

THIS LAND IS MINE

South African Freedom Songs

Recorded in Tanganyika, Africa



Folkways Record FH 5588

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NKOSI SIKELELI AFRIKA - Lord Bless Africa
AMANDLA, AWE THU! - Strength Is Ours
SIKHELELA IZWE LAKITHI - We Protest for Our Land
U SOBUKWE UFUNA AMAJONI - Sobukwe Wants Freedom Fighters
UMBUSO KA VERWOERD - Verwoerd's Regime
TSHOTSHOLOZA MANDELA - Go Underground Mandela
ITHE MBA ENDINALO INKULULEKO - The Trust I Have Is In Freedom
IMAYINI YASE - Coalbrook Mine
MAYIBUYE AFRIKA - Come Back Africa
E TANGANYIKA - In Tanganyika
IZAKUNYATHELI AFRIKA VERWOERD-Africa Is Going to Trample
on You, Verwoerd
DUBULA NGE MBAYMBAYI - Shoot with Cannons
THINANTSHA - We Are The Youth
THINA SIZWE - We the Africans
OH TANGANYIKANS
IBANDE NGE LAMI - The Belt Is Mine

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE
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This Land Is Mine

"No matter how long the night, the day is sure to come"

M.H.E. MANANA NYC 9/29/65

To M. A.

I am sending you by airmail the following reels of tape, which I think you can put together to make a fine LP of South African Freedom Songs. They were all recorded in Tanganyika by young people who are refugees from South Africa. Some had only escaped from there 5 days previously. Some have death sentences hanging over their heads if they go back at this time. For this reason no photographs of them could be taken, and the main address I am giving you is that of their organization, the African National Congress, which helps feed and clothe them while they are in Tanganyika.

SOUTH AFRICAN FREEDOM SONGS

A TRIBUTE TO THE PATRIOT VUYISILE MINI

As distinguished from staid and conservative choral compositions the term freedom song applies specially to a new phenomenon in South African life. This is the revolutionary song whose content and form not only express forcefully the mood and feelings of the South African freedom fighters but this is the song which unites black and white in the expression of their common aspiration for a free South Africa.

The freedom song is perhaps the most suitable vehicle for bridging the gap between the cultural and national characteristics of the different racial groups in South Africa. These songs are sung by the freedom fighters as they are composed without any translation into the different languages spoken. Thus in the process of struggle the fighters more often than not commune in the same language and know what it is all about.

Another feature of the freedom song is that it portrays the various stages reached by the people as they overcome obstacles on the march to freedom. The songs which were born in the 1950's when the era of positive, militant and revolutionary action came into the forefront as the only correct method of resistance, these freedom songs expressed this fighting attitude of mind. When the Congress volunteers went to jail in 1952 in defiance against unjust laws they sang:

"Imithetho ka Malani isiphethe nzima, Mayibuy' i Afrika". (Malan's laws are a burden to us, come back Africa).

Later when Chief Lutuli became President of the A. N. C. the people sang:

"Malan o tshohile
le 'muso oa hae

Lutuli phakisa onke'muso"

(Malan has taken flight, make haste Lutuli and form a new Government).

SOUTH AFRICA DEFIES THE WORLD -- AGAIN!

by Mary-Louise Hooper

"To be hanged by the neck until they are dead--" this was the bloody sentence that was carried out on Friday, November 6 in South Africa on three African patriots and long-time freedom fighters: Vuysile Mini, Zinakele Nkaba, and Wilson Khayingo.

All around the world appeals for clemency had been made to His Excellency Charles Swart, President of the Republic of South Africa -- the man who once brought a cat-o'-nine-tails into the South African Parliament and, speaking of a law to punish Africans by flogging, jovially brandished the formidable whip, asking: "What are six lashes between friends?"

Vuysile Mini, best known of the dead men, was Secretary of the Dock Workers' union of Port Elizabeth, one of the accused in the 4-year long Treason Trial, and had served several terms of imprisonment in the fight for human freedom and dignity in South Africa. All three of the martyred men were leading members of their trade unions and of the African National Congress of Chief A. J. Lutuli, Nobel Peace Prize winner. All leave widows; Mini and Khayingo leave fatherless children.

Sentenced to death last March for several counts of sabotage and one of murder -- that of an 'informer' in their underground whom they considered a traitor, but whose murder it was not alleged that they personally committed -- their final Appeal was rejected by the High Court on October 2. Well knowing the political grounds of their pitiless sentencing, the freedom-loving world rose up in massive protest. Hundreds -- probably thousands -- of cables and letters, some from heads of governments, poured in from the four corners of the earth to President Swart, the last slim remaining hope. The cables asked clemency for the freedom fighters, and they contained warnings, too. The American Committee on Africa wrote: "The execution of Mini, Kaba and Khayingo will enormously exacerbate racial hostility inside South Africa, and inflame antagonism of people of color throughout the world against the White Supremacists who rule in South Africa." James Farmer, Roy Wilkins, and A. Philip Randolph sent a joint cable which also warned: "These executions can serve only to deepen bitterness and reduce chances for peaceful solutions," certainly an under-estimate of their effect upon Africans and their certain baleful influence on rapidly worsening black-white relations in South Africa.

In all these appeals for mercy the world, however, crashed hard once more against the stone wall of South African stubbornness and self-righteousness. Distaining even to reply to the avalanche of communications that evidenced the deep concern of the whole civilized world, South Africa showed itself unspeakably strong, resolute, valiant and virtuous -- by the hanging of three simple, dedicated African patriots!

TRADE FOR LIVES

Three African trade-unionists and former African National Congress members, Mini, Nkaba and Khayinga, were hanged on November 6th by the all-white government of South Africa. Protests and appeals for clemency - 2,000 letters and cables -- which had poured in to the President of the Republic from all parts of the world were ignored, as well as repeated resolutions of the United Nations.

But now we discover that the three patriots need not have died; we read it from the pens of the dead men themselves. They were all offered life sentences in exchange for information on sabotage and the betrayal of a friend and associate, Wilton Mkwayi, who was then on trial.

It was early morning, one week before Christmas in 1956, as grey prison vans made their way slowly through the streets of Johannesburg to the Drill Hall which had been hastily converted into a court room for the holding of a treason trial. Inside the vans were 156 accused -- leaders of the National Liberation Movement in South Africa.

Huge crowds of Africans and other Non-whites had already gathered outside the Drill Hall -- many carrying placards proclaiming "We stand by our leaders."

As the prison vans appeared on the scene, it was as if this was the cue they were waiting for, the crowd burst out and sang "Nkosi Sikelel' i Afrika" (God Bless Africa).

The song rang out loud and clear from thousands of throats making the atmosphere electric and sending tears into your eyes. Yes, you felt sure that "Nkosi Sikelel' i Afrika" had never been sung quite like that before.

"Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika" and its Sotho version "Morena Boloka" was composed by Enoch Sontonga and was adopted as its national anthem by the African National Congress in 1912. And it is a matter of significance that the song spread to other parts of Africa and is today the national anthem of Tanzania and Zambia.

This song also gives a hint as to the origin of African freedom songs in South Africa. This song is a hymn, a prayer. And indeed the earlier freedom songs were adaptations of well known church songs with words changed to reflect political demands.

In the early days the freedom struggle in South Africa took the form of petitioning the ruling classes and pleading with them to attend to the grievances of the African. Likewise the freedom songs reflected this spirit. One such song "Senzenina" simply meant "What wrongs have we Africans done?"

The struggle as time went on took more militant forms. For an example during the campaign of the African National Congress in 1952 for the defiance of unjust laws when thousands of Congress members defied discriminatory laws and were jailed, many freedom songs were being composed reflecting a spirit of defiance. There were songs like "Vul' itilongo Malan", meaning "Open the prison gates Malan (the then Prime Minister) we are coming in."

A song recorded in this album "Sizakubadubula ngambayimbayi" -- we are going to shoot them with a cannon, reflects the present day mood.

The songs in this album are a selection of the many colorful freedom songs of the South African Liberation Movement. And sung in tempo that is youthful and full of vigour.

"Izakunyathel' i Africa. Verwoerd Pas Op!" -- Africa is going to trample you down Verwoerd if you don't look out.

This song was composed in jail in 1956 by the late Vuyisile Mini - the ANC leader who was hanged recently on charges of sabotage. He was awaiting trial on charges of high treason then.

"Sikhalela izwe lakithi." -- we are crying for our land which was grabbed away from us. The song also urges all the African tribes, Zulus, Xhosas, Sothos to unite.

"Thina silulutsha" -- we are the youth, we shall not permit Verwoerd to crush us.

"Lizofika nini iLanga lenkululeko" -- when will freedom day come, when will the day of rejoicing come.

Such then are the ideas expressed in these songs. In simple, repetitive lines sung in popular tunes, the hopes, the aspirations and above all the fighting spirit of South Africa's freedom fighters are expressed.

The song "Tanganyikans" sung in English expresses the gratitude of South African refugees who have fled the fires of Apartheid have found sanctuary in Tanzania.

The singing group which recorded these songs is one of the many impromptu choirs organized by various groups of refugees to while away time as they travel in transit from South Africa through Bechuanaland, Zambia and in Tanzania.

The arrival of a fresh batch of young people from South Africa in Tanzania always means that one is in for a treat of new freedom songs from South Africa. And the songs are full of fight.

SIDE A, Band 1

a) Nkosi Sikeleli Afrika

Lord bless Africa!
Exalted be its fame!
Hear our prayers!
Lord grant thy blessing!

D. C.
Come, spirit, come, come.
Come, spirit, come, come,
Come, Holy Spirit,
And bless us, her children.

Nkosi sikelela iAfrika - God bless Africa. (Xhosa)
Morena boloka sechaba - God bless our nation. (Suthu)

Nkosi sikele i Afrika.

Nkosi sikelel iAfrika. Maliphakanyis uphondo lwayo
Yiva nemithandazo yethu.
Nkosi sikelela. Nkosi sikelela. (twice)

Yiza moya
Yiza moya. Yiza moya. (twice)

Yiza moya oyingcwele.
Usisikelele. Thina lusapho lwayo.

translation

God bless Africa. Let its Horn (of hope) be raised,
Listen also to our pleas.
God Bless. God Bless.

Come spirit.

b) Amandla, Awethu!
(Strength is Ours)

SIDE A, Band 2

SIKHALELA IZWE LAKITHI (We protest for our land)

We protest for our land
That was taken from us by the wolves.

D. C.

Zulu, Mxhosa, Mosoto!
Unite. (repeat 3 times)

Say Verwoerd!
Open up your jails
We'll go in.
We, the volunteers.

Zulu, Mxhosa, Mosoto!
Unite.

We protest for our land
That was taken from us by the wolves.

Zulu! Mxhosa! Mosoto!
Unite!

Sikhalela izwe lakithi

Sikhalela izwe lakithi. Sikhalela izwe lakithi.
Lona lizothathwa ngamagalatshane.
Lona lizothathwa ngamagalatshane.

(chorus)
Zulu, Mxhosa Msuthu hlanganani.

We Verwoerd vul 'itilongo,
Wee Verwoerd vul 'itilongo,
Thina sizongena singamavolontiya.

Zulu Mxhosa Msuthu hlanganani
Zulu Mxhosa Msuthu hlanganani.

translation

We are crying for our country. We are crying for our
country
which was taken by the robbers (amagalatshane)
which was taken by the robbers

Zulus, Xhosas, Suthus unite!
Zulus, Xhosas, Suthus unite!

(the Zulus, Xhosas and Suthus are the main tribal
groups in South Africa).

Hey, Verwoerd open your jails
Hey Verwoerd open your jails
We are going to go in, we are going to go in
We the volunteers.

N. B.

(This going into jail refers to the time of the defiance
campaign, the passive resistance of 1952 when
thousands defied discriminatory laws and were
jailed.)

SIDE A, Band 3

SOBUKWE WANTS FREEDOM FIGHTERS
(U SOBUKWE UFUNA AMAJONI)

Sobukwe wants fighters.
African fighters.

Chorus: Fighters -----
(repeat 4 times or 8 times.)

SIDE A, Band 4

UMBUSO KA VERWOERD (Verwoerd's Regime)

Verwoerd's regime will crumble when Mandela is
released.
Luthuli will rule the way African people wish.

D. C.

Down went the regime.
Mandela, the people are calling, the African Nation.

Mandela, the Nation is calling, the African Nation.
Mandela, you are the one to bring about Verwoerd's
fall;
Then Luthuli will rule the land according to the people's
will.

Down went the regime.

Mmuso wa Verwoerd
Verwoerd's Government is going to tumble.

SIDE A, Band 5

TSHOTSHOLOZA MANDELA (Tshotsholoza¹ Mandela)

Tshotsholoza Mandela
Use the stick.
You'll hear from us when we are ready.

In went the leaders.²

D. C.

In went the leaders²
In went the leaders all over the country.
Bundled into jails without a just cause.

D. C.

He wailed³
Verwoerd wailed in Pretoria and said things are hot.
The reason? Mandela

Footnotes:

1. Tshotsholoza: pronounced chore-chore-law-zah
means to get out of sight in a slick
way.
2. imprisonment
3. cautioned his people

Shosholoza Mandela ... Go underground Mandela.

Shosholoza Mandela.
Shayinduku mfana.
Uzokuzwa ngathi xa sekulungile.

Wakalu Verwoerd kwelase Pitoli
Wathi kuyatshisa kwelase Afrika.

Shosholoza Mandela
Shayinduku mfana uzokuzwa ngathi
masekulungile.
SIDE A, Band 6
ITHEMBA ENDINALO INKULULEKO
(The Trust I Have is in Freedom)

The trust I have is in freedom.

Mayibuye¹

D. C.

Activists! Grab your sticks.
Watch out for Verwoerd.

D. C.

What's happening?
Mayibuye.

The trust I have is in freedom.

Footnote:

1. Mayibuye: pronounced mah-ye-bu-yeh
(soft B U)
means Africa! Come back.

Ithemba endinalo yinkululeko
I am confident of freedom.

SIDE A, Band 7

COALBROOK MINE (IMAYINI YASE Coalbrook)

There occurred a tragedy at Coalbrook mines.
A coal mine collapsed.
Hundreds died that day in South Africa.

D. C.

Dilika¹ Down went the coal mine
Women and children wept.
Flash! went the news abroad.
Buried were the men,
Men in their prime. Buried they were,
Healthy and fit.

Call unto the Saviour,
To heal the wounds.

D. C.

African blood is shed.
Shed was the blood of men.
The women weep,
The children weep.
Sad it is my people.
Sadness there is, my people.

D. C.

Yooh!² those tears.
Sad it is Africa.
Sadness there is, Africans.

Men pick up your sticks
And let's go talk to the soothsayers.

Woe unto Coalbrook mines which devoured men.
Woe unto this Coalbrook mine.
This day will remain ever memorable.

Footnotes:

1. Dilika pronounced: dee-lea-kah
means fall down
2. Yooh means a cry of sadness.

Coalbrook

Coalbrook coal mine fell killing
Over four hundred Africans and
About six whites. In the song, Africans
Say that their brothers blood will
Be retrieved one day.

SIDE A, Band 8

MAYIBUYE AFRIKA (Come Back Africa)

Come back Africa
Come back Africa
Come back Africa

And end the pass laws
And attain freedom

We the people
We the race.
We plead for the Africa that was robbed
From our fore-fathers who were of noble spirit.

Mayibuye iAfrika makaphele amapasi.

Mayibuye. Mayibuye. Mayibuy iAfrika.
Makaphele amapasi sithol inkululeko.

Mayibuye Mayibuye Myiby iAfrika.
Makaphele amapasi sithol inkululeko.

translation

Let Afrika come back let Afrika come back
let there be no more pass laws, let us get freedom.

SIDE B, Band 1

E TANGANYIKA (In Tanganyika)¹

Men went out in search of freedom.
Left their homes and came here into their exile.

D. C.

Mandela spoke, saying that the youth should
Receive military training.

Mandela spoke, saying that the youth should
Fight for Africa,
For Africa that was colonized ages ago.
Fight for Africa that was colonized ages ago.

He saw the youth leave home and head for Tanganyika.
They² proclaimed 90-day detention,
People were imprisoned together with their leaders.

D. C.

Out came Verwoerd.
We pulled him by the whiskers and kicked him to the
Ground and destroyed him.

D. C.

We danced at Mandela's return,
Proud of his victory over Vorster. 3

D. C.

Out came Verwoerd. . . . (repeat through "victory over
Vorster")

Footnotes:

1. In Tanganyika (Tanzania) is a reminiscence on
Tanganyika and refugee days there.
2. "They" are the people in Verwoerd's regime
3. Vorster: pronounced Forse-star
He is the Minister of Justice

E Tanganyika

Youth go to Tanganyika
From whence you will
Get directives as to what
You must do.

SIDE B, Band 2

"IZAKUNYATHELI AKRIKA VERWOERD"
(Africa is Going to Trample On You,
Verwoerd)

Africa is going to trample on you, Verwoerd.
Verwoerd! Shoot ----

You are going to get hurt.
Werwoerd, watch out.
You are going to get hurt.
Watch out.

Chorus: Africa is going to trample on you,
Verwoerd.

Izakunyathela i Afrika----Africa will trample on you.

Izakunyathel iAfrika.
Verwoerd! uzakwenzakala.

Hey, Verwoerd uzakwenzakala.
Hey, Basopa ... uzakwenzakala.

translation

Africa will trample on you
Verwoerd. You are going to get hurt.

Hey, Verwoerd you are going to get hurt.
Hey, look out you are going to get hurt.

SIDE B, Band 3

DUBULA NGE MBAYMBAYI (Shoot with Cannons)

We are going to shoot them with cannon fire.

Chorus: They'll run.

Shoot them with cannon fire.

D. C.

We are going to shoot them with cannon fire.

Chorus: Won't they run ---

Shoot them with cannon fire.

Sizokubadubula ngembayimbayi -- We shall shoot them
with a Cannon.

Sizokubadubula ngembayimbayi,
dubula ngembayimbayi. (repeat)

(chorus)

Sizokubadubula, dubula, dubula ngembayimbayi
Sizokubadubula, sizokubadubula ngembayimbayi.

translation

We are going to shoot them with a cannon.
Shoot them with a cannon.

We are going to shoot them, shoot, shoot with a
cannon.

We are going to shoot them, we are going to shoot
them with a cannon.

SIDE B, Band 4

We Are The Youth (THINANTSHA)

We are the youth.
And we'll never be destroyed by Verwoerd in our youth.

D. C.

We'll never be destroyed by Verwoerd in our youth.

D. C.

Repeat all the above.

In our youth!
In our youth!

Thina silulutsha -- We are the youth.

Thina silulutsha.
Asinakubulawa.
Asozesabulawa nguVelelvutha sisebatsha.

Thina silulutsha
Asinakubulawa (twice)

Asozesabulawa nguVelelvutha sisebatsha.
Sisebatsha, sisebatsha, sisebatsha, sisebatsha.

translation

We are the youth.
We can't be killed. We can never be killed by
Verwoerd
We are still young.

We can never be killed by Verwoerd, we are still
young

We are still young, we are still young, we are still
young.

SIDE B, Band 5

We The Africans (THINA SIZWE)

We the black race.
We moan for the black race.
We moan for our land that was usurped
By the white man.

Chorus:

Let them leave!
Let them leave our land alone. D. C.

The children
The children of Africa are moaning
For their land, that was robbed
By the white man.

Mayibuye! 1
Mayibuye i Africa 2

Footnotes:

1. Mayibuye: Come back Africa
2. Mayibuye i Africa: Let Africa come back.

THINA

Thina Sizwe. Thina sizwe esintsundu.
Sikhalela. Sikhalela izwe lethu.
Elathathwa. Elathathwa ngabamhlophe.
Mabayeke. Mabayek umhlaba wethu.
Mabayeke. Mabayek umhlaba wethu.

(repeat)

translation

We the people. We the black people.
We are crying. We are crying for our land
which was taken away, taken away by the white people.
They must leave our country alone, they must leave
our country alone.
Let them leave our country alone, let them leave our
country alone.

SIDE B, Band 6

OH TANGANYIKAUS

When Freedom comes along
We shall leave you,
We shall love you,
For the things you've done for us.

Oh Tanganyikans
Yes we know we are away from home
For the things you've done for us
When Freedom comes along.

SIDE B, Band 7

THE BELT IS MINE OR THE VOW IS MINE
(Ibande ngela lami)

This belt is mine.
This belt is mine.

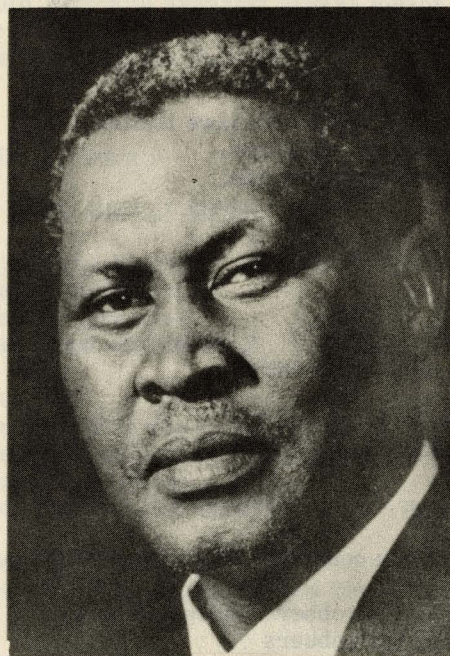
It's been a long time I've been roaming.

The belt is mine.
The belt is mine.
Yes, Mom, the belt is mine.
Yes, Mom, the belt is mine.

(This is my solemn promise)



The late Vuyisile Mini, leader of the African National Congress and Dockworkers' Union was composer of many S.A. freedom songs. He was executed by the S.A. fascist Government on charges of sabotage on the 6th of November 1964.



Chief Albert Luthuli, President of the African National Congress, Nobel Peace Prize winner, lives under restriction in his home district in Natal.

Production Director: Moses Asch
Part of The English Translation by:
M.H.E. Manana NYC