against Monica Andersson who she felt solidarity towards and who apparently was a candidate herself. Monica was unacceptable for us. She was too associated with Stockholm, and that was an issue for many of us who came from 'the country'. We finally convinced Anna that she should agree to run.

Sahlin's candidacy, meanwhile, was a thorny issue for SSKF as:

[Sahlin] had not needed us. She had — until then — managed without the sisterhood. The brotherhood had been enough. But eventually Mona became our candidate too.⁵²³

After much debate, Winberg and SSKF got the election committee to adopt their proposals at the congress:

It was a historical moment when the election committee's proposal was accepted! SSU chair Karl-Petter Thorwaldsson and I were given roses. His were for Anna, and I handed mine over to Mona. She looked surprised. She had obviously not been aware of the struggle that preceded her entry into the party elite. It was pretty significant and showed that her career until then had been without setbacks.⁵²⁴

As previously discussed, Sahlin had been privileged during her rise through SAP ranks and had not seen the need for a gender movement within the party at this point. In her 1996 memoirs, she wrote that she had thought SSKF was unnecessary as "it was just a matter of time until we would achieve equality".⁵²⁵ By 1996, Sahlin had changed her

⁵²¹ Winberg *Lärlarinna i politikens hårda skola*, p. 44

⁵²² Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1988*, p. 4

⁵²³ Winberg *Lärlarinna i politikens hårda skola*, p. 48

⁵²⁴ Winberg *Lärlarinna i politikens hårda skola*, p. 48

⁵²⁵ Sahlin *Med mina ord*, p. 80

mind, crediting her experiences of encountering resentment based on the fact that she was “young, new and a woman with opinions who spoke up and argued” during her early days as an MP. Further, she argued that historian Yvonne Hirdman’s pioneering gender history research in combination with national statistics proved to be an “unbeatable” combination.⁵²⁶ Sahlin’s conversion a sign that decades-long academic feminist mobilisation was beginning to have a decisive impact on women in the party.⁵²⁷

As a result of SSKF and SSU’s manoeuvring, the number of NEC women rose by one, from 4/14 to 5/14, in 1990. It was a small victory, but a victory nonetheless, particularly as it showed how female candidates could be elected in the future. As Anna-Greta Leijon and Gertrud Sigurdsen retired from NEC, they were given bouquets of the labour movement’s customary red roses, but also a cactus each; a reference to the nicknames of ‘small cactus’ and ‘big cactus’ that had followed them since they began working together in the late 1960s.⁵²⁸ Having passed Dahlerup’s 30 per cent critical mass threshold, the new NEC women could now have a collective impact on SAP structures unlike any generation before them.

PART III

THE LOSS OF PALME AND A NEW IDEOLOGICAL ERA

The murder of Olof Palme on 28 February 1986 was one of the greatest shocks inflicted on Swedish society in the 20th century. The murder took place just before midnight, as Palme and his wife Lisbeth were walking home from the cinema. Unaccompanied by bodyguards, Palme was shot by a murderer who then ran up a flight of stairs and disappeared.⁵²⁹ The subsequent police investigation was hampered by mistakes and dead ends. Conspiracy theories flourished from the start. Although several trails have led to South Africa, Croatia and Kurdistan, nothing has come out of it. In 1988 one man

⁵²⁶ Sahlin *Med mina ord*, p. 81

⁵²⁷ Linderborg *Socialdemokraterna skriver historia*, p. 372

⁵²⁸ Näslund *I en värld av män*, p. 228

⁵²⁹ Berggren *Underbara dagar framför oss*, pp. 656-657

– an alcoholic and drug addict – was convicted and sentenced to life, only to be freed on appeal because of a lack of evidence. The man, Christer Pettersson, died in 2004.⁵³⁰

At the time of his death, Palme and his cabinet faced attacks from both the left and the right, but with the party and the nation in shock, these subsided. Instead, many shared their condolences with well-known SAP representatives. Gertrud Sigurdson told her biographer that the day after the murder when she

left for Stockholm on the first morning train. I remember that the conductor was so upset that he sat with me almost the entire trip. And we were sad and upset. The entire country, even people who had slandered Olof Palme, now showed grief and sorrow. It was strange.⁵³¹

Despite their generational differences, the younger SAP women (Anna Lindh, Mona Sahlin and Margot Wallström) had several things in common with their elders (Anna-Greta Leijon, Birgitta Dahl and Anita Gradin): one of them was their faith in Olof Palme. Mona Sahlin wrote in her 1996 memoir that as they grew up within the party:

We quoted his speeches, enjoyed his debates and discovered, through him, the world outside our own borders, constantly new things that demanded our attention and solidarity. For me and my generation, Sweden was somehow complete. Olof Palme took us on an exciting tour of the world, and we followed him eagerly.⁵³²

Leijon, whose political career was derailed by the investigation into Palme's murder, wrote a few years later that as justice minister she had wanted:

the murder of Olof Palme to be solved, and I am incapable of keeping the cold, neutral distance that I ought to keep as minister of justice. For that, I may be criticised.⁵³³

Even before Palme's death, SAP had begun its ideological shift towards the centre. In 1982, Palme's second cabinet ruled on a minority mandate, but could be certain of passing laws unless VPK actively sided with the opposition. Thus, it could have been radical, using its silent majority to emphasise democratic socialism within economic

⁵³⁰ Justitiedepartementet *SOU 1999:88 Brottsutredningen efter mordet på statsminister Olof Palme* (Stockholm, 1999). See also Daley, Suzanne 'Did apartheid's police murder Sweden's prime minister?' *New York Times*, 29 September 1996; Serrill, M.S., McWhirter, W. & Kohan, J. 'Sweden: Bloody Blow to an Open Society' *Time*, 3 October 1986.

⁵³¹ Näslund *I en värld av män*, p. 230

⁵³² Sahlin *Med mina ord*, p. 25

⁵³³ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 294

policy, perhaps by pushing through the wage-earner fund, proposed by LO in the previous decade. Instead, the first SAP government to follow six years of bourgeois policies showed restraint, as the lasting impact of international economic crises limited SAP's ability to pursue utopian goals. The budget deficit ran to nearly 90 billion SEK.⁵³⁴ "Sweden is in crisis — at least that is our opinion," Anna-Greta Leijon wrote in her memoirs, adding that SAP's crisis programme, 'A Future for Sweden' called for "a greater emphasis on industry viability" and "greater caution with public expenses". Leijon argued that 'A Future for Sweden' was infused by "honest, old-school" social democracy,⁵³⁵ but the previously strong belief in non-stop progress and ever richer welfare state was gone. Cuts were followed by a devaluation of the Swedish krona, which successfully rebooted the economy.⁵³⁶

Within a year of the election, SAP economic policies under minister of finance Kjell-Olof Feldt sparked conflict within the labour movement. LO questioned why its members had to bear the brunt of the cutbacks. The so-called 'War of the Roses' of the early 1970s recommenced, with many party members siding with the trade unions in opposition to public sector cuts.⁵³⁷ A younger generation of MPs who had entered parliament in the late 1970s and early 1980s, including Mona Sahlin and Anna Lindh, voiced their criticism in meetings with SAP's parliamentary group, only to be told off by Palme. Soon enough, the party began to lose ground in opinion polls.⁵³⁸

The influence of neoliberalism in SAP and Sweden was visible elsewhere too. In the autumn of 1985, the Swedish central bank — Riksbanken — deregulated financial markets, which led to a boom in borrowing and eventually to another financial crash, this time on SAP's watch. The Riksbanken board was independent of the Swedish government and parliament, but its head, Bengt Dennis, had been appointed by Palme. The chairman in 1985, Erik Åsbrink, later served as minister of finance in Göran Persson's first SAP cabinet (1996-1999).

These changes sparked conflict within the party. A decade later, the former Laboremus member and 1983-1992 chair of Statistiska centralbyrån, Sten Johansson, wrote:

⁵³⁴ Näslund *I en värld av män*, p. 203

⁵³⁵ Leijon *Alla rosor ska inte tuktas!* p. 181

⁵³⁶ Andersson *Between Growth and Security*, pp. 107, 116

⁵³⁷ Östberg *När vinden vände*, p. 303

⁵³⁸ Östberg *När vinden vände*, p. 305-6

What Feldt did as a finance minister during the 1980s was to give market forces free rein across an increasing number of areas. (...) Society, democracy and politicians resigned or relinquished the ability to direct the use of capital towards community needs or national considerations. (...) [Feldt] abolished socialism and reintroduced capitalism as the basic economic principle of the Swedish welfare state.⁵³⁹

Nevertheless, the potential radicalism of the wage-earner funds and the financial philosophies of earlier SAP economists like Ernst Wigforss, Nils Karleby and Gunnar Myrdal were silenced in this era. Earlier generations had sought solutions to increase public ownership and enforce humane capitalism, but these ideals were now put on a shelf.⁵⁴⁰ The shift was visible in the austerity measures launched by Carlsson's government towards the end of the 1980s, without consulting SAP's labour movement partners. It was an attempt to avoid a financial collapse, but SAP was forced to point out in its annual report for 1989 that "it turned out that awareness of the crisis was not particularly prevalent in Swedish society". The hostile reaction to the measures was one reason why the party continued to fall in opinion polls.⁵⁴¹ As the downturn continued, labour market conflict followed, and 1990 proved an *annus horribilis* for the party. As parliament threw out SAP's austerity bill of that year, Carlsson and his cabinet were forced to resign. Carlsson reconstructed the cabinet, and it returned to power a few days later but without Kjell-Olof Feldt who was replaced by Allan Larsson as finance minister. Nevertheless, attempts to stake out a more neoliberal 'third way' economic policy continued unabated.⁵⁴²

The financial meltdown at the end of the 1980s continued into the next decade, and had far-reaching effects on Swedish society and democracy. In an ever shrinking world and after a tumultuous decade and a half during which it had become apparent that Sweden could not protect itself from global financial markets and their crises, a decision was taken by the SAP leadership to move closer to the European Union. Previously unthinkable due to Sweden's neutrality in the bipolar Cold War world, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the decreasing strength of the Soviet Union — coupled with the need for financial rejuvenation — made EU membership an enticing prospect. Feelers were thrown out to see whether party members and the Swedish public

⁵³⁹ Johansson, Sten 'Världen, vi och Västeuropa — vad blev det av freden, solidariteten och den demokratiska socialismen?' in Kokk, E., Gustavsson, K & Ljunggren, S-B. *Var blev ni av, ljuva drömmar?* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2002), p. 144

⁵⁴⁰ Whyman *Sweden and the 'Third Way'*, pp. 78-79

⁵⁴¹ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1989* (Stockholm: Socialdemokratiska arbetarepartiet, 1990), p. 4

⁵⁴² Whyman *Sweden and the 'Third Way'* pp. 3, 5, 8

were ready to debate the issue. The first of these came at the 1990 party congress, held in September in Stockholm. In October, the government announced to parliament that it sought the latter's approval to submit a formal application for EU membership; the application was submitted just months head of the next general election in the summer of 1991.⁵⁴³

PART IV

INTERNATIONALISM IN A NEW ERA

SAP was slow to accept its role in opposition in 1976; some party members were more reluctant than others. Kjell Östberg has argued that Palme delegated many issues to his core team — Ingvar Carlsson, Thage G. Peterson and Kjell-Olof Feldt — in the period following the election. The time he saved at home, Palme invested in a busy international schedule. In 1977, for example, he led the Socialist International's mission to southern Africa's frontline states; he took part in the UN's two conferences on South Africa; travelled to the US; and got involved in the democratisation of both Spain and Portugal. In 1980, Palme was appointed the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative to Iran and Iraq, undertaking peace missions in the region fraught by war.⁵⁴⁴

Internationalism was arguably a greater priority for Palme while SAP was in opposition than it had been at any other point since he became the party leader and prime minister in 1969. Palme reconnected to the kind of internationalist activity that had been a cornerstone of his political activism pre-1969, and which had been visible in his impromptu television speech condemning the US bombings of Hanoi during Christmas 1972.⁵⁴⁵ International activism remained a cornerstone of Palme's political

⁵⁴³ Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, pp. 112, 113 [Gradin erroneously states that the congress was held in 1989]; Socialdemokraterna 'Verksamheten 1990' *Verksamhetsberättelse för 1990-1992* (Linköping: Socialdemokraterna, 1993), p. 5; Einhorn, E. S. & Logue, J. 'Can Welfare States Be Sustained in a Global Economy?' *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 125, No. 1 (2010), pp. 1-29

⁵⁴⁴ United Nations Peacekeeping 'Past Peacekeeping Missions: Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group: Background' available at <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/uniimogbackgr.html> (accessed 22 May 2015). Bjereld, Ulf 'Critic or Mediator? Sweden in World Politics, 1945-90' *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (1995), pp. 31-32

⁵⁴⁵ Östberg *När vinden vände*, pp. 201-202; Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1977* (Stockholm: Socialdemokratiska arbetarepartiet, 1978), p. 77; ArAB: Olof Palmes arkiv 'Uttalande om USA:s bombningar av Hanoi julen 1972' 2.4.0: 044. Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania made up the Frontline States.

career. His last speech was held at the Swedish People's Parliament against Apartheid in Stockholm on 21 February 1986. In it, Palme outlined the history of oppression against black South Africans, and how Sweden was hoping to help end this by funding liberation movements and spearheading the campaign for sanctions at the UN.⁵⁴⁶

Meanwhile Fälldin and Ullsten governments between 1976 and 1982 continued to fund the SAP-instigated development aid and assistance programmes to liberation movements. In 1979/1980, the disbursement through SIDA to the Southern African liberation movements rose by 30 million to almost 73 million SEK, with Namibia's SWAPO — the main beneficiary — awarded 26.5 million.⁵⁴⁷ Two politicians who were of great importance for the continuation and expansion of Sweden's liberation movement support were Folkpartiet's Ola Ullsten and Centerpartiet's Karin Söder, who served as ministers of development aid and foreign affairs in Fälldin's first cabinet, before Ullsten took both roles in 1979-1981. In Ullsten's own 1978-1979 cabinet, Hans Blix became minister of foreign affairs and development aid. Although Centerpartiet and Folkpartiet were much less involved in personal exchanges with members of the liberation movements supported through the aid programmes, this gives an indication of the widespread support for small-state solidarity and liberation among Swedish politicians *and* the electorate in this era.⁵⁴⁸ The idea of an active neutrality — supporting just causes without getting involved militarily — gave Sweden an important role to play as a peace deal broker and check on superpower aggression. It also played a significant role in shaping the Swedish public's view of itself and others.⁵⁴⁹

Back in power after 1982, SAP's internationalist philosophy was again remodelled. Sweden's foreign policy was at the time heavily impacted by a deteriorating relationship with the USSR. Palme's new government took up the chase of Soviet submarines, sighted regularly in the Swedish Baltic Sea. One USSR submarine stranded in a military zone in southern Sweden in October 1981, leading to a tense nine-day stand-off between Sweden and the Soviet Union. Submarine chases continued to be front-page news throughout the 1980s, to the extent that they threatened to divert the

⁵⁴⁶ ArAB: Olof Palme's archive 'Speech made by the Prime Minister, Mr Olof Palme, at the "Swedish People's Parliament against Apartheid" Folkets Hus on 21 February 1986'

⁵⁴⁷ Sellström, Tor *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Volume II*, p. 900

⁵⁴⁸ Author's interview with Annie Marie Sundbom (10 December 2012).

⁵⁴⁹ These thoughts have been further developed by, among others, Ingebrigtsen, Christine 'Norm Entrepreneurs: Scandinavia's Role in World Politics' *Cooperation and Conflict* Vol. 37, No. 1 (2002), pp. 11-23; Bergman 'Co-Constitution of Domestic and International Welfare Obligations', pp. 73-99

government's attention from the economic crisis.⁵⁵⁰ Being in power also meant taking responsibility for international trade, which included the trade of Swedish arms and weapons around the world. A cornerstone of Swedish export policy, the arms trade was always controversial. The controversy increased in 1987, when Swedish public service radio revealed that Swedish arms companies had bribed their way to contracts in India, and broken the law by exporting weapons to Singapore who had then sold them on.⁵⁵¹

By the time SAP's September 1984 congress came round, the nation's financial health remained the focus while international solidarity seemed to unite warring factions. A sombre mood descended during Olof Palme's opening speech, in which he argued that SAP's foreign policy needed to be dictated by a "responsibility for Sweden":

[That] means the defence of our country's independence, our democratic social order, our right to decide our own future. This responsibility is best served by a firm policy of neutrality. (...) No matter how strong our defence force is, if the world should begin to doubt our non-participation in alliances, our ability to pursue our policy of neutrality would nevertheless be circumscribed. For this reason our foreign policy is always our first line of defence.⁵⁵²

On a more positive note, Palme reiterated the labour movement's responsibility for making the world a better place by engaging with and supporting righteous liberation movements through international solidarity.⁵⁵³ The sightings of Soviet submarines were not alone in bringing a new urgency to Swedish interests abroad. Several liberation movements supported by SAP — including in MPLA in Angola and FRELIMO in Mozambique, as detailed in chapters one and two — and ZAPU and ZANU in Zimbabwe had been successful in their struggles. Encouraged by this, SAP's 1984 1 May petition — published across the country to entice potential supporters to join the party's celebrations of international workers' day — had stated that

A longing for peace is something all people share. Worldwide peace presupposes the respect for all nations' right to self-determination. Worldwide peace presupposes social

⁵⁵⁰ Östberg *När vinden vände*, p. 331, 332

⁵⁵¹ See Ikegami, Masako 'The end of a 'national' defence industry? Impacts of globalisation on the Swedish defence industry', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (2013), pp. 440-442

⁵⁵² ArAB: Olof Palme's archive 'Anförande inför Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetarepartis kongress, 1984-09-17; unofficial translation'

⁵⁵³ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1984* (Stockholm: Socialdemokratiska arbetarepartiet, 1986), pp. 3, 7

and economic justice. Worldwide peace presupposes political detente and military disarmament.⁵⁵⁴

SAP's international agenda now focused on Latin America, the creation of the SAP government's foreign policy, future aims for development aid, as well as disarmament.⁵⁵⁵

It was with that ethos in mind that Olof Palme and fellow SAP members Gunnar Stenarv and Bengt Säve-Söderbergh went to Arusha in Tanzania in September 1984 to take part in the Socialist International conference on the future of southern Africa held there. During his speech, titled 'Progress of liberation in Africa cannot be stopped', Palme denounced the US position on sanctions in the region. He said:

In the light of history, it will be no excuse to just sit back and say that some big powers blocked a decision that the rest of us wanted, and let it rest at that. We have to go the other way. Party by party, government by government, we could introduce various means of direct selective action. Such sanctions will not be [one hundred] per cent efficient, but that is not the major point. (...) We know that when Ian Smith finally sat down at Lancaster House, this was because of both the liberation struggle and the international sanctions.⁵⁵⁶

This optimism and belief in the power to change the course of international politics and justice set SAP politicians apart from many others on the international scene.

The impact of the murder of Olof Palme was also felt by members of the international community. Indeed, Palme's funeral offered an opportunity for ANC members in South Africa and in exile to meet for the first time in decades. Birgitta Dahl remembers how she was stationed at Arlanda airport near Stockholm in order to greet foreign guests on behalf of the party and government ahead of Palme's funeral. She witnessed how

within an hour, Oliver Tambo, Allan Boesak and Desmond Tutu arrived, and they had never met before, because Allan Boesak and Desmond Tutu lived in South Africa and couldn't leave, and Oliver Tambo lived abroad and couldn't enter. They greeted each

⁵⁵⁴ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1984*, p. 56

⁵⁵⁵ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1983* (Stockholm: Socialdemokratiska arbetarepartiet, 1984), pp. 93, 94

⁵⁵⁶ Palme, Olof 'Speech at the Conference on Southern Africa of the Socialist International and the Socialist Group of the European Parliament with the Frontline States, ANC and SWAPO' 4 September 1984', available via the ANC at www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=4941 (accessed 20 May 2015); Sellström *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Vol II*, p. 349

other and fell into each other's arms in a very moving way. Olof Palme had meant a lot to them.⁵⁵⁷

At this time, township riots and the international boycott of South African goods were starting to have an impact on the apartheid government, as will be discussed in chapter four of this thesis. ANC members in Sweden at this time looked towards the future and participated in a programme aiming "to impart knowledge about the Swedish democratic model". ANC visitors spent nearly four months in Sweden for that purpose, both with the party centrally and in local party districts around the country.⁵⁵⁸ In 1987, SAP celebrated the anniversary of the opening of the ANC Stockholm office by inviting a delegation of ANC representatives in Lusaka to spend six to 10 weeks in Sweden studying the organisation of popular movements and local governments. The idea, according to a letter sent from SAP's assistant international secretary, Conny Fredriksson, to the ANC's Lusaka headquarters, was to

broaden the contacts between our two movements, and give the cooperation new dimensions, which will be very important for the relations between Sweden and a future free South Africa.⁵⁵⁹

1989 also saw a delegation from South Africa made up of ANC members and members of the National Association of Democratic Lawyers visited SAP's headquarters, where they learned more about the Swedish justice and constitutional systems. Meanwhile, developments in Eastern Europe started to take up more of SAP's international time. SSU made contact with pro-democracy movements in the Eastern bloc as soon as the Soviet Union seemed to be losing its grip.⁵⁶⁰ SAP also participated in the Namibian parliamentary elections, which elected MPs to take their seats after Namibia's scheduled independence in March the following year, by running election seminars for SWAPO campaigners in Luanda and Lusaka.⁵⁶¹

⁵⁵⁷ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (11 December 2012).

⁵⁵⁸ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1988*, p. 70

⁵⁵⁹ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archives, Box 79, Folder 399 'Letter from Conny Fredriksson (Assistant international secretary) and Bo Toresson (secretary general) to the ANC Central committee in Lusaka, 1987-01-30'; Sellström *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa, Vol II*, p. 20

⁵⁶⁰ For more on SAP and the Polish pro-democracy movement, see Misgeld, Klaus 'Solidaritet med Solidaritet: Den svenska arbetarrörelsen och demokratirörelsen i Polen kring 1980' *Arbetarhistoria*, Vol. 120, No. 4 (2006), pp. 24-31 and Anon. 'Uppdrag Polen: Ett svenskt tidsdokument om hemliga kontakter med polska Solidaritet 1985' *Arbetarhistoria*, Vol. 133, No. 1 (2010), pp. 4-23.

⁵⁶¹ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1989*, pp. 58, 75-76

Disappointments in national politics made internationalism a key outlet not just for Palme but for many other SAP members in opposition too. As Gertrud Sigurdson later pointed out,

It was easy to talk about international issues and aid. There was a strong sense of pride. We, the labour movement, were responsible for concrete and clear actions that gave results.⁵⁶²

Not used to being out of power, attention was diverted to areas where SAP could make an immediate difference. Like Palme, Annie Marie Sundbom's travelling schedule on behalf of SSKF was increasingly busy during the party's time in opposition. In 1977, Sundbom attended the 10th anniversary of the Tanzanian Arusha Declaration; extended SSKF solidarity to Chilean women; and attended a SIW conference on women.⁵⁶³

Solidarity was far from a one-way project, and SSKF was encouraged by support and encouragement from its overseas partners. This was particularly important in the fallout from the parental insurance debate of 1976, detailed in chapter one. The controversy was fresh in the minds of SSKF leaders, who put renewed efforts into strengthening the organisation by attracting new members. Internationalism had long been one of the organisation's key tools for this, and as the UN Decade of Women began in 1976 — a year after the UN Conference on Women in Mexico City in 1975 — there were plenty of opportunities to share SSKF expertise and visions.⁵⁶⁴

SSKF clubs in this era focused much of their work on gender politics at home, childcare, trade, industry and the care for elderly, but the internationalists at the top of the organisation were very active, organising visits to and from southern Africa, travelling exhibitions, fundraising and awareness for several solidarity causes. SSKF was still involved in the funding and running of the Mount Carmel Institute in Israel, but greater proportion of its time and funds were spent on projects in Africa, Latin America and South East Asia.⁵⁶⁵ These targeted women in particular, through support for education, publications and sanitation, which allowed SSKF to work for equality in

⁵⁶² Gertrud Sigurdson in Näslund, *I en värld av män*, p. 168, 169

⁵⁶³ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1977*, pp. 53-56. The Arusha Declaration of 1967 confirmed ruling party TANU's policies on socialism and self-reliance.

⁵⁶⁴ UN Global Issues 'Women'

⁵⁶⁵ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1980*, pp. 73, 74

a subtle but influential way.⁵⁶⁶ Their priorities mirrored those of the party at large, and the labour movement's internationalist solidarity work was so prominent that when Gertrud Sigurdson spoke of Nicaragua and Zimbabwe in her 1 May speech in 1980, she did not need to spell out that SAP supported the Sandinistas and Zimbabwe's liberation efforts: that much was obvious.⁵⁶⁷

Ties between the liberation movement and the Swedish labour movement were strengthened elsewhere too. In 1986, SSKF became directly involved with the ANC-affiliated Federation of Transvaal Women (FEDTRAW), supplying the latter with 50 per cent of the funds it needed to run its organisation while using the Swedish Foreign Office mission in Pretoria as a go-between. When FEDTRAW leader Jessie Duarte was arrested in 1988, the Swedish Foreign Office put pressure on the South African government to release her.⁵⁶⁸

SAP celebrated its centenary in 1989; a year in which the party could take stock of its achievements over the past 100 years. The party's history was explored in a book edited by Klaus Misgeld, Karl Molin and Klas Åmark, published in English a few years later as *Creating Social Democracy: A Century of the Social Democratic Party in Sweden*. One of its 14 chapters mentioned women's role in the party, focusing on family policy.⁵⁶⁹ Though written by Ann-Sofie Ohlander, a pioneer of Swedish women's history, the chapter shows that SAP women's history was still seen as separate from general — male-dominated — party history. Another chapter discussed SAP's foreign policy and its contribution to world peace. Nevertheless, the focus on internationalism was not unique to Swedish social democracy. In 1989, SI and SIW both held their congresses in Stockholm in 1989 in SAP's honour. SIW's congress, on 17-18 June, gathered 200 women from member states and supporters around the world under the theme of 'the future we want is possible'. The congress highlight, according to participating SAP members, was Albertina Sisulu's participation on her first ever trip abroad.⁵⁷⁰ SI's congress, held just after SIW's, on 20-22 June on the theme 'One

⁵⁶⁶ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1981*, pp. 77, 78; Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1983*, pp. 65, 69, 70, 72

⁵⁶⁷ Näslund, *I en värld av män*, pp. 168, 169

⁵⁶⁸ ArAB: Socialdemokratiska Kvinnoförbundet, 2702/F/6/F/16 'Brev från Birgitta Strömblad-Lindqvist till Lena Johansson, SIDA, re UDFWLs ansökan om bistånd till hjälp att bygga upp organisationen' [1987-06-10 (mislabelled 2987)]; ArAB: Socialdemokratiska Kvinnoförbundet, 2702/F/6/F/16 'Telegram från legationen i Pretoria till UD Stockholm 1988-03-18'

⁵⁶⁹ Ohlander 'Det osynliga barnet?' pp. 188-190; Johansson & Norman 'Sweden's Security and World Peace', pp. 339-374

⁵⁷⁰ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1989*, p. 70

hundred years of struggle for peace and freedom — towards a new century’, discussed “North versus South, mutual security, peace and disarmament, human rights and environmental issues”.⁵⁷¹

By the mid-1980s, the expanding field of feminist-focused academic research had begun to infuse and embolden SAP women’s activists. Mona Sahlin was influenced by Yvonne Hirdman’s research to see the Swedish gender gap clearly; other SAP members applied new gender theories to the international arena. Women’s activists were also benefitting from the systematic gender gap reporting that had followed in the wake of the first UN conferences on women in Mexico City and Copenhagen. This was particularly visible at the UN Decade for Women came to a close at another world conference in Nairobi in 1985. Anita Gradin chaired the Swedish delegation, joining 1,900 delegates from 157 UN member states in adopting the ‘Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women’. This outlined measures for achieving gender equality in participating countries, and also sought to promote women’s participation in peace and development efforts.⁵⁷² In her memoirs, Gradin remarked that:

During the decade after the Mexico conference, the world economy had declined, and it was difficult to fulfil the programmes created to support women. We could see that the economic crisis had led to a practical deterioration for women despite all attempts to improve their legal status. Increasing numbers of women lived in poverty, and they were even more exposed now.⁵⁷³

The Swedish delegation initiated a resolution to ensure that immigrant women had the right to language lessons, work and reuniting with their families; an indication of growing awareness of minority rights in the wake of increased immigration to Sweden in the 1970s and 1980s. The delegation also presented a report on migrating women from a European perspective, and — on behalf of SIW — called on all participating governments to work harder to meet women’s demands.⁵⁷⁴

Even more importantly, however, Gradin was elected chair of SIW and deputy chair of SI at the organisations’ congresses in Lima in 1986. The congresses marked a

⁵⁷¹ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamheten 1989*, p. 56

⁵⁷² UN Women ‘World Conferences on Women’; UN Women ‘World Conference to review and appraise the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women’

⁵⁷³ Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, p. 81

⁵⁷⁴ Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, p. 81

drastic change in its member parties' views on gender quotas, with SI enforcing SIW's petition for the equal participation of women in political life within all SI member parties, in all elections and within all SI delegations. "The goal was that there would be 50 per cent women and 50 per cent men at all levels within 10 years," Gradin wrote. She contributed to the practical implementation of the recommendations by keeping a notebook filled with the names of competent women in a vast number of areas. As a result:

When someone (generally a man) claimed that 'there aren't any suitable women', I usually had one or more names to put forward. (...) It's not enough to demand increased participation of women in general; you have to be able to name those who should do it. To use a notebook like that is to advance feminism!⁵⁷⁵

The implementation of these quotas within SAP and the ANC will be further explored in chapter five. However, it must be emphasised already here that international engagements had given SAP women one of their best tools for achieving gender equality over the next few years.

CONCLUSION

This chapter argues that the pace of reform in favour of gender liberation within SAP and in Sweden quickened as a result of the infusion of feminist theory throughout the party's ranks in the 1980s. This shift was informed by feminist academic research, and strengthened through international cooperation and collaboration. The UN and Socialist International's congresses and conferences were particularly important for SAP, as they brought women's activists from all corners of the world together during this decade, strengthening and mobilising them *en masse*. The increased interest in feminist methods was a result of the broken promises and failed reforms in the 1960s and 1970s, which had begun to address women's subordination in society but done very little to enforce gender equality in public life. The late 1970s and early 1980s also proved that women's rights were among the first to be shelved in times of national economic crises.

Chapter one outlined how important internationalism was for women's mobilisation within SAP in the 1960s and early 1970s, when it offered space for action

⁵⁷⁵ Gradin *Från bruket till Bryssel*, pp. 82, 90

while the upper levels of party and national hierarchies appeared closed to all but some individual women. This chapter, however, shows that women's internationalism changed in the 1980s: in an era in which women *were* promoted to higher political office at a greater rate than ever before, international spaces were important venues to share ideas and practices. They also gave SAP women an opportunity to take a hands-on approach to making the world better; but it was no longer as vital an alternative outlet for careers frustrated in national politics.

In this era, SAP women across all lateral organisational divides also became more aware of the need to identify suitable female candidates for positions before they opened up. The 1980s was a watershed moment in which women's-only mobilisation and mixed-gender mobilisation for gender equality within the party moved closer together. With hindsight, the 1980s appear as a vital yet overlooked decade for SAP women's activism. A new generation of 'party women' appeared on the national scene — notably Anna Lindh, Margot Wallström and Mona Sahlin — while the 'women's lobby' also saw a generational shift, notably in the election of Margareta Winberg as chair of SSKF in 1990. Throughout the decade, these two groups of women — previously very divided — broke down several ideological barriers that had kept them separate. Both groups aligned themselves with feminism in a more overt way than previously possible, and reached out towards one another. More importantly, women from both groups benefited from the opening up of the upper echelons of SAP deciding fora to women, e.g. in the inclusion of greater numbers of women in the party's NEC. Just as Drude Dahlerup's critical mass theory predicted, increased numbers of women in these fora allowed them to have a greater impact and an improved chance of achieving goals on the way towards gender equality.

The results were promising; however, as chapter five will show, it was in the 1990s that real progress was made. This was a direct result of the ideological struggles within SAP: as neoliberalism grew stronger at the expense of socialism, gender became an important tool in allowing SAP to portray itself as a radical party, despite a weaker grip on the electorate. In the 1980s, the party had not yet realised that. The quiet mobilisation within SAP structures ensured one of the greatest victories for women within the worldwide social democratic movement: the SI endorsement of quotas in the selection of candidates for party structures and parliaments in 1986.

CHAPTER 4

CONFRONTATION AND COLLABORATION: ANC WOMEN'S ACTIVISM

1976-1990

INTRODUCTION

Broad movements like that inevitably will have differences. The question is do you resolve them or do you let them overcome you?⁵⁷⁶

This chapter explores ANC women's history from 1976 until 1990. Discussing the period between the Soweto Uprising — which sparked a mass exodus from South Africa and reignited internal and external anti-apartheid resistance — and the unbanning of the ANC in 1990, the chapter focuses on the role of women's activists in this era. How did women respond to events at home and abroad? Which solutions did they seek to address their subjugation as women and — predominantly — non-white subjects of apartheid South Africa? How successful were they in their attempts to gain greater influence within the resistance movement? And what lessons did they learn for future activism?

The previous chapter established that women's struggle for equality within the Swedish Social Democratic Party was overshadowed by the political uncertainties and crises of the late 1970s and 1980s. However, by laying the foundations for a greater gender equality movement, this period can still be seen as a quiet revolution for women's rights in Sweden; a very important stepping stone to the successes of the mid-1990s. This chapter reaches a similar conclusion about ANC women's situation. The violence, repression and reprisals of the 1980s kept the ANC focus on matters that were perceived by the leadership as more urgent and important than gender equality. Nevertheless, the behind-the-scenes mobilisation of women's activists — both at home and in exile — also sowed the seeds for a mass-movement working for gender equality. It took a lot of hard work and, as the quote from Frene Ginwala above shows, it was far from easy to create a cohesive cross-organisational movement. Although women's concerns were overshadowed for the time being, their voices emerged louder and

⁵⁷⁶ Author's interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014).

clearer as the still male-dominated leadership began to accept and approve of their radicalism. Meanwhile, ANC women's internationalism emerges as an important link between the clandestine underground movement within South Africa and the more visible exile structure.

This chapter comprises four main sections. Part I offers a brief background to the main political developments of the era, against which the following three sections are developed. It is a period that has been covered extensively by other researchers, but a brief background to the events is called for to place this chapter's original contribution within a greater national and international context. Part II focuses on the ANC in exile: the impact of the influx of new members after 1976; the struggle to evade the security apparatus of the apartheid regime; and explores the gendered working environment established abroad.⁵⁷⁷ Part III discusses women's activism and political developments within South Africa, including the role of women in underground networks, and women's increasing visibility and importance in bridging generational gaps. Part IV probes ANC women's internationalism, discussing its importance for both the ANC's diplomatic mission and for closing the gaps between internal and external structures, especially as the apartheid state crumbled in the last half of the 1980s.

Parts I and III draw heavily on secondary sources, in particular relevant chapters from volume 4 of the South African Democracy Education Trust's *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*. Part III also relies on auto/biographical material (including Elinor Sisulu's 2002 biography of Albertina Sisulu and Ray Alexander Simons' 2004 memoir), as well as Jeremy Seekings' work on the United Democratic Front from 2000. Various documents deposited by the exiled ANC structures in Lusaka and London at the UWC Robben Island Museum Mayibuye Centre, and Women's Section files from the Liberation Movement Archives at the University of Fort Hare have also been consulted: these archival findings underpin parts II and IV, two sections that illuminate previously unexplored aspects of ANC women's history.

⁵⁷⁷ Examples of recent work on this era are the South African Democracy Education Trust's *The Road to Democracy in South Africa Volume 4 (1980-1990), part I and II* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2010) and chapters 6-8 of Dubow *Apartheid 1948-1994*.

PART I

SOUTH AFRICA, 1976-1990: 'REFORM' AND REPRESSION

In the wake of the Soweto Uprising in June 1976, the apartheid state recalibrated its offensive against the opposition in South Africa and abroad. The white electorate rewarded the government's efforts to quell the township rebellions, and the November 1977 elections saw John Vorster's National Party (NP) government win a landslide victory. NP won 65 per cent of the votes — the largest share it ever achieved — and filled 81 per cent of the assembly seats.⁵⁷⁸

However, the apartheid government was also looking to divide and pacify the non-white majority population. The strategy was masterminded by Vorster's successor as prime minister, P.W. Botha, who rose to power in 1978. A former Minister of Defence, Botha pioneered a 'Total Strategy' ideology, defined by Elinor Sisulu as a "‘carrot-and-stick’ programme, a curious mixture of reform and brutal oppression".⁵⁷⁹ The reforms included the electrification of townships, the lifting of restrictions on black businesses and schemes for black private property ownership "twenty years after the government had tried finally to abolish this".⁵⁸⁰ It was not the success Botha needed. As 15 NP MPs defected to the Conservative Party in opposition to the reforms,⁵⁸¹ the government's ability to buy its way out of trouble through reform was also hindered by financial woes. The price of gold, which had been high enough to sustain South Africa during the financial downturn of the late 1970s, now fell. Furthermore, although budgets were tighter, a higher proportion of state finances was spent on arms. These weapons were in near constant use: in the townships, which regularly erupted in protest, and border areas. In 1984, the Rand's value declined dramatically, increasing South Africa's monetary woes. In July 1985, Chase Manhattan Bank of New York, which had been one of the biggest lenders to the apartheid regime, recalled its credit of US\$500 million. Pretoria now depended on less favourable loan deals with Switzerland and

⁵⁷⁸ African Elections Database 'Elections in South Africa' available at <http://africanelections.tripod.com/za.html> (accessed 19 June 2015)

⁵⁷⁹ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 365

⁵⁸⁰ Beinart *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, p. 245

⁵⁸¹ William Beinart has written that the Conservatives were "unashamed in returning to the well-trying political language of racial preservation and the integrity of the *volk*" Beinart, *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, p. 246

Germany.⁵⁸² Meanwhile, popular anti-apartheid mobilisation around the world put pressure on political leaders and institutions, and in 1985 the first sanctions against South Africa were put in place.⁵⁸³

In the 1980s, the apartheid state was also struggling to cope with the loss of its supportive buffer zone. Mozambique and Angola, which had been liberated after the collapse of the Portuguese empire in 1974, became independent states led by the ANC's allies: Agostinho Neto and José Eduardo dos Santos' Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA), and Eduardo Mondlane and Samora Machel's Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO). Adding to the apartheid regime's troubles, in 1980 the white minority regime in Southern Rhodesia fell after decades of violent struggles, and Zimbabwe was declared independent under the leadership of ZANU's Robert Mugabe.⁵⁸⁴ In order to secure apartheid at home, Pretoria now began to fund and support 'anti-communist' allies throughout southern Africa, sparking and fuelling confrontation, civil war and the killings of thousands in the region.⁵⁸⁵ In this venture, Pretoria enjoyed the support of the more conservative elements of the 'free world', the governments of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher among them.⁵⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the increasing costs of wars soon led to an attempt to withdraw from conventional warfare. In March 1984, Botha signed the non-aggression Nkomati Accord with Samora Machel's Mozambique, which officially ended Pretoria's funding of Mozambican anti-communist rebels RENAMO (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana). In return, Machel agreed not to harbour any rebel movements, including the ANC. It was, however, a

⁵⁸² Magubane, Bernard 'The Collapse of the Garrison State' in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa: Volume 4 (1980-1990), part II* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2010), pp. 1640, 1630

⁵⁸³ Magubane, Bernard 'The Crisis of the Garrison State' in South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET) *The Road to Democracy in South Africa Volume 4 (1980-1990), part I* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2010), p. 58

⁵⁸⁴ Houston, Gregory 'The ANC's Internal Underground Political Work in the 1980s' South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa Volume 4 (1980-1990), part I*, p. 139; Magubane 'The Collapse of the Garrison State', p. 1623

⁵⁸⁵ See Saunders, Chris 'South Africa's War, and the Cuban Military, in Angola' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 6 (2014), pp. 1363-1368; Alden, C. & Simpson, M. 'Mozambique: a Delicate Peace' *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (March 1993), pp 109-130; O'Meara, Dan *Forty Lost Years: The Apartheid State and the Politics of the National Party, 1948-94* (Randburg: Ravan Press, 1996), pp. 264-269; Dubow *Apartheid 1948-1994*, pp. 200-202.

⁵⁸⁶ The implications of this support have been explored by Bernard Magubane in 'The Rise and Fall of Constructive Engagement', in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa Volume 4 (1980-1990), part II*, pp. 1551-1602

mere marriage of convenience for both parties: neither kept their promise, and conflict continued.⁵⁸⁷

South Africans living in townships had no opportunity to escape the violence. A State of Emergency was declared on 25 July 1985. It was lifted on 7 March 1986, but a second, year-long SOE was put in place on 12 June 1986 under harsher terms. This time, the emergency covered a greater number of regions, and included a total news blackout on unrests, army and police action.⁵⁸⁸ An increasingly shocked and outraged international community watched the downward spiral of violence and oppression in South Africa from the sidelines. In 1984, Desmond Tutu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Furthermore, the international campaign in support for Albertina Sisulu in the wake of her arrest, and press coverage of indiscriminate township violence helped keep South Africa in the news. Soon, the visual effects of the insurrection in combination with an increasingly powerful international anti-apartheid movement mobilising in favour of sanctions and boycotts against South Africa, led businesses to rethink their strategies. As recognition of and sympathy for the ANC grew throughout the 1980s, both the Reagan and Thatcher administrations readjusted their positions towards the organisation, and suggested that limited negotiations between the government and opposition could lead to peaceful coexistence in South Africa.⁵⁸⁹ This was the direct result of growing and increasingly visible South African resistance to the apartheid regime. The birth and role of the United Democratic Front in 1983 in creating this environment will be extensively discussed in part III of this chapter; suffice it to say here that it heralded a new era of mass-mobilisation, fuelled by anger and hope.

An era of negotiations now beckoned.⁵⁹⁰ In 1985, P.W. Botha offered Nelson Mandela conditional release from his prison sentence, which Mandela refused. However, Pretoria's willingness to negotiate was tied to the increasing rate at which foreign businesses were withdrawing their capital from South Africa. Amid violent resistance and repression, and the slight thawing of the Cold War visible at the

⁵⁸⁷ Magubane 'The Rise and Fall of Constructive Engagement', p. 1583

⁵⁸⁸ Cooper, C., Shindler, J., McCaul, C., Potter, F. & Cullum, M. *Race Relations Survey for 1985* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1986), p. xxv

⁵⁸⁹ Magubane 'The Collapse of the Garrison State', p. 1634; Renwick, Robin *A Journey with Margaret Thatcher: Foreign Policy Under the Iron Lady* (London: Biteback Publishing, 2013).

⁵⁹⁰ The topic of negotiations has been extensively covered by Sifiso Mxolisi Ndlovu in 'The African National Congress and negotiations', South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa Volume 4 (1980-1990), part I*, pp. 63-131

Reykjavik Summit of 1986, discussions between the ANC leadership and the National Party elite began in earnest in 1987.

Once negotiations started, the pace of events turned in favour of the resistance. In December 1988, Angola, Cuba and South Africa signed an independence agreement for Namibia, installing a United Nations Transitional Government to lead the country towards democratic elections. In 1989, the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) — a coalition between UDF and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) — was formed. In August 1989, MDM launched a countrywide defiance campaign, while P.W. Botha — who had suffered a stroke in January — was replaced as president by F.W. De Klerk.⁵⁹¹ In October, several Rivonia Trialists were released from their lifetime sentences. By the time ANC-ally SWAPO won the first democratic elections in Namibia in November 1989, South Africa's political landscape had been transformed beyond recognition.

PART II

THE ANC IN EXILE: REACTION AND RESURGENCE

While the ANC had not been involved in the events that led to the Soweto Uprising in June 1976, the revolt and the repression that followed in its wake had a dramatic impact on the organisation.⁵⁹² In the first two years after the revolt, hundreds of school children, youths and activists created a refugee exodus out of South Africa. It was estimated that the majority made it to the ANC's camps.⁵⁹³ The ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) — the ANC's armed wing — swelled with idealistic and often traumatised youngsters. The need for educational facilities, food, health services and housing became greater than ever before, putting a strain on already limited ANC budgets.

Many of the new exiles were women. Lindiwe Sisulu, the Black Consciousness activist and daughter of the ANC's Albertina and Walter Sisulu, was one of many picked

⁵⁹¹ Mzamane, M. B. & Maaba, B. 'The Azanian People's Organisation, 1977-1990' in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa Volume 4 (1980-1990), part II*, p. 1350; Saunders, Chris 'Liberal Democratic Anti-Apartheid Activity Within South Africa' in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa Volume 4 (1980-1990), part II*, p. 1607

⁵⁹² As discussed in chapter two of this thesis.

⁵⁹³ Beinart *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, p. 251

up and kept in arbitrary detention in the aftermath of June 1976. She was released in May 1977, and left for the Soviet Union — via Mozambique, where she stayed with Ruth First — a month later.⁵⁹⁴ Journalist and SASO-activist Thenjiwe Mtintso was released from prison in December 1976. A banning order confined her to her mother's house in Orlando East, removing Mtintso from the heart of the BCM community in King William's Town.⁵⁹⁵ She escaped into exile in 1978. Meanwhile, Nozipho Joyce Diseko, who became the ANC's Chief Representative in Sweden in 1991, left a year later, in 1979.⁵⁹⁶ According to an ANC Women's Section paper circulated at a workshop in 1990, the arrival of larger numbers of women into exile:

not only increase[d] membership of the women's section [sic], but it actually brought in young and militant activists. With more hands it became possible to do more work.⁵⁹⁷

The newcomers brought the role of women in the movement to the fore, and the women's activists in exile — working for the emancipation of women as well as the liberation of South Africa from apartheid — used their relative freedom of speech to carve out an intellectual debate about women's roles and needs. The Women's Section stressed the need for political education to expand women's horizons and equip them for ANC work. Linzi Manicom argued at a regional meeting for the East Africa branches in September 1978 that the lessons should specifically target women, because:

As we all know, women in South Africa, and African women in particular, are oppressed in specific ways arising from their position within the overall society. (...) Various social attitudes and traditional ways reinforce the underdevelopment of the political consciousness of women. Men and women come to believe that women do not have political viewpoints to put forward, that the education of the men must be given priority and that women are inferior. (...) If we are to break down the old attitudes about women and to make our full revolutionary contribution, we have to prove ourselves politically competent to participate in every aspect of the struggle and in every facet of the work of the movement.⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹⁴ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, pp. 347-348; Wieder *Ruth First and Joe Slovo*, p. 213

⁵⁹⁵ Ramphela *Across Boundaries*, pp. 111, 112, 119

⁵⁹⁶ 'Curriculum Vitae of Her Excellency Ms. Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of South Africa and Chairperson of the G-77 - Vienna Chapter 1998' — available at www.g77.org/vienna/CVMXAKATO.htm (accessed 19 June 2015)

⁵⁹⁷ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-53, 'Paper presented at the ANC Women's National workshop on building a legal ANC Women's League in South Africa'

⁵⁹⁸ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-4.1 'Report of the Political Education Sub-Committee to the General Meeting of the Women's Section of the African National Congress, East Africa Region', Sunday 24 September 1978.

One way of ensuring their ‘revolutionary contribution’ was to mobilise women into single-gender groups; the Women’s Section in particular. The reason for this, Manicom added, was that:

In a group of women comrades only, we cannot sit back and let the men do the talking. We can therefore use these Women’s Section discussion groups to develop our political skills and to gain confidence and to break down our own reservations about expressing ourselves.⁵⁹⁹

Manicom has since become a well-regarded academic, based in Canada.⁶⁰⁰ Her story is far from unusual, as higher education provided ANC women with stability and places of work in exile. Ray Alexander Simons had suggested the instigation of scholarships to enable women in exile to study in 1971. Throughout the 1970s and beyond, many ANC women had taken places at universities around the world, including Nozipho Joyce Diseko, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and Lindiwe Sisulu.⁶⁰¹ Nevertheless — and perhaps unsurprisingly, given the structural problems and challenges outlined in chapter two of this thesis — Women’s Section members were not able to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to the struggle and their political and/or higher education. There was a wide gap between their aspirations and their time-consuming duties as social welfare workers of the exile mission. Women’s Section members continued to fundraise and seek food and clothing donations from organisations supporting the ANC’s struggle in order to ensure the survival and life quality of ANC members. In this mission they continued to rely on their specific women-to-women contacts. For example, during the autumn of 1978 the Women’s Section appealed for material aid — including underwear, toiletries, babies clothing and financial assistance — at an international seminar hosted by the Federation of Swedish Social Democratic Women (SSKF).⁶⁰² The connection to Sweden, which is outlined throughout this thesis, thus continued to be important. In 1979, senior SSKF member Annie Marie Sundbom sent an application to the Swedish

⁵⁹⁹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-4.1 ‘Report of the Political Education Sub-Committee to the General Meeting of the Women’s Section of the African National Congress, East Africa Region’

⁶⁰⁰ Manicom has published books on women’s empowerment and debates, e.g. *Gender in Popular Education: Methods for Empowerment* (London: Zed, 1996) and *Feminist Popular Education in Transnational Debates: Building Pedagogies of Possibility* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), both written with Shirley Walters.

⁶⁰¹ Alexander Simons *All My Life and All My Strength*, pp. 317-318

⁶⁰² Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-2 ‘Seminar Report’ from International Seminar, Bommersvik, September 2-7, 1978

International Development Agency (SIDA) on behalf of SSKF, asking for 600,000 SEK to be spent on materials on behalf of the ANC Women's Section. These were to be distributed among young women and girls in ANC camps.⁶⁰³ A residential children's centre was also established at the ANC's Mazimbu farm near Morogoro in Tanzania. Funded by SIDA and UNESCO and organised by the Women's Section, the centre was symptomatic of the by-now lengthy exile existence, a response to the increasing number of children being born to exiled ANC activists. Moreover, it was a feminist project: an attempt to relieve women of the parenting duties that held them back in the struggle. According to a statement from the centre, dated in July 1979, the mothers of these children:

should not be forced to withdraw from active political life, study or productive activities. It is essential, if women are to achieve true liberation, that child bearing should not be considered a handicap. But it is also the duty of the ANC (SA), and of the future state to be created in South Africa, to ensure that the means are available for the care and education of every child from birth onwards. If a sound programme of child care is made available to all women then they will no longer be tied to their traditional roles in the home while at the same time this type of programme will ensure that each child has every possible advantage without being neglected in spite of the new roles taken on by mothers.⁶⁰⁴

The children's centre was established alongside the already existing Charlotte Maxeke residence for young mothers (to which pregnant and new mothers were sent from all over the exile mission) and the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College (SOMAFCO), a boarding school for children of the movement named in honour of an executed MK cadre.⁶⁰⁵

WOMEN AND THEIR BODIES: WEAPONS, PROTECTION AND VIOLENCE

Another example of the gendering of exile life emerged in the camps, where the idea that women could be a security threat was pervasive. An ANC headquarter report from the early 1980s discussed the poisoning of sexual partners in SWAPO camps by double-

⁶⁰³ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka MCH01-3 'Ansökan från SSKF till SIDA' Annie-Marie Sundbom (18 January 1979)

⁶⁰⁴ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-4.2 'Project Statement for the Residential Children's Centre, Mazimbu Farm, Morogoro, Tanzania', July 1979

⁶⁰⁵ Solomon Mahlangu's imprisonment and execution feature in part III of this chapter.

agent “girls” trained by South African agents. It warned that something similar might happen to ANC members.⁶⁰⁶ Meanwhile, the Women’s Section worried that there were ulterior, sinister motives behind the use of some contraception methods. In 1984, the Women’s Section sought to:

launch an effective anti-Depo Provera [a long-acting contraceptive administered through injections] campaign, with the aim of educating women on the negative effects of this drug, and using its maladministration on African women as an example of the [apartheid] regime’s policies of genocide.⁶⁰⁷

However, apartheid agents did not monopolise violence. One ANC Lusaka file reveals a case of infanticide committed by a young mother “scared of losing her place at the [ANC] school”.⁶⁰⁸ Abusive relationships between cadres were also a problem. Florence Mophosho resigned in 1981 due to ill health (she died in 1985) and was succeeded as head of the Women’s Section by Gertrude Shope. Shope continued to address the issue of violence, writing in letter to the ANC directorate that:

Reports continue to reach us that male comrades beat their girlfriends and wives up and that no disciplinary action has been taken. Instead, we are told, the attitude of even some senior people has sometimes been that it is traditional for this kind of thing to happen.⁶⁰⁹

In an attempt to improve the situation for women in the camps, the Women’s Secretariat (the elected body that oversaw the work of the Women’s Section) requested that the ANC’s National Executive Committee (NEC) make provision “for a nurse and gynaecologist for young women” at SOMAFCO.⁶¹⁰ They also demanded that the ANC’s educational and health departments “implement a programme of sex education”; and that the latter

⁶⁰⁶ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-5.2. ‘Report from Margaret Ling’ (no date but in folder from 1980-1981)

⁶⁰⁷ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-10.4 ‘Draft Programme of Action: African National Congress, Women’s Secretariat’

⁶⁰⁸ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-19.3 ‘Report on a Case of Infanticide by XXXX* at Luanshya on 29/02/88’ Japhet Ndlovu, Ag. Chief Representative **Name redacted*

⁶⁰⁹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-61.4 ‘Letter to the Directorate, Mazimbu, Morogoro, re. Wife / Girlfriend / Child battering’ Signed by Gertrude Shope, Head of Women’s Section. 1 March 1988

⁶¹⁰ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-4.5 ‘Report on the ANC South Africa Women’s Section in Zambia for the Year Ending December 1978’

pay attention to the gender bias in educational material which comes from the West which results in women only seeing themselves in roles like housewives.

The Women's Section also sought to confirm "our position on the suspension of male comrades for impregnating women."⁶¹¹ Women were still seen as solely responsible for contraception and the consequences of unprotected sexual relationships.⁶¹²

Women were not just seen as responsible for the sexual health and wellbeing of ANC structures; they were also charged with the responsibility to liberate themselves within its male-dominated culture. Throughout the period covered in this chapter, the ANC Women's Section and individual ANC women were constrained and held back by the organisation at large. As always, there was some encouragement from the very top. ANC president Oliver Tambo, who was a supporter of women's activists within the organisation, told the first Women's Section conference in September 1981 that women:

'have a duty to liberate us men from antique concepts and attitudes. The oppressed' he said, 'have even the greater duty to liberate themselves than the duty of the oppressor'. [Tambo] spoke of traditionalist, conservative and primitive constraints imposed on women by man dominated [sic] structures within our movement and submissiveness on the part of women. He made a call to move from revolutionary declaration to revolutionary practice.⁶¹³

The Women's Secretariat in Lusaka, which at this time included Shope, Mophosho, Agnes Msimang, Doreen Motshabi, Ray Alexander Simons and Mavis Nhlapo, was the conference organiser.⁶¹⁴ It took place in Luanda, Angola, was funded by SIDA and UNESCO, and hosted 80 women from 17 Women's Section groups in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.⁶¹⁵ These met to "map out strategies and tactics".⁶¹⁶ Keen to sound strong, important and united, the Secretariat's report, delivered at the conference, argued that "The Women's Secretariat has always been an integral part of the African

⁶¹¹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-10.4 'Recommendations from the ANC Women's Council' Lusaka, 22-25 February 1983

⁶¹² This topic is further explored in both the introduction and chapter two of this thesis.

⁶¹³ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-47.1 Letter from Gertrude Shope, head of the Women's Section, to Manala Manzini, Conference Preparatory Committee, 15 February 1985

⁶¹⁴ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-5.5 'Letter from Joe Nhlanhla, Admin-Sec, Lusaka, to Gertrude Shope' 19 June 1981; Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-5.5 'Letter from Joe Nhlanhla, Admin-Sec, Lusaka, to Mark Shope, Chief Rep ANC Mission Lagos' 19 June 1981

⁶¹⁵ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-10.2 'ANC Women's Section Conference of ANC Women in the external mission' Luanda, Angola, 10 September 1981

⁶¹⁶ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-22.5 'South African Women Face Challenges of the 80's: Draft article for VOW special issue 25th anniversary of August 9th 1956'

National Congress”.⁶¹⁷ This, as demonstrated in previous chapters, was not the whole truth. Although women had always played an important role in the ANC, the Women’s Secretariat had only existed for 10 out of the 20 years of exile up until this point, and always struggled to make its voice heard within ANC headquarters. They latched on to every morsel of support given to them by the leadership, including Tambo’s statement that:

Our struggle would be less than powerful and our national and social emancipation could never be complete if we continue to treat the women of our country as dependent minors and objects of one form of exploitation or another. Certainly, no longer should it be that a woman’s place is in the kitchen. In our beleaguered country the woman’s place is in the battlefield of struggle.⁶¹⁸

The Women’s Section interpreted this soundbite as a starting pistol, making a long list of tasks that needed to be fulfilled for the liberation of South African women at home and in exile. They were helped in their task by the ANC announcing that — following the Year of The Spear in 1979 and the Year of the Charter in 1980 — 1984 would be the ‘Year of the Woman’. This provided women’s activists with “an opportunity to intensify efforts in strengthening the Women’s Movement inside the country”.⁶¹⁹ The Women’s Secretariat’s programme of action for the Year of the Woman stated that it should write a comprehensive history of women’s struggles and heroism in South Africa, highlighting:

the militant struggles of the women of our country against the racist and colonial regime, with a view to educating our young women militants and deriving from the experiences various tactics of struggle. (...) [The fight is] against male chauvinism, male domination, we must do away with male domination in the home, village, town, factory/workshop, in politics, economics and religion. In particular we must fight domination even within our movement. No society is free [if] women are not free.⁶²⁰

⁶¹⁷ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-10.2 ‘Report of the Women’s Secretariat of the African National Congress to the first conference of ANC Women in the external mission’ Luanda, Angola, 10 September 1981

⁶¹⁸ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-47.1 Letter from Gertrude Shope, head of the Women’s Section, to Manala Manzini, Conference Preparatory Committee, 15 February 1985

⁶¹⁹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-14.3 ‘Report of the Women’s Secretariat to the Office of the Secretary General’ Gertrude Shope, January 1985

⁶²⁰ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-47.1 Letter from Gertrude Shope, head of the Women’s Section, to Manala Manzini, Conference Preparatory Committee, 15 February 1985

To ensure that a connection to the internal women's movement inside South Africa was established and strengthened, the Secretariat also proposed:

a huge anti-pass campaign, with special emphasis on influx control laws and their implication on the lives of women. This will be used as a uniting campaign for all women's organisations inside the country. (...) Our rallying call must be the consolidation of the united action of all democratic women's organisations at local and regional level. On the international scene we must continue to actively participate in the struggle for peace and complete disarmament, linking the question with the militarisation of South Africa of the Apartheid regime.⁶²¹

In calling for peace and disarmament, these ANC women's concerns were in line with those of many SAP women — from Alva Myrdal to Maj Britt Theorin — and campaigning feminist groups in Europe and beyond.⁶²²

Nevertheless, despite attempts to determine the role of women within the movement themselves, women's position within the ANC remained an unsolved and contested issue. A Women's Section-authored working paper on the historical context of the women's movement from the early 1980s pointed out that there were still:

people among us, as the ANC is well aware, who feel that the ANC should devote all its efforts to the struggle against apartheid, colonial rule and therefore the task of women's question is secondary. (...) They ask. [sic] Is the women's question not being deliberately used to divert the ANC from the main enemy.⁶²³

Women's agency was still considered as divisive and suspicious as ever. Nevertheless, the working paper's authors were adamant that:

Women should have unlimited range to carry out victoriously the revolutionary task of the ANC and when the ANC seizes power in South Africa, the women too should be equipped to participate equally with men in national reconstruction.⁶²⁴

⁶²¹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-10.4 'Draft Programme of Action: African National Congress, Women's Secretariat'

⁶²² See, e.g., the activism of the Greenham Common women. Junor, Beth *Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp: A History of Non-Violent Resistance, 1984-1995* (London: Working Press, 1995)

⁶²³ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-10.2 'Working Paper: The Historical Context of the Women's Movement'

⁶²⁴ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-10.2 'Working Paper: The Historical Context of the Women's Movement'

Despite their commitment to peace and disarmament, the Women's Section sought the involvement of women in all parts of the struggle against apartheid. That included its armed forces.

Women's Section activists often discussed the experiences of the MK's female cadres. The ANC armed forces were among the minority of ANC members that could bridge the gaps between exile and internal structures. Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 inspired the ANC to invest more time and effort in its own military struggle. On 31 May 1980, the MK's special operations unit, the recently renamed Solomon Mahlangu Detachment, crossed the border into South Africa from Mozambique to attack oil refineries SASOL I, SASOL II and NATREF. The operatives' timed bombs, which were planned to coincide with South Africa's Republic Day celebrations, destroyed eight fuel tanks and caused long-term damage to the plants.⁶²⁵ However, the heroism of MK was highly gendered. In her memoirs, Ray Alexander Simons reveals that, along with 11 others, she had been given a day's worth of training before taking the MK oath in 1978.⁶²⁶ Nevertheless, the position of female cadres in MK or, rather, their lack of a position there, was an annoying thorn in women's activists' sides. Instead of fighting, many MK women were given office jobs on finishing their training.⁶²⁷ In a 1987 report presented at the Second National Women's Section Conference, they blamed structural discrimination within the ANC for this. "Women in MK are not playing a decisive role in political and military work of our organisation," the report read, adding:

There are no underground women of MK at home. We have failed the people — we are commanding from the rear.⁶²⁸

The poor quality of recruits was part of the reason, the report argued, as:

⁶²⁵ South African History Online 'SASOL plant under attack', available at www.sahistory.org.za/dated-event/sasol-plant-under-attack (accessed 18 June 2015)

⁶²⁶ Alexander Simons *All My Life and All My Strength*, p. 325

⁶²⁷ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archives, Box 25, Folder 74 'Report of the African National Congress Women's Section Council meeting' Lusaka, Zambia, 22-25 February 1983

⁶²⁸ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archives, Box 25, Folder 75 'Women in the People's Army, Umkhonto we Sizwe' presented by Nomalizo Komane; rapporteur Tandie Rankoe. From 'Report of the proceedings of the second national conference on the Women's Section of the African National Congress of South Africa' Luanda, Angola 1-6 September 1987

Many women who joined the movement were not deliberately recruited, they left with spouses. Hence in most cases, the lack of political participation and enthusiasm.⁶²⁹

Nevertheless, the Women's Section felt that the ANC was missing a trick in not making use of its female soldiers as:

it has been proven that the chances of survival in the underground for women are greater than for men. People at home have actually demanded/recommended that the ANC should send and train more women.⁶³⁰

However, women cadres were not the only group discontented with MK standards and practices. In 1984, the ANC was rocked by mutiny in Pango, as anger with the camp's leadership caused some cadres to stage an unsuccessful coup. The Stuart Commission, set up by the ANC to investigate the cause of the mutiny, later established that mistreatment in the camps had led to the events. The commission argued that the ANC's Security Department was so desperate in its hunt for apartheid agents that:

Force has become the rule rather than the exception. It is indiscriminately used not only as a punishment but even when carrying out interviews and debriefings.⁶³¹

Fear of retribution meant many of those who suffered the most kept quiet.

Violence, however, was not exclusive to MK members. Apartheid forces also meted it out, making life in exile dangerous and unpredictable. Assassination attempts became increasingly daring throughout the 1980s. In March 1982, the ANC office in London was bombed, and on 17 August Ruth First was killed when a letter bomb exploded in her office at the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane in Maputo, Mozambique. On 19 August 1985, the deadliest attack yet on the ANC took place in Maseru, Lesotho, as a South African Defence Force group killed 30 South Africans and 12 Lesotho citizens in a cross-border raid that caused fury around the world. On the day of the

⁶²⁹ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archives, Box 25, Folder 75 'Women in the MK' presented by co-chairperson Cde Monica; rapporteur Cde Pauline Maputo. From 'Report of the proceedings of the second national conference on the Women's Section of the African National Congress of South Africa' Luanda, Angola 1-6 September 1987

⁶³⁰ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archives, Box 25, Folder 75 'Women in the MK' presented by co-chairperson Cde Monica; rapporteur Cde Pauline Maputo. From 'Report of the proceedings of the second national conference on the Women's Section of the African National Congress of South Africa' Luanda, Angola 1-6 September 1987

⁶³¹ ANC 'Stuart Commission Report: Commission of inquiry into recent developments in the People's Republic of Angola' 14 March 1984, Lusaka. Available at anc.org.za/show.php?id=87 (accessed 16 July 2014).

victims' funerals, MK retaliated with an attack on the Koeberg nuclear power station outside Cape Town.⁶³² In 1988, ANC Women's Section stalwart Dulcie September was assassinated in Paris, while a car bomb nearly killed Albie Sachs in Maputo. The 1980s was an unpredictable and thoroughly dangerous decade, in which ANC women's activists struggled on many fronts. Their political liberation — as South African citizens and as women — was often subsumed by the need to survive.

PART III

ANC ACTIVISM WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA

The influx of refugees and activists into exile structures, which coincided with growing repression within South Africa, prompted a reorganisation of the ANC and its methods on both sides of the border. Immediately in the aftermath of the Soweto Uprisings, an attempt was made to strengthen the connection between internal and external structures. Mac Maharaj, a longtime ANC member who had served 12 years on Robben Island alongside the Rivonia trialists after being convicted of sabotage in 1964, was charged with the task. He had been released in December 1976 and left South Africa six months later. He became the head of the Internal Reconstruction and Development Department (IRDD), which attempted to reorganise and reconstruct the political underground within South Africa from abroad.⁶³³ Its only female member was FEDSAW, SACP and ANC veteran Ray Alexander Simons, whose experience of underground mobilisation dated back to the 1930s.⁶³⁴ By the late 1970s, the ANC in exile produced 'The Green Book/ Theses on our Strategic Line', which outlined the role and organisation of internal underground structures. It was inspired by a visit to Vietnam, which points to the importance of the ANC's links to left-wing guerrilla movements.⁶³⁵

⁶³² Magubane 'The Crisis of the Garrison State', pp. 42-43

⁶³³ O'Malley, Pdraig *Shades of Difference: Mac Maharaj and the Struggle for South Africa* (New York: Penguin, 2008), pp. 203-207; Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 364

⁶³⁴ The O'Malley Archives: 'Mac Maharaj, security files – the Internal Reconstruction and Development Department (I.R.R.D.) and S.R. Mac Maharaj'

⁶³⁵ ANC 'The Green Book' available at www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=79 (accessed 19 June 2015). See, e.g., Ellis *The External Mission*, and Shubin, Vladimir *ANC: A View From Moscow* (Auckland Park: Jacana Media, 2008) for more on this.

As demonstrated in chapter two of this thesis, while the ANC had managed to encourage international support for its struggle, it remained weak inside South Africa during the 1970s. With the murder of Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) leader Steve Biko in prison on 12 September 1977 and the banning of all BCM organisations less than a week later, the ANC had seen an opportunity to use its experience of underground mobilisation to ensure the survival of the anti-apartheid movement within South Africa. It also had an opportunity to reclaim the initiative in the struggle: having been out of touch with BCM developments, the ANC was keen to reassert its influence in the wake of violence and bannings. The apartheid authorities inadvertently helped them in this cause. A BCM-inspired generation of political prisoners began arriving in Robben Island, where they were integrated with the Rivonia trialists. Many of the youngsters served time-limited sentences, and helped the imprisoned ANC leadership communicate with the outside world on their release throughout the 1980s.⁶³⁶ Nevertheless, in 1979, Maharaj estimated that there were only between 300 and 500 underground activists within ANC structures.⁶³⁷

Within South Africa, the anti-apartheid movement was fractured. Two of the ANC's competitors were the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), which provided a link and lifeline for banned BCM-movements,⁶³⁸ and the Natal-based Inkatha National Cultural Liberation Movement (founded in 1975 under Mangosuthu Buthelezi) which was perceived as a collaborator by the apartheid state.⁶³⁹ The ANC's internal supporters were most visible among trade unionists, who supported mobilisation as directed by the 1955 Freedom Charter. In September 1980, the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA) was formed by nine large trade unions; in 1982 CUSA launched the National Union of Mineworkers, which soon became the largest in the country with an estimated 100,000 members. Cyril Ramaphosa was elected its first general secretary and Elijah Barayi its vice president. Barayi later proved his credentials by leading 9,000

⁶³⁶ See Houston 'The ANC's Internal Underground Political Work in the 1980s', pp. 133-221 for a recent take on the ANC underground.

⁶³⁷ Ellis *External Mission*, p. 116

⁶³⁸ See Mzamane, M. V. & Maaba, B. 'The Azanian People's Organisation', pp. 1299-1358 and Mzamane, M. V. & Maaba, B. 'The Black Consciousness Movement of Azania, 1979-1990', both in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa Volume 4 (1980-1990), part II*, pp. 1361-1398

⁶³⁹ See Ndlovu, S. M. 'The African National Congress and negotiations', pp. 93-94

Blyvooruitzicht miners in a strike in May 1984.⁶⁴⁰ Alongside workers' strikes were those of school children, who still refused to re-enter the educational system in opposition to apartheid teachings and the lowering of standards for black pupils; issues that had led to the Soweto Uprising in 1976.⁶⁴¹

The most prolific members of the post-Soweto generation were the young men and women caught up in the apartheid authorities' net, who became symbols and martyrs of the struggle. Solomon Mahlangu was a young MK recruit who crossed the border into South Africa in the summer of 1977 with a small guerrilla group. Police apprehended two of the members in the group, Mahlangu and Monty Motlounge (1957-2006), shortly after their return. While pursued, two civilians were shot by Motlounge before both Mahlangu and Motlounge were arrested. The effects of torture — which reportedly resulted in lasting brain damage — made Motlounge unfit to stand trial. Mahlangu was therefore prosecuted on his own and was sentenced to death in early 1978.⁶⁴² His name spread among anti-apartheid activists in South Africa, in exile and within the international movement, who campaigned to save his life. Although futile, their efforts galvanised the anti-apartheid movement at home and abroad, giving it a hero whose final words were reported as:

My blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom. Tell my people that I love them. They must continue the fight.⁶⁴³

Another MK recruit was Thandi Modise, who had risen through the ranks after leaving South Africa in November 1976. In 1978, Modise re-entered the country illegally; by the time she was arrested in October 1979 she was pregnant. Held in solitary confinement for six months, she later told her trial that:

During long hours of police interrogation, she was repeatedly hit when refusing to answer. She was told that she would be killed; she was given a gun and told to commit suicide and when she refused, the gun was pointed at her head to frighten her. After a particularly brutal assault, fearing a miscarriage, Thandi asked for medical attention and

⁶⁴⁰ South African History Online 'Elijah Barayi', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/elijah-barayi (accessed 19 June 2015)

⁶⁴¹ Diseko, Nozipho, J. 'The Origins and Development of the South African Students' Movement (SASM), 1968-1976' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (1992), pp. 40-62

⁶⁴² South Africa History Online 'Solomon Kalushi Mahlangu', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/solomon-kalushi-mahlangu (accessed 17 July 2014); Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 369

⁶⁴³ ANC 'ANC statement on the execution of Solomon Mahlangu' 6 April 1979: available at <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=4496> (accessed 19 June 2015)

was told by the prison doctor that nothing could be done and that she would probably lose her baby.⁶⁴⁴

In the end, both Modise and her baby survived, and Modise was sentenced to eight years in prison, becoming the first woman to serve time for MK membership. The Women's Section in exile used Modise as an example of women's capability for heroism, as did the wider ANC. In the late 1970s Modise featured in pamphlets on female ANC activists and prisoners, which were publicly distributed in exile.⁶⁴⁵ Meanwhile, other women who experienced violence in prisons, including rape, went to great lengths to avoid talking about it, both at the time and in the post-apartheid era.⁶⁴⁶

UDF AND UWO: THE BIRTH OF A NEW MASS-MOVEMENT

Other resistance to Pretoria was more subtle. At funerals for young activists in the late 1970s, small groups of women appeared wearing the green and black uniforms of the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW), the organisation that had all but disappeared in the aftermath of the bannings of the 1960, but never formally disbanded. In the 1980s, a member of the by then recently established Federation of Transvaal Women (FEDTRAW) saw these women's uniformed action as a link to the pre-1960 women's movement: "For the first time in almost twenty years," Leila Patel wrote in South African feminist journal *Agenda*,

the FSAW [sic] was becoming visible. The symbolism of historical tradition, and the link with the beginnings of a women's movement has given impetus and direction to contemporary initiatives.⁶⁴⁷

There were other signs, too, that women were organising again and that the radicalism of the women's movement of the 1950s was reemerging. Two examples of this are the spring 1979 birth of the women's caucus of the Federation of South African Trade

⁶⁴⁴ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-130 "'Apartheid — You Shall Be Crushed': Women's Fight Against Apartheid", p. 25; see also Modise, T. & Curnow, R. 'Thandi Modise, a Woman in War' *Agenda*, No. 43 (2000), pp. 36-40

⁶⁴⁵ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-130 "'Apartheid — You Shall Be Crushed", p. 25

⁶⁴⁶ Thenjiwe Mtintso and Jessie Duarte are among those discussing this problem in Goldblatt, B. & Meintjes, S. 'Dealing with the Aftermath: Sexual Violence and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission' *Agenda*, No. 36 (1997), pp. 7-18; Sideris, Tina 'Rape in War and Peace: Some Thoughts on Social Context and Gender Roles' *Agenda*, No. 43 (2000), pp. 41-45

⁶⁴⁷ Patel, Leila 'South African Women's Struggles in the 1980's' *Agenda*, No. 2 (1988), pp. 28-35

Union (FOSATU), set up to address women's issues, and the April 1981 founding of the United Women's Organisation in the Western Cape.⁶⁴⁸ Initiated by eight FEDSAW veterans, it was a non-racial federation of women's groups.⁶⁴⁹ The UWO manifesto even opened with the preamble of the 1954 FEDSAW Women's Charter, showing its close connection to the older women's movements.⁶⁵⁰ According to a paper prepared by the ANC in exile, many of the 300 women who attended the inaugural UWO conference:

had a history of political experience, in trade union or community organisation or in the anti-pass campaigns of the 1950s (...) [They would soon] throw their weight against the increases in rents, mass removals, increases in bus fares in the Cape, in the struggles for better housing and living conditions.⁶⁵¹

Before the year was over, similar organisations had been set up in Natal (Durban), and the Eastern Cape (Port Elizabeth and East London).⁶⁵² The ANC was well-informed about the work of UWO; one of its founding leaders, Dorothy Zihlangu, was an ANC underground operative.⁶⁵³ As demonstrated in chapter two of this thesis, Albertina Sisulu was another influential and important underground operative.

Though predominantly working by themselves in small, clandestine units, the work of these operatives was partially directed by the ANC in exile, through the use of the organisation's Radio Freedom broadcasts from Lusaka as well as ANC journals *Sechaba* and *Mayibuye*. From the late 1970s, the Swedish direct aid programme for the ANC included a 'home front component', which included funds for the dispersal of radio broadcasts via cassette tapes and the photocopying of *Sechaba* and *Mayibuye* for public distribution.⁶⁵⁴

⁶⁴⁸ Patel 'South African Women's Struggles in the 1980's', p. 31; Beinart *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, p. 242

⁶⁴⁹ Magubane, Zine 'Attitudes towards feminism among women in the ANC, 1950–1990: A theoretical re-interpretation' in South African Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy in South Africa: Volume 4 (1980-1990), part II*, pp. 976, 977;

⁶⁵⁰ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-131 'United Women's Organisation of South Africa: South African Women's Declaration'

⁶⁵¹ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-131 'Paper on UWO' published by the Social Research Agency, November 1981

⁶⁵² Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-10.5 'An Assessment of the Internal Situation, with Particular Reference to the Women's Struggles and Organisations' ANC Women's Secretariat, late 1982/early 1983

⁶⁵³ Houston 'The ANC's Internal Underground Political Work in the 1980s', p. 142; The Presidency 'Dorothy Nomazotsho Zilangu: Citation for Order of Luthuli in Silver' www.thepresidency.gov.za/orders/042605/part3.pdf (accessed 19 June 2015), p. 16

⁶⁵⁴ Houston 'The ANC's internal underground political work in the 1980s', pp. 138, 152

The financial support for and the reorganisation of the underground are two reasons for the increasing success of the ANC to spread its message within South Africa. Another was the reaction of less overtly political groups whose anti-apartheid mobilisation was organised through church and community structures. The increasingly visible violent repression caused many of these to turn to the ANC in order to strengthen their own opposition to Pretoria. Albertina Sisulu later spoke about how the attitudes of some of the women that had previously shunned her changed in the aftermath of Soweto, telling her biographer that:

Some women, especially the church women, were so afraid of me, except those who were my personal friends. There were women who called me a jailbird and were afraid to be in my company because they were afraid to go to jail. After 1976, all that changed because now they knew what had happened to their children and who the enemy was. They would come to me and say ‘Mama, what must we do now?’ Our organisation of women became very strong after 1976.⁶⁵⁵

The idea of motherhood and mothering was of great importance to Sisulu’s activism, but also of others’ attitudes towards her: this will be further explored later in this section.

The renaissance of the mass anti-apartheid movement was also visible elsewhere within South Africa. In 1980, Durban-based *The Sunday Post* launched its ‘Release Nelson Mandela’ campaign, accumulating 86,000 signatures that were handed to the authorities. As Elinor Sisulu has written, “it turned out to be a tactically brilliant move” as “[p]eople identified more easily with an individual than an organisation”. More importantly,

in South Africa it was illegal to support the ANC, but it was not a crime to call for the release of an individual political leader. For ANC members and sympathisers, Mandela’s name was inseparable from that of the ANC, so the Release Mandela initiative was the first major political campaign that allowed them to identify openly with the ANC.⁶⁵⁶

⁶⁵⁵ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 348. Family terms like ‘sisi’, ‘mama’ and ‘tata’ are used to greet people respectfully in Xhosa.

⁶⁵⁶ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 368, 369; Reddy, E.S. ‘Free Nelson Mandela — an account of the Campaign to Free Nelson Mandela and all other Political Prisoners in South Africa’, available at www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=43 (accessed 19 June 2015)

Alongside this very visible campaign was another: in June 1980, the 25th anniversary of the Congress of Kliptown was celebrated through the reprinting and mass distribution of the 1955 Freedom Charter.⁶⁵⁷ No less radical now, the Charter stated

that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people.⁶⁵⁸

This resurgent and visible mobilisation against apartheid soon found an outlet in a new structure, the United Democratic Front (UDF).

Violence was not Pretoria's only response to political unrest. Throughout the period that followed the 1976 Soweto uprisings, the apartheid government attempted to quash the revolt by locating, creating and promoting a small sector of the black, Indian and coloured populations that might help police their own communities. These 'concessions', were part of P.W. Botha's strategies to quell the uprisings after he became prime minister in 1978.⁶⁵⁹ In 1982, Botha's government put forward a proposal for a new constitution, which included the creation of a segregated tricameral parliament. South Africa's white minority would remain the sole occupants of the 178-seat House of Assembly, while Indians would be elected to a 45-seat House of Delegates, and coloured South Africans would serve in a 85-seat House of Representatives. Black South Africans were eligible to elect their local authorities in urban townships.⁶⁶⁰ Under the new constitution, the office of prime minister would be abolished, giving executive power to a state president. In November 1983, a white-only referendum approved of the new constitution, but mobilisation against it had already begun.⁶⁶¹ Allan Boesak, a minister in the coloured South African Dutch Reformed Mission Church and a well-known anti-apartheid activist lit the spark.⁶⁶² At the congress of the Transvaal Anti-SAIC Committee on 23 January 1983, Boesak called for a united front to gather in

⁶⁵⁷ Houston 'The ANC's Internal Underground Political Work in the 1980s', p. 154

⁶⁵⁸ ANC 'The Freedom Charter'

⁶⁵⁹ Beinart *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, p. 245

⁶⁶⁰ South African History Online 'Tricameral Parliament', available at www.sahistory.org.za/archive/tricameral-parliament (accessed 19 June 2015)

⁶⁶¹ South African History Online 'The Tricameral Parliament: A White Referendum', available at www.sahistory.org.za/article/white-referendum (accessed 19 June 2015). See also Seekings, Jeremy *The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000), pp. 93-100.

⁶⁶² A year previously, Boesak had become an anti-apartheid celebrity as he led the World Alliance of Reformed Churches to proclaim apartheid a heresy.

rejection of the government's constitutional proposals.⁶⁶³ Soon, a steering committee was set up to take Boesak's suggestion forward, settling on the creation of an organisation that would, in the words of Jeremy Seekings,

be loosely constituted as a broad front. It would not be for political organisations only, but would seek to involve other organisations as long as they accepted a non-racial, non-collaborationist approach. It would not commit itself to the Freedom Charter (so as to avoid too explicit an association with the ANC). The front would be organised on a regional and essentially federal basis.⁶⁶⁴

The strategy worked well. In August 1983, the UDF was officially launched at a founding conference attended by 1,000 delegates and 500 observers from 565 organisations in Mitchell's Plain, a township on the outskirts of Cape Town. ANC women were very visible. FEDSAW stalwart Frances Baard opened a mass rally after the conference, in which somewhere between 6,000 and 15,000 people participated. Meanwhile, Albertina Sisulu, who had been arrested on 5 August at the clinic where she worked and was therefore unable to make it to Mitchell's Plain, was elected co-president in absentia alongside trade unionist Oscar Mpetsha and ANC organiser Archie Gumede. Their election was a compromise to minimise leadership issues and stop provincial posturing. Sisulu represented the Transvaal while Mpetsha and Gumede represented the Western Cape and Natal respectively. Mpetsha was on remand from prison after appealing against his conviction for terrorism after township riots in 1980, but at the time of the UDF launch he was in hospital. Gumede was therefore the only of the three presidents present.⁶⁶⁵ Nevertheless, the UDF immediately began organising campaigns against elections to black local authorities, with instant success. Turnout rates for the latter fell from 39 per cent in the late 1970s to 12 per cent in 1983. In 1984, the UDF stepped up the campaign, touring vast parts of the country to encourage a boycott of the elections to the Indian and coloured houses of parliament. Again, their

⁶⁶³ SAIC, or the South African Indian Council, was a government sanctioned body in charge of the separate (apartheid) development of South Africa's Indian population.

⁶⁶⁴ Seekings *The UDF*, p. 49

⁶⁶⁵ Seekings *The UDF*, pp. 55, 56, 57, 59; Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 393; 'Oscar Mafakafaka Mpetsha' *Encyclopedia Britannica* – available at www.britannica.com/biography/Oscar-Mafakafaka-Mpetsha (accessed 19 June 2015)

efforts were successful: only 18 per cent of the eligible coloured voters turned out, and only 13 per cent of Indians cast their votes.⁶⁶⁶

Part of the UDF's success lay in its visibility. Thousands turned out for meetings to hear a range of experienced orators argue that the struggle against apartheid was a struggle for all, and justice denied to one was justice denied to all.⁶⁶⁷ The first issue of *UDF News* had Albertina Sisulu's image on the front page, a significant boost for women's political visibility since it was disseminated in 250,000 copies across townships.⁶⁶⁸ This visibility continued beyond South Africa's borders: connections to activists and politicians in Sweden, Finland, Britain, the United Nations and the US were quickly made.⁶⁶⁹ In December 1985, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was launched, further strengthening internal anti-apartheid resistance. Committed to the UDF's vision of a non-racial, democratic South Africa, COSATU represented 450,000 workers organised in 33 unions.⁶⁷⁰

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE MASS-MOVEMENT

A further reason behind the UDF's success was the role played by senior ANC women within it, and their continued mobilisation within women-only groups. Amid the apartheid government's continuing support for traditional and limiting gender roles and endorsement of gender segregating work politics aimed towards black South Africans, women's separate mobilisation still had an important role to play. As previously explored, the exploitative migrant labour system meant that many families were broken up against their will for large parts of the year, and women were often the sole breadwinners. In 1980, the Women's Section in exile pointed out that only one per cent of black women managed to go to secondary school, while "there are only a few professional women among Africans".⁶⁷¹ Among these few educated women were the

⁶⁶⁶ Beinart *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, pp. 255, 257; Patel 'South African Women's Struggles in the 1980s', p. 30

⁶⁶⁷ Seekings *The UDF*, p. 109

⁶⁶⁸ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 390

⁶⁶⁹ Seekings *The UDF*, p. 118

⁶⁷⁰ Ndlovu, S. M. & Sithole, J. 'Trade Union Unity Summits and the Formation of COSATU, 1980-1990' in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa Volume 4 (1980-1990), part II*, p. 930; See also Baskin, Jeremy *Striking Back: A History of COSATU* (London: Routledge, 1991); COSATU 'Brief History of COSATU' – available at www.cosatu.org.za/show.php?ID=925 (accessed 19 June 2015)

⁶⁷¹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-6.2 'Statement by the ANC of South Africa — Women's Section — at the opening of the Helsinki Seminar of Women under Apartheid' Helsinki, Finland, 19-21 May 1980

leaders of the internal black women's movement. On 24 February 1984, Albertina Sisulu was sentenced to four years in prison for furthering the aims of the ANC.⁶⁷² She was released on bail pending her appeal.⁶⁷³ On 23 March, Dorothy Nyembe — the leading FEDSAW member who had been sentenced under the Terrorism and Suppression of Communism Acts in 1969 — was released from prison. Neither wasted any time in reconnecting to their cause: Nyembe went home to Natal where she joined the Natal Organisation of Women (NOW), an affiliate of UDF. Sisulu, meanwhile, continued her efforts to resuscitate FEDSAW, leading to the creation of the Federation of Transvaal Women (FEDTRAW) in 1984.

Uniting as women allowed anti-apartheid activists to call on all South African women to unite across apartheid lines of ethnicity. Albertina Sisulu needed no encouragement to take this view. At a UDF rally in Orlando, the township outside Johannesburg where she lived, Sisulu said:

All these years the women had been fighting side by side with men ... and I dare say without women in every struggle there is no progress. Today we are being divided. Our own children, which are Indians and coloureds, are taken away from us. Our own children are going to be called up as soldiers to fight against their own brothers. We as women are the only people who can stop that. The children are ours. They don't belong to the government ... they don't belong to anybody but the mothers of this country. We must stand up and say no to this new constitution of the government!⁶⁷⁴

While political mobilisation was key, some of the work these women's organisations did fall into the social outreach category. Towards the end of the decade, two women, named as Ms Quebeka and Ms Mupetami, presented a review of projects undertaken by women's groups within South Africa to exiled ANC members in Lusaka. They mentioned:

adult education and literacy classes, silk-screening work, neighbourhood care, handicraft activities, nutrition, candle-making, brick-making, food preparation and distribution, and fund-raising. (...) Many of the Black women's organisations organised their political struggle through the church and a few White women's organisations that were not listed by the regime.⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁷² Albertina Sisulu also served many lengthy bannings: on 31 July 1979, her third consecutive five-year ban had come to an end, only to be served with the fourth — this time for two years — the very next day.

⁶⁷³ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 349

⁶⁷⁴ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, pp. 400-401

⁶⁷⁵ Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archive, Box 119, Folder 461 'Report of a workshop on ILO assistance to women victims of Apartheid', Lusaka July 7-10 1987

The strategy was to include these less overtly political aspects of communal work to give women's activists the ability to reach women who were still afraid of political work.⁶⁷⁶ But it also offered an opportunity to mobilise politically without detection by the apartheid authorities. The idea was that strengthened women and strengthened communities would become an impenetrable front against apartheid oppression.

Younger women needed less handholding. At FEDTRAW, several well-known former ANCWL leaders, including Helen Joseph, June Mlangeni and Caroline Motsoaledi, joined Albertina Sisulu alongside a younger generation of women who had become activists in the 1970s.⁶⁷⁷ One of them was Jessie Duarte, who became Albertina Sisulu's personal secretary over the course of the next 12 years. She said:

We worked together almost on a daily basis. (...) At that time we young women did not have a political home. (...) MaSisulu was like a one-woman political education course. (...) We were called 'MaSisulu's girls'. MaSisulu was our political mentor who could tell us more about the policies of the ANC than anyone. Her crusade was to develop what she termed a 'petticoat' layer of women leaders that would take over when the older women were not there.⁶⁷⁸

Being a mother and a mother-figure, and addressing a crowd as such, gave Albertina Sisulu a natural authority among her peers to question the immorality of apartheid policies. Meanwhile, FEDTRAW, like NOW and other regional women's groups, helped bridge the generational gaps that had become so divisive in the mid-1970s. It was not a straightforward process, however: conflicts brewed as the 1980s progressed, particularly around the older generation's leadership styles. According to Jessie Duarte, Albertina Sisulu:

would not take no for an answer ... she would say, 'Look, my girls, we are going to do this thing in this manner and there is not going to be another way because I've done this before and it has worked.' Perhaps one could regard that as negative now but at the time ... we needed somebody who could provide the kind of firm leadership MaSisulu was able to give.⁶⁷⁹

⁶⁷⁶ Patel 'South African Women's Struggles in the 1980s', pp. 32-33

⁶⁷⁷ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archives, Box 33, Folder 55 'FEDTRAW: Budgets and proposals, 1990-1991'

⁶⁷⁸ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 375

⁶⁷⁹ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 400

By the mid-1980s, it seems as though the separate organisation of women within large movements was seen as unquestionable and a given. Despite the connotations of motherhood and mothering, these women's organisations were spaces for very radical discussions. As the decade drew to a close, it was no longer enough to talk about gender and oppression. Women's activists in exile and at home expected real change and were getting ready to instigate it, should the apartheid state crumble under the pressure they helped put on it.

VIOLENT SET-BACKS

It is important to point out that all of the events discussed above took place amid the brutal oppression of political dissenters, who faced continual bannings and dangerous imprisonment. Furthermore, just like their comrades abroad, they also faced targeted assassinations. In 1979, the counterinsurgency Vlakplaas Unit was set up under the command of Dirk Coetzee and, later, Eugene de Kock; it did not take long for it to be implicated in torture, kidnappings and murders, including that of ANC activist Griffiths Mxenge in November 1981.⁶⁸⁰ In February 1982, doctor and trade unionist organiser Neil Aggett was found dead in his cell, becoming the 51st political activist to die in detention in South Africa, and the first white political prisoner to do so.⁶⁸¹

Just as prison became a more dangerous location, the apartheid government tried to end the rise of the UDF by jailing its most famous faces. In the autumn of 1984, six UDF leaders — including one of its three presidents, Archie Gumede — took refuge in the British Consulate in Durban, protesting against the apartheid government's treatment of the UDF and Britain's support for Pretoria. The occupiers were arrested once they left the consulate, and in February 1985 Albertina Sisulu found herself standing alongside them in the dock, this time charged with treason. The Pietermaritzburg Treason Trial (as it became known) ended with all charges being

⁶⁸⁰ Truth and Reconciliation Commission *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report*, Volume 2, chapter 3, available at www.justice.gov.za/trc/report/finalreport/Volume%202.pdf (accessed 19 June 2015), pp. 224-225; Magubane 'The Crisis of the Garrison State', p. 10

⁶⁸¹ South Africa History Online 'Dr Neil Hudson Aggett', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/dr-neil-hudson-aggett (accessed 19 June 2015); Naidoo, Beverly *Death of an Idealist: In Search of Neil Aggett* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2012)

withdrawn in December 1985.⁶⁸² A second treason trial soon commenced in Delmas near Johannesburg after the arrest of UDF's public secretary Terror Lekota, national secretary Popo Molefe and Transvaal regional secretary Moss Chikane in April 1985. They were not granted bail, and were kept in prison until convicted in 1988.⁶⁸³

Other members of UDF-affiliated organisations fared much worse. In May 1985, three members of the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation (PEBCO) — Sipho Hashe, Champion Galela and Qaqawuli Godolozzi — were murdered. On 27 June, Matthew Goniwe, Fort Calata, Sparrow Mkonto and Sicelo Mhlauli, members and organisers of the Cradock Residents' Association, were also murdered. At the post-apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Committee hearings, security policemen admitted to carrying out the killings.⁶⁸⁴ A month after the murder of the Cradock Four, and with violence steadily increasing, President Botha declared a State of Emergency, sending greater number of troops into the townships to deal with school-boycotting Molotov-cocktail-throwing children. Meanwhile, well-known anti-apartheid activists continued to be specifically sought out and silenced. One example was the brutal murder of Victoria Mxenge, a lawyer and widow of Griffiths Maxenge who had been assassinated in 1981, in August 1985. Again, the Truth and Reconciliation Committee found that security branch was responsible.⁶⁸⁵

Nevertheless, the apartheid authorities could not control the rioting masses, which responded to the increased repression in two ways: by reorganising in large umbrella organisations beyond the reach of the government, or by attempting to take control over the townships themselves. The latter method provoked lasting controversies as some township residents interpreted calls for ungovernability literally. Thus started an era of vigilantism in which popular committees and people's courts quickly tried members of the community, resulting in many death sentences by necklacing. One example from the the townships around Johannesburg is the infamous Mandela Football Club, led by

⁶⁸² Seekings *The UDF*, p. 163

⁶⁸³ Seekings *The UDF*, pp. 145, 162, 240

⁶⁸⁴ Truth and Reconciliation Commission *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report*, pp. 227-228

⁶⁸⁵ Truth and Reconciliation Commission *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report*, pp. 229-230

Winnie Mandela, which was implicated in the murder of young local boy Stompie Seipei.⁶⁸⁶ Like many senior political leaders, Albertina Sisulu:

was deeply concerned about the brutalisation of young activists and the emergence of the ‘*com-tsotsis*’ (literally ‘comrade-gangsters’) who used political activism as a cover for violence and thuggery. She abhorred the murder of suspected political informers though brutal methods such as necklacing. (...) She believed that the criminal behaviour of some of the young comrades was a direct consequence of the intractable boycotts in townships schools, and she was openly critical of the ‘Liberation before Education’ slogan that was bandied about by militant student activists.⁶⁸⁷

When speaking in front of 60,000 people at the funeral of 17 young victims of violence in the aftermath of the ‘Six-Day War’ in Alexandra in March 1986, Albertina Sisulu specifically appealed to the nation’s mothers, this time including the mothers of police and soldiers sent into the townships in her message. She said:

We as mothers — black and white — should be fighting together more and more. What happens to black children will happen to white children ... Why are soldiers roaming the streets of the townships, killing our children?⁶⁸⁸

Meanwhile, the UDF was doing its best to operate under severe restrictions that left its leadership banned and harassed. Their frustrations led to the founding of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), an amalgamation of UDF and COSATU. The MDM was difficult for the apartheid government to track down, as it had no address, no elected leadership and no constitution: a highly effective way to organise.⁶⁸⁹ In August 1989, MDM launched a countrywide defiance campaign inspired by 1950s civil disobedience activism. Thousands of activists and sympathisers broke apartheid laws and regulations by using segregated facilities that they were excluded from, including

⁶⁸⁶ See, e.g. Lekgoathi, Sekibakiba Peter ‘The United Democratic Front, political resistance and local struggles in the Vaal and West Rand townships in the 1980s’ in South Africa Democracy Education Trust *The Road to Democracy*, Vol. 4, part I, pp. 566-569 on the township violence. The portrayal of this violence has been very gendered, which the forthcoming PhD thesis of Emily Bridger (University of Exeter) seeks to address by reinserting voices of violent female children and youth into the historiography. See also Beall J., Friedman M., Hassim S., Posel R., Stiebel L. & Todes A. ‘African women in the Durban struggle, 1985–1986: Towards a transformation of roles?’ *South African Review*, No. 4 (1987), pp. 93-103; Seekings ‘Gender Ideology and Township Politics in the 1980s’, pp. 77-88; Cherry, Janet *Women and War in South Africa* (London: Open Letters, 1992) and “‘We were not afraid’”, pp. 281-313

⁶⁸⁷ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 442

⁶⁸⁸ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 439

⁶⁸⁹ Seekings *The UDF*, pp. 245-248

hospitals, beaches and schools. In August, the UDF declared itself unbanned. Mass-mobilisation, worldwide outrage and disastrous national finances forced a shift in apartheid politics. ANC women stood ready to take advantage of the situation.

PART IV

ANC WOMEN'S INTERNATIONALISM: FUSING INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STRUCTURES

Throughout the period examined in this chapter, international activities brought internal and external ANC members together, while the growing international support for the organisation's cause allowed the ANC to emerge as a viable successor to the apartheid regime.

ANC women shared similar problems across the border: they were particularly vulnerable, financially and physically, both under apartheid rule and in the precarious exile structure. As stated throughout this thesis, apartheid resistance was highly gendered: women were predominantly seen as mothers and carers. They also often portrayed themselves as such, as it gave them a mandate and a 'natural' power base. As the example of Thandi Modise has shown, many women joined the armed struggle, yet female soldiers were rarely promoted to leadership positions. Furthermore, while male MK leaders were all part of the ANC's top leadership in exile (Chris Hani and Joe Modise are two examples), the low glass ceiling in MK meant the most senior women in the exile organisation were involved in non-violent ANC diplomacy. This was a direct result of their educational backgrounds (many were university graduates and intellectuals as well as activists), but also because the history of ANC women's internationalism meant that they were in demand abroad. By 1985, an encouraging number of women had been appointed to a range of roles. Lindiwe Mabuza was the Chief Representative to Sweden, while Mittah Seperepere, Pauline Maputo, Thenjiwe Mtintso and Rebecca Matlou (real name Sankie Mthembi-Mahanyele) had all been selected for important roles. As a result, an ANC National Women's Executive Committee (NWECC) report commended "the movement for this sign of progress and

maturity”.⁶⁹⁰ One of the reasons for their appointments, the report stated, was the “high demand for ANC women representatives or coordinators in North America, Scandinavia, Benelux, France and the United Kingdom”.⁶⁹¹

During the earlier period of exile existence, ANC women had gained strength, support and inspiration from international environments. This very much continued throughout the 14 years covered in this chapter. The ANC office in Stockholm under Lindiwe Mabuza was a particularly important piece of the Women’s Section jigsaw, as it functioned as a conduit for the relationship between generous donors within SAP and ANC structures.⁶⁹² Among the projects funded by SAP was the ANC Women’s Section journal, the *Voice of Women*. This was published with a grant from SAP’s International Forum (AIC), which SSKF’s Annie Marie Sundbom had helped negotiate in 1979.⁶⁹³ *VOW* was originally thought of as a publication that would help the Women’s Section rally support for the ANC internationally, but in 1981 its mandate changed; it would now help connect women within South Africa to women in exile.⁶⁹⁴ It had limited success in doing so: it was a challenge to produce material about the situation within South Africa from afar, and *VOW* often failed to stay ahead of events. It did, however, continue to play a great role in spreading awareness of South African women’s specific struggles to other women’s movements and anti-apartheid activists around the world.

ANC women’s quest to spread the word and mobilise support for the organisation in opposition to the apartheid regime continued despite the violent repression described in part II. In May 1980, an ANC Women’s Section delegation outlined the plight of women in South Africa at a Seminar of Women Under Apartheid in Helsinki (another indication of their Nordic connection), closely aligning gender and national liberation with the class struggle.⁶⁹⁵ The use of Marxist philosophy and the ANC’s close

⁶⁹⁰ The National Women’s Executive Committee was a council created at the 1981 Women’s Section conference, to serve alongside the eight-member full-time Secretariat appointed by ANC’s NEC. NWEC was scrapped at the 1987 conference, as it was found to duplicate the conference itself. Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-53 ‘Paper presented at the ANC Women’s National workshop on building a legal ANC Women’s League in South Africa’

⁶⁹¹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-19.4 ‘Report of Secretariat to NWEC Meeting 11-15 April 1985’

⁶⁹² Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission, Box 2, Folder 13 ‘Letter to T.T. Nkobi (Lusaka), from Lindiwe Mabuza, Chief Rep Sweden’ 9 March 1986

⁶⁹³ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-3 ‘Letter to Bengt Säve-Söderberg of AIC from Mavis Thwala (secretary)’ 31 October 1979

⁶⁹⁴ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-5.2 ‘Letter from Florence Mophosho to Ilva Mackay of ANC Women’s Section London’ 3 April 1981

⁶⁹⁵ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-6.2 ‘Statement by the ANC of South Africa — Women’s Section — at the opening of the Helsinki Seminar of Women under Apartheid’ Helsinki, Finland, 19-21 May 1980

relationship to the SACP was not always a strength for the exile movement: at the Second World Conference of the United Nations' Decade for Women in Copenhagen in July 1980, the ANC Women's Section struggled to convince delegations from the US and the UK about the righteousness of their cause and methods. In the era of Reagan, Thatcher and virulent anti-communism, they were perceived as a USSR-backed front. Nevertheless, the ANC delegation still deemed the conference a success. Mavis Nhlapo wrote afterwards that:

We succeeded in pricking the consciences of the women of the world to realise the evils of the governments that support Apartheid. We were interviewed by radio, press and TV crews from almost all of the Western capitals. We strengthened our ties with our friends, and established new bonds of friendships. The young Comrades, members of the delegation, received particular praise from our stalwarts, who were inspired and impressed right through the Conference by our young generation's ability to tackle many issues with a high level of political maturity.⁶⁹⁶

At the conference, South African women's struggles were discussed alongside those of Namibian and Zimbabwean women, and in December 1980 the relationship between the ANC and other southern African women's movements was further cemented through an agreement between the Organização da Mulher Moçambicana (Mozambique Women's Organisation; OMM) and the ANC Women's Section. Signed by the founder of the exiled ANC women's movement, Ruth Mompati, the agreement committed the organisations to exchanging information, official documents, decisions and resolutions. They would also exchange:

information material on the life and activities of women in the People's Republic of Mozambique and South Africa (...) OMM and the Women's Section of the ANC agree to give all political, moral and material support to the liberation movements, in particular the liberation movements in Southern Africa.⁶⁹⁷

The importance of these intellectual connections to a loosely defined international women's movement should not be underestimated. They tied women together across

⁶⁹⁶ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-6.2 'Report of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women - Equality, Development and Peace, Copenhagen' July 14-31 1980. Author: Mavis Nhlapo

⁶⁹⁷ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-1.1 'Agreement between the Organisation of Mozambican Women and the Women's Section of the African National Congress of South Africa' Maputo, 4 December 1980.

borders, and created shared spaces where experiences, working methods and solutions could be shared.

As the 1980s progressed, ANC women's activists spent an increasingly large proportion of their time in meetings, conferences and congresses, sharing strategies, lessons and theories with other women's movements. One example is the 1982 International Conference on Women in Southern Africa in Brussels, hosted by the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid, in which Frene Ginwala and Rose Motsepe (the Women's Section representative in Benelux) participated.⁶⁹⁸ Zanele Mbeki (a social sciences academic and future first lady of South Africa) took part in 'Women in Southern Africa Conference: Strategies for Change' in Harare, a workshop discussing how to ensure women's full participation in political life in November 1982.⁶⁹⁹ The following year started with a seminar on the struggle of women in Southern Africa organised by the church of Sweden, whose activism against apartheid fell under the umbrella of Isolera Sydafrika Kommittén (Isolate South Africa Committee, ISAK).⁷⁰⁰ Lindiwe Mabuza represented ANC's Sweden Mission and Mavis Nhlapo the Women's Secretariat in Lusaka. Mabuza and Nhlapo brought a group of students from SOMAFSCO to the workshop. Afterwards, Mabuza and Nhlapo claimed that they had won

the hearts of those who watched the fists of our youth raised high, their voices echoing the resilience of revolutionary fortitude of our leaders incarcerated on Robben Island. (...) They [the Swedish participants] were eager to know 'what can I do', 'what should the Swedish government do' etc. (...) No doubt it had been a new and moving experience for all of them.⁷⁰¹

⁶⁹⁸ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-7.1 'Report on preparatory meeting for the International Conference on Women and Apartheid', Brussels 26-27 January 1982

⁶⁹⁹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-7.3 'Women in South Africa Conference: Strategies for Change' 16-19 November 1982, Harare, Zimbabwe

⁷⁰⁰ Alongside the Swedish labour movement, the Swedish churches organised support for those oppressed by apartheid. It had, as outlined in the thesis introduction, a long history of engagement with South Africa. See Hale, Frederick 'Adapting to Apartheid: The Church of Sweden Mission on the Witwatersrand in the 1950s' *Journal of Church & State*, Vol. 50., No. 3 (2008), pp. 451-474; Forsbeck, Rune "Gör ni då inte åtskillnad?" *Kyrkorna och södra Afrika 1960-1994* (Stockholm: Nilsen & Norén/Afrikagrupperna, 2007); Liberation Africa: 'Interview with Rev. Rune Forsbeck of the Swedish Ecumenical Council' available at www.liberationafrica.se/intervstories/interviews/forsbeck/forsbeck.pdf; 'Interview with Magnus Walan of the Uppsala Africa Group and ISAK', available at www.liberationafrica.se/intervstories/interviews/walan/walan.pdf (accessed 19 May 2015).

⁷⁰¹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-10.5 'Report on the seminar 'the Struggle of the Women in Southern Africa' held in Rattvik, Sweden' 2-6 January 1983

ANC women's close connection to Sweden was further strengthened through the celebrations of 1984's Year of the Woman. Speaking tours were followed by the creation of a cross-party national committee to support ANC women's activities, a national seminar, an art exhibition and a widely publicised and broadcast concert.⁷⁰² There were plans to bring the Swedish art exhibition to Nairobi for the closing conference of the UN Decade of Women in July 1985.

However, UN mobilisation continued to be challenging. Ahead of the 1980 UN conference in Copenhagen, the Women's Section delegation had asked the preparatory committee:

How long must our people suffer under this inhuman system before some western countries that support apartheid politically, militarily and economically realise that apartheid must be destroyed. Peace, equality and development are the cherished goals of the women of the world. Let Copenhagen impress it upon these governments that they are blocking our path to the achievement of these goals.⁷⁰³

Ahead of the Nairobi conference five years later, the Women's Section knew that they would have to work hard to get their views across in this forum. In a memorandum to the ANC leadership, they pointed out that:

it is very essential that the ANC Women's Section is substantially represented in order to put our struggle in the correct perspective in the face of well organised imperialist opposition.

By 'imperialist opposition', they meant the US delegation:

4,000 delegates are expected in Nairobi and already a thousand will be from the U.S. alone! Our experience from the previous conferences (Mexico City and Copenhagen) as well as the preparatory meetings has been very unpleasant. Our struggle is usually played down using as an excuse the fact that women's conferences should not be political.⁷⁰⁴

Despite this frustration, ANC women were growing in confidence and making progress in their calls for greater representation within their own organisation. A month before the Nairobi Conference, the ANC had hosted its Second National Consultative

⁷⁰² Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archive, Box 120 Folder 467 'Kampanj under ANC's Kvinnoår 1984', Lena Johansson, Swedish Africa Groups

⁷⁰³ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-6.2 'Statement of the ANC delegation to the 3rd preparatory committee meeting of the UN Decade for Women' 14 April 1980

⁷⁰⁴ Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archive, Box 119, Folder 457 'Memorandum: World Conference of Women — to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations' Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace' signed by the Women's Secretariat, Lusaka, April 1985

Conference, in Kabwe, Zambia. Women's position within the movement was among the issues on the agenda and — in a clear break with past congresses and conferences — the need for women's liberation was now presented to the conference by senior male members of the ANC. The Commission on Cadre Policy, Political and Ideological Work is one example: chaired by Simon Makana with Essop Pahad, Brian Bunting, Francis Meli, Jack Simons and Peter Ramokoa as rapporteurs, its report stated that “there is a general tendency to refer the question of women's emancipation to the Women's [sic]”. The commission called:

on the Movement to educate comrades to stop practices that are unethical and are contrary to the high principles of the organisation. At the same time women in the Movement should be educated to free themselves from the images projected by the mass media of women as slaves to fashion and sensuality.⁷⁰⁵

Meanwhile, the Internal Commission Report, which was chaired by MK commander Joe Modise with Chris Hani, Jacob Zuma and Mac Maharaj among its members, went even further, recommending that:

Our training courses must be specially adapted to acknowledge that women start with disadvantages. When they are deployed this deployment must be calculated to develop them and to strengthen the women's organisations at home. In particular, this means that we should increase the deployment of women cadres in the Forward Areas and at home, both in the ANC network, trade union work and MK.⁷⁰⁶

The conference also showed a great awareness of the role of women in the resurgent anti-apartheid movement within South Africa. A report on the ‘Role and Place of Women in Society, the ANC and the Struggle’ stated that:

Recent struggles and campaigns (...) have proved that women are a very powerful force once proper ground has been laid and mobilisation has been done. (...) Since 1978 we have seen the revival of the women's movement inside the country.

But, it added,

⁷⁰⁵ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-19.1 ‘Commission on Cadre Policy, Political and Ideological Work’

⁷⁰⁶ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-19.1 ‘Internal Commission Report’

what still remains is the formation of a national body to unite the different women's organisations and groups.⁷⁰⁷

Women were still only perceived to be sufficiently powerful when mobilised *en masse*.

In 1987, the ANC Women's Section Conference in Luanda reiterated many of the recommendations made in Kabwe two years earlier, including an emphasis on the importance of studying women's movements in Vietnam, Cuba and Nicaragua "to learn how they are solving the women's question".⁷⁰⁸ Earlier that year, the Women's Section had issued a statement saying that:

the experiences of independent African countries tend to show that there is no significant changes in the relative positions of the genders in participation in national life despite the fact that constitutional and legislative provision are or appear non-discriminatory. (...) Systems and institutions of national and legal government as well as legal institutions must be established of a kind and in a manner which make them effectively accessible to women and all other disadvantaged groups and must be operated in such a manner that will allow women to fully and meaningfully participate.⁷⁰⁹

The conference also discussed how "our women at home" again had expressed the need for a national women's organisation "such as FEDSAW". That question was discussed at length, with the suggestion that a national structure outside the UDF but within ANC guidance ought to be set up.⁷¹⁰ However, within South Africa, Albertina Sisulu never gave up the hope that FEDSAW would be properly resurrected. Yet the UDF was the national body mobilising the greatest number of women in the 1980s. Its activities included a push to gain a greater female membership in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the march on Pretoria in 1986.⁷¹¹ The following year, 1987, became the year of women's congresses: on 25 April, the UDF launched its Women's Congress where 100 elected delegates represented "the major non-racial women's organisations in South Africa". As members of the UDF, the Women's Congress delegates were "all firmly committed to the basic principles of non-racialism, non-sexism and democracy",

⁷⁰⁷ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-47.3 'C.NPC. Documents: C4: Role and Place of Women in Society, the ANC and the Struggle'

⁷⁰⁸ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-19.1 'Commission on Cadre Policy, Political and Ideological Work'

⁷⁰⁹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-61.4 'Statement by Women's Section on the Gender Question' March 1988

⁷¹⁰ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archives, Box 25, Folder 75 'For the all round organisation and greater unity of women towards the seizure of power' in 'Report of the proceedings of the second national conference of the Women's Section of the African National Congress of South Africa' Luanda 1-6 September 1987. Chair: Ray Simons.

⁷¹¹ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 459

as well as the “development of grassroots organisation”. The Women’s Congress enabled the co-ordination of national campaigns to strengthen regional member organisations but, even more importantly, it asserted

women’s leadership and women’s issues in a more forceful way within the UDF to ensure that the idea that women’s struggle is an integral part of political struggle is fully realised.⁷¹²

Just like in exile, men were joining forces with women’s activists within South Africa too and, as chapter five will show, many of them became sources of strength and encouragement in the early 1990s. However, in order to create a powerful base to forge a break with patriarchy — whether cultural or organisational — women’s activists continued to organise in women’s-only groups in order to become a powerful caucus.

As women’s activists were silenced by violent township youths on account of them being untrustworthy, the space afforded to ANC women abroad became increasingly important venues for intellectual activism.⁷¹³ As the apartheid state was crumbling, the government granted Albertina Sisulu a special passport in the summer of 1989. It was valid for 31 days, and she immediately set off overseas, accompanied by FEDTRAW and UDF colleagues. During her 31 days abroad, Sisulu visited Sweden, France, the UK and the US. She met president George Bush and British prime minister Margaret Thatcher. She finally saw her children, who had been living in exile for the past decade, and she participated in the Socialist International Women (SIW) congress in Stockholm alongside several SAP women. Wherever she went, Albertina Sisulu spoke about the heroic women’s struggles and resistance to the apartheid regime, and outlined the ANC’s vision for a democratic South Africa. In Stockholm, she told SIW delegates that:

The state of emergency is the government’s weapon of deceit. Since people are prohibited from having mass meetings — the voice of mass protest is seen to be silent to the outside world. The government claims to need the state of emergency to protect the public. Actually they are only protecting their dictatorship. The people are not silent and we will resist injustice and Apartheid for as long as it is there in whatever disguised

⁷¹² Govender, Pregs ‘Launching of UDF Women’s Congress’ *Agenda*, No.1 (1987), pp. 75, 76, 78

⁷¹³ Beall, J., Hassim, S. & Todes, A. “‘A Bit on the Side?’” *Gender Struggles in the Politics of Transformation in South Africa’ Feminist Review*, No. 33 (Autumn, 1989), pp. 44-46; Delius, P. & Glaser, C. ‘Sexual Socialisation in South Africa: a Historical Perspective’ *African Studies*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (2002), pp. 48-49; Wood, Kate ‘Contextualising group rape in post-apartheid South Africa’ *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (2005), p. 306

form. We call on all of you to support us. (...) The women of South Africa are strong — with your help we can be stronger.⁷¹⁴

Albertina Sisulu also met with the leaders of the ANC Women's Section in exile: Gertrude Shope and Ruth Mompati.⁷¹⁵ Exile and internal women's activists were then invited to participate in a conference in Amsterdam in January 1990. The Malibongwe Conference, which proved to be the last of the underground era, was organised to establish a mutual understanding of internal and external structures, to provide a forum for discussions about women's emancipation, violence, the plight of children, and the development of a "truly democratic society".⁷¹⁶ It was a:

forum for an authentic dialogue among South African women of all national groups and democratic organisations, with women from international organisations, on all aspects of women's condition in racist South Africa (...). [The idea was to] exchange experiences; to establish new and consolidate existing contacts between women from inside the country and relevant solidarity and democratic women's organisations outside South Africa; to analyse the conditions which frustrate women's full participation in society and in struggle; (...) formulate strategies for changing the present position of women.⁷¹⁷

Again, "the absence of a national structure to which to relate directly," was found to be a persistent problem holding women's activism and political liberation back. In a paper written after the conference, the ANC Women's Section stated that "Malibongwe's focus on the need for women's unity was partly influenced by this problem", before adding that, at the time of the conference, "the assumption was that women would continue to organise under banned and restricted conditions".⁷¹⁸ However, less than four weeks after the Malibongwe delegates returned home, F.W. De Klerk addressed the South African parliament, ending the ban on the ANC and other political organisations, and leaving Mandela free to walk out of prison. The battle for democracy and women's equality was far from over, but thanks to their increased cross-border consultations,

⁷¹⁴ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archives, Box 87, Folder 450 'Speech of Albertina Sisulu at the Socialist International Women XIV Conference' Stockholm, 17/18 June 1989

⁷¹⁵ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, pp. 517, 518-519, 521-522

⁷¹⁶ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-24.1 'Letter from Thami Ngwevela (convenor, Malibongwe prep. committee) to Mavivi Manzini' 15 November 1989. The full name of the conference was 'Malibongwe Igama Lamakhosikazi', 'hail the name of the women'.

⁷¹⁷ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-24.1 'Letter from Gertrude Shope to Mavivi Manzini' 13 December 1989

⁷¹⁸ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-53 'Paper presented at the ANC Women's National workshop on building a legal ANC Women's League in South Africa'

South Africa's women at home and abroad believed they had gathered the strength to influence the proceedings.

CONCLUSION

The violence meted out by the Pretoria government against the anti-apartheid movements at home and in exile during the course of the 1970s and 1980s meant that the ANC leadership focused on bringing the apartheid regime down as soon as possible. Women's equality within the movement was not considered as important as bringing an end to the violence and repression. Understandable though that might be, it left the ANC's rigid patriarchal structures intact, which held women back from being appointed to the most influential roles in the movement. It also stopped many of them from partaking in the armed struggle, and left their Women's Secretariat understaffed and overstretched when trying to provide social care for the entire organisation.

The 1980s began in the worst possible way. Following Lilian Ngoyi's death in 1980, the murder of Ruth First in 1982, and with Florence Mophosho having had to resign from her duty as head of the Women's Secretariat due to ill health, the ANC had lost three of its strongest and best-known women from the pre-1960 era in the space of just a couple of years. Meanwhile, other activists at home were kept silent under banning orders or in prison.

The role of women within the ANC was one of the greatest points of contention for women's activists in this era. They attempted to widen the scope of what was perceived as suitable and acceptable work for women, including an acceptance of their capabilities as soldiers. However, sexism continued to affect all ANC women, whether they were school children at SOMAFCO, MK recruits or part of the organisation's top leadership core.

The violent nature of the apartheid regime and the anti-apartheid resistance in the 1980s helped turn the tide in the ANC's favour. It is true that the violence and the financial woes caused by foreign companies' withdrawals from South Africa as a result of international public pressure was the reason behind the apartheid government's decision to concede to negotiations with the ANC. But it must also be added that the way that the South African population responded to the onslaught from Pretoria was as important. In earlier decades, bannings and imprisonment had stopped the masses from

partaking in protests, and the 1950s mass-movement had been forced underground and decimated in the wake of the Sharpeville massacre in 1960. In the 1980s, desensitised by a collective trauma caused by indiscriminate violence, home invasions, arbitrary detentions, disappearances and deaths of sons, daughters, parents, siblings and friends, the mass-movement again rose to prominence. As Albertina Sisulu observed, by the late 1970s few South African township residents had much left to lose by getting involved in the struggle.

The generational gap between BCM-influenced youth and the slightly older ANC generation — as explored in chapter two — was partially bridged in this era, both at home and in exile. The influx of youth into ANC structures after 1976 infused the organisation with a new radicalism and bravery, in many cases forged through hideous first-hand experiences of apartheid repression. These new members not only rejuvenated the ANC but made it possible for it to broaden its base of support, which was of utmost importance in an era where mass-mobilisation under ANC banners and philosophy (through the UDF and the MDM at home) became the foundation of the organisation's ability to portray itself as the leader of the opposition.

Internationalism, which had been key to the survival of the ANC in the first couple of decades after banning, took a different role in the 1980s. It still secured funds and support for the struggle, but the diplomatic skills of the ANC leadership and its commitment to a non-racial democracy allowed it to become a government-in-waiting as sympathies with Pretoria waned. Most importantly for this thesis, international spaces in the 1970s and 1980s allowed some exiled ANC women the space to gain seniority within their organisation. The very important and visible roles ANC women played in the diplomatic missions in northern and western Europe led to the appointment of women to high offices there. In this, their career progress mirrored that of Swedish Social Democratic women of the 1950s and 1960s who used their international and diplomatic connections to gain seniority at home. Moreover, women's activists' internationalism also helped bridge the gap between home and exile. Their projects in exile and on the ground in South Africa were often funded by the same sources (in many cases by Swedish organisations), and these helped bring the exile and internal movements closer throughout the decade. It also afforded them a visibility that might protect them from some of the worst reprisals: in 1988, for example, the Swedish

mission in Pretoria declared that because Jessie Duarte led projects funded by SSKF, she was considered a very important person to them.⁷¹⁹ In 1989, Albertina Sisulu strengthened connections between the split ANC women's movement on her travels across the world, and in early 1990s activists were brought together to discuss the future at the Malibongwe conference in Amsterdam.

A time of violence and struggle, this period emerges as a bridge in the historical record, connecting the ANC's successful mass-mobilisation in the 1980s with that of ANC women in the early 1990s. In the later period, ANC women were much helped by their experiences in the 1980s. They saw how effective mass-mobilisation was to secure long-term goals of liberation; and they were strengthened by the experiences of women's activists in other parts of the world. They were also helped by an increasingly favourable attitude towards their goals for liberation within the ANC, and the coming together of a worldwide movement that sought the liberation of women through adequate political representation at all levels in society. Thus, the successes of the 1990s rested on lessons learned through the struggles of the 1980s.

⁷¹⁹ ArAB: Sveriges socialdemokratiska kvinnoförbund 2702/F/6/F/16 'Telegram från legationen i Pretoria till UD Stockholm 1988-03-18' Mapp 1: Handl. rörande Sydafrika 1986-88 (Birgitta Strömblad-Lindqvist)

CHAPTER 5

ERAS OF TRANSITION: SAP AND ANC WOMEN'S STRUGGLES FOR POWER 1990-1994

INTRODUCTION

By [the early 1990s] we were very familiar with the quota system (...). That's where the idea had come from, very much, from the international socialist movement.⁷²⁰

It was a terrible time, the end of the 80s and early 90s, a horrible time. And we had a bourgeois government between '91 and '94 too. So... It destroyed the lives of many.⁷²¹

This chapter fuses the two strains of this thesis that have been kept separate until now: the histories of SAP and the ANC in the early 1990s. It charts women's activism within SAP and the ANC, and women's activists' ability to impose gender quotas in the selection of prospective parliamentarians in 1994. It establishes that while ANC and SAP women were often in separate geographical locations, they were part of a cross-border discussion environment about women's rights and liberation. While their feminisms were centred on local concerns, which — as the quotes above show — were very different, it was within international environments that women's activism and academic research were combined into a powerful call for the introduction of gender quotas. This, in turn, laid the foundation for ANC and SAP women's successes in the 1994 general elections.

This chapter attempts to reveal this connection between women in democratic socialist organisations around the world. By discussing two aspects of a very transnational history, it will draw out inter-party tensions and cross-border support that were key to the successes of women's activists. It asks questions about women's political agency and capabilities of the era: why were ANC and SAP women much more successful in their calls for greater visibility and responsibility in the early 1990s than before? What roles did the ANC's transition negotiations and SAP's new term in opposition during these years play? How did their parties respond to women's activism?

⁷²⁰ Author's interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014).

⁷²¹ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (16 September 2014).

And why did international connections play such a pivotal role for both SAP and ANC women?

More than 20 years after their implementation, the gender quotas form part of both ANC and SAP mythology. The introduction of gender quotas in South Africa and Sweden is generally portrayed as a conflict-free and natural process; an issue without controversy and conflict. This chapter will reveal that these memories are incorrect: gender quotas were fought for, and faced strong opposition. This can be explained by the fact that a quota aimed at levelling the playing field between men and women naturally revokes some of the influence of the group that had benefited from the selection of candidates before their introduction: the men of each party. While support from the very top of the organisational hierarchies was necessary for the implementation of quotas, it is an achievement that belongs to women's activists within SAP and the ANC.

This chapter consists of two large sections. Part I tells the Swedish side of the story. It relies on interviews with SAP veterans like Birgitta Dahl and Annie Marie Sundbom, as well as auto/biographical material from Margareta Winberg. Party sources — discussion booklets and annual reports — as well as statistical material from the national bureau of statistics have also been important. Part II, which charts the ANC's role in the transition to democracy and ANC women's roles in this, is predominantly the result of archival research. Sources about women's positions and struggles in the era are loud and vocal within the ANC's archive at the Mayibuye Centre at the University of the Western Cape and the Liberation Movement Archives at the University of Fort Hare. Auto/biographical accounts of the period are, however, rare. An interview conducted with senior ANC member Frene Ginwala — who served as chair of the cross-party National Women's Coalition in the transition era — has thus proved invaluable. Shireen Hassim, Sheila Meintjes, Hannah Britton and others have written parts of this history previously.⁷²² The original contribution of this chapter lies in its in-depth assessment of women's personal experiences of the era, and the continued importance of their international connections.

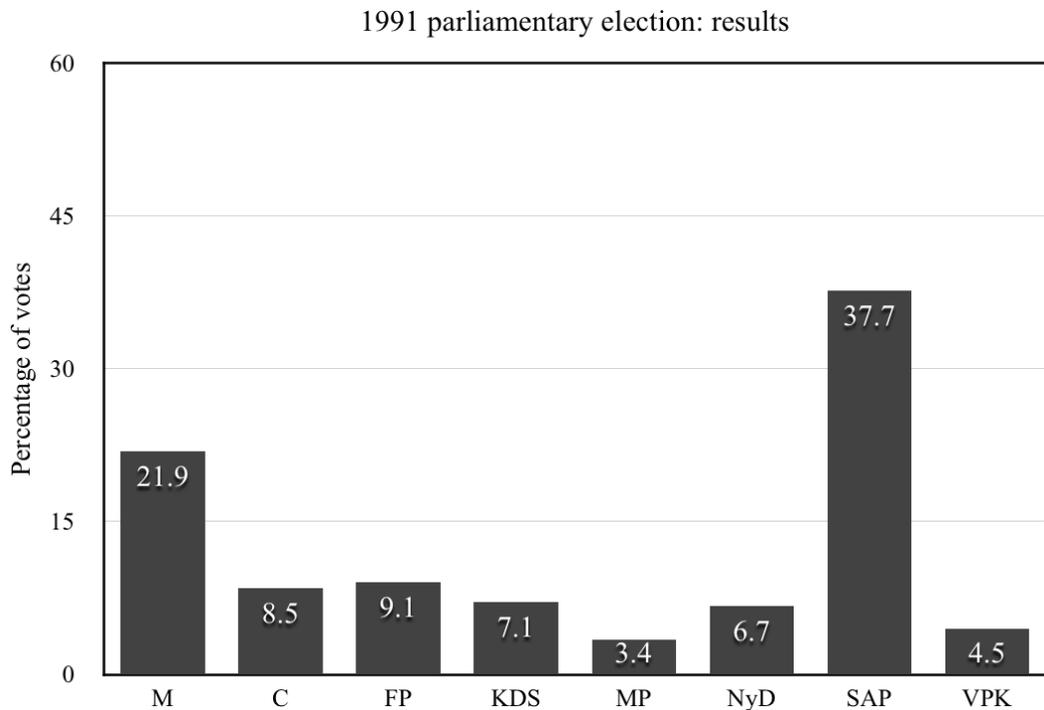
⁷²² For recent work, see Hassim, Shireen *The ANC Women's League: Sex, Politics and Gender* (Johannesburg: Jacana, 2014); Britton, H., Fish, J. & Meintjes, S. (eds.) *Women's Activism in South Africa: Working Across Divides* (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009); Britton, Hannah *Women in the South African Parliament: From Resistance to Governance* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005).

PART I

SAP 1991-1994: LOSS AND REMOBILISATION

SAP's loss in the election of 1991 came as a shock, even though it had been preceded by a period of economic turmoil and ever louder debates about the role of Sweden in the world. Despite stating in its annual report that the electoral campaign had fared well, the results — presented in figure 5:1 below — spoke for themselves.⁷²³

fig 5:1



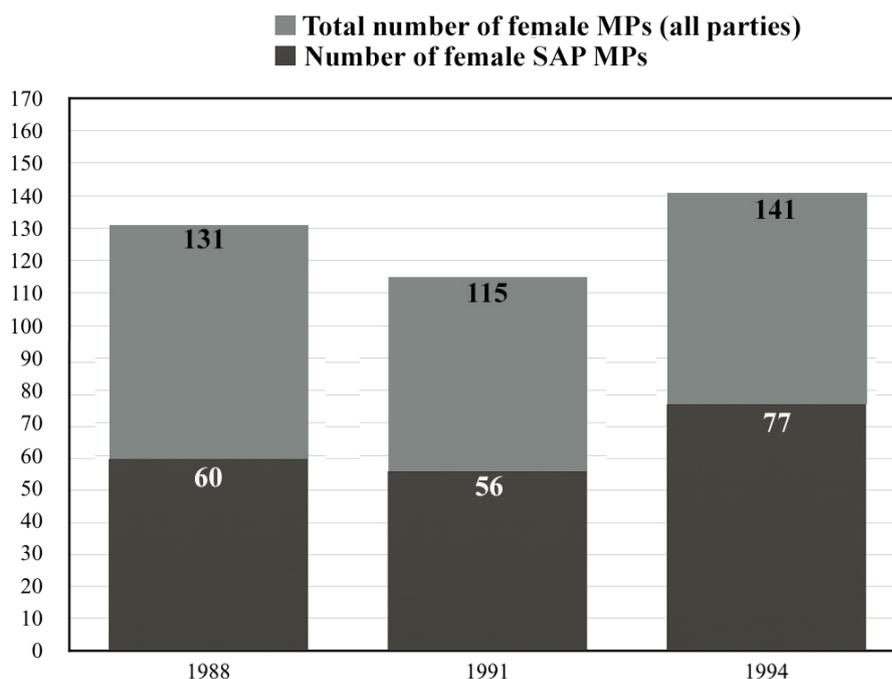
SAP's polling numbers were its lowest since 1928; with just 37.7 per cent of the vote, SAP lost 18 parliamentary seats. Vänsterpartiet, which had dropped both its communist prefix and manifesto content, lost five; green party Miljöpartiet lost all its 20 seats. The conservative elements of the bourgeois bloc continued to make gains at the expense of the agrarians and liberals. Moderaterna increased its number of MPs from 66 to 80, and formed a coalition under party leader Carl Bildt. Folkpartiet, which lost nine seats but kept 33 MPs, and Centerpartiet, which was awarded 31 seats (11 less than in 1988), were joined in the coalition by Christian democratic Kristdemokratiska Samhällspartiet

⁷²³ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1991: Del 1 – Riksdagsvalet den 15 september 1991* (Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån, 1992), p. 7

(KdS), which crossed the parliamentary threshold for the first time. Its 7.1 per cent share of the vote translated into 26 seats. Meanwhile populist right-wing party Ny Demokrati (NyD), formed six months before the election by an aristocrat and a music label executive, stormed into parliament by nabbing 25 seats.⁷²⁴ The coalition government held 170 out of 349 parliamentary seats, a total of 48.7 per cent, and looked able to rely on NyD's 25 for support when needed. The red-green bloc, meanwhile, held just 154 seats.

As visible in figure 5:2, below, the rise of the right wing meant that women's representation within parliament as a whole took a step back. There were 131 women MPs before the election, a proportion of 37.5 per cent. After the election, their number fell to 105, or 30 per cent.⁷²⁵

fig. 5:2 The parliamentary gender balance, 1988-1994



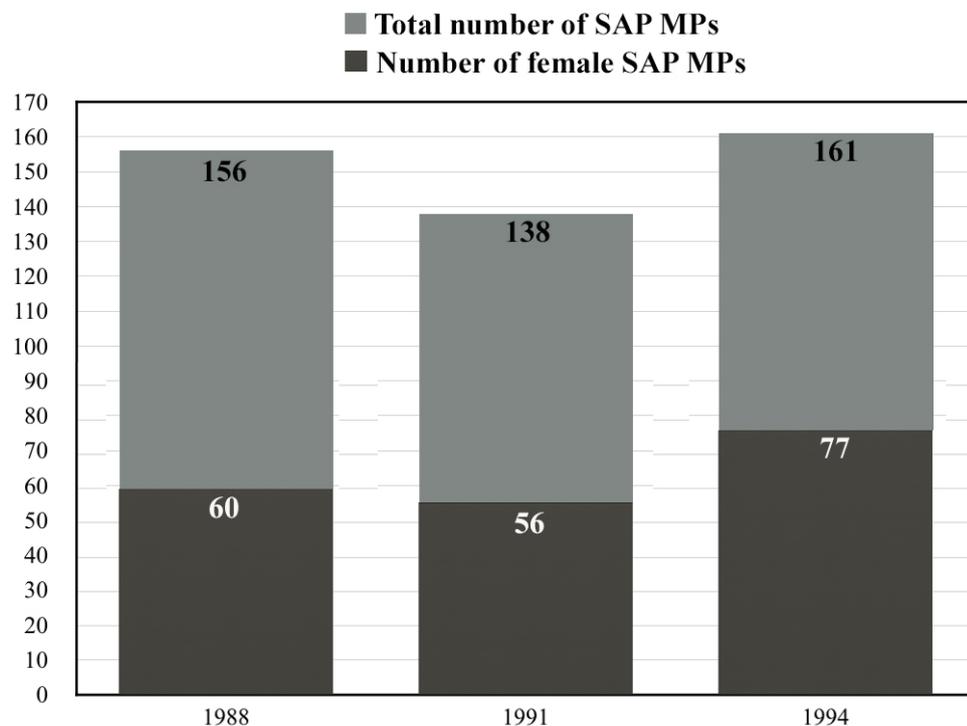
This caused frustration and consternation, especially as it transpired that it was a result of the growth of parties that had few women at the top of their electoral lists.

⁷²⁴ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1991*, p. 7

⁷²⁵ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1994: Del 1 — riksdagsvalet den 18 september 1994* (Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån, 1995), p. 27; Statistiska centralbyrån 'Statistikdatabasen: Valda i riksdagsval efter region, parti och kön. Valår 1973-2014'. This was a high number world-wide: in comparison only 9.2 per cent of MPs in the British Parliament were women in 1992, up from 6.3 in 1988. UK Political Info 'Women MPs & parliamentary candidates since 1945' available at www.ukpolitical.info/FemaleMPs.htm (accessed 19 June 2015)

Unsurprisingly, the often unapologetically male-chauvinist NyD had the smallest proportion of women in its parliamentary group, a mere three out of 25, or 12 per cent. Next were KdS with 26.9 per cent; Moderaterna with 27.5 per cent; Vänsterpartiet with 31.3 per cent; Centerpartiet with 32.3 per cent; and Folkpartiet with 36.4 per cent. With 56 female MPs to 82 male MPs (see figure 5:3, below), SAP's gender balance was 40.6/59.4 per cent, the closest gap in its history.⁷²⁶ The new coalition cabinet, meanwhile, had a fractionally narrower gender gap than its SAP predecessor. Thanks to eight out of 22 ministers being women, 36.4 per cent of the cabinet was made up of women.⁷²⁷

fig. 5:3 SAP's parliamentary gender balance, 1988-1994



The early 1990s was a bleak time for Swedish social democracy: its economic model and belief in a strong welfare state were deemed old-fashioned and unfit for purpose. “The time for the Nordic model has passed,” Carl Bildt told *The International Herald Tribune* six months into his reign as prime minister. He continued:

⁷²⁶ Statistiska centralbyrån ‘Statistikdatabasen: Valda i riksdagsval efter region, parti och kön. Valår 1973-2014’

⁷²⁷ Regeringskansliet ‘Sveriges regeringar 1946-’. For details of the female cabinet ministers, see appendix C.

It created societies that were too monopolized, too expensive and didn't give people the freedom of choice they wanted; societies that lacked flexibility and dynamism.⁷²⁸

As discussed in chapter three, the nuclear power debate in the late 1970s and early 1980s had proved that SAP struggled to be the party of the future. The early 1990s seemed to offer the confirmation that it had lost its vision of the future completely.⁷²⁹ The financial crisis that contributed to its ousting from government seemed to show that SAP lacked answers to modern problems: following its neoliberal project in the late 1980s, it was no longer a trusted financial authority. The rapidly changing international diplomatic environment, with the reunification of Germany, the fall of the USSR and subsequent liberation of Sweden's neighbouring nations across the Baltic Sea — Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania — and a new regime in Poland brought a need to modify Swedish security policies. As discussions about European Union membership followed Sweden's formal application in July 1991, the conservative coalition also began suggesting that NATO membership should replace Sweden's SAP-endorsed neutrality. The bourgeois parties were bolstered by the worldwide neoliberal trend, rooted in the politics of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher and the belief that these had helped pave the way for the fall of communism.⁷³⁰ At the age of 102, SAP looked like a party of the past.

SAP's leadership, however, was determined that the party's time in opposition should last just one term. And just like in 1976, it appointed a commission to establish the causes of the party's electoral loss. The commission was also tasked with finding the path to the future by suggesting “policies for the party, primarily for the party congress in 1993 and the election in 1994” with a report due in June 1992.⁷³¹ A year before the

⁷²⁸ Schmidt, William E. ‘In a Post-Cold War Era, Scandinavia Rethinks Itself’ *International Herald Tribune* 23 February 1992

⁷²⁹ This has been extensively explored by Jenny Andersson in *När framtiden redan har hänt: socialdemokratin och folkhemsnostalgin* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2009)

⁷³⁰ For more on this see Sejersted *The Age of Social Democracy*, p. 479; Hinnfors, Jonas *På dagordningen? Svensk politisk stil i förändring* (Stockholm: Nerenius & Santérus, 1995); Trägårdh, Lars ‘Sweden and the EU: Welfare State Nationalism and the Spectre of “Europe”’, in Hansen, L. & Wæver, O. (eds.), *European Integration and National Identity: The Challenge of the Nordic States* (London: Routledge 2001), pp. 130-181; Regeringskansliet ‘Sveriges väg till EU-medlemskap’ originally available at www.regeringen.se/sb/d/2477 (last accessed 16 February 2015); currently available through Web Archive at <https://web.archive.org/web/20150525110902/http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/2477> (accessed 28 June 2015); Wæver, Ole ‘Norden Rearticulated’, in Øberg, Jan (ed.) *Nordic Security in the 1990s: Options in the Changing Europe* (London, 1992), pp. 135-164

⁷³¹ Socialdemokraterna ‘Verksamheten 1991’ *Verksamhetsberättelse för 1990-1992* (Linköping: Socialdemokraterna, 1993), pp. 98, 99

1991 election, SAP and LO had agreed on a political platform for the 1990s, outlining five points to be achieved within the decade:

- The labour movement wants Sweden to actively participate in the creation of a new Europe.
- The labour movement wants to re-establish full employment and create good work.
- The labour movement wants to build for the future.
- The labour movement wants to build on general welfare politics and increase people's right to choose.
- The labour movement wants to make Sweden a leading country for environmentalism.⁷³²

Points one and four are indicative of the impact of neoliberal trends even on this bastion of democratic socialist philosophy. Swedish involvement in the European Union was no longer abhorred but encouraged; the 'right to choose', meanwhile, suggested an opening up of state-owned and welfare services to private capital. While staking out its 'third way', as discussed in chapter three, SAP continued to move to the right. In this they were not unique: neoliberalism was impacting social democratic movements worldwide at this time.⁷³³

The crisis-endorsed trend for budget cuts affected SAP's organisation too: 20 per cent of the party's staff was made redundant,⁷³⁴ while lower incomes from the state made it necessary to raise membership contributions. Meanwhile, the party was haemorrhaging members. In 1990, restructuring brought an end to the system of automatic party inclusion extended to all members of LO. As a result, the party lost 577,524 members, 68.9 per cent of its total membership, in the space of a year, ending up with 'just' 260,346 members. These continued to be organised in the same 284 workers' councils that had existed before restructuring. The number of workers' councils later increased, which suggests that many of the members that remained on the party books were more active than those who disappeared in 1990-1991.⁷³⁵ Meanwhile, the membership of youth organisation SSU almost halved in the decade between 1981

⁷³² Socialdemokraterna 'Verksamheten 1991', p. 97

⁷³³ For the international context of a 'new' social democracy, see Giddens, Anthony *Where Now for New Labour?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002); Whyman *Sweden and the 'Third Way'*, p. 4

⁷³⁴ Socialdemokraterna 'Verksamheten 1992' *Verksamhetsberättelse för 1990-1992* (Linköping: Socialdemokraterna, 1993), p. 198

⁷³⁵ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamhetsberättelse 1993-1996* (Stockholm: Socialdemokraterna, 1997), p. 466

and 1991, landing on just under 38,000. Women's organisation SSKF was also struggling: in 1991, the organisation counted 31,256 members; 10 years previously that figure had been 45,094, which in itself was down from a highpoint of 72,799 in 1959.⁷³⁶ Budget cuts forced SSKF to ask its members to contribute more. In November 1991, it began charging a SEK 50 membership fee to make up for some of its lost income, but further restructuring was still needed.⁷³⁷ In her memoir, SSKF leader Margareta Winberg wrote that during the 1970s and 1980s, the organisation had 23 members of staff; by 1989 they had become 13, and:

I had to start my term as chair by cutting back staff even further, to just five! From 23 to five in three years. That is quite a structural change. The small budget meant constant begging, constant questioning of what things cost, and always sharing rooms while travelling.⁷³⁸

SAP's NEC meetings — which took place fortnightly on Fridays throughout the year — became scenes of discussions about how to go about strengthening the welfare state despite the need for dramatic cutbacks.⁷³⁹ The goal was to use the conservative coalition's handling of the economic crisis to strengthen SAP's standing as a government-in-waiting, ready to take over in 1994. It was a strategy that seemed to work: some voters were appalled by cuts to the welfare state that they interpreted as ideological rather than strictly necessary to combat the crisis. This was exacerbated by the deepening recession. In the autumn of 1992, a currency crisis resulted in the krona, formerly a fixed currency, being floated on the exchange market.⁷⁴⁰ At the same time, opinion polls indicated that SAP would have won over 50 per cent of the votes had an election been called at this time.⁷⁴¹

⁷³⁶ Socialdemokraterna *Verksamhetsberättelse 1993-1996*, p. 468

⁷³⁷ Socialdemokraterna 'Verksamheten 1991', p. 163. SEK 50 equalled about £4 in 2015.

⁷³⁸ Winberg *Lärrinna i politikens hårda skola*, p. 54

⁷³⁹ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (16 September 2014). See also Andersson *Between Growth and Security*, pp. 105-127

⁷⁴⁰ Erixon, Lennart 'Under the Influence of Traumatic Events, New Ideas, Economic Experts and the ICT Revolution — the Economic Policy and Macroeconomic Performance of Sweden in the 1990s and 2000s' in Mjøset, Lars (ed.) *The Nordic Varieties of Capitalism* (Bingley: Emerald Group, 2011), pp. 270-271

⁷⁴¹ Statistiska centralbyrån 'Valresultatet 'om det varit val idag'. Tidsserie 1972-2014'

During this term in opposition, SAP discussions focused more on national than international politics. Nevertheless, much like in 1976-1982, SAP's internationalist tasks proved a welcome distraction from parliamentary setbacks. The early 1990s was a time of great international change: Anna-Greta Leijon witnessed how a new SAP generation became incensed by injustice and oppression on a trip with SSU to the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius, just a few weeks after the massacre of Lithuanian civilians by USSR troops in January 1991. In 2013, Leijon said:

To meet these *incredibly* clever youths from the Baltic States – and there were some young women there who were very conscious about not letting go and risking almost everything. (...) There is this thread, of young people who are brave enough to sacrifice their own comfort and their own future to fight for the freedom of their country. That changes you, of course it does.⁷⁴²

The cross-Baltic ties were made even stronger as the states reemerged from under the Soviet cloak.⁷⁴³ On 25 December 1991, the day Gorbachev resigned and the Soviet Union was dissolved, Birgitta Dahl and her husband, senior SAP-member Enn Kokk — who had arrived in Sweden in 1944 as an Estonian refugee — attended the Latvian Social Democratic Party's congress.⁷⁴⁴

This was the era of Francis Fukuyama's 'The End to History?' which argued that communism had been successfully combatted, liberation extended to millions of people as authoritarian regimes crumbled across the world.⁷⁴⁵ The democratisation of neighbouring countries brought optimism in regards to other liberation movements also supported by SAP. The ANC's path to liberation is discussed in depth later in the chapter, but it is clear that the organisation's negotiations with the apartheid government from 1990 were also a source of joy for SAP members who felt very involved in the proceedings and did what they could to support the ANC position. In 1991, SSKF was present at the newly re-formed ANC Women's League's conference in Kimberley, South

⁷⁴² Author's interview with Anna-Greta Leijon (20 January 2013).

⁷⁴³ See Marko Lehti's discussion about this in 'Possessing a Baltic Europe: Retold national narratives in the European north', in Lehti, M. & Smith, D.J. (eds.) *Post-Cold War Identity Politics: Northern and Baltic Experiences* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), pp. 11-49.

⁷⁴⁴ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (16 September 2014)

⁷⁴⁵ Fukuyama, Francis 'The End of History?' *National Interest* (Summer 1989), pp. 3-18

Africa.⁷⁴⁶ In 1992, Nelson Mandela and ANC Secretary General Cyril Ramaphosa visited Sweden, the latter to study party organisation, coordination and management issues with SAP colleagues. SAP also supported ANC's internal preparations for a possible general election: a SAP-instigated, SIDA-funded Voter Education and Elections Training Unit (VEETU) project ran from 1992 to 1994, at the cost of 13.3 million SEK.⁷⁴⁷ It was deemed a success: SAP's 1994 report states that

the project has been very successful, both in its implementation and its results, which to a great extent is due to the VEETU management and staff's devotion and competence. (...) It is with great pride that we can establish that our party's long-term support for the ANC's and other organisations' struggle against oppression has contributed to liberation.⁷⁴⁸

At Nelson Mandela's presidential inauguration in 1994, SAP's former foreign minister Sten Andersson represented the party. It was, however, jarring for SAP that the official Swedish delegation was made up of ministers from the conservative coalition, many of whom had explicitly not supported the ANC's cause.

THE FINAL HURDLE: TOWARDS GENDER QUOTAS

Building on the outrage created by the falling number of female MPs after the 1991 election, SAP women began to remobilise along feminist lines. This, they argued, was to ensure that the party would secure the votes of the female electorate, a safe bet in order to return to power in 1994. SSKF embarked on a new era of hands-on, feminist campaigning. Being in opposition allowed the organisation to be controversial, and Margareta Winberg interpreted it as an opportunity to push women's liberation to the top of party policies.

Losing the election became for us in the women's organisation an enormous incentive for rejuvenation and activity. It is, naturally, always easier to be a lateral organisation when the mother party is in opposition. One can set the agenda in a completely different

⁷⁴⁶ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission archive, Box 66, Folder 308 'Orgs: Social Democratic Party 1991, 1993: Fax from S-Kvinnor to ANCWL, dated 1991-04-22'

⁷⁴⁷ Socialdemokraterna 'Verksamheten 1992', pp. 235, 236. The number corresponds to £1 million in 2015.

⁷⁴⁸ Socialdemokraterna 'Verksamheten 1994' *Verksamhetsberättelse 1993-1996* (Stockholm: Socialdemokraterna, 1997), pp. 164, 165

way. Hardly anything is politically ‘forbidden’, the political working methods are really only limited by your own imagination.⁷⁴⁹

It might seem a curious position to take at first, as it would be reasonable to argue that individual party members ought to be more powerful when their party is in power. However, it is in opposition that SAP’s women’s lobby has been allowed to break loose from party constraints and actively seek improvements for women as a political and social group. This has always been controversial: in the 1970s, it led to the conflicts over the six-hour working day, and the child support versus childcare debate (as outlined in chapter one). These matters infuriated Palme especially when brought up while SAP led the government, but they still had a direct impact on the party’s policies in opposition. In the 1990s, being in opposition allowed women’s activists within SAP the opportunity to take a distinctly feminist tone without inviting a furious questioning of their divisive ‘double agency’.⁷⁵⁰

Women’s position within the party was stronger than ever in this period. Since 1990, 35 per cent of the members of SAP’s NEC had been women, thanks to the manoeuvring of SSKF and SSU activists ahead of their election at the congress of that year.⁷⁵¹ SAP women also benefited from a popular non-parliamentarian feminist awakening, channelled through the creation of feminist pressure group Stödstrumporna (the Support Stockings) in 1991. Inspired by the 1970s US-based Redstocking movement, Stödstrumporna was a collective fronted by Grupp 8 veterans and other activists, including academic Ebba Witt-Brattström, journalist Maria-Pia Boëthius and economist Agneta Stark. They demanded equal access to power, full salaries and an end to violence against women and children. On 8 March 1993, International Women’s Day, Stödstrumporna threatened to launch a feminist party, as a means to get the established parliamentary parties to urgently address the lack of women within their ranks.⁷⁵² This was a direct challenge to the SAP leadership, who did not want to risk losing voters to any such party.

Feminist mobilisation in the 1990s was more visible, louder and had broader support than before. In 1991, feminist cultural journal *Bang* was launched by a group of

⁷⁴⁹ Winberg *Lärlarinna i politikens hårda skola*, p. 57

⁷⁵⁰ Beckwith ‘Beyond Compare?’, p. 443. This term is discussed in the thesis introduction.

⁷⁵¹ This process is outlined in detail in chapter three of this thesis.

⁷⁵² Sveriges Radio *Ekot* 8 March 1993 ‘Stödstrumpor hotar bilda kvinnoparti’ Radio broadcast available at <http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=1602&artikel=912444> (accessed 28 January 2015)

students at the university of Stockholm, and mainstream media featured members of Stödstrumporna as well as other prominent feminists. Meanwhile, a younger generation of anarchist feminists took direct action against what they interpreted as sexist advertising and pornographic images of women. The visibility of these debates had an impact on women within SAP too, as the need for reforms within the party became increasingly visible. SSKF leader Margareta Winberg used the threat of a feminist party to push Anita Gradin's 1987 government report on 'Alternated Women' up on the agenda again and even went so far as to discuss starting SSKF's own women's party.⁷⁵³ It was a popular cause: in 1992, an opinion poll showed that 32 per cent of the Swedish electorate would consider supporting a feminist women's party in the next election. The supporters of the cause were men as well as women: SSKF created a 'Men's League' with trailblazing feminist men from SAP and other parties.⁷⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the opposition was large and well-organised. Some could not resist making fun of the leaders of the new women's movement. In a comment article for newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* in 1992, author P. C. Jersild - who favoured quotas - pointed out that:

Whispers have been heard about a nationwide women's network, a subversive resistance movement surrounded by secrecy, which draws the mind to "Allo 'Allo!"⁷⁵⁵

Meanwhile, LO-leader Stig Malm caused a scandal when it was revealed that he had called Margareta Winberg "the leader of the 'shoal of...'" followed by a derogatory word for women's reproductive organs. Winberg took advantage of this to spark a debate on left-wing views of women:

For him, like for so many other men in the labour movement, women were not really equal beings. The labour movement had until the 1990s no pronounced feminist ideology. The class struggle was [still] more important than the women's struggle.⁷⁵⁶

These discussions and the public sympathy for the women's cause mean that, before long, Margot Wallström was appointed to head a working group tasked to research

⁷⁵³ Winberg *Lärlarinna i politikens hårda skola*, p. 71; Socialdemokraterna 'Verksamheten 1992', p. 253. This report features in chapter three, and argued for the introduction of quotas to ensure equal representation of men and women in all SAP structures. See Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet *SOU 1987:19*.

⁷⁵⁴ Winberg *Lärlarinna i politikens hårda skola*, p. 62

⁷⁵⁵ Jersild, P.C. 'Behövs ett kvinnoparti?' *Dagens Nyheter* 9 August 1992

⁷⁵⁶ Winberg *Lärlarinna i politikens hårda skola*, p. 58

women's representation in SAP; one of a series of five commissioned debates on future party ideology. Wallström's findings were presented at SAP's 1993 congress, held in Gothenburg 15-21 September. She and her colleagues had mapped women's representation within party structures, as well as suggesting actions to help increase women's participation at all levels. The 27-page pamphlet makes it very clear that Wallström argued for the introduction of gender quotas. The document states that 40 per cent of the party's members and 51 per cent of the electorate in 1988 were women. As a result, party equality needed to "be hurried along to ensure that the female voters do not lose their patience".⁷⁵⁷

The commission argued further that gender equality would guarantee that every party member had equal rights and opportunities to influence party policies; that it would stop the waste of resources ("as women's experiences and knowledge differ from those of men") and give voice to different interests within the party. It also recommended that the party fund research into women's representation, and that it continued to map the proportion of women in its structures ahead of every congress.⁷⁵⁸ Finally – and most importantly – it heeded the Socialist International's 1986 call for the creation of quotas, arguing that every second place on all electoral lists (for municipal and county councils as well as parliament) be earmarked for women. Pointing out that SAP's parliamentary group already were 41 per cent women, county council groups 43 and municipal council groups 37, the authors stressed that:

women's representation is currently so high that an equal gender representation can be achieved without much effort.⁷⁵⁹

In an attempt to stave off criticism and strengthen supporters in their arguments, the report further outlined answers to common questions on the subject. Known objections were that women would be promoted once they got the correct competence and experience; that women often resigned or declined positions they had been offered; that women would object to being chosen solely on the base of their gender; that there were not enough women around to promote; and that some structures already had more than a

⁷⁵⁷ Socialdemokraterna *Är Socialdemokraterna ett Kvinnoparti? Programdebatt nummer 2* (Stockholm: Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetareparti, 1993), p. 3

⁷⁵⁸ Socialdemokraterna *Är Socialdemokraterna ett Kvinnoparti?*, p. 16

⁷⁵⁹ Socialdemokraterna *Är Socialdemokraterna ett Kvinnoparti?*, pp. 20, 19

50 per cent share of women — should they apply a quota to promote men instead? The commission guidelines answered all of these by pointing out that appointments due to one's gender was not different to those made on the basis of membership of Metall (the metal workers' union), specific geographical areas, or religion – all common practices in the labour movement and beyond. It also, significantly, blamed many of these objections on existing gender bias and blindness among men, stating that women never failed to find competent women for roles, so why would men?⁷⁶⁰ “Nowadays,” the report stated,

men are elected because they are men. Men that are ‘in charge’ of nominations and recruitment find it easier to identify men. The average Social Democratic voter is more likely a female health assistant than a male metalworker.⁷⁶¹

The report ended by posing six questions, meant to spark debate in local party organisations around the country.

It is important to note here that Wallström had never been an SSKF member and was very much a ‘party woman’ in Gunnel Karlsson’s sense of the word. She had risen through the ranks of SSU. However, the working group’s secretary, Lena Josefsson, was a very active SSKF member. The commission report, in other words, marks a moment when women of the party were sanctioned *by* the party to work across its organisational – and sometimes ideological – divides in the quest for a mutual policy strategy with which to win back government power.

SAP’s party executive took the decision to endorse gender equal lists of MPs in December 1992.⁷⁶² At the 1993 congress — at which 47 per cent of the delegates were women — the party as a whole endorsed the decision in a resolution. The party’s NEC was restructured along the lines of the quota system. A new, gender-equal group was elected to match the new gender-equal policy: 69-year-old Sten Andersson and 53-year-old Bo Toresson resigned in favour of two 35-year-olds, Mona Sahlin and Anna Lindh, who were promoted from substitutes to permanent NEC members. SAP’s NEC now had three male and four female members. Among the six-person strong substitutes, 51-year-old Bengt Holgersson and 54-year-old Allan Larsson resigned, allowing for the entry of

⁷⁶⁰ Socialdemokraterna *Är Socialdemokraterna ett Kvinnoparti?*, pp. 22-24

⁷⁶¹ Socialdemokraterna *Är Socialdemokraterna ett Kvinnoparti?*, p. 23

⁷⁶² Socialdemokraterna ‘Verksamheten 1992’, p. 253

38-year old Margot Wallström, 45-year-old Gun-Britt Mårtensson, 43-year-old Göran Persson and 51-year-old Leif Blomberg. A mixed group of newcomers, this changing of the guards marked a leap forward for both the younger generation and for the party, which had for so long refused to identify gender in its organisational structures.

Asked which role SSKF had had in ensuring the introduction of gender quotas, SSKF-activist Annie-Marie Sundbom recently said that

if the women's organisation hadn't lobbied for it, it wouldn't have happened. That is how it is. You have to nag and nag and nag until things change.⁷⁶³

Others are less sure. Birgitta Dahl has said:

The women's organisation had no decisive impact. (...) I might be wrong, but I don't believe it. She [Winberg] is too much demonstration and not enough *realpolitik*.⁷⁶⁴

In reality, it was by working together that SAP women were able to lead the party in the quota question. The often unpopular ground-work of SSKF played a great role, but without the endorsement of 'party women', it is unlikely that their calls would ever been heeded. They were further able to draw great strength from two different directions. The first was the academic research by political scientists, and in particular the ground-breaking research by Swedish-Danish professor Drude Dahlerup in 1988, which used the concept of critical mass theory to call for women to make up a minimum of 30 per cent in political structures in order for them to have an impact.⁷⁶⁵ Dahlerup's theories were seized on by the Nordic Council of Ministers, which published her *We Have Waited Too Long: Handbook in Women's Representation* in the five main Nordic languages from 1988 to 1990.⁷⁶⁶

There were also other promising signs that feminist theory and research was having a wider impact on a global scale in the first half of the 1990s. One example is the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in June 1993. It brought representatives of 171 member states together to sign the Vienna Declaration, which sought to strengthen human rights around the world. It marked the first occasion when a

⁷⁶³ Author's interview with Annie-Marie Sundbom (10 December 2012).

⁷⁶⁴ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (14 September 2014).

⁷⁶⁵ Dahlerup 'From a Small to a Large Minority', pp. 275–97

⁷⁶⁶ Dahlerup *Vi har ventet længe nok*

UN conference framed the promotion and protection of the rights of women as part of a wider human rights discourse.⁷⁶⁷ The conference had a lasting legacy: it recommended the creation of a Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, appointed in 1994.⁷⁶⁸ The conference also called for the universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the year 1995, seeking to protect the rights of girls and boys around the world.⁷⁶⁹ Falling between the UN Women's Conferences in Nairobi in 1985 and Beijing in 1995, the Human Rights conference is part of a greater pattern of summits in the 1990s that, according to Birgitta Dahl, sought to rectify the neglect suffered by some parts of society by patriarchal leaders. In Dahl's opinion, many injustices were

a result of men without suitable competence being in power. Housing issues, social issues, HIV/AIDS, the environment – all those issues that have been traditionally seen as unmanly, that is where they have lacked competence and interest. Global summits have had to be organised to attack those issues [instead].⁷⁷⁰

It had taken several decades to prove, but as academic, activist and international communities began to agree that more needed to be done to level the differences between men and women, SAP seemed to suggest that the sky was the limit - if the party could return to power.

If the 1993 SAP congress had hinted that there was a new generation on the scene, the 1994 elections confirmed it. After a campaign based on the motto that 'Sweden can do better' and promises for sounder state finances and increased funds for the welfare state, SAP ran its most successful campaign for 12 years and returned to government with a 45.3 per cent share of the vote (see figure 5:4, overleaf).

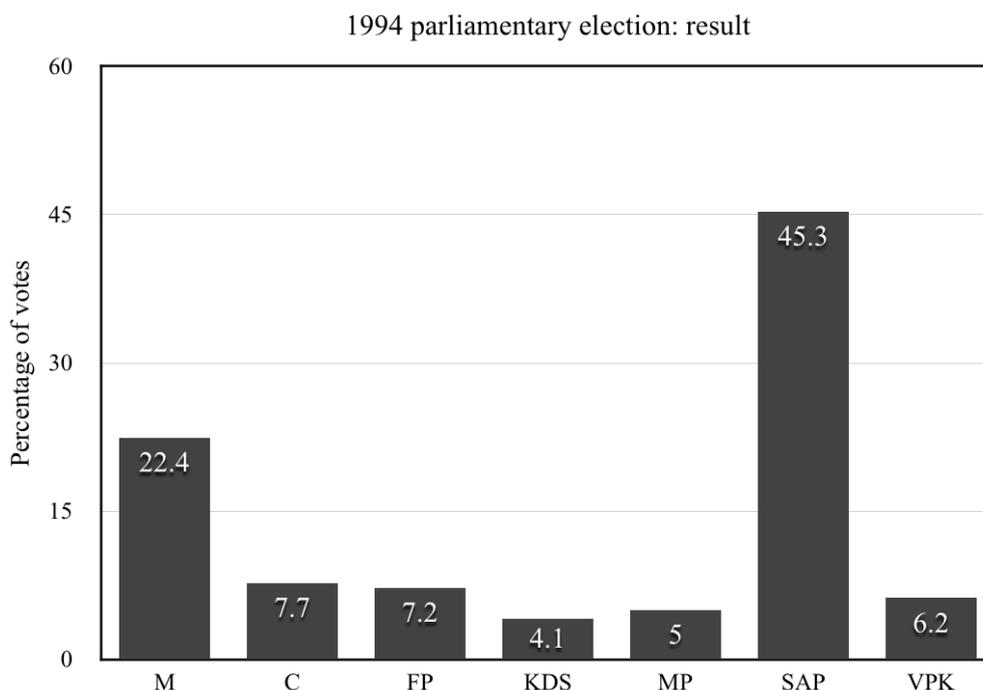
⁷⁶⁷ See, e.g., Ortiz-Ortega, Adriana 'Gendering Transition to Democracy in Mexico' *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 45, special issue (2010), pp. 124-125

⁷⁶⁸ The office has been held by three persons in this time: Sri Lanka's Radhika Coomaraswamy 1994-2003; Turkey's Yakin Ertürk 2003-2009, and South Africa's Rashida Manjoo since 2009. See United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 'Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences', available at www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/SRWomen/Pages/SRWomenIndex.aspx (accessed 28 January 2015)

⁷⁶⁹ United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 'World Conference on Human Rights, 14-25 June 1993, Vienna, Austria', available at www.ohchr.org/EN/ABOUTUS/Pages/ViennaWC.aspx (accessed 13 April 2014)

⁷⁷⁰ Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (11 December 2012).

fig. 5:4



The share translated into 161 seats in parliament, an addition of 23 seats in comparison to the 1991 elections. The bourgeois bloc was severely weakened. Moderaterna increased their share by 0.5 per cent and retained its 80 seats, but Centerpartiet's decline continued: it lost four seats, while preserving 27. Folkpartiet lost seven seats (from 33 to 26), and KdS's share dropped three per cent, resulting in 15 seats. NyD did not pass the parliamentary threshold with its 1.2 per cent. Meanwhile, SAP was further strengthened by the decisive parliamentary return of Miljöpartiet, which was awarded 18 seats, while Vänsterpartiet saw its parliamentary group increase from 16 to 22.⁷⁷¹ The strength of the parties of the red-green bloc, all of whom had around a 45 per cent share of women in its parliamentary groups, pushed the number of women in parliament to its highest levels yet. After the election, 141 out of the 349 MPs were women; a 40.4 per cent share (see figures 5:2 and 5:3 on pages 224-225).⁷⁷²

Ingvar Carlsson's new minority cabinet, a 14-minister strong body, with another eight deputy ministers, had a record-breaking gender equality with eight female ministers and three deputies. Three of these, Margot Wallström (minister for culture), Mona Sahlin (deputy prime minister and deputy equality minister) and Anna Lindh

⁷⁷¹ Statistiska centralbyrån *Allmänna valen 1994*, pp. 7, 27

⁷⁷² Statistiska centralbyrån 'Statistikdatabasen 'Valda i riksdagsval efter region, parti och kön. Valår 1973 - 2014'

(environmental minister), had risen through SSU. SSKF was represented by Margareta Winberg (minister of agriculture) and Ines Uusman (communications minister). Ingela Thalén (minister of social affairs), Laila Freivalds (minister of justice), Marita Ulvskog (minister of home affairs), Anna Hedborg (deputy minister of social affairs) and Ylva Johansson (deputy schools minister) made up the rest.⁷⁷³ The new Swedish parliament and government were both the most gender equal the world had ever seen. Margareta Winberg later wrote that “it was fun to be a part of a system [‘Alternated Women’] that you have played a role in creating”.⁷⁷⁴ Mona Sahlin added:

It is when travelling to other parts of the world that I realise how fantastic [Sweden’s gender-equal government] is. It doesn’t matter how many times I tell people – they won’t believe me. In the end, I began carrying a photo of the government to show as proof. Women I met counted [us] incredulously and then lit up. It’s true! And I often told them Ingvar’s joke (?) that the most difficult thing is to find enough competent men for the job.⁷⁷⁵

This great achievement soon became part of another wave of mythologising party history, silencing the evidence of conflicts that preceded the introduction of Alternated Women.

PART II

THE ANC 1990-1994: FROM EXILE TO POWER

Unknown to many at the time, the ANC leadership in South Africa had — through Nelson Mandela — begun informal negotiations with the apartheid government in Pretoria in the late 1980s.⁷⁷⁶ It was therefore a surprise when President F.W. De Klerk addressed the South African parliament on 2 February 1990 to end the ban on the ANC and other political organisations, leaving Mandela free to walk out of prison on 11 February.

With the unbanning of the ANC and other anti-apartheid and political organisations, South Africans experienced some form of political freedom for the first

⁷⁷³ A full list of female cabinet ministers in Sweden from 1960 until 1994 is available as Appendix C.

⁷⁷⁴ Winberg *Lärlarinna i politikens hårda skola*, p. 91

⁷⁷⁵ Sahlin *Med mina ord*, pp. 193-194; question mark is Sahlin’s original.

⁷⁷⁶ This process is outlined in chapter four of this thesis.

time in 30 years in February 1990. But apartheid-era laws were still in place and South African society continued to be organised along apartheid lines, a legacy of century-long segregation.⁷⁷⁷ Along with ethnicity, gender had an enormous impact on a person's life prospects, with black women particularly oppressed. The era of negotiations was also marred by continuous high rates of political and/or criminal violence. The post-apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Committee later recorded that 5,695 killings had taken place during the 1990 to 1994 transition period. However, the report added that others had found a number almost three times as large:

Sources other than the Commission have reported that, from the start of the negotiations in mid-1990 to the election in April 1994, some 14 000 South Africans died in politically related incidents. While Commission figures for reported violations in the earlier part of its mandate period are under-represented in part because of the passage of time, they are under-reported in this later period because the abuses are still fresh in people's memories and closely linked into current distribution of power.⁷⁷⁸

The situation was particularly dire in Natal, where the Human Rights Committee (HRC) estimated that an average of 101 people died every month in politically related incidents between July 1990 and June 1993. That resulted in a total of 3,653 deaths. Violence continued to escalate in the period between July 1993 and the election of April 1994.⁷⁷⁹ However, violence was far from unique to Natal. In September 1992, an ANC-led protest against the military leader of the bantustan of Ciskei, Brigadier Oupa Gqozo, led to the latter's forces opening fire, killing 29 and injuring 200 demonstrators.⁷⁸⁰ ANC activists found themselves under attack elsewhere too: in July 1993, one person died after a shooting incident involving Albertina and Walter Sisulu's car and an unmarked police vehicle.⁷⁸¹ A few weeks before, Chris Hanu – the recently elected leader of the South African Communist Party and chief of staff of Umkhonto we Sizwe – was assassinated in his driveway. Hanu's murderer was a Polish-born member of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (Afrikaner Resistance Movement; AWB) acting in collusion with a Conservative Party MP, Clive Derby-Lewis. Hanu's death sparked a

⁷⁷⁷ Beinart *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, p. 201-202, 277

⁷⁷⁸ Truth and Reconciliation Commission *The Report Of The Truth And Reconciliation Commission* Volume 2, Chapter 7: Political Violence in the Era of Negotiations and Transition, 1990-1994

⁷⁷⁹ Truth and Reconciliation Commission *The Report Of The Truth And Reconciliation Commission*

⁷⁸⁰ Beinart *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, p. 278-279

⁷⁸¹ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 561-562

dramatic increase in political violence, with the *Race Relations Survey* recording 143 deaths in March; 212 in April; 339 in May; and 547 in July.⁷⁸² Indiscriminate attacks on black train commuters also caused terror during this period.⁷⁸³

On several occasions, the outbreaks of violence stalled the negotiations that were ongoing between the ANC (erroneously seen as synonymous with the anti-apartheid movement) and the apartheid government. These had started in May 1990 when an ANC delegation met with the government at Groote Schuur, the Cape Town presidential residence. The resulting Groote Schuur Minute allowed for the release of political prisoners and the return of exiles. Amendments to South African security legislation also brought an end to individual banning orders.⁷⁸⁴ ANC activists in exile could now start planning for their repatriation.

The ANC's position on violence in relation to the transition negotiations was clarified later that summer at the ANC National Conference in Durban. The adopted resolution on negotiations stated that

the possibility exists of achieving the transfer of power to the people and the creation of a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa by peaceful means.

However, the resolution made it clear that the ANC saw the “campaign of terror” as directly

intended to destabilise society, intimidate the people, undermine and weaken the ANC, its allies and the rest of the democratic movement. (...) an obstacle to the objective of creating a climate conducive to negotiations and to free political activity and association.⁷⁸⁵

The resolution denounced and condemned “the Pretoria regime” for trying to strengthen itself by delaying further negotiations.⁷⁸⁶ Nevertheless, some negotiations continued. In

⁷⁸² Simons, *All My Life and All My Strength*, p. 350. Original footnote: *Race Relations Survey*, 1994/1995, p. 438

⁷⁸³ From July 1990 to January 1992, 48 attacks resulted in 112 deaths and 557 injuries; in December 1992, the Human Rights Commission reported 302 attacks resulting in 278 deaths and 563 injuries during the year. See Human Rights Watch *South Africa — Half-Hearted Reform: The Official Response to the Rising Tide of Violence* 8 May 1993 (Appendix).

⁷⁸⁴ ANC ‘Groote Schuur Minute, 4 May 1990’, available at <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=3881> (accessed 17 July 2014)

⁷⁸⁵ Fort Hare: ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 43, Folder 108 ‘ANC National Conference, July 1991, Durban: Adopted Resolutions on Negotiations’

⁷⁸⁶ Fort Hare: ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 43, Folder 108 ‘ANC National Conference, July 1991’

September 1991, 24 political parties and local governments — including the ANC and de Klerk’s National Party, but not the parties on either side of the democratic fringes — signed the National Peace Accord, which had “the establishment of a multi-party democracy in South Africa” as its goal.⁷⁸⁷ This was a major step towards real negotiations, which commenced in the form of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) in Johannesburg on 21 December 1991. However, before any terms had been agreed, the violence outlined above caused negotiations to break down. The reconvened negotiations, called CODESA II, in May 1992, quickly stalled for the same reasons, with the Boipatong massacre of 17 June 1992 – in which 50 people were killed by a mob of alleged Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) sympathisers – being the last straw for the ANC. In a press statement, the organisation pointed out that:

Mr. de Klerk’s administration is less than three years in office, and yet the death toll of black people during its brief period of office exceeds that of 40 years of National Party rule.⁷⁸⁸

An informal channel to the Pretoria government remained open. In March 1993, the CODESA system was abandoned in favour of a new Multi-Party Negotiation Process (MPNP), which led to the agreement of an interim constitution in November of that same year, setting the date for South Africa’s first democratic elections to take place in April 1994.⁷⁸⁹

NEGOTIATING SPACE FOR WOMEN

Women’s presence at negotiations was a key question for ANC women’s activists from the moment the organisation was unbanned in 1990. Some early signs were promising. At Groote Shuur, Cheryl Carolus and Ruth Mompati were the only women among the 11 ANC delegates, becoming the first black women to participate in an official meeting

⁷⁸⁷ ANC ‘National Peace Accord’, available at www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=3967 (accessed 17 July 2014). These included PAC, AZAPO, the Conservative Party, the Herstigte Nasionale Party and AWB were also among the negotiators.

⁷⁸⁸ ANC Press Statement on Boipatong Massacre, 18 June 1992, available at www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=8430 (accessed 29 January 2015)

⁷⁸⁹ For more information about the negotiation process, see Ndlovu, Sifiso Mxolisi ‘The ANC, CODESA, substantive negotiations and the road to the first democratic elections’ *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 6, Part II* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2013); Dubow *Apartheid, 1948-1994*, pp. 272-273

at “that bastion of white male supremacy”.⁷⁹⁰ In July, the 48th National Conference of the ANC resolution stated that

the NEC shall ensure that in all such organs and structures there is adequate and fair participation of women.⁷⁹¹

However, having learnt their lesson from other African women’s activists who had failed to secure true liberation at the dawn of democracy,⁷⁹² ANC women’s activists decided not to wait for their absence to be noted and an invitation to the head table extended. In early 1990, the ANC Women’s Section had begun working on ensuring proper representation for women’s interests, stating that:

not enough has been done to ensure that the women’s organisations move into more overtly political and national activity. (...) We need to inform on ANC policy, we need to look at the laws of the country and how they affect us as women.⁷⁹³

A mass-movement of women was needed to prop up the evidence of gender-specific suffering and support women’s demands for gender liberation. ANC women saw themselves as the natural leaders of such a movement, and to ensure the success of their mission they needed to rethink their above-ground strategies.

The reason women’s presence at negotiating tables was needed was that they brought perspectives that would deepen understandings of apartheid oppression. The lives of women had been particularly affected by the legalised discrimination and oppression, as outlined in earlier chapters of this thesis. A report from early 1990, commissioned by the Women’s National Coalition (an organisation which will be further discussed below), found that

women form 36.4% of the paid workforce in registered full time employment. They are employed within a very narrow range of occupations and 72% are employed in only 4 categories: service, clerical and sales, agriculture and professional. This last category

⁷⁹⁰ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 547

⁷⁹¹ Fort Hare: ANC Lusaka Mission, Box 43, Folder 108 ‘ANC National Conference, July 1991, Durban: Adopted Resolutions on Negotiations’

⁷⁹² Discussions in Zambia, Namibia and Zimbabwe were particularly significant. See Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-24.3 ‘ANC Women’s League: Statement on South African Women’s Day’ 9 August 1990

⁷⁹³ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archives, Box 25, Folder 75 ‘The Role and Structure of the ANC Women’s Section in 1990’

includes nurses and teachers. Only 17% of the workers in the managerial, executive and administrative category are women and nearly 88% of these are white.⁷⁹⁴

Women's lack of senior roles in the workplace was mirrored by their lack of political presence, the report argued, adding that:

Though white women have had equal political rights with white males for more than 50 years, they are not found in the decision making structures in either the political institutions or the economy. Sexism is the truly non-racial institution in South Africa.⁷⁹⁵

In a political climate shaped by violence and negotiations, it was a challenge to get the ANC to incorporate women's calls for representation. However, South African women – at home and abroad – were by now more united as a political collective than ever before. The creation of the collective was a process that had started in 1989 when Albertina Sisulu had been granted a 31-day passport by the apartheid regime, and left South Africa for a whistle-stop tour of countries and organisations sympathetic to the ANC's cause.⁷⁹⁶ Her travels forged closer links between women's activists in South Africa and exile, which were to prove very timely. Even more important to the coming together of women's activists was the Malibongwe Conference, held on 13-18 January 1990 in Amsterdam. The conference called delegates from the internal and external South African anti-apartheid movement to discuss women's emancipation, violence, the plight of children, and the development of a "truly democratic society".⁷⁹⁷ In this aim, it was very successful. Furthermore, the conference identified that one major and persistent problem hampering women's mobilisation was the absence of a national structure.⁷⁹⁸ Once the ban on the ANC and other internal anti-apartheid organisations was lifted a few weeks later, the race was on to set one up.

On 2 May 1990, the ANC relaunched the ANC Women's League through a party statement on the emancipation of South African women. The statement followed months

⁷⁹⁴ Mayibuye: Women's National Coalition Archives, MCH-100 28.2.10 'Document on the Charter Campaign'

⁷⁹⁵ Mayibuye: Women's National Coalition Archives, MCH-100 28.2.10 'Document on the Charter Campaign'. Emphasis taken from the original document.

⁷⁹⁶ This trip is depicted in chapter four.

⁷⁹⁷ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-24.1 'Letter from Thami Ngwevela (convenor, Malibongwe prep. committee) to Mavivi Manzini' 15 November 1989

⁷⁹⁸ Mayibuye: ANC London, MCH02-53.76 'Paper presented at the ANC Women's National workshop on building a legal ANC Women's League in South Africa'

of discussions within the Women's Section on how to best recreate the League, which had been disbanded in 1960 after the banning of the ANC. Discussions had culminated in a workshop in Lusaka at the end of April in which 83 delegates took part. Among the participants were some of the ANC's most famous and influential women's activists - Frene Ginwala, Ray Alexander Simons, Thenjiwe Mtintso, Mavis Nhlapo and Mittah Seperepere - as well as some very important male ANC members, like Albie Sachs and Chris Hani, whose very active support was a great help for women's activists.⁷⁹⁹ There, the reinstated ANCWL was tasked with the creation of a Women's Charter campaign, "involving all other structures of our organisation, the membership and supporters throughout South Africa".⁸⁰⁰ Just over a month later, on 8 June, an ANC Women's League task force arrived from exile in Johannesburg to guide the organisation towards its official launch in Durban on 9 August.⁸⁰¹ The ANCWL proclaimed that a separate women's organisation within the party was necessary as

experience of other societies has shown that success in the struggle or national liberation does not automatically lead to the liberation of women.⁸⁰² (...) Historically, our strength has come from struggle: in mobilising around the issues that affect us and organising resistance to correct them. In the year ahead, we must forge the Women's League into a mighty weapon and through struggle sharpen its spearpoint so that it becomes the instrument of our people's liberation and women's liberation.⁸⁰³

Building on long-term sympathies for the ANC and its leadership's status as leaders of the anti-apartheid liberation movement, the reestablished ANCWL grew quickly. In December 1990, the ANCWL reported that it had 35,845 members⁸⁰⁴ (the ANC itself counted 614,697 members in October 1991); a remarkable number for a recently established organisation.⁸⁰⁵ The most senior of these then gathered for the first ANC

⁷⁹⁹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-24.3 'Report on the Consultation on Rebuilding a Legal African National Congress Women's Organisation in South Africa' 30 April-2 May 1990

⁸⁰⁰ Mayibuye: ANC London Archives, MCH02-53.76 'Statement of the African National Congress on the Emancipation of Women in South Africa' 2 May 1990

⁸⁰¹ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-24.4 'Circular to all regions re: ANC Women's League launch and conference'

⁸⁰² Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-24.3 'ANC Women's League: Statement on South African Women's Day' 9 August 1990

⁸⁰³ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-24.3 'ANC Women's League: Statement on South African Women's Day'

⁸⁰⁴ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archives, Box 25, Folder 75 'The ANCWL National Consultative Meeting Report' 8-9 December 1990

⁸⁰⁵ Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archive, Box 39, Folder 150 'ANC Membership Statistics, October 1991'

Women's League conference in Kimberley in the Northern Cape in April 1991. Over 1,000 delegates from the ANC's armed forces, exile structure and internal organisation took part, as did "heroines of the legal and underground struggles of the 1950s and 1960s."⁸⁰⁶ The Sweden-based Women's Section delegation flew in from Stockholm to attend, and wrote in their report that "singing and toyi-toying played an important role throughout and contributed to the feeling of joy and unity that permeated the conference".⁸⁰⁷ They failed, however, to mention the controversy caused by Winnie Madikizela-Mandela standing for president against the election committee's favoured candidate, the exile organisation's Gertrude Shope. While carefully trying to integrate the external and internal women's leadership into one unit, the commission seems to have done its best to overlook Madikizela-Mandela, who by now was a very controversial figure in the movement after becoming implicated in the township violence in the 1980s.⁸⁰⁸ In the end, so did the delegates: Shope won the election with 60 per cent of the votes, while Albertina Sisulu was elected deputy president. Baleka Mbete-Kgositsile was elected secretary-general while Mavivi Manzini, Ruth Mompati and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela were among the women who took seats on the ANCWL NEC.⁸⁰⁹ By 1993, the controversies around Madikizela-Mandela had somehow become a strength, and she was elected ANCWL president. Sheila Meintjes has explained her resurrection as a consequence of women's identification with her struggles:

[Winnie] symbolized the experience and suffering of many women whose family life had been virtually destroyed by the apartheid system. Alone she had faced the state, with two little girls to bring up, and little means for doing so. Though this symbolism of 'Mother of the Nation' now appeared to have crumbled, Winnie's position as long-suffering wife now came to the fore.⁸¹⁰

⁸⁰⁶ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archive, Box 25, Folder 74 'Report of the Delegation of ANC Women in Sweden on the First National ANC Women's Conference held in Kimberley, South Africa, 24th-28th April, 1991'. By Yolisa Modise, Lindiwe Mngqikana and Madi Gray

⁸⁰⁷ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archive, Box 25, Folder 74 'Report of the Delegation of ANC Women in Sweden on the First National ANC Women's Conference held in Kimberley, South Africa, 24th-28th April, 1991'.

⁸⁰⁸ This has been outlined in chapter four.

⁸⁰⁹ Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archives, Box 39, Folder 162 'ANCWL Strategic Planning Exercise Draft Report' 23 July 1991

⁸¹⁰ Meintjes, Sheila 'Winnie Madikizela Mandela: Tragic figure? Populist tribune? Township tough?' *Southern Africa Report*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (August 1998), p. 14

Controversy around Madikizela-Mandela continued beyond her divorce from Nelson Mandela in 1994. Although a strong and powerful woman, ANC opposition to her influence hindered ANCWL activism in the years that followed.⁸¹¹

*MOBILISING WOMEN:
ANCWL AND THE WOMEN'S NATIONAL COALITION*

As outlined throughout this thesis, ANC women had been made several promises by the leaders of the party over the years, none of which had helped free them from patriarchy. Among the disappointments was the failure to implement a national commission on women, which the ANC had promised to set up in 1987.⁸¹² There was also a baffling lack of awareness of ANC women's mobilisation within the party at large: for all that the ANC's leadership said that women's emancipation was important, women still struggled to be heard. There was also a "lack of good working relations between the Women's League and structures of the ANC at National and regional level".⁸¹³ The ANC Women's League was struggling organisationally too: it was short-staffed, meaning those attached to its headquarters had to

act like a fire brigade and visit very briefly those areas which have crises situations [sic], to try to solve problems encountered by our women.⁸¹⁴

Membership figures, though impressive early on, were stalling in the violent political climate. Women were afraid of police harassment and violence, and intimidated by patriarchally-minded husbands and boyfriends ("some partners," the ANCWL wrote in a report for its members in October 1991, "do not understand why their wives should attend meetings regularly").⁸¹⁵ The League also found that there seemed to be a troubling divide between the new young urban members and the rural structures, whose

⁸¹¹ Meintjes 'Winnie Madikizela Mandela', p. 14. See also Gilbey Keller, Emma *The Lady: The Life and Times of Winnie Mandela* (London: Cape, 1993).

⁸¹² Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archive, Box 25, Folder 74 'Report of the Delegation of ANC Women in Sweden on the First National ANC Women's Conference held in Kimberley, South Africa, 24th-28th April, 1991'.

⁸¹³ Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archive, Box 111, Folder 303 'Letter to ANCWL NEC members' no date or author.

⁸¹⁴ Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archives, Box 40, Folder 172 'Report on the State of the Organisation of the ANC Women's League' October 1991

⁸¹⁵ Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archives, Box 40, Folder 172 'Report on the State of the Organisation of the ANC Women's League' October 1991

members were older and struggled to keep up with the material and recommendations sent out from ANCWL headquarters in Johannesburg.⁸¹⁶ Female ANC members needed to be strengthened collectively in their political activism, while leading ANC women's activists needed to claim a space for their voices within the organisation at large. There were two ways to deal with this. The first was to call for quotas to be introduced to allow a fair share of women in the organisation. This was, as Frene Ginwala has said, in line with the recommendations made by the Socialist International in 1986, of which the ANC was an observer, and discussions at the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

From there, we came up with the first 30 per cent quota (...) We tried to do that [to ensure that] ANC representation should be equal.⁸¹⁷

At the Kimberley conference in April 1991, the ANCWL issued a demand that

at least 30 per cent of all positions in ANC structures and departments [should be] held by women. Women must participate in the negotiating teams and help draw up the new constitution.⁸¹⁸

That demand was brought along to the National Conference of the ANC in Durban in July 1991. In an interview with ANCWL's newsletter *The Rock* in March 1992, Cheryl Carolus expressed her disappointment on finding that although she had expected women's rights "to be squarely on the agenda (...) it was all way below my anticipation." Her solution to women's invisibility was to build a greater movement:

I really think we have to start inside the movement if we want leadership to address the issue – we must win our power and support at grassroots first.⁸¹⁹

The ANCWL was similarly disappointed with the conference. The organisation had argued that 30 per cent of the seats in ANC's NEC - due to be elected at the conference -

⁸¹⁶ Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archives, Box 40, Folder 172 'Report on the State of the Organisation of the ANC Women's League' October 1991

⁸¹⁷ Author's interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014).

⁸¹⁸ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archive, Box 25, Folder 74 'Report of the Delegation of ANC Women in Sweden on the First National ANC Women's Conference held in Kimberley, South Africa, 24th-28th April, 1991'.

⁸¹⁹ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archives, Box 32, Folder 49 'The Rock: Newsletter of the ANC Women's League, March 1992'

be reserved for women. The response was that doing so would set a precedent that could lead to minority groups making similar demands in the future. “That experience,” wrote Baleka Mbete-Kgositsile:

was valuable in that it showed that commitment to affirmative action can only be attained when there has been a good understanding of the problem that is being addressed by all concerned. (...) Affirmative action is crucial to the attainment of women’s emancipation.⁸²⁰

This initial exclusion of women from negotiations strengthened calls made by women’s activists to create a movement that would speak for all of South Africa’s women. In September 1991, Frene Ginwala presented a paper on ‘Constitutional Arrangements for Gender Equality’, in which she argued that South African women faced specific challenges, and that great structural changes were needed to bring about an end to oppression. But, she added, the fact that the ANC was formally committed to transforming apartheid South Africa into a non-sexist democracy, made it possible for these changes to be pushed through. Ginwala wrote:

The majority of the South African population is female, yet hitherto, women have been noticeable by their absence in the delegations of all the parties engaged in the process [of negotiation of power].⁸²¹

To stop that, Ginwala suggested that:

women need to come together, work through and put forward specific proposals on gender equality using whatever avenues and channels as may be available to each of us.

This included organising within and across already established women’s groups, to ensure that the future constitution “goes beyond a ritualistic commitment to equality and actually lays the basis for effective gender equality.”⁸²² At this point, the idea of a national coalition of women’s organisations had been brewing within the ANC for a few years. According to Ginwala, it had started at a meeting in Lusaka in 1988, when it was

⁸²⁰ Fort Hare: ANC Women’s Section Archive, Box 78, Folder 177 ‘Affirmative Action and Women’ by Baleka Kgositsile.

⁸²¹ Fort Hare: ANC Women’s Section Archive, Box 47, Folder 90 ‘Constitutional Arrangements for Gender Equality: Statement by Frene Ginwala at the Women’s Consultation’ 27 September 1991

⁸²² Fort Hare: ANC Women’s Section Archive, Box 47, Folder 90 ‘Constitutional Arrangements for Gender Equality: Statement by Frene Ginwala at the Women’s Consultation’ 27 September 1991

decided that a new charter for women was needed, based on the pledge Oliver Tambo had given to the liberation of women in Nairobi three years earlier. As a return home started looking increasingly viable, the opportunity to include all South African women in the charter gained ground.

We were about to go home, so why don't we make sure that we draft it as the women of South Africa, not the women of the ANC? So the decision was taken then to try to involve women in the country in this charter movement. And that's what led to the formation of the coalition.⁸²³

The Women's National Coalition (WNC) was formally inaugurated in April 1992 at a weekend workshop at the University of Witwatersrand. Ginwala was unanimously elected convenor by the 297 delegates, who represented 67 national organisations and seven regional coalitions across the entire South African political spectrum. These included women's groups from ANC antagonists PAC, Inkatha and the National Party, as well as women from the Black Sash, Girl Guide Association of South Africa and South Africa's Council of Churches.⁸²⁴ A pamphlet about the organisation points out that:

As will be evident from the list, the Women's National Coalition embraces women from across the political, economic, social, racial, cultural and religious spectrum. It is united in the belief that progress and democracy will be limited if women are excluded from the democratic process as in our present patriarchal society. And that there is a need for women and men to work together for a common goal of a non-sexist, non-racial and democratic South Africa.⁸²⁵

In August 1992, WNC launched its Women's Charter campaign: an intense period of consultations and fieldwork aimed at establishing what it was like to be a woman in South Africa and how women's lives could be improved, as well as educating and empowering women politically. The research was to prove that all women had grievances in South Africa, according to Frene Ginwala.

⁸²³ Interview with Frene Ginwala 17 October 2014

⁸²⁴ Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archive, Box 27, Folder 84 'Minutes of the Women's National Coalition workshop' 25-26 April 1992; Mayibuye: Women's National Coalition Archive, MCH100-1.2 'Document about the WNC'

⁸²⁵ Mayibuye: Women's National Coalition, MCH100: Box 1 (1.1-4.1.4.11) pamphlet on WNC.

We were always being told that ‘intellectual women are the ones saying this, women are quite happy’. I’m sure all of us have heard this. So we thought ‘let’s do this and put it on the basis of the mass participatory campaign’. (...) What we did is probably the largest participatory research programme [ever].⁸²⁶

Formal focus groups were set up, but participatory research was also needed to give voice to many women without formal political ties. The Mothers’ Unions - tied to the churches - were a particularly important source. All women were asked:

to discuss a simple question: that change is coming to South Africa, what is it like to be a woman in South Africa today, and what is it that you would like to change in the new South Africa. (...) we got a lot of feedback from that (...) the coalition members did similar things among their own members, and we would put up big news sheets outside supermarkets and labour markets, and tell women to please come and write there what you would like to have changed.⁸²⁷

The charter would then be compiled and adopted at the WNC congress before it would be handed to the state president for inclusion in constitutional discussions.⁸²⁸ The strength and appeal of the coalition was that none of the participating organisations had to dissolve themselves to become members. This was purposefully so, Frene Ginwala says.

Our own certainty was we are not going to form one political movement because we have conflicts. It is very important to focus purely on women and to leave the organisations intact.

It also meant that the WNC became

the most representative body in South Africa, because we cut across (...) all sorts of lines. And nobody had to join us and dissolve their organisations, because it was a common objection.⁸²⁹

It was nevertheless the source of conflict. Even though the WNC was led by a long-term and highly respected ANC member, far from all ANCWL members saw the coalition in purely positive terms. Other participants also struggled. Members of the National Party

⁸²⁶ Author’s interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014).

⁸²⁷ Author’s interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014).

⁸²⁸ Mayibuye: Women’s National Coalition Archives, MCH100-28.4.32 ‘Charter for Women’s Equality: Discussion document’ by Frene Ginwala

⁸²⁹ Author’s interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014).

were particularly concerned about WNC being a front for the ANC, and tendered their resignation on several occasions.⁸³⁰ “To be sure there were bitter arguments,” a report later stated,

aggressive discussions, moments of intense exasperation. But – and perhaps this is where men could learn a few lessons – in the final analysis other qualities claimed victory.⁸³¹

In February 1994, the WNC Conference adopted the ‘Women’s Charter for Effective Equality’. The auspicious first words read “We, women of South Africa, claim our rights”. The charter is a lengthy and extensive document and was translated into all the languages of South Africa. Its 12 articles detailed every aspect of a woman’s life and the changes required to put a stop to apartheid-era discrimination and its legacy.⁸³² In their report, Frene Ginwala and her co-convenor Anne Letsebe, wrote that:

We ought to celebrate that (...) we have achieved the objective of ensuring effective equality for women. We can speak today of a gender sensitive constitution. We do however still have the responsibility of ensuring its implementation.⁸³³

Much of that hinged on a successful campaign to get as many WNC representatives as possible into parliament for their various political parties.

ANC women managed to make progress in their calls for quota implementation as late as a year before the first election. When the Multi-Party Negotiation Process (MPNP) started in March 1993 (as described above), ANCWL were shocked to find that despite all their efforts, women were again excluded from the negotiating teams. After this had been pointed out, the ANC leadership:

proposed that women be part of [all] the [MPNP] delegations. Although most parties initially jeered at this suggestion, subsequent pressure from women led to a decision

⁸³⁰ Mayibuye: Women’s National Coalition Archives, MCH100-3.3.1.32 ‘From Anne Routier to Frene Ginwala, tending a resignation to the Coalition on behalf of the National Party’ 15 March 1994; MCH100-30.1.10 Correspondence between Else Schreiner, Frene Ginwala, Anne Routier and Sandra Botha, February 1994

⁸³¹ Mayibuye: Women’s National Coalition Archive, MCH100-1.2 ‘Document about the WNC’

⁸³² Mayibuye: Women’s National Coalition Archives, MCH100-28.4.23 ‘The Women’s Charter for Effective Equality: Adopted at the National Convention convened by the Women’s National Coalition’ 25-27 February 1994

⁸³³ Mayibuye: Women’s National Coalition Archives, MCH100-14.3.12.3.2. ‘Convenor’s report to the National Conference’ 25-27 February 1994, by Anne Letsebe and Frene Ginwala

being taken that each party should have a woman as a second negotiator. April 1 [the day the decision was implemented] marked a victory for women.⁸³⁴

The ANC's very important and visible role at the negotiating table meant that any structural changes suggested or undertaken by the party were immediately visible. The implementation of this first quota was a good sign for women's activists.

As the MPNP discussions progressed, ANCWL mobilisation entered a new phase. It was committed to delivering "the woman vote to the ANC", but wary that although a majority of the eligible voters (an estimated 52 per cent) were women, only one million of these were either ANC members or guaranteed ANC voters. At the same time, a SIDA-sponsored voters' education programme commenced during the autumn of 1993 to ensure women's full participation in the electoral progress.⁸³⁵ The ANCWL could make use of this in its final call for support from the ANC leadership:

When the ANCWL promises to deliver the women's vote to the ANC, the ANC has to unambiguously commit itself to the advancement and meeting the needs of women permanently. Unfortunately debate on specifics tends to be overshadowed by slogans, emotions, political confusion and sometimes even opportunism.⁸³⁶

As an indication of real change rather than opportunism, ANCWL argued that 15 women (not necessarily ANCWL members) should be selected within every block of 50 prospective MPs on the ANC's electoral lists: a 30 per cent women's quota to ensure a fair representation.⁸³⁷ These lists should start at branch level and go "right up to national".⁸³⁸ Finally, their call was heard. In combination with the strength of WNC activists and the impact of women at the MPNP discussions, the ANC leadership realised that quotas was a way to ensure that the new South Africa fulfilled its non-sexist obligations.

⁸³⁴ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission Archive, Box 12, Folder 95 'ANCWL August 9 Statement - South African Women's Day' Issued by Baleka Kgositsile on behalf of ANCWL NEC

⁸³⁵ Fort Hare: ANC Sweden Mission, Box 25, Folder 74 'Project Proposal: Involving Women In Elections - African National Congress Women's League Voter Education and Elections Training Unit' 25 October 1993

⁸³⁶ Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archive, Box 49, Folder 19 'African National Congress Women's League - ANCWL Position on Elections' 22 January 1993

⁸³⁷ As discussed earlier in this chapter, 30 per cent was the figure believed to ensure a fair representation of minorities in deciding fora.

⁸³⁸ Fort Hare: ANC Women's Section Archive, Box 49, Folder 19 'African National Congress Women's League - ANCWL Position on Elections' 22 January 1993

On 26 April 1994, South Africa's first ever democratic elections were held. The voter turnout was 86.9 per cent, and the ANC won a predictable landslide with 63 per cent of the vote, allowing it to send 252 MPs to the 400-seat parliament.⁸³⁹ Violence continued right up to the election day and beyond, but that did not deter 19 million people from turning out. "Many powerful forces were talking about civil war," Walter Sisulu said later,

[but] on the day of the election the masses of people were determined only on one thing, to make their cross, to make the election a success. (...) It was a remarkable moment I can never forget.⁸⁴⁰

The election was a success for the anti-apartheid movement, the ANC, and women. In 1984, only 2.8 per cent of the MPs had been women; but after the 1994 election, 101 out of the 400 MPs in the National Assembly were women. As it held such large proportion of the parliamentary seats, that was largely thanks to the ANC's gender quota. South Africa was now liberated from apartheid and seventh in the Inter-Parliamentary Union's worldwide ranking of female parliamentary representation.⁸⁴¹ Soon, ANC women's activists hoped, black women's triple oppression would be but a fading memory.

CONCLUSION

The successes of SAP and ANC women in their respective 1994 elections were, despite the very different political circumstances in which they took place, remarkably similar. They built on a worldwide momentum and an understanding that drastic measures were needed to secure the political liberation of women through adequate representation.

In Sweden, the quota discussions were enabled by the diffusion of gender and feminist understandings in greater parts of society than before. In the 25 years since the eruption of visible second-wave feminist mobilisation in 1968, ideas about the social

⁸³⁹ The second largest party was the National Party, with a 20.4 per cent share and 82 seats, while Inkatha Freedom Party polled 10.5 per cent and got 43 seats. See African Elections Database '1994 elections' available at africanelections.tripod.com/za.html#1994_National_Assembly_Election (accessed 29 January 2015).

⁸⁴⁰ Sisulu *In Our Lifetime*, p. 563

⁸⁴¹ Mayibuye: Women's National Coalition Archives, MCH100-14.2.6.1 '1994 Country report on the Status of South African Women: Beijing Conference report 1994'

roots of the subordination of women were commonplace in both academic and cultural debates. Chapter three showed the impact of historians like Yvonne Hirdman on the generation of SAP women born in the 1950s. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the works of political scientist Drude Dahlerup was often cited as calls for a women's quota grew louder. The visibility of female business leaders like Antonia Ax:son Johnson — the young CEO of one of the largest business corporations in Sweden — and the continued mobilisation by non-parliamentary feminists also helped SAP women's cause. The party's electoral loss in 1991 further gave an impetus for committing the need for structural change to paper. As the number of female MPs in the Swedish parliament fell for the first time in generations, a result of the coming to power of the right-wing parties, women's calls for quotas, endorsed by the 1986 Socialist International congress in which SAP played a leading role, were further strengthened. Swedes with an interest in adequate political representation for women were outraged by this visible step back. In the end, Brigitta Dahl says,

It caused such a commotion that the parties began taking the issue of picking women for electable positions with an increased seriousness.⁸⁴²

Previous chapters have outlined how important internationalism was for women's mobilisation in the 1960s and early 1970s as it offered space for action while the upper levels of party and national structures were closed to all women, bar a few exceptional individuals. This chapter, however, shows that in an era in which women *were* promoted to higher political office at a greater rate than ever before, international spaces remained important. They allowed women to meet and discuss theories and strategies, and gave SAP women an opportunity to take a hands-on approach to making the world better. It was not, however, vital as an alternative outlet for careers frustrated at home.

The implementation of Alternated Women in Sweden and the enforcement of gender quotas should not be confused with all-out success. It guaranteed women's political liberation in the same way that the reforms of the 1970s brought legal and social emancipation through tax reform, childcare allowances and parental leave. Cultural and social factors continued to be a hindrance to women's advancement, and women's rights continued to be threatened by staunch opposition. Nevertheless, in 1994

⁸⁴² Author's interview with Birgitta Dahl (16 September 2014).

SAP women won political equality within their party and they – as a political collective – were stronger and more powerful than ever before.

This chapter has also shown that it was not the end of apartheid that brought greater representation for women in parliament in South Africa; it was the concerted efforts of a vast number of women's activists. The impact of the increasing repression in South Africa and the violence meted out by the Pretoria government against ANC members in exile during the course of the 1980s had greatly hampered ANC women from achieving their goals within the organisation. In the meantime, the rigid patriarchal views of many ANC members continued to hold women back from influential roles, stopped them from partaking in the armed struggle, and left the Women's Secretariat understaffed and overstretched when tasked with the social welfare care of the entire organisation.

ANC women's internationalism had secured funds and support for the struggle since the organisation went into exile in 1960, but it also gave ANC women plenty of models and alternative tactics to follow and learn from. It was in conversation with their international allies and supporters, and while observing the experiences of other liberation movements once in power, that ANC women learnt that promises of an end to gender oppression at the dawn of national liberation tended to be empty. As pointed out in chapter four, this led to the most senior women's activists within the ANC — Frene Ginwala and Gertrude Shope among them — to call on the ANC to implement structural changes to enable gender liberation *before* and not after national liberation. This proved fortuitous in the aftermath of the sudden unbanning of anti-apartheid movements in February 1990: the internal and external women's movements were already in the process of reconnecting, and the dormant ANC Women's League was soon awakened.

Furthermore, building on the mass-mobilising campaigns of the UDF-era (as outlined in chapter four) and convinced of the great structural difficulties in transforming the situation for all women in South Africa, the creation of the Women's National Coalition was a masterstroke. Removing political ideology and focusing on the creation of a nationwide Women's Charter to secure the end to women's political, economical, legal and cultural subordination, the WNC mobilised across all the lines that divided South Africa's population. It also very importantly became a stage for establishing closer connections between women's activists, as seen in the later

appointment of Frene Ginwala as Speaker of the National Assembly of South Africa in 1994. Members of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the ANC had waged a violent struggle in KwaZulu Natal and were considered parliamentary enemies. But when the IFP parliamentary caucus decided to challenge ANC's appointment of speaker, the IFP women said no.

They said 'we won't vote against her'. (...) [They] said to their party that they could understand why they would like to oppose an ANC speaker, but since they had heard that it was likely to be me, they said we will not vote against Frene because she was our leader in the coalition.⁸⁴³

The successes of WNC and its members also shows that although international communities and trends have been very important for conversations and actions to support women's liberation, local perspectives remain vital. In an interview with *The Cape Argus* in 1995, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma – by then Health Minister in Nelson Mandela's first government and the leader of South Africa's delegation to the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing – argued that:

Laws, conferences and conventions are there as enabling instruments. (...) Our struggles on the ground are what is going to make a difference.⁸⁴⁴

The role and impact of international connections in ending both apartheid and giving women the power to negotiate a gender-inclusive parliamentary selection process and constitution should not be understated, but it is important too to point out that the ANC and the WNC leadership all had specifically South African outlooks. The women's activists of these organisations were not creating a general road map to gender equality; they were creating a *South African* road map to *South African* gender equality, based on local conditions. As the South African delegation to the conference in Beijing pointed out:

The unbanning of the liberation movements in 1990 and the revocation of race as a constitutional and legal measure created space for the gender struggle to be waged as an autonomous aspect of the struggle for democracy in South Africa. At the same time the

⁸⁴³ Author's interview with Frene Ginwala (17 October 2014).

⁸⁴⁴ Mayibuye: Women's National Coalition Archive, MCH100-28.4.24 'SA Leads the World' *Argus* 15 September 1995

anticipation of a new order based on human rights principles – with women’s rights as part and parcel of human rights – created a new context for that struggle.⁸⁴⁵

The 1994 election marked the end of the era of the struggle in South African history, after which many of the organisations that had most actively called for an end to minority rule and women’s oppression closed down. As recent history has shown, there are many reasons to believe that this was premature: without riding on a wave of mobilisation and awareness, many South African women have been left struggling in informal settlements, impoverished townships, neglected rural communities; in oppressive personal relationships; and in parliament. However, South African women’s activists in general and ANC women’s activists in particular, were never overtaken by the events of the transition era but continued to mobilise and argue for their inclusion.

This chapter has argued that feminism was adopted as a strategy by women’s activists in SAP and the ANC in the 1990s. This was informed by the broken promises and failed reforms in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, which in Sweden had begun to address women’s subordination in society but in reality done very little to enforce gender equality in public life. For ANC women, infusing politics with feminist strategies threw light on their structural subordination both within the party as a whole and the country it was trying to liberate from apartheid. The achievements of SAP women in pushing for a gender quota pales in comparison to the ANC’s involvement in the liberation of South Africa from the shackles of apartheid. Nevertheless, both groups of women’s activists deserve to be seen and given credit for their achievement, which involved the setting of a very high standard for quotas and, in the case of SAP, an example to follow when concerning gender-equal governments.

⁸⁴⁵ Mayibuye: Women’s National Coalition, MCH100-14.2.6.1 ‘1994 Country report on the Status of South African Women: Beijing Conference Report 1994’

CONCLUSION

2015: RIGHTS, REPRESENTATION AND A CONTINUED STRUGGLE

Striving towards gender equality is not only a goal in itself, but also a precondition for achieving our wider foreign, development and security policy objectives. Working towards greater gender equality and ensuring women's rights is therefore at the heart of the Swedish Government's foreign policy. (...) There are three indispensable and interdependent concepts that are crucial to the 'how' of moving the feminist foreign policy agenda forward: RIGHTS, REPRESENTATION and RESOURCES — 'the feminist toolbox'.⁸⁴⁶

Africa boasts 14 out of the 46 countries in the world where women account for more than a quarter of Parliamentarians. We have a strong and vibrant women's movement on the continent, who are actively campaigning for greater representation, against child marriages, access to reproductive rights and for social and economic empowerment more generally. In Parliaments where we have a critical mass of women, we are beginning to see a difference in the laws and policies that are passed. We do however have to do more. During 2015, more than fifteen countries will have elections, and we will work hard to ensure that more women are elected.⁸⁴⁷

These quotes are taken from statements made by Swedish foreign minister Margot Wallström and Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, chairperson of the African Union Commission, in January and February 2015. Both Wallström and Dlamini-Zuma were active in and beneficiaries of the quest for quotas in the early 1990s. They are now using their experiences and offices to ensure that other women too get to play an active role in current and future policy considerations. While discussions about women's roles in representational democracy and government continue beyond Sweden and South Africa borders, the role of women in national and international political environments continue to be a cause for both concern and celebration.⁸⁴⁸ A sign of how feminism and gender equality have become an important part of the Swedish self-image and national identity, Wallström's ministry pursues an outspokenly feminist foreign policy. This is

⁸⁴⁶ Regeringskansliet 'Margot Wallström, United States Institute of Peace, Washington DC, 29 January 2015'

⁸⁴⁷ Women in Parliaments Global Forum 'Welcome words by Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, chairperson of the African Union Commission, at the Women In Parliaments Summit, 23 March 2015'

⁸⁴⁸ Recent examples include Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon's first government, made up of five male and five female cabinet ministers, and British Labour leader candidate Andy Burnham pledging a gender equal shadow cabinet should he be elected. See Boffey, Daniel 'Andy Burnham pledges half-female shadow cabinet as Labour leader' *The Observer* 28 June 2015

infused with her own experiences as a SAP politician in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, and as the UN Secretary General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict 2010-2013. Supporting women through ensuring their adequate representation during peace negotiations is one aspect of that policy, but Wallström is keen to point out that all the actions of her ministry — including the recognition of the State of Palestine and the moratorium on Swedish weapons exports to Saudi Arabia — are feminist. Meanwhile, the quote from Dlamini-Zuma is taken from her address to the annual 'Women In Parliaments Summit' in March 2015. Dlamini-Zuma, who served as South Africa's minister of health 1994-1999 before becoming minister of foreign affairs in 1999-2009 and minister of home affairs 2009-2012, spoke about the impact of women in legislative structures, and the work that still need to be done to ensure their full participation and representation. To strengthen the women's movements across the continent further, the AUC has decreed 2015 the 'Year of Women's Empowerment and Development Towards Africa's Agenda 2063'.⁸⁴⁹

Sweden and South Africa continue to rank highly in the Inter-Parliamentary Union's league table for women's representation within democratic structures.⁸⁵⁰ This is a direct result of gender quotas: as visible elsewhere (for example in the British parliament, where women made up 29.4 per cent of the MPs elected to the House of Commons in 2015, and 24.1 per cent in the House of Lords), selection processes continue to favour men ahead of women as long as norms still identify and equate 'politician' with 'male'.⁸⁵¹ However, men and women are still defined by their socially constructed genders rather than by their individual strength and weaknesses in both Sweden and South Africa. One indication of this is that both countries have seen their parliamentary gender gaps grow over the last decade. While Sweden yet again has a gender-equal government in the form of a SAP-Green Party minority coalition after the election in the autumn of 2014, the proportion of female MPs — at 43.6 per cent — is at its lowest since 1998. This is a direct result of the growing strength of parties that do not

⁸⁴⁹ African Union 'Decision on the theme, date and venue of the twenty fourth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union' Assembly of the Union, 23rd Ordinary Session, 26-27 June 2014 (Malabo, Equatorial Guinea), Decisions, Declarations and Resolution: Assembly/AU/Dec.539(XXIII)

⁸⁵⁰ On 1 June 2015, Sweden was at number five and South Africa at number seven in the ranking compiled by the Inter-Parliamentary Union. See Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Women in National Parliaments' 1 June 2015. Available at www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/classif010615.htm (accessed 28 June 2015)

⁸⁵¹ Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Women in National Parliaments' 1 June 2015; Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Parline Database: United Kingdom, House of Commons', available at www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2335_E.htm (accessed 19 June 2015)

see gender quotas as a means to ensure a fair representation of men and women in parliament or elsewhere.⁸⁵² In South Africa, the gender gap is still diminishing but remains wider than in Sweden. Female MPs hold 41.5 per cent of the South African parliament's seats after the 2014 election, while the government has 22 male and 15 female cabinet ministers. This is an improvement on figures of the 1990s and 2000s: female MPs only made up 25 per cent of parliament in 1994 and 32.8 per cent in 2004.⁸⁵³ However, the current parliamentary gender gap is greater than in 2009, when women made up 44.5 per cent of MPs.⁸⁵⁴ The large proportion of female MPs in 2009 is in itself a direct result of the ANC's decision to impose 50/50 alternated lists at its 52nd National Congress in Polokwane in 2007.

CHALLENGING SILENCES AND RESTORING CONFLICT

This thesis has discussed the political liberation of women within the Swedish Social Democratic Party and the African National Congress of South Africa, from 1960 until 1994. It has argued that internationalism was key to their success: as a source of support and funding as well as a stage to develop policies away from overwhelmingly patriarchal national settings. Creating and steering political trends and discussions in international fora, and bolstered by the approval of others in the international community, these women gained a foot in the door of power and created environments conducive to their presence, abilities and voices.

To uncover the tensions generated by women's activism, the thesis has investigated the social constructions of gender and how these fluctuated over the period discussed. The thesis also adds strength to the argument that women have been actively removed from history while their contributions have been consciously silenced.⁸⁵⁵ One example of this is that as the political movements within which these women were organised came to support their specific policy positions, women's activism pre-dating

⁸⁵² In 2006, Sweden's parliament was at its most gender equal, with 184 male MPs to 165 female MPs. As of September 2014, the Swedish parliament has 197 male MPs to 152 female MPs. Statistiska centralbyrån 'Statistikdatabasen: Riksdagsledamöter efter region, parti och kön. Valår 1973 - 2014.

⁸⁵³ Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Women in National Parliaments: 25 December 1997', available at www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/classif251297.htm (accessed 19 April 2015); and 'Women in National Parliaments: 30 December 2006', available at www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/classif311206.htm (accessed 19 April 2015).

⁸⁵⁴ Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Women in National Parliaments: 30 November 2009'. Available at www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/classif301109.htm (accessed 19 April 2015).

⁸⁵⁵ See, e.g., Johnson 'Making History, Gendering Youth', pp. 243, 244, 246, 119, 120; Brady and Arnold *What Is Masculinity?*, p. 22; McClintock "'No Longer in a Future Heaven'", p. 116

official support was submerged into organisational records in which male voices remain the norm. Furthermore, women still remain unlikely to write their own histories or account for their own experiences in a public arena. Their silence is often personal, sometimes political. It is, however, not surprising that the only women to publish their stories are those still well regarded within their parties (e.g. Albertina Sisulu, Margot Wallström and Gertrud Sigurdsen) or those who seek to protect their own version of events that may be in conflict with mainstream interpretations, including that of their own party (e.g. Anna-Greta Leijon, Mona Sahlin, Mamphela Ramphele and Ulla Lindström). These silences stand in stark contrast to archival sources cited throughout this thesis, in which women's voices emerge loud and strong.

Neglected in public history, the silencing of women has — as discussed in chapter two — left a mark on public memorialisation of women's role in national politics. The march on Pretoria in 1956 is the subject of one of very few statues dedicated to women's political activism in South Africa. As discussed by Kim Miller, Sabine Marschall and Annie Coombes, it does not, however, depict the women leading the march, nor is it easy to access despite its promising placement at the Union Buildings in Pretoria.⁸⁵⁶ Meanwhile, the Swedish city of Malmö — which has a proud SAP heritage — does not commemorate a single female politician, but has statues of and streets named for the most important of the party's men. This is indicative of a larger omission of women from public memorialisation across Sweden.⁸⁵⁷

The roads to success for SAP and ANC women in 1994 were lined by conflict and frustration, with every appointment fought for and hard lessons learned along the way. By recovering this history, the thesis challenges national and organisational myth-making, within Sweden and SAP as well as South Africa and the ANC. It argues that the narratives of these political women's activists complicate organisational and national histories, which now emerge as oversimplified constructions of progress and unity. Women's attempts to increase their collective representation unveil the inner workings of mass-mobilising political organisations like the ANC and SAP. These have enjoyed

⁸⁵⁶ Miller 'Selective Silence and the Shaping of Memory in Post- Apartheid Visual Culture', pp. 295-317; Marschall 'Serving Male Agendas', pp. 1009-1033; Coombes *History After Apartheid*, pp. 105-115

⁸⁵⁷ These include P.A. Hansson, August Palm, Axel Danielsson and Henrik Menander, all of whom were born or active in Malmö. See, e.g., Malmö City Council's 'Konstkompassen': www.konstkompassen.se (accessed 9 June 2015); Guwallius, Kolbjörn 'Finn en kvinna' 14 December 2013: kolbjorn.se/2013/finn-en-kvinna/ (accessed 9 June 2015); Bäckström, Liv 'Fler statyer åt kvinnorna!' *Kommunalarbetaren* 21 August 2008 (available at www.ka.se/fler-statyer-at-kvinnorna, accessed 9 June 2015); Epstein, Lars 'Politisk strid om kvinnostaty' *Dagens Nyheter* 10 January 2013.

enormous support and loyalty through historic bonds to vast numbers of sympathisers and large lateral organisations feeding into the mother party. Movements of this size and scope are, however, vulnerable to ideological conflicts sparked by individual activists. Ideological differences have often been interpreted as dangerous schisms by the SAP and ANC: as political organisations, they need to express coherence and structural soundness to ensure popularity among the electorate and to be seen as credible and suitable national leaders. Instead of embracing a lack of consensus as a sign of democratic strength — a sign that all members are seen, heard, taken seriously and, most importantly, fully represented, conflicts have often been silenced or shut down. This can be seen in the debate about parental leave ahead of the 1976 general election in Sweden — as portrayed in chapter one — and in the discussions about the role of MK women in chapter four. It is also highly visible in the gender quota discussion in the early 1990s, which — as chapter five showed — was far from conflict-free. Conference and congress resolutions bind both SAP and the ANC to certain policies and goals, but these must be preceded by open discussion to allow all party members to represent and be represented by majority decisions. Unfortunately, both the ANC and SAP have a tendency to emphasise unity at the cost of discussions, and to endorse radicalism only when it seems key to the electorate. In 1972, Olof Palme turned ‘women’s issues’ into equality politics to give SAP an edge ahead of the general election; in 1976 he retaliated harshly when women’s activists bypassed party rules to force a parliamentary discussion about parental leave. Furthermore, it was not until the apartheid state crumbled that the ANC lent its full weight to calls for the creation of a non-sexist democracy as part of the struggle to unite and reconcile the South African nation.

The thesis has also made clear that ‘feminism’ is not a clear-cut, straight-forward concept but a set of strategies that can be applied to a multitude of political and/or private situations. SAP and ANC women were for a long time sceptical as to the use and benefit of feminist strategies, as feminism itself seemed to be the domain of a privileged white middle-class minority. However, towards the end of the 1980s and the early 1990s, both groups had clearly adopted feminism as a collective working tool, having adapted it to suit their own needs and those of the people they sought to represent. Nevertheless, another reason for their reluctance to become feminists was the reception of feminists within their political parties and societies. Women’s activists were for a long time perceived as an untrustworthy fifth column, which curbed their already

limited influence. Throughout the period covered by this thesis, feminism was variously seen as competing with nationalism, socialism, democracy and black consciousness. Like other political strategies and ideologies, an individual and personal understanding of feminism is required at all times, which causes rifts between party members who will have different interpretations of the phenomenon and its effects. Overt feminism was only possible in the 1990s as a new wave of radicalism was needed to rejuvenate SAP and as women were needed to confirm the ANC's claim to represent all South Africans. It was possible as feminism had been moulded to fit the pre-existing political narratives and ideologies of these organisations.

Meanwhile, stressing unity by smoothing over conflict subsequently impacts the writing of the organisations' histories. Again, covering up decades of tension preceding the decision, the implementation of quotas is now portrayed by both the ANC and SAP as obvious, natural steps that both parties took without dissent and opposition. In contrast to this stands this thesis' argument that historiographical understandings of the ANC and SAP need to be disconnected from the organisations' need to be portrayed as united, stable bodies. Key to this is the reinsertion of conflict into the organisations' histories.⁸⁵⁸ Inter-party arguments, discussions and debates are vital in order for these organisations to remain democratic, and for majority decisions to be made, supported and enforced. If silenced in hindsight, the agency and contribution of radical activists — regardless of their gender — is revoked.

This thesis has also identified another striking similarity that binds ANC and SAP together: the importance of re-radicalisation through generational rejuvenation, and the conflicts caused by generational overlaps. The ANCYL founders, for example, were perceived as radical in the 1940s, but in turn were surpassed by their BCM-influenced children in the 1960s and 1970s. Moreover, SAP women were trailblazing internationalists in the 1950s and 1960s, but considered old-fashioned by their younger successors in the 1970s and 1980s. In a recent paper on 'History and Politics', Geoff Eley referred to the persistence of 'grumpy generational incomprehension' throughout recent history.⁸⁵⁹ This incomprehension has been visible at regular intervals within ANC

⁸⁵⁸ See the discussion of this in the thesis introduction, pp. 20-21, and Nyzell "“Striden ägde rum i Malmö”", pp. 402, 405

⁸⁵⁹ Eley, Geoff 'History and Politics' Plenary at the History After Hobsbawm conference, Birkbeck, University of London, 1 May 2014. Available at backdoorbroadcasting.net/2014/05/geoff-eley-history-and-politics/

and SAP structures throughout the second half of the 20th century. As this thesis has shown, regular ideological and generational rejuvenation is essential in ensuring that large and/or influential parties are able to create a vision of the future that appeals to the electorate and supporters. Nevertheless, it invariably happens at the expense of a once radical older guard that does not always appreciate its consequences.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSNATIONALISM

The findings of this thesis are the result of comparative transnational research. By creating a window that separates yet connects the recent histories of Sweden and South Africa, SAP and the ANC, the specificities, similarities and differences emerge more strongly. Despite the many differences between Sweden and South Africa — a result of unique historical, social, cultural, political and economic factors — some striking similarities have emerged through this research. These indicate a connection or commonality across borders that point to the creation and impact of worldwide trends and patterns, which in turn allows these histories to break out of their nation-specific settings. One similarity is the pervasiveness of racism and misogyny, neither of which has disappeared in Sweden or South Africa despite the ground gained in 1994. Another is the cyclical mobilisation around radical policies. This is in part due to the generational rejuvenation explored above, but also a result of the impact of external factors such as electoral losses, economic or international crises. These have at times pushed women's quest for liberation below the surface for a decade as the mother party focuses on more 'urgent' issues. It is only in hindsight that the 1980s appear as a decade of radical feminist politics, in the wake of the successes of the early 1990s. At the time, SAP women's struggles were neglected as their party sought a solution to financial crises and dwindling electoral appeal, while ANC women's activism seemingly disappeared from view as attention was given to township rioting and the traumatising of the nation.⁸⁶⁰

The political activism portrayed across these chapters are not created in vacuums contained by national borders, but within a global context where people, goods and ideas cross borders. Throughout the decades discussed, the worldwide community of

⁸⁶⁰ Yvonne Hirdman recently made this point too, see Hirdman *Medan jag var ung*, p. 299

politicians and activists became increasingly connected. One underlying reason are the technological advances of the late 20th century, which made communication easier and international travel cheaper. Another is the role played by politicians and activists connecting across borders to support one another. As such, the thesis has traced the globalisation of political activism, adding to Håkan Thörn's earlier research on the topic.⁸⁶¹

Throughout this thesis, the importance of cross-border collaborations has been stressed. This is partially a result of the nature of the study as a comparative transnational project, infused by gender and postcolonial theory. However, the archival records and interviews with activists have placed an even greater emphasis on inter-, supra- and transnational activism than originally intended. They have revealed that cross-border activities have been of utmost importance to SAP and ANC, giving them platforms, connections, strategies and power at various points in their histories and careers. That was the case in the 1960s, when SAP women joined the diplomatic service and/or Socialist International platforms in order to get an outlet for political ambitions so frustrated at home, as discussed in chapter one. Chapter four, meanwhile, revealed that international contacts played a similar role in the 1980s, when the violent *com-tso-tso* era removed many women from the public anti-apartheid arena within South Africa. ANC-allied women relied on their comrades in exile and beyond to amplify their voices. Successes in international or transnational venues were also amplified by the increased visibility of women: SAP women's quota success at the Socialist International in the 1980s is an example of this, as was the creation of the UN Decade for Women in the 1970s. It is through the connection of histories across borders that these themes are given their rightful space.

As a project focused on women who made up a political elite, or who became a political elite, this thesis has discussed issues of political representation. It is therefore important to point out that the women featured here were not average members — or even average female members — of their parties. Nevertheless, they increasingly sought to represent both average members and average women through their expertise and privileged positions within the organisational hierarchy. By studying their quest for influence and power, this thesis confirms that political privilege can only be extended if

⁸⁶¹ See, e.g., Thörn 'The Meaning(s) of Solidarity', pp. 417-436

the influence of those already privileged is curbed. The right to vote is one example, first infringing on the privileges of monarch and aristocracy, later the bourgeoisie's influence and finally — as women were granted equal suffrage — that of working-class men. The point of this argument is not that women are automatically represented or even best served by other women in positions of power. However, it is vital that democratic structures look and act representative of the people they serve. A fair representation of social classes, women and minorities to break privileged, patriarchal and 'ethnic' holds on power are important factors in creating support for democratic structures and — ultimately — democracy itself.

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APPENDIX A

SWEDISH POLITICAL PARTIES (SAP OPPONENTS)

Högerpartiet/Moderata Samlingspartiet (H/M): A coalition with roots in conservative parliamentary groups in the 19th century, it was officially founded in 1904 and referred to as Högern or Högerpartiet (the Right, or the Right Party) from the 1930s until 1969, and subsequently Moderata Samlingspartiet (The Moderate Coalition Party). For a history of women in Högern/Moderata Samlingspartiet see Haglund, Ann-Catherine, Petersson, Ann-Marie & Ström-Billing, Inger (eds.) *Moderata pionjärer: Kvinnor i politiskt arbete 1900-2000* (Stockholm: Sällskapet för moderata kvinnors historia, 2004);

Folkpartiet (FP): a liberal party founded in 1934;

Bondepartiet/Centerpartiet (C): Founded in 1913, it was called Bondepartiet (The Farmers' Party) until 1957, and subsequently Centerpartiet (the Centre Party). For a history of Bondepartiet/Centerpartiet's female members, see Larsson, E., Svensson, M., Färjhage, J. *Kvinnor som gjort skillnad: centerrörelsens pionjärer* (Stockholm: Centerkvinnorna, 2008).

Sveriges Kommunistiska Parti/Vänsterpartiet Kommunisterna/Vänsterpartiet: The party has changed its name twice during the course of the 20th century: originally Sveriges Kommunistiska Parti (SKP) from 1921, it became Vänsterpartiet Kommunisterna (VPK) in 1967 and finally Vänsterpartiet (V) in 1990 when communism was removed from both name and manifesto.

Kristdemokraterna: The Christian Democrat party. Founded in 1964 as Kristen Demokratisk Samling (KDS), it changed its name to Kristdemokratiska Samhällspartiet (KdS) in 1987, and Kristdemokraterna (KD) in 1997.

Miljöpartiet de Gröna (Mp): Mp and SAP currently govern Sweden through a minority coalition, following the 2014 general elections. Founded in 1981, it entered parliament for the first time in 1988, and has remained in parliament since 1994.

Ny Demokrati: ‘New Democracy’, or NyD, served one term in parliament, 1991-1994, and was declared bankrupt in 2000. A more recent challenger is nationalist Sverigedemokraterna (Sweden Democrats) — founded in 1988 by a collection of racist and neo-Nazi groups — which has held parliamentary seats since 2010.

APPENDIX B

***SWEDISH GOVERNMENTS, 1932-1946*⁸⁶⁵**

P.A. HANSSON I: 1932-1936

SAP minority government

PEHRSSON I BRAMSTORP I: JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1936

Bondeförbundet minority government

P. A. HANSSON II: 1936-1939

SAP-Bondeförbundet coalition

P. A. HANSSON III: 1939-1945

A wartime unity government with the bourgeois bloc: agrarian Bondepartiet, liberal party Folkpartiet and conservative party coalition Högern

*P. A. HANSSON IV: 1945-1946*⁸⁶⁶

SAP minority government

⁸⁶⁵ Regeringskansliet 'Sveriges regeringar under 100 år'

⁸⁶⁶ Hansson's death.

APPENDIX C

SWEDISH FEMALE CABINET MINISTERS, 1946-1994⁸⁶⁷

ERLANDER I: 1946-1951

Karin Kock-Lindberg: deputy minister of economical issues, 1947-48; minister of rations 1948-1949;

Hildur Nygren: minister of education, March-October 1951.

ERLANDER II: 1951-1957

Ulla Lindström: deputy minister of family policy, consumer issues, development aid and immigration.

ERLANDER III: 1957-1969

Ulla Lindström: deputy minister of family policy, consumer issues, development aid and immigration, 1957-1966;

Alva Myrdahl: deputy minister of disarmament and churches, 1966-1969

Camilla Odhnoff: deputy minister of family, youth and immigration policy, 1966-1969.

PALME I: 1969-1973

Alva Myrdahl: deputy minister of disarmament and churches, 1969-1973;

Camilla Odhnoff: deputy minister of family, youth and immigration policy, 1969-1973;

Gertrud Sigurdsen: deputy minister of development aid, 1973-1976;

Anna-Greta Leijon: deputy labour market minister, 1973-1976;

Lena Hjelm-Wallén: deputy minister of schools, 1974-1976.

⁸⁶⁷ Regeringskansliet 'Sveriges regeringar under 100 år'

FÄLLDIN I: 1976-1978

Karin Söder: minister of foreign affairs (Centerpartiet);
Elvy Olsson: minister of housing (Centerpartiet);
Ingegerd Troedsson: deputy healthcare minister (Moderata Samlingspartiet);
Britt Mogård: deputy minister of schools (Moderata Samlingspartiet);
Birgit Friggebo: deputy housing minister (Folkpartiet).

ULLSTEN: 1978-1979

Birgit Friggebo: housing minister (Folkpartiet);
Anitha Bondestam: minister of communications (Folkpartiet),
Hedda Lindahl: deputy minister of healthcare (Folkpartiet);
Marianne Wahlberg: deputy minister of salary policy (Folkpartiet);
Birgit Rodhe: deputy schools minister (Folkpartiet);
Eva Winther: deputy equality and immigration minister (Folkpartiet).

FÄLLDIN II: 1979-1981

Birgit Friggebo: housing minister (Folkpartiet);
Karin Söder: minister of social affairs (Centerpartiet);
Elisabet Holm: deputy healthcare minister (Moderata Samlingspartiet);
Britt Mogård: deputy minister of schools (Moderata Samlingspartiet);
Karin Andersson: deputy minister of equality and immigration (Centerpartiet).

FÄLLDIN III: 1981-1982

Birgit Friggebo: housing minister (Folkpartiet);
Karin Söder: minister of social affairs (Centerpartiet);
Karin Andersson: deputy minister of equality and immigration (Centerpartiet);
Karin Ahrland: deputy minister of healthcare (Folkpartiet);
Ulla Tillander: deputy minister of schools and youth policy (Centerpartiet).

PALME II: 1982-1986

Gertrud Sigurdsen: deputy healthcare minister 1982-1985; minister of social affairs 1985-1986;

Lena Hjelm-Wallén: minister of education, 1982-1985; deputy development aid minister, 1985-1986;

Birgitta Dahl: deputy energy minister;

Anna-Greta Leijon: labour market minister;

Anita Gradin: minister of equality and immigration.

CARLSSON I: 1986-1990

Anna-Greta Leijon: labour market and equality minister, 1986-1987; minister of justice, 1987-1988;

Lena Hjelm-Wallén: deputy development aid minister;

Anita Gradin: deputy equality and immigration minister, 1986; deputy foreign trade minister, 1986-1990;

Gertrud Sigurdsen: minister of social affairs, 1986-1989;

Birgitta Dahl: minister of the environment and energy;

Ingela Thalén: labour market and equality minister, 1987-1990; minister of social affairs, 1990;

Laila Freivalds: minister of justice, 1988-1990;

Margot Wallström: deputy church, consumer and youth policy minister, 1988-1990;

Maj-Lis Lööv: deputy equality and immigration minister, 1989-1990;

Mona Sahlin: labour market minister, 1990.

CARLSSON II: 1990-1991

Laila Freivalds: minister of justice;

Lena Hjelm-Wallén: deputy development aid minister;

Anita Gradin: deputy foreign trade minister;

Ingela Thalén: minister of social affairs;

Birgitta Dahl: minister of energy, 1990; minister of the environment 1990-1991;

Mona Sahlin: labour market minister;
Maj-Lis Lööw: deputy equality and immigration minister;
Margot Wallström: deputy church, consumer and youth policy minister.

BILDT: 1991-1994

Gun Hellsvik: minister of justice (Moderata Samlingspartiet);
Reidun Laurén: deputy minister of justice (independent);
Margareta af Ugglas: minister of foreign affairs (Moderata Samlingspartiet);
Anne Wibbe: finance minister (Folkpartiet);
Beatrice Ask: deputy schools minister (Moderata Samlingspartiet);
Inger Davidsson: minister of social affairs, consumer issues, church and youth policy (Kristdemokraterna);
Görel Thurdin: deputy minister of the environment, 1994; deputy minister of planning, 1991-1994 (Centerpartiet);
Birgit Friggebo: minister of housing, 1991-1994; minister of equality, 1991-1993; minister of culture and immigration 1991-1994 (Folkpartiet).

CARLSSON III: 1994-1996

Mona Sahlin: deputy prime minister, 1994-1995;
Laila Freivalds: minister of justice;
Lena Hjelm-Wallén: minister of foreign affairs;
Ingela Thalén: minister of social affairs;
Anna Hedborg: deputy minister of social insurance;
Ylva Johansson: deputy schools minister;
Margareta Winberg: minister of agriculture;
Anna Lindh: minister of the environment;
Margot Wallström: minister of culture;
Ines Uusmann: minister of communication;
Marita Ulvskog: minister of social affairs, church, sports, equality, youth, and consumer policy.

APPENDIX D

BIOGRAPHIES

Aggett, Neil 1953-1982. A Kenya-born doctor and trade union organiser, Aggett had moved to South Africa in the 1960s. He worked in black-only hospitals, and became an organiser for the African Food and Canning Workers' Union. In late 1981, Aggett was arrested; he died in detention on 5 February 1982, allegedly from suicide. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission later held his interrogating officers responsible for the torture that led to Aggett taking his life.⁸⁶⁸

Ahrland, Karin Born in 1931, Ahrland is a lawyer by training and served on the Supreme Administrative Court in the 1960s. She was the chair of the Fredrika Bremer Association 1970-1976 and a board member of the International Alliance of Women in the 1970s. She served as deputy chair and chair of the government's equality commission 1976-1981, as a Folkpartiet MP 1976-1989 and deputy minister of social affairs and healthcare 1981-1982. She was Sweden's ambassador to New Zealand 1993-1995.⁸⁶⁹

Alexander Simons, Ray 1913-2004. Born in Latvia, Alexander Simons became a member of the Communist Party at the age of 13, arriving in South Africa in 1929. She joined the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) on her arrival, serving as its secretary 1934-1935. She helped found the Food and Canning Workers Union (FCWU) in 1941, a non-racial trade union, and was a founding member of FEDSAW. She went into exile in 1965, settling first in Zambia.⁸⁷⁰

Andersson, Karin 1918-2012. An MP 1970-1985 and general secretary of Centerkvinnorna — Centerpartiet's women's organisation — 1966-1979, Andersson served as ministry of equality and immigration 1979-1982.⁸⁷¹

Ax:son Johnson, Antonia Born in 1943, Ax:son Johnson became the chairman of the vast Sweden-based family-owned Axel Johnson Group in 1982.⁸⁷²

Baard, Frances 1901-1997. A domestic servant and teacher, Beard became a trade unionist and ANC Women's League leader in the 1950s. She served on the NEC of FEDSAW and was involved in the drafting of the Freedom Charter in 1955 and the march on Pretoria in 1956. She was a Treason Trial defendant, repeatedly imprisoned

⁸⁶⁸ South African History Online 'Dr Neil Hudson Aggett', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/dr-neil-hudson-aggett (accessed 18 July 2014)

⁸⁶⁹ Frime, Monica 'Folkpartisten Karin Ahland fyller 75 år' *Helsingborgs Dagblad*, 18 July 2006

⁸⁷⁰ South African History Online 'Ray Alexander Simons', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/ray-alexander-simons (accessed 29 June 2015)

⁸⁷¹ Gunnarson, Doris 'Karin Andersson har avlidit' *Hallands Nyheter*, 26 July 2012

⁸⁷² 'The World's Billionaires 2015: #283 Antonia Johnson' *Forbes*, available at www.forbes.com/profile/antonia-johnson/ (accessed 29 June 2015)

and sentenced to five years in 1964 for ANC activities. Banned to Mabopane near Pretoria on her release she worked with then the UDF.⁸⁷³

Blix, Hans Born in 1928, Blix is a lawyer specialising in international law. Having served in the foreign office 1962-1978, he served as foreign minister in 1978-1979. He led Linje 2 in the nuclear power referendum in 1980 before becoming head of the International Atomic Energy Agency 1981-1997. He chaired United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission 2000-2003 and later the International Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission.⁸⁷⁴

Boesak, Allan Born in 1945, Boesak was ordained at 23 and studied for a PhD in ethics in the Netherlands and US in the 1970s. In 1981, he was elected chairman of the recently founded Alliance of Black Reformed Christians in Southern Africa, which rejected the use of religion as cultural or racist ideology. Fundamental to the founding of the UDF in 1983, he was a very public figure in South Africa during the 1980s. In 1999, Boesak was convicted of theft and fraud and sentenced to prison. He received a presidential pardon and was released in 2001.⁸⁷⁵

Bondestam, Anitha Born in 1941, Bondestam was a public prosecutor and legal expert at the ministry of justice before becoming a minister in 1978-1979. She served in expert positions in the equality commission and the equality board.

Botha, P.W. 1916-2006. A National Party MP from 1948, Botha became the minister of defence in 1966, and succeeded John Vorster as prime minister in 1978. In 1984, Botha became the first state president of South Africa. He served in that capacity until the autumn of 1989.

Branting, Hjalmar 1860-1925. A founder of SAP in 1889, Branting served as the party's chairman from 1907-1925. He was the first SAP MP to be elected, in 1896, and served as prime minister March-October 1920, October 1922-April 1923 and October 1924-January 1925. Branting awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1921 along with the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Christian Lange.⁸⁷⁶

Bunting, Brian 1920-2008. Expelled from parliament for being a communist, and a defendant in the Treason Trial, Bunting was a newspaper editor who went into exile in 1963. Settling in London, he was a very influential ANC/SACP member, and became an MP in the election of 1994.⁸⁷⁷

Buthelezi, Mangosuthu Born in 1928 into a royal Zulu family, Buthelezi studied at the University of Fort Hare in the 1940s. A clerk in the Bantu Administrations in the

⁸⁷³ South African History Online 'Frances Baard', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/frances-baard (accessed 29 June 2015)

⁸⁷⁴ International Atomic Energy Agency 'Biography of Dr Hans Blix', available at www.iaea.org/about/dg/blix/biography (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁷⁵ South African History Online 'Reverend Allan Aubrey Boesak', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/reverend-allan-aubrey-boesak (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁷⁶ nobelprize.org 'Hjalmar Branting — Biographical', available at www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1921/branting-bio.html (accessed 16 June 2015).

⁸⁷⁷ Herbstein, Denis 'Brian Bunting' *The Guardian* 9 July 2008

1950s, he later became a Bantustan Homeland leader and as such considered an apartheid regime puppet by the ANC. He founded the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) in 1975, which was embroiled in violent conflict with the ANC in the 1990s. He served as minister of home affairs from 1994-2004 under presidents Mandela and Mbeki.⁸⁷⁸

Carolus, Cheryl Born in 1958, Carolus was a leading member of the United Democratic Front in the 1980s, and a figurehead for internal anti-apartheid resistance. She was a founding member of United Women's Organisation in the same decade, and the general secretary of FEDSAW from 1987. Carolus became a member of ANC's NEC in 1990, and a member of its negotiation team in 1991-1994. In 1998, Carolus was appointed High Commissioner in London. She is a co-founder of Peotona Capital, and serves on boards in various sectors.⁸⁷⁹

Chikane, Moss A UDF activist and Delmas Treason Trial defendant, Chikane was appointed the national co-ordinator of the National Co-ordinating Committee for the Return of Exiles (NCCR) in 1990.⁸⁸⁰

Dahl, Birgitta Born in 1937, Dahl served as an MP from 1969 to 2002, as Minister for Energy Affairs 1982-1990, and as Minister for the Environment 1986-1991 before becoming the first female Speaker of the Swedish Parliament 1994-2002.

De Klerk, F.W. Born in 1936, De Klerk worked as a lawyer before being elected to parliament for the National Party in 1972. He was a cabinet minister from 1979, and succeeded P.W. Botha as NP leader and South African president in 1989. He is credited with the commencement of serious negotiations with the ANC leadership at that time, which hastened the pace of reform that brought apartheid to an end.⁸⁸¹

Diseko, Nozipho Joyce Born in 1956, Diseko became a BCM activist in the 1970s while working as a teacher. She left South Africa in 1978 and studied for her BA and DPhil at Somerville College, Oxford. The chair of the ANC mission in the UK and Ireland 1988-1991, she was appointed head of the Swedish mission in 1991 and served there until 31 May 1994. In 1994, she became Chief Director Policy Planning in the South African Department of Foreign Affairs, and has served as an ambassador since 1996.⁸⁸²

Dlamini-Zuma, Nkosazana Born in 1949, Dlamini Zuma was elected deputy president of SASO in 1976. Fleeing into exile, she became a medical doctor in England and lived in Swaziland for a few years (where she married Jacob Zuma, the current president of South Africa). In 1985, Dlamini-Zuma returned to the UK. She served as Minister of Health in Nelson Mandela's cabinet from 1994-1999, before becoming

⁸⁷⁸ South African History Online 'Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/mangosuthu-gatsha-buthelezi (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁷⁹ South African History Online 'Cheryl Carolus', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/cheryl-carolus (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁸⁰ 'Moss Chikane In The Firing Line' *Mail and Guardian*, 23 September 1994

⁸⁸¹ 'F.W. De Klerk' *Encyclopedia Britannica*, available at www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/153615/FW-de-Klerk (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁸² 'Curriculum Vitae of Her Excellency Ms. Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of South Africa and Chairperson of the G-77 — Vienna Chapter 1998'

Minister of Foreign Affairs in the cabinets of Thabo Mbeki and Kgalema Molanthe 1999-2009, and Minister of Home Affairs 2009-2012. As of 2012, she is the African Union Commission chairperson.⁸⁸³

Duarte, Jessie Born in 1953, Duarte was a member of the Federation of Transvaal Women (FEDTRAW) and a close collaborator of Albertina Sisulu. She became a special assistant to Nelson Mandela on his release from prison in 1990, and served as a member of the provincial cabinet of Gauteng before becoming the ANC spokesperson and, in 2012, the organisation's Deputy Secretary General.⁸⁸⁴

Engman, Gerd Born in 1947, Engman was a substitute MP at various points from 1983 to 1989.⁸⁸⁵

Feldt, Kjell-Olof Born in 1931, Feldt served as an MP 1971-1990; minister of trade 1970-1975; deputy finance minister 1975-1976, and finance minister 1982-1990. He was a member of the General Council of Riksbanken (the Swedish central bank) 1994-1998.

First, Ruth 1925-1982. The daughter of Jewish immigrants from Latvia who were founding members of CPSA, First was a lifelong member of the party and its successor, SACP. A journalist and academic, she was banned several times in the early decades of apartheid, and was a defendant in the 1956-1961 Treason Trial. In 1964, she went into exile — settling first in London and, in 1978, Maputo, Mozambique. She was killed by a letter bomb in her office at the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane in Maputo on 17 August 1982.⁸⁸⁶

Freivalds, Laila Born in 1942, Freivalds came to Sweden as a refugee from Latvia via Germany in 1947. She served as a judge before working in various capacities at the Swedish Consumer Agency, including a stint as Consumer Ombudsman. She served as justice minister 1988-1991 and 1994-2000.

Friggebo, Birgit Born in 1941, Friggebo served on Stockholm City's social welfare board and county council before being elected to parliament. She served as an MP 1979-1982 and 1985-1997. She was the deputy housing minister 1978-1982, and minister of culture, immigration and equality 1991-1994.⁸⁸⁷

Ginwala, Frene Born 1932, Ginwala was one of the earliest ANC exiles in 1960, setting up an exit network for others. She was a lawyer and a journalist, and studied for a PhD in history at Oxford. In the 1980s, she was the head of the Political

⁸⁸³ South African History Online 'Nkosazana Clarice Dlamini-Zuma' *South African History Online*, available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/nkosazana-clarice-dlamini-zuma (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁸⁴ 'Jessie Yasmin Duarte' *Who's Who Southern Africa*, available at whoswho.co.za/jessie-duarte-2928 (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁸⁵ Sveriges Riksdag 'Gerd Engman: past and present members', available at www.riksdagen.se/en/Members-and-parties/Members/Ledamoter/Engman-Gerd-0978492597607/?hist=true (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁸⁶ South African History Online 'Ruth Heloise First', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/ruth-heloise-first (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁸⁷ Sveriges Riksdag 'Birgit Friggebo: aktuella och tidigare uppdrag', available at www.riksdagen.se/sv/ledamoter-partier/Hitta-ledamot/Ledamoter/Friggebo-Birgit-0841802782704/ (accessed 29 June 2015).

Research Unit in the Office of ANC President Oliver Tambo. She served as the Speaker of the National Assembly of South Africa 1994-2004.⁸⁸⁸

Gradin, Anita Born in 1933, Gradin served as an MP 1969-1992, was appointed deputy leader of SSKF in 1975 and became an MEP and EU Commissioner in 1995. Her age made her a borderline member of the younger generation, but her alliances and policies aligned her with younger colleagues.

Gumede, Archie 1914-1998. Gumede joined the ANC in 1949, having encountered older leaders like Z.K. Matthews as a student at the University of Fort Hare. Gumede was charged with high treason alongside Chief Albert Luthuli in 1952; the charges were dropped. He became a member of the Liberal Party in the 1950s, but continued to work for the ANC. Banned for five years in 1963, he became an attorney in 1967 and established a law firm in 1970. He participated in the foundation of the UDF in 1983, and became one of its three presidents — the only not to be banned or in prison at the time. Gumede was part of the ANC's negotiations delegation in 1990, and became an MP in 1994.⁸⁸⁹

Hjelm-Wallén, Lena Hjelm-Wallén served as an MP 1969-2002 and became the youngest ever cabinet minister in 1974 when she was appointed Minister without Portfolio (schools and education). She also served as Minister of Education 1982-1985, Minister of Aid 1985-1991 and Minister of Foreign Affairs 1994-1998, and was appointed Deputy Prime Minister in 1990 and 1998-2002.⁸⁹⁰

Holm, Elisabet 1917-1997. A nurse, Holm served Moderata Samlingspartiet as a municipal and county politician before becoming a minister in Fälldin's second cabinet. She was the deputy chair of M's women's organisation 1972-1978.⁸⁹¹

Joseph, Helen 1905-1992. An immigrant from England and King's College London graduate, Joseph arrived in South Africa in 1931. A social worker, she began working for the Garment Workers' Union in the 1950s, and became a founding member of the Congress of Democrats shortly after. She was a FEDSAW founder, a Treason Trial defendant and placed under house arrest in 1962. She served lengthy banning stints during the apartheid era.⁸⁹²

Kuzwayo, Ellen 1914-2006. A women's activist and community organiser, Kuzwayo was a longstanding member of the ANC. A teacher, she left the educational system in

⁸⁸⁸ South African History Online 'Dr. Frene Noshir Ginwala', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/dr-frene-noshir-ginwala (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁸⁹ South African History Online 'Archibald Gumede', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/archibald-gumede (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁹⁰ Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law 'Lena Hjelm-Wallén', available at rwi.lu.se/about/board/lena-hjelm-wallen/ (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁹¹ Haglund, Ann-Catherine 'Elisabet Holm 1917-1997' in Haglund, A-C., Peterson, A-M. & Ström-Billing, I. *Moderata pionjärer: Kvinnor i politiskt arbete 1900-2000* (Stockholm: Sällskapet för moderata kvinnors historia, 2004), pp. 324-343

⁸⁹² South African History Online 'Helen Joseph', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/helen-joseph (accessed 29 June 2015).

the 1950s in protest against Bantu Education, and retrained as a social worker. Kuzwayo was elected MP in 1994 and served until 1999.⁸⁹³

Larsson, Allan Born in 1938, Larsson was a journalist and rose through party ranks through trade union employment. He worked alongside Anna-Greta Leijon at the labour market board in the 1970s, serving as its head from 1983 until 1990. In 1990, Larsson was appointed minister of finance following the resignation of Carlsson's first cabinet. After 1995, Larsson served the EU Commission.⁸⁹⁴

Leijon, Anna-Greta Born in 1939, Leijon served as an MP 1973-1990 and was appointed Minister without Portfolio (labour and immigration policy) 1973-76; Minister of Labour 1982-1987; and Minister of Justice 1987-1988.

Lekota, Mosiua ('Terror') Born in 1948, Lekota became politically active at the University of the North in the early 1970s. He joined SASO and became a full-time organiser for the organisation in 1973. In 1974, he was arrested, charged under the terrorism act and sentenced to six years on Robben Island. Released in 1982, he became the publicity secretary of the UDF in 1983. He was arrested in 1984 and 1985, charged with high treason in the Delmas Trial. Found guilty in 1989, he was acquitted on appeal. In 1991, he became a member of ANC's NEC, inserted as premier of the Free State 1994-1997. He became the first chair of the National Council of Provinces 1997-1999, and served as Minister of Defence 1999-2008. In 2008, Lekota left the ANC and founded the Congress of the People (COPE) of which he is the president.⁸⁹⁵

Lindahl, Hedda 1919-2007. A county council politician for Folkpartiet, Lindahl was not an MP and served as deputy healthcare minister 1978-1979.⁸⁹⁶

Lindh, Anna Born in 1957 Lindh served as MP 1982-2003; SSU chair 1984-1990; environmental minister 1994-1998 and as foreign minister from 1998 until her murder in 2003.⁸⁹⁷

Lööw, Maj-Lis Born in 1936, Lööw served as an MP in 1976 and 1979-1995; as SSKF chair 1981-1990; as deputy labour minister 1989-1991 and as an MEP 1995-1999.⁸⁹⁸

Mabuza, Lindiwe Born in 1938, Mabuza went into exile in the early 1960s, spending time in the US before joining ANC's Radio Freedom as a journalist in 1975. She also worked for ANC Women's Section journal *Voice of Women* before becoming the ANC's Chief Representative in Sweden 1979-1987 and in the US 1989-1994. She

⁸⁹³ South African History Online 'Noseng Ellen Kate Khuzwayo', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/noseng-ellen-kate-khuzwayo (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁹⁴ Larsson, Allan 'My CV' — available at allanlarsson.wordpress.com/about/ (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁹⁵ South African History Online 'Mosiua Patrick "Terror" Lekota', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/mosiua-patrick-terror-lekota (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁹⁶ Molin, Björn 'Hedda Lindahl' *Nationalencyklopedin*, available at www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/lang/hedda-lindahl (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁹⁷ Anna Lindhs Minnesfond 'Anna Lindh: biografi', available at www.annalindhsmminnesfond.se/om-anna-lindh/biografi/ (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁸⁹⁸ Sveriges Riksdag 'Maj Lis Lööw', available at www.riksdagen.se/sv/ledamoter-partier/Hitta-ledamot/Ledamoter/Lw-Maj-Lis-0153549892302/ (accessed 29 June 2015).

was appointed ambassador to Germany 1995-1999, and later served as High Commissioner in London.⁸⁹⁹

Machel, Samora 1933-1986. A Mozambiquan resistance leader in the fight against the Portuguese empire, Machel was a key figure in FRELIMO — the socialist-tinged liberation movement. He was the first president of Mozambique on independence in 1975, and served until killed in an airplane crash in 1986. The crash has been variously described as an accident and assassination.⁹⁰⁰

Madikizela-Mandela, Winnie Born in 1936, Madikizela-Mandela rose to prominence as the second wife of Nelson Mandela after his imprisonment in the early 1960s. A social worker by training, Madikizela-Mandela became an ANC member in 1950s before marrying Mandela in 1958. He spent 26 years of their marriage as a prisoner on Robben Island, while Madikizela-Mandela was continually banned and harassed by security police. She sympathised with BCM movements and was banned to Brandfort in the Orange Free State in 1977. In 1986, she returned to Soweto and became involved in the township violence. Her personal guard - the Mandela United Football Club — and Madikizela-Mandela were implicated in the death of a young boy, Stompie Seipei in 1989. She was elected to ANC's NEC in 1991, separated from Mandela in 1992, and found guilty of the kidnap and murder of Seipei in 1992. She served as president of ANCWL 1993-2003.⁹⁰¹

Maharaj, Satyandranath ('Mac') Born in 1935, Maharaj studied at the University of Natal before becoming the editor of the *New Age* in 1956. Becoming active in the underground ANC network, he was arrested in 1964 and convicted of sabotage. Serving 12 years in prison on Robben island, he was released in December 1976 and left for the ANC exile mission in Lusaka in July 1977. He was elected to the ANC's NEC in 1985, and worked underground in South Africa between 1987 and 1990 as part of Operation Vula. A member of SACP's central committee, he was also a member of the ANC's delegation at CODESA and later served as a minister of transport until 1999.⁹⁰²

Mahlangu, Solomon 1956-1979. Mahlangu left South Africa in the aftermath of the Soweto Uprisings in 1976 and joined the Umkhonto we Sizwe in Angola. Returning to South Africa in 1977, he was arrested and tried for murder and terrorism. Executed in 1979, Mahlangu was hailed as a martyr by the anti-apartheid movement.⁹⁰³

Makana, Simon (?-2004). Makana went into exile in 1963, studying in Moscow before returning to Morogoro and Lusaka where he worked in the Secretary General's Office and the then ANC Department of Intelligence and Security. He later headed

⁸⁹⁹ Liberation Africa: 'Interview with Lindiwe Mabuza' 14 March 1996, available at www.liberationafrica.se/intervystories/interviews/mabuza/?by-name=1 (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁰⁰ South African History Online 'Samora Machel', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/samora-machel (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁰¹ South African History Online 'Winnie Madikizela-Mandela', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/winnie-madikizela-mandela (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁰² South African History Online 'Satyandranath "Mac" Maharaj', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/satyandranath-mac-ragunanan-maharaj (accessed 29 June 2015)

⁹⁰³ South African History Online 'Solomon Kalushi Mahlangu'

the ANC Moscow Mission as an ANC Chief Representative. Makana was the South African ambassador to Russia from 1996 and was the ambassador to Vietnam when he died in 2004.⁹⁰⁴

Malm, Stig Born in 1942, Malm was a member of the Swedish Metal Workers Union (Metall) before being elected chairman of LO in 1983. He served the organisation for 10 years, resigning in 1993 as a result of the scandal he caused when using derogatory language about women's activists.

Manicom, Linzi A South African women's activist and academic who went into exile in Tanzania, London and Canada, Manicom has published extensively on feminist theory.

Matlou, Rebecca see Mthembu-Mahanyele, Sankie

Manzini, Mavivi (also known as Mavivi Myakayaka-Manzini). Born in Alexandra in 1956, Manzini became a black consciousness activist and ANC activists in the 1970s, and went into exile after being detained in 1976. She was elected an MP in 1994.⁹⁰⁵

Mbeki, Govan 1910-2001. A graduate from Fort Hare University, Mbeki worked as a journalist while rising within the ranks of the ANC and SACP. He was imprisoned for terrorism and treason on Robben Island 1964-1987. He served as deputy president of the South African Senate 1994-1997 and in its successor — the National Council of Provinces — 1997-1999.⁹⁰⁶

Mbeki, Zanele Born Dlamini, Mbeki trained as a social worker and moved to London in the mid-1960s. There, she met Thabo Mbeki, who she married in 1974. Like all weddings within the ANC exile mission, it was approved by the organisation. In the late 1970s, Mbeki ran the Africa offices of the International University Education Fund in Lusaka. She was the first lady of South Africa 1999-2008. She is very involved in the financial empowerment of South African women.⁹⁰⁷

Mbete-Kgositsile, Baleka Born in 1949, Mbete (who was known by her married name, Kgositsile, from the late 1970s to the early 1990s) trained as a teacher before becoming active in black consciousness organisations in the 1970s. She went into exile just before the Soweto Uprisings of 1976. She has held high offices within the ANC, including serving as its national chairperson. She was previously the deputy

⁹⁰⁴ Department of International Relations & Cooperation, South Africa 'Statement on the Death of South African Ambassador to Vietnam, Simon Makana', available at www.dfa.gov.za/docs/2004/viet0216.htm (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁰⁵ South African History Online 'Mavivi Myakayaka-Manzini', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/mavivi-myakayaka-manzini (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁰⁶ South African History Online 'Govan Mbeki', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/govan-mbeki (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁰⁷ 'Zanele Mbeki' *Who's Who Southern Africa* — available at whoswho.co.za/zanele-mbeki-5563; South African History Online 'Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/thabo-mvuyelwa-mbeki (accessed 29 June 2015).

president of South Africa, and the speaker of the national assembly of South Africa since May 2014.⁹⁰⁸

Meli, Francis 1942-1990. Meli studied in the German Democratic Republic before becoming the first political commissar of the ANC/MK camp at Novo Catengue in Angola. He also edited *Sechaba*.⁹⁰⁹

Mlangeni, June ANC Women's Section activist and wife of Robben Island prisoner Andrew Mlangeni (b. 1925).

Modise, Joe 1929-2001. Modise joined ANCYL in 1947, campaigning against the removal of residents under the Group Areas Act and introduction of Bantu Education. He played a key role in MK, and went into exile in 1963 to evade detection and arrest. He served as a commander of MK from 1965 to 1984, and was the subject of the Hani Memorandum in 1969. Modise served as Nelson Mandela's Minister of Defence 1994-1996.⁹¹⁰

Modise, Thandi Born in 1959, Modise joined the ANC in exile after the 1976 Soweto Uprisings. She became an MK cadre in Angola, and worked as a political commissar in the camps. In 1978, she returned to South Africa as an underground operative, but was arrested in 1979 and in prison until 1988. She served as deputy secretary-general of the ANC 2007-2012, premier of the North West 2010-2014, and is the chair of the National Council of Provinces since 2014.⁹¹¹

Mogård, Britt 1922-2012. An MP from 1969 until 1983, Mogård was also the chair of Moderata kvinnoförbundet — M's women's organisation — 1976-1978. She served as deputy schools minister 1976-1978 and 1979-1981.⁹¹²

Molefe, Popo Born in 1952, Molefe participated in the Soweto Uprisings of 1976, and was a founding member of the Azanian People's Organisation in 1978. Leaving AZAPO in 1981, he was a founding member of the UDF and involved in the Soweto Civic Organisation. A defendant in the Delmas Trial, he was sentenced to 10 years. The conviction was overturned in 1989, and Molefe became a member of the ANC.⁹¹³

⁹⁰⁸ South African History Online 'Baleka Mbete-Kgositsile', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/baleka-mbete-kgositsile (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁰⁹ Ellis, S. & Sechaba, T. *Comrades Against Apartheid: The ANC & the South African Communist Party in Exile* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), p. 88

⁹¹⁰ South African History Online 'Johannes (Joe) Modise', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/johannes-joe-modise (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹¹¹ South African History Online 'Thandi Modise', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/thandi-modise (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹¹² Petersson, Ann-Marie 'Britt Mogård: några biografiska data', available at moderatakvinnorshistoria.se/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/17-Britt-Mogård---några-biografiska-data-Ann-Marie-Peterssoni.pdf (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹¹³ South African History Online 'Popo Molefe', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/pop-molefe (accessed 29 June 2015).

Moloto, Bakone Justice Born in 1944, Moloto is the son of Ellen Kuzwayo. A lawyer and judge, currently at the International Crime Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia at the Hague.⁹¹⁴

Mompati, Ruth 1925-2015. Mompati went into exile in 1962. She served as ANC Chief Representative in London in 1981-1982, as an MP 1994-1996 and Ambassador to Switzerland 1996-2000.⁹¹⁵

Mophosho, Florence 1921-1985. A domestic worker and factory worker who joined the ANC around the time of the Defiance Campaign in the early 1950s, Mophosho was instrumental in organising the Congress of the People, which adopted the Freedom Charter in 1955. She was a very influential women's organiser, too, through FEDSAW and the Alexander Bus Boycott Committee. Banned in 1964, she went into exile and became the ANC's representative at WIDF's headquarters in Berlin. In 1969, she participated in the Morogoro Conference, and was elected to serve on ANC's NEC in 1975. She was the head of the Women's Section from Morogoro until her death in 1985.⁹¹⁶

Motsepe, Rose The Women's Section representative in Benelux.⁹¹⁷

Motsoaledi, Caroline (?-2014) ANC Women's Section activist; FEDSAW veteran and wife of Robben Island prisoner Elias Motsoaledi.

Mpetha, Oscar 1909-1994. A trade unionist in Cape Town, Mpetha helped organise the Food and Canning Workers' Union in the 1940s, becoming its general secretary in 1951. He joined the ANC and detained several times before being convicted of terrorism and the incitement of a riot and sentenced to five years in prison in 1988, most of which was served in a prison hospital. He was released in October 1989, having been elected UDF co-president in absentia in 1983.⁹¹⁸

Mthembi-Mahanyele, Sankie Born in 1951, Mthembi was an administrative officer at the ANC mission to Sweden and the Nordic countries, and later became Deputy Secretary of International Affairs and a Minister of Housing. She preceded Thandi Modise as Deputy Secretary General of the ANC in the mid-2000s.⁹¹⁹

Mtintso, Thenjiwe Born in 1950, Mtintso was a leading member of BCM-inspired student organisation SASO in the 1970s and a notable journalist. Having been

⁹¹⁴ International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia 'Biographical Note: Judge Bakone Justice Moloto, South Africa', available at www.icty.org/x/file/About/Chambers/judges_bios_en/PJ_Moloto_Bio_en.pdf (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹¹⁵ South African History Online 'Ruth Mompati', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/ruth-mompati (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹¹⁶ South African History Online 'Florence Mophosho', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/florence-mophosho (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹¹⁷ Mayibuye: ANC Lusaka, MCH01-7.1 'Report on preparatory meeting for the International Conference on Women and Apartheid', Brussels 26-27 January 1982

⁹¹⁸ South African History Online 'Oscar Mpetha', www.sahistory.org.za/people/oscar-mpetha (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹¹⁹ Liberation Africa: 'Interview with Sankie Mthembi-Mahanyele (aka Rebecca Matlou)' 7 September 1995, available at www.liberationafrica.se/intervstories/interviews/mthembi/?by-name=1 (accessed 29 June 2015).

imprisoned under the Terrorism Act, she escaped into exile in 1978, becoming a commander of the MK and an important member of the ANC in exile. Mtintso was a member of the ANC's negotiation team during the transition era, and became an MP in 1994. In 1998, she became the Deputy Secretary General of the ANC. She has also been an ambassador to Cuba and Italy.⁹²⁰

Mxenge, Griffiths 1935-1981. A lawyer and ANC activist who had been imprisoned on Robben Island in the 1960s, Mxenge was murdered by the South African Security Police's clandestine Vlakplaas unit.⁹²¹

Mxenge, Victoria 1942-1985. A nurse and midwife who trained as a lawyer, Mxenge was a prominent member of the UDF and Natal Organisation of Women (NOW). She was a member of the defence team at the Pietermaritzburg Treason Trial in 1985, but was assassinated by the clandestine Vlakplaas unit under Dirk Coetzee shortly before the trial.⁹²²

Netshitenzhe, Joel Born in 1956, Netshitenzhe studied in Moscow in the 1980s, and served as Head of Communication in President Mandela's office. He edited *Mayibue* in the 1980s, and worked as a journalist for Radio Freedom before that. In the 1970s, he got involved in SASO, before going into exile in 1976.⁹²³

Nhlapo, Mavis Administrative secretary of the ANC Women's Section in the early 1980s.⁹²⁴

Nkadimeng, John Born in 1925, Nkadimeng was a Defiance Campaign veteran who had joined the ANC in 1951, became a NEC member of SACTU after its formation in 1955 and a member of the communist party in 1955.⁹²⁵

Ngoyi, Lilian 1911-1980. The first woman to be elected to the ANC's National Executive Committee, Ngoyi was a seamstress and longtime ANC member. She joined ANCWL in 1952, becoming its president a year later, and was instrumental in the founding of FEDSAW. She remained in South Africa throughout the apartheid era, and served a series of severe banning orders during that time.⁹²⁶

Nyembe, Dorothy 1931-1998. An ANC member since 1952 and volunteer in the Defiance Campaign in Durban, Nyembe was an ANCWL organiser and involved in the Cato Manor protests in 1956. She continued to organise anti-apartheid resistance

⁹²⁰ South African History Online 'Thenjiwe Mtintso', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/thenjiwe-mtintso (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹²¹ South African History Online 'Griffiths Mlungisi Mxenge', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/griffiths-mlungisi-mxenge (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹²² South African History Online 'Victoria Nonyamezelo Mxenge', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/victoria-nonyamezelo-mxenge (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹²³ The Presidency 'Mr Joel Khathushelo Netshitenzhe', available at www.thepresidency.gov.za/pebble.asp?relid=1791 (accessed 29 June 2015); 'Joel Netshitenzhe' *Who's Who Southern Africa*, available at whoswho.co.za/joel-netshitenzhe-2189 (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹²⁴ Hassim *Women's Organisations and Democracy in South Africa*, p. 89

⁹²⁵ South African History Online 'John K. Nkadimeng', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/john-kgkadimeng (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹²⁶ South African History Online 'Lilian Masediba Ngoyi', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/lilian-masediba-ngoyi (accessed 29 June 2015).

after the banning of the ANC, which led to a three-year prison sentence in 1963 and a five-year banning order on her release in 1966. In 1969, she was sentenced to 15 years in jail for harbouring members of the MK. On her release in 1984, Nyembe became a leader of the Natal Organisation of Women (NOW). She was elected an MP in 1994.⁹²⁷

Olsson, Elvy Born in 1923, Olsson was an MP for Centerpartiet from 1960 until 1984, and served as minister of housing 1976-1978.⁹²⁸

Palme, Elisabeth (born von Knieriem) 1890-1972. Olof Palme's mother was a German-Baltic aristocrat who came to Sweden as a refugee during the First World War. She was among the first women to be awarded a baccalaureate in the Baltic states, and went on to study medicine in Germany. In Sweden, von Knieriem was active in several liberal women's organisations and was elected to the board of the Fredrika Bremer Association in 1937, filling a seat vacated by Ulla Lindström.⁹²⁹

Pahad, Essop Born in 1939, Pahad was an ANC member who went into exile in 1964 after being banned. In exile he served on leadership structures of ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP). He served as a Parliamentary Counsellor to then Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa from May 1994 until July 1996 and he was appointed Deputy Minister in the Office of the former Executive Deputy President Thabo Mbeki from August 1996 until 16 June 1999. He was an ANC NEC member 1994-2007.⁹³⁰

Persson, Göran Born in 1949, Persson served as Minister of Education 1989-1991; Minister of Finance 1994-1994; SAP chairman 1996-2007, and Swedish prime minister 1996-2006.

Ramokoa, Peter see Netshitenzhe, Joel

Ramaphosa, Cyril Born in 1952, Ramaphosa has served as Secretary General of the ANC from 1991-1997; Deputy President of the ANC 2012-2014, and Deputy President of South Africa from 2014.⁹³¹

Ramphela, Mamphela Born in 1947, Ramphela worked as a doctor and became a SASO activist during her studies. She has served as a managing director of the World Bank, on the boards of Anglo-American and Gold Fields, and started a left-of-centre political party, Agang, in 2013 before deciding to run for president in collaboration with DA in 2014.⁹³²

⁹²⁷ South African History Online 'Dorothy Nomzansi Nyembe', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/dorothy-nomzansi-nyembe (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹²⁸ Larsson, Inga 'Olsson, Elvy' *Nationalecyklopedin*, available at www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/l%C3%A5ng/elvy-olsson (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹²⁹ Östberg, *I takt med tiden*, pp. 18, 36, 43-44; Berggren *Underbara dagar framför oss*, pp. 58-68.

⁹³⁰ Government Communications 'Essop Goolam Pahad, Dr', available at http://apps.gcis.gov.za/gcis/gcis_profile.jsp?id=1062 (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹³¹ South African History Online 'Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/cyril-matamela-ramaphosa (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹³² South African History Online 'Dr Mamphela Aletta Ramphela', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/dr-mamphela-aletta-ramphela (accessed 29 June 2015).

Rodhe, Birgit 1915-1998. A teacher, headmaster and member of Folkpartiet, Rodhe was elected to Malmö City Council 1959-1976, and served as a deputy minister of schools 1978-1979.⁹³³

Rudling, Anna 1911-1999. A journalist and editor of SSKF's *Morgonbris* 1950-1974; chair of ICSDW 1966.⁹³⁴

Rössel, Agda 1910-2001. A Social Democrat, Rössel was the first female Permanent Representative to the United Nations, serving there from 1958 until 1964.⁹³⁵

Sahlin, Mona Born in 1957, Sahlin served as MP 1982-1996, 2002-2011; labour market minister 1990-1991 and 1998-2002; SAP Party Secretary 1992-1994; deputy prime minister and equality minister 1994-1995; integration, democracy and equality minister 2002-2004; environmental minister 2004-2005; energy and society minister 2005-2006; SAP chair 2007-2011.⁹³⁶

Seipei, James ('Stompie') 1974-1989. A UDF activist, he and three others were kidnapped in December 1988 by Winnie Madikizela-Mandela's bodyguards, who suspected him of being a police informer. He was killed on 1 January 1989.

Seperere, Mittah 1929-2010. Politicised by the ANCYL's Programme of Action of 1949, Seperere joined the group. Imprisoned in 1965, she and her husband left for Botswana in 1966. They later relocated to Tanzania, where Seperere served in the Regional Political Committee of the ANC. She became the welfare officer and started a primary school at SOMAFKO (the ANC School in Tanzania), moving to Lusaka in 1981 where she joined the ANC's Women's Section. From 1983 until 1989, she served as the ANC Women's Section WIDF representative in Berlin. In 1989, she was appointed ANC Chief Representative to Madagascar, La Reunion, Seychelles, Mauritius and the Comoros. An MP from 1994, she retired in 1999.⁹³⁷

Shope, Gertrude Born in 1925, Shope worked as a teacher before leaving the profession in the mid-1950s in protest against Bantu Education regulation. She joined the ANC around that time, and became a member of FEDSAW. Rising within the FEDSAW ranks, she worked for Bram Fischer before leaving for exile with her husband Mark in 1966. In exile, Shope was a high-ranking member of the Women's Section, heading the organisation from 1981. In 1985, she became a member of ANC's NEC, and she was elected president of ANCWL in 1991. In 1994, she was elected an MP.

⁹³³ Molin, Björn 'Rodhe, Birgit' *Nationalecyklopedin*, available at www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/lång/birgit-rodhe (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹³⁴ Gradin, Anita 'Dödsfall. Anna Rudling' *Dagens Nyheter* 20 January 1999

⁹³⁵ Sjöberg, Hans 'Rössel, Agda' *Nationalecyklopedin* — available at www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/lång/agda-rössel (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹³⁶ Socialdemokraterna 'Mona Sahlin: CV', available at www.socialdemokraterna.se/Var-politik/Arkiv/Partiordforanden/Mona-Sahlin-/CV-/ (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹³⁷ The Department of International Relations and Cooperation 'The Department of International Relations and Cooperation offers its condolences to the family of a pathfinder, combatant and freedom fighter: Mama Mittah Seperere (Nee Goieman)', available at www.dfa.gov.za/docs/2010/sepe0411.html (accessed 29 June 2015).

Sigurdson, Gertrud (1923-2015) was a member of trade union LO, serving as an LO ombudsman 1949-1982. She was an MP 1969-1991; a member of SAP's NEC 1968-1990; deputy immigration minister 1973-1976; deputy minister of health 1982-1985, and minister of social affairs 1985-1989.⁹³⁸

Simons, Jack 1907-1995 A CPSA/SACP member, lawyer and husband of Ray Alexander Simons, Simons was a very influential ANC leader and political thinker. Going into exile in 1965, he studied, taught and researched in the UK before settling in Lusaka. 1907-1995.⁹³⁹

Sisulu, Albertina 1918-2011. Sisulu was a trained nurse, who came to Johannesburg in the mid-1940s to work as a midwife. She married Walter Sisulu in 1944, and joined the ANC Women's League in the 1950s. A founding member of the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW), Sisulu participated in the march on Pretoria's Union Buildings in 1956. Serving long periods of banning and occasional detention, she stayed in South Africa throughout the era of apartheid, Sisulu was a co-president of UDF from 1983, deputy president of the ANCWL after unbanning in 1990, and a member of parliament 1994-1998.⁹⁴⁰

Sisulu, Lindiwe Born in 1954 to Walter and Albertina Sisulu, Lindiwe studied in Swaziland before being arrested in the aftermath of the Soweto Uprisings in 1976. She was held without trial for 11 months, and tortured during interrogations. After being released, she left South Africa to study in the United Kingdom, and became a member of the MK's intelligence wing. She served as Deputy Minister of Home Affairs 1996-2001, Minister of Intelligence 2001-2004, Minister of Housing 2004-2009, Minister of Defence and Military Veterans 2009-2012, Minister of Public Service and Administration 2012-2014 and Minister of Human Settlements from May 2014.⁹⁴¹

Slovo, Joe 1926-1995. Slovo was a Jewish Lithuanian immigrant to South Africa, who fought in the Second World War and joined CPSA during the war. A lawyer and husband of Ruth First, he became a leader of Umkhonto we Sizwe in the early era of the ANC underground movement. Going into exile in 1963, he was a leading figure of SACP, the ANC and MK throughout these years. Returning to South Africa, he served as Minister of Housing in Nelson Mandela's first government.⁹⁴²

Stenary, Gunnar A member of the international unit at SAP's head office in the 1980s.

Sundbom, Annie Marie (b. 1932) was the chair of Stockholm City Council 1982-1985, a member of SAP's international unit and peace forum in the 1980s, the government's

⁹³⁸ Lodenius, Anna-Lena 'Gertrud Sigurdson' *Fokus*, no. 17 (28 April 2015)

⁹³⁹ South African History Online 'Professor Harold Jack Simons', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/professor-harold-jack-simons (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁴⁰ South African History Online 'Albertina Nontsikelelo Sisulu', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/albertina-nontsikelelo-sisulu (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁴¹ South African History Online 'Lindiwe Nonceba Sisulu', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/lindiwe-nonceba-sisulu (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁴² South African History Online 'Joe Slovo', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/joe-slovo (accessed 29 June 2015).

representative to the UN's NGO Committee 1986-1993 (which Sundbom also chaired), and Sweden's ambassador to Sierra Leone, Gambia and Liberia 1992-1997.⁹⁴³

Säve-Söderbergh, Bengt Born in 1940, Säve-Söderbergh had been secretary general of Arbetarrörelsens Internationella Centrum (AIC), the labour movement's international solidarity organisation, before becoming a secretary of state in the foreign office after the election of 1982.

Söder, Karin Born in 1928, Söder was elected to parliament in 1971 and served there until 1991. She served as foreign minister 1976-1978 and minister of social affairs 1978-1982, and was the leader of Centerpartiet 1985-1987. Thus, Söder was the first woman to lead a parliamentary political party in Sweden.⁹⁴⁴

Thalén, Ingela Born in 1943, Thalén made her career as a municipal politician in Järfälla in Stockholm County, and was Sweden's minister of social affairs 1990-1991 and 1994-1996 before serving three years as SAP Party Secretary 1996-1999.

Theorin, Maj Britt Theorin (b. 1932) was an MP 1971-1995, and an MEP 1995-2004. She has served as Sweden's Ambassador for Disarmament 1982-1991, and was the president of the International Peace Bureau 1992-2000.⁹⁴⁵

Thorwaldsson, Karl-Petter Born in 1964, Thorwaldsson succeeded Anna Lindh as SSU chair 1990-1995. He was appointed chair of LO in 2012.⁹⁴⁶

Tillander, Ulla 1931-1994. Tillander served as an MP for Centerpartiet 1974-1991, and as deputy schools minister 1981-1982.

Troedsson, Ingegerd 1929-2012. An MP 1974-1994, Troedsson served as deputy minister of social affairs 1976-1978. She was the deputy speaker of parliament 1979-1991, and elected speaker in 1991. Serving until 1994, she was the Swedish parliament's first speaker.⁹⁴⁷

Undén, Östen 1886-1975. Undén served as Sweden's foreign minister in the cabinets of Hjalmar Branting and Rickard Sandler 1921-1926 and P. A. Hansson and Erlander 1945-1962.⁹⁴⁸

Verwoerd, H. F. 1901-1966. Born in the Netherlands, Verwoerd's family moved to South Africa in 1903. He studied theology, philosophy and psychology at the

⁹⁴³ Ståhl, Marianne 'Inventory: Women's archives at the Labour Movement Archives and Library', available at www.arbark.se/pdf_wrd/stahl-womens-archives-inventory.pdf (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁴⁴ Centerkvinnorna 'Karin Söder', available at www.centerkvinnorna.se/Om-oss/Historia/Karin-Soder/ (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁴⁵ Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research 'Maj Britt Theorin', available at www.oldsite.transnational.org/SAJT/tff/people/m-b_theorin.html (accessed 29 June 2015)

⁹⁴⁶ Landsorganisationen 'CV: Karl Petter Thorwaldsson', available at www.lo.se/start/om_oss/ledningen/karl_petter_thorwaldsson/cv (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁴⁷ Melsted, Lillemor 'Ingegerd Troedsson' *Fokus*, No. 48 (7 December 2012)

⁹⁴⁸ Thullberg, Per 'Undén, Östen' *Nationalencyklopedin* — available at www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/lang/osten-unden (accessed 29 June 2015).

University of Stellenbosch, and studied in Germany in the 1920s. In the mid-1930s, Verwoerd became Professor of Sociology and Social Work at Stellenbosch, and became a politician towards the end of the decade. He served as minister of native affairs from 1950 and as prime minister from 1958 until his murder in 1966.⁹⁴⁹

Wahlberg, Marianne 1917-2005. An MP from 1979 to 1982, Wahlberg was active in Folkpartiet's women's organisation, and served as a cabinet minister 1978-1979. She served as a ministerial aide in the labour market ministry until 1982.⁹⁵⁰

Wallström, Margot Born in 1954, Wallström served as deputy civil affairs minister in charge of consumer, church and youth policy questions 1988-1991, culture minister 1994-1996, and social affairs minister 1996-1998 before becoming an EU commissioner 1999-2010 and the UN Secretary General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict 2010-2013. She is the foreign minister of Sweden since October 2014.⁹⁵¹

Williams-De Bruyn, Sophia Born 1938, Williams-De Bruyn was a textile worker from Port Elizabeth and a founding member of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU; a precursor to COSATU). She spent time in exile before returning to South Africa in the early 1990s.⁹⁵²

Winberg, Margareta Born in 1947, Winberg became an MP in 1981 before serving as SSKF chairperson 1990-1995; agricultural minister 1994-1996 and 1998-2002; labour market minister 1996-1998; equality minister 1998-2002; deputy prime minister 2002-2003; and Sweden's ambassador to Brazil 2003-2007.

Winther, Eva 1921-2014. A nurse, Winther served for Folkpartiet in the city and county councils in Kiruna from 1967 until 1979 and in Halland 1985-1991, and as an MP 1976-1982.⁹⁵³

Zihlangu, Dorothy 1920-1991. Zihlangu worked as a domestic worker in Cape Town and was forcibly relocated from the city to the township of Langa in 1941, where she joined the ANC. She took part in the Defiance Campaign in 1952, and became an organiser of the Freedom Charter Campaign in 1955. She was also a FEDSAW member and present on the march on Union Buildings in 1956. She helped found the UWO in the 1980s, and worked underground for the ANC in the same decade.⁹⁵⁴

Zuma, Jacob Born in 1942, Zuma joined MK in 1962, and was sentenced to 10 years on Robben Island in 1963. Released in 1973, he worked for the ANC underground

⁹⁴⁹ South African History Online 'Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/hendrik-frensch-verwoerd (accessed 17 June 2015).

⁹⁵⁰ Molin, Björn 'Wahlberg, Marianne' *Nationalencyklopedin* — available at www.ne.se/upplagsverk/encyklopedi/lang/marianne-wahlberg (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁵¹ Regeringen 'CV — Margot Wallström', available at www.regeringen.se/informationsmaterial/2014/11/cv---margot-wallstrom/ (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁵² South African History Online 'Sophia Theresa Williams de Bruyn', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/sophia-theresa-williams-de-bruyn (accessed 29 June 2015).

⁹⁵³ Hedvall, Barbro 'Eva Winther' *Fokus*, No. 26 (4 August 2014)

⁹⁵⁴ South African History Online 'Dorothy Nomazotsho Zihlangu', available at www.sahistory.org.za/people/dorothy-nomazotsho-zihlangu (accessed 29 June 2015).

before going into exile in 1975. He became a NEC member in 1977, and served as Chief Representative of the ANC in Mozambique in 1984. In 1987, he joined the ANC in Lusaka, where he was appointed Head of Underground Structures and, later, Chief of the Intelligence Department. A member of the negotiating team at Groote Schuur in 1990, he served in the KwaZulu-Natal government in the early 1990s. Zuma was elected Deputy President of the ANC in 1997, and Executive Deputy President of South Africa in 1999. In 2006 he was acquitted of rape, and in 2007 he was elected president of the ANC, succeeding Thabo Mbeki as president in 2009.⁹⁵⁵

⁹⁵⁵ BBC News 'South Africa's President Jacob Zuma: a profile', available at www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17450447 (accessed 29 June 2015); 'Jacob Zuma Biography' *Bio.*, available at www.biography.com/people/jacob-zuma-262727 (accessed 29 June 2015).