

4 APARTHEID GETS WORSE, 1950s – 1970s



Ten homelands were created in remote areas. Each homeland held only one ethnic group – an attempt to further divide Africans. The homelands consisted of 13% of South Africa's land – for over 87% of the population. Above, a woman stands in front of her possessions, displaced from her old neighborhood and forced into a distant homeland.



Forced into "Homelands"

The ANC's peaceful protests only fanned the fears of white leaders. The government stepped up segregation.

In 1959, police began herding people of color into "homelands."

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, 3.5 million people were forced into poverty-stricken rural areas – places with no modern facilities and poor land for farming. Outside the Soviet Union, these were the largest forced removals in the world.

A new level of violence

Government violence increased. In the "Sharpeville Massacre" of 1960, police killed 69 peaceful protestors and injured 180 more.



The Sharpeville Massacre, March 21, 1960 marked a new era of government brutality. Police opened fire on a crowd protesting against the pass laws. Most of those killed or wounded were shot in the back.

In turn, the African National Congress finally ended its policy of non-violence. It created Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) in 1961, which began sabotaging government property.

Police now started jailing protestors secretly, without filing charges. Solwandle Ngudle died from beatings in jail in 1963, the first of more than 100 to perish in prison.



Police with clubs beat a group of women protesting near Durban, 1959.



One response to government violence was the ANC's new Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation). Its first actions included destroying electric lines which mostly served whites but not blacks.