nationalists used the fear that poor whites might lose their ‘racial identity’ to help rally Afrikaners into the nationalist movement.27 Such a survey would explore the changing lives of white poor over time, in the towns as well as in the countryside, and of the English-speaking poor, about whom Macmillan first wrote,28 as well as the far more numerous Afrikaans-speaking poor. And such a study might also bring the story to the present, in so doing considering the growth in the number of poor whites in the past decade, and of how some have identified themselves with the Conservative Party and even more radical far-right political movements, and how a few have ‘chosen’ to live in black squatter settlements.29

Such an agenda would not deny the interdependence of black and white poverty, nor the common roots of poverty, and the unimportance of race to many poor people. From the time poor whiteism became identified as a ‘problem’, however, most whites assumed that blacks were somehow naturally poor, whereas poverty among whites was something anomalous and required special attention.30 While an exploration of the extent and role of colour consciousness among the poor should be high on such an agenda, the fact is that the white poor were singled out for separate treatment, and many white poor identified themselves by race as well as economic circumstance, hoping that such identification would be a route out of poverty. Limited though it is in its exploration of self-identification, Morrell’s volume does show how useful such a focus on the white poor can be. A future work should not only discuss how such people lived, but also attempt, as this volume does not, to measure the changing demography of the white poor, and explain, systematically, the structural causes of their poverty. Such an agenda is a daunting one.31 In the meantime we can be grateful for Morrell’s modest but worthwhile volume.

30. Parallels between poor whiteism in South Africa and in the southern United States have been noted by a number of writers, but never fully explored. See, for example, scattered references in G.M. Fredrickson, White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History (New York, 1981). For the idea of “po-white trash” in the American South see, for example, A.N.J. den Hollander, ‘The Tradition of “Poor Whites” in W.T. Couch, ed., Culture in the South (Chapel Hill, 1934).
then, after all, the revisionists tended to focus on 'ordinary people'. In any case, 'history from below' emphasised structural transformations and collective identities rather than individual experience and personal idiosyncrasy. Privileging working class consciousness over national feeling also made it difficult for scholarly research to make sense of the public lives of black politicians. The appearance, then, of a series of publications which document the generation of nationalist notables who matured in the aftermath of the Second World War responds to an significant void in the scholarship. Whether it fills it satisfactorily is another matter.

One essential element of political hagiography is the published collection of speeches and writings. Communist personality cults usually featured the production of massive multi-volumed collections of even the most occasional jottings of deified leaders. Communists, of course, were not alone in this. Such acts of homage were almost indispensable elements in the construction of certain third-world nationalist liturgies; the 60-volume Collected Works of M.K. Gandhi is an epic example of this kind of officially sponsored literary monument. Several of the volumes under review represent works in this category: uncritical assemblings of the rhetorical and polemical testimony of great men. They hardly substitute for even bad biography but they are oddly revealing all the same.

Apparently a biography of Yusuf Dadoo was scheduled for publication during the year of his seventieth birthday. One of the conventions which senior African National Congress (ANC) and South African Communist Party (SACP) functionaries have borrowed from their Eastern European allies is a tendency to treat their own birthdays as occasions for public celebration. It never appeared and so for the time being we will have to make do with South Africa's Freedom Struggle, a selection of Dadoo's speeches and articles put together by E.S. Reddy, head of the United Nations Centre against Apartheid. For the enquiring reader these can be supplemented by tributes published in the African Communist and Reddy's earlier commemorative article in the Indian journal, Mainstream.

In all the published descriptions of Dadoo's life a more or less uniform narrative appears. Yusuf Dadoo was born in 1909 in Krugersdorp, the son of E.S. Reddy, head of the United Nations Centre against Apartheid. For the enquiring reader these can be supplemented by tributes published in the African Communist and Reddy's earlier commemorative article in the Indian journal, Mainstream.

In 1945, Dadoo became president of the TIC, his election marking the ascendency over Indian politics by a young professional élite with a keener appetite for confrontation than the wealthy traders who had hitherto predominated. The threat of legislative restrictions on Indian land acquisitions helped between 1925 and 1927 he returned home to help in his father's business. In 1929 he travelled to Britain to study medicine. He joined the London branch of the Indian National Congress and was arrested after participating in a demonstration. Young Yusuf was put on probation and his father insisted that he should move to the calmer environment of Edinburgh where he resumed his training. Here he joined the Independent Labour Party and continued to involve himself in Indian anti-colonial agitation. After qualifying in 1936 he returned to Johannesburg to play an active role in the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC).

In 1938 he helped to founded the Non-European United Front (NEUF) of which he became secretary. One year later he helped to form the 'Nationalist Bloc' within the TIC. At the same time he became a member of the Communist Party. As the acknowledged leader of the younger radicals within the TIC, Dadoo aimed to steer Indian politics away from the accommodationist posture it had adopted to official segregationist policies since the departure of Gandhi in 1913. Immediately after its formation the Bloc began planning passive resistance against the new Asiatic (Transvaal) Land and Trading Act. Dadoo opened a correspondence with the Mahatma to solicit his advice. The well-attended public meetings held by the Bloc encouraged Gandhi to believe there was sufficient popular support for resistance to constitute the kind of leverage in which negotiations would be successful. His intercession prompted the nationalists to shelve their campaigning plans. The advent of war, though, provided another reason for protest and in 1940 Dadoo was convicted for publishing the NEUF leaflet opposing military recruitment. A supporter prevented him from going to prison by paying his fine; instead Yusuf Dadoo's first prison confinement, four months in Boksburg jail, occurred in 1941, after his second conviction for anti-war incitement. Shortly after his release 'the whole character of the war was altered' for communists 'by the Nazi Attack on the Soviet Union'. Dadoo, together with Moses Kotane, assumed a major role in the Party's efforts to explain at public meetings 'the qualitative change in the international situation. In 1943 he helped to establish and became the first chairman of the Anti-Pass Council, a body sponsored by the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), which attempted to draw together the energies of a diversity of organisations, including the ANC, to oppose pass laws in an eighteen-month campaign of pettion signing, meetings and parades.

In 1945, Dadoo became president of the TIC, his election marking the ascendency over Indian politics by a young professional élite with a keener appetite for confrontation than the wealthy traders who had hitherto predominated. The threat of legislative restrictions on Indian land acquisitions helped
to prompt this change. In March 1946, three months after the introduction of the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Bill, the new leaderships of both the Transvaal and the Natal Indian Congresses appointed Passive Resistance Councils. In his capacity as chairman of the Transvaal Council, Dadoo led the first batch of resisters in the province and was jailed for three months in June 1946, thereby missing out on the Johannesburg Party District's preparations for the 1946 mineworkers strike. This did not prevent the authorities from extracting him from jail and putting him on trial with the rest of the Party's Central Committee for incitement of an illegal strike. After his acquittal he toured India with M.P. Naicker, president of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC); signed the 'Doctor's Pact', a joint demand for rights and pledge of co-operation to achieve them between the Indian Congresses and the ANC; and served a third prison term in March 1948 for encouraging Indians to cross provincial boundaries. The Doctor's Pact found expression in the establishment of the Joint Planning Council for the Defiance Campaign. Dadoo, by this time president of the South African Indian Congress, became one of three members of the Council and co-authored with Walter Sisulu the report detailing the strategy to be followed. He defied a ban to address a public meeting at the inception of the campaign and served six weeks of a six-month prison sentence before being released on appeal. After 1952, subsequent bans and prohibitions compelled Dadoo to retire from openly activist politics. He remained an influential figure, though, and was elected onto the SACP's central committee at the time of its reconstruction in 1953. In April 1960, two weeks after the declaration of the Emergency, Dadoo left South Africa to represent the ANC in an exiled United Front. He played an important role in helping to develop the ANC's external bureaucracy and became vice chairman of its Revolutionary Council in 1969. In 1972 he was appointed to the largely honorific post of SACP chairman. He died in London, of cancer, in September 1983.

Of course, in different versions of this narrative, individual emphases vary. Communists tend to omit or downplay mention of Dadoo's middle-class origins, his Islamic upbringing, his early involvement in the anti-Stalinist International Labour Party, and his contact with Gandhi. Indian communal portrayals of Dadoo conversely accentuate the extent to which Dadoo 'imbibed' from Gandhi 'the spirit of Defiance' and treat his Marxism as almost incidental. But such distinctions would not in any case count for very much in a career in which apparently the principal imperative was a simple conviction that for Indian South Africans their 'destiny was with the African majority and that [their] future should be built by [their] willingness to sacrifice' (South Africa's Freedom Struggle, introduction, p. xi). As is commonplace in political testimonials, according to his comrades, Yusuf Dadoo's life was absolutely impersonal: his virtues were routinely heroic and his ideas are indistinguishable from theirs. 'Known and loved by millions of South Africans', not to mention 'progressives all over the world', this was a man who was apparently unformed by his private life. Though he was married three times, none of the official profiles of Dadoo mention his wives or children by name. It is true that Joe Slovo's account of Dadoo's last hours does refer to his third wife Winnie and his daughter Roshan: they were present with select members of the Central Committee to whom Dadoo issued his last instructions. He also managed in his last moments of consciousness to speak to his wife 'about their companionship and good life together'. But even in this speech, the public and the private were interfused; as Joe Slovo recalled, between each phrase 'he raised his fist with the words "Amandla" on his lips'.

Yet for a public man, even about his public life surprisingly little is recorded. All the chronologies of Dadoo's political activities become very uninformative after his fourth decade. He was banned from organised gatherings and activities from 1952 until his departure from South Africa in 1960, but even so he was supposedly continuing to exert significant influence behind the scenes. What kind of influence and to what effect are topics which are left unexplored. The last 33 years of his life were spent in exile. About this period the published record is especially laconic. We are told that he held a number of important positions in the external hierarchies of the ANC and the SACP. We learn that he was awarded seven medals on his seventieth birthday ('The Order of Dimitrov' of Bulgaria, 'The Order of Karl Marx' of the German Democratic Republic, 'The Scroll of Honour of the World Peace Council', and so on). The tributes note that he represented the ANC at various conferences, in Helsinki for example, 'in support of Vietnam after the criminal aggression and brazen banditry of the Chinese invaders'. And that is about it. For a man, who according to one of his epitaphs was essentially an activist, a leader who 'led from the front', the life of a senior liberation bureaucrat must have been a diminished sort of existence, notwithstanding the scrolls and orders bestowed by Soviet-bloc apparatchiks. If this was the case, not a hint escapes from the bracingly cheerful devotional literature. Indeed, removal from the exhilarations of 'the forefront of the firing line' had its compensations: Dadoo's foreign travels after his departure from South Africa helped to nurture a 'love for the Soviet people and the CPSU' which grew 'steadily over the years'.

Can Dadoo's own testimony tell us more about his life than this? Doubtless it could, but Reddy's volume confines itself largely to the most stilled
and formal public utterances, many of them made in an official leadership capacity and probably collectively scripted. This is particularly the case with the later speeches and statements; the earlier material is more heavily stamped with an individual personality and does offer a little more in the way of biographical revelation. The book's 300-odd pages contain a biographical sketch, 66 statements or speeches by Dadoo, an exchange of 40 letters and telegrams between Dadoo and Gandhi, and, as an appendix, the ANC's National Executive eulogy delivered at Dadoo's funeral.

The earliest material is the correspondence with Gandhi, most of it dating between March 1939 and May 1940. The 1939 Asiatic (Transvaal) Land and Trading Bill prohibited transfers of property from whites to Indians for the next two years when more comprehensive restrictive legislation was planned. Most of these exchanges between Dadoo and Gandhi are quite cryptic. The sequence opens with a detailed letter, though, from Dadoo explaining the background to the new legislation and illuminating some of the rifts in South African Indian politics at that time. At this point, the TIC was still led by wealthy businessmen who, although they disliked segregation in principle, nevertheless stood to gain from the new bill which would have confirmed their title over recent property acquisitions. As Dadoo explained to Gandhi, impending restrictions and the consequently frozen market had enabled landlords to raise rents sharply (South Africa's Freedom Struggle, p. 294). On 1 March 1939 the TIC held a public meeting to protest against segregation at which Dadoo succeeded in persuading a majority of those who attended to embark on passive resistance if the bill were passed. Resistance was, however, fiercely opposed by the TIC leadership who were, according to Dadoo, 'prepared to go to any length to nullify this decision' (p. 295). Dadoo said he was confident of popular support and he believed that the intermediate group of petty traders (licence holders) might be won over. Certainly Dadoo and fellow radicals who formed the 'nationalist bloc' after the meeting on 1 March could draw impressive crowds; subsequent meetings were attended by between 5,000 and 6,000 people, almost a quarter of the Transvaal Indian population. Despite this, in the subsequent four months Dadoo and his fellow nationalists allowed themselves to be persuaded by Gandhi to call off the campaign. Why Gandhi's advice prevailed is not clear.

Eleven branches of the TIC had promised volunteers; within the community there seemed no shortage of enthusiasm. It is possible that Dadoo was still very susceptible to Gandhi's influence at this stage. One month before the date set for the inception of the campaign, Gandhi telegrammed Smuts 'imploring' him from inflicting any 'needless wounding' of Indian 'self respect' (p. 299).


Smuts replied courteously if blandly and the cabled dialogue was maintained in this cordial, although on Smuts's side, non-committal, vein for the next six months. Meanwhile Gandhi urged postponement to facilitate the 'delicate negotiations' (p. 301) which he claimed his exchanges with Smuts represented. After all, Gandhi argued, it was morally incumbent on every passive resister 'to seize every opportunity of avoiding resistance' (p. 302). This was a line of reasoning that Dadoo in 1939 seemed prepared to accept, for, as he conceded in November, 'our duty is to win our opponents by love and understanding' (p. 313). Gandhi's warning that Dadoo could expect no significant support from the Indian nationalist movement may also have been persuasive; in May, Dadoo had hoped that 'the people of India' could 'bring pressure upon the Government of India' (p. 297).

Dadoo's subsequent wartime speeches and writings demonstrate an eclectic range of influences and ideas. In his first court statement in 1940 he defended the NEUF's attitude to the war in the terms which conformed with Comintern prescriptions of the time. The conflict was 'an imperialist war... to maintain and extend imperialist democracy' (South Africa's Freedom Struggle, p. 8). In a departure from party doctrine, however, Dadoo went on to argue that it could be transformed into a just war 'when full and unfettered democratic rights are extended to the Non-european people of this country' (p. 9). This assertion was never put to the test for Dadoo and his comrades, because Soviet entry into the hostilities had a similarly transformative effect. After June 1941, Communist Party wartime propaganda gave short shrift to anti-imperialist and class struggle and so it was quite easy for newcomers to the party to get away with some pretty sloppy thinking. Even so, it is rather startling to encounter from a 'theoretically mature' revolutionary as benign a view of authority as is indicated in Dadoo's eve-of-trial statement in January 1941. 'The path of passive resistance', he told his audience, was 'one of suffering'; it should be accompanied by 'an attitude of mind' and 'a behaviour' which ultimately would 'disarm all opposition and open the road to the vindication of justice' (p. 12). To be sure, a view of authority open to conversion through moral example obviously had inherent attractions to the small and vulnerable middle-class community which represented Dadoo's main constituency in the Transvaal. Also, to this audience Dadoo directed his appeals to an Indian sense of national honour as 'sons and daughters of a country with a proud and cultured heritage' (p. 21). There is nothing, though, in his early political discourse which tells us about any of the compulsive attraction which Marxism is supposed to have had for Dadoo. Indeed, all the evidence suggests that the Party's appeal for Dadoo was neither...
doctrinal nor cerebral; it simply represented the most effective means of 'vindicating our self respect' (p. 38) through struggle and activism.

Dadoo's admiration of Gandhi was deep rooted - his father had been one of Gandhi's first legal clients - but even in 1939 there were differences in their outlook. Dadoo helped to establish the Transvaal section of the NEUF, a body through which the CPSA aimed to stitch together a coalition of radical coloured, Indian and African personalities and organisations. The NEUF did not feature conspicuous African participation, however. In his newspaper, Harijan, Gandhi was critical of the Front, partly because he felt that the issues affecting Indians were different from those concerning Africans; Indians could add little to African strength but, by joining forces with Africans, would encounter greater opposition than if they acted separately. Such reservations might have qualified Dadoo's regard for Gandhi as a mentor; during most of the war Dadoo headed up campaigns directed at Africans or 'non-europeans' generally rather than Indians specifically. Although such initiatives as the 1943-1945 pass campaign helped to lay the foundation for future co-operation between African and Indian organisations, their style was ritualistic rather than confrontational, featuring what were to become the standard repertoire of Congress Alliance ventures in the 1950s and beyond: the million signature petition, self congratulatory public pageantry, and amorphous federations of vaguely defined associations purporting to represent huge numbers of people.

Despite his evident popularity amongst Africans in Johannesburg - an open space in Orlando became informally known as Dadoo square - Dadoo's most significant political achievements were within the domain of Indian communal politics. In this sphere he was a decisive actor in three respects: in the dismissal of the older generation of conservative leadership; in the reintroduction of passive resistance - effectively setting the strategic agenda for the 1950s; and in pioneering 'multiracial' alliance politics. The declamatory documentation which Reddy assembles here offers only occasional insights into these developments.

By this stage the Communists were beginning to feel their way towards activism. As an 'architect' of post-war South African passive resistance, Dadoo is sometimes characterised as having assumed the 'Mantle of Gandhi'. This is a misrepresentation. Though Dadoo was perfectly familiar with the ethical base of Gandhi's satyagraha, and although the influence of Gandhian strategic thinking is evident even as late as 1951 in the Joint Planning Council's (JPC) preparations for the Defiance Campaign, Dadoo was not a Gandhista. As with most other nationalists, Dadoo's political endeavours were directed at the attainment of power, not truth. Like both marxists and liberals of his generation, and in contrast to Gandhi, he had a strongly determinist understanding

('symbiotically linked with internationalism') as an indispensable element in the struggle for 'peoples democracy' which set the Party's strategic agenda in the 1950s. Defining the ingredients in any progressive nationalist identity was, however, an uncertain business. In a 1946 pamphlet, Dadoo referred to South African society as 'multinational' (p. 27), a usage which would help to supply the doctrinal justification for retaining separate communal organisations in later years. What kinds of distinguishing features of separate nationhood were healthy or authentic and which were not would never be spelt out in any detail. Hence Dadoo could assert in 1948 that 'neither the African nor the Indian is asking for his blood to be mixed with the white peoples of South Africa' (p. 101), repeating a traditional Communist Party refrain which was implicitly critical of 'miscegenation' and which endorsed racist conceptions of honour and esteem.

If his domestic life was anything to go by - at that time he was married to a German woman - Dadoo was no racist and nor was he animated by any notions of racial purity. But in the mid 1940s, the available conceptions of nationalism were essentially organic or cultural; they suited Dadoo's immediate rhetorical purposes and so he used them. The diverse range of references in Dadoo's oratory may have signalled inner conflict or intellectual confusion but it is more likely that they were indicative of a man who used ideas instrumentally but was essentially uninterested in them. What else is one to make of Dadoo's invocation of a South African liberal tradition - 'the heritage of great fighters for freedom in the past, men and women like Thomas Pringle, Read and van der Kemp, the Schreiners and Colenso' - which in 1946, he argued, found a 'higher and better' expression in the Communist Party. Now, in reality, Dadoo had no time for liberals or liberalism. In 1944, he fell out with Michael Scott over the issue of white liberal participation in black politics - interestingly, Scott observed later that Dadoo's NEUF 'seemed to have no moral or religious basis and lacked any cohesive force or strong positive vision'.

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of political and social progress as the consequence of urbanisation, industry and modernity. In contrast, in the speeches of his contemporary, Monty Naicker, president of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC), references to 'the rule of non-violence' disappear from Dadoo's testimony after 1950. In 1948 Dadoo wrote a 'reminiscence' of the recently assassinated Mahatma for the Johannesburg Passive Resister. It is an affectionate though mawkish tribute - Dadoo's rotund prose style did not express genuine emotion easily - but underlying the veneration is a perception of 'Bapu' as a faintly ridiculous figure:

Just before sunrise, I was awakened from my sound slumber by ripples of laughter. I put my head from underneath a hand-woven Khadi bedsheet which I was using as a covering and lo! What did I behold! Bapu, with staff in one hand: and the other resting securely on the shoulder of a devotee ... He stood in front of my bed and laughed heartily ... His laughter will not be heard again ... But the reverberations of his laughter will not cease ... His laughter was the embodiment of India's will to freedom ... His laughter will never issue again forth from his toothless ascetic mouth ... (p. 67).

Not only were there philosophical differences between Dadoo and Gandhi, but the passive resistance with which Dadoo is most closely identified, that of 1946 to 1948, was a minor affair compared with Gandhi's earlier campaigns. The resistance, in any case, took place largely in Natal, not the Transvaal. Although the campaign formally went through three phases and lasted for over two years, most of the action was over by the end of 1946. Only 2000 volunteers offered themselves for arrest, either through establishing encampments on proscribed land or by crossing provincial boundaries without the permits Indians were required to obtain.

Dowlat Bagwandeen's doctoral dissertation on the events leading up to the campaign is one of a series of recent books from Madiba Publications, a enterprise administered by Fatima Meer which has as its purpose developing 'research, writing and publishing ... focusing in particular, on the experiences of unenfranchised South Africans'. Bagwandeen's book does this only indirectly; his research is mainly grounded in various official archives and is consequently thin on experience generally. His narrative emphasis is on the evolution of municipal and national segregationist policies directed at Indians, but his analysis also includes a thumbnail sketch of the recreation of Natal Indian politics by 'intellectuals and trade unionists' which took place during the Second World War. Given the NIC's 35,000 membership in 1945, the meagre number of participants in the 1946-1948 resistance is ostensibly surprising. Maureen Tayal has suggested that notwithstanding labour and union leadership support for the campaign against the 'Ghetto Act', Indian workers may well have felt ambivalent about the 1946 legislation; the new townships which were to be established under its provisions may have been a preferable prospect to remaining in increasingly expensive slums.16 Subsequent levels of Indian participation in Congress Alliance campaigns were quite low - fewer than 300 Indians volunteered in the 1952 Defiance Campaign. This surely did not represent the full potential of worker mobilisation, not with 22,000 Indians belonging to trade unions with a history of militancy. Ironically, Dadoo the communist very rarely addressed workers as workers and his co-authored JPC report deferred any plans for 'lawful industrial action' to accompany the Defiance Campaign (A People on Trial, p. 126).

The documentation in Reddy's collection becomes very perfunctory after the Defiance Campaign. Within South Africa, bans silenced Dadoo; his public voice was limited to occasional messages of greeting and commemoration. The material from exile contains little that is memorable. There are tributes to dead fellow revolutionaries with the standard fulsome lexicon favoured by left-wing politicians the world over: 'ardent' (G.M. Naicker); 'immortal' (Ho Chi Minh); 'utterly dedicated' (Amilcar Cabral); 'loyal to his class and its party' (M.P. Naicker); 'love and comradeship for the Soviet people' (Moses Kotane); 'steadfast' - this was in reference to Michael Harmel - 'steadfast in his support of the Czechoslovak party and people during the difficult 1968 events'; one can only imagine that the absence of anything else prompted the re-publication of this ephemeral material. A statement Dadoo delivered 'on behalf of the secretariat to the plenary session of the Central Committee of the SACP' in October 1973 supplies an interesting reminder of just how patronising South African Marxist-Leninists could be: 'History teaches that, left to themselves, the masses can be more easily deceived and led into the traps of reformism and unprincipled compromises' (South Africa's Freedom Struggle, p. 216). What prompted this particular observation was the NIC's declaration that its members were free to join the government-sponsored South African Indian Council. White student leaders would have been heartened to read that 'white groups like NUSAS ... can at the very least be neutralised in the struggle against extreme reaction' (p. 226). Such sentiments do not weather well, while Dadoo's observations on 'the adventurism of the Chinese hegemonists' or his confidence in 'that great bastion of freedom and loyalty, the Soviet Union', as well as his protestations concerning the 'unswerving respect our party has for the CPSU' also seem pretty quaint today. These texts merely serve to underline Dadoo's adherence to the dogmas of his time and his inability to see beyond them.

So what do we make of Yusuf Dadoo? On the basis of the record supplied by the published speeches or the comradely citations a rather two-dimensional character appears: virtuous loyal stalwart or blinkered party functionary, depending on the reader's preferences. Both characterisations are probably less than fair. Dadoo's initial readiness to identify his own political destiny and that of his community with the situation of Africans required a considerable leap of imagination and empathy; his convictions at the time were not shared by all his political peers. Reddy in his Mainstream article quotes an interview given in 1979 (unfortunately not reproduced in the book) in which Dadoo spoke about the indignation and pity which his initial experiences as a doctor evoked: 'I came across the poverty, the misery, the malnutrition, the sickness of black people ... And that made my blood boil'. Dadoo maintained his medical practice alongside his political commitments; interestingly his political rhetoric is shot through with medically derived metaphors - South African society is 'diseased' and 'rabid' and racialism is a 'sickness', a 'cancer'. It would be useful to know more about his early childhood: his initial decision to train for a profession was against his father's inclination, and his early involvement in anti-colonial rebellion might have been a form of filial revolt. He remained close to his family, though: his brother, sister and sisters-in-law were present at his death in London. He could, incidently, be a most authoritarian father himself: he insisted that his daughter by his first marriage train and remain in the Soviet Union and only after considerable pressure from friends and family did he allow her to travel and settle in the West. As a young communist, he may have retained more intellectual and emotional independence from the Party's dictates than this anecdote suggests. Though Essop Pahad contends that as soon as Germany attacked the Soviet Union, forcing it to enter the war, Dadoo flung himself into promoting the Party's new line, his first published declaration in 1942 was 'drawn up by him [Gandhi] personally' (p. 56). Of these principles, non-violence was a fundamental tenet; 'at no stage' he told the NIC conference in 1957, 'will we tolerate anyone within the Congress fold advocating the use of violence' (p. 126). Such affirmations lost its full meaning and zest for Yusuf Dadoo and dutiful ideological propriety had to be a substitute for passion and sacrifice. Essop Pahad would have us believe that during the emergency in 1960 Dadoo was amongst that small band who for several months 'operated underground moving from one place to another and continuously keeping abreast of the developing situation'. In fact, such excitements were denied to him, for by 16 April 1960 he was already in Dar es Salaam; with his international connections and reputation he was far too valuable a figure for the party to risk getting locked up. 'As a disciplined communist and revolutionary he submerged his own wishes' and off he went, first to East Africa and then to Britain to begin the task of building the authoritarian edifice which served the party so well during its enforced diaspora. But that is a history which is unlikely to be recounted in public.

Dadoo's contemporary, Monty Naicker, has also recently been canonised with the 'collected speeches' treatment, again through the ministrations of Mr Reddy. Naicker's life paralleled Dadoo's to some extent; although the grandson of an indentured labourer, he was born, in 1910, into the home of a prosperous banana exporter. He attended secondary school and medical classes in Edinburgh and returned to open a general practice in Durban. He led the younger radicals against the conservative leadership of the NIC and was elected president of that body in 1945. The 32 documents reprinted in Monty Speaks are chiefly drawn from his presidential addresses as leader of the NIC and the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) between 1945 and 1963. Though a graceful memorial to a most engaging man, this volume does not add very much to the available historical understanding of the period. Its contents do remind us, though, of the lingering influence of Gandhi's thinking on South African extra-parliamentary politics: unlike Dadoo, Naicker remained a determined disciple of the Mahatma and was considered in the 1950s to be one of the less radical NIC leaders. The plans for the 1946 civil disobedience, he informed a Bombay readership in 1951, were 'drawn up by him [Gandhi] personally' (Monty Speaks, p. 56). 'Positive action', he asserted in the same article, would lead 'straight to success if the principles were not compromised in any way' (p. 56). Of these principles, non-violence was a fundamental tenet; 'at no stage' he told the NIC conference in 1957, 'will we tolerate anyone within the Congress fold advocating the use of violence' (p. 126). Such affirmations

20. Ibid.
21. For unreliable details concerning Yusuf Dadoo's exile activities in London, see various numbers of Bwazi, a dissident journal edited in Nottingham by disenchanted former PAC, ANC and Unity Movement members in the late 1970s.
continued to characterise his speeches at least as late as 1961. As with the early Dadoo, the victory of Indian nationalism was a source of confidence and pride. Returning from his visit to India in 1947, he brought home a message from Gandhi that 'the Satyagrahis of South Africa should know that they have India behind them' (p. 34). South African Indians 'were not only fighting for [their] just rights, but also to preserve the national honour of all Indians and Asians' (p. 34). 'A resurgent Asia' was arising which would 'allow no country to trifle with her sons and daughters in other countries' (p. 35). South African Indians, however, while remaining 'loyal to the spiritual inheritance of their race ... have adjusted themselves to their local environment' (p. 25). They were 'not foreigners' and they had 'adopted a Western way of life' (p. 25). Moreover, Naicker argued on the eve of the Defiance Campaign, 'a day must come when there will be no need for separate political organizations for the different sections of the oppressed peoples' (p. 75). Like Dadoo, Naicker lived in a world in which it seemed obvious that the 'cancer of racialism' (p. 61) would disappear: 'the policy of apartheid' would 'not be able to stem the tide of industrialization' (p. 89). In 1950, he believed, there were 'many European democrats supporting our just cause' (p. 62). Even a decade later it was evident to him that 'the conscience of white South Africa is astir'. Naicker's optimism was underscored by his repeated conviction that 'never in world history has any single movement for national liberation failed' (p. 120). 'We know', he insisted, 'that the gospel we preach is based on truth' (p. 110).

Perhaps, after all, Naicker's testament can tell us something about the assurance of a political elite whose faith was a reflection of a world which seemed to be shaped by modernity. Culture and tradition were part of one's spiritual inheritance, but in the secular nationalism of the Monty Naickers and the Yusuf Dadooos they did not inhabit an important place in politics. Not that they were dispensed with entirely; Naicker was relatively unusual amongst his generation of Indian Congress principals in his descent from indentured labourers, and in a warm essay Fatima Meer remembers parties at the Naicker home at which Naicker delighted in his 'taste for the exotic' (p. 15): curried iguana stew and bawdy jokes by dancers from the sugar plantations. Meer's generation of Indian Congress principals in his descent from indentured labourers, and in a warm essay Fatima Meer remembers parties at the Naicker home at which Naicker delighted in his 'taste for the exotic' (p. 15): curried iguana stew and bawdy jokes by dancers from the sugar plantations. Meer's contribution is all too short, for she can write vividly.

The memoirs of one more graduate of Edinburgh's medical school, this time a woman, Gonarathnam Goonan, supply a more textured rendering than any polemical writing can of the experience of Dadoo's and Naicker's generation. Her journey to Scotland, on the same boat as Naicker, whom she knew as a child, represented a sharp break with an 'Indian world of high domesticity and profound ritual' (Cooie Doctor, p. 21). Generally, South African Indian girls did not acquire professional educations; she was fortunate in having an adventurous mother who had been influenced by suffragette thinking during her upbringing in Mauritius. Her father was less enthusiastic, influenced by his business friends who kept 'warning [that] she will marry a white man there' (p. 26). Nothing so untoward happened; in Edinburgh her main companions were 'very orthodox Indian students' (p. 43) with whom she had a particular cachet arising from her family's early association with Mohandas Gandhi. She did fall in love with an Egyptian but her father's financial failure decided her against marriage; after qualifying in 1936 she returned to Durban to help the family repay its debts. She arrived back in South Africa 'with a far lower tolerance for colour discrimination than our parents' (p. 41), partly a consequence of a fresh sensitivity to the 'inequalities of the white raj' (p. 43), but also as a result of the hospitality and kindness with which she had been received by her landlady and the relative freedom of her life as a student.

Beginning her practice as Durban's fourth Indian doctor, as a woman, Goonan found she was 'a novelty but professionally I was no draw' (p. 58) amongst middle-class patients. Eventually she obtained employment in the Indian African Clearing Section, an annex to the main hospital established to relieve congestion. Here she had her first direct encounters with 'the depths of Indian poverty' within communities in the thralldom of 'tradition, superstition, ignorance and ritual' (p. 61). She joined the Liberal Study Group, a discussion circle formed by the young marxist nationalists who later formed the Anti-Segregation Council (ASC) within the NIC. She subscribed to the Left Book Club; later on travelling to India her baggage was searched by immigration officials in Madras and they confiscated volumes of Marx, Engels and Edgar Snow. She was in India because in 1939 the Durban City Council had given her an expropriation notice - her house in Umgeni Hill was in an area about to be zoned for whites. For a while she planned to remain on the sub-continent despite undertaking a tour of speaking engagements on South Africa in which she talked about the plans of her generation to 'gain control and restore Congress to its original purpose' (p. 87).

Back home in 1940 she made friends with Rowley Arenstein, then a leading member of the Durban District of the CPSA, and she became a vigorous participant in the NEUF, helping to organise strike support for Falkirk iron workers and addressing meetings in Tamil on the sugar plantations. Trade union support, in her view, was the key to the victory of Naicker's support in the NIC elections in 1945, elections which were held by a show of hands at a crowded meeting after the ASC had successfully fought a court battle with the old guard to resist the introduction of a secret ballot. Goonan claims that for the first time, in 1945, women were allowed NIC membership and voting rights.

Three short chapters describe the 1946-1948 passive resistance and her own role in it. She refers to an extensive programme of canvassing and recruitment; though the 'call was national, brooking no division of class' (p. 106), the NIC activists took pains to mobilise enthusiasm in the factories and on the sugar plantations. They raised money from storekeepers and professionals, for the
campaign was costly: 'the greatest expense was maintaining families of resisters' (p. 106). Workers predominated amongst the volunteers but, as we know, really massive support was not forthcoming - Goonan and her comrades were to be disappointed in their aim of 'filling the jails' (p. 110). Despite Naicker's Gandhist precepts, few of the resisters 'believed in the moral impact of [their] defiance' (p. 107). Imprisoned after her arrest - up to that point the authorities had merely fined the resisters - she was treated quite well in prison and even permitted to collect information for a report commissioned by the Penal Reform League.

Goonan's narrative becomes somewhat abrupt after the suspension of the campaign in 1948 and she does not detail her subsequent political activities. The 1949 Durban riots, she suggests, 'made it clear to us that never again would we take up the government as Indians alone. Our survival lay in a non-european united front' (p. 134). A second property expropriation prompted her departure to Britain and then again to India where for three years she directed a family planning programme. She then travelled back to Durban to open a general practice. A third visit to India was interrupted by a summons from Dr Dadoo to journey to London - she does not explain why she was needed. She 'renewed contact with exiles' (p. 151) before resuming her medical practice in Durban, leaving the country again in 1975 'to avoid arrest' (p. 167). Work for the Walthamstow Borough council and then in a Zimbabwean hospital kept her busy until her final homecoming in 1990.

Dr Goonan's memoir underscores several important features of this post-war cohort of South African Indian leaders. It was a group which possessed an acute generational consciousness, a consequence of being in the vanguard of a rising new élite of professionals ready to challenge the business notables who until their arrival had predominated within their community. They often came from the same families as the group they sought to displace; within a small community, the political, commercial and social élites were tightly interwoven by bonds of kinship and neighbourhood. Like their parents, they exploited skilfully the political connections arising from their membership of an immigrant diaspora; Gandhi's early presence within this community gave subcontinental Indian nationalism a powerful resonance in South Africa. Despite the moral authority of the Mahatma, their feeling of belonging to a modernising élite, their experiences at British universities in the mid 1930s, and the swift growth during these years of an Indian industrial working class are all factors which help to explain the intellectual impact of marxism on Goonan and her contemporaries. To date, their lives and achievements remain curiously under-explored by South African historians; interesting in themselves, they played a decisive role in determining the course of post-war black protest and in fostering the ideology of 'multiracial' nationalism.

By contrast, the men who presided over the African National Congress at that time have less grounds to complain of scholarly inattention. Albert Luthuli's autobiography was ghost-written 30 years ago, there have been at least three popular biographies of Nelson Mandela, his writings and those of Oliver Tambo have both been anthologised several times, there is in progress yet another life of Mandela and researchers are busy investigating the careers of Tambo, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki and Raymond Mhlaba as well. Even in the case of Mandela, though, much remains untold. No detailed narratives of his childhood, upbringing or education exist, his first marriage is usually relegated to a few paragraphs, his political ascent is generally unfolded with reference to well-known events rather than through identifying any developments or changes in his ideas and beliefs, and virtually nothing has been recorded about his professional activities as a lawyer. Sheridan Johns and R. Hunt Davis's new volume, Mandela, Tambo and the African National Congress, though mainly directed at the American college textbook market, may therefore be expected to address the shortcomings in the existing record. Instead it follows a well-trodden path with its six introductory essays and primary documentation imitating the format employed by the Gwendolen Carter and Thomas Karis team in their Protest to Challenge series. The documents are divided into four sequences which correspond to the conventional periodisation of the ANC's fortunes since 1948: 'A New Generation Challenges Apartheid'; 'Proscription and Enforced Reorientation'; 'A Leader Among Prisoners'; 'Post Rivonia Politics'; in each of these either Mandela or Tambo's voice prevails. Given the top-down fashion in which the ANC's institutional history has so often been narrated this seems to work well enough. Many of the key happenings which appear in other accounts of the organisation's progress through these four decades receive due acknowledgement in the material reprinted here.

Johns and Davis's selection does suggest that Mandela was a more intellectually interesting figure than has been customary in previous liberal treatments of ANC leadership which tend to accentuate its 'pragmatic' (i.e. liberal) and 'moderate' (reformist) dimensions. In their introduction they draw attention to the 'ties between the ANC and the political left, especially the Communist Party' (Mandela, Tambo and the African National Congress, p. 21).

Mandela's own ideas during the 1950s seemed to owe more to these links than it used to be acceptable to suggest within this sort of scholarship. In a speech delivered to the Youth League in 1951 he reminded his listeners never to forget 'the advance guard of American penetration ... the infinitely more dangerous enemy sustaining all those with loans, capital and arms' (p. 36). Given the growing affinity between 'English, Jewish and Afrikaner financial and industrial interests' it was quite likely that all these 'found the fascist policy of Malan suitable' (p. 37). 'The possibility of a liberal capitalist democracy in South Africa is extremely nil' (p. 37). South Africa was rapidly becoming 'an openly fascist state', the creation 'of monopoly capitalism gone mad' (p. 37). Political opposition required the talents 'of a professional revolutionary' (p. 39). Certainly, such rhetoric incorporated many of the sentiments which were then normal in anti-colonialist or anti-imperialist discourses, but Mandela's deployment of them is strikingly logical and disciplined. His often reprinted articles first published in the left-wing journal, Liberation, are especially impressive, with their carefully structured and conceptually systematic deployment of them is strikingly logical and disciplined. This is particularly evident in his well-known characterisation of the Freedom Charter as 'by no means a blueprint for a socialist state' but rather 'a programme for the unification of certain classes' engaged in 'a democratic struggle' of 'various classes and political groupings' (p. 49). The language is remarkable as much for its cerebral dispassion as its sociological sophistication.

In biographies on Mandela, he is usually characterised as a man of action, not a thinker, and his relationship with the communist left is perceived as developing from an initial suspicion to a later regard derived from personal friendship and activist camaraderie. Any intellectual affinity he may have felt with the ideas of the left is left unexplained. Yet Mandela's understanding of marxist polemics went well beyond the familiarity with its phraseology which existed in ordinary Congress circles. The preferred emphasis is rather on the patriot with 'his proudly felt African background', attracted certainly 'by a classless society' (p. 116), but maintaining all the same his admiration for parliamentary democracy as well as his 'great respect for British political institutions' (p. 129). Courtroom testimony is never a reliable guide to inner convictions, but there seems, nevertheless, to be a wide gulf between the Mandela we encounter in the Rivonia trial and the Youth League president who 13 years earlier had found the prospects of liberal capitalist democracy in South Africa to be 'extremely nil' (p. 37).

Understandably, the Mandela material becomes very fragmentary after his incarceration on Robben Island. Deprived of his direct voice the compilers attempt to flesh out the narrative with the reminiscences of fellow prisoners as well as the impressions of Mandela's occasional visitors. Neither of these really succeeds in substantiating Johns and Davis's contention that Mandela 'was at the center of ANC activities on Robben Island' (p. 143) nor that he 'sharpened and deepened his analysis of the South African situation' (p. 143), although these both might well have been the case. Entry into the disciplined and ordered society created by the ANC prisoners was pivotal in the ideological reorientation of a number of important Black Consciousness leaders, including Dan Montsisi and Seth Mazibuko whose subsequent testimony is reproduced here. How this order was constructed and sustained is not explored, though. Govan Mbeki's recently published prison writings suggest an intellectual regime of a doctrinaire quality which finds no echo in the conciliatory language used by the dignified African patriarch who met such visitors as Samuel Dash, Nicholas Bethall, and Helen Suzman. All the same, future Mandela biographers may glean a few useful insights from this material: in 1973 he told one journalist that at the time of his imprisonment he had been earning R4 000 a year; obviously the Mandela/Tambo legal practice was quite lucrative despite their political commitments. In prison, he continued to acknowledge his Methodism and prayed monthly. His negotiation skills continued to be honed on Robben Island in the various confrontations with the warders; unlike the Pan Africanists and Black Consciousness prisoners, the ANC men, at Mandela's insistence, treated the authorities with the appropriate courtesies.

Oliver Tambo has much less to say in this book. In any case, many of the texts which appeared below his name reflected the corporate mood of the ANC's senior echelons; at best they supply an opaque indication of his personal predispositions at any time. Nor, if read literally, are they a particularly useful guide to events. In 1968, for example, the ANC's Rhodesian guerilla campaign was hardly of sufficient magnitude to 'rock' the South African regime by its 'striking power' let alone arouse 'the masses to a new revolutionary mood' (p. 229). In February 1984, Tambo had good reason to insist on the 'myth about the ANC having bases in neighboring countries' (p. 244) but diplomatic expediency is not the same thing as accurate history. What American college students will make of his 1971 characterisation of Mrs Suzman as 'this sweet bird from the bloodstained south' (p. 233) is difficult to say; the exigencies which motivated this statement as well as the pandering to Black Consciousness in the same speech - 'power to the people ... means power to the black people' (p. 234) - need a more careful commentary than the bland generalities which determine the tone of the essays that accompany the documents. Was it really the case, for instance, that during the 30 years of its exile 'the ANC was to

23. Barbara Harmel remembers her father, Michael, telling her in the 1960s that Mandela attended the night classes run by the Communist Party in Johannesburg in the late 1940s.

continue to be an African 'parliament' inclusive of all political persuasions' (p. 310)? When Tambo speaks more spontaneously in interviews he does seem to match the urbane and gentle image of a reluctant revolutionary suggested by the editors in their conclusion (p. 316); but it is an image which is at odds with much of the strained rhetoric which appeared under his name.

Oliver Tambo's United Nations speeches supply the text for yet another volume from the ubiquitous E.S. Reddy. A preface by Bishop Trevor Huddleston stakes out the claim for Tambo's epochal significance: 'without Oliver Tambo ... the ANC could not have survived the years and years of repression and exile as it has done' (Oliver Tambo, Apartheid and the International Community, p. vii). Such assertions are assumed to be self evident; if Tambo's achievements are ever specified, they are usually done so with vague references to his 'unifying presence' (Mandela, Tambo and the African National Congress, p. 316). What the divisions were that Tambo's presence helped to alleviate and what he did or did not do to keep the exiled organisation intact are topics which still await exploration. Reddy contends that Tambo made an especially vital contribution 'in enabling the United Nations to play a significant role in the struggle against Apartheid' (Oliver Tambo, Apartheid and the International Community, p. viii). Perhaps this was so, but notwithstanding Huddleston's praise for 'the words of each address, so carefully chosen and so beautifully linked together' (p. viii), there is little in the oratory collected in this book to suggest that Tambo's United Nations speeches would have persuaded the unconverted or inspired disciples where none existed before. The workaday language of international anti-apartheid mobilisation seldom expressed original ideas or complex thoughts; this was hardly what was required by its audience. The hyperbole inherent in references to the Rivonia trial as 'genocide masquerading under the guise of justice' (p. 6) or to apartheid as 'the biggest threat to world peace' (p. 50) merely detracts from the meaning of words. As Tambo himself observed in a perceptive aside in one of his General Assembly addresses, 'use and abuse turns even these words upon themselves [and] their strength of feeling withers away' (p. 60). The measure of Tambo's achievements as an ANC leader cannot be sought in his public pronouncements but rather in the more discreet activities which enlisted a surprisingly disparate group of allies and which in one way or another helped to protect the organisation from the dissipation engendered by exile. As the recent disclosures about the ANC's Angolan detention camps suggest, some episodes in this history are hardly the stuff of celebration.

Sixteen speeches delivered by Nelson Mandela between his release in February 1990 and his briefing to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) summit in Kampala six months later supply eloquent indications of the increasing professionalism of the ANC's speech writers, though his Dickensian meditations on the evanescent quality of individual genius - 'each shall, like a meteor, a mere brief passing moment in time and space, flit across the human stage' (Nelson Mandela, Symbol of Resistance and Hope, p. 83) - were probably wasted on the Joint Session of the United States Congress and Senate. Reddy's final tributary volume contributes little to what we already know about this intelligent, literate and able politician. The speeches are uniformly elegant and gracious but the most memorable parts are usually allusions to a great tradition made by other famous men. The sources of Mandela's charisma are surely more complex than those qualities which can be read off a neatly crafted script.