

ANDIMBA

TOIVO



Ya. TOIVO
PORTRAIT OF A
REVOLUTIONARY
LEGEND

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ATYT A PORTRAIT OF A REVOLUTIONARY LEGEND

NAHAS A.ANGULA

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Gwashaamba 3

PORTRAIT OF A REVOLUTIONARY LEGEND

NAHAS A.ANGULA

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Dedicated to

THIS BOOKLET IS DEDICATED

TO THE YOUTH OF NAMIBIA WHOSE MISSION

IS TO BRING SOCIAL & ECONOMIC

TRANSFORMATION

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CHAPTER I

CELEBRATION OF A HERO

NAHAS A.ANGULA

ON 22 AUGUST 2014 ANDIMBA TOIVO YA TOIVO TURNS 90 YEARS OLD. HIS LIFE HAS BEEN FULL OF TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS BECAUSE OF HIS DETERMINATION TO FIGHT FOR THE DIGNITY, INDEPENDENCE, AND FREEDOM OF HIS PEOPLE.

ANDIMBA TOIVO YA TOIVO IS A GIANT IN THE ANNALS OF THE STRUGGLE OF NAMIBIA, BUT HIS LEADING ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION ARE NOT OFTEN ACKNOWLEDGED IN THE PUBLIC ARENA. THE OLDER GENERATION IS PERPLEXED THAT HIS NAME IS CURRENTLY RARELY MENTIONED AND ARE CONCERNED THAT TODAY'S YOUTH ARE BEING DEPRIVED OF KNOWLEDGE OF A ROLE MODEL WHOSE EXAMPLE SHOULD BE A LASTING SOURCE OF INSPIRATION TO SUCCEEDING GENERATIONS.

THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF ANDIMBA TOIVO HERMAN TOIVO YA TOIVO OFFERS THE NAMIBIAN NATION AN OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON

THE TIMES AND LIFE OF THIS POLITICAL TRAILBLAZER AND LIBERATION ICON

I WAS RECRUITED INTO THE SOUTH WEST AFRICA PEOPLES ORGAN IN 1963 AT ONDANGWA, NORTHERN NAMIBIA, BY ANDIMBA TOIVO YA TOIVO. IN THIS BOOKLET I SHALL FEATURE SOME ASPECTS OF THE LIFE TRAJECTORY OF ANDIMBA HERMAN TOIVO YA TOIVO AS A WAY TO EXPRESS MY ADMIRATION AND GRATITUDE FOR THIS HERO OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE..MY GOAL IS TO CONTRIBUTE TO PUBLIC EDUCATION REGARDING THE IMMENSE CONTRIBUTION OF THIS LEGEND TO OUR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE.

THE KEY QUESTIONS I WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS ARE: HOW DID ANDIMBA HERMAN TOIVO YA TOIVO COME TO THE ATTENTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC?WHAT LIFE EXPERIENCES SHAPED THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL AWARENESS OF THIS PATRIOT?WHAT TYPE OF POLITICAL CHALLENGES DID HE FACE DURING HIS POLITICAL LIFE?HOW DID HE MEET SUCH CHALLENGES?WHAT ARE WE GOING TO CELEBRATE ON 22 AUGUST 2014, AND WHAT LESSONS CAN WE LEARN FROM THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ANDIMBA HERMAN TOIVO YA TOIVO?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

NAHAS A.ANGULA

In preparing this booklet I was assisted by many people. I would particularly, like to sincerely thank Mrs Vicki Ya Toivo for her assistance in checking facts and figures for accuracy and reliability and in editing. Her assistance helped to improve the content of the booklet.

My sincere thanks also go to Mrs Jane Katjavivi who painstakingly edited the content and greatly improved the flow of language and the story.

My secretary Mrs Elizabeth Ngheendavali worked hard to type the manuscript under a tight time schedule. I thank her for going an extra mile in order to meet the deadline.

The booklet should be understood as an exploration of the history of the development of nationalism in Namibia. A comprehensive biography of Andimba Toivo ya Toivo and other pioneers of African nationalism in Namibia should be written for posterity. Meanwhile any commission or omission in the booklet are entirely my responsibility

CHAPTER 1

YA TOIVO'S FORMATIVE YEARS

NAHAS A. ANGULA

FAMILY AND SCHOOL . Ya Toivo was born to Andimba Toivo Uushona and Eliazabeth Nashikto Malima in Omukunda Omangundu (Present day Onyaanya constituency of Oshikoto region) on 22 August 1924. At the time of his birth, Omangundu was one of the counties in the Ondonga Traditional Authority, which was ruled by Omukwaniilwa Nambala Martin Kadhikwa from 1917 to 1942. Omangundu was a station where Europeans travelling to the Ondongwa traditional authority area were first received, scrutinised, and reported to 'Uuwa', the rulers residence, before they were allowed to proceed further into the Ondonga traditional area.

The finish missionaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church put up a temporary Christian conversion centre at Omangundu. Ya Toivo's father acted as a lay preacher and teacher there. He also acted as a link between Omangundu Christian Centre and Onayena Parish further to the west. Ya Toivo's father died in 1935, while Ya Toivo was very young, and his mother left with the sole responsibility of his upbringing and education. Since Ya Toivo was born into a Christian family that was closely associated with the missionaries, he attended primary school at Onayena parish school. In 1939, he was enrolled by a Finnish missionary in Ongwediva Industrial School, where he studied history, arithmetic, geography, woodwork, carpentry and blacksmithing. At Ongwediva Industrial School he met Simon Noah Kaukungwa from Ohalushu, in the Oukwanyama Traditional Authority of Owamboland. Ya Toivo and Kaukungwa became good friends. Their lives crossed each other at critical times in future years. The character, personality and world outlook of Ya Toivo was shaped by a myriad of life experiences, these included: poverty, lack of opportunities, schooling, soldiering, the contract labour system, mine work, and the political development in South Africa and the world. During his childhood, the area where Ya Toivo grew up turned to ecological disasters, locusts, crop failures and destruction of animal life. This poverty pushed young able-bodied men to seek employment opportunities outside Owamboland. Some were recruited to work as contract labourers in central and southern Namibia. Others travelled to work in South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia. The literate ones, trekked to South African mines with the view of eventually proceeding to Cape Town, which was regarded as a town of better employment opportunities. A critical factor influencing developments in Owamboland during Ya Toivo's early life was the penetration of the colonial administration in the Owambo. The colonial administrative centre was officially opened in the Ondonga Traditional Authority. This brought about dramatic changes in the area. The colonial authorities set out to pacify the traditional leaders. Some eventually tried to collaborate with the colonial establishment. Those who resisted colonial pacification were overthrown or murdered. In this the colonial administration were able to extract contract labour from northern Namibia with the cooperation of the traditional leaders.

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tion of the traditional authority. The poverty push and the demand of the colonial settlers for labour capital conspired to ensure that the contract labour recruitment system was formalised in the 1940's. The outbreak of the Second World War in the late 1930's enabled the colonial authorities to recruit young men into the South African Native Military Corps (NMC). Participation in the war gave the young conscripts new perspectives in their world views. During this period, political developments in Africa and elsewhere were creating new social and political awareness among the youth. After the Second World War, South Africa attempted to incorporate South West Africa into South Africa as a fifth province. Chiefs in the south and central regions of the country submitted petitions to the United Nations to protest against the racial exploitation and colonial domination under South African rule. This embarrassed the enlightened youth from the north of the country. The campaign in the 1940's for the Indian independence by Mahatma Gandhi, inspired many young nationalists in Southern Africa. The political campaigns of Kwame Nkrumah in the Gold Coast (present day Ghana) likewise fired the imagination of African nationalists throughout the continent. These events greatly impacted on ya Toivo's world view, his social awareness and political awakening. In the next chapter, I shall illustrate concretely how ya Toivo reacted to these life experiences and how they shaped his political ideas and actions. Ya Toivo's ties and political experiences were shaped by many other young men of that period. Such experiences shaped his political views and missions because he was a man of destiny and mission. It takes a keen observer to relate social and economic conditions to political policies and behaviour. Above all it takes courage to articulate grievances and demands for change. That has been the unique character of ya Toivo. It takes personal commitment for a person to commit him or herself to suffer for one's beliefs and for the common good of the people. The political life of ya Toivo demonstrates rare qualities. It is for this reason that the nation should genuinely celebrate the times and political life of this soldier, teacher, labourer, political mobiliser, prisoner, freedom fighter and one of the founders of the Namibian nation. I shall elaborate on these experiences in the following chapters

CHAPTER 2

POLITICAL EDUCATION

NAHAS A. ANGULA

SOLDIERING. Around 1941, Simon Kaugunwa left Ongwediva Industrial School and joined the South African native Military Corps (NMC), which was established to contribute to the fight against Nazism in Germany under its leader Adolf Hitler. Simon Kaukungwa wrote to his friend Andimba Herman ya Toivo and encouraged him to join the fight against Nazism. Ya Toivo convinced his friends Cleopas Johannes Itope and Andreas Mika Shifula to accompany him to join Simon Kaukungwa in the Native Military Corps. They enlisted at Ondanwa in 1942 and received basic training and training as military leaders in Tsumeb before they were sent to South Africa. While being transported to South Africa, ya Toivo witnessed a peculiar incident that left an incredible mark in his mind. As their convoy was approaching Onamutoni, it stopped suddenly. Ya Toivo saw four white

drivers beating and kicking a black contract labourer. Since it was considered 'taboo' and very dangerous to assault a white man, he and his colleagues could only stand by helplessly and watch the bloody spectacle. This made him determined to oppose white domination. In South Africa, ya Toivo and his colleagues were deployed to guard military installations. While serving in the Native Military corps, ya Toivo's social and political awareness developed further. He saw terrible social conditions in South Africa. At the same time he learnt that a large section of the white population in South Africa and South West Africa supported Nazi ideology. After serving at several posts in South Africa, ya Toivo was transferred back to South West Africa and served in the area of Warmbad. He was officially demobilised on 23 September 1943, before the end of the Second World War. Ya Toivo was clearly articulated in the social and political awareness that developed during his participation in the Second World War. On 1 February 1968, at the end of his trial in Pretoria, ya Toivo stated as follows: 'My Lord, you found it necessary to brand me a coward,' He pointedly told the Judge: 'During the Second World War, when it became evident that both my country and your country were threatened by the dark clouds of Nazism, I risked my life to defend both of them, wearing a uniform with orange bands on it.' He further concluded: 'But some of your countrymen called to battle to defend civilisation resorted to sabotage against their own fatherland.' He stressed: 'I volunteered to face German bullets, and as a guard of military installations, both in South West Africa and the Republic, was prepared to be the victim of their sabotage'. The Second World War was a 'school' that cultivated the social and political consciousness of many servicemen, including Herman ya Toivo and Simon Kaukungwa.

CONTRACT LABOURER. After demobilisation, ya Toivo joined the contract labour system, along with two friends. Their objective was to take up a contract temporarily as a means to take them to Swakopmund, which was reported to offer higher paying work. He and one friend were sent to the farm Obona in the Kalkfeld District.

The German speaking farm owner was in detention in Koffiefontein in South Africa, because he was a supporter of Adolf Hitler and had sent three of his sons to serve in Hitler's army. The owner's wife was in charge of his farm. Ya Toivo often argued with her as she did not provide adequate food and the relationship became unbearable. He wanted to abandon the contract labour system in order to travel to Swakopmund, but was warned that he could be arrested and banned from working in the police zone (the centre and south of the country) if he absconded. His contract was for one year but he was paid only every four months. His pay was 9 Shillings; then 10 Shillings and then 11 Shillings. Although the contract ended, the employer wanted to renew the contract, ya Toivo refused. Ya Toivo then took up a contract in Kalkfeld with Otto Born, a karakul dealer, for a salary of 3 pounds (36 Shillings) per month. After working for three months, he became ill and was hospitalized at Omaruru, but to get there he had to walk almost 70 kilometres to the hospital, following the railway track. When ya Toivo walked back to Kalkfeld following his discharge from hospital, his employer terminated his contract. The experience of working as a contract labourer convinced ya Toivo that being employed in the contract labour system was the most exploitative and degrading experience.. He returned home to Owamboland, vowing never to work for a white person again. He decided to enroll in school. After a week at home, ya Toivo met his friend Cleophas Iitope, who had learned English. He informed ya Toivo that he had been studying at St Mary's Anglican School in Odibo, near the border of South West Africa and Angola, and that he knew someone there who was looking for a young man to stay at her home. Ya Toivo decided without hesitation that he would return to school. Iitope gave him directions to travel to Odibo, and ya Toivo set off the next day, on foot, to get there. In 1945, at the age of 21, ya Toivo enrolled at St Mary's school and took up residence at the home of late Theofilus Hamutumbangela, who was in South Africa studying Theology. His wife Marie Eularia was alone with their two children, Mary and Jack. At St Mary's Ya Toivo began his studies with the basics in the medium of English, but progressed rapidly. He trained as a teacher, giving lessons in the morning and receiving lessons in the afternoon. Helao Shityuwete whom

he would spend many years on Robben Island with was one of his students. Ya Toivo established good relations with Reverend Hamutubangela, who had returned from Odibo in 1946, and Ms Faye Eyre, a British teacher. He had periodic access to newspapers during his stay at Odibo, and he also received news from contract workers returning from the south of the country. While at Odibo Ya Toivo visited Oshikango and saw a pamphlet written by Moses Kotane, the Secretary General of the Communist party of South Africa. This was the first time he had seen a publication written by a black person. He was also aware that the Herero Chiefs Council had appeared before the United Nations on their behalf as early as 1949. After completing his teacher training, ya Toivo was assigned to teach at St Cuthbert School in Onamutayi. While teaching at Onamutayi, he decided he wanted to further his education. He had heard that in Cape Town South Africa one could work during the day and attend night school. Ya Toivo therefore decided to make his way to South Africa through the contract labour system, with the ultimate goal of reaching Cape Town. In 1951, ya Toivo set off with Peter Jacobs, Jacob Kuhangua, Sylvester Mwashindange for Rundu on foot (some 460 Kilometers) in order to travel to South Africa through WENELA, the formal organization of the contract labour system. Since South Africa did not permit men from South West Africa to work on the mines, the three pretended to be Angolans. They first secured employment at the Witwatersrand gold mines present day Gauteng province South Africa. In 1952 they proceeded to Cape Town 1262KM away. ya Toivo first secured employment as a railway guard. After a year he got employment in a furniture store. In 1952, there were about 200-300 migrant workers from Owambo-land in the Cape area. These included Polly Kaukungwa, Eliaser Tuhadeleni, Peter Hilinganye Mweshihange, Solomon Mifima, Maxton Joseph Mutongolumbe, Andreas Shipanga, Tobias Hainyeko, Jacob Kahungua, Paul Helmut and others. Emil Appolus who had studied in Benoni Gauteng, was also in Cape Town seeking employment. In the 1950s the opposition against apartheid was intensified in South Africa. While working as a guard at the Cape Town railway station, ya Toivo listened to the speeches given by his opponents of apartheid at the nearby Grand Parade. He took great interest in these speeches.

In 1954, he received a flyer promoting an Easter Sunday picnic in Hout Bay organised by the South African Nation Congress, the Congress of Democrats, the Indian Congress, and the Coloured Peoples Organisation, and offering free transport to get there. He convinced his friends Simon Jonah Haitenge and Jacob Kuhangua to accompany him. At the Hout Bay gathering, they witnessed Africans, Europeans, Indians, and Coloureds mixing freely, enjoying themselves, singing freedom songs, reciting poetry, and discussing the important political issues of the day. From that time, he never missed the opportunity to attend such events. At these gatherings he met members of the African National Congress, Coloureds Peoples Organisation and Congress of Democrats. In particular, he associated himself with members of the Congress of Democrats such as Brian Bunting, Fred Carneson and Professor Jack Simons, to mention a few. The Congress of Democrats and the Liberal Party were European organisations that actively fought against apartheid at that time and campaigned for a non-racial democratic South Africa. In 1954, ya Toivo joined the Modern Youth Society, a political and social youth group, whose members included Denis Goldberg, Albie Sachs, Ben Turok, Esme Bodenstein and Amy Ahrenstein. Denis Goldberg was the chairperson, and ya Toivo later became the vice chairperson. In 1956, he assisted Fort Hare student Jaitretundu Kozonguizi to come to Cape Town to continue his studies, and Kozonguizi later introduced him to Willy Uatja Kaukwetu. In 1957, he joined the African National Congress in Langa, where he lived. In the same year, he attended political classes given by University of Cape Town professor Jack Simmons at his home, along with Emil Appolius, Festus Isaak Newton, Solomon Mifima, Jacob Kuhangua and Willi Uatja Kaukwetu. He also met Jack Simons wife, trade union leader Ray Alexander who was under a ban following a trade union dispute. Ya Toivo developed a personal relationship with Simmons and Alexander as well as their respective families. These interactions provided ya Toivo with organizational skills in political concepts, as well as wider contacts with people of influence within South Africa's Western Cape's anti apartheid campaign. Ya Toivo used these skills to start mobilising migrant workers from South West Africa. They met in the evenings at a barbershop owned by two Owam-

bo migrant workers, Timothy Petrus Enkali (Nangolo) and Joseph Phillemon. The shop was located at 35 Somerset Cape Town. Andimba Herman Toivo acquired his political consciousness through hard life experiences. As a student at Ongwediva Industrial School he cultivated friendships with students from different traditional communities and dialects within Owamboland. Similarly, when he enrolled for teacher training at St Mary's Odibo, he met more students with whom he developed friendships. When he met some of his former classmates in Cape Town, it was not difficult to mobilise them.. He directly experienced the harsh working conditions on white commercial farms. His encounter with the German owner of the farm Ombona convinced him that the conditions of contract labourers had to be changed. When he became exposed to political campaigns in South Africa, the seeds of political resistance found fertile soil in ya Toivo. It was for this reason that he enthusiastically earned the skills of political organisation. In the next chapter i shal discuss how ya Toivo used these skills to plant the seeds of political awareness in Namibia's oppresses masses, especcially the workers.

POLITICAL

PRAIRIE

FIRE

NAHAS A. ANGULA

EARLY NATIONALISM. After the Second World War, the United Nations inherited the responsibility for the League of Nations mandated territories, including South West Africa. However, in 1946, the South African regime threatened to incorporate South West Africa into South Africa as a fifth province. South Africa conducted a bogus referendum in their country for that purpose. This move was rejected by the Herero Chief Frederick Maharero, who at that point was exiled in Botswana. He was joined by Chief Kutako of the Hereros and Chief David Witbooi of the Namas both indigenous groups in Namibia. Both Chief Kutako and Witbooi sent joint petitions to the United Nations demanding that the UN should not allow South Africa to change the status of the country. The UN General Assembly rejected the South African proposal in December 1946. In November 1946, some educated youth established the African Improvement Society

Generally, the AIS was a social and cultural body. The AIS helped the Herero Chiefs Council to draft petitions to the United Nations. Its leaders were Clemens Kapuuu, David Meroro, Rev Bartholomeus Karuaera, and others. The South West Africa Progressive Association (SWAPA) was established in 1952 by teachers, students, black intellectuals in Windhoek. Since there were few intellectuals among the blacks, SWAPA's influence was minimal. Four years later SWAPA was transformed into South West Africa National Union (SWANU.) The Herero Chiefs Council was rooted in traditional authorities. Its appeal to non-Herero speaking people was limited. Similarly, both the African Improvement Society (AIS) and the South West African Progressive Association (SWAPA) appealed to a limited number of African intellectuals. Their effectiveness in mobilising a significant support base was therefore limited. Ya Toivo was aware of the broad political developments in South West Africa. However having been a contract labourer himself, he identified the workers grievances as the starting point to launch a political organisation. He travelled throughout Cape Town and surrounding towns to meet workers from South West Africa and to recruit them to form a new organisation that would fight for an end to the contract labour system and an end to the South African occupation of their motherland. The new organisation, Owambo Peoples Congress (OPC), was founded on 2 August 1957 in Cape Town. The founding members OPC were: Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, President; Peter Hilinganye Mweshihange; Solomon Mifima, Maxton Joseph Mutongolumbe, Paul Helmut, Emil Appolus, Polly Kaukungwa, Peter Kauluma, Nestor ya Toivo, Tobias Hainyeko, Timothy Petrus Enkali (Nangolo) and Joseph Phillemon. The political slogan of OPC was solidarity, justice and freedom and it is clear that OPC leaders knew the implications of these objectives. There is no denying that the broader struggle for freedom and independence was shaped by these aspirations. Ya Toivo had created a wide network of contacts. In New York his contact was Mburumba Kerina (Getzen), who had obtained a scholarship to study at Lincoln University in the United States, He had joined Michael Scott in New York to represent the Herero Chiefs Council at the United Nations. Ya Toivo sent numerous appeals to world leaders and to the United Nations, in which he spoke on behalf of the suffering Owambo contract workers in South West Africa.

His message painted a picture of the suffering Owambo contract labourers as akin to slave conditions and charged South Africa with violating the terms of the League of Nations Mandate under which they ruled the country. He warned the United Nations to take action to end the contract labour system in South West Africa. One such petition was sent to the chairman of the United Nations Trusteeship Council dated 3 August, 1957, signed by ya Toivo and 80 other signatories to that effect. The petitioners complained that the South African Government and its racial barriers isolated them and prevented them from voicing their opposition to South Africa's policies. They complained of the loss of portions of their land and of the rights to valuable minerals. They also expressed their solidarity with the other peoples of South West Africa, stating, 'we have stood and will continue to stand together with our brothers the Hereros, the Berg Damaras and Namas, to the bitter end. They demanded the following: 1. South West Africa be placed under the United Nations Trusteeship Council; their children be educated to prepare for self rule and the United Nations send a committee to South West Africa to 'see for themselves' the conditions under which its inhabitants are living. Referring to the oppressive and discriminatory character of the contract labour system, they stated, 'we also demand the abolition of the compulsory 'contract system' through which our young men are employed. Contracts should only be taken voluntarily and every young man should be free to choose and serve his master as long as they understand each other. Our married women folk must be allowed to accompany their husbands to their place of work if they wish to do so; the unmarried women must be permitted to enter the police zone and look for work if they wish so. In September, ya Toivo petitioned the United Nations Fourth Committee (Decolonisation Committee), by sending a tape-recorded message to the UN through Mburumba Kerina in New York. The tape lit the political prairie fire in South West Africa: 'The time has come for the people of South West Africa to exercise their rights as human beings. Having become victims of the vicious totalitarian Government of South Africa we, the people of South West Africa, humbly request the United Nations to revoke the mandate and place the Territory under the Trusteeship of the United Nations Organisation.

and to end the misery inflicted upon us by the Government of the Union of South Africa. He further demanded that the UN send a commission of enquiry to South West Africa to study the appalling living conditions of the people. The message was sent 5 September 1958, on behalf of the Owamboland Peoples Congress. It is clear, therefore, that the seed that was planted in Cape Town grew into a tree that nourished and inspired the struggle for freedom and independence in Namibia. As will be discussed, the name of OPC was changed over time to Owamboland Peoples Organisation (OPO) and then the South West Africa People's organisation (SWAPO). But the root of the tree remained the same. There is no doubt, therefore, that the mass political organisational skills of Andimba Herman Toivo ya Toivo made him a trailblazer that started the fire in the virgin political territory of South West Africa in the late 1950's. The strategy used by ya Toivo and his comrades to ensure that their organisational tactics gained root in the people's hearts and minds was the identification of the grievances that deeply hurt the people. Due to limited resources in their environment, people have few options but to escape the contract labour system. Contract labourers shared common experiences. They therefore found their salvation in shared solidarity against the exploitative contract labour system. This was the shared solidarity that the founders of the Owamboland Peoples Congress (OPC) focused on as a mobilisation platform. Their message was simple, 'Struggle for your own liberation'. They also expressed solidarity with the people of the other ethnic groups in South West Africa, who were not part of the contract labour system by force but were also victims of South African rule. From the very beginning, ya Toivo had a vision of a united struggle of all peoples of South West Africa and projected a struggle to liberate their motherland based on solidarity, justice and freedom. In the next chapter, I shall focus on how ya Toivo carried his mobilisation strategy back home to Namibia after his deportation from Cape Town in December 1958.

CRUSADE FOR MASS MOBILISATION

NAHAS A. ANGULA

DEPORTATION TO SOUTH WEST AFRICA. The petition ya Toivo sent to the United Nations drew the wrath of the South African government. He was promptly arrested, interrogated and given 72 hours to leave the territory and return to South West Africa. In December 1959 ya Toivo left Cape Town together with Fanuel Kozonguizi. When ya Toivo and Kozonguizi reached Keetmanshoop, they contacted Phillip Musirika, the leader of the Society for the Advancement of the African Peoples of South West Africa (SAAPSWA). They urged him to launch a Namaland Peoples Congress. The organisational strategy of ya Toivo was to encourage the establishment of Regional Congresses throughout the territory. He reasoned that, due to communication difficulties and the different interests of various communities, it could have been easier to launch a 'regional organisations and eventually

forge them into one national organisation or congress. This was also the pattern in which ANC organised itself at the time in South Africa. From Keetmashoop, ya Toivo and Kozonguizi travelled separately in order to avoid detection from the police. Kozonguizi proceeded to Windhoek first and ya Toivo proceeded later. When ya Toivo reached Windhoek he was met at Windhoek's Old Location by Chief Clemens Kapuuu, Levy Nganjone, David Meroro and Rev Bartholomeus Kauaera. He was accompanied by Hildegaard Kapuuu the sister of chief Clemens Kapuuu. He was also met by chief Hosea Kutako who also feared that if ya Toivo proceeded north to Owamboland he would be detained by the traditional authority. However ya Toivo was determined to challenge the political autonomy of the chiefs in Owamboland. While in Windhoek ya Toivo discussed with others the possibility of forming a national organisation. This did not take root immediately however. From Windhoek ya Toivo proceeded to Tsumeb where he visited the copper mining compound. At the mine, the police were alerted to his presence, at which time he was arrested for trespassing and leaving South West Africa without a permit. While in detention with workers who had fled the contract system or fought with their bosses, ya Toivo continued his political mobilisation. After spending two weeks in goal, he was deported to Ondangwa, a town in northern Namibia Owamboland area under police escort. He was kept handcuffed the entire trip. In Ondangwa ya Toivo was at first kept under the watch of his senior headman, Kambuta Elifas, and was warned not to continue political mobilisation or send any letters abroad. However as ya Toivo continued to politically mobilise and send letters to Cape Town he was put under detention at the palace of the chief Johannes Kambonde of the Ondonga Traditional Authority. He was kept at the chief's palace for four months in 1959, and once again in 1960. When the chief passed away, his successor Martin Ashikoto allowed him to return to Ondangwa. The deportation of ya Toivo seems to have prompted the leaders of the Owamboland Peoples Congress in Cape Town to change the name to Owamboland Peoples Organisation. The word 'Congress' would have attracted too much attention according to the similarities with the African National Congress which suffered a ban.

The word Congress at the time had communist connotations that would otherwise affiliate their small organisation to the African National Congress and Congress of Democrats in South Africa..Emil Appolus and others who remained in Cape Town drafted the constitution of OPO and printed membership cards in Cape Town.They returned to Windhoek in 1959 and established Owamboland Peoples Organisation (OPO) in South West Africa and Sam Nujoma was elected as the second President.The year 1959 also saw the rise of protests in Windhoek by OPO, SWANU and the Herero chiefs council against the South African regimes decision to remove people from the Old Location. The location situated in Windhoek was non-segregated and Africans of different ethnic groups lived together.The municipal authority built a new location to the north of the city with imposed segregation according to ethnic grouping.The indigenous people named the location 'Katutura' which means, 'the place we would not like to stay' in the Herero language.A demonstration led by women in December 1959 against the removals was broken up by the municipal police using live ammunition to the effect that 11 people were killed and many more wounded. Mainly female fatalities.After the old location shootings, Sam Nujoma and some other leaders left the country and travelled across the continent to Tanganyika, which was soon to achieve self-government.In the north of the country, Owamboland, ya Toivo attracted the attention of many people, especially students and youth.I personally experienced this political awakening when I attended Oniipa Boys School in 1959,which was run by Finnish missionaries.One Sunday, ya Toivo and his companions visited Oniipa, they were riding bicycles.Many of us wanted to follow them, or even just to touch them, the police were spreading rumours that ya Toivo was a witch and the devil incarnate.Such mystery attracted much attention for the man but also increased his popularity.People were eager to hear what he had to say and in his message OPO spread like wild fire.. Ya Toivo and such comrades as Eliaser Tuhadeleni, Erasmus Mbumba, Simon Kaukungwa,Mathew Joseph,Vinnia Ndadi,Hifikepunye Lucas Pohamba,John ya Otto Nankudhu,Eliaser Mwatale and Nathanael Homateni,to name a few spread out through sleepy Owamboland and spread the word through political campaigns.A new network of political contacts was developed throughout Owamboland.

Conflict soon developed between OPO and the traditional authorities..Several of the traditional authorities among the indigenous Owambo people were instigated by colonial authorities and this resulted in floggings of OPO organisers.This forced some of the OPO organisers to flee to exile.However despite the harassment by police and traditional authorities, ya Toivo stood firm and remained in Oluno, within the Ondaangwa area, where he had built his home and setup a business.In 1960 OPO became the South West Africa Peoples Organisation (SWAPO) of Namibia and ya Toivo was designated as the regional secretary of Owamboland northern Namibia.His shop was a centre of SWAPO activities and functioned as a contact point. He criss-crossed Owamboland by bicycle and later by automobile recruiting members into the organisation.He maintained contact with SWAPO leaders who were operating in Tanganyika (present day Tanzania) sending youth into exile.Ya Toivo mobilised the youth, he encouraged them to go into exile and further their education and served as the contact point for those individuals who wanted to join SWAPO in exile.This strategy led to the constant supply of young people to the SWAPO external wing located in Tanganyika therefore facilitating students studies abroad. Others were sent for military training.Toward the middle of 1965 Eliaser Tuhadeleni reported to ya Toivo that he had received 6 trained military cadres who had returned to Namibia from Tanganyika, to fight the South African regime by military means..This information created somewhat of a dilemma for ya Toivo the Owamboland leader of SWAPO:'Are we as a movement sufficiently prepared to launch an armed struggle?'he asked.'How could we ensure a reliable supply of materials and other neccessitty to cadres?'Where shall we establish military bases?'When the enemy finds out what will be the consequences?'These were some of the difficult questions the SWAPO leadership at home were faced with.I personally remember attending a meeting at Uuyoka village, near Onayena, Southern Oshikoto Region northern Namibia, in September 1965.At that meeting ya Toivo told the audience to be careful and not share information with untrustworthy people.He warned:'There will be a time when the character of the struggle will change.I did not actually know what he meant:I only understood when i arrived in Lusaka in 1966.

Ya Toivo resolved the dilemma of whether to go to war with meagre resources or to continue the peaceful political struggle. Thus at the trial, he told the Pretoria Supreme Court: 'Suddely we in SWAPO found that a war situation had arisen and that our colleagues and South Africa were facing each other on the field of battle.' He explained; 'Although I had not been responsible for organising my people militarily and although I believe we were unwise to fight the might of South Africa while we were so weak, I could not refuse to help them when the time came.' This demonstrates ya Toivo's courage, commitment and preparedness to sacrifice for his own beliefs. These are the qualities of a revolutionary. As a leader he did not shirk his responsibility to assist the armed struggle despite the huge risks involved. Ya Toivo opted to struggle for his country out of deep conviction. He prepared himself to face risks to his own life for the sake of his country and his people. Through his conviction ya Toivo was able to persevere in the face of multiple challenges of the struggle. He endured arrests, detentions, harassments and eventually long imprisonment. Few Namibian leaders went through the experience he went through for the sake of the people and the country.

ON TRIAL IN PRETORIA

NAHAS A. ANGULA

ARMED STRUGGLE. On the morning of 26 August 1966, the SWAPO military cadres base was attacked by South African forces. It was located in the thick forested area of the Uukwaludhi Traditional Authority. The area was known locally as 'Omugulu Gwombashe'. The worst fears of ya Toivo materialised; the wisdom of embarking on armed struggle. Some of the combatants were killed, arrested and some scattered into the forested area and escaped. Ya Toivo continued to assist them materially after they managed to escape. Ya Toivo was arrested on 9 September 1966 together with 36 others were flown to Pretoria the capital of South Africa and held in the Compol Building. Ya Toivo was kept in solitary confinement, interrogated, tortured and deprived of sleep. At one point he recounted he was suspended by his arms, with his toes barely touching the ground. During his incarceration he suffered moments of memory loss

During his time in detention, a number of the other Namibians detained were held in detention but never charged. It appeared some had been placed there to pass on information from other detainees to the South African authorities. Ishmael Fortune, a Swapo representative formerly based in Tanganyika and soon returned to South West Africa knew about the training of the exiled youth who had launched the armed struggle. He inexplicably appeared among the accused before the trial but was never charged. The Namibians were kept in confinement while the legislative branch of the South African executive made arrangements in the form of a new Bill specifically to deal with them. The Terrorism Act No 83 of 1967 was made retroactive to the year 1962 to ensure the Namibians could be charged with the act of terrorism and be sentenced to death. Facing the death penalty, ya Toivo was allowed to make a statement on behalf of SWAPO, his fellow accused and himself. The statement reads in full as follows: 'My Lord we find ourselves in a foreign country, convicted under the laws made by people whom we have always considered foreigners. We find ourselves tried by a judge whom is not our countryman and who has not shared our background. When this case began, council stated that this Court had no jurisdiction to try us. What they had to say was of a technical and legal nature. The reason may mean little to some of us, but it is the deep feeling of all of us that we should not be tried here in Pretoria. You, my Lord, decided that you had the right to try us, because your Parliament gave you that right. That ruling has could not have changed our feelings. We are Namibians and not South Africans. We do not now, and will not in the future, recognise your right to govern us; to make laws for us in which we had no say; to treat our country as if it were your property as if you were our masters. We have always regarded South Africa as an intruder in our country. This is how we have always felt and this is how we currently feel, and it is on this basis that we have faced this trial. I speak of 'we' because I am not trying to speak for myself but for others as well, and especially those of my fellow accused who have not had the benefit of any education. I think also what when I say 'we', the overwhelming majority of non-white people in South West Africa would like to be included.

We are far away from our home; not a single member of our families has come to visit us, never mind be present at our trial. The Pretoria Gaol, the Police Headquarters at Compol where we were interrogated and where these statements were extracted from us, and this court all we have seen in Pretoria. We have been cut off from our people and the world. We all wondered whether the headmen would have repeated some of their lies if our people had been present in the court to hear them. The South African Government has again shown its strength by detaining us for as long as it pleased; keeping some of us in solitary confinement for 300 to 400 days and bringing us to the capital to try us. It has shown its strength by passing the Act especially for us and having it made retrospective. It has even chosen an ugly name to call us by, One's own are called patriot, or at least rebels; your opponents are called terrorists. A court can only do justice in political cases if it understands the position of those that is has in front of it. The state has not only wanted to convict us, but also to justify the policy of South African Government. We will not even try to present the other side of the picture, because we know that a court that has not suffered in the same way that we have cannot understand us. This is perhaps why it is said that one should be tried by one's equals. We have felt from the very time of our arrest that we were not being tried by our equals but by our masters, and those that have brought us to trial very often do not even do us the courtesy of calling us by our surnames. Had we been tried by our equals, it would have been necessary to have any discussion about our grievances. They would have any discussion about our grievances. They would have been known to those set to judge us. It suits the government of South Africa to say that it is ruling South West Africa with the consent of its people. This is not true. Our organisation, the South West African Peoples Organisation, is the largest political organisation in South West Africa. We considered ourselves a political party. We know that whites do not think of blacks as politicians - only agitators. Many of our people, through no fault of their own, have had no education at all. This does not mean that they do not know what they want.

A man does not have to be formally educated to know that he wants to live with his family where he wants to live, and not where an official chooses to tell him to live. To move about freely and not require a pass; to earn a decent wage; to be free to work for the persons of his choice for as long as he wants; and finally, to be ruled by the people that he wants to be ruled by, and not by those who rule him just because he has more guns than he has. Our grievances are called 'so-called' grievances. We do not believe South Africa is in South West Africa in order to provide facilities and work for non-whites. It is there for its own selfish reason. For the first forty years it did practically nothing to fulfill its 'sacred trust' for SWA. It only concerned itself with the welfare of the whites. Since 1962 because of the pressure from inside by non-whites especially my organisation, and because of the limelight placed on our country by the world, South Africa has been trying to do a bit more. It rushed the Bantustan Report so that it would at least have something to say at the World Court. Only the one who is not white and has suffered the way we have can say whether our grievances are real or 'so called'. Those of us who have some education, together with our uneducated brethren, have always struggled to get freedom. The idea of our freedom is not liked by South Africa. It has tried in this court to prove through the mouth of a couple of its paid Chiefs and a paid SWAPO official that does not represent the people of South West Africa. If the government of South Africa were sure that SWAPO did not represent the innermost feelings of the people of South West Africa, it would not have taken the trouble to make it impossible for SWAPO to advocate its peaceful policy/armed policy. South African officials want to believe that SWAPO is an irresponsible organisation that resorts to the level of telling people not to get vaccinated. As much as white South Africans may want to believe, this is not SWAPO. We sometimes feel that it is what the government would like SWAPO to be. It may be true that some member or even members of SWAPO somewhere refused to do this. The reason for such refusal is that some people in our part of the world have lost confidence in the governors of our country and they are not prepared to accept even the good that they are trying to do. Your government my Lord, undertook a very social responsibility when it was awarded the mandate over us after the First World War

It assumed a sacred trust to guide us towards independence and to prepare us to take our place among the nations in the world. We believe that South Africa has abused that trust because of its belief in racial supremacy (that white people have been chosen by God to rule the world) and apartheid (segregation of population). We believe that for fifty years South Africa has failed to promote the development of our people. Where are our trained men? The wealth of our country should be used to train your people for leadership and the sacred duty of preparing the indigenous to take their place among the nations of the world has been ignored. I know of no case in the last twenty years of a parent who did not want his child to go to school if the facilities were available, but even if, as it was said, a small percentage of parents wanted their children to look after cattle, I am sure that South Africa was strong enough to impose its will on this as a fact, as it has done in so many other respects. To us it has always seemed that our rulers wanted to keep us backward for their benefit. 1963 for us was to be the year of our freedom. From 1960 it had looked as if South Africa could not oppose the world forever. The world is important to us. In the same way as all laughed in court when they heard that an old chief tried to bring down a helicopter with bow and arrow, we laughed when South Africa said that it would oppose the world governing body. We knew that the world was divided, but as time went on it at least agreed that South Africa had no right to rule us. The South African Government creates hostility by separating people and emphasising their differences. We believe that by living together, people will learn to lose the fear which some of the whites have of the Africans. This fear is based on their desire to be superior and privileged. When whites see themselves as part of South West Africa, sharing with us all its hopes and troubles, then that fear will disappear. Separation is said to be a natural process. But why, then, is it imposed by force, and why then is it that whites have the superiority? Headmen are used to oppress us. This is not the first time that foreigners have tried to rule indirectly—we know that only those who are prepared to do what their masters tell them become headmen. Most of those who had some feeling for their people and who wanted independence have been intimidated into accepting the policy from above. Their guns and sticks are used to make people

Say they support them. I have come to know that our people cannot expect progress as a gift from anyone, be it United Nations or South Africa. Progress is something we shall have to struggle and work for. And I believe that the only way in which we shall be able and fit to secure that progress is to learn from our own experience and mistakes. Your Lordship emphasized in our judgement the fact that our arms come from communist countries, and also that words commonly used by communists were to be found in our documents. But my Lord, in the documents produced by the state there is another type of language. It appears even more often than the former. Many documents finish up with an appeal to the Almighty to guide us in our struggle for freedom. It is the wish of the South African government that we should be discredited in the western world. That is why it calls our struggle a communist plot; but this will not be believed by the world. The world knows that we are not interested in ideologies. We feel that the world as a whole has a special responsibility towards us. This is because the land of our fathers was handed over to South Africa by a world body. It is a divided world, but it is a matter of hope for us that it at least agrees about one thing, that we are entitled to freedom and justice. Other mandated territories have received their freedom. The judgement of the World Court was a bitter disappointment to us. We felt betrayed and we believed that South Africa would never fulfill its trust. Some felt that we would secure our freedom only by fighting for it. We knew that the power of South Africa is overwhelming but we also know that our case is a just one and our situation intolerable - why should we not also receive our freedom? We are sure that the world's efforts to help us in our plight will continue, whatever South Africans may call us. We do not expect that independence will end our troubles, but we do believe that our people are entitled - as are all peoples - to rule themselves. It is not really a question of whether South Africa treats us well or badly, but South West Africa is our country and we wish to be our own masters. There are some who will say that they are sympathetic with our aims, but that they condemn violence. I would answer that I am not by nature a man of violence and I believe that violence is a sin against God and my fellowmen. SWAPO itself was a non-violent organisation, but the South African government is not truly interested in whether opposition is violent or non-violent.

It does not wish to hear any opposition to apartheid. Since 1963 SWAPO meetings have been banned. It is true that it is the tribal authorities who have done so, but they work with the South African Government, which has never lifted a finger in favour of political freedom. We have found ourselves voteless in our own country and deprived of the right to meet and state our own political opinions. It is surprising that in such times my countrymen have taken up arms? Violence is truly fearsome, but who would not defend his property and himself against a robber? And we believe that South Africa has robbed us of our country. I have spent my life working in SWAPO which is an ordinary political party like any other. Suddenly we in SWAPO found that a war situation had arisen and that our colleagues and South Africa were facing each other on the field of battle. Although I had not been responsible for organising my people militarily and although I believe we were unwise to fight the might of South Africa while we were so weak, I could not refuse to help them when the time came. My Lord, you found it necessary to brand me as a coward. During the Second World War, when it became evident that both my country and your country were threatened by the dark clouds of the Nazism, I risked my life to defend both of them, wearing a uniform with orange bands on it. But some of your countrymen when called to battle to defend civilisation resorted to sabotage against their own Fatherland. I volunteered to face German bullets, and as a guard of military installations, both in South West Africa and the Republic, was prepared to be the victim of their sabotage. Today they are our masters and are considered the heroes, and I am called the coward. When I consider my country, I am proud that my countrymen have taken up arms for their people and I believe that anyone who calls himself a man would not despise them. In 1964 the ANC and PAC in South Africa were suppressed. This convinced me that we were too weak to face South Africa's force by waging battle. When some of my country's soldiers came back I foresaw the trouble there would be for SWAPO, my people and me personally. I tried to do what I could to prevent my people from going into the bush. In my attempts I became unpopular with some of my comrades, but this too, I was prepared to endure.

Decisions of this kind are not easy to make. My loyalty is to my country. My organisation could not work properly - it could not even hold meetings. Even though I did not agree that the people should go into the bush, I could not refuse to help them when I knew that they were hungry. I even passed on the request for dynamite. It was not an easy decision. Another man might have been able to say 'I will have nothing to do with that sort of thing.' I was not, and I could not remain a spectator in the struggle of my people for their freedom. I am a loyal Namibian and I could not betray my people to their enemies. I admit that I decided to assist those who had taken up arms. I know that the struggle will be long and bitter. I also know that my people will wage that struggle, whatever the cost. Only when our human dignity is restored to us, as equals of the whites, will there be peace between us. We believe that South Africa has a choice - either to live at peace with us or to subdue us by force. If you choose to crush us and impose your will on us then you not only betray your trust, but you will live in security for only so long as your power is greater than ours. No South African will live at peace in South West Africa, for each will know that his security is based on force and that without force he will face rejection by the people of South West Africa. My co-accused and I have suffered. We are not looking forward to imprisonment. We do not, however, feel that our efforts and sacrifice have been wasted. We believe that human suffering has its effect even on those who impose it. We hope that what has happened will persuade the whites of South Africa that we and the world may be right and they may be wrong. Only when white South Africans realise this and act on it will it be possible for us to stop our struggle for freedom and justice in the land of our birth. This historic statement embodies the central character of the struggle for Namibia's freedom and independence. This statement is a testimony to the courage, steadfastness, and commitment of a patriot who fully understood his historic responsibilities. The dynamics and the complexity of the struggle will only fully be appreciated when all the records of the trial are made public. During the trial, some people with whom ya Toivo had worked closely came forward to testify against him. (SWAPO members) Several exhibits were introduced.

These exhibits are still not available to the public. Full disclosure of these records would shed light on what actually happened that led to the arrest of ya Toivo and his comrades..It is, however, indisputable that ya Toivo's statement and his courage in facing his accusers helped to mobilise the successive generations to continue the struggle and to prosecute it to its logical end. To escape the prosecutorial authority that further implicated ya Toivo and his compatriots. In the next chapter, I shall discuss the prison experience of ya Toivo on Robben Island. I shall conclude by highlighting the political development in the country despite the absence of formal SWAPO leadership.

ROBBEN ISLAND

NAHAS A. ANGULA

THE DEFIANT PRISONER. On February 1968, ya Toivo was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. Most of his co-accused were sentenced to 20 years or life imprisonment. He and his co-accused were sent to Robben Island, off Cape Town. From the time of his arrival at Robben Island, ya Toivo did not acknowledge the authority of South Africa to imprison him and his Namibian comrades, and he demanded that they be transferred to serve their sentences in their own country. He certainly wanted to be closer to home so that he could continue to influence the political developments in the country. In 1971, after being forced to strip naked and having punched a warder and knocking him to the ground. As punishment, he was kept in solitary confinement for almost a year and a half. When he was released from solitary confinement, he was not sent to the section where his fellow Namibians had been confined, but he was placed with Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and other prominent South African political prisoners.

Throughout his incarceration, Ya Toivo defied the prison authorities and maintained the stance that he had taken at the trial: that South Africa had no right to imprison him and his fellow accused. He therefore refused to cooperate in the system of classification, which gave privileges to prisoners, such as permission to write letters, to study or to receive newspapers. Rights based upon their adaptation to prison life and submission to prison authority. As a result, he was limited in writing or receiving letters from his family. For example, according to prison records, he only wrote three letters in total; 1978 and two letters in 1980. The letters that he was allowed to receive were censored by the prison authorities, and much of what was written in them was deleted. It was also virtually impossible for Ya Toivo's family to visit him in prison, because of the expense of travelling thousands of kilometres from northern Namibia. During his 16 years on Robben Island he only received three or four visitors from his family. These were arranged through the churches in Namibia, with the assistance of international bodies such as the Red Cross, International Defense and Aid Fund, and Amnesty International. The authorities refused the request of family member Loide Kamati to visit him in 1983. That same year, Bernt Carlsson, then Secretary General of the Socialist International, sent a letter to Ya Toivo inviting him to address the congress of the Socialists International in Portugal. The Robben Island authorities never delivered the invitation letter to Ya Toivo. This was one of many letters that was not delivered over the years. On the rare occasion when a family member was able to visit, Ya Toivo insisted on speaking in his mother tongue, Oshindonga. This irritated the prison authorities. Ya Toivo also refused to comply with prison rules and procedures. He refused to shave his beard, to answer questions when called by prison officials, or to cooperate in routine inspections by a magistrate and the commanding officer. A prison record states that 'Ya Toivo' after a soccer match tried to incite prisoners by walking around with his fist in the air (black power sign). In a prison authority report dated 13 April 1972, the commanding officer of Robben Island described Ya Toivo thus: 'He is considered an embittered man with intense hatred of whites and anything associated with the whites.' Another report dated 24 May 1982 concluded: 'His general

prognosis can be described as bad and there is no question about
 any form of rehabilitation'. It concluded: 'His steadfastness to his
 political beliefs was unequalled. After the arrest and incarceration of
 ya Toivo and other Swapo leaders, political mobilisation in Namibia
 came to almost a standstill. However, the seeds of resistance planted
 by ya Toivo and his comrades in the country since the late 1950's did
 not fall on bare rocks. They fell on fertile soil. Similarly, ya Toivo's state-
 ment in Pretoria Supreme Court and his subsequent imprisonment
 on Robben Island created political ferment in the heart and mind of
 the people at home, inspiring many young Namibians to leave the
 country and join the liberation struggle. In 1960, Liberia and Ethiopia
 had petitioned the International Court of Justice to revoke South
 Africa's Mandate over South West Africa. In 1966, the Court ruled that
 the petitioners lacked judicial standing to bring the case. However, in
 1971, the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on
 South West Africa asserted the legal authority and the rights of the
 United Nations as the lawful governing authority of the Territory of
 South West Africa. This was a catalyst to renewed political resistance
 that started in Namibia. After the ICJ ruling in 1971, Bishop Leonard
 Auala of the Evangelical Owambo-Kavango Church (ELOK), and
 Moderator Gowaseb of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South
 West Africa, issued an Open Letter to South African Prime Minister
 John Vorster on 30 June 1971. The two Church leaders asserted: 'The
 Church Boards' urgent wish is that in terms of the declarations of the
 World Court and in co-operation with the United Nations, of which
 South Africa is a member, your government will seek a peaceful
 solution to problems of our land and see to it that Human Rights be
 put into operation and that South West Africa may become a self-
 sufficient and independent state. The pastoral letter was read in every
 black Lutheran Church in the country. The leaders of the Anglican
 and Roman Catholic Churches supported the message of the Open
 Letter to Prime Minister Vorster. Bishop Colin Winter of the Anglican
 Church emphasised: 'The Christian Church, as the conscience of the
 nation, must now speak out with clarity'. The national contract workers'
 strike that started in December 1971 and lasted until March 1972, in
 particular, was a result of the struggle that started in 1957, and as

articulated in ya Toivo's petitions to the United Nations. The contract workers' strike shook the foundations of labour relations in the country, when 13,000 contract workers stopped working and returned to Owamboland. It demonstrated the power of organisation and solidarity. At the end of the strike, the formal contract labour system was abolished and this opened the possibility of workers formally organising themselves into trade unions. Simultaneously, the youth and students were in political ferment in the early 1970's. Many students were expelled from their schools. Some were flogged by traditional authorities and imprisoned by police. By the time the Portuguese regime collapsed in 1974, opening the way for an independent Angola in 1975, political tempers in Namibia were boiling. As a result, there was an exodus of young people who left the country to join SWAPO outside Namibia. The exile population grew very rapidly. SWAPO could now absorb more young people into its ranks. The People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) grew and became strong. SWAPO was now able to expand and to escalate the armed Liberation Struggle. While on Robben Island, ya Toivo refused to meet with people sent by the South African authorities who claimed to be researchers or journalists, attempting to elicit his views on political topics. He also refused to meet former associates who had then returned from exile and back to Namibia to collaborate with the South African authorities in establishing internal settlements and therefore preventing democratic elections in Namibia. On 9 June 1977, Mburumba Kerina said that Namibia was going to achieve independence through the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA). He enclosed newspaper cuttings and requested ya Toivo to meet and defer from SWAPO. ya Toivo refused this request and used the occasion to organise a meeting with eight fellow prisoners with whom he had been incarcerated but had been separated from for some years. He requested consultation with his fellow prisoners based on Mburumba Kerina's visit. The prison authorities allowed this and the prisoners met for a period of four days. After the meeting ya Toivo and the fellow prisoners returned the letter to Mr Kerina. Ya Toivo has stated that in 1983, he was misled into receiving Moses Katjiuangua.

After they chatted about some mutual friends in Cape Town, Katjiuongua attempted to discuss a meeting between South African President P.W. Botha and the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA). ya Toivo stated that he was not interested in discussing P.W. Botha. It appeared that Katjiuongua was coerced into receiving ya Toivo's approval for a release by P.W. Botha on the insistence of the DTA. In early 1984 after serving 16 years of his 20 year prison sentence, ya Toivo was transferred to Windhoek, Namibia with four of his fellow detainees pending release. ya Toivo refused to be released unless his other comrades who he had been left on the island be released as well. His mother came to visit him and agreed with his decision to remain incarcerated until the other comrades who were subsequently incarcerated could be released. Ya Toivo then requested to meet SWAPO representatives in Windhoek, and after a full day of discussions and deliberations, they convinced him to leave the prison. On 1 March 1984, he was unconditionally released. All Namibians who remained on Robben Island were released on 20 May 1984. Clearly the mobilisation work of ya Toivo and his political co-workers created a sustained political awareness and consciousness in the country. Despite their imprisonment, their political message caught the attention of the population at large. The words of ya Toivo in Pretoria Supreme Court at the beginning of the trial in 1968 were therefore prophetic: 'I know that the struggle will be long and bitter, however, he affirmed his confidence in the determination of his people: 'I also know that my people will wage that struggle, whatever the cost,' History has proved him right, today Namibia is a free and independent sovereign nation.

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NEITHER FOR POWER NOR FOR GLORY

NAHAS A. ANGULA

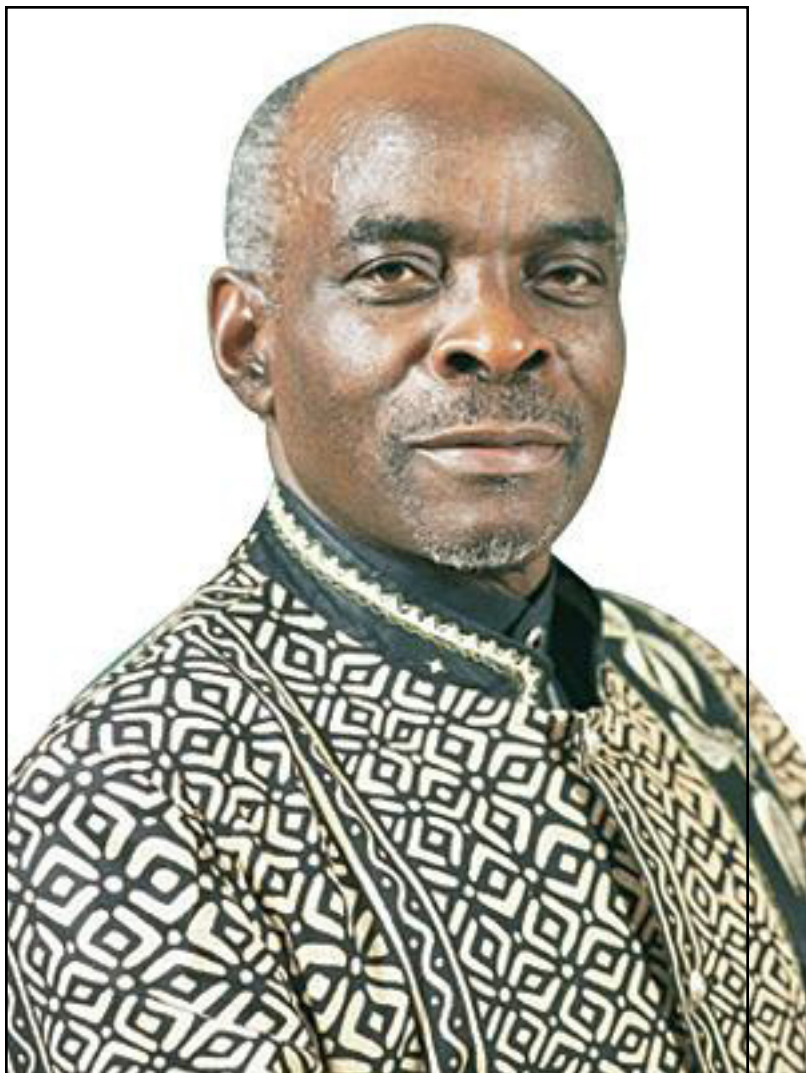
EXILE. After his release from imprisonment, ya Toivo joined his comrades in exile. From 1984 to 1991 he served as the Secretary General of SWAPO. This position allowed him to continue to play a vital role in consolidating unity in the organisation. When Moses Garoeb replaced him as Secretary General in 1991, ya Toivo accepted the defeat at congress with deep humility,

In 1989, after the holding of free and fair elections under the direct supervision of the United Nations, ya Toivo was elected to the Constituent Assembly, the formal committee which was responsible for the compilation of the first Constitution of the Republic of Namibia. When the Constituent Assembly was converted into a National Assembly, ya Toivo became a member of the National Parliament of the Republic of Namibia. He served in his parliamentary position until his retirement in 2006. Ya Toivo is therefore, one of the founding Fathers and Mothers of the Namibian nation. He further served in the following portfolios as part of a free and independent Namibia; first minister of Mines and Energy (1990-1999), Labour (1999-2002), Prisons and Correctional Facilities (2002-2005). Ya Toivo married Vicki Earnstein on 29 March 1990 and they established a family consisting of two nephews, Isaac and Phillemon and twins Nashikoto and Mutaleni born in 1993. The life trajectory of ya Toivo portrays a personality of steadfast character, courage, determination, patience, and above all, humility. Faced with life-threatening situations as he challenged South African misrule of his motherland and hostile traditional authorities, he chose to remain inside the country to mobilise political awareness among the oppressed masses. When he encountered disappointments such as the negative pronouncements of the World Court of Justice in 1966 (current CC), he did not lose hope. He remained steadfast as he proclaimed in his speech at the Pretoria trial in 1968: 'We are sure that the world's efforts to help us in our plight will continue; whatever South Africans may call us.' Ya Toivo's courage was tested to the limit when he had decided whether to support the armed struggle or not. He saw the limited resources at the disposal of the combatants in August 1966. He was fully aware of the dire circumstances and the almost futility of challenging the military power of South Africa at that time. However, he ultimately conceded that his responsibility as political mobiliser caused the population to respond and join the struggle, form underground organisations within Namibia and in exile. Ya Toivo decided to support the armed struggle against all the odds in the year 1966. He reasoned: 'I have come to know that our people cannot expect progress as a gift from anyone... Progress is something we shall have to struggle and work for.'

He concluded; 'I believe that the only way in which we shall be able and fit to ensure that progress is to learn from our own experience and mistakes.' As a true leader, ya Toivo took a courageous stand on what he believed to be true and just. It required a determined mentality to endure torture and solitary confinement for a year and a half at the beginning of his incarceration. Being separated from fellow countrymen for years within the prison. He endured torture, humiliation, deprivation of sleep and isolation. He lost his memory during interrogation in Pretoria. His determination to ensure his political goals of freedom and independence were won sustained his sanity to endure. Ya Toivo was a humble politician. He related well to ordinary people, neither did he seek public attention. His political life was therefore separate from his social life. During an election campaign when some local SWAPO officials declared certain areas as no-go areas for opposition parties, ya Toivo as a party cadre stood alone to condemn political violence and called for tolerance of democratic political views. Finally ya Toivo did not commit his entire life to the struggle for national independence for his own gain. He never sought glory nor political power but rather fought for his people's dignity. As he stated in a 1986 interview; 'most of the people who are incarcerated in South African jails because of their convictions and their beliefs are very strong. Their morale is very high. They cannot be dissuaded or diverted from their cause. I was able to sustain myself in a sane position because I was on the right track and pursuing a noble cause; to liberate my country and people. This is a mission. In every walk of life people have to make some sacrifices for the just cause. In my case, I felt this is my mission, and I have to complete my mission: to liberate my motherland!'. His legacy was steadfast courage, perseverance and humility as he fought for a just cause. He truly was a revolutionary legend.

ANDIMBA HERMANTOIVO YA TOIVO (nee Uushona) PASSED AWAY
IN JUNE 2017 BEFORE BECOMING THE AGE OF 93. HE WAS NEITHER
ILL NOR HOSPITALIZED AND MET HIS MAKER IN A PEACEFUL STATE.
HE WAS SURVIVED BY HIS WIFE ,DAUGHTERS ,NEPHEWS AND SISTER.





NAHAS ANGULA ANGULA AFTER JOINING THE PARTY IN 1963 BY THE BEHEST OF yaTOIVO MADE IT INTO EXILE IN ZAMBIA IN SEPTEMBER 1966..HE WAS THE THIRD PRIME MINISER OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA FROM 2005 - 2012. HE HAS HELD SEVERAL GOVERNMENT PORTFOLIOS INCLUDING EDUCAION & DEFENSE. AFTER yaTOIVO'S RELEASE FROM ROBBEN ISLAND IN 1984, ANGULA WAS SECRETARY OF EDUCATION FOR SWAPO IN EXILE. HE HOLDS A MASTERS IN EDUCATION FROM COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY NY USA

