

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND
AFRICAN STUDIES INSTITUTE

African Studies Seminar Paper
to be presented at Seminar in RW 319 at
4.00pm on MONDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 1990

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Title: Double-Cross: Potlako Leballo and the 1946 Riots at Lovedale
Missionary Institution.

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No. 264

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NOTE

This paper in modified form comprises the second chapter of a longer work, entitled Potlako Leballo - The Man Who Hurried To Meet His Destiny. At present this paper is still in draft form. However, even in its final form the work will remain scarred and contorted by its own production. This is inevitable since my primary objective has been to arrange the content of the letters that were exchanged between Leballo and Shepherd.

DOUBLE-CROSS: POTLAKO LEBALLO AND THE 1946 RIOTS AT
LOVEDALE MISSIONARY INSTITUTION.

"Are gone to praise God and his Priest and
King who make up a heaven of our misery."
William Blake.

On the night of the 7th August, 1946 the students of Lovedale College tried to ransack their school and to kill numerous members of staff.

Between 100-200 men students went on a rampage that shook the serenity of the rural mission establishment. They stoned the houses of the head of the teachers' training school, the Lady superintendant of the girls' school and the head of the high school. Then they turned their wrath on the nightwatchmen and the prefects, sending intense salvos of stones at their respective huts and rooms. The attacks on the prefects and the nightwatchmen were particularly severe, perhaps because as blacks they had earned double contempt for their obvious duplicity. Last, but by no means least they gave the house of the principal, the Reverend R.W. Shepherd, a brief but ferocious peppering.(1)

They also made unsuccessful attempts to cut the electrical power lines and the telephone lines, and to start numerous fires. Two of these were quickly extinguished, but a third managed to do extensive damage to a toolshed, destroying all the tools inside.(2)

The police at Alice were contacted. Their arrival occasioned fresh scenes of confrontation. The outbreak being regarded as one of public violence, the police announced that the matter was beyond the jurisdiction of the Lovedale authorities.

It was later claimed by the police that the mob advanced on them "as one man". (3) In response the police fired over their heads - an act that seems admirable when contrasted with the latter-day tactics of the South African Police.

The students then withdrew to Black Hill, a koppie behind the institution, where they spent the night. The police contingent, now bolstered by white members of the Lovedale staff as well as white civilians from the nearby town of Alice, threw a cordon around the students and waited out the night. At dawn 157 male students were arrested and marched to the Alice jail. (4)

The remainder of the students were clearly in solidarity with those who had been arrested. 80 students in particular showed that their sympathies had been "stirred". On the Saturday after the riots, against Shepherd's orders, they marched to Alice to pay a visit to the imprisoned students.

In the afternoon Shepherd held a meeting with the senior students. In his own words: he "endeavoured to explain the actual position, telling them that whatever their sympathy for those in custody the fact remained that they had broken the law." (5)

The students were not swayed by their principal's persuasions. Shepherd notes that towards the close of the meeting one of them gave the ominous warning that "this wave is not yet over."

On the following day, a Sunday, church services were boycotted. That same evening stones were thrown again and a letter of defiance was handed in to Shepherd. It stated that it was "the unanimous decision of the majority of the students of Lovedale Boys Boarding Department" to boycott classes indefinitely. Still very much tied to the "civilised" conventions instilled in them by the institution that their contemporaries had tried to reduce to ashes, they concluded the letter with "We beg to be yours obediently, THE STUDENTS." (6).

That Monday morning, out of a total school population of 612, only 30 students attended classes. The authorities decided it capricious to close Lovedale forthwith. An announcement to that effect was read by Shepherd at both the male and female dining halls - boarding facilities being strictly segregated along sexual lines. In both dining halls the announcement was greeted with applause. Lovedale was only re-opened nine weeks later, on the 9th October, 1946.

Since Lovedale was situated at the heart of the mission school environment, both physically and historically, it was often the case that significant events there had a ripple effect on neighbouring establishments. Within days of the outbreak of violence at Lovedale, similar trouble was brewing at Healdtown Missionary Institution, situated some ten miles away (7). More than a dozen boys at Healdtown were expelled after they had cut the telephone wires there and attempted to set buildings on fire.

An encounter between four of these Healdtown students and a Mr. P.M. Sebina, who was in the employ of Chief Tshekedi Khama of Bechuanaland, and who had been sent to Lovedale to accompany several expelled Botswana students on their long journey home, prompted the emissary to observe that "there is something radically wrong at the institutions." (8)

There had been something radically wrong for quite some time. During the decade from 1937-1946 disturbances occurred in 28 out of 46 mission institutions in South Africa, Basutoland and Swaziland. There were 49 documented disturbances in total. Some institutions had to cope with recurrent rebellions. 31 of these incidents were regarded as being of a serious nature. The tempo accelerated towards the end of the war, with 20 of the recorded disturbances occurring in 1945 and 1946. (9)

The authorities at Lovedale, in an obvious attempt to downplay

the severity of the problems besetting the school, were to argue that the riots of August 1946, took them completely by surprise (10). In so doing they failed to mention that one year previously, in 1945, conflicts between students and the principal had been severe enough for Shepherd to have carried out his threat to prevent a number of the matriculants from gaining admittance to Fort Hare College.

This punitive step was taken after a "long typewritten effusion" had been found pinned to a notice board. The notice gives such a clear insight into the deep resentment felt by some black students towards mission school education, in contrast to the toady adulation of most liberals, that it warrants lengthy quotation:

To be inside Lovedale is to be in an Institution.
An institution is supposed to be a place where young Africans get a well balanced education as a weapon for use in the troubled world when the time is ripe...

This place is so historical that it ought to serve as an example for progressive centres and not as a place of oppression, of tyranny and dictatorship, but as a democratic education centre...

A Missionary in a Missionary Institution who turns (sic) the bible day and night, who worships God not hypocritically, who faithfully sings, "Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts: Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High!", ought not to force discipline... He should practice what he preaches so that followers should be readily accessible.(11)

Having declared that he was willing to go to jail in defence of his position the author concluded by echoing an increasingly popular refrain:

There are many things that paralyse my nation but those that can be rectified; let them be rectified with alacrity. (12)

The spirit of the letter was reflected in notices that had been chalked all over the school encouraging students to strike. Some of the graffiti made direct threats to members of staff. One slogan called on students to "Kill Dr. Shepherd." Given these developments Shepherd notified the police. For the last few nights of the school year of 1945, an armed guard was maintained on the Lovedale property.(13)

These defiant acts had been witnessed and in some cases perpetrated by students who returned to Lovedale in 1946. In spite of his protestations to the contrary the principal of the institution must have been aware of the mood of resistance that was intensifying within the ranks of his students. Their growing disdain for authority and their increasing willingness to give

expression to their grievances was symptomatic of broader political currents that were sweeping through black South African society at the time. Shepherd, in his capacity as editor of the liberal christian journal "South African Outlook", was well aware of the rapid social and economic changes that South Africa had experienced during the war years. (14) Manufacturing capital, fuelled partly by enforced protection afforded by the war and by a boom in the gold industry began to displace mining from its central position in the economy. This comprehensive structural shift was spurred on by the rapid decline in the economic viability of the "Native" reserves. As a result of these interlocking pressures hundreds of thousands of Africans streamed into the cities.

It was already a well-established characteristic of South Africa's segregated social formation that infra-structural changes within black communities, instead of accompanying profound socio-economic transformations, were wilfully retarded by the ruling strata and the state. So it was that mission schools, largely dependent on subsidisation by the various provincial administrations, and already under severe financial pressure, found themselves with grossly inadequate resources. They were hopelessly unable to meet the rapid increase in the demand for schooling.

Crude economic issues such as budgets, subsidies and fees do not quite explain why the content of the education and the nature of schooling offered to African children and young adults remained fundamentally unchanged. In order to get more detailed insight it is necessary to pay passing attention to some of the ideological perspectives of the paternalistic liberals, "the friends of the natives", who had cornered the market on African education. (15)

Although teaching at mission schools had begun to acquire an increasingly secular flavour during the late 1930's, there remained a strong emphasis on ardent christian faith. Accompanying the missionary zeal to convert the entire human race was the certainty that this evangelical task was culturally pre-determined. For most mission school educators christian faith was inconceivable, or otherwise blasphemous, unless it was connected to a dominant European conception of life and meaning of civilisation.

Thus in spite of the dramatic demographic shift in South Africa's African population (16), and the attendant social pressures that were spawned or intensified in the process, mission schools remained unbendingly committed to paternalism and trusteeship. Mission schools continued to be administered and managed by specially selected, white, middle class, christian, adult males who automatically promoted forms of behaviour that they regarded as appropriate in their black "charges". The pervasive atmosphere at Lovedale college, its liberal image and its elitist reality notwithstanding, strongly reinforced the idea that its pupils were part of a group appropriately subordinate to the dominant white population. (17) It is in this context that it can be argued

that during the period of South Africa's industrialisation, of which the 1940's was a benchmark, mission schools, in spite of their sporadic disagreements with the state, were propagators of the ideology of the legitimacy and the inevitability of South Africa's social organisation.

Given this link between the discourse of trusteeship which was enshrined in mission school paternalism and the specific structure of South Africa's race capitalism, it is not surprising that the response of the authorities at Lovedale to the riots of August 1946 bordered on the hysterical. In other circumstances the riots might have given cause for agitation but not for frenzy. However by the time Lovedale's discipline committee was dragooned into action by its chairman, the Rev. Shepherd, events in the outside world had severely impinged on the judgement of its members.

The day after Lovedale was closed 50,000 African mineworkers went on strike. Two days later there was a confrontation between police and striking miners at the Sub-Nigel mine. Police opened fire, injuring 6 miners. In the ensuing mellee six others were crushed to death.(18)

The subsequent adjournment of the Native Representative Council, (N.R.C.) although it was a feeble act of protest at best, caused the irreparable breakdown of political clientelism. In all likelihood this effete gesture of defiance met with the Rev. Shepherd's strong disapproval. Shepherd, who as editor of the South African Outlook was one of the most prolific of the conservative welfare liberals, actually regarded the N.R.C. as being the provocative mouthpiece of the "over-sophisticated African". In a letter to the then Minister of Native Affairs, Shepherd wrote: "To my mind the elected NRs in both houses have been too voluble, suspicious and doctrinaire." (19)

In the light of the explosive encounter between the principal and a new post-war generation of more assertive students it is interesting to contrast his attitude towards the NRC with that of the nascent radical African Nationalism of the time. Writing in 1950, the leader of the Non-European Unity Movement, Isaac Tabata, (whose son happened to be a student at Lovedale in 1946) made the following retrospective comments about the N.R.C.

" Here was a chance for the liberals to play an important role which was in keeping with their function in the past... Parliament would provide a platform for these so-called champions of the African cause. Every opportunity would be given them for indulging their eloquence in the defence of the voiceless masses. (20)

It is impossible to know precisely what went on at the meetings of Lovedale's disciplinary committee. Nevertheless it can be safely assumed that the shock of the first significant post-war flexing of working class muscle and the disappointment caused by

"the bursting of the bubble" of the N.R.C. must have reverberated through the principal's office in which the first few meetings of the disciplinary committee were held. The fact that these two events had occurred in the same week as the Lovedale Riots certainly did not appear to the Lovedale authorities as mere coincidence. Rather it prompted the predictable and fruitless response of seeking to blame the Lovedale disturbances on outside influences.(21) One or two of the more lucid members of the disciplinary committee were able to see beyond the conspiracy smokescreen, however, and concur with the opinions of those whom their colleagues suspected of incitement. They recognised that the three seemingly disparate events all sprang from the same source; "the sense of despair that is gripping all Africans, men, women and youth."(22) Nevertheless the proclivity to punish, which after all is the function of a disciplinary committee, won out over these more sensitive appraisals.

While these sketchy insights into African deprivations and the embitterment they engendered were relegated to sociological footnotes in the report of the commission of inquiry that was later appointed to investigate the disturbances, the principal made it clear that the immediate, if not only, issue on the agenda was to punish all offenders.

After an extensive investigation, the venerable "friends of the natives", having feverishly tried to find some explanation for the violence that had rocked their hallowed establishment, could do no better than meekly conclude: "these factors remain a mystery."

The Reverend Robert W. Shepherd, although a religious man, was not one to trifle with mysteries. Whatever else one concludes about his responses, Shepherd cannot be accused of inconsistency. Throughout the crisis, which was to extend well into the following academic year and to generate nationwide interest, Shepherd's foremost concern was to discover who had been the ringleaders and to punish any student whom he regarded as having committed an act of insubordination.

A few days after the riots the 157 imprisoned students appeared in the Alice municipal court where they were charged with public violence. All but 5 were found guilty. 84 who were under the age of 19 were sentenced to receive cuts with a light cane. The remainder were fined 5 pounds each, with the alternative of 2 months in prison.(23)

That however, was only where punitive action against the students began. In their letter to Shepherd the students had expressed "their unanimous opinion that after a verdict has been given by the legal court, Lovedale must not give them a double punishment." (24) Lovedale paid them scant attention. There were hardly any calls for tolerance and forgiveness. Recrimination was the order of the day.

Although African mission schools in general were notoriously

authoritarian, the vindictive response of the Lovedale officials was in large measure a reflection of the temperament and style of its principal. It is therefore important to know a little about Shepherd himself, in order to understand the inquisitorial activities that were unleashed by the disciplinary committee over which he presided, supposedly with the "unctuous rectitude of a Pasha on a divan".(25)

An austere and unforgiving personality, Shepherd's own hardships as a child and young adult, together with a strict protestant upbringing, had imbued in him a firm belief in discipline and obedience.(26) It had also left him with a surprising lack of empathy for those young Africans under his tutelage who were faced with similar hardships to those that he himself had endured and who responded to their conditions with rebellion rather than obedience.

Shepherd's boyhood experiences had convinced him of the pertinence of the capitalist ideology of equal opportunity and the church's ideology of the dignity of labour. At the age of eleven he worked 16 hours a day in a Jute mill in Invergowrie Scotland. From thirteen onwards he rounded out his day's work by studying at a night school. The young teenager clearly took to heart the moral instructions in Self Help and Character, books by Samuel Smiles that he had read with great reverence as a young teenager. Through application and sheer effort he had managed to win a scholarship to Dundee University College. Even then his vacations were devoted to work, including a stint with the Inland Revenue Office where it was his job to ensure that houses scheduled as vacant by their owners did not have tax evading tenants. Though he undoubtedly did this job with the dedication and perseverance that became a self-made man, he seemed to have gotten nothing more than chronic asthma for his pains. It was in part because of this ailment that in 1918, at the age of thirty, Shepherd, after completing a divinity degree at New College Edinburgh, selected to practice as a missionary in Southern Africa. (27)

Perhaps Shepherd's antipathy to the hardships of his underlings had not only to do with his stern moral self-righteousness but also with the racial stereotypes that he upheld. Tim Couzins has pointed out in a tightly argued essay that in Shepherd's hierarchy of races black Americans were "an essentially African people" who nevertheless were "further along the road than the Bantu, and yet not so far in advance as to render valueless the lessons they can teach to their African Kinsmen." (28)

There is little doubt that Shepherd exercised an almost Victorian authority over Lovedale Institution. He had been the chaplain there from his arrival in 1926 until his appointment as principal in 1942. In return for the paternalistic care he bestowed and the well heeled responsibility he felt for his flock he expected loyalty and obedience. Shepherd certainly showed manifest obligation to his black charges, particularly through his editorship of "South African Outlook" where he religiously but

somewhat phlegmatically drew attention to the causes of the downtrodden African. Ideologically and materially, however, he had much more in common with the very powers which held his flock down. This is reflected in the benign understanding with which he responded to the white state's flagrant disregard for the social and material needs of South Africa's black population. Thus in an amicable letter to Prime Minister Smuts, Shepherd felt no qualms about following up a rather lame criticism by saying that

"even then we try to have understanding and to remember that with your fuller knowledge and comprehensive care you perceive that other factors must be taken into account and other interests safeguarded." (29)

No such generosity of spirit was expressed by the principal when he differed with his subordinates. In his capacity as head of the Discipline Committee and chairman of the Senate, Shepherd initiated and supervised an inquisition that accorded with a punitive personality, obsessed with punishing those who had committed the gravest of all offences - flaunting the law and disobeying authority.

The activities of the Discipline Committee bear Shepherd's distinctive stamp. He conducted its activities with a single-minded purpose, instructing and notifying his fellow members, as he was wont to do to staff and students alike.

About two weeks after the riots Shepherd convened a special meeting of the Lovedale Senate. The venerated gentlemen of the Senate divided their time equally between two urgent issues. On the one hand pressure from the parents, anxious to have their children return to school, and from the Native Affairs Department (N.A.D.), anxious to announce a return to normality as soon as possible, had forced the Senate to give prompt attention to the matter of re-opening the institution. On the other hand the sense of shock and outrage on the part of the staff, the principal in particular, obliged them to spend a proportionate amount of time and energy on establishing the culpability of all the rioters and on deciding an appropriate form of punishment.

The Rev. Shepherd dominated the meeting. He argued that although it was known which students had been convicted and which students had marched on Alice it was still not certain that all the ringleaders had been exposed. Obviously motivated by a determination to ferret out these elusive culprits the Senate agreed to send a letter and a questionnaire to every student. It was agreed that students would not be considered for readmission to the institution unless they complied with the instruction to complete the incidious questionnaire.

After the Discipline Committee had investigated all the cases individually, the Senate, on its recommendation, prepared to expel 197 students; almost one third of the entire enrolment.

This rather extreme action prompted the convening of an extraordinary meeting of Lovedale's Governing Council. Under the chairmanship of Dr. Alexander Kerr, Principal of Fort Hare College, whose relationship with Shepherd was far from cordial (30), this body, which enjoyed final authority over decisions effecting the institution, took strong exception to the recommendations of the Disciplinary Committee. Kerr drafted a private letter to Shepherd in which he pointed out that:

It was unlikely that 197 students who had been admitted with good records in January had become so vicious by August as to justify permanent expulsion from the Institution. (31)

The Governing Council accordingly instructed the Senate to change its approach from "maximum exclusion to a policy of maximum re-admission". Kerr stressed the point that in his opinion such a policy was "more in consonance with the traditions of Lovedale and the spirit of a missionary institution." (32)

After lengthy protestations and even longer deliberations the Senate agreed to re-assess the cases on an individual basis. In February, 1947 - by which time the effected pupils had lost a year's study - the Senate recommended that the exclusions of 79 offenders be rescinded. The Governing Council once again voiced its disapproval. They advised the principal to make individual character assessments of the remaining 118 expelled students, with the objective of re-admitting as many as possible. When Shepherd had narrowed down the number of expulsions to 87 the Governing Council was finally satisfied that the traditions of Lovedale had been maintained.(33)

Previous historical records have ended here; the incident having been recorded with little more than anecdotal attention. This would be an appropriate historical perspective were it not for the fact that the exclusions prompted a startling correspondence between the principal of Lovedale College and one of the excluded students who had been regarded by the authorities as one of the main instigators of the riots.

The correspondence has quite remarkably remained in the archives of the Cory Library at Rhodes University, seemingly undetected by the probing minds of researchers. At first glance this is rather surprising because the correspondence provides a living illumination of the first tentative and ill-defined confrontations between a toothless but stubborn liberal paternalism, and a dawning, almost embryonic militant african nationalism. Perhaps it is because the correspondence is unflattering to both positions that sympathisers of these two divergent but curiously intertwined forms of resistance to white rule have preferred to leave the letters undisturbed.

If the correspondence that was documented by Shula Marks in her book Not Either an Experimental Doll illuminated "the generousities yet limitations of white liberalism" (34), the

correspondence between the Reverend Shepherd and Potlako Kitchener Leballo gives the reader a far less ambiguous impression of the nature of white liberalism.

Likewise the contradictory and ultimately treacherous responses by Leballo to Shepherd's vindictiveness and manipulation suggest that reactions to conditions of oppression do not always merit unqualified sanction.

But more importantly the Leballo/Shepherd correspondence reveals that the living articulation of any ideology is uneven and ill-defined. The ideal-type, the absolute embodiment, of any given ideology occurs only in the polemic of activists or in the science-obsessed reifications of social theorists. In real life ideologies are integrated and modified by the personae of those who expound them. Not only is individual consciousness permeated by the ideologies that life experiences spawn, but simultaneously the ideologies become tinted by the specific hues of the individual character.

Thus ideologies are in a constant state of flux. Their congealed form is merely the alienated construct of political parties and other mediating institutions of power who transform these theoretical embodiments of lived experience - of practice - into doctrines or grand philosophies.

Whereas Marks appropriately referred to the "personal and idiosyncratic" components of the Palmer/Makhanya/"Moya" correspondence as being "precious" (35), no such quaint and commendable adjective could be used to describe the private content of Leballo's and Shepherd's letters. Their exchange is bitter and convoluted, with repressed hostility blistering the conventional courtesy of official correspondence. Nevertheless in the same vein as the correspondence in "Not Either An Experimental Doll" the nasty exchange that is recorded in these pages shows that "the private lives, even (the) obsessions ... of individuals, far from being simple psychological quirks ... flow directly from the social situation of the individuals." (36)

On 19th January, 1946, Potlako Leballo (or Kitchener as whites rather sublimely called him) walked out of the dispersal depot of the Union Defence Force at Modderbee, after having spent 1917 days in the service of the Native Military Corps.(37) Then already twenty-six years old Leballo decided to return to school to complete his training as a teacher. He chose to go back to Lovedale College where he had been a student in 1940, when the lure of adventure inspired him to volunteer for military service.

Given the harsh statutory constraints on African social and physical mobility it is not difficult to understand why Leballo decided to return to school. The wave of reform that had marked South Africa's political direction at the outbreak of the war had begun to recede. Prime Minister Jan Smuts's startling statement that "segregation has fallen on evil days" had been laid to rest under a series of repressive promulgations. One of the Acts that

had severely negative repercussions on the daily life of Africans was the Native (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act of 1945, which tightened up the control of Africans in the cities and attempted to place further checks on African urban influx. These strictures on mobility and residence certainly must have influenced Leballo's life choices. As a citizen of the Basutoland Protectorate Leballo would have found life considerably hazardous in South Africa's segregated and rigorously patrolled urban centres.

But by seeking the relative sanctuary of an educational institution Leballo, who was the son of an Anglican catechist at St. Paul's Mission in Tsikoane, was responding at the same time to deeply rooted impulses that had been instilled in him by the historical context and the social class into which he had been born.

With the defeat of the independent African chieftanships, the dispossession of the indigenous pastoralists, the monopolisation of the mineral industries and the consolidation of white political power, the capitalist mode of production asserted its dominance over the lives of virtually all the inhabitants of the subcontinent. The indigenous social formations were unable to resist its implacable development. For the vast majority of Africans this meant being forced, by poverty and violence, to enter the capitalist economy as super-exploited labour. For a tiny privileged minority there existed a less traumatic option - incorporation into a commodity economy as professionals, primarily as teachers. The education provided by mission schools constituted the major conduit through which some Africans could pass from a fracturing pre-capitalist social organisation to the promised land of white urban "civilisation". Until Bantu Education was introduced in the mid 1950's christian education, because of the relative privilege it promised, was a central component in the self-identity of aspirant African elites.

But Leballo's choice was not a passive one merely foisted upon him by the grand designs of white rule, or even by the grander sweep of historical development. Within the specific context in which he was operating, the ever-resourceful Leballo was able to maximise his options. On the grounds of his war experiences Leballo applied to the Directorate of Demobilisation for a subsistence allowance. He succeeded in securing a grant for one-hundred pounds (38), a sizeable sum of money, especially when contrasted with the gratuity of 5 shillings per month which was awarded to African soldiers on demobilisation.(39)

Leballo was granted the allowance on the grounds of a declaration he made to the Directorate of Demobilisation. In his declaration Leballo claimed his mother, wife, child and three sisters as dependents. This was a deliberate and understandable fabrication, quite in keeping with Leballo's highly developed sense of self-aggrandizement. Not one to let a favourable opportunity pass him by, and deeply scornful of white authority, Leballo made maximum mileage out of the opportunity offered by the Directorate of

Demobilisation. The fact of the matter was that Leballo supported neither his mother nor his sisters. Whatever the values of education - and given the opportunities of relative privilege provided to those who received it they were considerable - Leballo had, in part, re-entered the educational system for the financial assistance that it had to offer. By defrauding the Union Defence Forces he was declaring himself to have understood the system and to regard it with contempt. It was only in the aftermath of the riots of August that it was discovered that the six pounds per month that was meant to go towards supporting his mother and his siblings was ending up in his own pocket.(40)

In addition to this grant of one hundred pounds Leballo had applied to the Governor General's War Fund for a study grant of one-hundred-and-fifty pounds, payable over three years.(41) It is in the light of this significant amount of material support which had been seriously jeopardised by Leballo's implication in the Lovedale disturbances that his desperate and voluble correspondence with the Rev. Shepherd must be understood. Not only Leballo's future career but his immediate source of income was hanging in the balance, when, on the 2nd September, 1946, he returned the questionnaire, virtually unanswered, directly to Shepherd himself. Enclosed in the bulky envelope which bore the post-mark of Lady Selborne, Pretoria was a short letter in Leballo's own hand. "Looking forward to our re-opening date"(42) was its optimistic conclusion.

But by the time Leballo's letter arrived on Shepherd's desk the questionnaires had begun to yield some confessions and disclosures.

Most of the questionnaires, like Leballo's, had been returned either unanswered or with painstakingly obtuse and intentionally non-incriminating replies. So similar were the responses to the questionnaires (which began arriving at the homes of the students a fortnight after their suspension) that there can be little doubt that there had been some elaborate planning behind the strikes.(43) Those involved in the strikes had anticipated that the Lovedale authorities would apply considerable pressure on students in order to uncover and if necessary create "ringleaders", thereby shifting the focus away from the need to address legitimate grievances. The prime motivators behind the riots had only one possible response to this predictable tactic. They warned students that the cost of collaboration would be injury or death. Thus at an impromptu meeting held on the bridge into the town of Alice on the day of the students' march into town, a student by the name of Ebenezer Malie, who with thirteen others, including Leballo, was to be singled out as a chief culprit, issued the following warning:

Such a man who can reveal or mention the ringleaders is liable to be shot right in the head, because even the rioters themselves have agreed not to mention any name in court.(44)

For some students the threat of physical violence from fellow scholars was less intimidating than the fear of expulsion from Lovedale. This would appear to be what motivated one student, June Phuti, to write from her home in Middelburg, Cape Province. In her letter she not only implicated several male students but claimed that some of them, including the abovementioned Ebenezer Malie, were "armed with loaded revolvers" (45) Evidently the rioters were equipped with the wherewithal to back up their threats.

In other cases parental pressure combined with internalised cultural obsessions about education to convince some students to inform on their comrades. It was at his father's insistence that Titus Maqubela provided Shepherd with enough circumstantial evidence with which to be convinced that Leballo had been one of the ringleaders. According to Maqubela's evidence, on the night of the riots Leballo went round to all the dormitories, calling students to assemble for a public meeting. Maqubela went on to mention that a few hours before the actual outbreak of the disturbances Leballo "made a strong speech in regard to starvation prevailing in the dining hall and the incapability of our S.R.C." (46). In a speech that Leballo repeated in every dormitory that he visited, "in corridors and even in the dining hall" he prevailed upon the students to give practical expression to their grievances. "Many hours will pass, gentlemen, on strike," he asserted. "Passive resistance will not help us. Don't be cowards." (47)*

In other instances loyalty to white authority was so deeply ingrained that collaboration was voluntary. This was the case with Ivan Bokwe, Chairman of the Lovedale Student Representative Council, related by marriage to Z.K. Matthews and son of teacher John Knox Bokwe, the institution's veteran quisling. In an interview held with Shepherd shortly after the riots, he stated that at a meeting chaired by himself, three men spoke passionately against conditions at the institution, especially in regard to the shocking quality of the food and the arrogant and authoritarian attitude of the authorities. The three men were Andrew Maroetsele, Ebenezer Malie and Potlako Leballo. Interestingly enough there were some important features shared by these three men which partly account for the prominent part they played in initiating the strikes. All three of them had grown up in Basutoland and they had all enlisted in the Native Military Corps during the war.(48)

The Lovedale authorities were quick to notice that there was a definite "tribal" component to the leadership of the riots. They noted that there had been rumour that in the next academic year (1947) Sotho and Tswana students were to be barred from the institution since there were too few of them to justify tuition

* As an afterthought Maqubela added that when it came to Leballo he believed that "anything said of him may be right." Throughout the turbulent years of his political career, Leballo's allies, enemies and even friends were frequently to echo that sentiment.

in their mother tongue.(49) Although this certainly must have been cause for concern it is unlikely that it was the major reason for the high profile taken by young men from the Protectorate territories. It is more likely that coming from countries in which pre-capitalist African communities still enjoyed relative political and territorial integrity, youths from the Protectorates were less likely to be quiescent in the face of racial abuse than students from the comparatively disembodied communities within the Union of South Africa. This tendency was reinforced by the fact that the process of industrialisation in the subcontinent was (and still is) extremely uneven. In most Eastern Cape communities entry into the capitalist productive process, the attendant contact with whites and the development of new consumer and cultural patterns had ceased to be discretionary many generations earlier. By contrast the majority of the communities in Botswana and even Lesotho were only just beginning to feel the full pressure of a commodity economy. It is not surprising, therefore, that the products of these communities responded a little more turbulently to the strictures and injustices of what was for them a new social order. (50)

In Leballo's case his war-time experiences certainly did contribute to his growing political militancy. Forced to endure racial discrimination while enlisted in an army that was ostensibly fighting to rid the world of race hatred and oppression he had been sufficiently embittered to earn an early repatriation on the grounds of rebellious behaviour. But at the same time, Leballo like thousands of other Africans who had served in overseas theatres of war returned to South Africa inspired by experiences of life beyond the colour bar. The comparatively comradely treatment that he had received from British soldiers and the relative privileges enjoyed by Africans in Abyssinia and in North Africa made the humiliations and the indignities heaped upon him in South Africa more intolerable than they had been before his enlistment.

As ex-servicemen Leballo and his co-conspirators were probably well aware of the change in the political climate of European and American politics in the wake of the end of the war. This change was registered by the rulers of the West in the proclamation of the Atlantic Charter which made a tacit acknowledgement that the process of decolonisation could no longer be retarded, except at staggering political and economic cost. It had a profound influence on aspirant elites in colonial countries. In South Africa this found clearest expression in the drafting by the African National Congress (ANC), at the instigation of the organisation's Youth League, of "African Claims", a bill of rights which was based on the third article of the Atlantic Charter.

By rejecting the policy of racial segregation out of hand, "African Claims" was a reflection of the growing orientation of organised African resistance towards confrontation instead of co-operation. Far from being a "democratisation of African

consciousness" this new commitment to non-collaboration, passive resistance and civil disobedience on the part of young activists was a response by self-styled leaders to more aggressive actions by a post-war generation of Africans to social crises.

The Lovedale riots were a direct and practical rejection of the clientelism which was the basis for the white liberal establishment's appeal for African support. The fact that the africanist polemic of the ANC Youth League was premised on an attack of white liberal trusteeship does not show that the students had rioted because their consciousness had been awoken by the organisations - of which the ANC Youth League was only one - which claimed to lead them. Suggestions that there was a branch of the Youth League on Lovedale College and that Leballo had been its founder are entirely spurious (50). The deep antipathy towards the patronising attitudes of white liberals was a consciousness gained principally by direct experience, not by political indoctrination or by reading. The rioting Lovedale students acquired their distrust of liberal trusteeship first-hand - in exactly the same way as the prominent ANC Youth League leaders had acquired theirs.(51)

The important point about white liberal trustees is that their attentions to the "natives" were class-specific. The failures as well as the successes of trusteeship had direct relevance for only a small privileged stratum of African society. What made the criticism of trusteeship appeal to other classes of Africans, besides those who benefitted from its efforts and suffered because of its severe limitations, was the richly populist form in which this criticism was couched. This was not the result of intentional political manoeuvring by a sophisticated African petty-bourgeoisie. Rather it was the immediate consequence of this African petty-bourgeoisie, because of the strongly racial character of South African capitalism, having to endure similar material hardships to those experienced by the African under classes.

Leballo was no stranger to material deprivation. In fact the riots at Lovedale had been triggered in part by the poor diets provided by the Institution. During the mid 1940's scholars at the boarding institutions in the Eastern Cape had good reason to differ with Sol Plaatje's assertion that the people on Lovedale Estate were "well-fed and well cared for." (53) Because of commodity scarcity in the wake of the Second World War, exacerbated by the most severe drought in the Eastern Cape in decades, the missionary schools experienced a serious shortage of food. Although certainly better-off than the rural communities that surrounded Lovedale, where malnutrition among children was widespread (54) and where almost 50,000 head of cattle had been lost to the drought in the winter months of 1945 (55), the institution had to extend the winter vacation of 1946 by one week because of chronic food shortages.

Major subsistence problems were not confined to the countryside. The rapid urbanisation of the 1940's had created acute social

difficulties in the cities as well. The shortage of housing, the difficulty for super-exploited labourers to subsist on paltry wages, and the high level of unemployment were just a few of the factors that contributed to the mushrooming of slums and the spawning of squatter communities. It was into this maelstrom that Leballo disappeared after he had been suspended from Lovedale. More fortunate than most, he was able to move into a tiny house in Lady Selborne that was being rented by some of his relatives.

Isolated in this freehold township near Pretoria, unable to communicate with his peers except by letter, and without influential parents to motivate for his re-admission, Leballo had to pin his hopes on his own ability to persuade the authorities to lift his suspension. If by any chance he needed additional incentive to plead his case to an intansigent principal it arrived in late September. With the end of the month approaching, Leballo went to the Standard Bank Building in Pretoria where the offices of the Union Education Department (UED) were housed. The UED was responsible for making the payments of his army subsistence allowance. Leballo optimistically assumed that if he appeared in person in their offices they would pay him directly without consulting the Lovedale Authorities.

Although the department's functionaries refused to pay him, Leballo did not leave the Standard Bank Building empty-handed. He was given a form for the Rev. Shepherd's "perusal and signature." Having no alternative Leballo forwarded the form to Lovedale. In a covering letter he pointed out that,

In the course of my training in the College and my holidays at any time I am still entitled to my subsistence allowance payable to me every month by (sic) Union Education Department. (56)

Leballo ended his second letter to Shepherd by asking for his "kind assistance" which he assured his principal would be "very much appreciated". He was still hoping, somewhat naively, that the white authorities who held his future in their hands would act in the spirit of tolerance and fair-play that they sanctimoniously espoused. Unfortunately for Leballo such a display of goodwill was not forthcoming.

Leballo's letter was read by Mr. J.W. Macquarrie, head of the Teachers Training School, a man who "took much interest" in Leballo and "placed great reliance on him" (57) because they had both served in the North African campaign during World War 2. In what was almost certainly a case of familiarity having caused contempt Macquarrie advised Shepherd to return the form unsigned to the Secretary for Education. This was duly done. In the letter that accompanied the unsigned form Shepherd wrote:

The above ex-soldier has asked me to sign the attached. Following a riot here this student was sent home with all other students on 12th August. Although not arrested, we have reason to believe that he was deeply implicated

in the disturbance and is suspected of being one of the chief ringleaders. (58)

Leballo, of course, was not informed of these developments. The Lovedale authorities, who were busy with preparations for the re-opening of the Institution, did not respond to Leballo until they received a telegram that apparently had been sent by Leballo's mother. (59)

Kitchener still awaiting re-opening date to return. Please advise. (60)

On 9th October, the day after this telegram was sent, the Rev. Shepherd made written contact with Leballo for the first time.

Lovedale re-opened today, and all students who were eligible to return were informed, and re-called. All other students will be informed shortly of the decision of the Senate. (61)

Although Leballo must have suspected that his status at Lovedale had been placed in jeopardy by his involvement in the disturbances, this clear sign that a dark cloud now hung over his future academic and employment prospects gave him a severe shock. He had evidently been deluding himself if he thought that his activities had gone undetected. Never one to relinquish a misapprehension in a hurry, Leballo began to construct his self-defence around a plaintive plea of innocence. However naive this might appear in the light of the evidence that had been amassed against him, this tactic indicates that Leballo was sufficiently well acquainted with the moral priorities of white Christians to guess that protestations of innocence were more likely to receive a sympathetic hearing than an admission of guilt. Especially if these protestations were accompanied by evidence that would incriminate his accomplices.

By the 19th October Leballo had decided that the new canons of passive resistance and defiance to white authority were not as compelling - or binding - as the western use-values of education and subsistence allowances. The immediate relevance of the latter to a 26 year old father of young children who depended on the institution and the state for his immediate as well as long-term income could not have been lost on Shepherd. Hoping to arouse the principal's sympathy Leballo made a point of reminding him that:

I have been granted financial assistance as an ex-volunteer to further my studies at this institution for which I feel if I am refused to return back I shall have sustained a great loss. (62)

Clearly overcome by the anxiety and regret of having jeopardised so much, Leballo felt that the best way to maximise his chance for re-admission was to give Shepherd the information he had demanded in the questionnaire. In a twelve point betrayal he divulged some of the names of those who had incited the students

to riot, those who had been armed with revolvers, those who had incited the students to march on the town of Alice and those who had written the threatening letter to Shepherd. (63)

The extent to which Leballo remained betrothed to white liberal paternalism and its material fruits is evident in the interesting choice of metaphor in his letter of betrayal. It is to provocative protestant phraseology, heavy with inferences of damnation, that he turned to underscore his fidelity to the white authorities who were intent on rustivating him. After having re-asserted that he had in no way been involved in the disturbances, he went on to explain that he acquired his damning evidence at student meetings which he had assumed to be legal. He wrote:

I beg to greatly apologise for having associated with these meetings ... but at that particular time Satan defeated me unconditionally. But from now on I swear that I shall never be defeated by evil spirits and temptations. I am sure my prayer shall be my greatest weapon of all time to conquer evil things.(64)

Although it certainly did not improve his chances, the obvious hypocrisy in these utterances is vaguely redeeming. No doubt Shepherd did not approve of the way in which Leballo was miming the homilies he had been exposed to at Lovedale on a daily basis. In all likelihood it added to his disdain. While Shepherd was proud of the way in which he had pressurised the students to inform on their colleagues, for some of those who succumbed to his dirty tricks he had nothing but contempt. Once again he did not bother to reply to Leballo's letter.

This was to mark a turning point in Leballo's approach to the Lovedale principal, and perhaps to white liberals in general. The three months that had passed since his dismissal had been an emotionally turbulent time for him. Having been in the custody of two white institutions all his adult life - first the Union Defence Forces and then a mission school - Leballo's initiation into the African urban world, with its new sets of material hardships and its stinging disappointments, affected him profoundly. Deprived of a fixed income, paltry though it might have been, and of secure lodgings, Leballo for the first time in his life experienced the drudgery and hardship of wage labour and survival. This lot was made more intolerable and resentable by the pernicious web of racist legislation that successive white governments had promulgated in order to preserve racial domination.

It is not difficult to discern the basis for Leballo's ambiguous relationship to the two socialising institutions of the capitalist system to which he had been exposed. It is significant that during the mid-1940's both the army and the schools in South Africa diligently discharged their obligations under the flag of trusteeship (65).

Kicking his heels in the overcrowded urban home of his relatives, burdening them with his subsistence, Leballo must have had ample time to muse upon the cruel joke that history was playing on him and on members of his social class throughout South Africa. However mediocre the opportunities for an African teacher might have been they were immeasurably superior to those of an unskilled, de-ruralised African city-dweller. To get a slightly *more wholesome helping of the mess of pottage* that settler capitalism was doling out to the black inhabitants of the sub-continent, those few blacks who enjoyed a margin of choice (and Leballo was one of them) were forced to eat at the troughs of white trusteeship.

The sudden experience of one of the harshest forms of proletarianisation - unemployment - had the simultaneous effects on Leballo of making him long for the superior fare that was being withheld, and of reminding him that one of the intensifying peculiarities of South African capitalism was that regardless of the trough at which a black man ate, in the collective eyes of a settler society he was always seen as a swine.*

In Lady Selborne in November 1946 Leballo had begun to forge a self identity based on being an African, and already have had that identity hardened by the racial crust of South Africa's social conflict. But his real life choices were tailored by social forces that accorded with the class nature of conflict in South Africa.

With each passing week Leballo's anxiety rose. The pinch of being without an income was exacerbated by growing uncertainty about his future. The end of the year was approaching; if he did not sit for examinations not only would an entire year have been wasted but he would not become a qualified teacher. When Leballo wrote again to Shepherd on 5th November, there was not only a definite edge of anger to his words but a sense of deepening anxiety as well.

It is very unfair and injustice (sic) when obligations of my education etc. are not fulfilled, and that I cause other expenditure as I did from August up to now in my home, yet money for my fees has been paid ... and my parents are already in difficulties of finance caused by authorities ... The examination is drawing nearer every day. We do not know where we are and we are still cramming. (66)

After again protesting his innocence, although this time with more self assertion - "my name, conduct, character have never been spoiled or defamed" - Leballo then committed the tactical error that, as the constructor of a well-considered alibi, he had thus far studiously avoided. He insisted that two African members

* to say nothing of black women whose collective status was (and is) the lowest of all.

of Lovedale's teaching staff, Mr. Mathlare and Mr. Makalima, could vouch for his innocence since he had been in their company for the duration of the first night's rioting.

Within hours of receiving Leballo's letter the Rev. Shepherd had a private conversation with Mr. Makalima, the contents of which were recorded in Shepherd's own handwriting. The conversation inspired Shepherd to write his longest and most direct letter to Leballo. It is not difficult to imagine the sinking feeling with which Leballo must have read it. After making passing reference to the evidence incriminating others which Leballo had provided, Shepherd went on to write:

Amid much evidence that is still coming in, is the important fact that while you say that when the rioting broke out you ran from your dormitory and immediately took cover at the teacher's cottage occupied by Mr. Mathlare and Mr. Makalima and stayed there until the fighting of the riot was over, Mr. Makalima utterly denies this and declares that you ... came there after it was all over. (67)

For most people in such a situation any remaining hopes for readmission to Lovedale and the attendant rite of passage into the African intelligensia would have disintegrated. But Leballo was gifted with a thick-skinned tenacity. Within days his reply was on its way to Alice. Since it was impossible to retract his claim that he had been with Makalima and Motlhare or to try to cast doubt on the validity of the rejoinder extracted from Makalima by Shepherd, Leballo had to seek a more subtle defence. "Mr. Makalima's statements are not entirely contradictory to mine," he wrote before pointing out that his dormitory was one of the last buildings to be stoned and that he was one of the last students to leave it. (68) This kind of circumstantial counter-argument might have received a sympathetic hearing from an impartial inquiry, but from Shepherd and his discipline committee it was rejected out of hand, thereby re-affirming the arbitrary and authoritarian manner in which the Lovedale authorities handled the crisis. The information extracted from the questionnaires, the interviews and the letters from unsuspecting or compromised students was regarded as sufficient evidence on which to decide dismissals. The students had neither the means nor the opportunity to familiarise themselves with accusations and to answer them.

As Leballo's brash self-assurance got wittled away by gnawing anxieties about money and career opportunities he began to discern Shepherd's tactics and the extent to which he had fallen victim to them. He began to realise that the Lovedale authorities had no intention of rewarding his duplicity with re-admission. "This kind of answer from you sir," he asked Shepherd, "is that what every student must expect if he reveals any information?" Were it not for the probability that the "Shepherd of Lovedale" (as his biographer predictably called him) tended to identify with biblical sages such as St. Peter, he might have recalled, as

he read Leballo's plaintive question, how Pilate rewarded Judas for his pains. But in Shepherd's case, as we shall see, even the blood money was not forthcoming.

What was forthcoming was a memorandum on the 2nd December in which Leballo was finally informed of bureaucratic decisions that had been made without his knowledge and which seriously jeopardised his material predicament. In the memorandum Shepherd informed Leballo that a cheque made out in his favour had been returned to the Governor General's War Fund, that the form from the UED had been returned unsigned, that no arrangements had been made for his sitting examinations that year, and that the Discipline Committee had recommended to the Senate that he should not be allowed to return to Lovedale.(69)

Leballo's pleas of innocence, betrayals of fellow-students, outbursts of anger, hints of dismay at being deceived had all left Shepherd unmoved. Appeals for mercy and acts of duplicity had failed to secure a readmission. Leballo was down to exercising his last option. For other students an admission of guilt would have come earlier - certainly before giving evidence against friends - but not for someone as opinionated and bombastic as Leballo. Drawing heavily on his Anglican background, and at the same time adopting a style that he thought might sway the sentiments of a religious man, Leballo sat down on the 18th December to write his last lengthy letter to Shepherd. Although he once again insisted that he had not been involved at all in the rioting on the night of 7th August*, he sensed it was expedient to acknowledge some complicity in the riots.

I strongly appeal to you as my principal, my minister of religion as well as my father in God for mercy and forgiveness ... I have already suffered the punishment imposed on me for lossing (sic) my classes, my examinations and fees, these are really severe. Should I not have been misled I could have defeated these temptations. Therefore I truly ask forgiveness. I have done this once and for the first time and I shall never do it again ... You are my father in Christ and I humbly ask you to be mercy (sic). I am your son. I did wrong things against you and the people and it is even a disgrace to talk about the strike which was done deliberately and without reasons ... (70)

The Rev. Shepherd had finally secured Leballo's confession. Instead of accepting it in good faith as Leballo must have hoped, Shepherd was to use it against him. In early January 1947 Leballo, having realised that his pleas and protestations to Shepherd were not yielding any results, decided that the next available avenue was to write directly to the Chief Inspector of

* This assertion was probably true since most of the alleged ringleaders had made a point of not being involved in the actual conflagration, preferring to seek refuge in the time-honoured and disastrous mental/manual division of labour amongst rebels. Native Education for the Cape Province. This he accordingly did.

In his letter to Chief Inspector Stander, Leballo objected to the summary manner in which the investigation into the riots had been conducted. In addition he made reference to the way in which the Lovedale authorities had dispensed their justice unevenly. He pointed out that Dr. Shepherd had readmitted some of the students who had been found guilty of the riot and convicted in a court of law. "How does he dissolve this conviction," Leballo wanted to know "when he is not the Supreme Court?" Suggesting that he was being victimised, Leballo requested that Stander intercede on his behalf, authorising his re-admission to Lovedale or his admission to another school.(71)

When Leballo's letter to Stander duly arrived on Shepherd's desk in a government envelope marked "urgent" it was accompanied by a brief note from the Chief Inspector. After having virtually dismissed Leballo's challenges with the statement that "the enclosed letter (is) for your information and any action which you may wish to take", Stander went on to reaffirm his fraternal feelings towards Lovedale's administrators and to wish the institution "a long period of relief from 'disturbances'" (72).

It is hardly possible that as a scholar Leballo was not aware of the intimate relationship that existed between officials in the Native Education Department and heads of schools, especially Shepherd who proudly admitted that "some of my closest friends At the very least he must have realised that the Chief Inspector would have automatically accepted a principal's evidence over the counter-evidence of one of his pupils, for reasons with which Leballo was quite familiar; the two men shared the same social station, the same broad ideological vision, were of the same age and, perhaps most evidently from Leballo's point of view, belonged to the same "superior" race.

Had Leballo harboured any lingering hopes that the Chief Inspector would intercede on his behalf they must have dissipated the moment he read the note that Shepherd sent him a short while later.

I must ask for a full explanation of your letter of 7th January to Mr. A.H. Stander - a letter full of baseless charges against members of the Discipline Committee and myself. That letter has added to your offences. (74)

The irony of these vehement words could not have been lost on Leballo who was equally well-versed in treachery. The clear message that Shepherd sent was that only those with power over their subjects are able to get away with making baseless charges. When in later years Leballo crushed all opposition to his leadership within the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) he relied heavily on this kind of tyrannous rationality.

As far as Stander was concerned Shepherd acknowledged his gesture with a prompt and detailed reply. "I thank you for your personal

letter re the communication from Leballo" it began, before going on to quote Leballo's own words from his letters to Shepherd in order to prove his guilt.

The same affable relationship did not exist between Shepherd and the other white authority figure whose assistance the resourceful Leballo sought. A few days prior to the date on which Stander forwarded Leballo's letter to Shepherd, a letter arrived in Lovedale from Hyman Basner, radical liberal and Native Representative in the Senate. Basner mentioned to Shepherd that he had been consulted by "Mr. Kitchener Leballo and a number of other students of your institution who were sent away after the recent disturbance." (76) Basner went on to make a plea on behalf of these students, requesting that they be reinstated. He lent some weight to this request by saying that he planned to raise the matter in parliament - a promise he never fulfilled.

Shepherd's reply to Basner gives an insight into the divisiveness and acrimony that increasing powerlessness had spawned and which had begun to flourish within the different ideological camps of white 'liberalism'. "Some of us have only one aim," Shepherd pontificated in his reply to Basner "and that is the stabilising and further upbuilding of the cause to which we have given the major portion of our lives." (75) Evidently the Rev. Shepherd was not averse to sacrificing the lives of others to his interpretation of this cause.

In the meantime Leballo had managed to find a job as a teacher at a school attached to the Anglican mission in Lady Selborne. It was here that he first came into contact with the Rev. John Arthur Arrowsmith-Maund. A few years later Leballo was to accuse Maund of fathering a child by an African schoolteacher. The Anglican authorities did not take the charge seriously, but the matter captured the attention of organised resistance politics and catapulted Leballo into the political limelight for the first time. (76) Given the severity of his conflicts with two prominent Anglican ministers and, on both occasions, the off-hand manner in which his point of view was dismissed by paternalistic institutions it is not at all surprising that Leballo later became an impassioned opponent of co-operation between African nationalists and white radicals.

Leballo's teaching position at Lady Selborne was a temporary appointment. Since he was unqualified he was poorly paid. The incentive to complete his studies remained strong. Over the coming months, while he awaited a formal decision from the Lovedale Senate he continued to send the occasional letter to Shepherd. When his teaching post expired his letters to Lovedale once again became insistent.

In May 1947 Rev. Shepherd went on leave. The Acting Principal was Mr. O.B. Bull who had been the Director of Education in Basutoland in the late 1930's when Leballo was an unqualified teacher at Masite Institution. It transpired that Bull remembered having received good reports about Leballo's work at Masite. At

last Leballo had some grounds for optimism. On the 14th May Leballo wrote to Bull asking to be considered for re-admission as well as requesting a testimonial, since both Shepherd and Macquarrie had refused to grant him one. (77) As it turned out the Senate reached its final decision about permanent exclusions during Bull's brief tenure. Accordingly on 23rd June, 1947, almost eleven months after the disturbances, the following memorandum, signed by Bull instead of Shepherd, was forwarded to Leballo:

Further to the correspondence which has passed in regard to yourself and your conduct here last year, I regret to have to inform you that the decision of the Lovedale Governing Council is that you cannot be re-admitted to Lovedale. (78)

Leballo was to write one final letter to Lovedale. This was in October 1947, in which he applied for admission for the following calendar year. One paragraph in particular warrants quoting, since it shows how Leballo's dismissal from Lovedale had repercussions that went beyond the eventual expulsion.

I am suffering educationally a great deal. Wherever I applied for admission my application was refused. I have applied to seven schools without success. Whenever I tell or mention the truth in my application that I am an ex-student of Lovedale who took part in the riot of 1946 ... my application is turned down. (79)

At the foot of the page, in Shepherd's distinctive scrawl, the telling words "take no notice of this" are scribbled. No doubt Shepherd would have adhered to his own injunction had Leballo not managed eventually to secure a position for himself at Wilberforce Institute of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Evaton, Transvaal. Once accepted again at an educational establishment Leballo wrote to the Directorate of Demobilisation requesting that the unexpended balance of his grant of one-hundred pounds be re-instated. The Directorate referred the matter to the Lovedale principal, pointing out that they were inclined to consider Leballo's application favourably. (80)

On the 5th April Shepherd replied to the Directorate. Judging from the content of his letter he chose to ignore the fact that the expulsion notices sent to all the expelled students included a guarantee that Lovedale would not put any difficulties in their way should they be accepted at another school. "We have no wish to ruin this man's career for all time," Shepherd self-righteously wrote. "But" the letter continued

in view of his leadership in subversive activities here and the way in which he caused others younger than himself to take to courses most harmful to themselves I think it would be wrong to deal generously with him in financial matters. (81)

It would be ridiculous to have expected an educationist, a self-satisfied missionary in South Africa in the bargain, to have discerned that the drudgery and the poverty of the African student was a counterpart of the drudgery and poverty of the African wage labourer. However, Shepherd must have been well aware of the fact that by denying Leballo financial assistance he was placing a formidable obstacle in his path.

Leballo did go on to Wilberforce where he was obliged to pay his own fees and subsistence, since on Shepherd's recommendation the Directorate of Demobilisation did not re-instate his grant. It was not long before Leballo was causing anxieties for Mr. B. Rajuili, the Wilberforce principal. Twice in April letters were exchanged between the principals of Lovedale and Wilberforce and on both occasions the primary topic was Leballo's behaviour. Rajuili's letter on the 3rd April read as follows:

We have one student here, Kitchener Leballo. He seems quite interested in the disturbance of authoritative administration. What kind of pupil was he down there and was he not one of those who were involved in the students' strike? (82)

And then again on the 14th April:

re K. Leballo. A very bad student indeed!!! He and a few others have worked our Institute into a most unfortunate kind of a strike - a passive sit-down kind of a strike. (83)

Leballo's increasing militancy was eloquent testimony to the failure of Shepherd's abusive and bullying tactics. Although there were undoubtedly other factors at work - most noticeably the boarding conditions and attitudes of the authorities which were no different at the AME Wilberforce from the Anglican Lovedale - Shepherd's abusive treatment of Leballo must have intensified his disdain for authority. Against the rough edges of a paternalistic liberalism Leballo cut his militant africanist teeth.

What we witness in Leballo's correspondence are fabrications, pleadings, threats and betrayals. The psychopathy of later years already rears its head. Especially when we see him cold-heartedly betray his comrades we get a premonition of the debacle of his press conference at Maseru in 1963. Everywhere there are tell-tale signs of the loquaciousness, the psychic swagger that cost the PAC in exile so dearly. But at the same time there are clear indications of his powers of oratory, of his persistence and his energy. These are aspects of Leballo's individual psychology. They can only be related imprecisely to the realities of the social order in which his persona evolved and underwent constant changes in response to varying social stimuli. But what is clear from the sequence of events disclosed by the correspondence is that Leballo's negative characteristics, like his lying, his betrayals, his fabrications, as well as his considerable

political attributes like his antipathy towards authority, his natural taste for subversion, his considerable powers of persuasion, were all ways in which Leballo orientated himself towards the material exigencies of his daily life. And the most pressing motivation for Leballo and for many Africans of similar social and economic standing was to vigorously defend his petty-bourgeois status. The repressive conditions this social class had to endure because of race capitalism guaranteed that this resilience often spilled into overt resistance. As soon as the options to escape proletarianisation began to close this class was faced with one of two choices - either to capitulate or to resist. Most of them chose resistance at some stage in their lives, as did Leballo when he confronted the Lovedale authorities. Most of them also seized the opportunity to seek accommodation with the social forces that threatened their status, either when the options to escape proletarianisation began to open again or when resistance seemed to offer fewer material rewards than compromise. In Leballo's case it was the latter exigency that prompted him to engage the Rev. Shepherd in a lengthy correspondence.

Once grounded in the material conditions that governed his life Leballo's betrayal becomes understandable although not condonable. Like millions of others from his class and generation throughout the continent Leballo turned to a militant populist idealism as a response to the oppression that he was forced to endure. Leballo's adoption of a pan-African populism, with its resistance to forces of white domination and the assertion of a separate national identity, found its first feeble expression in his involvement in the 1946 Lovedale Riots. The ambiguity of this backward-looking ideology, confronted by and evolving because of the nature of social, production and consumption relations in settler societies, becomes crystallised in Leballo's actions. He galvanised his peers into rebellion against the oppressive conditions they experienced at the hands of white authorities. However his own rejection of what those self-same authorities had to offer was uneven and incomplete. When he was threatened with expulsion from the institution that he had exhorted his fellow-students to burn down Leballo went to the extreme of reneging on his co-rebels in the hope of re-instatement.

Although he was a black African increasingly inclined to perceive the world in terms of militant Africanism, while Shepherd was a white European who devoted his life to the social reproduction of the values and ideas of liberal philanthropy, in Shepherd Leballo had stumbled upon an adversary to whom he was extra-ordinarily similar. Both men had a predilection for the spoken word, Shepherd being regarded as an extremely good preacher, Leballo gaining renown as a fiery orator. Neither of them could tolerate opposition. One of the shared characteristics of which this intolerance was a consequence was that they both had over-developed opinions of themselves. In each case an inflated self-esteem was rather ridiculously prone to flattery. Not surprisingly both Leballo and Shepherd had extremely dogmatic world views. The heavily deterministic facet of their thought -

the one betrothed to a backward-looking Africanist populism, the other to an outmoded religiously inspired paternalism - was precisely the reason why both men excelled in their respective organisations of nationalist movement and philanthropic church despite their glaring deficiencies as human beings.

The Lovedale riots, the practical event that spawned the letters, was one of several events in the mid 1940's which indicated that in order to emerge as a decisive political force, organised African nationalism had to begin with a sustained attack on the liberal institutions that simultaneously nurtured and restrained it. On the surface the Leballo/Shepherd correspondence comes across as a passion play in which the main actors reflect and symbolise these two contending ideologies which they respectively espoused.

It is one of the ontological deceits of ideologies that their hallowed articulators must always be presented as infallible and upright. However the Leballo/Shepherd correspondence does not show either man in a favourable light. While settler capitalism and its relatively autonomous adjunct, the white state, remain the villains of the piece, the victim of that villainy, Leballo, does not come across as a determined and committed militant. Nor does the philanthropic missionary, educationist and editor, Shepherd, cut a convincing figure as a moral and upstanding defender of justice. Rather each man presents to the other a mirror which reflects little more than its own mirroring. At the moment of their inevitably hostile rupture, in spite of the vast social chasm that separates them, the stubborn believer in white clientelism and the wilful upholder of militant Africanism stand at the threshold of a bleak and uncertain future, locked in what Walter Benjamin would have called an "impassioned cult of similarity."

REFERENCES

- 1) see Lovedale Manuscripts. Cory Library MS 16453 A(1).
- 2) MS 16,453 A(1)
- 3) East London Daily Dispatch. 17-8-46.
- 4) MS 16,453 A(1).
- 5) Report of the Disturbances at State-Aided Native Educational Institutions With Boarding Facilities (The Report) p.69 passim.
- 6) Cory MS 16453 B(2). Letter from Students to Shepherd.
- 7) At the time Robert Sobukwe, later to lead the Pan Africanist Congress which was co-founded by Leballo, was a prefect at Healdtown.(see Healdtown Institution Papers. Cory Library. M6 16,598(2).)
- 8) MS 16,453 D. P.M. Sebina to Tshekedi Khama.
- 9) The Report. P69.
- 10) MS 16,453 A(1)
- 11) MS 16,453 B(2). " Inside Lovedale."
- 12) ibid.
- 13) Shepherd to DC South African Police, Alice. 4-12-45. MS 16,453 B(2).
- 14) Shepherd had been editor of "South African Outlook" since 1932.
- 15) The radical liberalism of the likes of Patrick Duncan belongs to a later era. see Tom Lodge. Patrick Duncan and Radical Liberalism UCT Africa Seminar 1977.
- 16) F. Walshe. The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa. Berkeley. 1971. p300.
- 17) in 1945 there were 587,128 Africans at school. Only 2,2% of that number were at secondary schools.
- 18) for a detailed analysis of the 1946 Mine Workers Strike see:
- 19) Ms 3682 letter from Shepherd to Van der Bijl, 11/6/1944.
- 20) I.B.Tabata. The Awakening of a People. A.A.C. 1950.
- 21) The questionnaire sent by Shepherd to all Lovedale students included the following questions: "What people who are not students attended your meetings? Name the papers or pamphlets you receive inciting you against authority. Are you a member of the student's association that meets in your home district? MS16453 A(2).
- 22) "The Voice" mouthpiece of the All-African Convention. September 1946. No. 11. In an interview with this researcher, Prof J.W. Macquarrie, who was head of the training school at the time of the riots, stated: "I think the trouble was a way of hitting back at authority generally, at the government. We were the nearest whites to get at, you see." (Macquarrie interview. April 1989.)
- 23) MS16453 A(2).
- 24) ibid.
- 25) MS 16453 letter by Mda Mda, Secretary of the Western Province Bantu Teachers League, entitled "Those Wolves in Sheepskins". undated.
- 26) His father had been a stern disciplinarian. Shepherd remembered fondly that his father's dying words to one of his brothers had been : "Be a Man!" see G.C.Oosthuizen. Shepherd of Lovedale. p11. Keartland. 1970.
- 27) for Shepherd's biographical details see G.C. Oosthuizen. op.

cit.

- 28) T. Couzins. Moralising Leisure Time in S. Marks and R. Rathbone. Industrialisation and Social Change: African class formation, culture and consciousness 1870-1930. London 1982. pp324/5 . The quote is from R. Shepherd. Literature for the Bantu.
- 29) MS3682. Christmas greetings from Shepherd to J.C. Smuts. 25/12/44.
- 30) Macquarrie interview. April 1989.
- 31) MS16453 A5. Letter from Dr. Kerr to Dr. Shepherd. 17/12/46.
- 32) *ibid.*
- 33) see MS16453 B(1).
- 34) S. Marks.(ed) Not Either An Experimental Doll. pl. University of Natal. 1987.
- 35) *ibid.*
- 36) *ibid.* pp1&2.
- 37) for details of Leballo's war-time career see J.Bolnick. Sefela Sa Letsamayanaha - The Wartime Experiences of Potlako Kitchener Leballo. Wits History Workshop 1990.
- 38) MS16453 A(1) Leballo's fee certificate at Lovedale Missionary Institution.
- 39) By comparison "coloured" males received 10 shillings for every month of service, white females 15 shillings and white males 30 shillings. see pamphlet by A. Scholtz: They Served Their Country. Cape Town. August 1945.
- 40) MS 16453 A(2). Letter from Secretary Bantu Soldiers Sub-Committee of the Governor-General's War Fund to The Principal, Lovedale Missionary Institution. 30/8/1946.
- 41)MS 16453 A(2) Governor General's War Fund to Principal Lovedale Missionary Institution. 10/10/46.
- 42) MS 16453 A(2). Leballo to Shepherd. 2/9/1946.
- 43) MS 16453. At least a hundred of the questionnaires have been preserved in this collection. There is not a scrap of incriminating evidence in any of them.
- 44) MS 16453 A(2). Letter from Leballo to Shepherd. 19/10/1946.
- 45) MS 16453 B(2) Letter from June Phuti to Shepherd 19/8/1946.
- 46) MS 16453 K . Letter from Titus Maqubela to Shepherd 21/8/1946.
- 48) MS 16453 A(3) Shepherd interview with Bokwe . Also interview with Macquarrie for information on Basotho students.
- 49) MS16453 D.
- 50) This argument was used by Tom Lodge in his thesis Insurrectionism in South Africa ^{Ph.D York 1982}, to explain the predominance of Sotho-speakers in the PAC leadership. Since Leballo was one of those leaders this line of reasoning has a special resonance in this regard.
- 51)see T. Karis & G. Carter. From Protest to Challenge. Vol 4.
- 52) with the exception of Walter Sisulu all the leading figures in the Youth League in the 1940's were missionary school matriculants. Anton Lembede and Jordan Ngubane had been educated at Adam's College; A.P. Mda at Mariazell; Nelson Mandela and Govan Mbeki at Healdtown; Oliver Tambo and Godfrey Pitje at St. Peter's. Tennyson Makiwane was a scholar at Lovedale at the time of the disturbances.
- 53) S. Flaatzje. Native Life In South Africa 1913. p189.

- 54) South African Outlook June 1940 reported that "Malnutrition was widespread, a survey from the Lovedale area showing that 70% of those aged 7-12 months were under-weight and 92% of those aged 8-11 years."
- 55) South African Outlook October 1945.
- 56) MS16453 A(2) Leballo to Shepherd. 28/9/1946.
- 57) MS16453 A(1) note scribbled on the back of a letter from the Governor General's War Fund to Shepherd.
- 58) MS16453 A(2) Shepherd to Secretary for Education. 2/10/1946.
- 59) Some time previously Shepherd had received a letter from one Mary Leballo, claiming to be Kitchener's mother. However in an interview conducted in 1981 by Bernard Leeman, Leballo insisted that his parents had been killed in a car accident in the Orange Free State in the late 1930's. This discrepancy awaits resolution.
- 60) MS16453 A(2).
- 61) MS16453 A(2), Shepherd to Leballo. 9/10/1946.
- 62) MS16453 A(2). Leballo to Shepherd. 19/10/1946.
- 63) *ibid.*
- 64) *ibid.*
- 65) The Union Defence Forces were strictly segregated along racial lines. In accordance with the tendencies of the time, the composition of the hierarchy of the Native Military Corps was such that white officers who were "familiar with the native mind" were placed in positions of prominence. Staunch believers in trusteeship were well-represented in that department. The structure and administration of the Corps bore strong traces of their ideology.
- 66) MS16453 A(3). Leballo to Shepherd. 5/11/1946.
- 67) MS16453 A(3). Shepherd to Leballo. 7/11/1946.
- 68) MS16453 A(3). Leballo to Shepherd. 13/11/1946.
- 69) MS16453 A(5). Shepherd to Leballo. 2/12/1946.
- 70) MS16453 A(5). Leballo to Shepherd. 18/12/1946.
- 71) MS16453 A(6). copy of a letter from Leballo to Stander, 7/1/1947, sent to Shepherd on 14/1/1947.
- 72) MS16453 A(6). Stander to Shepherd. 14/1/1947.
- 73) G. Oosthuizen. *op. cit.* pp57/8.
- 74) MS16453 A(6). Shepherd to Leballo. 8/2/1947.
- 75) MS16453 A(6). Basner to Shepherd. 9/1/1947.
- 76) This researcher's interview with Godfrey Pitje. November 1988.
- 77) MS16453 A(6). Leballo to Bull. 14/5/1947.
- 78) MS16453 A(6).
- 79) MS16453 A(6). Leballo to Shepherd. 18/10/1947.
- 80) MS16453 A(7). Director General of Demobilisation to the Principal of Lovedale Missionary Institution. 30/3/1948.
- 81) MS16453 A(7). Shepherd to Director General of Demobilisation. 5/4/48.
- 82) MS16453 A(7). Rajuili to Shepherd. 3/4/1948.
- 83) MS16453 A(7). Rajuili to Shepherd. 14/4/1948.