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PC1/1112/11-21

1. Mahabane was born at Thaba'Nchu in 1881. His parents were Christians, his father a skilled farmer. He studied at ^{Morija} ~~Monja~~ and qualified as teacher in 1901. After theological training in the Cape he was ordained a Methodist minister in 1914. But politics drew him, and in 1919 he became president of the African National Congress in the Cape.

Cartoon: Mahabane presiding over the ANC (Cape); He was a commanding figure and wore his dark suit and clerical collar

2. Those were indecisive years for the A.N.C. Mahabane became president-general in 1924, was thought too conservative and ousted by J.T.Gumede in 1927, who favoured cooperation with the Communist Party. Mahabane engineered Gumede's defeat and Seme's election. Seme in his turn was thought too conservative, and Mahabane defeated him in 1937. In 1940 Xuma defeated Mahabane, and was later himself ousted for his conservatism. Black politics was warming up.

Cartoon: What? A succession? Mahabane, Gumede, Seme, Mahabane, Xuma?

3. Mahabane belonged to the moderate and impressive generation of African politicians whose great importance was ignored - in blindness one assumes - by Hertzog and Smuts. Mahabane, although rejected for his conservatism, continued active in religion and politics. He presided over the Interdenominational African Minister's Federation founded in 1945, and pressed for greater black responsibilities in the Methodist Church. He became a venerable figure like Moses, and dying saw from afar the Promised Land. He died in 1970.

Cartoon: Let us be imaginative! What about Moses in his robes and Mahabane in his suit, on the top of Mount Nebo, where Moses shows Mahabane the Promised Land?