



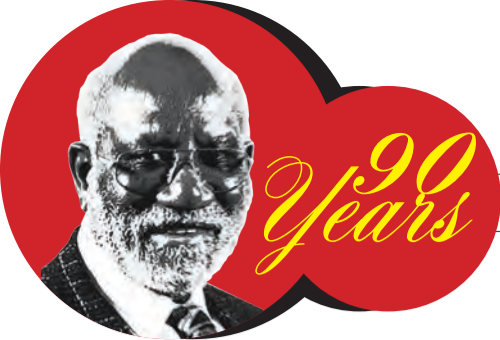
Photo: Nelson Mandela Foundation/Debbie Yazbek

In honour of a legend

A Publication of

WHEN ICONS MET ... Namibian struggle icon Herman Andimba Toivo ya Toivo and former President of South Africa Nelson Rolihlahla 'Madiba' Mandela spent years together on Robben Island as political prisoners. The photo was taken on 6 May 2010 when Ya Toivo visited Mandela at his office.





Foreword

SWAPO lawmaker Kazenambo Kazenambo is given to easy outbursts of emotions. But he is hardly a rabble-rouser. In fact, while most politicians evoke rhetoric to whip up fervour for personal expediency, Kazenambo often lets rip at his own expense. Thus, his outbursts cannot be dismissed as the calculated rants of a politician.

It was thus telling when in April this year KK took a swipe at his own party, Swapo, for not treating the founder of their party, Herman Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, with the respect he deserves.

Kazenambo was joined by another of the ruling party's younger leaders, Peya Mushelenga, in lamenting that the former liberation movement has hugely underplayed Ya Toivo's place in the country's freedom. Mushelenga, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, complained that Ya Toivo was more revered in South Africa than in his country, for which he probably suffered more at the hands of the apartheid regime than any Swapo leader could claim.

Despite the undercurrents of why Swapo and the government of independent Namib-

ia have overlooked Ya Toivo in the many expensive accolades showered on a few of their leaders, we, at *The Namibian*, were still shocked when founding President Sam Nujoma pointedly declined a request for a tribute to Ya Toivo in this publication.

We still do not know what to make of it and can only hope our first President was ill-advised.

The Nelson Mandela Foundation jumped at the opportunity to honour Ya Toivo on his 90th birthday, saying Madiba himself would have gone to great lengths to acknowledge the feats of his fellow Robben Island prisoner, whom he described as a "formidable freedom fighter".

President Hifikepunye Pohamba delivered his part like a statesman would.

Long-term comrades and friends of Ya Toivo added their voices to celebrate what is undoubtedly another milestone in the life of an icon.

No living Namibian could possibly claim to have played a more pivotal role in the liberation of Namibia at the time when Ya Toivo led a few others to first form an organisation to oppose the slavish migrant

labour system and then to agitate for the total freedom of its citizens.

For someone who has achieved so much, Ya Toivo is modest if you follow what he says in this supplement and what he has said since his activism became public in the 1950s.

Even his apartheid enemies, while vilifying him, would not denigrate his status in the push for the independence of then South West Africa.

Unclassified intelligence files of the apartheid regime refer to Ya Toivo as a "martyr leader", a "very good orator" with an above average intelligence.

One part states: "Ya Toivo has since his incarceration (on Robben Island) not relented his anti-white point of view. He is surly, moody and shows no respect or cooperation. He refuses to communicate with any official and his general behaviour is poor. He does not submit to any authority and is unsatisfied to be in held in a South African prison. His general prognosis can be described as bad and there is no question about any form of rehabilitation. He is embittered and hardened."

Hardened, perhaps, but if he was embittered, Ya Toivo has done a very good job not to show it to his former enemies and comrades alike.

He has continued to play no small part in shaping Namibia as a democratic country, but has done so quietly and with humility.

We can only refer you to another of his messages contained in this publication as he turns 90.

"To the youth and students, I ask you to dedicate yourself to hard work and to struggle against selfishness and greed. Be honest and stay focused... The struggle to develop our beloved Namibia and to share its wealth among all of our people will take longer than the political struggle, but where there is a will, there is always a way."

This supplement is our contribution to Namibia and Namibians, so that we remember what drove our forebears and continue to strive for freedom and justice with care for fellow human beings and the environment that we live in.

Tangeni Amupadhi
Editor

A message from Andimba Toivo ya Toivo

Dear comrades and friends

IAM grateful to be given this opportunity to greet you on my 90th birthday. I most sincerely thank the Namibian people for the outpouring of love and best wishes that you have showered on me as I approached this milestone.

I am proud to be part of a generation of men and women who were able to achieve the noble goal that we set for ourselves: to liberate our motherland and to restore our dignity as equal members of the human family. We followed in the footsteps of our brave ancestors, who were prepared to sacrifice their lives to challenge foreign domination and oppression.

The key to our success was that we succeeded to unite the peoples of our land in a common vision. Out of the darkest era emerged the beautiful idea that we are all Namibians. Inspired by this idea, we reached the first goal of our struggle: an independent and sovereign Namibia. This is the foundation on which we must build in order to achieve the well-being of our people.

In the recent weeks, many have asked me how I managed to survive repeated detentions, torture and imprisonment. I can only say that I vowed to myself not to allow my oppressors, torturers and captors to defeat me. I had no doubt that we would succeed. Namibians are not losers. I knew that I was not alone and we were not alone in our struggle. We knew that the decent people of the world were on our side.

I am confident that the succeeding generations will have the courage to dedicate themselves to the next phase of our struggle: to end poverty and inequality. This noble goal can also be achieved through unity and



HOME SWEET HOME ... Andimba Toivo ya Toivo is seen kissing the Namibian soil upon his return in 1989. To his left is the late Swapo Party chairman David Meroro.

Photo: The Namibian Archives

commitment. We must hold hands with our brothers and sisters not only in Namibia, but across the globe, to reach this goal.

I am a happy person today because the gift of long life has enabled me to enjoy the Independence of the Land of the Brave for the past 24 years. Many of those who wanted to destroy me physically and mentally have passed on, but I am still here. I continue to exercise every morning and to work to achieve my set objectives every day. I urge the young people to follow this example.

To the youth and students, I ask you to dedicate yourself to hard work and to struggle against selfishness and greed. Be honest and stay focused. Listen to the advice of your parents. We need you to develop yourselves and to excel as professionals, academics, artisans, entrepreneurs and public servants in order to make our country the best place to live in the world.

The struggle to develop our beloved Namibia and to share its wealth among all of our people will take longer than the political

struggle, but where there is a will, there is always a way.

I am a believer in the Namibian people: that once we set out to do something, there is no doubt we will succeed - no matter what happens.

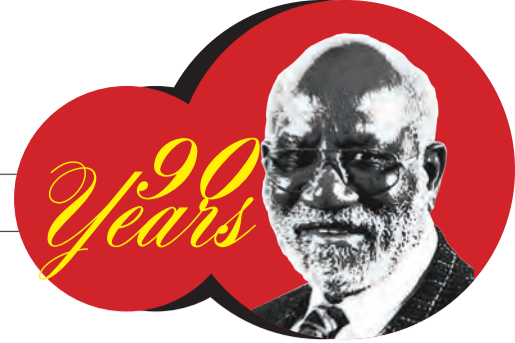
I thank my family, and again I thank the entire Namibian nation for the support and love that you have given me.

Andimba Toivo Ya Toivo
22 August 2014

THE special supplement was compiled in honour and as a tribute by *The Namibian* newspaper to the 90th birthday of Namibian struggle hero and political icon Herman Andimba Toivo ya Toivo. Coordination of articles was done by Christof Maletsky while advertising was under the Strategic Publications Department. Layout and design by Charlton de Waal. Published by the Free Press of Namibia (Pty) Ltd.

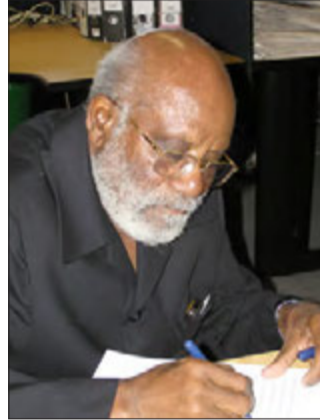
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This special supplement can also be accessed on our website at www.namibian.com.na



SPECIAL FRIENDS ... Andimba Toivo ya Toivo's relationship with the former Editor of *The Namibian*, Gwen Lister, dates back to years before independence of Namibia. As a result, the two meet from time to time and when Ya Toivo retired from active politics he took up the challenge of being an editor of the paper for one day.

Photos: Tanja Bause and Sheefeni Nikodemus



On the Role of Gwen Lister in Namibia's Struggle for Independence

Ms. Gwen Lister's role in the struggle for Namibia's independence as a journalist was immeasurable. Because of her courageous stance in defence of SWAPO, she had to part company with her former boss, Johannes Smith. After the founding of the Namibian, Gwen Lister continued to fight in the liberation struggle with her pen, which was her gun, on the media front, together with her staff. SWAPO leaders who stood with her included Cdes Nico Bessinger Daniel Tjongarero, Jeremiah Nambinga, Philip Tjerije, Rev. (now Bishop) Kameeja, the late Rev. H. Witbooi, Gottlieb Nathaniel, Anton Lubowsky, Harmut Ruppel. *just to mention a few. have*

In a democratic society, a journalist, and the media generally, has the right to tell the truth as he/she or they see it or to criticize any public figure who has made a mistake, whether a Minister, a civil servant or even the President. Although we may not agree with every position taken by a journalist, we must respect his or her right to criticize, provided that the journalist writes ethically and with integrity. It is indisputable that Gwen has demonstrated a high level of ethics and integrity during her career as a journalist, even if, like any human being, she sometimes made mistakes.

In my view, Gwen Lister deserves a national award for her bravery because of the stand that she took in defence of SWAPO and the liberation struggle.

Gwen, your contribution to the struggle was to help to popularise SWAPO and to justify the armed liberation struggle worldwide. Your remarkable contribution cannot be separated from the history of the liberation struggle of Namibia.

-- Andimba Toivo ya Toivo
7 November 2011

For Andimba at 90

From humble roots in Omangundu
the young man that was you
dreamed of liberation to get your country back.
In a journey spanning decades
moving mountains for a cause,
and inspiring many to do the same.
Defiant in the dock along with compatriots
you berated the colonisers
who responded with draconian ire.
When you look back
do you miss
the camaraderie you shared on the Island?
Do you revisit
the hopes and dreams you had as you stared out to sea
to think of home as it might be, when free?
Did you ever wonder if the sacrifice would be in vain?
Yet they called you 'terrorist'
and banished you to a rocky outcrop
because you spoke out against the intruders
who cruelly subjected a country, a people.
And even there
(prisoner in a foreign land) and in a lonely cell
after torture, interrogation, incarceration,
they could not break your spirit with their blows.
Though they blacked out the windows
so you could not see the sun,
still you refused to bow.
When they said 'South West Africa' you retorted with 'Namibia'
and stood your ground.
'Formidable freedom fighter' was how Mandela spoke of your resolve.
Though guns and guards and metal bars
kept you distant
the thought of you inspired us all.
And when your day of liberty came
on a dusty March day on home soil in Katutura
your light and spirit showed you had overcome, and won your personal fight
against apartheid.
Then the world wanted to see you
and I marvelled at your humility on other shores
when they honoured you with rousing cheers in Harlem
and you made me stand up too.
Then came a time when a young man's dream came true:
a country too, was free.
And as you take time now for reverie, and contemplation
of all that was and is and could have been.
Remind us to remember – icon that you are - what it was all about.
That we may never forget why we wanted what we did:
from a free people must come
a goodness for and in us all.

From Gwen





TOASTING TO GOOD HEALTH ... Namibia's liberation struggle icon Andimba Toivo ya Toivo toasting with First Lady Penelope Pohamba and President Hifikepunye Pohamba during the Head of State's new year greetings at State House in 2012.

Nampa



Tribute to Comrade Andimba Toivo ya Toivo on the Special Occasion of His 90th Birthday Anniversary

by

H.E. Hifikepunye Pohamba, President of the Republic of Namibia

It is a great honour for me to pay tribute to Comrade Herman Andimba Toivo ya Toivo on the auspicious occasion of his 90th birthday anniversary celebration. Comrade Ya Toivo is one of the stalwarts of Namibia's national liberation struggle. In the late 1950s, he played a crucial role as a founder member, in fact the main force, behind the creation of OPO, the forerunner of Swapo.

For his strong beliefs and convictions, he endured arrest, imprisonment, detention and harassment at the hands of the colonial authorities. He was among many Namibian freedom fighters who were incarcerated in the notorious Robben Island Prison, where he was jailed for 16 years, enduring long periods of solitary confinement and other forms of harsh treatment.

The struggle for Namibia's independence required leaders with nerves of steel. It

needed unwavering and principled freedom fighters, who were ready to stand their ground in the face of unrelenting attacks and threats to their personal safety by the colonial regime. Andimba Toivo ya Toivo is one of such leaders. He personifies courage and steadfast commitment to the cause.

During the trial at which Ya Toivo and his co-accused were sentenced to imprisonment, he articulated the fundamental principles as a dedicated freedom fighter. I would like to quote a few sentences from the statement he made from the dock during the trial. He said "I am a loyal Namibian and I could not betray my people to their enemies. I admit that I decided to assist those who had taken up arms. I know that the struggle will be long and bitter. I also know that my people will wage that struggle, whatever the cost. Only when we are granted our independence will the struggle stop." He continued. "Only

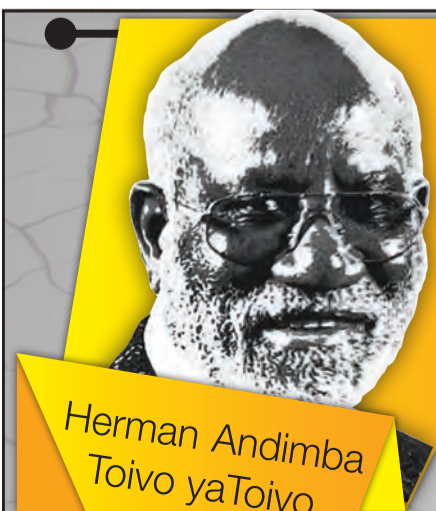
when our human dignity is restored to us, as equals of the whites, will there be peace between us."

These words demonstrate not only courage, but the character of a man who was ready to give up everything for the sake of the freedom and independence of his Motherland.

Throughout his life, both before and after the attainment of our freedom and independence, Comrade Ya Toivo has made immense contributions to our nation and its history. His work as a senior government minister in various portfolios, founding member of parliament and as a community leader has been exemplary and greatly enriched our nation. Over the years, he distinguished himself as a leader of strong character, with an indomitable spirit and unwavering belief in the power of justice, equality and dignity of all human beings.

On the occasion of his 90th birthday anniversary, I take this opportunity, on behalf of the government and people of the Republic of Namibia, my family and indeed on my own behalf, to wish Comrade Ya Toivo a happy birthday celebration. We congratulate you and your family on this important milestone and wish you many happy returns. Yours has been an exemplary life. A blessed life. And, a life well-lived. Once again, congratulations.

Hifikepunye Pohamba
President



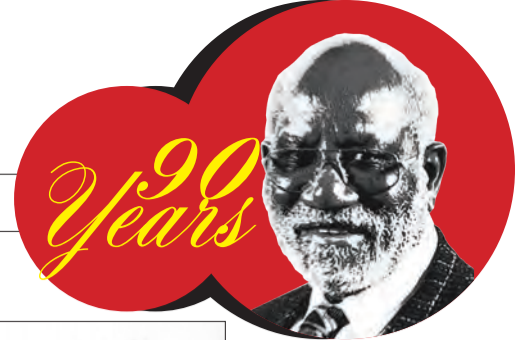
TO A LIVING LEGEND

Without your relentless contribution to the Independence of Namibia, we would not be enjoying the freedom, especially freedom of expression and the media, to allow us to keep on

"telling it like it is"

Happy birthday
90
Years

From:



ON THE ISLAND ... Andimba Toivo ya Toivo (second from left) with some of the political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela (left), and a security officer (right) at Robben Island in 1977. Photo: National Archives of South Africa.

From the Nelson Mandela Foundation

“**“**QUITE militant”.

This is how Nelson Mandela once described Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, with whom he spent around ten years in the same section on Robben Island.

Two years after he was released, Madiba recalled Ya Toivo in a conversation with Richard Stengel, who collaborated with him on his autobiography ‘Long Walk to Freedom’. “He was quite militant,” Madiba said. “He wanted very little to do with whites, with the warders.”

While the other Namibian prisoners were briefly held in what became known as the ‘punishment’ wing of the prison, Ya Toivo was the only one with Madiba and other comrades in B Section. B Section was one arm of a U-shaped construction, while the ‘punishment’ section formed the other, placing them parallel to each other. For most of their time on Robben Island, the other Namibians were held in the communal cells, known as D Section.

In an extensive series of recorded conversations, which are housed in the Nelson Mandela Foundation’s archive in Johannesburg, Madiba detailed the system which graded all prisoners into privilege-related rungs. The system started at D Group for all prisoners and went all the way up to A Group which allowed for the most privileges such as having contact visits and being allowed to buy groceries. He said that while some people “behaved very well” in order to be promoted, Ya Toivo was different.

“Andimba was not concerned about that,” Madiba said. “He didn’t care to be promoted and he wouldn’t cooperate with the authorities at all in almost everything.”

“We did persuade him that he has many people there who want to be looked after – because his people were in D Section and we felt it was his duty,

you know, to speak, to have the conditions of his people improved – and that we thought he should play a more active role in that regard.”

While Ya Toivo and his comrades from Namibia were on Robben Island from early 1968, they were brought to the punishment section in May 1971.

Madiba and his comrades got to hear that the Namibians had embarked on a hunger strike because of their isolation and started their own in solidarity.

At the time the prison was run by the notorious commanding officer colonel Piet Badenhorst, and conditions were brutal.

The solidarity hunger strike angered the warders, who on 28 May 1971 embarked on a raid of B Section. Madiba and his comrades were stripped and made to stand in the icy winter night for some time while their cells were searched. They only stopped their tormenting when Govan Mbeki collapsed. The next day Madiba and his comrades heard that the Namibians had been beaten up. Ya Toivo, who Madiba called in his autobiography, “a formidable freedom fighter,” had hit back and knocked down a warder.

Madiba left Robben Island on 31 March 1982, two years before Ya Toivo was released after having served 16 years of a 20 year sentence. In his famous rejection on 10 February 1985 of President PW Botha’s offer to release him if he renounced violence, Madiba, who had then served 22 years in jail, said, through his daughter Zindzi: “Only free men can negotiate. Prisoners cannot enter into contracts. Herman Toivo ya Toivo, when freed, never gave any undertaking, nor was he called upon to do so.” After his release from prison in 1990 Madiba stayed in touch with Ya Toivo who visited him at both his home and office in recent years.



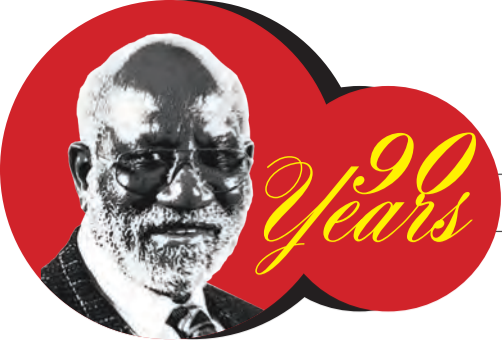
Photo: Family Album

CLOSE TIES ... Even though both Ya Toivo and Mandela retired from active politics, the two struggle icons and their families remained in close contact. The photo was taken during one of the visits of the Toivo family to the Mandelas.



TOGETHER AS ONE ... Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, former President of South Africa Nelson Mandela and apartheid activist Denis Goldberg in Mandela’s office on 6 May 2010.

Photo: Nelson Mandela Foundation/Debbie Yazbek



Through thick and thin

I thought we were going to meet to discuss our US solidarity work with Swapo, but he got right to the point, as he usually does, expressing his attraction to me and proposed that we start seeing each other on a personal basis.

– Vicki

• YVONNE AMUKWAYA

AN UNEXPECTED encounter, while on their way to an Angela Davis rally in the mid-80s in New York, eventually led to a lifelong commitment for Vicki Erenstein (now Ya Toivo) and Andimba Toivo ya Toivo.

The couple met in 1984, just seven months after Andimba ya Toivo was released from Robben Island Prison, while he was in New York to attend the United Nations General Assembly. Mrs Ya Toivo had invited Lucia Hamutenya, a Namibian friend who worked at the office of the UN Commissioner for Namibia, to attend a rally to be addressed by Angela Davis, a communist leader, university lecturer and former political prisoner. Her friend asked if she could bring two Namibian friends along.

Then a labour lawyer and political activist, Vicki Erenstein was working closely with the ANC and Swapo. Ya Toivo was no stranger when she met him. Recalling their first meeting, Mrs Ya Toivo said: “As Andimba climbed into the car, I was in shock. He was well-known to me, since we had been campaigning for his freedom. I just could not believe that I was actually meeting him.” A Namibian graduate student, Leake Hangala, accompanied him.

Thereafter the two met by chance at the Swapo office and at a UN reception, just exchanging greetings. However, one day, a secretary in the Swapo office in New York phoned her on behalf of Ya Toivo and invited her to meet him.

“I thought we were going to meet to discuss our US solidarity work with Swapo, but he got right to the point, as he usually does, expressing his attraction to me and proposed that we start seeing each other on a personal basis. The chemistry was too strong to resist,” shared Mrs Ya Toivo. “I agreed that we could meet socially in order to get to know each other, but requested to keep our relationship between the two of us,” she continued. Mrs Ya Toivo said the reason for this was simply because he was an important political figure and she was a prominent activist and that she did not want to be relegated to the role of simply being a leader’s “girlfriend”.

“On his visits, I tried to show him the wonders and the daily life of New York through my eyes. We spent most of our time just walking in the streets and stopping here and there. You should understand that these were dangerous times for liberation fighters, and some were targeted for assassination. During his first visit, he did not have a bodyguard, but Swapo soon asked someone to accompany him when he went out. We nevertheless did our best to find ways to be alone, and sometimes sneaked out on our own.” The couple spent their first years in a long-distance relationship.

The next time the two met was in Luanda, Angola, in 1985, where Mrs Ya Toivo had been invited by the Organisation of Angolan Women (OMA) after attending the United National Conference for Women in Nairobi.

She said their long distance relationship was quite challenging.

“We met whenever we could, in the US, and once in London. Fortunately, Andimba came back to the United States periodically to attend the General Assembly, for a speaking tour, and to attend solidarity conferences. Andimba was determined to maintain contact,” she said.

“He would phone occasionally, but frequently sent postcards and letters from wherever he was in the world. I probably had the highest phone bill in New York at that time because of my too frequent calls to Luanda. So we did our



Photo: Henry van Rooi

GROOVE ... Andimba and Vicki on the dance floor shortly after the City of Windhoek renamed a street in his honour. Several towns in Namibia have named streets after him with the most recent one being Katima Mulilo.

best to keep contact.”

Taking a further stroll down memory lane, Mrs Ya Toivo glowed as she shared the story of her first African dress.

“I was phoned on a very hot day to retrieve a parcel from the Swapo office, which was not far from the offices of my law firm. Andimba had sent me an African dress that he had purchased in Zimbabwe. As soon as I opened my parcel, I changed clothes and marched back to my office proudly wearing my new (and very cool) African dress.”

While many couples know that they are bound to spend the rest of their lives together, Mrs Ya Toivo said, “I did not enter the relationship with the view that we would marry. But as we grew closer and closer, I knew that I wanted to spend the rest of my life with him. We decided that we would marry at an appropriate time and would live together in an independent Namibia.”

“In 1989, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had invited Andimba for a rest programme at a sanatorium. Andimba got permission to take me along. We decided that we would try to get married during this visit. We met in Moscow and had thorough medical checkups, followed by a visit of about 14 days to a sanatorium in the Crimea on the Black Sea and to Kiev. It was amazing. It was like having a honeymoon before our wedding,” reminisced Mrs Ya Toivo.

The couple expressed their desire to marry to the director of the sanatorium, and he agreed happily to make the arrangements, including a small reception. However, shortly before the scheduled date, the couple was informed that the wedding could not be arranged because they could not comply with the Soviet Union’s legal requirements for marriage within the time period of their stay.

The two were able to meet later in the same year, in Namibia, when Mrs Ya Toivo was part of a group of lawyers who came to observe

the election campaign and the actual election. While in Windhoek, she spent as much time with her fiancé as possible. They decided that they would marry at the time of independence.

“We wanted to get married on Independence Day but Andimba had too many responsibilities and there was no time. We ended up getting married a week after independence at the Magistrate’s Court.”

From then onwards, it was only a question of when she would be able to move to Namibia permanently. However, it was not an easy time.

“My father had just passed away in 1989 and my mother was very ill at the time that we married. My brother, who was not married, became critically ill while my mother was on her deathbed. I had to be with them.” Thus, Mrs Ya Toivo could not move to Namibia immediately. “My mother passed away while my brother was in the intensive care unit, on life support. He remained in a critical condition for a period of six months, but managed miraculously to survive and to live for another 10 years! I was able to move to Namibia, in August 1991, only after he completed a long period of rehabilitation.”

By the time Mrs Ya Toivo moved permanently to Namibia, she already had 18 years of legal practice in New York. She said that when she came to Namibia, she had the idea of contributing to the development of the nation as a lawyer, but many people took it for granted that she was going to be a housewife.

“I had a hard time finding employment, even with my academic qualifications and years of experience in legal practice, and Andimba is not a man to use his position to obtain personal favours,” she shared. She finally was appointed to a position in the Attorney-General’s office approximately 10 months after settling permanently in Windhoek.

In 1993, the couple were blessed with twin daughters, Mutaleni and Nashikoto, whom they raised with their three adopted children.

“When I moved here, I was instantly a

mother. My husband had three small boys living with him-- two were his sister’s sons and the other was a boy whom he had taken in as a small child in Angola. We were soon joined by Kuku Nashikoto Elizabeth Malima, Andimba’s mother”.

As the wife of a prominent political figure, Mrs Ya Toivo tackled her role as a mother, wife, career woman and then later also as an active community and school board member.

“My husband is very hardworking, and in the early days, he travelled a lot both within Namibia and abroad, as Minister of Mines and Energy. Before I started working, I accompanied him on some of his local trips to the mines. In addition, we travelled frequently with the boys to the North on weekends to visit family and friends.”

When the girls were eight months old, the couple travelled to the United States to visit her family in different states, and also went to Cuba for three days on the same trip. They travelled alone with the girls, and cared for them themselves.

Mrs Ya Toivo tried to ensure that the family spent as much time together under the very demanding circumstances of her husband’s schedule. She introduced into his life the ritual of an annual family vacation at the end of the year. The couple managed to take a one-month vacation with the children almost every year, mainly in Namibia, but also in Cape Town, and while her brother was alive, in the US. Her husband also accompanied her to New York in 2005 when she ran the New York marathon for the first time.

She said that while the Namibian people in general have a high degree of respect for Ya Toivo, there were times when rumours were spread or unpleasant things appeared in the papers about her. But she had been counselled by one of her husband’s former Robben Island Prison colleagues before marriage, who told her that the attacks on her were actually efforts to discredit her husband. “He had told me that these things were political and that in politics these things happen. We never took them personally.”

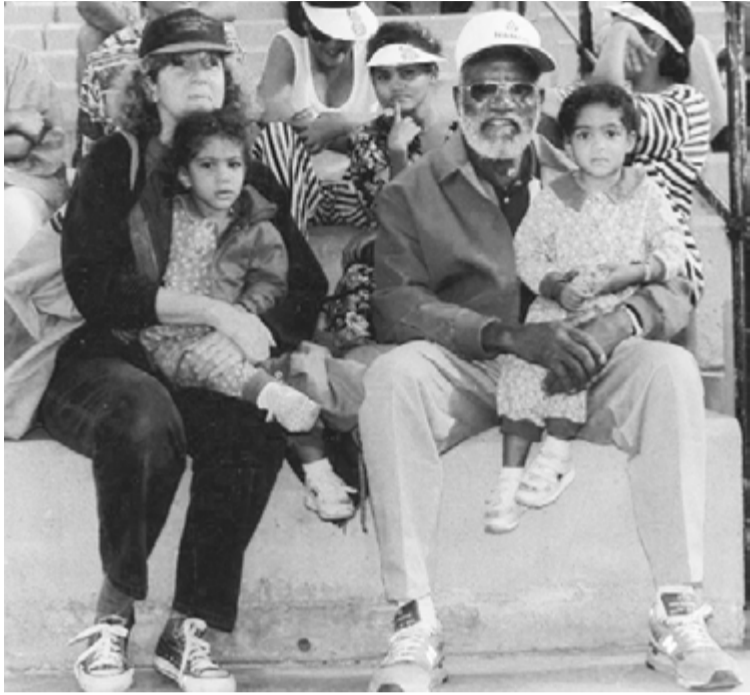
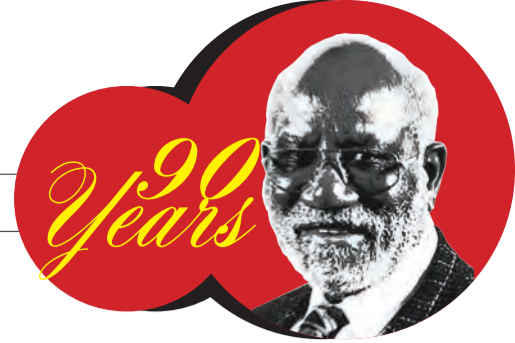
Mrs Ya Toivo, who described her husband as a courageous politician with integrity and the friendliest person in Namibia, said that her husband’s dream of liberating his motherland has been achieved but that the struggle still continues.

“My husband’s primary mission was to liberate his motherland. He is happy and proud that this was achieved. However, he envisages a longer struggle to achieve the economic emancipation and well-being of all Namibians,” she said.

“Andimba represents important values that are crucial to the achievement of Namibia’s goals. As a politician, he has been courageous and selfless and has demonstrated integrity, humility and great commitment to his people. These are qualities that need to be promoted and that the youth should emulate.”

She said that throughout his life her husband has promoted solidarity among Namibia’s different ethnic groups and tolerance of differing ideas, adding that he also attaches great importance to international solidarity. “He has dedicated his life to the service of people and he’s given an example that others should try to live up to in their own ways.”

Asked how the journey has been, Mrs Ya Toivo said, “It has been rich, adventurous, challenging and has had its ups and downs, but mostly, it has been wonderful. I have been part of something wonderful and so have our children.”



Mutaleni's tribute to Papa

THEY say you are humble, kind, funny, generous, giving, a pillar of strength, a river of wisdom, and think about others before considering yourself. The list goes on, but in my opinion, words cannot fully describe your true essence.

As my father, friend and educator, I am ecstatic and blessed to have been given and continue to be given the purest fruits from your knowledge because it shows all your qualities, and everything else that cannot be explained verbally, such as the sacrifices you have made to make sure that your children be given the best you can afford.

You have taught me so much over the past years and I continue to learn from you each and every day. You make sure that we learn to give back what we can because not everyone is as privileged as we are. You also make sure that we know our dif-

ferent duties in order to live life to the fullest. You are someone who doesn't give up on what you want to achieve and so far in life, I have been trying to do the same. I may not want to follow in your footsteps directly, but I do believe I portray your qualities and good abilities, which are followed though in my personality and being.

I am so honored and thankful to call you my Papa.

I really could not have asked for a better father. You and my mother are a true blessing in my life. I look up to you two because I want to achieve great things just like the both of you have. Both of you have given me an unforgettable number of memories that I will cherish for the rest of my life. I cannot wait to create many more moments with you. I love you both dearly.

Thank you so much for everything

and for your life lessons! I do not know if a simple 'thank you' honours all you have done, but at this point in time, that is all I can say.

Although you may be turning 90 years old, I feel as though you have the energy – physically and mentally – of someone in their 40s.

I just wanted to say HAPPY BIRTHDAY PAPA!! I hope you enjoy all the earlier events to celebrate your upcoming 90th birthday. May you have an amazing and unforgettable day filled with LOVE from all walks of life, friends and family.

I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU PAPA!

Hugs, kisses and LOVE from your last-born daughter,

Mutaleni ya Toivo

Andimba, I hope to have the privilege of having you at our side for many years to come. Keep it up.

– Vicki



Photo: The Namibian Archives

THE FAMILY ... Andimba and Vicki with their daughters Nashikoto (left) and Mutaleni (right). They have also raised several other family children.

To my husband Andimba

FOR twenty years, you have been my lover, partner and comrade. Your love for me as your wife has given me great happiness. You have also shared with me your vast reserve of love: of life; of people; of politics; of family; of Namibian culture; of learning; of adventure. You are a man who is secure and without petty jealousy. When asked by friends how you are, you usually respond, "I'm on top of the world as usual." When presented with a challenge, you never hesitate, but simply say, "Where there's a will, there's a way." And you mean it! This is how I know and love you.

The honest, determined, democratic-minded, loyal and humble Andimba Toivo ya Toivo known to the public is known in the same way to family and friends.

As a husband, you are loving, open-minded and tolerant. Your wisdom, generosity of spirit and fearlessness guide me as I navigate the unknown and sometimes turbulent currents of my adopted Namibia.

As a father, your love and devotion to Isak, Philemon, Nashikoto and Mutaleni give them an anchor and strong guidance: you have taught them the importance of

showing respect for every person, being honest, focusing on goals and working hard. You savour all the joys and wonders of raising our young daughters and have never hesitated to share the daily responsibilities of parenting.

To me, you have the distinction of being the friendliest person in Namibia. You have the extraordinary talent to show an interest in everyone you meet, to ask questions, to retain the information gained and to stay in touch. You never tire of visiting sick friends, sharing bereavement or happy occasions or simply phoning to say "hello." Many friends come to you for help and counselling, and you are always willing to assist. It is a never-ending source of amazement to travel with you throughout this country that you love so much. Wherever we go, you are received warmly by people from every walk of life who count themselves among your personal friends. The same is true wherever we have visited outside of Namibia.

Andimba, I hope to have the privilege of having you at our side for many years to come.

Keep it up, Vicki



A tribute to my father

A MAN revered who sacrificed the majority of his life in order to liberate his country from South Africa. A man who endured the tortures and brutality of the Apartheid Era. A man whom many consider to be a hero, some even refer to him as the "silent hero". A politician he once was, humble and charismatic in his own way. That is all most people get to see. I, on the other hand, am going to tell you about my father Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, the man I know. I will give you a bit of insight into who he really is.

Andimba Toivo ya Toivo and Vicki ya Toivo bore two beautiful twin daughters. My father a.k.a 'Papa' is the strongest man I know, physically and mentally fit. I remember when my sister and I were younger; our father would on occasion have us accompany him at four in the morning on rather strenuous walks up and down our hill, which ultimately turned into a jog. Sometimes it was voluntary. We could never understand how our father was able to go to bed so late and still manage to wake up so absurdly early. We then concluded it was simply his daily routine. My father has never ceased to amaze me and inspired me to be the best in whichever way possible.

He is a man who thrives on adventure and is well-travelled. My father made sure that as a family we experienced it all. Funerals, weddings, birthdays and holidays. Many a time would be spent travelling long distances at the back of the car, on account of me being the smallest! I shall definitely never forget those trips. As a family we have travelled more than many could ever wish for and for that I am thankful. It has shaped me into a well-rounded person, and

in the process we have created wonderful memories.

Throughout my life I have always appreciated my parents and have over the years come to understand how privileged my sister and I are. 'Papa' faces all challenges head-on; even if it means being in the line of fire. A workaholic to say the least, he always tends to other people's needs before he attends to his own. My father, my friend, someone I will always look up to and admire. He has taught me respect, moral values, work ethic and to face any adversity that life throws at me, a true educator of life.

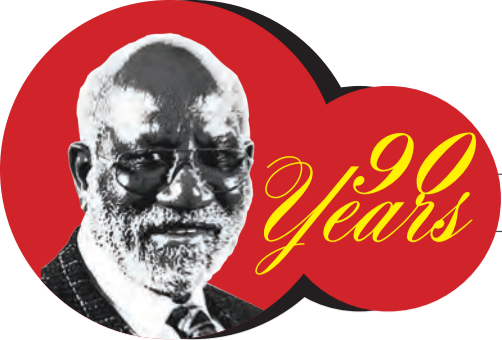
My father has counselled my sister and me, and made sure that we received the best education possible. Education and the pruning of the 'born-frees' is a key factor as we are the generation who need to follow in the footsteps of my father as well as many others. We need to ensure that their legacies continue.

The amount of gratitude I have for my father is simply unimaginable. I can only hope to one day be half as brave and wise as my father is. Thank you for truly being an inspiration to all, myself included, and for being the number one man in my life!

I hope you enjoy your birthday to the fullest as it is a milestone not many have the pleasure of celebrating. May your day be filled with much love, happiness and blessings all round.

Tate, onda pandula, tangi unene. Evalo iyoye nalikuyambekelwe. Translates to: Tate, thank you very much. Happy Birthday.

Nashikoto ya Toivo



The prisoner's adaptation and behaviour remained bad and gradually became worse. It was clear that he did not want to abide by the discipline in prison. On 20 June 1971 he swore at the member in charge of the section, sergeant Karsten, and threatened to assault him after the member told him to walk down a corridor.

— Prison records



Photo: The Namibian Archives

RIGHTS CAMPAIGNERS ... Emil Appolus, Speaker Theo-Ben Gurirab and Andimba Toivo ya Toivo share a joke as they recall the struggle days.

Robben Island records reveal a moody, disrespectful Toivo

THE recently declassified prison records of Namibia's best known Robben Island prisoner and struggle icon, Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, have provided new insight into the life and struggles of his life during detention.

Ya Toivo's time on the notorious island was marked by constant brawls with the prison authorities and they had a tough time dealing with him.

In one instance he was described as "surly, moody and shows no respect or cooperation", while he continuously threatened to assault guards and did not relent on his view of whites.

Ya Toivo and 36 other Namibians were arrested on 9 September 1966 by members of the South African security forces in the

north. They were charged under the Terrorism Act and on 9 February 1968 he was found guilty of contravening the Act and sentenced to 20 years in prison.

Throughout his years at Robben Island, where he was incarcerated with the likes of the late South African President Nelson Mandela, Ya Toivo refused to recognise South Africa's jurisdiction over Namibia and was the real troublemaker for the prison authorities.

For instance, on 18 April 1970 Ya Toivo demanded that all Namibians be transferred back to their country and called for a drastic improvement of the medical services on Robben Island.

"The prisoner's adaptation and behaviour remained bad and gradually became worse. It was clear that he did not want to abide by the discipline in prison. On 20 June 1971 he swore at the member in charge of the section, sergeant Karsten, and threatened to assault him after the member told him to walk down a corridor," the prison records indicate.

He also refused to shave his beard when instructed, so as a result was put in solitary confinement for one year.

He drafted a petition on behalf of the Namibian prisoners in September 1971 but it was pointed out to him that he could not speak on behalf of the group.

The authorities told him that he could only speak on his own behalf

but he reacted angrily to it.

"I accept what you have just told me. What I want to say is that the boat is ready to take you back to Holland. You came from there to steal our land. Remember, perhaps you and I will not be there anymore when the Africans take over, but your children will blame you for the manner in which you treated the Africans. You see this desk and chairs, this is the work of the black man. One of these days we will be sitting there."

The records continue to indicate that he said: "I am here as a leader and I will continue to act for my people. I will continue to say 'we', because I am doing my duty as a leader."

More such reactions could be seen when on 13 June 1981 after the prisoners played a soccer match Ya Toivo "tried to incite the prisoners by walking around with his fist in the air," according to the prison files.

Similarly on 13 October 1981, he refused to prepare for an inspection by a magistrate and commanding officer.

Such behavior led to his de-grading from Group C to D in February 1982.

"His behaviour remains bad, he has no respect for white members, he resists discipline and takes an aggressive stance when he is addressed," the authorities wrote in his file.

Three months later on 24 May 1982 Ya Toivo's behaviour was described as follows:

"Ya Toivo has since his incarceration not relented his anti-white point of view. He is surly, moody and shows no respect or cooperation. He refuses to communicate with any official and his general behaviour is poor. He does not submit to any authority and is unsatisfied to be in held in a South African prison. His general prognosis can be described as bad and there is no question about any form of rehabilitation. He is embittered and hardened."

For all the time he was at the island,

Ya Toivo received very few visitors.

Among those was his mother Elizabeth Malima ya Toivo who visited him on 27 July and 3 August 1974 and the late former president of Swanu, Moses Katjiongua, who visited him on 21 January 1983.

Toivo believed that Katjiongua visited him on the instructions of the DTA to perhaps try and convince him to join the party.

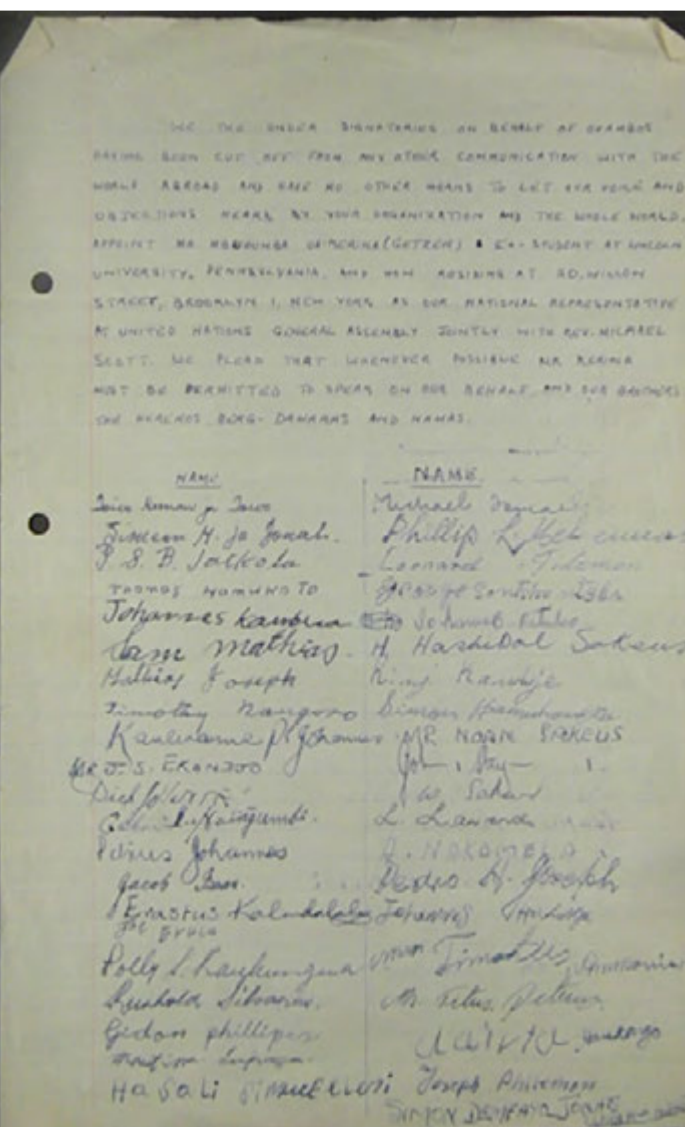
A request by late freedom fighter Emil Appolus in June 1981 to visit him, was denied by prison authorities.

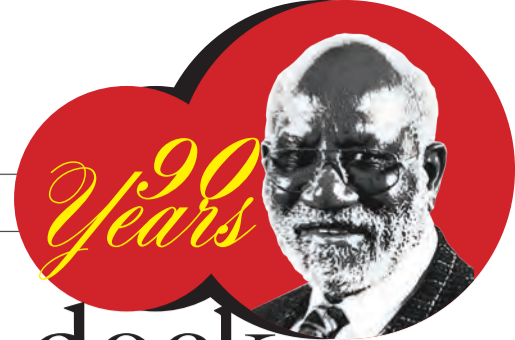
The files describe Ya Toivo as a "martyr leader", a "very good orator" with an above average intelligence.

Names of Toivo's fellow prisoners

Ephraim Kamati Andjengo Kapolo dies during the trial in Pretoria.

THE trialists are inter alia: Eliazer Tuhadele, John Otto Nankudhu (sentenced to life imprisonment), Simeon Shihungileni, Julius Israel Shilongo (Kashuku), Lazarus Zachariah (Shakala) (arrested on 16.04.1966 at Nkurenkuru and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment), David Hamunime (Kengoya), Joseph Shimuefeleni, Helao Shityuwete (arrested on 26.03.1966 and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment), Eino Kamati Ekandjo, Festus Nehale, Nghidipo Jesaja Haufiku (Kambwa), Immanuel Augustus Shifidi, Kaleb Hanganee Tjipahura, Rudolf Kadhikwa, Abel Shuudeni Haluteni, Betuel Nunjango, Michael Ifingilwa Moses, Matias Elia Nashidengo (Kanyeule), Malakia Shivute Ushona, Johannes Samuel Shiponeni, Petrus Kamati, Immanuel Gottlieb "Maxuilili" Nathaniel, John Ya Otto, Jason Daniel Mutumbulwa, Joseph Matheus, Jonas Nashivela, Nathanael Lot Homateni, Pillemon Kakwalindishi Shitilifa, Simeon Namunganga Hamulemo, Shinima Niilenge (Harakaty), Petrus Sinima Niilenge, Ndjaula Tshaningua (Manghono), Sakeus Phillipus Itika (Oshivela), Simeon Ipinge Iputa, Naf-talie Amungulu (Kombadjele), and Rehabeam Olavi Nambinga. Joseph Shimuefeleni and Festus Nehale die later of negligence and mistreatment on Robben Island. Over the next years altogether 62 Namibian prisoners spend many years of hardship on Robben Island.





Ya Toivo's statement from the dock

DURING his trial, which lasted from August 1967 to February 1968, Ya Toivo made a statement from the dock:

"We find ourselves here in a foreign country, convicted under laws made by people whom we have always considered as foreigners. We find ourselves tried by a judge who is not our countryman and who has not shared our background....

We are Namibians and not South Africans. We do not now, and will not in the future, recognise your right to govern us, to make laws for us in which we have no say; to treat our country as if it were your property and us as if you were our masters....

We are far away from our homes; not a single member of our families has come to visit us, never mind be present at our trial....

The South African government has again shown its strength by detaining us for as long as it pleased, keeping some of us in solitary confinement for 300 to 400 days and bringing us to its capital to try us. It has shown its strength by passing an Act especially for us and having it made retrospective. It has even chosen an ugly name to call us by. One's own are called patriots, or at least rebels; your opponents are called terrorists....

We know that whites do not think of blacks as politicians – only as agitators. Many of our people, through no fault of their own have had no education at all. This does not mean that they do not know what they want....

Our grievances are called 'so-called' grievances. We do not believe South Africa is in South West Africa in order to provide facilities and work for non-whites. It is there for its own selfish reasons. For the first 40 years it did practically nothing to fulfil its 'sacred trust'. It only concerned itself with the welfare of the whites.

Since 1962 because of the pressure from inside by the non-whites and especially my organisation, and because of the limelight placed on our country by the world, South Africa has been trying to do a bit more. It rushed the Bantustan Report, so that it would at least have something to say at the World Court.

Only one who is not white and has suffered the way we have can say whether our grievances are real or 'so-called'.

Those of us who have some education, together with our uneducated brethren, have always struggled to get freedom....

Your government, my Lord, undertook a very special responsibility, when it was awarded the mandate over us after the First World War. It assumed a sacred trust to guide us towards independence and to prepare us to take our place among the nations of the world.

We believe that South Africa has abused that trust because of its belief in racial supremacy (that white people have been chosen by God to rule the world) and apartheid. We believe that for 50 years South Africa had failed to promote the development of our people. Where are our trained men? The wealth of our country has been used to train your people for leadership and the sacred duty of preparing the indigenous people to take their place among the nations of the world has been ignored....

I do not claim that it is easy for men of different races to live at peace with one another. I myself had no experience of this in my youth, and at first it surprised me that men of different races could live together in peace. But now I know it to be true and to be something to which we must strive.

The South African government creates



DETAINED ... Some of the accused in the trial of 37 Swapo members under the South African Terrorism Act, Pretoria 1967-8. Seventeen of them were serving life imprisonment and were on Robben Island. Left to right (top): Herman Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, Johannes Nankudhu, Kaleb Tjipahura, David Shimuafeleni, Malakia Ushona and Betual Nunjango. Bottom: Johannes Shiponeni, Abel Haluteni, Rudolph Kadhikwa, Lazarus Zacharia, Petrus Kamati and Kambua Kashikola.



hostility by separating people and emphasising their differences. We believe that by living together, people will learn to lose their fear of each other. We also believe that this fear which some of the whites have of Africans is based on their desire to be superior and privileged and that when whites see themselves as part of South West Africa, sharing with us all its hopes and troubles, then that fear will disappear. Separation is said to be a natural process. But why, then, is it imposed by force, and why then is it the whites have the superiority?

I have come to know that our people cannot expect progress as a gift from anyone, be it the United Nations or South Africa. Progress is something we shall have to struggle and work for. And I believe that the only way in which we shall be able and fit to secure that progress is to learn from our own experience and mistakes.

Your Lordship emphasised in your judgement the fact that our arms came from communist countries and also that words commonly used by communists were to be found in our documents. But my Lord, in the documents produced by the State, there is another type of language. It appears even more often than the former. Many documents finish up with an appeal to the Almighty to guide us in our struggle for freedom. It is the wish of the South African government that we should be discredited in the Western world. That is why it calls our struggle a communist plot; but this will not be believed by the world.

The world knows that we are not interested in ideologies.

We feel that the world as a whole has a special responsibility towards us. This is because the land of our fathers was handed over to South Africa by a world body. It is a divided world, but it is a matter of hope for us that it at least agrees about one thing – that we are entitled to freedom and justice.

Other mandated territories have received their freedom. The judgement of the World Court was a bitter disappointment to us. We felt betrayed and we believed that South Africa would never fulfil its trust. Some felt that we would secure our freedom only by fighting for it. We knew that the power of South Africa is overwhelming, but we also knew that our case is a just one and our situation intolerable – why should we not receive our freedom?

We are sure that the world's efforts to help us in our plight will continue, whatever South Africans may call us.

We do not expect that independence will end our troubles, but we do believe that our people are entitled – as are all peoples – to rule them-

selves. It is not really a question whether South Africa treats us well or badly, but that South West Africa is our country and we wish to be our own masters.

There are some who will say that they are sympathetic with our aims, but that they condemn violence. I would answer that I am not by nature a man of violence and I believe that violence is a sin against God and my fellow men. Swapo itself was a non-violent organisation, but the South African government is not truly interested in whether opposition is violent or non-violent. It does not wish to hear any opposition to apartheid.

Is it surprising that in such times my countrymen have taken up arms? Violence is truly fearsome, but who would not defend his property and himself against a robber? And we believe that South Africa has robbed us of our country.

I have spent my life working in Swapo, which is an ordinary political party like any other.

My Lord, you found it necessary to brand me as a coward. During the Second World War, when it became evident that both my country and your country were threatened by the dark clouds of Nazism, I risked my life to defend both of them, wearing a uniform with orange bands on it.

But some of your countrymen when called to battle to defend civilisation resorted to sabotage against their own fatherland. I volunteered to face German bullets, and as a guard of military installations, both in South West Africa and the Republic, was prepared to be the victim of their sabotage. Today they are our masters and are considered the heroes, and I am called the coward.

When I consider my country, I am proud that my countrymen have taken up arms for their people and I believe that anyone who calls himself a man would not despise them.

I had no answer to the question: 'Where has your non-violence got us?' Whilst the World Court judgement was pending, I at least had that to fall back on. When we failed, after years of waiting, I had no answer to give to my people.

Even though I did not agree that people should go into the bush, I could not refuse to help them when I knew that they were hungry. I even passed on the request for dynamite. It was not any easy decision. Another man might have been able to say 'I will have nothing to do with that sort of thing'. I was not, and I could not remain a spectator in the struggle of my people for their freedom.

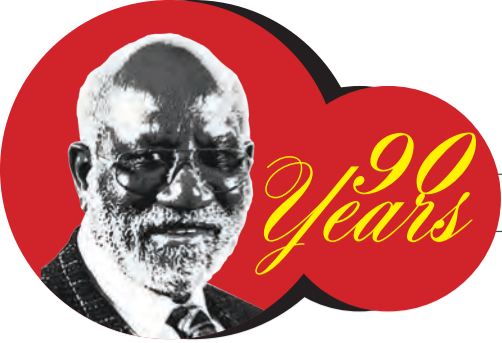
I am a loyal Namibian and I could not betray my people to their enemies. I admit that I decided to assist those who had taken up arms. I know that the struggle will be long and bitter. I also know that my people will wage that struggle, whatever the cost.

Only when we are granted our independence will the struggle stop. Only when our human dignity is restored to us, as equals of the whites, will there be peace between us ...

My co-accused and I have suffered. We are not looking forward to our imprisonment. We do not, however, feel that our efforts and sacrifice have been wasted. We believe that human suffering has its effect even on those who impose it.

We hope that what has happened will persuade the whites of South Africa that we and the world may be right and they may be wrong. Only when white South Africans realise this and act on it, will it be possible for us to stop our struggle for freedom and justice in the land of our birth".

Toivo was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment.



PLACE OF WORSHIP ... The Odibo Anglican Church where he was a member.



IN HIS HONOUR ... The dining hall at St Mary's Mission school which was named after Andimba Toivo ya Toivo.



HISTORIC PLACE ... Andimba Toivo ya Toivo's classroom has since been renovated.

His teacher recalls:

Ya Toivo gave me Namibia

• HILENI NEMBWAYA at ONAMHINDA

VETERAN politician Andimba Toivo Ya Toivo is regarded as a source of inspiration by many people at Odibo and the community highly values and respects what he has done for Namibia.

Julia Mbida (whose age is estimated at over 97 years), from Onamhinda village in Odibo district, is one of the few elderly people who still remember Ya Toivo as a small boy.

Mbida was a Sub B (Grade 2) teacher at St Mary's Mission school when Ya Toivo, a lad with a strong Ndonga accent, first arrived at the school at Odibo in 1947, and from then she knew him very well.

"Ya Toivo found me here at Odibo when he came to St Mary's and that time he was still young but a mature boy, who knew what he wanted to achieve. I watched him as he progressed in school. He also used to come to my house to play with my children since we were neighbours," says Mbida.

Mbida says when Ya Toivo arrived at Odibo he stayed at the late Petrus Ndongo's homestead, before moving into the school hostel.

She said Ya Toivo, who was a Lutheran, had to change his religion to Anglican to be admitted at St Mary's school.

When asked whether Ya Toivo still visits her and what he has done for the community of Odibo, she says: "Even if he does not visit me anymore, we are still together spiritually. He fought and liberated this country for us. He gave me my Namibia and we are proud for what he did for us and he remains our hero."

Mbida says Ya Toivo used to regularly attend Odibo Anglican Church with his wife before age caught up

with him.

She described Ya Toivo as a quiet and smart learner.

"He was a very polite, quiet boy and neat at the same time. I have never seen him angry or arguing with anyone. He was very peaceful and intelligent."

She says even though Ya Toivo was very bright at school, some of the missionaries were not happy with him and they tried to stop his education by sending him off to mould mud bricks.

However, Ya Toivo was smart and never allowed anything to get between him and his education.

He remained at St Mary's Mission school for six years until he graduated as a teacher in 1950.

Ya Toivo taught at St Cuthbert's school at Onamutayi for about six months before he transferred to St Mary's, where he taught till the end of 1951. He left for South Africa to further his studies in November 1951.

Mbida, who is now blind and unable to walk on her own, still remembers when Ya Toivo first gave her a Swapo membership card before he went into exile.



Photos: Hileni Nembwaya

“He was a very polite, quiet boy and neat at the same time. I have never seen him angry or arguing with any one. He was very peaceful and intelligent.

– Julia Mbida

MY HERO ... Julia Mbida, who was a Sub B teacher at St Mary's Mission School, is one of the few elders in the community who still remembers Andimba Toivo ya Toivo as a young schoolboy. She is pictured at her homestead at Onamhinda village in the Odibo district.

Hilundwa and his best friend, Ya Toivo

• HILENI NEMBWAYA and OSWALD SHIVUTE

THE former deputy mayor of Os-hakati, Skinny Hilundwa, has often described his best friend Andimba Toivo ya Toivo as an intelligent and fearless man.

Hilundwa met Ya Toivo when he first arrived at Odibo after the second world war in 1947. He says that before Ya Toivo came to Odibo, he attended Ongwediva Industrial School in 1939.

There, Ya Toivo was trained as a carpenter for three years and was taught Afrikaans by Gabriel Taapopi. Ya Toivo was also a farm worker at Tsumeb, before he went back to school at Odibo.

Hilundwa says that Ya Toivo managed to build a store at Ondangwa with his farm earnings that he had saved.

"His business started to flourish and Ya Toivo became an established businessman

in Ondangwa. He was really good at it," he says.

Hilundwa also remembers his school years at St. Mary's with the former liberation fighter at Odibo as if they happened yesterday, saying that life was hard in many aspects. They had to cook for themselves but often did not have food to eat.

"The struggle was real; our life in the hostel was a struggle because we never had a dining hall or a kitchen. We cooked ourselves. By that time we used to receive one tin of maize flour and a small piece of dried traditional spinach (ekaka) but it was never really enough," says Hilundwa.

He also speaks of how they used to travel long distances by foot to Ondangwa in search of holiday jobs. Ondangwa was the nearest town at that time. Hilundwa said Ya Toivo had completed all his standard grades until standard six, which was the highest grade at that time. Some of Ya Toivo's classmates included the likes of

Edmund Kandume, Monica Ashikenga, Nataniel Namweya, Nataniel Paulus and George Tobias.

Hilundwa also speaks of how their school was regarded by the South African government as a great evil in the country, whereby it became the main target of the occupying forces until it was destroyed in 1979.

When asked whether he and Ya Toivo still visit Odibo, he says: "Odibo is our holy place, we still go there occasionally. However, I cannot remember the last time we went there." He says that since Ya Toivo came back from exile, he has made numerous donations to St Mary's school and also bought a piano for the church. "He has done a lot for the community of Odibo". Ya Toivo was an active pupil during his school years. He participated in many things like sports and politics, and became the patron of St Mary's in 2002. He continues to raise funds in order to rebuild and renovate the

school buildings.

Skinny Hilundwa and Ya Toivo were in the same class and in the same hostel room and have remained friends up until today.

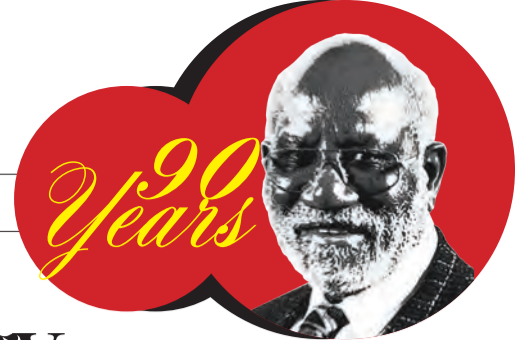
Oluno secondary school in Ondangwa was named after Ya Toivo in 2004.

According to the principal of Andimba Toivo ya Toivo secondary school, Wardehein Shapaka, Ya Toivo visits the school on an annual basis and has contributed a lot to its development.

Ya Toivo's last donation to the school was earlier this year, when he contributed an amount of N\$5 000 and books for the learners.

"He tries to contribute something to the school every year. He mostly donates money, boxes of fish or reading books. We are really pleased with what he is contributing to our school and he really has the school at heart. He is a great leader," says Shapaka.

Andimba Toivo ya Toivo school has about 847 pupils and 40 teachers.



First Minister of Mines and Energy

ON the occasion of his 90th birthday on 22 August 2014, the Ministry of Mines and Energy is privileged and proud to pay tribute to its first minister, Herman Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, and congratulate him on his countless achievements.

Following Namibian independence, the Ministry of Mines and Energy was established under Ya Toivo's leadership.

The ministry comprised of the Directorates of Mining, Geological Survey of Namibia, Energy and Administration and Finance.

The Diamond Board, regulating and controlling the production, evaluation and security of diamonds since pre-independence times, was brought under the control of the Ministry of Mines and Energy, as were the National Energy Council, the national electricity utility NamPower, and the national oil company Namcor.

Under the direction and leadership of Ya Toivo the ministry immediately embarked upon a number of schemes with the following objectives:

- To administer the relevant legislation and exercise control over mineral, energy and other land-based resources.
- To monitor the performance of the existing legislation and to enact further legislation as necessary.
- To monitor and control developments with an impact on geological resources.
- To promote investment by creating an enabling environment conducive to the optimal utilisation of Namibia's mineral, energy and other land-based resources.
- To maintain and expand the contribution of formal and informal mineral and energy sectors to the economy of Namibia.
- To maintain and promote regional and international cooperation in the mineral and energy sectors
- To ensure sustainable development of all earth-based resources
- To develop strategies for optimal land-use planning
- To minimise the impact of the exploitation of Namibia's mineral, energy and other land-based resources on the environment by ensuring development in a responsible way and in compliance with the national policy and universally accepted practices and standards
- To assess the impact of previous mining and development activities on the environment through baseline studies and to develop strategies to manage this impact
- To develop multidisciplinary and integrated land-use planning, working closely with other ministries
- To undertake research and disseminate



Photo: The Namibian Archives

ENCOURAGEMENT ... As Minister of Mines he was known as a humble servant who would always make time to meet workers when visiting mining sites.

relevant quality scientific data to address national issues related to resources, environment and hazards in earth science and energy-related matters, and

■ To provide value for money and customer-oriented services to all stakeholders.

Drafting of legislation started without delay, and soon the Petroleum Products and Energy Act of 1990 was passed by Parliament, followed by the Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Act No. 2 of 1991 and the Petroleum (Taxation) Act No. 3 of 1991.

Drafting of mining legislation appropriate for an independent Namibia also commenced, and culminated in the promulgation of the Minerals (Prospecting and Mining) Act No 33 in 1992.

Government through the Ministry of Mines and Energy also embarked upon an extensive rural electrification programme in order to bring electricity and development to the rural people of Namibia.

Major expansion of the electricity transmission and distribution network has taken place since, and a national electricity masterplan was compiled.

In 1992, construction work for the new, custom-built Ministry of Mines and Energy headquarters started with the Geological Survey of Namibia offices, as the existing facilities were completely inadequate for a modern research institution in an independent Namibia, and the comprehensive reference volume "The Mineral Resources of Namibia", a powerful tool to attract investment, was

published by the Geological Survey of Namibia. In 1993, the government of Namibia and the European Union signed a 40 million Euro agreement under the Sysmin scheme for support to the Namibian mining industry, and the establishment of the Minerals Development Fund. A first licensing round was held in 1991 to promote hydrocarbon exploration, which attracted world-class companies to explore in Namibia. A further licensing round was held in 1994, before the licensing process was opened up in 1998.

In November 1994, a milestone was reached when agreements were signed between the government of Namibia and De Beers giving the Government a 50% stake in Consolidated Diamond Mines (CDM) and leading to the formation of Namibia's leading diamond producer Namdeb as a joint venture between government and the private sector.

That same year the Geological Survey of Namibia's programme of high-resolution airborne geophysical surveys started, and has since produced one of the best and largest sets of geophysical data worldwide.

In 1995, the Minerals Ancillary Rights Commission was established, and the Ministry began the process of reviewing and substantially revising the existing diamond legislation, which culminated in the promulgation of the Diamond Act No 13 of 1999.

The Petroleum Laws Amendment Act, 1998, and the Model Petroleum Agreement, 1998, as well as the Petroleum Income Tax

(PIT) and the Additional Profits Tax (APT) were gazetted in order to cater for economic and fiscal aspects and royalties, and the White Paper on Energy Policy was released.

In 1996, the Minerals Board of Namibia was constituted in terms of the Minerals Act. Construction of the second part of the new headquarters at the site of the Geological Survey of Namibia commenced.

The building was completed and inaugurated in 1999, thereby creating an excellent one-stop facility for investors and stakeholders in the minerals, energy and earth science sectors.

Ya Toivo took over the position at the helm of the Ministry of Mines and Energy at a time when enthusiasm for the newly independent Namibia was paired with the overwhelming task of building a new Public Service commensurate with the new conditions in this young nation.

He mastered this difficult task with dedication and an admirable sense of duty. He united the staff of the ministry by building the "Mines and Energy family" and instilling a common desire to take Namibia to greater heights.

This he did not do by giving directions from the top, but rather by working alongside with the staff and fostering a sense of belonging. His admirable humility regularly came to the forefront when he greeted visitors or new staff members by saying: "Good morning, I am Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, I work for the Ministry of Mines and Energy."

However, in March 1999, the Ministry of Mines and Energy sadly had to bid farewell to its long-standing minister, as Ya Toivo left for the Ministry of Prisons and Correctional Services.

The achievements made in nine years under his skillful leadership reflect the foresight and vision of this dedicated leader, and many a staff member had tears in their eyes when he entered the room for his farewell function.

He said in a display of his wonderful sense of humor "Good afternoon everybody, I am Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, I work for the Ministry of Prisons and Correctional Services!"

Today, we pay tribute to this true icon of the struggle for Namibian independence, who is also an icon of the formative years of our beloved nation. We wish him good health, God's blessing and many more years with his loved ones. We express our gratitude and admiration for what he has done as the true father of the Ministry of Mines and Energy.

** Tribute done by the Ministry of Mines and Energy.*



Photo: Henry van Rooi

PROUD MOMENT ... Krupp Street in Windhoek was renamed to Andimba Toivo ya Toivo Street. Ya Toivo and wife Vicki with former Windhoek Mayor Mateus Shikongo.



FOUND ... Andimba Toivo ya Toivo received service medals for his contribution in the South African Army during the Second World War but they got lost. Around 50 years later, in 1996, he was issued with a new set. South Africa's first High Commissioner to Namibia Stanley Mabizela (right) and the mission's military advisor colonel Johan van Rooyen (centre) gave him the medals.



Photo: Papa Shikongeni

RECENT ... In the run up to mark Ya Toivo's 90th birthday several public lectures were held throughout the country. Here he is seen with people who attended a lecture at Katima Mulilo in the Zambezi Region.



Prison authorities had to trick him out of the cell

SHORTLY after joining the African National Congress during the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign 1952, in South Africa, I began to be infatuated with wars of liberation in other parts of the world, particularly the African continent.

At the tender age of 13, I had heard of John Langalibalele Dube, one of the founders and first president of the ANC: “Vul’indlela Mntaka Dube.....” (lead the way son of Dube we have been long in the darkness) we sang lustily about the man! Dube’s colleagues, Pixie ka Seme and Sol Platjie were other names I became familiar with in my primary boarding school, St Ansgar’s Institute, Roodepoort.

New names: Walter Sisulu, and Moses Kotane were also on the lips of our class teacher BM Masipha, who revered them. School history books mentioned King Moshoeshe of Lesotho (Basutoland) who defeated Boer invaders by rolling rocks on them from the top of Thaba Bosiu! King Dingaan who massacred the Boers he hosted, in their sleep, was the boarding school boys’ hero with his war-cry, “Bulalani abathalathi! (Kill the wizards).

Outside of South Africa there weren’t many names I can remember except that of Herman Toivo ya Toivo, in the late 1950s from a country my father called German Wes(t), officially known as South West Africa to be later renamed Namibia on attaining independence in 1990. The name Toivo ya Toivo fascinated me. I wished to catch a glimpse of the man even at a distance.

Andimba was a fighter. When the prison authorities got it in their sick head that we self-censor our outgoing letters, they demanded of him to stop referring in his letters to “Namibia.” “Expunge ‘Namibia’ or the letter won’t go!” “Forget it!” Andimba stubbornly stuck to his guns: “Namibia is Namibia and don’t tell me to call it anything else...” And he flung his arms characteristically.

— Mike Dingake

My peripatetic father, who had travelled and worked in many mines in South Africa had also been to German Wes(t) for some cash-rewarding stint and had nothing pleasant or good to say about the German employers. In a good mood, induced by the native brew my mother was expert at, he sang for us some indigenous songs and told us about the beauty of the native women and the elegance of their dresses.

My appetite to know more about German Wes(t) and its colourful inhabitants, especial-



REUNION ... To celebrate the 20th anniversary of Nelson Mandela’s (front) release from Robben Island, fellow freedom struggle stalwarts met with him at Cape Town in 2010. From left (retired Brigadier General Sandile Sijake, Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, former SA Vice President Kaglema Motlanthe, former Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda, SA President Jacob Zuma, Mike Dingake and an unnamed former Robben Island prisoner.

ly the man with a romantic sounding name Toivo ya Toivo, was wetted. Later I was fascinated by reading that he had sent a petition to the United Nations General Assembly to demand the independence of his country!

Andimba and I eventually met in Robben Island Prison in 1971. Before I met Andimba, I had been tantalised by meeting some of his countrymen, among them Gerson Veii of Swanu, comrades Shityuwete, Shiponeni,

Tjipahura, Hamutenya (Swapo) and others, in Pretoria Local Prison while in detention under the 180-day detention law.

Though kept in isolated cells, we clandestinely communicated and caught a glimpse of one another in prison corridors. I was burning to know whether they had one Toivo ya Toivo among them. Informed he was in detention in Namibia, I was disappointed. After the 15-year sentence verdict I was swiftly transferred

‘Here’s a biscuit for you’

ANDIMBA! IT gives me great pleasure to send you a message for your 90th birthday.

As you know, mine is just a day before and although I am a full five years younger, I think of our birthdays together.

This special birthday takes me back to Robben Island where we spent many years together in B Section.

I remember how, when we were in A Group, we used to buy tea, coffee and biscuits. This is how we celebrated our birthdays – with biscuits. Of course you never agreed to participate in the grading of prisoners. You were a real militant, a tough guy against the authorities.

To us you were very well liked, a good chap, very jolly. Do you recall when we were allowed to order newspapers and we sat in the courtyard reading interesting stories? When you tried to join us, the warders chased you away.

We will never forget the night of 28 May 1971 when we were raided and the warders made us strip and stand in the cold – until Govan collapsed and everyone panicked. We thought it was a heart attack but luckily it was just stress.

After they finished with us, they turned

the corner and went to you in the punishment cells. We heard that you knocked one of them down.

You were a good comrade, Andimba. While you were highly respected as a founder of Swapo, for all intents and purposes we regarded you, and Eddie Daniels, as ANC members.

I don’t recall if you ever had a visitor. Like many prisoners whose loved ones were so far away, you sacrificed a great deal in that sense. You didn’t let it get you down and kept up your spirits.

I was transferred to Pollsmoor Prison in October 1982, almost 18 months before your release.

Unlike that March when Madiba, Raymond, Walter and Andrew were pounced upon at night to “pack up” and couldn’t say goodbye, I was given some notice.

They told me at 10 am that I needed to be ready to leave at 2pm. So I had the chance to bid farewell to everyone in the section.

I next saw you in Namibia on the first anniversary of independence. You look me up whenever you are in Joburg and I always enjoy seeing you.

Enjoy your birthday Andimba. Love to Vicki and the children.



HEY YOU ... Andimba Toivo ya Toivo and Ahmed Kathrada in a joyous mood when they reunited with one of his visits to South Africa.

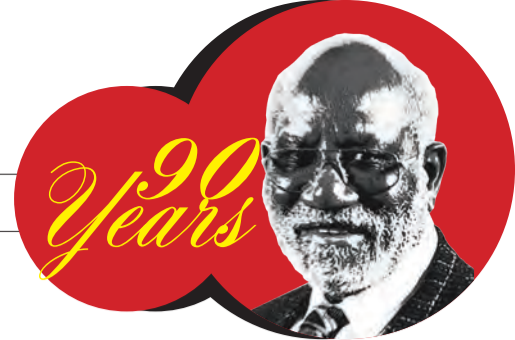


Photo: Family Collection

In my mind I was certain Andimba wouldn't allow this potential conflict to wreck the victory he had contributed to for the many years! I knew he would concede to Nujoma to avoid a despicable conflict. I believe the dreaded conflict was aborted by Andimba's magnanimity. He simply settled for the post of Minister of Mines and Energy.

— Mike Dingake

Wow! I was about to strike gold! A couple of days after their arrival in the single cells section, the no-nonsense Namibians launched a sudden hunger strike! Though unclear of the issue(s) that triggered it, we joined the strike. That night we were locked up earlier than usual. Shortly after lock-up warders came back flinging cell doors open and barking orders: "Teen die muur, teen die muur.!" Each in his own cell was shoved against the wall, frisked and prison blankets thrown around apparently in search of contraband. A few metres from my cell, around the corner warders tried to push Toivo ya Toivo intolerably around. Andimba unleashed a hard open-hand smack on the young warder's cheek, 'whack!', sending the warder's cap flying and the struck warder wailing: 'die kaffer het my geslaan' (the kaffer has hit me)! The scream of the slapped warder made warders converge on Andimba's cell to revenge the warder's assault. Barricaded each prisoner in his own cell and unarmed there was nothing we could do to express our seething solidarity.

After satisfying themselves they had taught the 'kaffer' a lesson they ordered him to mop up the cell floor drenched in his blood. Soon thereafter the Namibian prisoners were transferred back to the communal cells section leaving Toivo ya Toivo alone behind. Andimba was thus incorporated into the single cells section where the feared /'privileged' members of the South African organisations were held. We immediately became friends, Andimba and I.

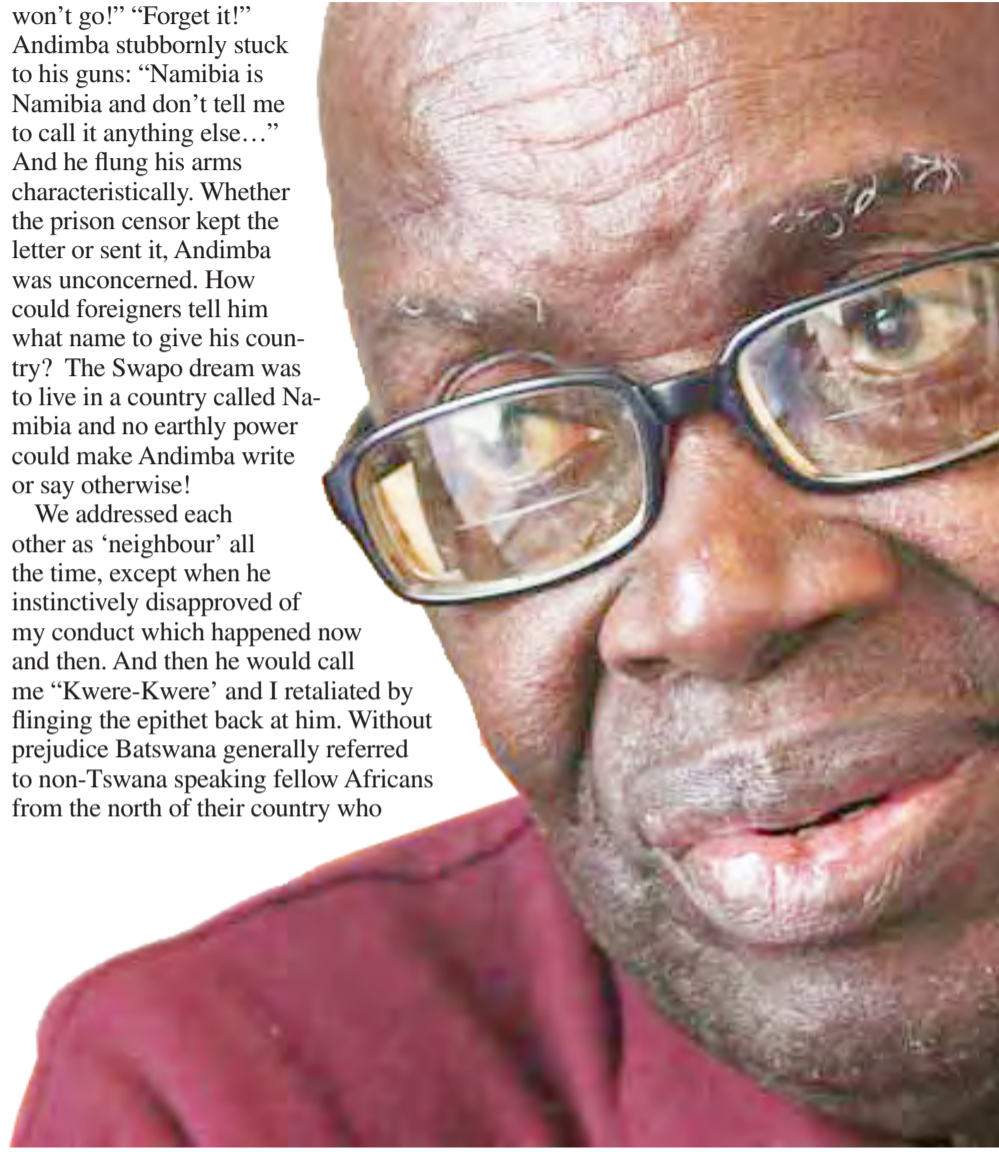
Initially I helped him with the academic subjects he was studying through a correspondence college. Our friendship blossomed under these conditions. Studying under the jail conditions of Robben Island, where prisoners could be deprived of study privilege for the flimsiest excuse soon irritated Andimba, whose attitude was 'rights' instead of 'privileges' for people whether in jail or outside! He unceremoniously threw away the 'lousy privilege' of studying! Remonstrations with him didn't work. Once decided, Andimba was unmoved!

My plea to him not to resort to such drastic action, as study 'privilege' assuaged the prisoner's tension, fell on deaf ears. I had known that once I had failed to convince him, nobody including Nelson Mandela with whom he was also on the friendliest of terms, could move him. The prison authorities had in the past tried to organise a visit for him from a former comrade now a turncoat apparently to woo him with promise for 'release'. Andimba had resisted until I pleaded with him to go and meet the 'sell-out' in a posh Cape Town hotel and find out what tricks the oppressor was up to and how some former comrades were being won over. Reluctantly he had gone to meet the 'sell-out' at a five-star hotel, and came back amused by the lengths the Boer colonialists could go to attempt to corrupt the Namibian freedom struggle!

Andimba was a fighter. When the prison authorities got it in their sick head that we self-censor our outgoing letters, they demanded of him to stop referring in his letters to "Namibia." "Expunge 'Namibia' or the letter

won't go!" "Forget it!" Andimba stubbornly stuck to his guns: "Namibia is Namibia and don't tell me to call it anything else..." And he flung his arms characteristically. Whether the prison censor kept the letter or sent it, Andimba was unconcerned. How could foreigners tell him what name to give his country? The Swapo dream was to live in a country called Namibia and no earthly power could make Andimba write or say otherwise!

We addressed each other as 'neighbour' all the time, except when he instinctively disapproved of my conduct which happened now and then. And then he would call me "Kwere-Kwere" and I retaliated by flinging the epithet back at him. Without prejudice Batswana generally referred to non-Tswana speaking fellow Africans from the north of their country who



spoke a strange language which sounded like 'kwere-kwere', so they were called Makwere-kwere. The name expressed the feeling of un-familiarity with the language. That form of address of course did not sit well with non-Tswana who came into contact with Batswana. Andimba's use of the word was to remind me that not only whites discriminated against them but neighbouring Batswana also did. All of this, of course, was always done in good humour between us.

Shortly after his release Andimba and I reunited at the Gaborone Airport where he was in transit to somewhere I can't remember now. He had me in stitches narrating how he tried to resist release from prison before the expiry of his sentence. He particularly was not amused by his 'freedom' while some of his comrades were left in imprisonment. The prison authorities had to trick him out of the cell and then lock him out! Andimba believed the authorities were trying to antagonise him with his fellow prisoners and the Namibians, generally as a sell-out. The release was a vile ruse! Typical Andimba!

His release was a sign of pressure building up to grant Namibia her independence. Andimba didn't waste time to join the Swapo leadership in exile. When apartheid SA eventually loosened her grip on Namibia, many observers, I daresay including the South African authorities, speculated that there was going to be a tug-of-war for presidency of the newly-independent Namibia between Sam Nujoma and Andimba. Andimba was the foundation rock of the Namibian struggle and had gone to Robben Island Prison for many years, while Sam Nujoma had been in the thick of the struggle in exile for the many years Andimba was away.

In my mind I was certain Andimba wouldn't allow this potential conflict to wreck the victory he had contributed to for the many years! I knew he would concede to Nujoma

to avoid a despicable conflict. I believe the dreaded conflict was aborted by Andimba's magnanimity. He simply settled for the post of Minister of Mines and Energy.

My family and I travelled to Windhoek to celebrate the 1991 New Year festivity with Comrade Andimba. We drove to Windhoek a couple days before New Year, 1991. It was a fantastic occasion with Andimba in Windhoek, extended to Swakopmund, later. What a jolly week! We met his mother, his nephews and nieces.

When I informed Andimba that I was due to travel to America on a US Visitors' Programme, he took advantage of my US visit to introduce me to his wife Vicki, who was winding up her practice in New York to join him. Vicki and I met in NY and had a swell time looking for a restaurant where I could enjoy the calypso! I was impressed by Toivo's choice! One might have mistakenly thought Andimba was anti-White. Far from it. Anti-racist, yes!

When Andimba visited Botswana on an official visit, some time in 1994, he wanted me to be part of his entourage wherever he went. Unfortunately, restrained by my duties, I could only accompany him to the diamond sorting plant in Orapa House. He must have bored everyone in my absence telling them about our friendship. All Batswana acquaintances with Andimba never stop asking me: "How's your friend Toivo ya Toivo?"

He has unique charm, often hidden under his initial gruff manner but infectious to all he comes in contact with. We have met several times in South Africa for events that commemorate SA political history and Robben Island episodes. At such meetings we invariably break away on-off to reminisce about our friendship: spontaneous, warm, durable, unpretentious.

• Mike K Dingake

Andimba unleashed a hard open-hand smack on the young warder's cheek, 'whack!', sending the warder's cap flying and the struck warder wailing: 'die kaffer het my geslaan' (the kaffer has hit me)!

— Mike Dingake

to Robben Island Prison before Toivo could arrive. My disappointment was enormous. In my imagination the Namibians were unlikely to be sent to Robben Island because the UN was closely involved in their case. I gave up!

Hope was rekindled when we read from smuggled newspapers, the Namibian detainees after the harsh sentences, 20 years hard labour for Toivo ya Toivo, no doubt invited by the hard hitting speech from the dock by him were likely to land on our Robben Island and I was optimistic the Swapo prisoners would join us in segregation not in the communal cells. I was wrong. Swapo 'terrorists' went to the communal cells section but were segregated from 'Poqo' and ANC 'terries.' Communal cells ANC comrades sent us snippets about the Namibians, and what their relations with warders were. We were shocked by reports that Namibians had adopted a hostile attitude, not only to warders, but to the visiting delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross who visited us annually on Robben Island to exchange news about our welfare and demands we were raising with the authorities. The ICRC was prisoners' lifeline under the brutal apartheid regime, we thought, here were Swapo comrades ignorantly treating them as the enemy! Namibians were virtually saying 'voetsek' to friends in need! We pleaded with comrades in the communal cells to ask Namibian fellow prisoners to 'hamba kahle,' take it easy and not antagonise friends!

As fate would have it, the Namibian group of prisoners, Toivo among them, was transferred to one wing of our single cells section.

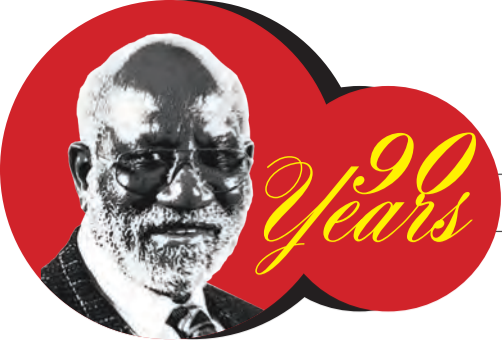


Photo: Bente Pedersen

BACK IN THE DAYS ... Bente Pedersen with Andimba Toivo ya Toivo (centre), President Hifikepunye Pohamba (left), defence minister Nahas Angula and African National Congress stalwart Billy Modise (right).

Toivo ya Toivo 90th birthday wishes from Paths to Freedom launch

• YOCHANAN COETZEE

Mburumba Kerina: "Toivo ya Toivo is one of our greatest leaders. During the struggle, we communicated regularly since 1966 and it was only after independence that we met face to face. His name can be mentioned alongside those of great men such as Nelson Mandela."

Vickson Angula: "I'm looking forward to celebrating the strong man's birthday. Through his bravery and perseverance he has become a living example of making it through until you reach the top..."



Onesmus Maharero: "A long life to him, we need to stay mindful of our struggle veterans and how much they sacrificed for the country's freedom."



Alfred Angula: "Their sacrifices are beyond what we can imagine, therefore I thank leaders like Tate Ya Toivo and wish him a very happy birthday."



Ben Ulenga: "One will never truly know the feeling of true fulfillment, but I wish him all the happiness and fulfillment in the world. He is blessed to see the free and independent Namibia he and so many others fought for and we are blessed to have him around."



Cecil Moller: "He is truly a great man and the nation wishes him well. Hopefully local production companies can one day secure the rights to tell his remarkable story."

Gerson Veii: "I wish him a very happy 90th birthday. May leaders like him live long and continue to be an example to all Namibians and be a reminder that freedom was fought for and should not be taken for granted."



A man of charisma and warmth

I HAD the privilege to get to know Andimba Toivo ya Toivo on a few different occasions. Norway and the other Nordic countries supported the liberation struggle and when Ya Toivo was released from Robben Island in 1983 he soon came to visit Norway and the Namibia Association of Norway where I was involved. Meeting Ya Toivo was a great inspiration to me personally and to the solidarity work and anti-apartheid work that took place in Norway. His charisma, warmth, commitment, humbleness and dedication inspired us all.

A year later we met again, this time in New York. It was election time and we all knew that if Reagan was re-elected, the Namibian liberation was further into the future. The day after the election I was in

a taxi with Ya Toivo, Gwen Lister, Leake Hangala and Kakena driving back from a visit to Theo-Ben Gurirab's house. Leake sat next to the taxi driver and started a conversation with him, interested in finding out his opinion about the election.

The driver, a 25-year-old, white American man, told us how thrilled he was with the election and another four years with Reagan. The taxi went still, we said nothing and he surely sensed that, asking us: "By the way - where do you come from?" Leake replied: "We're from Africa". "Africa," the driver asked, "is that a monarchy?" Leake replied very diplomatically: "Not exactly - it is actually a continent." Ya Toivo hummed and smiled in the backseat over the ignorance of this young American who'd never been

outside the United States and thus had no passport.

In 1999, I had the privilege of being appointed one of ten Norwegian representatives to the Nordic-SADC conference to be hosted on Robben Island. Participants from North and South worked together for three days, focusing on the future for the region and what we may learn from the liberation struggle. The programme was busy but we had a tour of the prison and the lime quarry. Listening to Ya Toivo talk about life as a prisoner made a strong impression on me.

I am forever grateful for the friendship between our two countries and people. Congratulations on your 90th birthday, dear Ya Toivo!

* Bente Pedersen (Katjivena)

To the father of Namibia's liberation movement

ANDIMBA Toivo Ya Toivo is the father of Namibia's liberation movement. He established the Ovamboland Peoples' Congress in Cape Town, which later became the liberation movement of Swapo, that led Namibia to independence.

What is unique about Ya Toivo is that he never vied for leadership. He is a man of the people, more interested in urging and mobilising them to stand up for their freedom.

The apartheid regime recognised his abilities and perseverance as a freedom fighter. Therefore they tried to stop him from the onset. First, by confining him to Ondangwa as a way of robbing him of his national character. In order to break Ya Toivo's isolation, Levi Nganjone travelled from central Namibia to Ovamboland, originally by

bicycle before finding other means, in order to uncover the conditions of the confinement. This testifies how Toivo Ya Toivo's popularity gradually spread among the Namibian people, regardless of their ethnic origin.

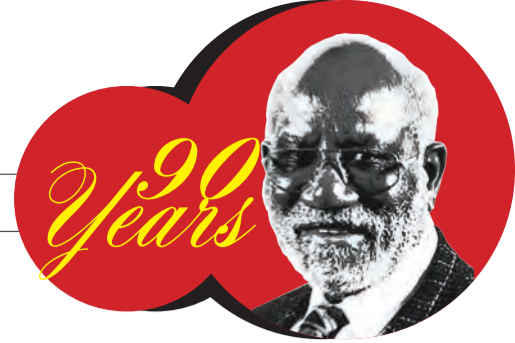
During the Second World War, Ya Toivo, as both a Namibian patriot and a Pan-Africanist, fought against the Germans with the South African forces. In spite of his commitment, he was confined to Robben Island with Nelson Mandela and many others about 20 years later. This was the apartheid regime's second attempt to silence Ya Toivo, and stop his charisma and agenda spreading to the Namibian people. However, his confinement made him even more recognised as a leader. His greatness can only be compared with the other pioneers of Namibia's

liberation, such as Chief Hosea Kutako, Mburumba Kerina and Jariretundu Kozonguizi.

Today we are so thankful and appreciative of the initiative of Ya Toivo, leading us to the monumental gift of freedom. He is not only a loyal Namibian, he is also a dear friend and a role model for Namibia and Africa in general. We celebrate and congratulate him on his 90th birthday on 22 August 2014.

"I am a loyal Namibian and could not betray my people to their enemies. I admit that I decided to assist those who have taken up arms. I know that the struggle will be long and bitter. I also know that my people will wage that struggle, whatever the cost."

* Uazuvara Ewald Katjivena (in Norway)



Andimba the inspirational leader



Photo: Anti-Apartheid Movement Archives

INSPIRATIONAL ... Andimba Toivo ya Toivo with ES Reddy and then Labour leader Neil Kinnock at the Anti-Apartheid Movement's 25th anniversary convention in June 1984.

• **BOB HUGHES**

ANDIMBA Toivo ya Toivo is an inspirational leader of Swapo of Namibia who I remember with admiration and affection and like to call a personal friend.

He attended and spoke at the Anti-Apartheid Movement National Convention in 1984 and the quarter of a million strong Nelson Mandela Freedom Rally in Hyde Park, London in 1988, the latter bringing real poignancy and realism as he had shared time on Robben Island with Madiba.

Those of us who were active in the Anti-Apartheid Movement were able to share and play a part in the struggle for freedom in southern Africa with the giants of Africa as Toivo ya Toivo.

Much remains to be done to tackle the legacies of the apartheid years, and the successor to AAM, Action for Southern Africa, continues to be inspired by the example of Ya Toivo in striving to deal with the massive challenges which remain.

We wish him a very happy birthday and good wishes for the future for him, his wife Vicki and family.

** Bob Hughes was the chair of the Anti-Apartheid Movement and president Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA). As Lord Hughes of Woodside he is a member of House of Lords.*

Andimba Herman Toivo ya Toivo

'My teacher, my mentor, my friend'

• **HELAO JOSEPH SHITYUWETE**

WE met for the first time in the 1950s, where he taught me English under a tree at Odibo, when he himself was also a student. He was an excellent teacher, even then, and I was hungry to learn.

Even though we went our separate ways (me to Walvis Bay and other contracts, he to Cape Town) we never lost sight of each other. When I was in Walvis Bay I read the story of his expulsion from Cape Town in 1958 in the newspaper and followed subsequent events. When I left Walvis Bay in 1961, I went to visit him at Okaloko, where he was under house arrest. This is when we planned to leave Namibia for New York via Angola, but this failed to work out on two occasions.

In 1962, Andimba and I linked up again when the first United Nations delegation came to Namibia, headed by Victorio Carpio. Andimba, I and others demonstrated to insist that he meets our delegation and in the end he agreed.

Contract labour again took me to Windhoek and in 1964 I decided to go abroad in search of education, but I was deemed "over-age" at the age of 30 and took up military training instead. On my return to Namibia in 1966, I was arrested and detained in Pretoria. Once again fate was to bring us together when he was arrested in 1967 and came to join me in Pretoria.

While in detention we met only during our exercise sessions, where we managed to discuss politics and the future of our country. This is where I came to see his great leadership qualities. Facing the death sentence and enduring torture, as we all were, he motivated and encouraged us not to give in and to believe that we would overcome whatever lay ahead. We went through the infamous terrorism trial and were charged and sen-



Photo: Family Album

BACK TO WHERE IT STARTED ... Anti-Apartheid struggle warriors Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, Mike Dingake and Helao Shityuwete revisited Robben Island to recall the days they spent there.

tenced together, during which he delivered his great speech, which made us proud and strong but angered the judge.

After being sentenced and sent to Robben Island, we stayed and worked together in the same team until 1972, when we were all sent to the Mandela section. After a week, Andimba was separated from us and given 18 days solitary confinement, after which he was placed with Mandela while the rest of us were sent to D Section.

Although communication was difficult, we managed to keep in touch with each other by means of hidden notes on toilet paper. This ensured that we kept up our good spirits, as we had done in Pretoria. His role as a leader of Namibian prisoners on Robben Island never wavered.

After Robben Island our paths went differ-

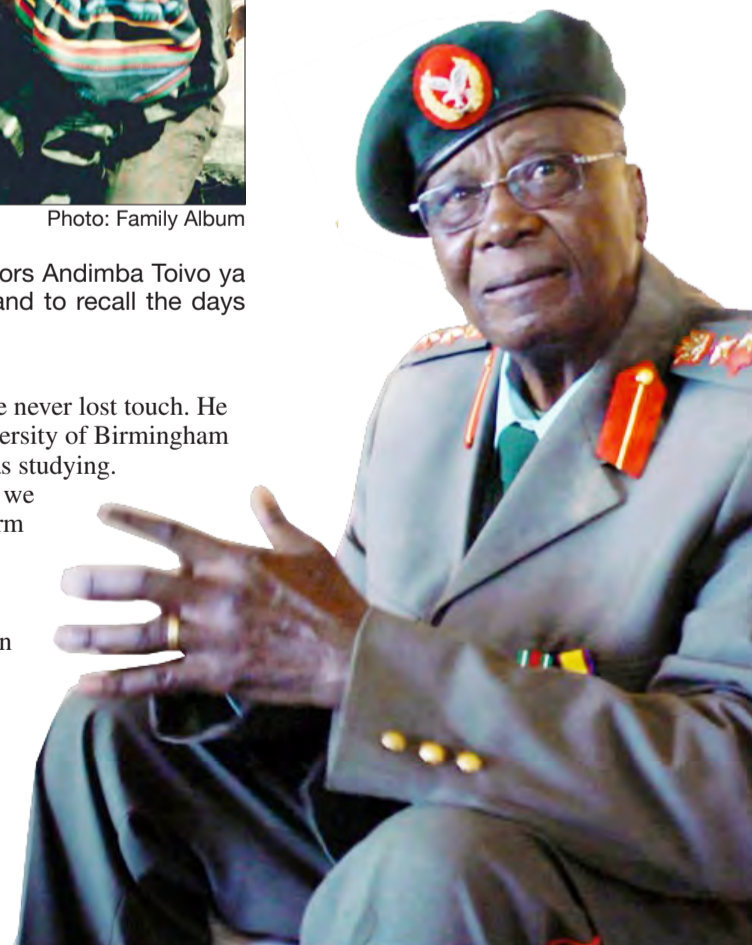
ent ways again, but we never lost touch. He visited me at the University of Birmingham in the UK, where I was studying.

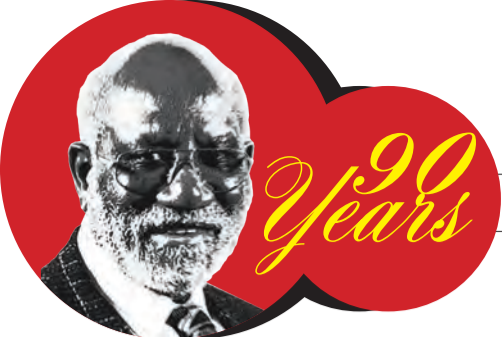
After independence we worked together to form the Namibian Former Robben Island Political Prisoners Trust (NFRIPPT) in 1993. In 1995 we were invited to and visited Robben Island for a reunion.

Andimba is a wonderful friend. He is mischievous, a terrible tease, generous, inclusive and a man of honour and integrity. His belief

in the importance of unifying the country to achieve independence remains now as we seek to promote development and greater equality in Namibia. These are ideals I share.

Although I am approaching my 80th birthday, I am still his younger brother. I look up to him as my mentor and hero and I am honoured to be at his side to 'carry his stick' for the rest of the years we may have left together.





A humanitarian par excellence

HERMAN Andimba Toivo ya Toivo is not only a respected personality as a political icon, but to the Red Cross family locally and internationally, he is a humanitarian par excellence who has displayed his care and love for humanity through his voluntary service to the most vulnerable Namibians.

“Tatekulu” as he is affectionately known by staff, volunteers and beneficiaries of the Namibia Red Cross Society, has over the decades been a familiar face at the NRCS offices and all official functions and meetings, giving his time and commitment selflessly. He carries an aura which commands respect and honour. Apart from being among the many Namibians who were incarcerated for years at Robben Island who received visits, material and moral support from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Ya Toivo upon his release showed appreciation by supporting local humanitarian activities implemented by the Namibia Red Cross Society.

Among the notable contributions were the various fundraising activities which he spearheaded and raised thousands of dollars,



Photo: The Namibian Archives

HUMANITARIAN ... For years Andimba Toivo ya Toivo served the Red Cross Society of Namibia as chairperson of the governing board as well as patron. Dorkas Kapembe-Haiduwa (left) is the secretary general of the organisation and the new chairperson of the governing board is Peter Katjavivi.

while millions were raised nationally for appeals towards disaster response. He managed to successfully lobby for government financial support for the NRCS in the form of an annual subsidy. Today the Namibia Red Cross Society also boasts owning a plot at Katima Mulilo in the Zambezi Region housing the regional office, which was acquired through his support. During his tenure as chairperson of the NRCS governing board, Ya Toivo represented the NRCS at national and international conferences.

In the Namibia Red Cross circles he is

known for his signature greeting “who are you?” followed by “where are you from and who are your parents?” This might sound like a mere way of trying to know people better, but everyone knows Ya Toivo as a caring person who will always stop and greet and find out how you are doing and ending with “how is the Red Cross?”

He joined the Namibia Red Cross Society as a board member in November 2005 and became the chairperson of the Governing Board in 2006. He was honoured as Patron of NRCS from November 2011 until he requested to

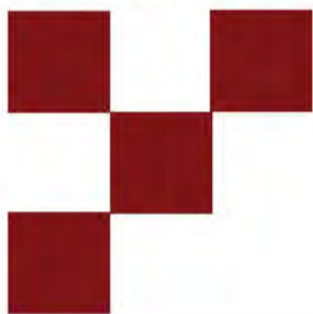
be relieved of his duties in September 2012. He has, however, since then made himself available for NRCS activities and continues to officiate at the various Red Cross events and this speaks volumes about his voluntary spirit.

Everyone who has known him will agree that Ya Toivo is a straight talker and does not mince his words about how he feels about a situation. This has earned him respect and admiration.

He is admired by many not only in Namibia but in many other countries, especially in South Africa due to his shared history of the liberation struggle with many of that country’s political leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Oliver Tambo and others. Those who have known him will remember that he often gets followed by people wanting to greet him or take photos with him and he will always take time to chat to them. A group of NRCS staff and volunteers who once travelled with him to Johannesburg for a meeting many years ago, remember how they were startled by a group of security guards who wanted to get to know him at Oliver Tambo International Airport. On enquiry they were told that they recognised him and just wanted to greet him and take photos with him. The sight was reportedly very humbling, although it took them some time to leave the group as he started chatting to everyone and wanting to know them better.

The Red Cross family feels honoured and humbled to have been part of Honourable Ya Toivo’s journey and history and wishes him renewed strength and good health to continue blessing us with his presence.

Happy 90th birthday tatekulu!



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We do care for your Sight



Dear Andimba

As you celebrate your 90th birthday today, may the whole Universe smile at you. May the Christ of the Universe be kind to you and give you peace. May you accept our humble appreciation for the long-term friendship we have enjoyed with you. May the years ahead be light, once filled with hope and happiness.

We at Kapia Optics just want you to know that we love you with all our hearts. We thank God for your illustrious life and we are highly appreciative of the price you have paid for Namibia and her people.

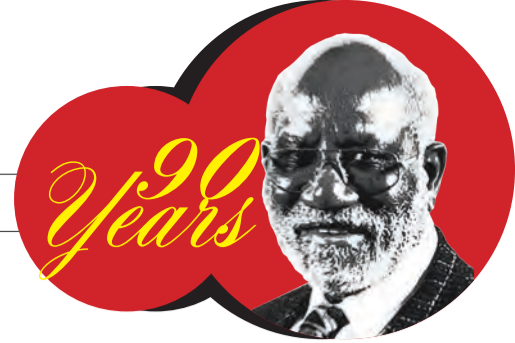
May this day be one of the best days of your life and may you live to be 150.

From all of us at Kapia Optics

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Ya Toivo's 1968 Court Statement:



My Lord, you found it necessary to brand me as a coward. During the Second World War, when it became evident that both my country and your country were threatened by the dark clouds of Nazism, I risked my life to defend both of them, wearing a uniform with orange bands on it.

– Ya Toivo



Photo: Family Collection

BACK IN THE DAYS ... Andimba Toivo ya Toivo with friends Peter Kauluma and Simon Mzee Kaukungwa in 1997.



Photo: Tony Figueira

DOWN MEMORY LANE ... Chat with former Robben Island stalwarts during one of his visits to the Island.

The CREDO of OUR STRUGGLE

• PHANUEL KAAPAMA and ELLEN NDESHI NAMHILA

IN recognition of his pioneering leadership, unwavering dedication and sacrifices towards the noble goals of freedom, and emancipation of all his countrymen and women, Andimba Toivo ya Toivo earned himself tremendous praises and veneration not only at home in Namibia, but also across the African continent and abroad. Among his numerous exceptional exploits is his ground-breaking role in the political mobilisation of Namibian expatriate contract workers in South Africa in the 1950s. His successful sneaking out of petitions to the United Nations, which chronicled the recurring acts of injustices committed against his people by the colonial administration. His inextinguishable role in the founding of the Ovamboland People Congress, the frontrunner to Namibia's most formidable liberation movement the South West African People Organisation (Swapo), is another mark that Ya Toivo has made on the Namibian political landscape. He remains one of the most eminent prisoners of conscience in the history of Namibia, for daring to openly challenge the legitimacy of the South African colonial rule over his beloved Namibia.

This tribute is specifically penned as a humble contribution to the 90th birthday celebration of a legendary leader and an icon of the Namibian independence struggle, Tatekulu Andimba Toivo Ya Toivo. It proffers excerpts of his legendary, courageous and steering statement, delivered on 1 February 1968 in the Pretoria Supreme Court where he and 36 others were being tried on charges of terrorism. As he put it then in his statement, he justified his speaking on behalf of his co-accused as follows: "I speak of 'we' because I am trying to speak not only for myself, but for others as well, and especially for those of my fellow accused who have not had the benefit of any education. I think also that when I say 'we', the overwhelming majority of non-white people in South West Africa would like to be included"

He commenced his statement by emphatically stating for the record that he and his 36 co-accused found themselves ushered against their will to "... a foreign country, convicted under laws made by people whom we have always considered as foreigners. We find ourselves tried by a judge who is not our countryman and who has not shared our background... You, my Lord, decided that you had the right to try us, because your parliament gave you that right. That ruling has not and could not have changed our feelings. We are Namibians and not South Africans. We do not now, and will not in the future, recognise your right to govern us; to make laws for us in which we had no say; to treat our country as if it were your property and as if you were our master". This courtroom oratory became one of the most eloquent explanations ever given of why Namibians wanted independence from South Africa.

In his memoirs, George Bizos, a member of the legal defence team, noted that Judge Josef Francis Ludorf in his judgment not only found

it expedient to convict Ya Toivo, but also tried to discredit him as a political leader. Ya Toivo in turn insisted on responding to this attack on his persona, even though his legal defence cautioned him that his sentence may as a result be increased. Notwithstanding the gravity of the possible consequences, he took the bull by the horns, by reminding Judge Ludorf in no uncertain terms that "My Lord, you found it necessary to brand me as a coward. During the Second World War, when it became evident that both my country and your country were threatened by the dark clouds of Nazism, I risked my life to defend both of them, wearing a uniform with orange bands on it. But some of your countrymen when called to battle to defend civilization resorted to sabotage against their own fatherland. I volunteered to face German bullets, and as a guard of military installations, both in South West Africa and the Republic, was prepared to be the victim of their sabotage. Today they are our masters and are considered the heroes and I am called the coward". This statement therefore eventually led to an amendment of the Criminal Procedures Act, so as to deprive accused persons the right to speak from the dock "to make propaganda against the State and insult the judge".

Regarding the grievances that he and the leadership of Swapo raised regarding the South African false claim of its right and legitimacy to rule the colonized territory, Ya Toivo unequivocally stated that "our organisation, the South West African People's Organisation, is the largest political organisation in South West Africa. We considered ourselves a political party. We know that whites do not think of blacks as politicians – only as agitators... Our grievances are called 'so-called' grievances ... Only one who is not white and has suffered the way we have can say whether our grievances are real or 'so-called'".

In various newspaper articles published at the time of his release after his confinement of 16 years the Robben Island maximum security penitentiary, ya Toivo was deservedly described as a symbolic martyr of Namibia's independence. In particular his February 1968 statement continued to be appropriately recognised as a credo for Namibian revolutionaries, which has been quoted again and again as a classic symbol of humanist black nationalism. For it is rightly

considered not only as one of the classic statements of African resistance to colonialism, but also one of the most inspiring defences of the right of oppressed peoples to take up arms.

Lastly the statement became an international rallying call which challenged the initial intransigent handling of the Namibian independence question by the international community. "Your government, my Lord, undertook a very special responsibility when it was awarded the mandate over us after the First World War. It assumed a sacred trust to guide us towards independence and to prepare us to take our place among the nations of the world. We believe that South Africa has abused that trust because of its belief in racial

supremacy (that white people have been chosen by God to rule the world) and apartheid. We believe that for 50 years South Africa has failed to promote development of our people. Where are our trained men? The wealth of our country has been used to train your people for leadership and the sacred duty of preparing the indigenous people to take their place among the nations of the world has been ignored... In the same way as all laughed in court when they heard that an old man tried to bring down a helicopter with bow and arrow, we laughed when South Africa said that it would oppose the world."

Happy 90th birthday. "Kulupa nomeho tatekulu Andimba, mayego tuku taasinine".

As a young company we are inspired by your courage, perseverance, humility and commitment to democracy.

It is on this foundation you have set for the Republic, that we are building our company's creativity, innovation and economic growth for future generations.

Happy birthday Tate Kulu!



HERMAN ANDIMBA TOIVO YA TOIVO AT 90



FITNESS FANATIC ... Andimba Toivo ya Toivo has kept good shape throughout the years with rigorous training which involves swimming, gym and exercises at home. The photos were taken when he was 80 years old.

Photos: Sakaria Kadhikwa

Ya Toivo meets Capitol Hill

• JACKIE ASHEEKE

THE release from prison of Andimba Toivo ya Toivo in March 1984 was met with much celebration by the US anti-apartheid movement. Those of us working in the movement who were lobbying in support of Namibia through the legislative channels in Washington, DC, were particularly enthusiastic. At the time, I was the young executive assistant at the Washington Office on Africa (WOA) working closely with my boss and mentor, Dr Jean Sindab (1944-1996) who was the organisation's executive director. WOA had a movement-wide reputation of

specifically including Namibia in all of our anti-apartheid lobbying work. Our organisation often worked with the UN Swapo office, various agencies of the Lutheran Church and the UN Council for Namibia. Together with these major entities as well as labour unions, The Namibia Concerns Committee, the Southern Africa Support Project and many others, WOA successfully sponsored a host of legislative briefings, supplied legal drafting assistance, expert advice on Namibia, educational speaking tours, media programmes and other activities to elevate the Namibian issue.

In 1985, when Ya Toivo embarked on his first USA visit after his release, WOA was asked

to coordinate the Washington, DC portion of his trip. Back in those Cold War-thinking days, WOA didn't waste its breath visiting far right wing crazies like the Republican senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina or segregationist Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, who were true believers that being anti-communist was more important than human rights. Lawmakers of that ilk assiduously worked to block implementation of UN Resolution 435 on Namibia until Cuban troops left Angola. This was, in essence, the Reagan Administration's "Linkage Policy."

Into this US political cauldron in 1985, Andimba Toivo ya Toivo entered the fray.

While never shouting, ranting or showing any anger during his visits, Ya Toivo came out fighting and was on the attack on all points. He talked about his life on Robben Island and most importantly, why he was sent by Swapo to the USA. He gave updates on the struggle inside and outside Namibia and in particular, the war situation in Angola. He held court with the already-converted and reaffirmed their belief that what they were doing made a difference.

But surprisingly for some of us who accompanied him on his programmes, he held the rapt attention of the unconvinced too! Many 'wavering' journalists and legislators, who repeated the 'linkage' excuse for blocking the implementation of UN Resolution 435, received a calm, cool, point by point explanation of how wrong they were. The repartee with those throwing accusations at him about his 'communist' leanings, or his support for the 'violence of Swapo', was stimulating. Each comment was met with the truth about life under apartheid colonialism. Old colleagues reminded me that on one of his visits he paraphrased Frederick Douglass, the great former slave and eloquent statesman for freedom and equal rights. The actual full quote of Douglass was:

"Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom

they oppress."

Ya Toivo spoke of Malcolm X, Marcus Garvey, WEB Dubois, and others, flawlessly weaving their points about racism in the USA into the struggle for justice in Namibia.

Before Ya Toivo's lobbying visits, my boss delivered briefing sessions for him. She reviewed the potential attitudes and level of receptiveness of the legislators or journalists he would be meeting. I was amazed at how quickly he inculcated the information into his knowledge base and effortlessly used it during his presentations, informal banter and answers to questions. Constantly, he brought every conversation around to Namibia, the need to implement 435, the rejection of the linkage policy, the need for funding for the UN Institute for Namibia, and an end for US military support for Unita. Often he had to do mini-geography lessons.

While I was unable to unearth any old copies of his itineraries from so long ago, old colleagues helped me recall his visits while in Washington. He visited with Members of the Congressional Black Caucus and the House Africa Subcommittee (chaired by Howard Wolpe from Michigan). He had historic meetings with the great Congressmen Ronald V Dellums and John Conyers, Senators Ted Kennedy, John Kerry (now Secretary of State of the USA), Paul Simon (chairman of the Senate Africa sub-committee), Lowell Weicker (a rare species: A liberal Republican), Christopher Dodd, and Richard Lugar (Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, responsible for legislation affecting Namibia) and others. He presented the Swapo action agenda, answered all queries, gave history lessons about southern Africa and even told stories that often left the room laughing. He commanded rooms filled with powerful men.

An archivist of the anti-apartheid movement and a former colleague from the American Committee on Africa, Richard Knight, sent me several links to relevant documents that have been scanned and saved. He sent me an old programme from a 'National Conference on Namibia and the US' held at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago - 23-25 July, 1987, from a second Ya Toivo visit to the USA.

Ya Toivo was not only the keynote speaker, but he also did press interviews. During the opening lunch, he sat next to the bookish-looking, bespectacled senator Paul Simon to directly lobby him on Namibian issues. As we celebrate the 90th birthday of an icon of Namibia, we must also remember his long reach of effectiveness. His scope not only includes past achievements that are well documented, but some that are nearly forgotten, like those visits to the USA. It should always be remembered that he was among the Swapo leaders that touched armies of people in different places around the world and helped them make a significant positive impact on the independence struggle.

A hero understands the responsibility that comes with freedom. He fights not with weapons but with his heart. Such a hero is Honourable Andimba Toivo Ya Toivo.

The Swakopmund Municipal Council, staff members and the residents of Swakopmund wishes the Honourable Andimba Toivo Ya Toivo a

Happy 90th Birthday.

From His Worship the Mayor **Juuso Kambueshe**
Municipality of Swakopmund
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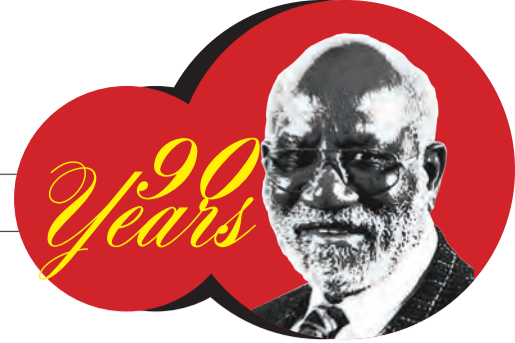


Photo: Family Collection

IN ARMS ... Ya Toivo with Oliver Tambo.



Photo: Family Collection

TRIO ... Ya Toivo with Ben Ulenga and the late African National Congress stalwart Walter Sisulu.

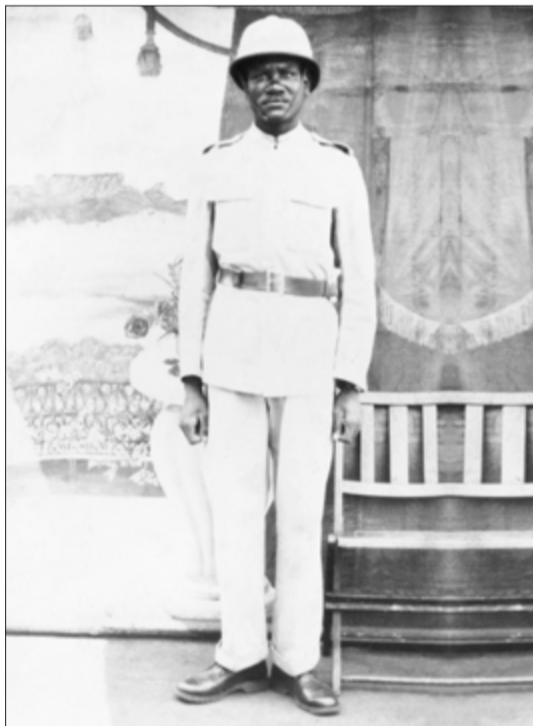


Photo: Family Collection

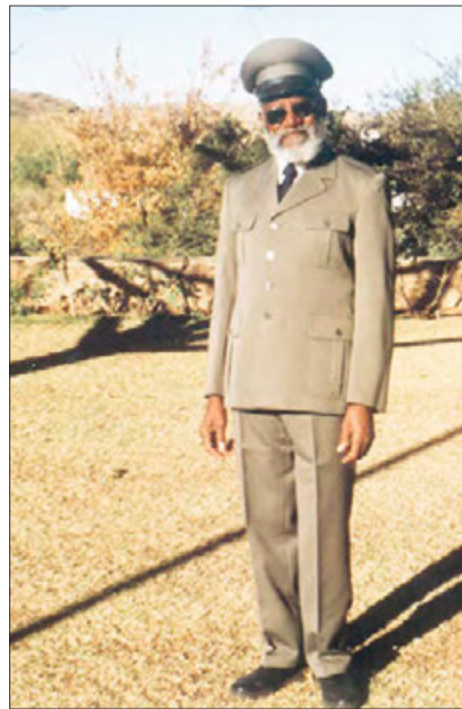
MEDIA BRIEFING ... During a media briefing with Hendrik Witbooi (left) and former Swapo president Sam Nujoma in March 1984 at Lusaka, Zambia.



TOUGHTFUL ... Niko Bessinger and Toivo.



STRAIGHT UP ... As a railway guard in 1952 at Cape Town.



Photos: Family Collection



QUICK CHAT ... Ya Toivo and Thabo Mbeki.



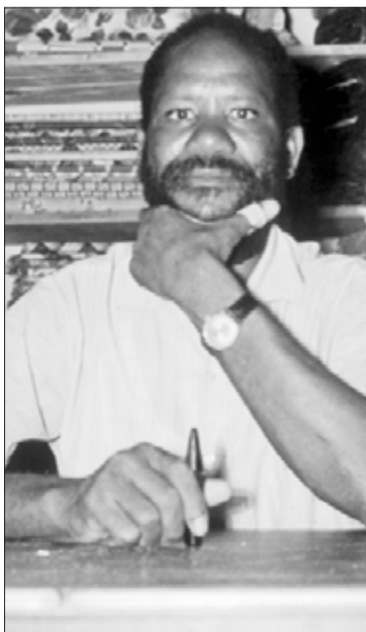
Photo: Van Kalker Studios, Cape Town.

LOOKALIKES ... With his brother Nestor (left) in 1955.



Photo: Family Collection

FIELD WORK ... Ya Toivo with the late former Swapo Secretary General Moses //Garoeb (right) in 1986.



IN HIS SHOP ... Ya Toivo had a shop (Cash Store) in 1963 and is seen behind the counter.

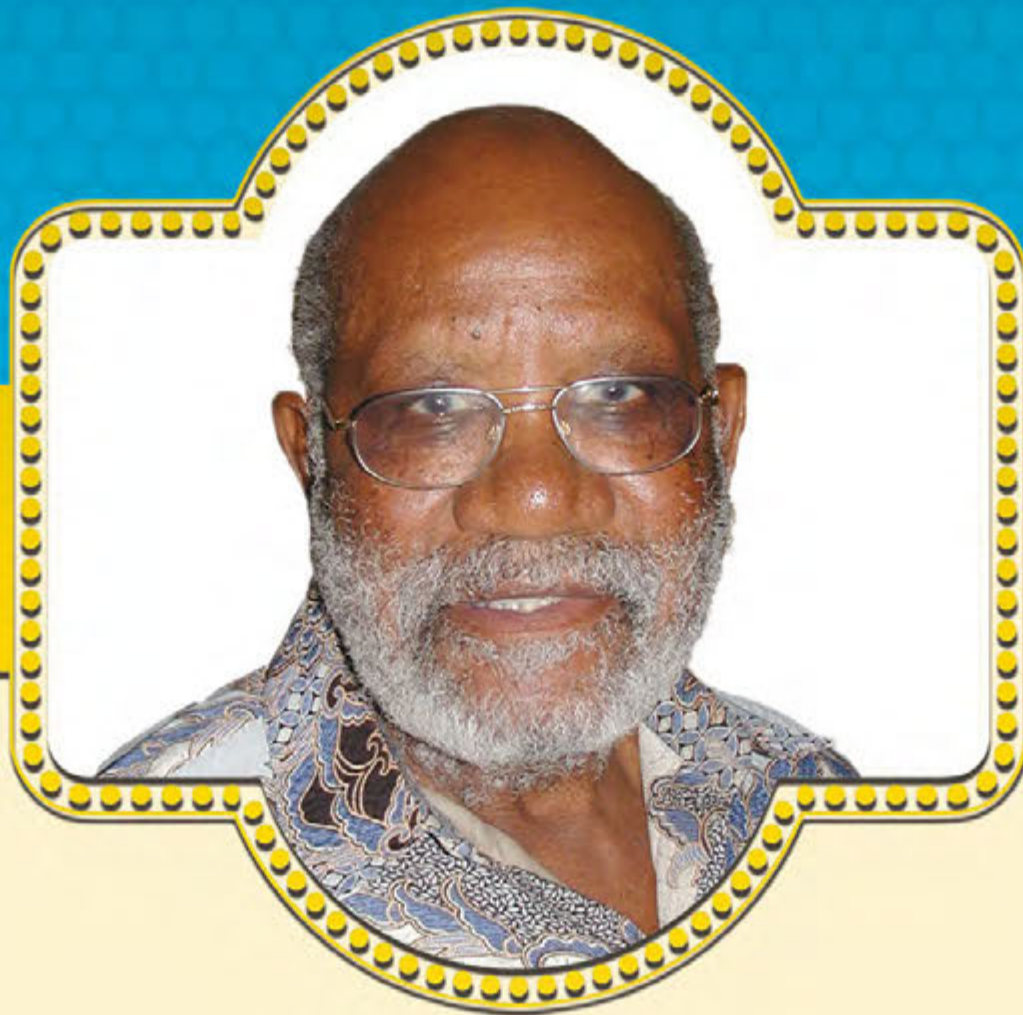
Photo: Ben Amadhila



NOTED ... Exchanging notes as Minister of Labour with former International Labour Organisation Director General Juan Somavia.

Photo: Family Collection

*We love you Andimba,
Happy
90th Birthday!*



Words cannot describe how blessed this generation is to
have lived during the times of the icon like you.
Namibia is blessed to have you.

Thanks for being a wonderful friend to our family.
You have been an inspiration to all of us
in striving to be better.

The SAVVA Family.