



FROM APARTHEID TO DEMOCRACY



TOTAL STRATEGY

- Strengthening the army

'TOTAL STRATEGY' – REFORM

- Labour – Workers Unite!
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- A permanent urban African population
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TOTAL STRATEGY – REPRESSION

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THE MOVE TO DEMOCRACY

- Negotiations begin
- The first democratic elections

GRADE 9

Content: Repression and the growth of mass democratic movements in the 1970s and 1980s: external and internal pressure

GRADE 12

Content: How did South Africa emerge as a democracy from the crises of the 1990s?

- The crisis and collapse of apartheid

New words

communist forces – the South African government considered anyone who opposed apartheid a ‘communist’. In the context of the Cold War, talk about a ‘communist threat’ encouraged fear and rallied white support for the government.

onslaught – attack

reform – gradual changes to improve the political situation

TOTAL STRATEGY

The Soweto Uprising of 1976 changed the political landscape of South Africa forever. Resistance intensified, international pressure against the government increased and the economy went into serious decline. The South African government began to feel increasingly threatened.



I’m giving you a final warning: one man, one vote in this country is out – that is never!

Quoted in South Africa since 1948 by C. Culpin, p 109.

◀ In 1978, P.W. Botha succeeded B. J. Vorster as prime minister.

P.W. Botha was determined to keep South Africa under white control. His government believed that white South Africa was under threat from **communist forces** both within and outside South Africa. He called this threat the ‘total onslaught’. Botha’s response to ‘total **onslaught**’ was ‘total strategy’.

‘Total strategy’ aimed to fight the ‘total onslaught’ in two ways:

- The government gradually introduced a number of **reforms** in the hope of winning support in the black community.
- At the same time, it intensified its repression in order to stamp out all opposition.

Strengthening the army

An important aspect of P.W. Botha’s ‘total strategy’ policy was to strengthen the position of the military. Before Botha became prime minister, he had been Minister of Defence. As prime minister, he increased the power of the army considerably. Two years of military service for all white men became compulsory and the constant presence of the army in the townships was a regular feature of the 1980s.

► *This Casspir, which dominates the 1980s exhibition in the Apartheid Museum, is a sinister symbol of the army’s threatening role and widespread presence in the 1980s.*



Activity 1:

Analysing military statistics

The growth of military expenditure and personnel

	1961	1974	1977	1981
Total military personnel	106 000	328 000	439 500	592 000
Military spending in millions	72	707	1 940	3 000

▲ From IDAF., *Apartheid: The Facts*, 1983, p. 68.

1. By how much did the South African government increase its military spending between 1974 and 1981?
2. In the period 1961 to 1981, how many more people were drawn into the armed forces?
3. Using the table and your own knowledge, explain what events in South African history may have persuaded the South African government to increase the size of its army and the amount it spent on the military: in 1961 and 1977?
4. How do you explain the sharp increase in the military budget as well as the numbers of military personnel from 1977 to 1981? (★)
5. Why did the apartheid government choose to use the army to implement its 'total strategy'? (★)

GRADE 9: LO 1, AS 3

GRADE 12: LO 1, AS 3

'TOTAL STRATEGY' – REFORM

As part of Botha's policy of reform, he made **concessions** in a number of different areas. He hoped that by doing this, many blacks would be **bought off** and would be satisfied with these so-called reforms. In this way, resistance would die down and whites would be able to hold on to power.

In this section, we look at some of the different reforms Botha's government introduced. These included the recognition of African trade unions, the granting of independence to some homelands, the recognition of a permanent urban African population, the attempt to create an African middle class and the creation of the **Tricameral Parliament**.

Labour – Workers Unite!

Under the umbrella of reform, the government recognized African trade unions in 1979. Until then, African trade unions had been legal but were not allowed to negotiate with employers over wages and working conditions.

Why did the government recognize African trade unions at this time? On the one hand, it was part of P.W. Botha's strategy of reform. But the government was also forced to respond to the growing **militancy** among workers. In 1973 nearly 60 000 workers embarked on a wave of strikes in Durban as a response to a sharp increase in food prices. The Durban strikes were a major turning point in the history of African trade unions. Inspired by the strikes, more and more African trade unions began to spring up and organize workers.

The recognition of African trade unions in 1979 made it easier for them to operate. They realized that they would have more power if they worked together. This led to the formation of the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) and other umbrella bodies. FOSATU supported the principle of non-racialism and believed that all workers should unite and fight for better conditions.

GRADE 9

Content: Repression and the growth of mass democratic movements in the 1970s and 1980s: external and internal pressure

GRADE 12

Content: How did South Africa emerge as a democracy from the crises of the 1990s?

- The crisis and collapse of apartheid

New words

concessions – giving some rights as a result of pressure

bought off – won over by giving them a stake in the system

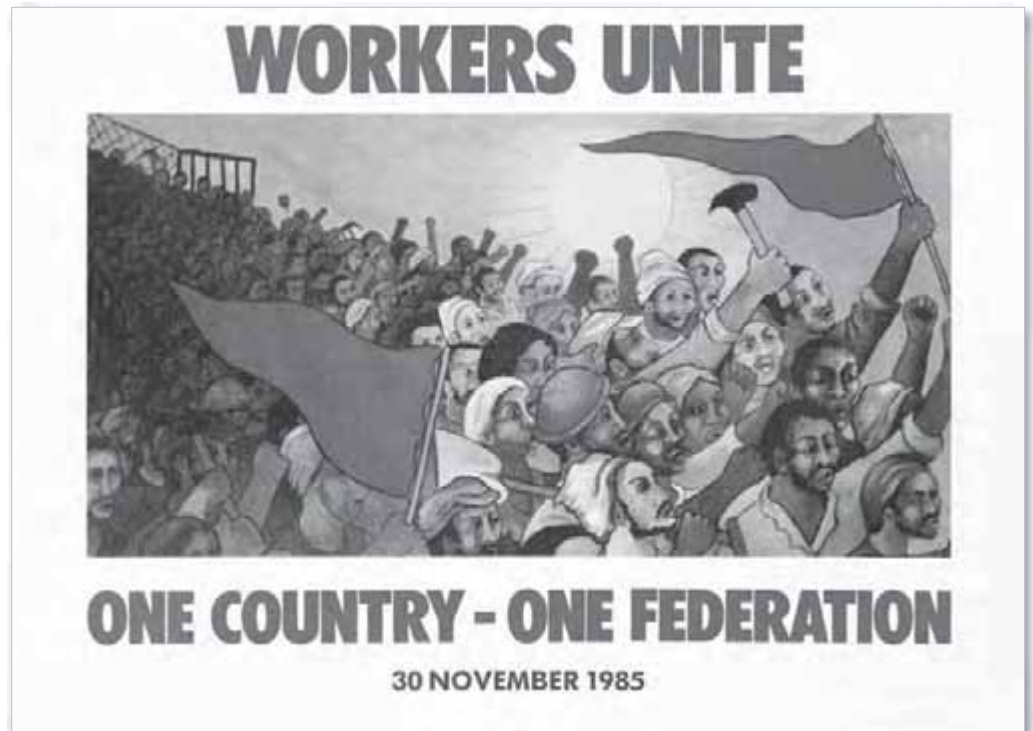
Tricameral Parliament – 'tri-' means three and '-cameral' means chamber. Therefore the Tricameral Parliament was a parliament with three separate chambers, in this case, the House of Assembly for whites, the House of Representatives for coloureds and the House of Delegates for Indians.

militancy – willingness to take aggressive and direct action

The push for unity continued and in 1985, FOSATU merged with other unions to form a new federation – the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). COSATU, with nearly half a million members, was the largest trade union organization ever formed in South Africa.

Under COSATU's banner, workers organized countless strikes and protests in the factories and on the mines to improve wages and working conditions. However, as repression intensified, COSATU was drawn more and more into the struggle for broad political change and became one of the most important anti-apartheid forces.

May Day – 1 May – is traditionally celebrated as Workers' Day throughout the world. COSATU often used May Day as a call to action for workers. After the 1994 elections, 1 May was recognized as Worker's Day in the new South Africa. Today we celebrate it as a public holiday and remember the struggles of working class people for their rights.



▲ Poster produced in the Western Cape to celebrate the launch of COSATU. It is inspired by Soviet posters of workers in the USSR.

Activity 2: Analysing a political poster

GRADE 9: LO 1, AS 2 and 3
GRADE 12: LO 1, AS 3 and 4

1. Look at the following symbols in the poster, and explain what they mean:
 - the red flag
 - the bright yellow sun
 - the hammer
 - the raised fists.
2. What does the slogan “One Country - One Federation” mean?
3. Using the poster and your own knowledge, explain why African trade unions wanted to create one federation.
4. Why do you think this poster was produced? (★)
5. Do you think this is an effective poster? Explain your answer. (★)

Making homelands 'independent'

The government decided to grant limited independence to four homelands. This would entitle them to their own president and give them some administrative powers. However, the homelands remained financially dependent on South Africa and did not have the right to make their own policies.

In this way, P.W. Botha and his cabinet hoped to create a group of African leaders in the homelands who depended on the South African government's support. In 1976, the Transkei became the first homeland to gain its 'independence', followed by Bophuthatswana and Venda in 1977 and the Ciskei in 1981.

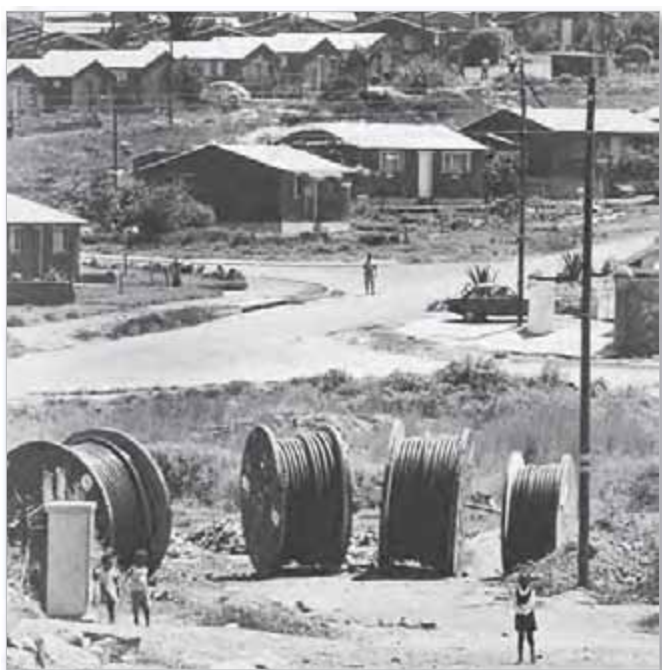
Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi refused to accept 'independence' for KwaZulu and massive resistance by the people in the remaining Bantustans eventually led the government to scrap its plans to extend 'independence' to them.



◀ Most people considered Kaiser Matanzima, the leader of the Transkei, and other homeland rulers as puppets of the white South African government. He was nevertheless given an official funeral in post-apartheid South Africa.

A permanent urban African population

African people living in the urban areas remained a huge problem for the government, but it was eventually forced to recognize that there was a permanent urban African population outside of the Bantustans. From the late 1970s, plans were launched to develop African townships, in the hope that electricity, improved services and new housing would reduce militancy among residents.



◀ From the late 1970s, people in Soweto were allowed to buy new houses rather than rent them, and new suburbs for the better-off were constructed in Diepkloof Extension, Orlando West and Selection Park.

New words

constitution – rules and principles according to which a country is governed

parliament – the most important law-making body in a democratic country

cabinet – a group of ministers chosen by the head of the government to be responsible for policy and administration

sham – pretence

Creating a new African middle class

At the same time the state tried to create an African middle class which would have an economic stake in the system and so be loyal to the government. Many measures were introduced, both economic and cultural, to encourage better-off urban Africans to adopt a middle class lifestyle. Separate amenities legislation was relaxed to allow middle class blacks access to hotels, cinemas and restaurants in white areas.

The film about the 1980s in the Apartheid Museum begins by showing the government's drive to create better housing for some residents in Soweto.

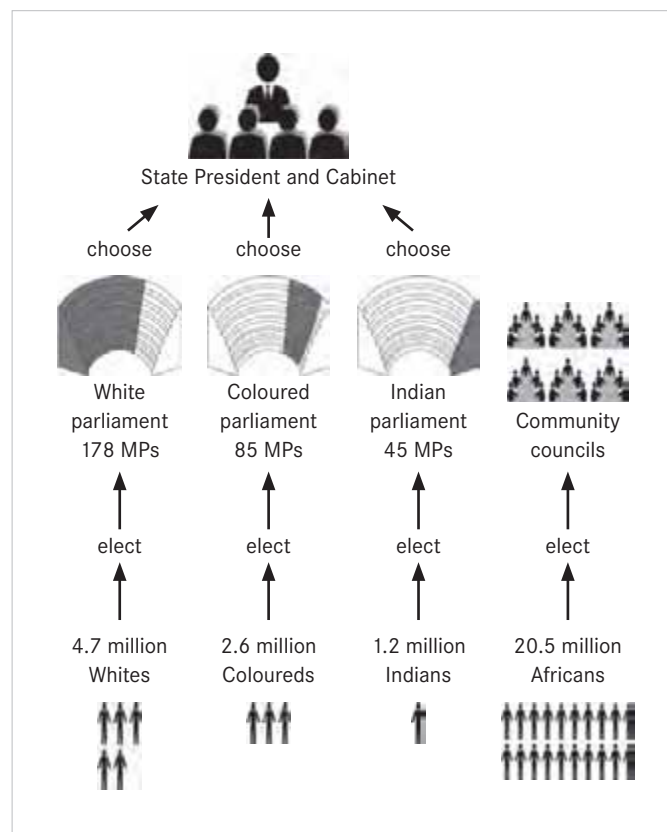
The Tricameral Parliament

In 1983, P.W. Botha introduced a new **constitution** for South Africa, which gave limited parliamentary representation to coloureds and Indians. There was to be a new **parliament**, the Tricameral Parliament. The new constitution allowed coloureds and Indians to vote for their own representatives who would sit in their own chambers of parliament. Africans were still denied the right to vote. Their interests would be represented by black, local or community councils.

The white, coloured and Indian chambers each handled laws that related to their 'own affairs'. This meant that issues relating to education, health and community affairs were dealt with separately by each chamber. For example, the House of Representatives – the coloured chamber of parliament – would make decisions about coloured education.

All matters that related to the wider issues of governing the country, such as defence, taxation, and industry were called 'general affairs'. The **cabinet**, which included representatives of all three chambers, made decisions on these. Under this new constitution, P.W. Botha became state president. He had far greater powers than any previous head of state, and could decide which matters were 'general' and which were 'own affairs'.

People saw the 1983 Constitution for the **sham** democracy that it was. Not only was the Tricameral Parliament racially segregated, but it excluded Africans altogether.



◀ A diagram showing how Botha's new Tricameral Parliament was supposed to work
C. Culpin, South Africa since 1948, p. 114.

Activity 3:

Analysing a diagram

1. How many members of parliament would represent the:
 - 4.7 million whites
 - 2.6 million coloureds
 - 1.2 million Indians?
2. How were the rights of the 20.5 million Africans to be represented:
 - at a local or community level?
 - at a national level?
3. According to the diagram, who was the highest power in the land?
4. Using the diagram and your own knowledge, explain what powers the Indian and coloured chambers of parliament would have in the new constitution.
5. According to the government, the Tricameral Parliament provided real power sharing in South Africa. To what extent was this true? (★)

GRADE 9: LO 1, AS 3
GRADE 12: LO 1, AS 3

The formation of the United Democratic Front

Two **umbrella bodies** were formed in 1983 to oppose the new constitution – the National Forum, which took a black consciousness position, and the United Democratic Front (UDF) which was aligned to the ANC and supported the principle of non-racialism. A contest developed between the two groups and the UDF emerged as the stronger. The UDF eventually consisted of over 500 anti-apartheid organizations, which came together to oppose the Tricameral Parliament and the whole system of apartheid.

The UDF called for all coloureds and Indians to **boycott** the elections for the new parliament and for Africans to boycott elections for the local community councils. In 1984, only one in five black voters actually voted in the elections. The UDF campaign had successfully denied the new parliament any kind of **legitimacy**.



◀ Reverend Allan Boesak, speaking at the launch of the UDF in Mitchells Plain, Cape Town, in 1983.

We want all our rights,
we want them here and
we want them now.

The banner of the UDF in the photograph on the left shows the different anti-apartheid groups that came together to form the UDF. They included trade unions and groups which represented women, churches, students, youth and civic organizations and South Africans of all races.

New words

umbrella bodies – large organizations which co-ordinate smaller organizations under their influence

boycott – the practice of refusing to participate in a particular activity in order to show opposition to it

legitimacy – recognition and acceptance by society



Political posters

In the 1980s, political posters became an important form of protest. Most of these posters were produced by grassroots community structures around the country and addressed all forms of inequality in apartheid South Africa. By producing their own posters, these organizations were demanding their right to be heard and communicating their opposition to apartheid. The Apartheid Museum has dedicated a whole wall to these political posters.

◀ Posters like this were produced to appeal to coloureds and Indians not to vote in the 1984 elections for the Tricameral Parliament.
Source: Images of Defiance, SAHA.

Activity 4: Working with two sources on a theme

GRADE 9: LO 1, AS 2
GRADE 12: LO 1, AS 4



◀ This cartoon by Abe Berry was published in the City Press in the late 1980s. It shows how P.W. Botha's reforms left Africans feeling that these were empty promises.

Source: A. Berry, Act by Act, p. 94.

▶ A UDF poster, indicating what really lay behind P.W. Botha's reforms.



1. What does the size of the package in the cartoon say about the reforms that P.W. Botha introduced?
2. What do you think the caption means, "Never mind the small package – just look how large I've spelt it out for you!"?
3. What point is the poster making about the nature of Botha's reforms?
4. How does it make this point?
5. In what ways do the cartoon and poster make a similar comment about the nature of Botha's reforms? Explain your answer. (★)
6. Do you agree with the ideas presented in the cartoon and poster? Provide evidence to back up your answer. (★)

TOTAL STRATEGY – REPRESSION

At the same time as the government was introducing all these so-called reforms, it continued to use very harsh measures to quell the growing resistance. Anti-apartheid organizations were **banned** and their leaders were imprisoned.

Many people were placed in detention. This meant they were kept in prison without trial. Detainees were often tortured, and many of them died. Between 1963 and 1990, at least a hundred people died in detention. The victims committed suicide or died after being tortured by the police. The government, however, always claimed that detainees either committed suicide or died as a result of strange accidents.

During this period, the number of political assassinations increased. Examples documented in the Apartheid Museum include Ruth First, who was killed by a letter bomb in Maputo, Griffiths and Nonyamezelo Victoria Mxenge who were killed in separate incidents in Durban and the Cradock Four, activists Matthew Goniwe, Fort Calata, Sparrow Mkhonto and Sicelo Mhlauli, who were mysteriously murdered.

GRADE 9

Content: Repression and the growth of mass democratic movements in the 1970s and 1980s: external and internal pressure

GRADE 12

Content: How did South Africa emerge as a democracy from the crises of the 1990s?

- The crisis and collapse of apartheid

New word

banned – organizations that were banned were not allowed to exist anymore

Activity 5: Responding to a political poem

Read the poem and then do the following activities:

1. Discuss the message of this poem.
2. Choose one of the strange statements made in this poem and illustrate it in the form of a poster.
3. In groups of four, create a piece of performance theatre by acting out this poem.

GRADE 9: LO 1, AS 5

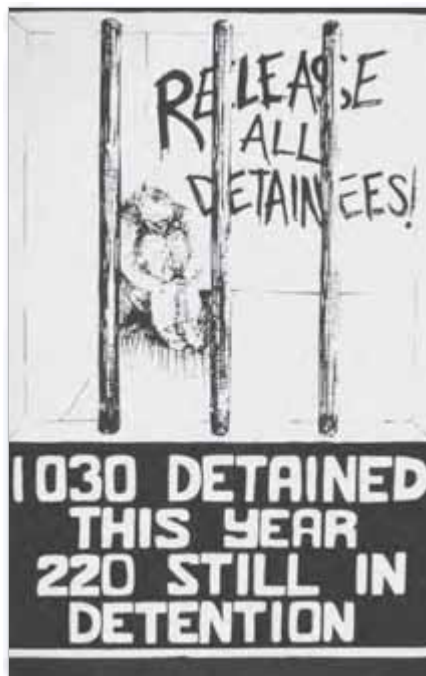
GRADE 12: LO 3, AS 4

In detention

Chris van Wyk

He fell from the ninth floor
He hanged himself
He slipped on a piece of soap while washing
He hanged himself
He slipped on a piece of soap while washing
He fell from the ninth floor
He hanged himself while washing
He slipped from the ninth floor
He hung from the ninth floor
He slipped on the ninth floor while washing
He fell from a piece of soap while slipping
He hung from the ninth floor
He washed from the ninth floor while slipping
He hung from a piece of soap while washing*

▲ C. van Wyk, *New Inscapes*, p. 290.
The ninth floor was where interrogations of political prisoners took place at John Vorster Square, the police headquarters in Johannesburg.



▲ Poster produced in 1985, following the wave of detentions during the first State of Emergency.

New word

wet bag method – a method of torture where a wet canvas bag is placed over the person's face and then the torturer closes off the nose and mouth so that the person cannot breathe. In this way, the tortured person is brought close to death.

Voices of detainees

Source A

What bothered me were the rats. They were the size of cats and they were in the passage all the time. I took my clothes to block their access, but they ripped all that and came in ... I screamed the place down and they found me in a corner eating my T-shirt. This is how berserk I was. Isolation for seven months taught me something. No human being can live alone. I felt I was going deeper and deeper into the ground. It felt as if all the cells were like coffins full of dead people.

▲ Adapted from *Country of My Skull* by A. Krog, p. 181.

Source B

Before the morning I was taken from the cell to the place where I had been tortured the day before. I was suspended into a jack where I was handcuffed below the knees and my arms, and an iron bar was forced between my arms and legs, and I was left hanging between the two tables. I was being pushed and I was told to tell the truth ... I was bleeding from my nose and somebody was stabbing me with a sharp instrument in my private parts – for about four to five hours.

▲ Adapted from *Detention and Torture in South Africa* by D. Foster, p. 128.

Source C

Ashley Forbes, a political activist in the Western Cape, confronted his torturer, Jeffrey Benzien, at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission:

Forbes: *On the second occasion I was wrapped in a carpet ... my clothes were removed and the **wet bag method** used on me ... Do you remember that you said you were going to break my nose by putting both your thumbs into my nostrils, ripping them until blood came out of my nose?*

Benzien: *I know you had a nosebleed but I thought that was as a result of the smack I gave you.*

▲ Adapted from *Country of My Skull* by A. Krog, p. 73.



◀ Source D

The Detainees Parents Support Committee (DPSC) and the Detainees Support Committee (DESCOM) were formed in response to the wave of detentions in the early 1980s. They brought parents and family members of detainees together and offered them a support system. They also publicized the plight of detainees. Here Fanie Guduka, an 11-year-old from Alexandra, speaks about his experiences in detention at a meeting in the mid 1980s. The DPSC had found out where he was being held and had helped to secure his release.

Activity 6: Developing empathy in history

Read the sources on people's experience of torture in detention. Then imagine that you are a parent whose son is in detention in the 1980s. He has managed to smuggle a letter to you in which he describes some of his terrible experiences. You feel desperately worried and decide to write a letter to Helen Suzman, the only member of parliament to challenge the government on its detention practices. The letter should cover the following aspects:

- a description of your son's treatment at the hands of the security police
- your own feelings about his experiences
- a request for information about your son's legal rights and where you can go for help.

GRADE 9: LO 1, AS 5
GRADE 12: LO 3, AS 4

SKILLS Skills development: historical empathy

Developing historical empathy involves trying to understand why people in the past acted in the way they did. You may need to suspend your own set of beliefs and ways of behaving and thinking in order to try and understand how people thought, believed and reacted to events in the past.

What to do

- Always refer to reliable historical evidence when you explore the perspectives of people in the past.
- Be aware that people behaved the way they did because of the particular circumstances that they found themselves in.
- Analyse the views and attitudes of different kinds of people who lived at that particular time.

What to avoid

- Set aside your own beliefs and points of view when you are trying to imagine how people in the past may have felt and acted.
- Do not use make-believe and creative writing, which are not based on sound historical evidence.

New word

inaugurated – formally introduced to the public

RESISTANCE INTENSIFIES

Resistance to the government and apartheid grew quickly in the 1980s. On 3 September 1983, the day the Tricameral Parliament was **inaugurated**, African townships in the Vaal Triangle, south of Johannesburg, erupted in violence as a result of rent boycotts.

The ANC in exile inspired the people to take action through its broadcasts from Lusaka on Radio Freedom. During his New Year's Day broadcast in 1985, Oliver Tambo, the president-general of the ANC, called on those in the struggle to 'render South Africa ungovernable'.

The youth took to the streets. Shouts of "*Heyta! Ta! Heyta! Ta Ta!*" that accompany the *toyi-toyi* resounded through the townships. The targets of these protests were often the local community councils, which were seen as puppets of the apartheid state.

GRADE 9

Content: Repression and the growth of mass democratic movements in the 1970s and 1980s: external and internal pressure

GRADE 12

Content: How did South Africa emerge as a democracy from the crises of the 1990s?

- The crisis and collapse of apartheid under internal and external pressure leading to negotiations
- How were the crises managed: conflict, compromise, negotiation, settlement, elections?



▲ Youths in the township of Duduza on the East Rand protesting against the local community councils in 1986.

In a film about the 1980s in the Apartheid Museum, Motsamai Kobi, 14 years old when he joined the ranks of the comrades, explains the power of the *toyi-toyi*:

“The *toyi-toyi* happened everywhere, it happened anywhere ... It kept the morale very high. It brought us hope and joy. When we raised our knees, they came as high as our chests. Then we realized that we are tomorrow’s leaders.”



▲ ANC youths toyi-toying in Mooi River, KwaZulu-Natal. The toyi-toyi became a unifying force in township protests.

Resistance spread rapidly, and by 1985, many townships in South Africa had become ‘ungovernable’. At this point, trade unions, particularly COSATU, spearheaded the resistance and were helped by church organizations.

The government fought back. It declared a **state of emergency** in some areas in 1985 and a full emergency over the whole country between June 1986 and 1990. The police were given wide powers and, in effect, South Africa became a police state. The army occupied the townships, which only intensified the people’s anger.

By 1986 between 16 000 to 20 000 people had been detained and thousands had died at the hands of the police and the army. Violence also broke out between ANC supporters and members of Chief Buthelezi’s Inkatha Freedom Party. Political funerals became a regular occurrence.



▲ A single woman protests as the South African Defence troops move into the townships.

New word

state of emergency – the government suspended the rule of law and was given special powers to rule the country. The police and army were given the power to arrest anyone who was believed to be a threat to the state.

Activity 7: Using photographs for different purposes

1. Imagine that you are the editor of *Die Beeld*, a government-supporting Afrikaans newspaper in the 1980s. You want to use the photograph on top of page 86 to persuade your readers that the State of Emergency is necessary. Write a caption which will persuade them of the danger of the protesting youths in the townships.
2. Imagine that you are the editor of *Sechaba*, the underground ANC newspaper in the 1980s. Write a caption for the photograph on bottom of page 86, which will persuade your readers of the power of mass resistance to apartheid.

GRADE 9: LO 1, AS 5
GRADE 12: LO 3, AS 4



◀ During the State of Emergency, newspapers were not allowed to print what was really happening. The Weekly Mail took the brave step of showing its readers just how much of their news was being blacked out.

The role of the Churches

With so many leaders of the struggle in prison and in exile, the Churches became the voice of the people. Many church leaders opposed apartheid because they saw it as both immoral and unchristian. Perhaps the best-known church leader and an extremely vocal critic of apartheid was Archbishop Desmond Tutu.



There was a road sign which said: 'Careful, natives cross here' and someone changed it to read 'Careful, natives very cross here'. Perhaps that sums it all up.

◀ Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Church leaders felt that the government was less likely to act against them than against other opponents of apartheid. Nevertheless, many of them suffered for their outspoken criticism of the government. Rev. Beyers Naude, a founder member of the Christian Institute, and later the general secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), was banned for five years. Rev. Frank Chikane, also appointed as the general secretary of the SACC, was detained four times. Rev. Allan Boesak, the leader of the World Council of Reformed Churches, was jailed for a month for leading a march to demand the release of Mandela.

White resistance and the End Conscription Campaign

While many whites supported the government and apartheid, or did not take a stand against it, others actively resisted. At universities, white opponents of apartheid joined NUSAS (the National Union of South African Students) which had become an **affiliate** of the UDF.

By 1983, the government needed more troops to clamp down on political activity in the townships. Young white South African men, who had to serve in the army for two years, were therefore sent into the townships. Whites who objected to this formed the **End Conscription Campaign** (ECC), which was also an affiliate of the UDF.

ECC called for an end to compulsory military service and for troops to leave the townships. A number of white conscripts went to jail rather than serve in the army. Progressive whites also opposed the apartheid state through organizations such as the Black Sash, the Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee (JODAC) and the Five Freedoms Forum.



▲ This poster is on display in the Apartheid Museum. Botha, Ek's gatvol! (Botha, I've had enough!) conveys the despair of many white conscripts who were forced into the townships against their will.

International pressure

In 1960, the United Nations (UN) condemned apartheid as a crime against humanity. In the 1970s, it called for economic sanctions to be imposed on South Africa. Although **sanctions** were imposed by the UN and many of its members, most major western countries continued to trade with South Africa.

Other kinds of sanctions were imposed during the 1980s, including sports, cultural and academic boycotts. Although these distressed many white South Africans, it was only when the United States imposed economic and financial sanctions in 1986 and the South African economy was seriously threatened, that the National Party began to consider **negotiations** with the ANC.

THE MOVE TO DEMOCRACY

At the beginning of a film about the 1980s in the Apartheid Museum, Pik Botha (a National Party cabinet minister) and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela were both asked by a BBC journalist: “Will there ever be majority rule in South Africa?”.



There will never be one man one vote in South Africa. There's not one man one vote anywhere in Africa.

◀ *Pik Botha*

Certainly ... that is inevitable. There will be one man one vote in this country. There will be a majority government in South Africa, but that majority government will accommodate everybody.

▶ *Winnie Madikizela-Mandela*



Although Winnie Madikizela-Mandela became extremely controversial as a result of her questionable actions in the late 1980s and 1990s, she has remained an **icon** of the struggle. A similar statement could apply to Allan Boesak, who was later convicted of misappropriating international aid funds entrusted to him. This raises an interesting question. How should history judge leaders like them?

The groundswell of resistance was an important factor in changing the political landscape in South Africa. This, together with the sustained actions of the mass democratic movement, ongoing pressure from the liberation movement in exile and economic strain, forced the National Party government to the negotiating table.

By the end of the 1980s, the government had not been able to crush the forces of resistance, but equally, the resistance movements had not been able to bring the government to its knees. A deadlock had been reached.

GRADE 9

Content: Building a new identity in South Africa in the 1990s: pre-1994 negotiations, the first democratic elections and South Africa's Constitution

GRADE 12

Content: How did South Africa emerge as a democracy from the crises of the 1990s?
– How the crises were managed: conflict, compromise, negotiation, settlement, elections
– The Government of National Unity and the making of the Constitution

New words

affiliate – membership-based organization that associated itself with the UDF

conscription – making it compulsory by law for young white men to serve in the armed forces

sanctions – forbidding economic, political, sporting, cultural or academic relations between other countries and South Africa

negotiations – meetings and discussions aimed at finding a compromise or agreement

icon – a powerful symbol, in this case, of the struggle against apartheid

New words

CODESA – Convention for a Democratic South Africa, the name given to the negotiation process

Third Force – a military force that tried to undermine the progress being made in the negotiations

In 1989 F.W. de Klerk became the new leader of the National Party and the president of South Africa. There was a lot of pressure on him to introduce changes. As a result, he took a number of steps which put South Africa on the path towards democracy.

- On 2 February 1990, he unbanned all political groups that had opposed apartheid. These included the ANC, the PAC and the South African Communist Party.
- He announced that political prisoners would be released and exiles allowed to return to South Africa.
- On 11 February 1990, he released Nelson Mandela after 27 years in prison on Robben Island and elsewhere.
- He started negotiations for a new South Africa with the ANC and other political parties.



▲ The historic moment when Mandela was released on 11 February 1990, after 27 years in prison, can be seen in a video in the Apartheid Museum.

Negotiations begin

Negotiations for a new South Africa began in 1991, but they took place against a backdrop of ongoing violence. In the **CODESA** room in the Apartheid Museum, these two parallel processes are very effectively captured. You can watch television recordings of the negotiations and at the same time, through the windows in this room, you can see the civil war that was taking place in many areas of the country.

This part of the Museum is a chilling reminder that, while talks went on, over 14 000 people were killed in political violence. The timeline that follows shows how these two parallel processes took place side by side.

Countdown to Democracy

Negotiations	Month	Violence
1990		
Unbanning of political organizations (ANC, PAC, SACP) Release of Mandela	February	
Groote Schuur Accord – the terms of negotiations are set out	May	
Separate Ammenities Act repealed	June	
	July	(27 people killed at Sebokeng)
Pretoria Minute – Mandela announces the end of the armed struggle	August	(3 600 people killed in political violence in 1990)
1991		
Repeal of Group Areas Act, Population Registration Act, Land Act	March	
	June	Violence escalates in the Johannesburg area
CODESA I meets – it was agreed that an interim government would rule until a new constitution had been drawn up	December	Suspicious that government is aiding Inkatha in the township violence (Third Force activity) (2 700 people killed in political violence in 1991)
1992		
Whites-only referendum is held. 68% of the white population vote in favour of continuing negotiations for democracy	March	
CODESA II talks break down – the ANC and the NP government cannot agree on how power should be shared	May	ANC suspicious of the NP's role in the ongoing violence
	June	200 members of Inkatha attack a squatter camp near Boipatong, killing 49 people 28 unarmed ANC demonstrators are killed and 200 wounded by Ciskei security forces at Bisho (3 550 people killed in political violence in 1992)
1993		
Talks resume	March	
	April	SACP leader Chris Hani assassinated by right-wing fanatics 72 people die in the violence that follows
	June	<i>Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging</i> (AWB) force their way into the negotiating chamber after driving an armoured vehicle through the windows of the World Trade Centre
The IFP and Conservative Party walk out of the talks	July	
Agreement is reached on a new constitution for South Africa	November	(4 450 people killed in political violence in 1993)
1994		
	March	The governments of Ciskei and Bophuthatswana collapse and are incorporated into South Africa
The IFP decides to participate in the election at the last minute	April	
The first democratic elections are held in South Africa	27 April	

Activity 8: Working with a timeline

GRADE 9: LO 2, AS 3
GRADE 12: LO 2, AS 2

History is concerned with turning points. These are major events that mark a change in the course of history.

1. Identify any two turning points on the timeline on page 91.
2. Explain what caused each turning point and how it changed the course of events that followed. Use information from the timeline on page 91 as well as your own research, to answer this question. (★)



The first democratic elections

Despite the violence, negotiations continued. The National Party, the ANC and other political parties eventually agreed to hold an election in which all South Africans would vote for their representatives in a democratic parliament. On 27 April 1994, the first democratic election in South Africa took place. This historic day is now celebrated every year as a public holiday. We call it Freedom Day.

The ANC won the majority of votes and formed a Government of National Unity, with Nelson Mandela as the first democratically elected president of South Africa, and F.W. de Klerk and Thabo Mbeki as his deputies.

The date 27 April was a profoundly significant moment in the history of South Africa. It had been a “long walk to freedom”, in which the black people of South Africa had struggled against enormous odds. After suffering humiliating apartheid laws and intense and violent repression for many years, the people of South Africa had finally triumphed.

GRADE 11 and 12: LO 2, AS 2 and 3; LO 3, AS 2 and 3

Now we are going to review the most important skills for writing essays and answering source-based questions that you have learned in this book.

1. The Essay question

poses a problem that you must solve. You need to develop an argument in relation to this problem. This means stating an opinion and giving well-researched evidence to back up your opinion.

2. Underline the content words. The content words tell you what the subject matter of your essay should be.

3. The task word tells you what to do. **Discuss** means to examine in as much detail as possible within the time limits provided.

4. The dates define the **scope** of the essay. Make sure that you keep your focus on the time period indicated in the question.

12. In the conclusion, you sum up the main points you have made, and you answer the question.
Useful words and phrases include:
To sum up ...
In conclusion ...
To conclude ...
I have argued that ...

11. Provide evidence to support your counter-argument.

10. Use link words to show that you are disagreeing with the previous discussion and that you are introducing a counter-argument. Other words or phrases include:
But ...
On the other hand ...
Nevertheless ...

9. Use link words to carry the meaning forward. Other link words or phrases include:
Furthermore ...
Not only ..., but also...
Moreover, ...

Question 3a

It was the reform policies of the government rather than the resistance of the people which finally put South Africa on the path to democracy. **Discuss** the validity of this statement for the period **1976 to 1989**.

Question 3a

In the late 1970s, the government embarked on a policy of 'total strategy' as a means of curbing the violence in the townships. It aimed to use both reform and repression. **This essay will argue** that the policies of reform were not aimed at removing the apartheid system. In fact, they inspired more resistance. Rather, it was the resistance of the people that made the townships ungovernable, combined with external pressure and a failing economy that forced the government to the negotiating table.

When P.W. Botha became prime minister in 1978, he began to introduce a number of reforms. In 1979 African trade unions were recognized and for the first time, these trade unions were allowed to negotiate legally for improved working conditions. Bantustans were offered their independence.

In addition, in 1983, Botha introduced the Tricameral Parliament which aimed to ...

However, the Tricameral Parliament represented a sham democracy. Africans were excluded from voting altogether...

.....
.....

In conclusion, Botha's reform measures often intensified the anger of the people. The wave of resistance made the country 'ungovernable'. Together with mounting international pressure, and a declining economy, it was resistance rather than reform that brought the South African government to the negotiating table.

5. The Introduction identifies the problem posed by the essay question and outlines how you are going to structure your argument in the essay.

6. Other useful phrases to use in the introduction include:
This essay will include ...
The discussion will cover ...
The purpose of this essay is to ...
I will argue that ...

7. Each paragraph begins with the main or controlling idea. Each paragraph should focus on one main idea. All the paragraphs of your essay should link to each other and to the topic.

8. Provide evidence or examples to support the controlling or main idea

GRADE 11 and 12: LO 1, AS 3 and 4; LO 2, AS 3

Study the following four sources and then answer the questions which follow:

Source A



◀ A South African Defence Force pamphlet justifying the presence of the troops in the townships in the mid-1980s.

Source B

The statement of a conscript, who did not want to be identified for fear of intimidation. He had been involved in the SADF action in the townships of the Eastern Cape in the 1980s:

We entered one of the sprawling Port Elizabeth townships and came upon a bakkie loaded with children and youths who showed us the clenched fist salute. The cops went into action. They returned in triumph with their catch: a boy of about ten whom they were slapping while he shouted: "Weet niks, baas, weet niks, baas" ("know nothing, boss/sir"). They forced him to slap himself, while telling us: "He won't show a black power sign again in a hurry". This, for me, is the central image of this time – the small black boy with wild, frightened eyes, slapping himself, and the sudden stream of bright blood appearing from his nose and dropping from his chin on the carpeted floor of the Casspir.

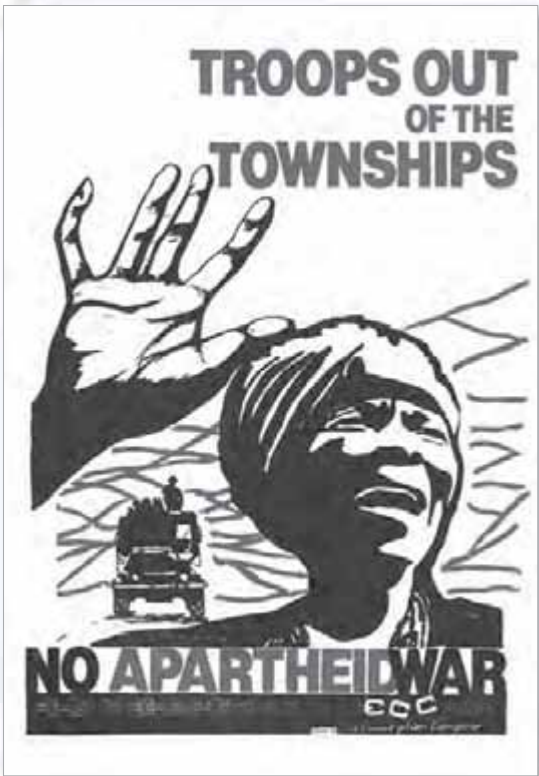
▲ From ECC Collection, F12, Historical Papers Library, Wits University.

Source C

Quote from a township resident about the troops in the townships from the 1980s film in the Apartheid Museum:

We have the very strong feeling that they are here to kill us – and not to protect us.

Source D



◀ An ECC poster, produced in 1984, calling for the South African Defence Force (SADF) to leave the townships.

Use the diagram to revise the levels of questioning you can expect in source-based questions.

This is a **level 1** question. It requires the learner to simply extract evidence from the source.

These are **level 3** questions. In both, the learner is required to provide a straightforward interpretation of the source. Question 3 focuses on the views or opinions of the people who produced the source; Question 4 on the view being expressed by the ex-conscript.

1. In Source A, what reason does the South African Defence Force give for being in the townships?
2. Using Sources B, C, D and your own knowledge, explain why the End Conscription Campaign was against 'Troops in the Township'.
3. What is the point of view of the South African Defence Force, as expressed by the creator of the pamphlet in Source A? Provide a good reason for your answer.
4. What does the conscript in Source B believe that the South African Defence Force is doing in the townships?
5. Do you feel that the producers or originators of these four sources differ in their views of the role of the SADF in the townships? Explain your answer.

This is a **level 2** question. The learner is required to use information extracted from the source, as well as his/her wider knowledge of the period.

This is a **level 4** question. The learner is required to ask complex questions, usually involving more than one source. And to look at aspects such as bias, reliability, comparisons, contrasts. In this case, answering Question 5 involves writing a paragraph.