POLITICAL CONFLICT AND CIVIL UNREST IN AFRICAN TOWNSHIPS IN NATAL

(We regret the delay in publishing this article, caused by a section of the Emergency Regulations since successfully challenged in Court – Editorial Board.)

1. INTRODUCTION:

The outbreak of large-scale protests in the Vaal Triangle in September 1984 marked the beginnings of unrest and violence in African townships throughout the country. This also ushered in a new dimension in protest action. Protesting masses not only directed their anger at the state and the conventional state apparatus, they also extended the definition of "state apparatus" to include incumbents of local government, the police and businessmen in the townships. In response to the magnitude and scope of the conflict, the government deployed first the police and later the defence force into the riot-torn townships. Predictably, this exacerbated rather than abated the conflict as events subsequent to this move were to demonstrate. To this day (two years from the outbreak) African townships in particular are still experiencing continual unrest and violence.

Table 1 below demonstrates the magnitude of the political conflict as indicated by the number of people killed and detained as well as the extent of damage to property. The figures are by no means exhaustive as compiling statistics in this field is not an easy task. What they are meant to do is to give an indication of the state of unrest in the country, as well as the price that people and the government pay for their efforts to either transform society or to maintain the status quo.

The huge increase in the figures for 1985 indicates the escalation of the conflict, since in 1984 this was localised mainly to the townships in the Vaal Triangle and later the Eastern Cape. The increase in both the intensity and scope of the conflict led to the State President's declaration of the state of emergency on the 21st of July 1985. In spite of this, the confrontation continued as this declaration did not address the root causes of the problem. The conflict increased and engulfed Natal and the Western Cape, including coloured townships. This together with the increased death tolls for 1986 indicates the seriousness of the situation.

2. A BRIEF THEORETICAL OVERVIEW:

Studies in social and political conflict reveal that discontent generally turns to protest and possibly violence when the subordinate or dissident group views its discontent as having its source in the existing power relations. This paper will adopt a modified version of Gurr's models (Gurr 70, 1973) and will postulate that the magnitude of political conflict varies with:

i) the intensity and scope of relative deprivation;
ii) the belief in the justification and utility of engaging in overt strife; (collective consciousness) and,
iii) the organisational and mobilisation capacity of the conflict or dissident group.

TABLE 1
THE MAGNITUDE OF POLITICAL CONFLICT IN SOUTH AFRICA

	Total	Sept - Dec 1984	1985	Up to 30 April 1986
Killed	1559	149	879	531
Killed by Security Forces* (1.9.85-31.1.86 only)			628	
Detained *	12524	1149	10998	377
Political Trials*	-	-	122	To Feb 1986 31
No. of People in Unrest Trials. 1985 Only*	-	-	25000	-
Incidents of Guerilla Activities	255	44	136	75
Damage to Property	R138 million*	-	-	-
Damage to Private Buildings*	-	68	2787	-
Damage to Government Buildings*	-	20	1153	-
Attacks on Police Homes	807	-	-	-
Police Killed in Unrest*	33	-	16	-
Police Injured in Unrest*	584	-	330	-

Sources: The **Weekly Mail** Unrest Barometer,
Responses by the Minister of Justice to Questions in Parliament.

*Figures Incomplete with regard to the above breakdown.

The synergism of the above factors is modified or even suppressed by the power or repressive capacity of the regime. Hence the model could roughly read thus:

$$MPC \quad \frac{RD \times JUST \times OCDG}{RCR}$$

where:
RD = Relative deprivation
MPC = magnitude of political conflict
JUST = belief in the justification and utility of engaging in conflict (collective consciousness)
OCDG = organisational capacity of the dissident group
RCR = repressive capacity of the regime.

The model is not meant to give mathematical dimensions since the above factors are subjective and, therefore, very difficult to quantify. All that it illustrates is the direction of the relationship between the magnitude of political conflict and its causal factors as well as the "brakes" or "constraints" than can be imposed, on this relationship, by the regime in control. Further, the model allows for sociological factors such as the collective consciousness which influences both relative deprivation and the belief in the justification and utility of engaging in overt strife. The repressive capacity of the regime includes the use of physical coercion as well as the employment of the ideological state apparatus.

Gagiano (1979) introduces further preconditions for protest behaviour:
i) the discontent should have a local context. He quotes Sears and McConahay who found that riot participants are different from non-participants both in being disaffected in general and (particularly) in being disaffected from local government;
ii) participants in protest action usually have a history of protest or have been socialised in protest;
iii) there is generally a crisis in the legitimacy of the government or the group in control.

The above preconditions predispose people to protest behaviour in general. What precipitates specific incidents of protest are definite fuse situations which explode as soon as some stimulus is applied to them.

3. CONTEMPORARY PROTEST EXPRESSION:
Contemporary protest expression is both actual and symbolic. The origins are both historical and contemporary. Slogans such as "non-participation in the system" date back to the days of the African National Congress Youth League, and have been adopted by the extra-parliamentary organisations such as the United Democratic Front (U.D.F.) and the National Forum (N.F.). The bearers of the protest language are the civic and youth organisations in the townships, trade unions, the churches, black consciousness and charterist-oriented umbrella bodies. The campaign is not limited to black organisations only: the Black Sash, for example, an organisation of "progressive" white women is a powerful lobby that has intervened on behalf of subordinates at critical moments by making use of the legal and parliamentary processes. Forms of resistance have moved from passive to pro-active strategies, rallies against the new structures in local government, worker stay-aways, school and consumer boycotts. The present wave of resistance has been characterised by the attacks on the property and lives of incumbents of local government, the police, and, during outbreaks of intense rioting, business properties in the townships. This has prompted the use of the label "black on black" violence, a situation which is partly apparent and partly real. It is apparent where the violence is directed at the "extension of the state apparatus" but real where black organisations vying for control start attacking one another.

4. THE CASE OF NATAL
The above picture is an account of the national scene, and sets out the confrontation in four main areas i.e. local government, transport, education, and lately in the labour scene. Although Natal has and still experiences all the manifestations of the protest movement, the duration of large-scale street violence has been relatively shorter than has been the case in the rest of the country. Secondly, the intervention of Inkatha has given the resistance movement in Natal a different colour from what so far has taken place elsewhere, except in Bophuthatswana where close parallels can be drawn. Finally, the delay in rioting in the major townships (almost a year from the time when large-scale rioting took place in the other provinces) calls for analysis.

To explain the case in Natal, two hypotheses have been advanced:
i) that the presence of a strong political mobilisation movement, i.e. Inkatha, exerts a moderating influence in Natal politics, and that it is this moderating force which restrains Natal Africans from engaging in large-scale conflict as is the case in other provinces in South Africa. This is the view espoused by the government, Inkatha and some liberal quarters, particularly the liberal press;
ii) that the relative calm in Natal is not a function of any ideological influences, but is rather a product of different material conditions. These material conditions not only account for the relative decrease in specific fuse situations, but have also facilitated the development of a third force in the conflict thus dissipating the energy of the protesting group between two powerful forces – the state and Inkatha.

The analysis which follows will seek to explore the above hypotheses within the context of the developments in Natal between September 1984 and the beginning of May 1986, with special emphasis on the period, August 1985, to May 1986 which witnessed an increase in both the intensity and scale of the conflict. The analysis is preceded by a brief look into the material conditons in Natal since the author attributes the existence of this relatively powerful third force to the same conditions.

METHODOLOGY:
In order to isolate those variables which account for the peculiarities in Natal the following course is necessary:
i) draw up a profile of Natal's major townships and from this establish the material conditions which account for the differences between Natal and the rest of the provinces;
ii) document the course and manifestations in Natal and compare this with the developments elsewhere in the country.

The following sources of data proved to be invaluable:
i) taking clippings from Natal newspapers i.e. daily, bi-weekly and weekly publications;

ii) setting up a network of research assistants at strategic points. Their function was to document and report on any episodes of conflict within their areas as well as to verify and clarify press reports;

iii) collecting eye witness accounts of reportings made in the press and other sources.

iv) liaising with organisations which play a significant role in the regulation of the conflict in the area.

The method yielded material which forms the basis of this paper. Hence, while the paper does not purport to offer conclusive explanations of the conflict in the region, it provides an exploration into an intricate subject and offers a tentative analysis which could form the basis for further debate.

4.1 A Profile of Natal's Major Townships:
The major townships in Natal, i.e. Umlazi, KwaMashu, Madadeni, Osizweni and Esikhawini fall within the KwaZulu administration. The most immediate sources of irritation and deprivation or "fuse" factors are relatively remote. For instance:

i) the monthly rent is R12,70 including service charges. This is in sharp contrast compared to an average of R45,00 in the townships which fall under the Natalia Development Board;

ii) there is relatively more security of tenure as residents can either buy or build their houses on a deed of grant basis. In 1985, 89 percent of the houses in KwaMashu and 70 percent in Umlazi were owned by the residents;

iii) irritations arising from the enforcement of influx control regulations have always been missing as the townships are not in designated urban areas. This means that the notorious "black jacks" or police did not have to carry out their nightly raids into houses to evict "illegals";

iv) because of the relative security of tenure, "middle class" suburbs have sprung up in the townships thus contributing to a relatively stable political culture;

v) the low rents, relative security of tenure, and the fact that township councillors can offer limited rewards such as trading licences and building sites have minimised the stigma of "puppets of the system". While township councillors do not enjoy any measure of legitimacy, it would be incorrect to say that they are significantly illegitimate in the eyes of the populations in the townships.

4.2 Local Politics and the Broadly-based Mass Mobilisation Movements:
None of the broadly-based organisations or fronts such as the United Democratic Front, the National Forum and Inkatha has been directly involved in the council elections in the townships. However, in the Natal townships candidates have largely campaigned on an Inkatha ticket. Further, the organic links between Inkatha and the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly have, in practice, meant that Inkatha is super-imposed on the KwaZulu administration. Since protests are largely in the spheres of education and local government (both of which fall under the control of the KwaZulu administration), confrontations in these areas have become confrontations with Inkatha. Thus, besides ideological differences which have become more pronounced as the unrest develops, structural conditions pre-dispose the polarisation where

Inkatha is forced to take an opposing position to the protesting masses.

4.3 August 1985
August '85 signifies the beginnings of large scale rioting in Durban, a situation unequalled since Cato Manor in 1959. The rioting was a sequel to the assassination of a human rights lawyer, Victoria Mxenge. The following course of events illustrates both the nature and scope of the developments during the week-long unrest:

i) firstly, commercial vehicles were looted and burnt, P.U.T.Co buses were stoned and burnt;

ii) young people stood at cross roads and barricaded the streets with old cars, burning tyres, stones and other available objects;

iii) young people also stopped people from going to work, with the exception of nurses in uniform;

iv) administration offices, including those of the KwaZulu administration and the post office at Umlazi, were burnt down;

v) houses and property belonging to "informers" were burnt down;

This was the order of events between Monday the 5th and Wednesday the 7th of August. Up to this point one could clearly discern a political motive in the rioting.

Later developments were coloured by a mixture of both political and criminal elements:

i) firstly, bottle stores and shops declared to be owned by corporations, whites or Indians, with Africans operating them as fronts, were looted and burnt;

ii) shops belonging to African traders declared as unco-operative in community and welfare activities were looted and burnt;

iii) finally, there was general looting and burning of shops, butcheries, tea rooms and other trading amenities.

The above events marked the final stages of rioting and by then the unrest was on its third day, Friday. (Monday and Tuesday had been relatively calm save for the few incidents of looting of vehicles.) A combined police and Inkatha operation apparently brought the large-scale rioting to an end.

As stated earlier, these developments occurred against a background of relative calm and quiet in the region. Since that disastrous week the province has never been the same as the following accounts will demonstrate. While intense rioting was brief, the material and psychological destruction was to last for a long time, thus contradicting allegations that the experience had produced any masters of the situation in Natal. The causes of the rioting lay beyond the ambit of either the police or Inkatha as the two forces whose intervention had apparently brought the rioting to an end. In the long run, events were to prove that the war had produced no winners.

4.3.1 Problems in Education
During the week-long unrest in Durban, the youth played a major role in the streets. Subsequent to this there were numerous clashes between the youth and the police on the one hand and the youth and vigilantes on the other. The banning of the Congress of South African Students exacerbated rather than abated the conflict. The period between August and the end of September was characterised either by disrupted schooling or no schooling at all in the secondary and high schools in Durban. Problems also spread to the townships around Pietermaritzburg. By

mid-September the Chesterville Students' Representative Council issued a pamphlet alleging that 19 pupils from Chesterville, 45 from Lamontville, 25 from Clermont, 54 from KwaMusha and 38 from Umlazi had been detained by the police.

The detention of students led to further demonstrations and further arrests.By the end of the year the conflict in education led to the boycott of examinations by students in Lamontville and Chesterville. Although examinations were conducted in the schools falling within the KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture, the results were a clear reflection of the extent of the damage due to the unrest. Only 26 percent of the candidates who sat for the Junior Certificate examinations gained the promotional mark of 40 percent.

4.3.1.1 The Soweto Parents Crisis Committee

At a conference convened by the Soweto Parents Crisis Committee at the University of the Witwatersrand in December 1985 and attended by delegates from all over the country, it was decided to advance the cause in education beyond boycotts. The slogan "liberation first, education later" was developed to "education for people's power". The conference thus resolved that all pupils should return to school on the 25th January 1986 and that the government be given three months in which to meet among other, the following demands:
i) to unban the Congress of South African Students (C.O.S.A.S.)
ii) to provide free textbooks and stationery
iii) to recognise the formation of students' representative councils in all schools.

The conference further urged parents to refrain from becoming members of the school committees and to refuse paying school fees. Finally a National Education Crisis Committee was formed to monitor the progress and report back in three months time.

In January 1986 the Minister of National Education announced that the Department of Education and Training would provide free books and stationery in all schools which fall within its ambit. The Departments of Education in the National states were given grants to effect the same changes in their schools. KwaZulu received R5,7 million. This was to shape the conflict in the schools, a development which lasted until the proclamation of the state of emergency in June 1986. By then a number of people had been killed and many houses razed to the ground. In KwaMashu, 14 people died within two weeks in clashes between students and Inkatha-led vigilantes. Besides the killings the schools crisis had far-reaching consequences as the period January to April was marked by disrupted or no schooling at all in the senior schools in KwaMashu, Clermont, Lamontville, Chesterville and a few schools in Umlazi and in the Pietermaritzburg regions.

The Second National Education Crisis Committee held in Durban at the end of March 1986 emphasised an alternative 'people's education' programme, and to this end resolved that pupils return to classes and called for the opening of those schools which were closed. The attack on the Conference delegates, allegedly by Inkatha-led amabutho, further aggravated the already tense relationships between Inkatha and students in the townships and much of what followed in KwaMashu

cannot be divorced from this. Hence by May 1986, the majority of senior schools in Durban and two in Pietermaritzburg had practically had very little, if any, schooling at all – almost the entire school term was lost.

4.3.2. Transport

The conflict in transport had two sources:
i) the periodic increases in bus fares: and
ii) the role played by P.U.T.Co in transporting vigilantes through the townships of KwaMashu and Umlazi.

A new dimension developed when the P.U.T.Co bus drivers blamed taxi-men for the continual stoning of P.U.T.Co buses by the township youth. Further, cleavages arose between hostel residents, especially in Kranskloof near Clermont and the youth on the one side and between the former and taximen on the other over the stoning of Durban municipal buses in Clermont. Between August 1985 and May 1986, 1054 P.U.T.Co buses were damaged while 14 (both P.U.T.Co and D.T.M.B. buses) were completely destroyed.

The condemnation of the stoning of buses by the National Education Crisis Committee in Durban seemed to have had an effect as very few buses were stoned or burnt after this.

4.3.3. The Vigilantes And Amabutho

The period since August 1985 has ushered in a new phenomenon in the conflict in Natal, that of the vigilantes and amabutho. Two factors account for this development:
i) the criminalisation of all forms of protest behaviour by the state and the state-controlled media and in the process redefining the protestor as a criminal;
ii) the organic links between Inkatha and the KwaZulu administration.

During the week-long unrest in Durban, many shops, butcheries, bottlestores and other businesses as well as township offices were either looted or burned down. This facilitated a coalition of interests between township councillors, local members of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly and some businessmen, all of whom had Inkatha as a common base. From this base, they organised vigilantes or amabutho who were set on "eliminating" the "criminals" as the protesting youth were called, and, indeed, there had been a criminal element in the August rioting. Further, the communication between the protesters and the community was weak, fragmented and at times confused. The stoning of buses without prior warning to the commuters not to use them alienated the masses, and further gave an opportunity to the mass media to depict the unrest as senseless violence.

The entry of the vigilantes (e.g. the A-Team) and amabutho into the scene further complicated both the nature and direction of political conflict in Natal. Today the Government and the media speak of "black on black" violence yet this is more apparent than real. Reports from the various Crisis Committees and the nature of interdicts against identifiable perpetrators of this violence do indicate that this cannot be divorced from the political base which both facilitates and shapes the violence. Allegations that the state, through the police, is not immune from this violence do very little to convince the world of its black-on-blackness. However, more destruction and conflict has emanated from this than from any other source in the present turmoil. The conflict was further aggravated by

the struggle on the shop floor when U.W.U.S.A., an Inkatha-linked union, came into being in May 1986. Ideological differences between U.W.U.S.A. and C.O.S.A.T.U. have led to physical confrontations between the two unions, and in the process both amabutho and Inkatha have had their images tarnished. For instance:

i) In Newcastle, 10 C.O.S.A.T.U. officials alleged that they were being harassed by KwaZulu police and that houses belonging to some of them were attacked by amabutho. They positively identified the "mayor" of Madadeni as one of the attackers. (City Press, 6.4.86)

ii) Numerous allegations of attack by amabutho organised or led by Inkatha officials have been made by members of C.O.S.A.T.U. Some of these have culminated in interdicts restraining these officials from interfering with the lives and property of the C.O.S.A.T.U. unionists.

There have been several interdicts against Inkatha officials restraining them from interfering with the property and lives of persons in the extra-parliamentary resistance movement and members of C.O.S.A.T.U. On the other hand, two such interdicts have been issued against the opposition, one against an individual and one against members of C.O.S.A.T.U.

5. An Appraisal of the Hypothesis

Up to the time when rioting broke out in the major townships in Durban, claims especially from the government and some liberal quarters were that Natal had been quiet because of the strong moderating influence of Inkatha. The evidence submitted in this paper is that;

i) violence has not only erupted in Natal as elsewhere, it has also been incremental like in all other regions;

ii) the strong alleged links between the vigilantes and Inkatha suggest that the influence has been more at the level of force than ideology.

The nature and course of black politics in Natal must, therefore, be sought elsewhere.

The second hypothesis sought an explanation in the "unique" material conditions in Natal. The argument was that not only do these material conditions account for the relatively few specific fuse situations, they also facilitate the development of a third force in the configuration i.e. Inkatha. Hence the conflict has been between the mass of protesters and the state on one side and the protesters and Inkatha on the other. This has tended to dissipate the energy of the protesters and it is on this second explanation that the analysis should focus.

5.1 The Model of Political Conflict – A Critique

In discussing the nature and course of political conflict in Natal's African townships, the model provided in the beginning of this paper merits a closer analysis. A brief analysis of the four elements in the model follows.

5.1.1 Relative Deprivation:

Although the empirical evidence espoused in this paper does suggest the presence of factors which contribute to relative deprivation in education, transport and to a lesser extent in local government, the absence of specific fuse situations, especially in local government is a dampening factor. Only townships which fall under the Natalia Development Board experience acute discontent in all the three areas, i.e. education, transport and local government.

5.1.2 Collective Consciousness:

Since collective consciousness arises out of material and ideological conditions, the absence of uniform material conditions in the townships affects this attribute as well. In terms of the administrative authority, African townships in Natal can be roughly divided into three categories:

i) those which fall within the KwaZulu administration,
ii) those administered by the Natalia Development Board,
iii) shanty towns or informal settlements.

The unevenness of conditions in these categories has contributed to a fragmented social consciousness. The relatively better off in the townships within the KwaZulu administration are relatively less radicalised, those in the Natalia Development Board townships are relatively politicised whilst the marginalised residents in shanty towns become easy tools in the political ball game depending on whatever group holds out the best promises.

Structurally, the close links between Inkatha and the KwaZulu administration have made the former a strong resource base. The KwaZulu administration controls the majority of the townships in Natal and can effectively mediate in the lives of the people residing in shanty towns. This becomes a source of power for Inkatha and enables it to "distribute" resources no matter how limited this "distribution" is. This has given Inkatha a strong organisational base since it can temper its ideological message with material items. On the contrary, extra-establishment organisations such as the United Democratic Front and the National Forum can only thrive on the discontent of the people since they have no material benefits as a source of power. Conscientisation of the people in Natal thus stems from two structurally diverse forces, the intra-establishment and extra-establishment groups, and is further complicated by the material gains that each makes from its structural position. The ideological state apparatus has not been idle in condemning all forms of protest and thus criminalising protest action as well as the protestor. This has had a tremendous effect on the willingness of the residents to embark upon protest action.

5.1.3 Organisational Ability of the Discontented:

The existence of the two camps described above does not imply differences in discontent among residents in either camp. What it indicates is that the expression of discontent differs in line with the ideological leanings in the camps. This in turn affects the organisational capacity of the discontented and consequently the thrust of protest action. Protest and confrontation emanate mainly from students and youth groupings who, in turn, mobilise the residents. Inkatha is also a strong mobilising force, especially given its structural position which places it in favourable light from the state. Given the psychological instinct of self preservation which induces fear on the part of humans to engage in "dangerous" ventures, protest-oriented organisations face an arduous task in mobilising the masses. The organisational capacity of "dissident" groupings is therefore tremendously constrained, especially where they have to contend with an opposing group from within the townships.

5.1.4 The Repressive Capacity of the Regime:

The South African state has at its disposal an armoury of strategies to contain opposition and challenge to its

hegemony. Adam 1971 lists three important areas where the state employs its "power" to contain dissidence.

i) symbolic alternatives manifested in the apartheid utopia;
ii) effective police control;
iii) economic integration and improvement in living standards of blacks.

In containing the magnitude of political conflict in the townships, the state has selectively employed the above three conditions to the detriment of the "dissidents". In Natal, the employment of brutal police force has been tempered with the activities of the amabutho or vigilantes thus rendering the police ostensibly distant from the conflict. The state-controlled media have diligently echoed the theme of "black on black" violence and constantly lambasted the "agitators" and "trouble-makers" for their role. It is now common knowledge in the townships that amabutho or vigilantes enjoy immunity from the police. This serves two purposes.

i) the state can stand at a distance and escape international condemnation for "brutally oppressing black people";
ii) divisions among black people weaken their thrust on the state and dissipate the strength of the resistance.
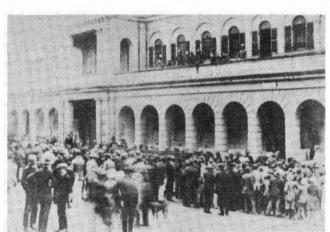
In instances where the threat becomes imminent, the state does not hesitate to move in the police and the army to "restore law and order". Even here, the state is careful to emphasise "at the request of the communities themselves", where "community" refers to the councillors, support notwithstanding.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion it might be argued that both the material and ideological conditions which exist in Natal's African townships also exist in townships in the other provinces. This is true, but what is missing in the other provinces is the presence of a strong counter-revolutionary organisational base with a populist appeal. Inkatha is more than a homeland party whose function is the mobilisation of voters for local elections. Inkatha's appeal is that it has its own ideology and a material base with a stake in the system. In the present context Inkatha offers the alternative to going into the streets and getting shot – that this alternative "change through peaceful means" is no more than a slogan does not matter. The atmosphere in the townships is charged with slogans from both sides. Admittedly, the politics of "resistance" has yielded some "visible fruits": the very process of reform that the country is going through is ample proof of that.□

by Gary Baines

THE PORT ELIZABETH DISTURBANCES OF 1920

The scene at the Baakens St. Police Station.   (Police College Library)

There exists a long tradition of black resistance to white domination. Odendaal has argued for a line of continuity between tribal or primary resistance, early constitutional protest politics, African nationalism and (might one add?), the Black consciousness movement. The strategies of resistance have assumed various forms but in seeking to protect their interests against white domination, their aims have been the same.Thus, by adopting a constitutional approach and seeking accommodation within the colonial systems, early African political organisations in the Eastern Cape were merely displaying a different form of resistance.[1] However, the related development of worker resistance and the emergence of black trade unionism in the Eastern Cape – as part of this tradition – has still to be chronicled.

It would appear that the earliest instance of worker mobilisation was a strike by Mfengu beach labourers at Port Elizabeth in 1846 – possibly the first in South Africa's history.[2] Moreover, between 1854 and 1897 there were a further 17 strikes in the Eastern Cape.[3] Despite the relatively high incidence of strike action in the second half of the nineteenth century, the mobilisation of workers was not necessarily based on class interests. The bargaining power of the Mfengu beach labourers, for example, was initially due to a shortage of labour and, after the influx of labour into the Colony following the Cattle Killing of 1857, on the deliberate exclusion of other groups. Thus the Mfengu, who had been co-opted into white settler society, sought to deny the Khoi and Xhosa entry into labour markets which they monopolised.[4] This preference for neutralising competition to the principle of collective bargaining does not suggest 'proto-unionism' amongst the black working classes in the Eastern Cape. In fact, the writer has found no evidence of working class organisation until the First World War years.

The Port Elizabeth Industrial and Commercial Amalga-