

## **Time Travel Mayibuye uprising 1952, Galeshewe**

Site: Abatho-Bantu Hall, Galeshewe

### **Goals**

- To learn about the defiance campaign, the mayibuye uprising and why people were protesting.
- To understand why both sides (community and police) acted the way they did.
- To understand why the defiance turned violent
- To empathize with participants on both sides
- To reflect on any unjust laws or inequalities today and possible ways to protest
- To introduce the Time Travel method as a learning method

### **Target group**

Grade 11 history learners, August: Resistance to apartheid: 1950s: the decade of defiance

#### **NEW CAPS Curriculum Guidelines:**

#### **Topic 5: Apartheid South Africa 1940s to 1960s**

#### **Background and focus**

...In overcoming Apartheid, there needs to be an understanding of the strategies of resistance by South Africans, drawn from various and diverse social movements (for example, Gandhi's movement, CPSA, the trade unions of the 1940s and 1950s, the Unity Movement, street committees and indigenous culture of collective co-operation). The strategies include passive resistance, non-cooperation, consumer boycotts, stayaways, strikes, civil disobedience and the formation of alliances.

### **Facts**

The Mayibuye Uprisings took place on Saturday 8 November 1952 in No. 2 Location (Galeshewe). This event did not occur as an isolated event, but as a result of the culmination of oppressive activities against black/Africans. A joint decision was taken by the ANC, SAIC and African People's Organisation (APO) to fight against the myriad of unjust laws introduced by the apartheid regime. The Defiance Campaign began on 26 June 1952, the anniversary of the first National Day of Protest of 1950, to protest against the government's murder of 18 black/Africans. Nelson Mandela was tasked by the National Action Committee to organise the campaign. Every city, town and farm in South Africa was called upon to peacefully defy apartheid's inhumane laws. Kimberley, No. 2 Location, Barkly Road Zone and Greenpoint were organised under the leadership of Dr Arthur Elias Letele who at that time was the No. 2 Location branch chairperson. Dr Letele was subsequently elected as national treasurer-general of the ANC.

On Friday, 7 November 1952, protestors demonstrated against apartheid by occupying racially segregated public spaces in Kimberley. Protestors blocked whites-only entrances to the main post office and defiantly sat on whites-only benches at the railway station. Dr Letele and seven other No. 2 Location executive ANC members were arrested. The arrests fuelled further resentment and led to public uprisings in the streets of No. 2 Location where both public and private property were destroyed. The protest continued the following day, 8 November, with more arrests and the police station as well as two nearby clinics, a power station and several other buildings including a crèche being burned. Police, municipal and private vehicles were set alight. Protestors intended to march towards the centre of town and threatened to burn the petrol depot in Cecil Suzman Road. However, before they could reach the depot, the police stopped the march by firing indiscriminately into the crowd. Thirteen people were killed and 78 others were wounded. According to oral testimony some of those killed and injured were innocent bystanders.

A dark cloud hung over No. 2 Location as the bodies of the dead were recovered and the wounded were treated at the Kimberley Hospital. Among the dead were: Samuel Boloko (21); Thomas Boloko (23); Elizabeth Buffel (26); Maria Frans (40); John Gewildt (17); Japan Komane (17); David Madlala (18); Johannes Manopole (29); Daniel Roos (34); Daniel Shushu (29); Willie Shushu (25); and Stompie Julia McCarthy and her baby.

In addition, a mother and her baby were shot dead while at a bus stop. A large funeral service was held on the open space next to the old Methodist Church at the corners of Mzikinya, Rhabe and Sanduza Streets in Galeshewe. Speakers condemned the callous action by the police. The dead are all buried in the West End Cemetery. Their graves are declared provincial heritage sites.

The eight accused, Daniel Chabalala, Dr Arthur Letele, Pepys Madibane, David Mphiwa, Alexander Nkoane, Samuel Phakedi, Father Ambrose Sehume, and Samuel Sesedi were charged for contravening the Suppression of Communism Act. They were sentenced to between 3 and 9 months imprisonment with compulsory labour, suspended for two years.

In 2002 Northern Cape Premier Manne Dipico unveiled a memorial in honour of those who were killed in the Defiance Campaign. The memorial was relocated from its original site next to the old police station in Tyson Road to its present position. This is the site where most of the protest actions took place.

### **Scenario, Defiance Campaign in Galeshewe, 7<sup>th</sup> November 1952**

It is 4 months into the National Defiance Campaign in 1952. People of Galeshewe are unhappy about the apartheid laws and want to heed the ANC's call to defy unjust laws. The local ANC has called for a meeting in Abatho-Bantu Hall to discuss further action.

Many unjust laws have been adopted the last years. The situation in the country is becoming more and more tense. People in Galeshewe want to show their dissatisfaction. But what are we going to do? Will we follow the proposal of a defiance campaign from ANC and start local actions? A protest march, sitting on whites only benches, destroying passbooks, waive the ANC flag, write placards? But the situation might turn violent. Is it better with more peaceful actions, negotiate?

People start gathering in the hall. The situation is tense. Are there any informers in the group? President-general of the ANC, Dr Moroka is expected to address the meeting. What is he going to say?

Today the grievances will be expressed and the actions decided. People want a change. What is the best way forward?

#### **Roles**

The learners are learners from neighbouring schools

Famous eight, some of (Daniel Chabalala, Dr Letele, Pepys Madibane, David Mphiwa, Alexander Nkoane, Samuel Phakedi, Father Ambrose Sehume, and Samuel Sesedi)

Members of public

White civilians

Informer

## **Key Questions**

In what way is the society not equal? Unjust laws? What are our grievances?

What will be our actions? Negotiate? Non-violent or violent actions? Other ways?

What will be the response and the result if we make protest actions?

If it turns violent, what do we do?

## **Activities**

- Make placards, posters
- Write speeches, poems
- Practice songs, slogans
- Prepare drinks, biscuits
- Make rosettes

## **Time plan**

08:00 Preparations, participants arrive

09:00 Tea and registration

09:30 Welcome, background, scenario, roles, dress up, rules

10:00 Initiation, witness

Meeting starts in the hall, Dr Letele

Activities

Informer

11.00 Dr Moroka arrives, presentation of grievances and actions, discussions, voting

Singing and toy-toying

11.30 Prepare to walk out, End

Short reflection, What happened? Could there have been another outcome?

Compare to today

12.00 Learners leave, clean up

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