

The Parallel Union Thrust

Memorandum issued by FOSATU on 8 November 1979

Employers are Co-operating

'Employers are with this Union, and they are prepared to let their Black employees join this Trade Union because it is well run, well organised, and seeks only to improve the position of its members. Because of these reasons, the Motor Industry Workers Union of S.A. is sure to be the only Trade Union for Black Workers in the Motor Industry. Employers trust us because they know that we are only interested in making things better for our members, and are not a political organisation. So you are safe in our ranks. We will fight for your rights as a worker, and protect you in your jobs, but we will never place you on the wrong side of the Law'.

Quoted from a pamphlet issued to workers by the
Motor Industry Workers' Union

The past two months have seen an unprecedented number of companies introducing unions to their African workers. Much of the recruiting for these unions has been done by the companies themselves. All of these unions have told workers that they will be registered under the new labour laws.

This surge of activity, as was clearly expressed at the recent TUCSA Conference, is the result of a very new interest by many of the presently registered unions in organising African workers. It is also a result of the realisation by employers that they will have to deal with unions of African workers, so that many companies are hastily looking around for the unions which they regard as most convivial, and are introducing these into their plants.

The registered unions taking the lead in this upsurge of activity are:

Motor Industry Combined Workers Union (which has established the Motor Industry Workers Union for Black workers);

The Engineering Industrial Workers Union (which has established the

National Union of Engineering Industrial and Allied Workers);
 S.A. Electrical Workers Association (which has established the Electrical and Allied Workers Union of S.A.);
 Textile Workers Industrial Union (which appears to be organising for the Textile Workers Union (Tvl) in Natal and the Cape);
 Radio, Television, Electronic and Allied Workers Union

The independent trade unions organising African workers are very concerned by this trend, for the following reasons:

1. Most of the unions named above have never before actively organised African workers. They have not assisted the unregistered unions which have for several years, been fighting an uphill battle for union rights for African workers. Suddenly they are deeply concerned about 'organising the unorganised'. This has come when organising African workers has suddenly become easy and respectable - the government approves and employers are assisting selected unions. It also comes at a time when the members of registered unions are more than ever threatened by competition from African workers, following the virtual abolition of statutory job reservation.
2. Employers and the government have realised that they have to accept unions of African workers. They clearly now wish to encourage unions which they believe will not cause them any difficulties. The independent unions (i.e. those in FOSATU, the Consultative Committee of Black Trade Unions, and certain unions in the Western Cape, have been struggling for years for recognition by employers and for basic rights and facilities. These have consistently been denied to them by all but a few enlightened companies such as Smith & Nephew, Kellogs, Ford and SKF.
3. Now, suddenly, employers are bypassing the established unions of African workers and are bringing new unions to their workers. In many cases, the new unions are being used in an attempt to undermine or pre-empt organisation by FOSATU or Consultative Committee unions.
4. The most important feature of the new unions is that they are able to compete at an advantage with the existing unions of African workers. This unfair competition is a result of employers interfering in the freedom of association of their employees.
5. Judging from their statements to workers and pamphlets issued by them, most of the new unions will be prepared to accept certain condi-

tions from management which will have the effect of weakening the entire labour movement. These relate especially to the acceptance of Management - dominated in-plant committees for the handling of in-plant issues. Further, the existing unions have been struggling for the right to have facilities for their shop stewards, and to represent their members on in-plant issues, like dismissal procedures. These matters appear to be of little interest to the new unions, who clearly intend to work mainly through the Industrial Councils.

Some of the new unions have been started at the request of Management. Mr. A.E. Poole, Secretary of the Engineering Industrial Workers' Union, admitted to the press that he had been pressed by Management to start his new union. The International Metal Workers' Federation was informed by Leyland International that the Motor Industry Workers' Union was started at their request. Furthermore, the management of Siemens actively encouraged the formation of the Electrical and Allied Workers' Union.

In keeping with this inauspicious start, some of the new unions have been called into their plants by Management with the obvious intention of undermining the independent union which had already organised the African workers there. This has happened at least in Leyland, Hella and Non-Ferrous Metalworks.

In addition, many companies are giving facilities to the new unions. Most of these companies are actively interfering in the freedom of association of their employees by:

granting facilities to the new unions which they have denied to the existing unions (often on the pretext that these unions were not registered, but disregarding the fact that the new unions themselves are at present unregistered). Especially important is access to company premises for recruiting;

by assisting the new unions to organise. Management, particularly Personnel Officers, and sometimes officially-approved Liaison Committee members, are handling recruiting for the new unions. In many companies, workers have been called together by Management and told to join a certain union. This interference by Management effectively amounts to coercion. Few workers feel that they can refuse to join without endangering their jobs.

Personnel Management collects subscriptions for most of the new

unions. Many companies have already promised stop-order facilities.

FOSATU is not opposed to the granting of facilities to unions in respect of access to company premises for recruiting. Indeed, it is one of the rights for which FOSATU unions have been struggling. However, it should be granted even-handedly and without strings. Management assistance with recruiting is, however, unacceptable to FOSATU.

FOSATU believes that the trends outlined above will be to the detriment of the labour movement as a whole. Workers will eventually become disillusioned with unions which allow themselves to operate only on Management's restrictive terms.

Current Parallel Union Organising Drive - The Role of TUCSA

The current organising effort of the parallel unions is obviously a response to the new labour dispensation in South Africa.

The prime mover in the drive to organise African workers into parallel unions is TUCSA, and as can be seen in **Appendix I** most of the parallel unions are affiliated to TUCSA.

At the recent TUCSA Conference it became clear that TUCSA affiliates were proposing to take a much more activist position as regards the organising of African workers. The aggressive nature of this move is demonstrated by the defeat of a proposal that new unions should not be formed where African unions already existed. In other words, regardless of whether or not the independent unions were organising in a particular area, TUCSA unions would go ahead and organise there too.

Why are TUCSA affiliates now moving rapidly to 'organise the unorganised' (always their stated policy, but in practice carried out in a very half-hearted way)?

An examination of motives shows similar reasons to those of the past: i.e. the need to maintain 'rate for the job' in order to prevent wage undercutting by Africans, as well as a fear of the influence of a black trade union movement. Nevertheless, with the recent 'labour reforms' the issues are more pressing. These pressing needs, together with the ease of organising, coincides with the needs of Management, and, taken together, provides powerful reasons for organising black workers.

One major reason that emerges is the growth of an independent trade union movement, which over the past few years has made substantial progress in factory organisation, and gained local and international support. TUCSA sees this movement as a direct threat to its claim to be the major trade union body in South Africa. TUCSA has never hidden its hostility to these independent unions. In 1976, when many officials of the independent trade unions were banned, Mr. A. Grobbelaar, general secretary of TUCSA, supported the then Minister of Justice, Mr. Jimmy Kruger, in his statement that officials of independent unions who were banned, were banned for reasons other than their trade union activities (he was subsequently sued and retracted this statement). The recent TUCSA conference has served to confirm this hostility. Mr. Archie Poole, (EIWU) made a strong attack on FOSATU unions, accusing them of 'misleading' black workers. Christina du Preez (National Union of Cigarette and Tobacco Workers) described Freddie Sauls, secretary of the National Union of Automobile and Rubber Workers of South Africa (a registered FOSATU union) as one of TUCSA's 'biggest enemies'. Ronnie Webb attacked both Sauls and the independent Food and Canning Workers Union, and the Conference as a whole refused to support striking workers at Eveready and Fatti's and Moni's - all members of independent unions.

TUCSA needs to be seen to be doing something for black workers if it is to regain credibility with the international labour movement. Over recent years it has lost both status and money to the growing independent trade union movement.

Questions of image and support are, therefore, important motivations for the recent moves. However, on a more day to day basis, other reasons prevail.

As African workers move increasingly into skilled and semi-skilled positions, and the protection offered by registered unions to their members, that of job reservation, is lost, the need to implement 'rate for the job' becomes more urgent. Only by bringing African workers into the same bargaining machinery - and this under the firm control of currently registered unions - can such an imperative be implemented to the satisfaction of their members. Furthermore, it is only in this way that the unions can prevent the decline in membership and influence which is a feature of most of the existing craft unions. This decline results largely from the loss of protection offered by the unions.

Members of registered unions have also been undercut by the formation

of in-plant Liaison Committees for African workers. Management grants **apparently** better facilities to these Committees for in-plant matters than the registered unions achieve for their members - very few of the registered unions have won facilities for their shop stewards or access for their officials. This adds to the disenchantment of members with their unions.

The fear of Management's instituting multi-racial in-plant Works Councils has also been expressed by such union officials as Ben Nicholson (SAEWU). At a recent UNISA seminar he said he feared the weakening of trade unions on shop floor issues because of the presence of Works Councils. He also felt that the Councils may provide the vehicle for the breakdown of the Industrial Council system and centralised bargaining process. The unions, therefore, need to control these Committees. (In the past, however, Nicholson has said that Black unions should work through the Liaison Committees).

For these reasons, the parallel unions (with their registered 'parent' unions) appear to have formed an alliance with Management. Management and the registered unions, for differing reasons, both want to see the growth of parallel unions at the expense of independent black unions. As a recent pamphlet produced by the Motor Industry Workers Union proclaims:

'Employers are with this Union, and they are prepared to let their Black employees join this Trade Union...'

Management's Attitude

Why are companies entering into such an alliance with the parallel unions, when in the past there has been almost total opposition to **any** union organisation for African workers?

There are a series of clear motivations for this apparent about-face. Companies, as well as the registered unions, are faced with a changing labour situation, and realise the inevitable present of African trade unions. It seems that many companies wish to be able to channel union organisation in their plants.

Independent unions have, in general, placed emphasis on building strong shop floor organisation and negotiating plant recognition agreements and shop floor issues.

Most registered unions, on the other hand, have placed emphasis on wor-

king through Industrial Councils and using the Industrial Councils to police agreements. These unions have not tried to negotiate dismissal procedures, shop steward facilities and other in-plant issues. Clearly employers prefer the latter approach, as the union is then not directly involved in the factory.

The parallel unions have adopted the same strategy as their 'parents'. A glance at the reports on parallel union activity in various firms confirms this [Appendices 2 to 11]. In not one instance is there evidence of active union plant committees, or the tackling of worker grievances at plant level. The Electrical and Allied Workers' Union described itself to one worker as being 'like a policeman' - policing the laws laid down by the Industrial Council. It was also said that the union could not control Management and that Management alone decides whether to increase wages. [See Appendix 7 - report from Defy workers].

The parallel unions also appear to support, or at least not actively oppose, the established Liaison Committees. These committees have consistently been rejected by workers and independent unions.

Evidence from workers confirms this view. Workers at Leyland, where MIWU is actively organising, report the retention of the Liaison Committee and, in fact, they appear not to see the difference between it and the union. Workers at both Defy and South African General Electric report that union officials said that the Liaison Committee would remain in the factory despite the union presence. [Appendices 7 and 2]. Management at Leyland clearly stated the position regarding the MIWU and the company Liaison Committee in a letter to the Metal and Allied Workers' Union dated 5 April 1978:

'We find our Liaison Committee to be functioning well and the trade union involved with our black employees will be nominating its representatives in the plant onto these committees and they will operate as the present Government policy prescribes'.

Companies have, in the face of constant rejection by workers, insisted on retaining Liaison Committees, backed by such employer organisations as SEIFSA, and by the Department of Labour. The parallel union acceptance of these committees accords well with the evident wishes of companies to retain in-plant committee systems, which are dominated by Management.

Multi-national firms appear to be among the first to have given access to these recently formed parallel unions. Examples are Leyland and Hella, where Management invited a parallel union, MIWU, to organise there in

order to block the MAWU and the United Automobile and Rubber Workers' Union respectively. GEC, South African General Electric and Siemens have also granted access to recruit.

Why are multi-national firms taking the lead in this matter?

These firms have been under pressure from their home countries. By granting recognition and facilities to parallel unions for African workers, a great deal of credibility accrues to them overseas, and pressures are thus substantially reduced. The recognition of parallel unions given many advantages and few disadvantages.

The example of Leyland is a case in point. British Leyland came under heavy attack over its blocking of the organising activities of the independent MAWU. Leyland encouraged the setting up of the parallel MIWU by R. Webb, and publicised this overseas. The strategy worked. Even trade union organisations were fooled. From correspondence it is clear that the TUC of Britain regard Leyland's recognition of MIWU as a positive step:

'They (Leyland) refer to one unregistered trade union as having 30 per cent of their black African workforce at Elandsfontein in membership.... the union referred to is the Motor Industry Workers' Union....and that the local Leyland management has recognised it for negotiating purposes.

...it is clear that Leyland South Africa have moved some way towards recognition of a trade union representing black African employees'.

Unfair Competition

Management, particularly in some of the multi-nationals is encouraging these unions to come into their plants. In so doing, they are interfering with the basic principle of freedom of association of workers.

How does this occur?

Firstly, facilities are given to parallel unions, whilst denying access of any kind to the independent unions. Examples of this are:

allowing, and sometimes inviting, organisers of parallel unions into the firm to address workers and recruit members, as in Hella, Temsa, etc. In fact, Archie Poole stated recently that companies had 'pressed' him to form a new union, as was the case with Ronnie Webb and Leyland.
[Appendix 5]

using management representatives, such as personnel officers and/or officially sanctioned Liaison Committee members to recruit workers. This tactic emerges in almost all our reports - see the examples of Leyland, GEC, General Electric, Defy. It is difficult for workers to refuse to join, for fear of losing their jobs.

some workers have reported active intimidation, particularly by black personnel officers (see Leyland, GEC, Hella).

the collection of subscriptions is facilitated by management, either through agreement to stop orders or by collection by supervisory staff.

the provision of discriminatory benefits to members of parallel unions, as for example in Hella, where the MIWU members are given maternity benefits and UAW members are not. [See Appendix 10]

Secondly, in many cases, Management speaks out against independent unions. There are numerous examples of this. Union officials and workers report that at Non Ferrous Metals, Management said that an unregistered union, MAWU, could do nothing because it was unregistered. [Appendix 6]. The minutes of South African General Electric Liaison Committee meeting of 11 October 1979 stated:

'The Chairman...sounded a warning to the members not to get involved with unregistered trade unions since these trade unions could do nothing for the employees'.

However, it must be noted that none of the unions referred to in this report are themselves registered, but are still allowed facilities denied to the independent unions.

Management in many cases then hampers workers' freedom to chose their own unions by clearly favouring one type of union (parallel unions) and opposing the other (independent).

For a variety of reasons, it suits both Management and the presently registered unions to form an alliance. The unions in so doing are, however, being used by Management, which will have the effect of weakening the trade union movement as a whole. It appears that by co-operating with Management in organising African workers, some unions feel they will gain favour with Management, and that through rapid membership growth they will be able to use the new labour laws against the independent unions of FOSATU and the Consultative Committee of Black Trade Unions.

The Functioning of Parallel Unions

As observed in the last section, the image projected by the parallel unions is one of common interest with Management. These unions, therefore, have to balance this with the image of an independent effective organisation for their members. Their dilemma is clearly shown in a pamphlet recently distributed by the MIWU [Appendix 12], which tries to please both management and workers:

'Employers are with this union'.

'Employers trust us because...we are not a political organisation'.

'this Trade Union...is well run, well organised'.

'It helps to settle disputes in a peaceful, constructive and legal fashion'.

'The Union...speaks with one voice for its members'.

'We will fight for your rights as a worker, and protect you in your job'.

It is not clear at the moment that these unions will be able to operate independently of Management. Whilst companies try to project an image of common interest with workers, the latter, subjected to poor conditions and low wages over the years, do not view things in the same way. Any union which appears to workers as being brought to them by Management is likely to be the object of suspicion and may ultimately be rejected by workers if they are given the opportunity to do so. [See Appendices 2,4,5,6,9,10,11].

In most cases, 'parent' unions seem to retain a great deal of influence over the 'parallel daughter union'. Despite many years of operation, some of the parallel unions are totally reliant on a 'parent' union for facilities such as offices, transport and personnel. The secretary of the 'parent' union often acts as secretary of the 'parallel' union - see Appendix 1. More important, however, is the fact that these unions have been unable to operate an independent organising strategy, and indeed the interests of their members appear in many cases to have been subordinated to the interests of the 'parent' union members.

Within the ranks of the older parallel unions, these facts are being recognised and discontent is growing. The recent dispute between the members of the TUCSA parallel union, African Transport Workers Union, and their white Secretary, Gert van der Walt, where bitter allegations were made, is a pointer to the problems likely to be encountered when true independence is blocked.

The effectiveness of the parallel unions is also suspect. The stated aim of

working mainly through the Industrial Council system will mean, as with most currently registered unions, lack of effectiveness at plant level. This will not satisfy black workers, as is borne out by the rejection of the parallel union in Leyland and Hella.

Even at the Industrial Council level, the oldest parallel unions do not appear to have been very successful in gaining advantages for their members. In February last year, the largest parallel union, the National Union of Clothing Workers, played an active part in negotiating an agreement which laid down a minimum rate of R13,75 per week - which is lower than that specified in the Wage Determination for unskilled labour (R17,20 for a female) manufacturing industry, and this in spite of the long standing unionisation in the industry.

A major problem with the parallel unions is their apparent readiness to co-operate with the discredited Liaison Committee system. It is clearly the intention of many companies and of the major employer organisations, that plant issues will be dealt with by these Committees. The unions will, therefore, be reduced to negotiating only at a national level, having little contact with the day to day issues in the factories.

The emphasis on the financial benefits offered by these unions, is a further sign of weakness. This also creates the impression among workers that these unions are ineffective and will not serve their need to gain better conditions in the plant. All our reports clearly show that this benefit function is emphasised by union officials. As a worker at South African General Electric stated:

'These unions look after us when we are dead. When we are alive they do nothing for us'.

Consultation

None of the registered unions has consulted with the existing unregistered unions before starting a new union.

Only the S.A. Boilermakers Society has consulted on many occasions, and in great depth with the unregistered unions, as to the advisability of doing so. None of the other unions has made any attempt whatsoever to do so.

Approaches to Management

In this document, we do not intend to imply that all the companies named

have deliberately discriminated against the independent unions. In particular, we believe that some companies may not have been aware of the organising activities of any independent unions; this is probably true of S.A. General Electric and GEC.

APPENDIX 1

EXISTING PARALLEL UNIONS

Parallel Union	Secretary	'Parent Union'	Secretary
Motor Industry Workers Union of S.A.		Motor Industry Combined Workers Union	R. Webb
African Transport Workers Union	G.H. van der Walt	Motor Transport Workers Union/Johannesburg Municipal Transport Workers Union	H.M. Wallis
African Leather Workers Union	L.C.M. Scheepers	Transvaal Leather & Allied Workers Union	L.C.M. Scheepers
African Trunk & Box Workers Union	L.C.M. Scheepers	Trunk & Box Workers Industrial Union	L.C.M. Scheepers
African Tobacco Workers Union	C. du Preez	National Union of Cigarette & Tobacco Workers	C. du Preez
National Union of Clothing Workers	L. Mvubelo	Garment Workers Union of S.A.	B.L. Krynauw
Textile Workers Union	E. Seloro	Textile Workers Industrial Union	N. Daniels
S.A. Bank Employees Union	A. Malherbe	National Union of Bank Employees of S.A.	A. Malherbe
National Union of Engineering Industrial & Allied Workers Union	A.E. Poole	Engineering Industrial Workers Union of S.A.	A.E. Poole
Electrical & Allied Workers Union of S.A.		S.A. Electrical Workers Association/Electrical Allied Trades Union of S.A. Radio, Television, Electronic & Allied Workers	B. Nicholson L.C.M. Scheepers

APPENDIX 2**Report on Parallels in S.A. General Electric - Benoni**

Information received from:

- (i) Liaison Committee member
- (ii) Liaison Committee Minutes of 11/10/79

Parallel Union involved: Electrical & Allied Workers' Union of S.A.

The Union

Around the end of September/beginning of October, the Black Personnel Officer called the Liaison Committee members and told them that officials from a trade union were coming the next day to speak to them.

The next day, they were called to the Board Room to meet these officials. Two Liaison Committee members were there and the Black Personnel Officer. Two union officials were present: one white man (name unknown) and a 'so-called coloured' man (Mr. Olifants)

The officials explained to the workers about the Union. They told the workers that it was a Union for workers 'over the whole Republic'. They explained how the Union would help them. The main points were:

1. The Union would help them if they lost their jobs. It would help them to find another job, and also support them with R2,50 a week whilst they were looking for a job.
2. If they died their dependents would get money (amount not specified).
3. They would be members of a sick pay fund and receive R3,00 a week whilst sick.

They were told that subscriptions were 50 cents a week, and that this would be deducted from their wages. A question was raised by workers about the Liaison Committee - Union relationship. Workers asked whether they would be able to form a Works Committee in the firm, rather than a Liaison Committee. Mr. Olifants replied that Management would not allow it. He said that the Liaison Committee and the trade union would work together in the firm.

He also told the Liaison Committee members that they must not fight in the Factory.

Joining forms were given to the Personnel Officer. He gave them to the Liaison Committee members and told them to tell workers about the Union and to give out forms in their departments.

The Liaison Committee members and the Personnel Officer were invited to a Union meeting in Reiger Park, Boksburg. The Liaison Committee members did not attend, but the Personnel Officer reported to them that a Chairman and Treasurer for the East Rand had been elected at the meeting.

The Liaison Committee members were told that the joining forms would be collected by the Personnel Officer on 26 October 1979. No further meetings were arranged between the Liaison Committee members and Union officials, either at the firm or at the Union Offices.

The Liaison Committee members report that they are unhappy about this Union:

'It seems just like Liaison Committee or Industrial Council...They don't want to solve our problems. They talk about canteens and first aid, but if you talk about money, they don't want to hear you'.

They report that workers are also suspicious, especially about the 50 cent deduction.

Management

An extract from Liaison Committee minutes indicates Management's attitude:

'The Chairman then explained the benefits of registered trade unions and also sounded a warning to the members not to get involved with unregistered trade unions since these trade unions could do nothing for the employees'.

APPENDIX 3**Report on Parallel Union Activity in G.E.C. Machines, Benoni**

Information received from: Team Leaders - 2 Workers

Parallel Union Involved: Electrical & Allied Workers Union of S.A.

Two officials from the Electrical and Allied Workers' Union came to the firm at the beginning of October. They went to Management and the Personnel Manager then called all the team leaders to the Black Personnel Officer. The team leaders discussed the Union with the two officials, Mr. Nicholson and Mr. Olifants. Following this discussion, joining forms were left with the Personnel Officer.

Workers were called **individually** to the Black Personnel Officer. He told them about the Union. He told workers that the Union is good when you lose your job because it gives you some money. He also explained about other benefits, such as death benefits.

He said that the Liaison Committee will stay the same - that it is working well. He also said that the Union cannot argue about the workers' wages. The workers must work hard to make production for the firm. Management alone will decide whether to give an increase. Subscriptions for the Union would be 50 cents and would be taken from their wages.

A meeting would be held for workers at Reiger Park, Boksburg and the Personnel Officer said he would inform workers when this meeting would take place.

Workers felt that this Personnel Officer was trying to force them to join the Union. They report that he told them they would lose their jobs if they did not fill in the forms. He told them that Management wants everyone to belong to the Union.

APPENDIX 4**Report on Parallel Union Activity in a Motor Firm**

Information received from: 2 Liaison Committee members

Parallel Union involved: Motor Industry Workers Union of S.A.

In the middle of October 1979, the Managing Director called all the Liaison Committee members for a special meeting. The paymaster was also present at the meeting. The M.D. told them that a Union was coming to speak to them on 26 October 1979. He told them that they should join this Union. When workers asked how it was that a Union was coming to the Firm, the M.D. replied that he did not know. Workers feel that the Union must have contacted the firm, although they have no proof.

The Liaison Committee members called a meeting of all workers one lunch-time to discuss this matter. Workers said that it was a Management Union and so they were not interested.

On Tuesday, 26 October Mr. East (Transvaal Secretary of the Motor Industry Combined Workers' Union) and Mr. A. Masabalala came to the firm and met the Liaison Committee members. The two officials said they were from the Union and that they wanted workers at the firm to join the Union. They said they were registered and that the government was allowing people to join. They told workers that they were going to different firms organising workers in the motor industry. They felt that the African workers should join the Union as all the whites have joined and they should all be the same.

The officials explained about subscriptions - it would be 40 cents per week and would be deducted from their wages by Management. They explained that the Union offered a death benefit and that when workers have joined they will elect one representative to attend committee meetings and look after their firm. They then told the Liaison Committee members to discuss this with workers and then to contact the officials again. The workers asked for the Union constitution. A pamphlet was subsequently distributed in the firm.

The workforce, however, have rejected the Union and Management has been advised accordingly.

APPENDIX 5**Report on Parallels In Leyland S.A. Ltd, Elandsfontein**

Information received from:

ex Union member, Mr. E. Buthelezi, supported by female office workers and two other workers from the main plant.

Parallel Union involved: Motor Industry Workers' Union of S.A.

Independent Union involved: Metal & Allied Workers' Union

Background

The dispute between Leyland Management and the independent Metal and Allied Workers' Union goes back to 1973. Management consistently blocked MAWU's organising activity in plants in Mobeni, Natal and Elandsfontein, Transvaal.

In November 1977, Management requested the Motor Industry Combined Workers' Union, General Secretary Ronnie Webb (ex President of TUCSA), to organise black workers at their plant at Elandsfontein. According to Werner Thonnissen, Assistant General Secretary of International Metalworkers Federation, this strategy was told him by representatives of Leyland International. In other words, it was a high-level decision taken specifically to block an independent black union, the MAWU, and bring in a union of Management's choice. At this stage, the Motor Industry Combined Workers' Union organised coloured workers only and the parallel union for black workers, Motor Industry Workers Union of S.A., was formed specifically for organising Leyland workers.

Information received November 1978 and February 1979

It was reported by an ex-member of the MIWU that he and many other workers were dissatisfied with this Union and, in fact, had ceased to pay their subscriptions.

The reasons for dissatisfaction were as follows:

1. Forms were distributed to workers in each department by the Personnel Officer. They were told merely to fill them in and return to him. No proper explanation was given.
2. Workers, feeling afraid, filled in the forms. After they were collected, the

Personnel Officer spoke to the workers telling them that the forms were for a Union that was going to help them. No further explanation was given apart from being told that a subscription of 10 cents per week was to be paid.

3. They paid their first subscription on pay-day. The subscription was raised to 30 cents and was collected by the Personnel Officer who was waiting near the pay-office. Subsequently 'boss-boys' began collecting subscriptions on pay days and the subscription raised to 40 cents.
4. Up to this date, there had been only one meeting for workers. In September, three union officials visited the firm and addressed a meeting of workers. They told workers the Union would help them when they got fired; it would help them look for a job; they would take complaints from workers; there was money from the Union if anyone died. They promised to return and tell workers how to contact the Union if they were in trouble, but workers did not see the officials again. Many workers have had problems or been fired and the Union has not helped them.
5. There is no Union organisation inside the plant. Workers did not elect representatives.
6. The Liaison Committee is still in existence and 'does nothing for us'.
7. When workers stopped paying subscriptions the Personnel Manager is alleged to have threatened workers with dismissal.

Information received October 1979

The information provided above was substantiated by 2 female clerks and 2 workers from the workshop. They have also ceased to pay subscriptions as they have 'never heard of this union doing anything'. They have been told by the Liaison Committee members that the subscription to the Union will be deducted from their wages (stop order) from the end of November. In this way they feel they will be forced to pay to the Union.

The feeling of these workers is that the Liaison Committee is the same as the Union. The Committee meets in the same way as before, but sometimes it appears as the Union. The Union subscription stop order issue, for example, was reported to them by the Liaison Committee. They are confused, and see no reason to have a Union; to which they pay subscriptions, which operates exactly as a Liaison Committee.

The following extract from a letter to the MAWU dated 5 April 1978 from the Group Industrial Relations Manager, Mr. Hall, clarifies the position on the relationship between the Liaison Committee and the MIWU.

'...we find our Liaison Committees to be functioning well and the Trade Union involved with our black employees will be nominating its representatives in the plant on to these committees and they will operate as the present Government Policy prescribes'.

APPENDIX 6

Report on Parallel Union Activity, Non-Ferrous Metals, Durban

Information received from: Branch Secretary, Metal & Allied Workers Union

Parallel Union Involved: National Union of engineering Industrial & Allied Workers

Independent Union: Metal & Allied Workers Union

One of the members of the Metal and Allied Workers Union was called in by Management and informed that workers in this factory were wasting their money giving it to MAWU. It was claimed that MAWU would not help them because SEIFSA will establish its own registered union to represent African workers. The member explained that all the workers in the firm were MAWU members and Management said that they preferred to deal with unions they already knew.

Two weeks later, this member was given two documents to give to workers and to explain about them to workers. The documents were from the National Union of Engineering Industrial and Allied Workers and the Engineering Industrial Workers Union of South Africa, Durban Branch. They were both explaining benefits offered by these unions. The former was signed, A.E. Poole, General Secretary.

In the last week of October, the same member was told that at the beginning of 1980, all workers in this factory will belong to a registered union.

At a meeting between Non-Ferrous Metal Extruders' Management and the MAWU organiser, the organiser was told that MAWU would not represent workers as it was not registered and they were expecting a registered union to represent workers at their factory very soon.

Workers in both plants in Natal are in full support of MAWU.

APPENDIX 7**Report on Parallel Union Activity at Defy Industries, Benoni**

Information received from: Liaison Committee member

Parallel Union involved: Electrical & Allied Workers' Union

Sometime in September, the Liaison Committee members were called into the office to meet officials of the above Union. There were two officials, Mr. Olifants and a white man (name unknown). They said that they were bringing the Union to the workers. They then explained about the Union benefits, about a death benefit and if a member dies or if someone in his family dies. They talked about the subscriptions and said when there was 50% membership in the firm, the Management would grant them stop orders.

The officials told them that workers get money from the Management and so the workers must work hard. Management will decide whether to give an increase. They added that the Liaison Committee was good and that the Union cannot control the Management. The Liaison Committee will remain in the firm. The Liaison Committee members were given joining forms and told to give them to workers in their departments. When workers want to join, they have to take the form to the Black Personnel Officer, who helps them fill in the form. The Personnel Officer then keeps the form for the Union. Some workers have joined. Many are afraid not to join.

APPENDIX 8**Report on Parallel Union Activity at TEMSA, Springs**

Information received from: General Secretary, Engineering & Allied Workers

Parallel Unions involved: Electrical & Allied Workers' Union; Union formed by Radio, Television, Electronic & Allied Workers' Union (name unknown)

Independent Union involved: Engineering & Allied Workers' Union

Management has allowed organiser from the Radio, Television, Electronic and Allied Workers and Electrical and Allied Trades Union of South Africa into the canteen at lunchtime to address workers about their unions.

Some workers have joined.

APPENDIX 9**Report on Parallel Union Activity in Textile Industry in Natal**

Information received from: O. Zuma - General Secretary NUTW

Parallel Union Involved: organised by Textile Workers Industrial Union,
probably for E. Selora (this is not confirmed)

Independent Union Involved: National Union of Textile Workers

The Textile Workers Industrial Union - a registered union for coloured and Indian workers has recently employed a black organiser. This organiser is in fact an ex-employee of NUTW.

The TWIU organiser, Mr. Warren, approached workers in one of the Frame Factories in Natal, where the NUTW has been organising since 1973. He said he was going to bring a black organiser to the firm to organise them into a union.

Workers rejected this approach.

It is clear that Management is supporting the parallel union. At Natal Cotton & Woolen Mills, for example, Management allowed Norman Daniels, Warren and his black organiser to come inside the factory to address and recruit workers. In one of the Frame factories pamphlet advertising this parallel union was found on the tables in the workers dining hall. When an Indian worker suggested to others that TWIU was dividing workers by forming a parallel union and that workers should rather consider uniting, she threatened

recruit workers. In one of the Frame factories pamphlet advertising this parallel union was found on the tables in the workers dining hall. When an Indian worker suggested to others that TWIU was dividing workers by forming a parallel union and that workers should rather consider uniting, she was threatened by Management and warned that if she was again found to be encouraging workers to join the NUTW, she will be fired.

APPENDIX II**Report on Union Activity in Johannesburg Municipality**

Information received from: several workers from Johannesburg Municipality

Union involved: name unknown

At the beginning of October 1979, workers from Johannesburg Municipality reported that a personnel officer had been round to various departments to speak to workers about a union that was being formed for Municipal workers by the Council.

The graded staff at the Council (e.g. traffic officers, nurses, clerks) were called to a meeting at White City, Soweto on 18 October 1979 to discuss the formation of this union.

At the meeting, the workers were told that the council had a Liaison Committee but now thought of starting a Union for its workers in Johannesburg.

They were told:

1. The union would be for Johannesburg City Council workers only.
2. It would be for all black workers in the Council - from doctors to labourers.
3. The union would be for blacks only because of government regulations.
4. Workers state that they were told they would pay a subscription, and that inspectors would go around and check cards to see if they were up to date.
5. They were told that the union would be independent and it would be run by an executive committee.

Three people were presented to the workers as potential organisers - an inspector, a senior clerk and a nurse. They were told that these were just Management's suggestions - the workers or the Management could elect the organisers.

Workers asked whether they would be permitted to join a trade union other than this one. No answer was given.

The female nurses at the meeting appeared happy to accept the Union. The males at the meeting were undecided. No decision was taken.

APPENDIX 12**ANALYSIS OF PARALLEL UNION FUNCTIONING (Source - workers in various factories)**

	Motor Industry Workers Union	Electrical & Allied Workers Union	National Union of Engineering Industrial & Allied Workers Union
Recently formed	1977	1979	1979
Dependent on all or some resources from 'parent' union	Yes	Yes	Yes
Known to have been invited into firms by management	Yes	Unknown	Yes
Approach workers through management	Yes	Yes	Yes
Management representatives such as personnel and/ or liaison committee members used to recruit	Yes	Yes	Unknown
Personnel col- lects subscriptions	Yes	Unknown	Unknown
Stop orders promised	Yes	Yes	Yes
Registration promised	Yes	Yes	Yes
Works primarily through Industrial Councils. Emphasis on national bargaining only	Yes	Yes	Yes
Works with liaison committee in plant	Yes	Yes	Unknown
No independent shop stewards committee in plant	Yes	Yes	Unknown
Workers report dissatisfaction with union	Yes	Yes	Yes
Union called into firms where independent union already established	Yes	Unknown	Yes