

SOUTH AFRICAN LABOUR BULLETIN

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(The views expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editorial board).

COMMENT1. Anything for Black workers?

The Prime Minister's "give us six months" speech has by now been hedged about with so many qualifications and clarifications that it is no longer clear, what, if anything, it means in terms of changes within South Africa. Mr. Vorster has the difficult problem of trying to convince critics outside that things are changing, while convincing many of his supporters inside the country that things are staying the same. So one does not know which of his statements to disbelieve. But it is unlikely that he can hope to placate independent Africa without at least some internal changes. So it is worth looking at some of the suggested avenues to see what they would mean for Black workers in South Africa.

Some of the suggestions

a) Petty Apartheid.

Opening up selected hotels to Black South Africans as well as to Black foreigners,

Giving equal pay to Black professional people such as teachers and doctors,

Giving Africans the right of home-ownership in the townships,

Letting Coloureds attend the Nico Malan theatre,

Integrating the first class coaches on trains.

These and other similar reforms would of course have great symbolic value; they would do away with some of the more gratuitous insults to all Black South Africans. And they would positively benefit a small group of Blacks who have access to the education required for professional jobs, or who can afford to stay in expensive hotels, to travel first class, and to pay for tickets to the Nico Malan. But even the question of home-ownership is essentially a 'middle class' issue. It will be a long time before Black workers in South Africa will be able to afford to buy urban land and to build the sort of houses that will pass town planning requirements. Black workers are separated from these kind of amenities not only by petty apartheid, but also by the barrier of sheer poverty.

Black workers at this stage do not need the right to own their own homes; they need to have security of tenure in good sub-economic housing. They do not need integrated first class coaches, they need vastly improved cheap mass transport. What they need is not the alteration of a few regulations, but a massive expenditure of money on improved amenities of all kinds.

b) 'Grand' Apartheid.

How would homeland independence help African workers? The answer is, once again, very little. The problems of the African workers lie in the urban areas. They cannot be solved anywhere else but in those areas. White individuals and White-owned companies pay taxes derived in large measure from the labour of Black workers. The assumption underlying apartheid is that this jointly-produced wealth should be permanently and totally under the control of one section of the population. For a homeland to accept independence is for it to accept this principle. It is to accept that Black workers have no right to a share of the wealth which they have helped to create, and to abandon them to their fate as rightless workers in a foreign country.

The fact is that the problems of Black workers come largely from grand apartheid; from influx control, and from the principle that, as migrants, they should not have full trade union rights in the industrial areas. These problems can only be overcome by the acceptance that they are South Africans, rather than foreigners, and that as such they should have the rights of freedom of movement and freedom to organise within their homeland, South Africa.

It may eventually be possible to find some form of world which will accommodate even this within the formal framework of separate development. But if so it will be on the basis of essentially different institutions. Both external criticisms and internal tensions are only secondarily associated with petty apartheid. They are related to the fact that Black South Africans have no control over their jobs, their lives, and the wealth that they help to produce. These problems cannot be resolved merely by greater consultation, whether through a liaison committee or through round table meetings between the Prime Minister and homeland leaders. They can only be resolved through institutions which are based on the recognition of power relationships. The trade union is the most important of such institutions. Both the moral and the pragmatic arguments in favour of giving African workers the same trade union rights as are at present enjoyed by other workers, are overwhelming. Peace is not the absence of conflict. Peace is the institutionalisation of conflict in non-violent forms. If the Prime Minister is interested in peace in Southern Africa, the recognition of African trade unions is where he needs to begin.

2) Equality between Management and Labour.

In the June edition of the SALB we called for the recognition of an African mine workers' union. We argued

that there will be relative peace on the mines only when the workers themselves have a measure of control over their lives. Consultation is not enough. There must also be real participation, which involves some devolution of power from management to worker. We rejected the argument that such an organisation is not possible on the mines because of migrant labour. It is well-known that miners return at frequent intervals, usually averaging 6 to 7 years on the mines in a lifetime. Besides we have provided evidence in this edition of the emergence of the AMWU which was successfully able to organise mine workers in spite of obstacles placed in its way by the mines and the state.

For unionisation to take place the following obstacles will have to be removed:

- a) War Measure 1425 prohibiting gatherings of more than 20 persons on proclaimed mine property.
- b) Amendment to the Mozambique-South Africa Labour Treaty banning unions.
- c) Permission for union organisers to enter mining property.

However, effective trade unions are not possible until workers are free to sell their labour on an open market. For over 80 years the Chamber of Mines has played a central role in maintaining a supply of cheap African labour by preventing competition among the mining houses and among the miners through its monopoly of recruiting. Faced by a severe labour crisis, there is evidence that some mining houses are more ready to raise wages than others. The time has now come for us to bring back into currency capitalism's boldest 'law' - the law of supply and demand. To enable an effective system of industrial relations to emerge, the mine-owners must:

- a) abolish the collective agreement of the mining companies not to permit the average wages of African workers to exceed a low maximum rate,
- b) end the buyers' monopoly over the recruitment of African labour, which prevents the competitive determination of African wage rates through a free relationship between supply and demand.

The central purpose of the Chamber has been to suppress the growing bargaining power of the mine worker which emerged in the late nineteenth century. We suggest that the most effective action for those mining companies dissatisfied with the Chamber's labour policy is to withdraw from the Chamber of mines.

BACKGROUND TO THE SUPPLY AND CONTROL OF LABOUR
IN THE GOLD MINES

The position of Black labour within the South African economy today, characterised as it is by the institutionalisation of migrant labour, low wages and lack of worker organisation is mirrored in the development of labour patterns in the gold mining industry since its inception in 1886. Central to an understanding of the gold mines is its extremely sensitive cost structure. Profits are totally dependent on low production costs for two reasons. Firstly because the average gold content of the ore is low. Secondly, the internationally controlled price of gold prevents the mining companies from transferring any increases in working costs to the consumers. Consequently within this narrowly circumscribed cost structure, the usual area of cost minimisation has been wages. The task then for the mine-owners has been to create and contain a vast supply of cheap African labour.

How was this labour supply created and how has it been controlled? The emergence of a wage-earning class through the slow operation of market forces - the need to earn enough to purchase a gun, for instance - was clearly inadequate for the needs of the mining industry and they turned to two 'extra-economic' methods to assist them; the legislative power of the state and the creation of monopolistic recruiting organisations. The central laws in this process of forced proletarianization are three-fold:

- the pass laws which controlled labour on the mines. Introduced under direct pressure from the Chamber in 1896, they stipulated "that Natives on the Rand must be in the employ of a master and wear a metal plate or 'badge' on the arm in token of such employ". However, the Chamber remained dissatisfied with the allegedly inefficient manner in which it was administered. S. Jennings argues that "We have a most excellent law, namely the pass law, which should enable us to obtain complete control over the Kaffirs. As at present administered, the Pass laws gives us no such protection As the matter now stands, we import Kaffirs who sign a contract to serve us for twelve months; many leave after a couple of weeks, and it is impossible to recover them" (1).

- the Glen Grey Act which introduced a labour tax which in the words of the mining capitalist and Cape politician Cecil Rhodes, "removed Natives from that life of sloth and laziness, teaching them the dignity of labour and made them contribute to the prosperity of the state and made them give some return for our wise and good government". Lashing out at those who appealed to the missionaries for assistance in inducing Africans to take up work in the

mines, the Standard (1895) declared "... mission work begins at the wrong end - by clothing, feeding and pampering an already lazy animal, and straight away removing hunger, that singular incentive which alone successfully compels a man to labour ... it is in the direction of taxation that the ultimate solution of the labour question lies". - the Land Act of 1913, which froze African land ownership to a mere 13% of the total land area and so forced Africans into the overcrowded reserves. This Act had the twin effect of suppressing the emerging African peasantry, that was proving an effective counter-class to the White farmer and creating a pool of cheap labour in the reserves.

By the 1890s, a powerful and well-organised mining capitalist class had emerged with the ownership of both the gold and diamond mines in the hands of a few groups of capitalists. This centralization of control was further consolidated by the formation of the Chamber of Mines in 1887 and two African recruiting agencies. Initially, in 1896, the Chamber formed the Rand Native Labour Association and out of this grew the present recruiting organisations: the Native Recruiting Corporation, which supplies labour from within South Africa and the three ex-Protectorates, and the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association which recruits elsewhere in Africa. The Association had been formed against the background of a growing dissatisfaction among mine-owners. G. H. Stevens, acting on behalf of Rhodes and Rudd, sounded the following warning; "At present there is no guarantee that tomorrow the Rand will not be boyless. That must be remedied in the interests of the capitalist: there should be some system under which the supply is certain and cannot fail. Such a system would have to be on a colossal scale and administered either by Government or some institution acting under its sanction. There is no use of private individuals and mere amateurs attempting to command a Native labour-supply" (Standard, 21 March 1891).

The Association received an undertaking from its members to abide by its decisions and not to outbid one another in recruiting for labour. The Association formed a Maximum Average wage system for the entire industry, and there was thus no need for individual mines to improve conditions or wages. By 1897, wages had fallen to R58 per month after an average wage of R78 per month in 1889. Looking back at the introduction of the Maximum Average Wage System, Percy Fitzpatrick, a leading mine-owner at the time, explained as follows: "You must understand this, that the necessity for the reduction in the rate of wages arose from the fact that there was competition among ourselves and that little by little one employer bid against another until finally the average became too high and the whole industry took it in hand and tried again to make a fresh start - that was what prompted us to form

the Native Labour Assoc. You see, we could not pool the supply, so we pooled the demand. The employers agreed to divide the supply among themselves, that is, what they could get" (Evidence before the Transvaal Labour Commission Feb. 1904) (3).

The purpose of these forms of centralisation then, was to unify the mine-owners through a monopolistic structure of control enabling the mine-owners to best pursue their aim of minimising labour costs. These measures have been labelled the 'wage colour bar' - to distinguish this colour bar from the job colour bars of the White miners. These colour bars of the mine-owners were basically threefold: the maximum average system (a collective agreement of the mining companies not to permit the average wages of the African workers to exceed a very low maximum rate); the recruiting monopoly (a buyer's monopoly over the recruitment of African labour, to prevent the competitive determination of African wage rates through a free relationship between supply and demand); and servile labour measures (such as the closed compound system, pass laws and severe provisions against breach of contract embodied in the Master and Servants Act). Since the essential aim of these discriminatory measures was to secure the cheapness of African labour, they can be referred to as the wage colour bar which constituted the class colour bar of the mining capitalist (4).

Much has been said by well-meaning and not so well-meaning people about the costs of a system of migrant labour for the employer in terms of high labour turnover. It has been suggested that migrant labour is inconsistent with the notion of economic rationality - a notion which implies a system of free wage labour. Less has been said publicly in mining circles of the benefits of such a system of institutionalised migrant labour in ensuring a cheap, rightless, and unorganised labour force.

The benefits can be seen in two broad areas. Firstly, the existence of reserves where Africans allegedly have an alternative source of income to substitute their mine wages has provided the mine-owners with a justification for subsistence wages. It could be said then that this vast army of peasant-workers has subsidized the mining industry for nearly half a century. Secondly, oscillating migration prevents effective class mobilisation. For an effective trade union to arise, there must be a body of lifelong wage-earners, free to sell their labour, wholly dependent on wages without prospects of becoming independent producers and aware of the benefits of collective bargaining. Retaining 97% of the labour force on a yearly contract basis on the mines, inhibits the workers from developing skills, both in performance and in control of their work situation, and thus inhibits the emergence of

of an effective class consciousness. The quasi-military institution of the compound often structured in a way that encourages inter-ethnic strife, provides an ideal technique for the control of labour. In fact it has been suggested that this system of labour exploitation which enables an employer to control a variety of forms of legitimate violence which he may use against the worker, but which at the same time does not require that he should buy and be responsible for, the worker for life as in slavery, is the most theoretically perfect system of labour exploitation yet devised! (5).

Industrial Conflict

The basic source of conflict on the mines lies in the fact that what is income for the worker is a cost for the mine-owner - a cost, which we have suggested, the mines have sought to minimise. How the surplus generated by the mine workers is divided between mine-owners and mine workers depends primarily on the power relationship between the two sides. This power relationship is highly unequal as the mine-owners have been able to organise themselves into powerful employer organisations and have had the concrete support of the state. Mine workers at first White, as well as African, were not similarly able to organise themselves collectively to promote their interests through the organisation of trade unions. The primary purpose of a trade union is to maintain and raise wages by limiting competition between workers preventing undercutting, and applying organised pressure on employers. The trade union is the means whereby the workers can combine to exercise some power over their lives. Through their representations they can bargain with management. By pooling their limited individual funds they can employ full-time organisers and equip themselves with the necessary information. The ultimate weapon the worker has in collective bargaining is the right to withdraw his labour, that is to strike. However, a strike organised by a recognised trade union with pickets to discipline its members, is only one form of industrial conflict. Industrial conflict is better conceived of as a continuum with organised strikes on one end and 'desertion', refusal to be recruited and industrial sabotage at the other end. All these forms of industrial conflict have been seen on the mines.

In the early decades of the mining industry, sharp industrial conflict took place between a relatively small artisan and overseer 'labour aristocracy' (20,000) of White workers and the mine-owners over the job-colour bar. In essence, White workers wanted to increase the scarcity of their skills and the mine-owners wanted to decrease this scarcity by creating a more competitive market by employing cheaper, though not necessarily less-skilled,

African labour. White workers regarded themselves as a labour aristocracy from the inception of the gold-mining industry. However, the first legal job-colour bar, specifying that only Whites may blast, was passed in 1897.

The first White union on the mines was founded in 1892 and the first strike by Whites on the gold mines was successfully organised in 1897 to prevent the Chamber of Mines from reducing wages. In 1907, Whites struck in protest against a proposal by the mine-owners to permit African and Chinese 'indentured' workers to perform skilled work. Immigrant, largely British, workers held a jealously preserved monopoly of skilled work at this time and the strike was broken by replacing the strikers with unemployed Afrikaner workers. This was a breakthrough for the emerging Afrikaner working class and within 15 years, three-quarters of the mine workers were Afrikaner.

In 1913, White miners struck (winning recognition for their trade union by the Chamber of Mines), in 1914 and again in 1922, on each occasion advancing their privileged position against the mine-owners' attempts at introducing cheaper African labour. 1922 was the high-water mark in the making of a White labour aristocracy - a bloody and protracted strike broke out on the Witwatersrand when the mine-owners tried to cut their costs by reducing the number of highly paid (White) workers and replacing some of them with Africans. The White workers resisted this attempt. This was the basic issue of the strike, which began on January 22nd and was only terminated in March after bloody clashes between workers and Smuts' army. Military planes were used to bomb White working class residential areas in Benoni and Germiston; artillery, tanks and armoured cars were brought into action in addition to ground forces employing machine guns and rifles. A Government inquiry reported the casualties as 153 killed and 687 injured and 4 were executed.

The demands that the White workers had failed to achieve through strike action were won at the polls in the 1924 General Election, when the Smuts Government was defeated by a coalition of the Labour Party and the Afrikaner Nationalist Party under General Hertzog. The Labour Party had been formed in 1909 to promote the interests of the White worker and under the leadership of Creswell were the first political party to articulate a full-blown segregationist policy. The Labour-Nationalist Pact Government secured a virtual monopoly of highly paid, skilled jobs in the mines and through the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1924, set up a system of collective bargaining which was in effect to exclude the African. Thus if 1922 was the decisive point in the consolidation of the White labour aristocracy, it also marks the terminal point in

the parting of ways of White and African mine workers.

Was non-racial class solidarity between African and White mine workers possible in these early years of struggle between capital and labour? In contrast to the successful attempts at class mobilization among White workers and mine owners, African workers were heavily disadvantaged structurally to organise themselves. However, this is not to imply that Africans were simply responding passively to the process of proletarianization. African mine workers had two avenues open to them for expression of discontent. Firstly, they could refuse to be recruited. It was this refusal on a mass scale after the Anglo-Boer War with the drop in wages that precipitated a labour crisis on the mines. It was resolved by undercutting the bargaining power of the African mine worker by importing cheap Chinese labour. Secondly, they could 'desert' - a response which was to lead to the tightening up of the pass laws.

The first strike among African mine workers took place on several mines in 1913 following the success of the White strike. However, as the Commission appointed to investigate the disturbances found, their main grievance was "the colour bar which blocks practically all opportunities of promotion". The largest African strike over this period was in 1920 when 71,000 Africans came out on strike for better pay, to lower the prices of the compound store and against the colour bar. Police were called in immediately and after one violent clash, workers returned to work at the point of police bayonets. Again, in spite of Sidney Bunting's passionate plea to White workers to recognise the identity of interest with their fellow workers in the strike they failed to show solidarity and scabbed. As Eddie Roux, an activist at the time, has written, "the White miners earned ten times as much as the Blacks, many of them employed Black servants in their homes - a victory of the Black miners would have increased the desire of the mine-owners to reduce the status of the White miners, since any increase in Black wages would have to be met either by a reduction in White wages or by a reduction in profits. Such was the reality of the situation which the White workers, unconsciously or not, understood very well". (6)

Five factors seem to me to discourage non-racial trade unions and organisations from emerging during this early period on the mines:

a) the fact that the White worker had access to political power opened the door to economic privilege and this economic privilege gave the White worker a vested interest in the perpetuation of the system.

b) A crucial factor was the relatively easy embourgeoisement of the White artisan who would move out of his class to set up as master on his own and employ his own cheap African labour. The 'caste-like' barrier to upward social mobility blocked a similar process for Africans.

c) The structure of the labour market on the mines was such that White miners could have a gang of African miners contracted to them. These men were under the arbitrary control of the White miner, subject to his discipline and ultimately with the power of dismissal in the hands of the White miner.

d) The work situation cannot be considered in isolation, as even if interests in friendship did emerge in the workplace (as described by Peter Abraham in his novel "Mine-boy") the battery of racial discriminatory custom and law in the overall structure of society militated against common political action. A good example here would be the fact that African mine workers were housed in compounds which imposed, through the compound policemen, tight control over their lives.

e) Most important of all was the system of migrant labour itself, which as I suggested prevented at that time full proletarianisation from taking place - the necessary condition for effective trade unions.

Since 1922, the mine owners fear of provoking a similar confrontation with White unions has prevented them from making any appreciable dent in the job colour bar. Thus the lot of the African worker has been determined not only by the profit-motive of the mining capitalists, but also by the vested interests of the White mine workers. Hence the White worker's access to political power has enabled him to define his position in antagonistic terms to that of the African worker. In essence, the White worker constitutes an aristocracy of labour because he shares with the owners of the mines, the surplus extracted from African labour. The White worker, it is argued by some, produces less value than he receives and is ipso facto, not exploited. Whether he is to be defined as a separate, non-productive class, or whether the White worker is simply to be seen as the privileged stratum of the working class, suffering a rather prolonged bout of 'false consciousness' seems to me largely academic. What in fact has happened is that race has been used in the wider conflict between capital and labour. The White worker, rather than identify himself with a working class overwhelmingly consisting of what he has been taught to believe is an 'inferior' race, has preferred the rather reluctant acceptance he has been given at the lower ranks of the White ruling class.

In South Africa, the state is not simply the instrument of the capitalist class (although it is primarily that) -

it involves a coalition of classes which includes White workers as well as industrial, mining and landed capitalists.

It was this class alliance that set the context for labour relations in the industry for the next 50 years. This structure was challenged by the African mine workers' strike in 1946, which clearly demonstrated the potential power and limits of the African workers. The first effective African Mine Workers' Union had been formed by 1941. Wage demands were made but not met. In 1945 a number of disturbances and strikes took place following the reduction of rations by the mining houses. In the disturbances two men were killed in a police baton charge and a hundred others were seriously wounded.

In 1946, the African Mine Workers' Union (AMWU) called for "immediate steps to provide adequate and suitable food for the workers and in accordance with the new world principles for an improved standard of living, subscribed to by our Government at the United Nations, an increase in the minimum wage of all African miners at R1.00 a day". The demand was ignored and the AMWU called a General Strike in August 1946, when 74,00 workers came out on strike for 4 days. Strike leaders were arrested and police surrounded the compounds.

Several violent confrontations developed and on one mine, the workers were driven underground at bayonet point. Nine men were killed and more than 1,200 were injured. The strike did not succeed in bringing about any improvement in African working conditions, and General Smuts said of the strikes, "it was not caused by legitimate grievances but by agitators".

The evidence of the successful organisation of an African mine workers' union is important because it has been consistently argued by the mine-owners that migrant labour and ethnic diversity make unionization impossible. What emerges from this brief look at the AMWU is that it is difficult but not impossible to organise, in spite of the fact that both the Government and the Chamber attempted to stifle the AMWU. Giving evidence to the sedition trial following the 1946 strike, the compound manager of the New Kleenfontein Mine admitted Africans "were not allowed to organise" and that Chamber policy, followed on all mines, was "to get rid of anybody trying to organise workers". At the same trial, Senator Basner claimed that the Chamber had initiated a spy system in the AMWU. Despite harrassment, the union grew steadily, claiming 25,000 members in 1944. In August of that year, following representation from the Chamber, War Measure 1425 was promulgated prohibiting gatherings of more than 20 persons on proclaimed mining ground. With the compounds out of bounds to its officials meetings now had to be held clandestinely

at night under mine dumps (6).

The second world war was the turning point for the gold mines. It was at this time that the proportion of South African Africans on the mines declined rapidly from a proportion of 80% of the total labour force to less than 25% today. The decline in the proportion of Africans who could draw an alternative income from agriculture in the Reserves coincides with the 'pull' to manufacturing industry, with its 'free' and more competitive wage system. With the decline of the South African peasant-worker, due to accelerating proletarianization, the mines became increasingly dependent on an 'external' proletariat - a factor that has now been brought into sharp focus with the ban on recruitment from Malawi and the change of government imminent in Mozambique (Even if Mozambique continues to allow recruiting for the mines, they are likely to amend the provision in the Mozambique-South Africa Labour Treaty, which precludes unionisation).

The increases in African wages on the mines recently is significant only in as much as it is a manifestation of the use of market mechanisms to attract labour to the mines. While clearly this is a tentative step in the right direction, the mining industry will not 'solve' its labour crises unless it turns its attention towards the hazardous nature of the work (reflected in the appalling mortality rate(8)) the lack of job advancement opportunities, the repressive living conditions in the compounds, and at the core of the reluctance of Africans to work on the mines, the migrant labour system itself. The necessary condition for the achievement and implementation of these reforms is the emergence of a viable and democratic African mine workers' union. While this may sound platitudinous, it relates directly to labour supply.

In a situation in which workers cannot organise or bargain, they tend to react in other ways. One way is simply refusing to be recruited to work on the mines. Another method is that of industrial sabotage where individuals tend to destroy or mutilate objects or each other in the work environment. This is done either to reduce tension or frustration or, on the other hand, to assert some form of direct control over one's work or life. Unplanned smashing and spontaneous destruction are signs of a powerless individual or group and it has been suggested that they principally occur in industries which are in an almost 'pre-trade union' state (7). The current wave of unrest on the mines with its so-called faction fights seem to be in some instances, a clear case of industrial sabotage.

If the mining industry is to maintain its labour supply, new techniques of control will be necessary -

techniques which will inevitably involve the participation of workers in collective bargaining. However, to enable effective bargaining to take place, the mining industry will have to dismantle those aspects of the industry which prevent a system of 'free' wage labour from emerging. But for an African to demand the right to sell his labour where he pleases is to make a political as well as an economic demand. This it was argued is the predicament of the African trade unions (9). It is this essentially political element in the struggle for African trade union recognition that now needs to be recognised by both employers and trade unionists.

References

- 1) Denis Bransky - "Causes of the Anglo-Boer War"
- 2) " "
- 3) " "
- 4) Johnstone - "Class and Class Conflict on the Gold Mines"
- 5) Rex - "The Compound, Reserve and Urban Location - Essential Institutions of Southern African Labour Exploitation (SALB Vol. 1 No. 5)"
- 6) D. O'Meara - "The 1946 African Mine Workers' Strike" (Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies March 1975)
- 7) Taylor and Walton - "Industrial Sabotage" in "Images of Deviance" (ed. Cohen and Taylor).
- 8) Mortality rates for the year 1973 were 737 deaths and over 2,900 non-fatal injuries, on the mines.
- 9) Eddie Webster - "The ICU and the Predicament of African Trade Unions" (SALB Vol.1 No. 6)

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	ESTABLISHED	NO. OF MINES		EMPLOYMENT (♠)		GOLD PRODUCTION (♠)	
		1936	1969	1936	1969	1936	1969
The Consolidated Gold Fields of S.A. Ltd.	1887	9	11	12	17	11	17
JHB. Consolidated Investment Co. Ltd.	1889	7	4	23	4	24	23
Rand Mines Ltd.	1893	14	7	36	17	34	12
General Mining and Finance Corporation Ltd.	1895	2	3	4	10	5	7
Union Corporation Ltd.	1897	6	8	6	13	8	13
Anglo-American Corporation of S.A. Ltd.	1917	5	12	13	29	14	41
Anglo-Transvaal Consolidated Investment Co. Ltd.	1933	1	5	2	10	1	6
Sundry Companies		4	1	4	0	2	-
				<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Total		48	51	302,000	337,000	11,0m	30.9m

- f. This table is taken from Francis Wilson's book "Labour in the South African Gold Mines 1911-1969"
- a) This table is no more than a rough guide as it does not show the involvement of each group with mines under the control of other groups.
- b) Including non-producing mines.

(f) Table 2. INTERLOCKING DIRECTORSHIPS: MINING HOUSES, 1965

Anglo-American Corporation Ltd.	Rand Mines Ltd.	Jhb. Consolidated Investment Co. Ltd.	General Mining and Finance Corporation Ltd.
H.F. Oppenheimer			H.F. Oppenheimer
<hr/>			
C.S. McLean			C.S. McLean
<hr/>			
R.B. Hagart	R.B. Hagart	R.B. Hagart	
<hr/>			
C.W. Engelhard	C.W. Engelhard		
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f. This table was also taken from Francis Wilson's book, "Labour in the South African Gold Mines 1911-1969.

Source: Walter R. Skinner's "Mining Yearbook" (1965).

SEX AND SOCIAL CONTROL IN THE RHODESIAN MINE
COMPOUNDS, 1900-1933.

Directly after the Revolt of 1896-1933, Rhodesian mine-owners set about developing a compound system which would facilitate control over their black employees. As early as August 1900, the Chief Native Commissioner (C.N.C.) had written to the Secretary of the De Beers diamond mine to enquire about different ways of treating 'free' and convict labour at Kimberley. This early initiative was consolidated in 1903, when the Rhodesian administration sent another native commissioner, C.L. Carbutt, to study the compound systems of the Kimberley and Witwatersrand mines. But despite their enthusiasm for South African models, the Rhodesian mine-owners came to develop their own distinctive compound system; and it is important to understand its particular features if we wish to fully appreciate the sociological significance of sex in African mining communities.

Unlike the 'closed compounds' of Kimberley, or the male-only barracks of the Witwatersrand, the three-tier compound system of Rhodesia made allowance for the presence of women. The core of the African housing complex on large Rhodesian mines was the central square-shaped compound. This relatively 'closed' block housed either short term migrant workers or Rhodesian Native Labour Bureau (R.N.L.B.) recruits - that is, the least proletarianised, unskilled and lowest paid workers who were most likely to desert. Surrounding this central block and frequently sub-divided into tribal divisions were the huts of the longer term single workers - that is, more proletarianised labourers with greater skills and average wages, who were less likely to desert. Beyond this, and again set apart, were a third set of huts which accommodated prostitutes, couples living together and married workers with their families - that is, fully proletarianised workers, semi-skilled with above average wages - the group least likely of all to desert. The mere presence of women in the third tier, however, did not lead to a simple pattern of heterosexual relationships in compounds, and in order to understand how sex was used for purposes of social control, we need to place these features within a broader context as well (1).

Mines that operated in a colonial political economy officially neither made allowance for nor acknowledged the presence of, women in the compounds. With the exception of a 3 or 4 year period at the turn of the century when food rations were also issued to women at certain large mines in an attempt to stabilise the labour force, wages for miners were never related to family needs. In state and mining-house ideology alike, the low wages of

Black miner were justified on the grounds that they were the earnings of a single male migrant worker who had a supplementary income from the subsistence economy of the rural areas.

This ideological and economic denial of the existence of women in the industrial areas reflected itself in two important ways within the compound. Firstly, as a self-fulfilling prophecy it led to a structural imbalance in the sex ratios within the compound. Secondly, it placed such women as did live in the compound in a state of chronic poverty and insecurity. Unable to sell their labour power to the capitalists, single and married females alike were forced to ferret out the cash that flowed into the nooks and crannies of the compound economy from the workers' pockets. Much of this was done through working at tasks traditionally associated with women - jobs such as house-keeping, sewing, cooking or selling beer. The remainder of the women without a skill or craft to sell had only one more thing to sell in a setting where males outnumbered females - their bodies.

The fact that there was a shortage of women in compound society and that women were willing to sell themselves are both ultimately attributable to the exploitative wage policies of the mining companies. Within the confines of a relatively closed community such as the compound, any shortage offered the management a potential lever for social control; and tobacco, dagga and alcohol were all used in this way. In cases where the shortage was linked to a basic need - such as that of food or sex - the potential for social control was even greater. It is the objective of this article to demonstrate that shortage and to illustrate how, through the medium of prostitution, the industry and the state used sex as a means of social control in the mine compounds.

Sexual deprivation and the mine worker

The fact that there were a limited number of women within the mine compounds did not mean that all men competed on an equal footing for the sexual favours of women. The barracks-like inner compound which housed dozens of workers under one roof put the short term workers and the R.N.L.B. labourers at a particular disadvantage. Besides having least privacy, their mobility was also most circumscribed - an aspect which also reduced the chances of meeting women off the mine property. Further, in an environment where sex, like any other commodity, could be bought or sold, these groups who were at the lowest wages were at a further disadvantage. As in all aspects of capitalist society, there was no democracy of poverty, and for the least privileged of all, the prices charged by prostitutes were beyond reach. It was thus in the low-

est socio-economic stratum of compound society that sexual deprivation was most severely felt.

The plight of these poorest workers drove several of them towards bestiality. The Rhodesian mines in rural areas often kept livestock on the company property - usually as a food supply for the workers and sometimes as the property of the White workers. At night this livestock was kept next to the compound and it was towards these animals that the men turned for their sexual needs. It is significant that often those found guilty of offences with donkies, heifers, oxen or goats, were the poorest paid unmarried men of the inner compound (2). Although the evidence is limited, it does seem as if most of these offences took place at a time when African wages were at a particularly low ebb in the mining industry - the early 1920s. In cases of bestiality, the magistrates did not consider the imbalance of sexual ratios in the compound as a mitigating factor; sentences were usually 6 months with hard labour, sometimes with the option of a fine of £20.

In the inner compounds and the huts of the second tier, sexual frustration was also evident in the number of cases of sodomy. Overcrowding in the compounds, the poverty of workers who shared blankets and beds, and the surrogate female role which many boy servants were called on to play, all made their contribution to this type of offence (3). Here too, the state was unconcerned about the particular social context of the offence and the favoured sentence for Black workers was five months with hard labour; usually without the option of a fine.

Almost as vulnerable as the young boys who acted as servants were the young girls who lived in the compounds - the off-spring of countless illegal and temporary unions of those on the mine property. Being the smallest and the weakest of the females accessible, they formed relatively easy prey for workers denied more orthodox sexual outlets. Girls under the age of 10 who were not under close and concerned supervision were vulnerable to sexual assaults (4). Whilst the rape of 2 or 3 year old girls was almost unheard of in the rural areas, such cases did occur in the compounds (5). Girls of 10 and 12 who were approaching puberty were even more likely to be raped on the mines if not constantly watched (6). Since older girls were more likely to resist there was usually more violence in such cases and this was usually reflected in the most common sentence of 3 years hard labour with 20 lashes. The frequency of such cases and their underlying causes were never considered worth examining by the state or the industry.

Perhaps inevitably violence also surrounded the adult

women who lived in the compounds. Occasionally prostitutes assaulted each other in disputes which hinged around attachments to particularly favoured customers but more frequent by far, was the conflict between workers about the women they called mahure (prostitutes) (7). Women who owed their allegiance to the highest bidder acted as the catalyst of conflict amongst jealous or poorer workers (8). The small number of women and acute poverty meant that much of the Black workers' energy and initiative was directed against fellow-workers while the fundamental conflict lay outside the compound.

For most Black miners and some White miners, it was pennies and pounds which ultimately brought them access to the mahure (9). In the confined new industrial setting, however, others found that it was not only the power of the purse that commanded respect. Since they enjoyed considerable power in the oppressive compound system, managers and their Black assistants found that they did not even need money to get access to the women they desired. At the Antelope mine in 1934, the assistant compound manager simply sent his 'cook boy' Dennis to get women for himself and his European guest (10). At the Falcon mine in 1919, compound 'police boys' Jacob and Sam used their authority to demand sexual favours from the women in the compound (11). Ordinary Black workers without the advantages of uniforms or sjamboks could only rely on power that in some way transcended that of the mine management. The traditional power of witchcraft was put to new use by a frustrated worker in the Wankie colliery in 1914; a woman who refused sexual favours was handed a red coloured stick and told that she would die if she ever let it go, while a second reluctant woman was also handed a charm (12).

The basic state of sexual deprivation in the compound also placed the wives of married workers at risk. Quarrels assaults and numerous cases of arson all bore eloquent, albeit bloody, testimony to the insecurity of marriage in a community of poverty and violence (13). Most married workers were at a loss as to how to best protect their wives and their legal rights in the new setting where old beliefs, values, and traditions were badly equipped to compete with commodities and cash.

The literate workers from Nyasaland, even articulate, looked to Zomba to help them out of their difficulties. Feeling that they got little help from the Rhodesian authorities they directed pathetic pleas for assistance to those whom they considered to be more reasonable men. Isaac Manda of the Cam and Motor compound articulated the dilemma of many a married man:

"But don't think that I am a troublesome man

Bwana, because my heart is not well for my wife having been taken away. I am afraid to make battle because perhaps you shall imprison me if I kill a man for the reason of a woman, but it is right therefore that I should complain to you, Bwana" (14).

The same lack of a concerned authority was felt by Simon Banda who wrote from the Eldorado mine: "We are living as if there is no Europeans of the Boma here," he observed, "therefore I thought it right to put my complaint before you". (15). Thereafter followed the inevitable appeal for assistance in an attempt to get back his wife.

The more practically minded Black workers did not waste their time writing to far-off European authorities. Traditionalists sought to protect their wives from the temptations of adultery through the custom of 'eating' their women (16). Others, aware that a jealous neighbour may set fire to a thatched roof also prepared accordingly. A cynical journalist, in the style of the time noted with some truth that:

"In Rhodesia you can always tell when a kaffir has a too attractive wife ... He invariably lives in a kia made of tin sheeting without a thatched roof The tin roof is the bad kaffir's fire insurance " (17).

Clearly such happy marriages as there were on the Rhodesian mines were not as a result of the three-tier compound system.

Prostitution.

For a certain number of women, the compounds must have offered an alternative society to the tightly structured traditional community (18). Others, such as a Shona girl who cut her upper teeth first, were rejected by traditional society and turned to the indiscriminating sanctuary of the compounds (19). Other women may have been forced to prostitution by their husbands who found that the low wages of the mining industry were insufficient for their needs (20). Such cases, however, could only account for a relatively small number of the prostitutes who found their way to the compounds. Basically prostitutes - just like male African labour in the economy - were the product of the process of proletarianisation. Once the redistributive economy of the traditional society was undermined, it offered little security to the young, the old, the powerless or those without kin. Once the standard of living in the rural areas dropped, women who were not part of a family production unit were very vulnerable

Those who had lost their access to land were forced into the urban areas where they could seek cash and fend for themselves. In Rhodesia, unlike South Africa where there was at least the possibility for women to be taken into domestic service, the bulk of the housework was undertaken by 'boys' and the labour market for females diminished accordingly. The overwhelming majority of prostitutes in the Rhodesian mine compounds were women without close family, who for want of anything else, were forced to sell their bodies.

This hypothesis is supported by the evidence we have about the social background of compound prostitutes. Lassi, a Shona woman from the Victoria district only left home after both her parents had died. She sought out her sister who was living in the Gaika mine compound near Que Que and it was there that she first turned to prostitution to make a living (21). It was also only after their parents had died that the Atonga sisters, Sijoma and Sewaya went to live in the care of George Haridi at the Globe and Phoenix compound; again this was the start of a life of prostitution. In 1924 a pimp named Chilopola led a group of travelling prostitutes who made their way from compound to compound throughout Rhodesia. His charges included; Malita a 17 year old woman who was recruited in Nyasaland when her husband died, Anija a 14 year old Achewa girl from Kota Kota who had a mother but no father at the time of her recruitment, and a third woman Anagota who also had no father when she joined the band (22).

Since death and misfortune was no respecter of time, such women made their way to the compounds from the very earliest days of the mining industry. But while individual women may have turned to prostitution at any time that misfortune overtook them, the large scale movements to the compounds can be more specifically dated. This closer definition again emphasises the underlying structural reasons for the presence of these women on the mines.

Prostitution as a means of earning a living was a particularly noticeable feature of the 1920s and 1930s - that is, during those years when proletarianisation had reached an advanced stage (23). In addition, there was a significant acceleration of the trend during those years when the economy was depressed. It is significant that 1921 saw 'an influx of foreign native women' who went to the compounds for purposes of prostitution (24). It is equally significant that the Inspector of Native Compounds chose 1931 as the year in which to draw attention to the fact that prostitution was 'rife' in the compounds. (25)

As parasites within the Black working class, prostitutes shared the fortunes of that class - both in the economy as a whole and in the mining industry in particular. Just as more labour made its way to the mines during the depression so too more women went to the compounds to become prostitutes. Just as the earning power of the Black miners declined as wages fell in successive years, so too did the prices charged by prostitutes. Mahure regularly charged 10 to 15 shillings a time between 1900 and 1910 - by the early 1920s they were accepting 2/6 and at least some were accepting credit tokens in the 1930s (26).

Deprived rather than depraved, these women were pushed into the patterns of behaviour that characterise many underprivileged and exploited socio-economic groups. As the 'scum of the country' they lied, cheated and stole from the Black miners on whom they depended for money (27). The state officials responsible for inspecting the mine compounds felt that prostitutes were at the base of most crime within the African mining community (28). The Black workers themselves felt that the 'mahure and beer' were the most important contributory factors to the 'faction fights' that frequently racked the working class community (29). Yet despite all the conflict, tension and disruption caused by the prostitutes, no action was taken against them by the authorities; indeed, the state and mining industry alike took steps to protect the presence of the mahure in the compounds.

One of the reasons which made women in the compound acceptable was the fact that they improved the health of the workers. Early on it was recognised that a woman who attached herself to a chamwario (lover) produced better quality meals than were usual in the compounds and this tended to increase the productivity of the labourers. (30) The settlers for their part, were more taken with the idea that Black prostitutes in the compound protected White women in the community from sexual assault. "The opinion is freely expressed", the Native Commissioner at Shamva observed, "that the presence of these women has the affect of minimising the danger of 'black peril' cases" (31). Given the amount of sexual deprivation and frustration in the compounds, it is possible that the mahure did in fact indirectly protect the White Women on the mining properties from rape.

Appealing as these arguments might have been in themselves, the mine-owners had other, more deep-seated reasons for approving of prostitution. From at least 1900 the mine-owners were aware that the presence of women attracted workers, lengthened the labour cycle and contributed to the proletarianisation of the Black work-force (32). The more 'voluntary' labour that could be attracted to a mine, the less expensive capititation fees for recruited labour

had to be paid to the R.N.L.B. The more stabilised the labour force, the greater the average level of competence and productivity of the workers - a feature with obvious appeal to any mine-owner.

In Rhodesia, what was good for the mining industry was considered to be good enough for the state. State officials accepted that the mahure assisted labour stabilisation and were thus willing to 'regulate' but not eliminate prostitution in the compounds. The C.N.C. made his acceptance of prostitution quite clear:

"... I do not think that it would be good policy to interfere to any great extent with the native women who congregate on the mines as such interference would be likely to affect the labour supply detrimentally, but their presence in the compound should be regulated in some degree" (33).

This basic acceptance was also evident in the comments of the Inspector of Native Compounds who, in 1931, felt that it would "be good policy to abolish these evils (prostitution and credit) altogether" (34). When, on the one and only occasion when the state did take action against the influx of women into the compounds in 1931, it did so on a very selective basis. On the specific instructions of the C.N.C., the police were asked to eject only those women who had deserted their husbands or parents; that is, those who had an alternative source of income - the prostitutes were to be left strictly alone (35).

There was a price to pay, however, for this unwillingness to eliminate prostitution in the compounds - the growing incidence of venereal disease. It was not so much the cost of treatment that concerned the mine-owners - the workers were made to pay for that - but the fact that it reduced productivity (36). At a large mine, such as the Cam and Motor in 1925, the daily average number of patients suffering from venereal disease in August was 16.5, in September 10.8 and October 15.6. In the three months concerned, the mine lost 1 337 working days from its Black labour force and three years later venereal disease still accounted for the majority of hospital patients at the mine (37). Between 1900 and 1933 thousands of workers in the compounds contracted syphilis and about 250 Africans lost their lives to the disease (38).

A loss of productivity on this scale did concern the industry and the state. Clearly what was ideally required was a system which reaped all the benefits of prostitution without reducing the productivity of the Black miners. It was around this idealised objective that the industry

and state's desire for 'regulation' centred.

As early as 1916, the C.N.C. suggested a scheme for the compulsory medical examination of prostitutes (39). In the wake of this suggestion a few of the larger mines did in fact set up a system of medical checks but venereal disease continued to spread. By the time that the Rhodesian Chamber of Mines initiated a debate on productivity and venereal disease in the Legislative Council in 1923, two large mines had fairly well-developed systems of control. At the Shamva mine, a committee of African women inspected any new woman who wished to take up residence in the compound and at the Falcon mine women were 'compelled to carry a medical certificate' after examination by the mine doctor (40).

In the mid 1920s it seemed briefly that this system of 'regulation' might stay the spread of venereal disease. (41). But as proletarianisation accelerated in the late 1920s and 1930s, so more women from the countryside were forced to turn to prostitution in the towns and compounds. Mines in the Bulawayo district not only had their own resident prostitutes but at weekends they were also visited by literally truck-loads of mahure from the Bulawayo location (42). With prostitution on this scale, the state pushed more forcefully for the voluntary system of 'regulation'. By the late 1920s it was standard practice for women to submit to medical inspection at the compound entrance before prostituting themselves to the workers of such large mines as the Lonely and Wankie (43). Just as the Inspector of Native Compounds was called upon to make certain that the credit system at the mine stores operated smoothly, so too he had to ensure that venereal disease spread by the mahure did not jeopardise productivity. By late 1931 the system was operating smoothly on 'most' large mines (44).

Since prostitutes ensured the 'retention of servants and a permanent labour supply' the industry and the state were always unwilling to eliminate them from the mine compounds. As the purveyors of sex in a sexually deprived community the mahure came to form simply one more lever for social control. By 1933, at least one enterprising N.C. was looking to extend the role of the state so that more tangible benefits than labour stabilisation could accrue to the government:

"Granted that prostitutes are a necessary evil, there is no reason why they should carry on a lucrative but repulsive trade without heavy taxation. Many people will no doubt be horrified at the suggestion of legalising and regulating prostitution; but facts must be faced squarely and cour-

ageously" (45).

Although the state never came to legalise the activities of the mahure or tax it, the government in partnership with the mining industry was a willing supervisor of a system of 'regulated prostitution'. Sex, together with food and drugs formed part of the web of social control exercised over the working class in Central Africa.

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The author explores these other aspects of social control in his doctoral thesis, "African Mine Labour in the Political Economy of Rhodesia, 1900-1935".

FOOTNOTES

1. The evidence for these paragraphs is to be found in chapters 5 and 6 of my thesis, "African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia 1900-1933", currently being completed.
2. National Archives of Rhodesia (N.A.R.) Salisbury, are the source and place of deposit for all files mentioned in this study. For cases of bestiality see for example: at the Blanket mine D/19/5, Case No. 24 of 1908; at the Globe & Phoenix mine, D3/32/16, Case No. 902 of 1920, and D3/32/21, Case No. 64 of 1924; at the Broken Luck mine D3/32/20, Case No. 917 of 1923.
3. Many young boys were hired by single workers to do their cleaning, cooking and house-keeping. For cases of sodomy involving boy servants and over-crowding see: D3/32/21, Case No. 1592 of 1923; D3/37/11, Case No. 438 of 1925? D3/37/8, Case No. 325 of 1924, and D3/32/9 Case No. 392 of 1917. Most cases of attempted sodomy appear to have been promptly reported to the 'compound police' by reluctant victims. Less frequently homosexual relationships developed which involved the exchange of money. See for example, D3/32/4, Preliminary Examination Rex vs. Chabwana 1914, and D3/37/14, Case No. 201 of 1928.
4. In the Gaika compound two girls aged 6 and 10 who were in the care of an aunt were raped see, D3/32/3, Case No. 234 of 1913. In the Globe & Phoenix compound, the 3year old daughter of a prostitute was raped, see D/32/21 Case No. 1609 of 1923.
5. Ibid. See also D3/37/3, Case No. 85 of 1918.
6. There were numerous cases of girls under the age of 12 being raped at the mines. For examples see, Rhodesia Herald, 29 Jan. 1909 (Eldorado mine compound);

- Rhodesia Herald, 26 Oct. 1917 (Golden Kopje and Acorn mine compounds); Rhodesia Herald, 16 May 1919 (Fiffel Blue mine compound), and Rhodesia Herald, 10 Feb. 1920 (Shepherd's Reef mine compound).
7. Interview with Alec Chirwa, former 'boss boy' at Wankie Colliery and Gath's Asbestos mine (1920-1960), at Triangle, Southern Rhodesia 23 Feb. 1973.
 8. For examples see, D3/32/20, Case No. 528 of 1923 which centred around Mava, a prostitute in the Eva mine compound, and D3/32/20 Case No. 679 of 1923 where the conflict revolved around Bitiyema, a prostitute in the Gaika mine compound.
 9. In several important respects early white miners were just as isolated and sexually deprived as black workers and there are thus significant similarities in their behaviour. At the Imani mine in 1901, W.H. Mitchell with the assistance of 3 Africans and another white miner raped a woman called Zandile see, D3/19/3, Case No. 23 of 1901. More frequently, however, white miners asked black workers to arrange for the services of the mahure see, S1175/7A, Compound Inspector's Report, Nov. 1928 and footnote 10 below. Since white miners could afford to pay more for their services, the mahure seem to have been less than reluctant to go to the European single quarters. At the Globe & Phoenix mine in 1920, for example, a white miner who was willing to pay 19/- had little difficulty in arranging meetings with 'Annie' and 'Mary' see, D3/32/16, Case No. 682 of 1920.
 10. S1542/k1, Statement by Maweni, enclosure, Commissioner of Police to British South African Police, 10 March 1934.
 11. A8/3/8 Compound Inspector's Reports, Gwelo, July 1919.
 12. D3/31/1 A.N.C. Wankie to Superintendent of Natives, Bulawayo, 14 Feb. 1914.
 13. For cases of assault revolving around the 'eternal triangle' see for example D3/37/2, Case No. 270 of 1917 or D3/32/2 Case No. 259 of 1909. For fatal assaults in such cases, See Rhodesia Herald, 5 May 1904 (Golden Valley mine compound), and Rhodesia Herald 30 Aug. 1912 (Eldorado mine compound). 'A match in the thatch' was a frequent sequel to a 'roll in the hay'. For an example of a case where marital difficulties culminated in arson see D3/37/3 Case No. 168 of 1918.
 14. S138/22, I. Manda to Chief Sec. Zomba, 7 Dec. 1925.
 15. S138/41, S. Banda to Nyasaland Administration, 24 Jan. 1925.
 16. 'Eating', 'refers to a custom, more or less common amongst many native tribes, of "bewitching" a woman so that she shall be a danger to any man who has congress with her except the man who performs the spell which consists in eating a piece of food after he has thrust it into and withdrawn it from the woman's private parts' S138/100 N.C. Wankie to the Superintendent of Natives, Bulawayo, 18 Dec. 1923.

17. Report by John Stuart, a journalist who visited many Rhodesian mine compounds during a tour in 1909, see Rhodesia Herald, 3 Dec. 1909.
18. In particular beer-selling in the compounds opened new possibilities for the independence of African women, see, NB6/1/19, Report of the Inspector of Native Compounds Div.5, for the year ended 31 March 1907. At least one tribal association raised this problem with the administration see N3/21/1, Loyal Mandabele Society to H.M. Jackson, Bulawayo, 4 March 1916. Running away to the mine compounds was still one avenue of 'womens' liberation' during the 1920s see, S138/22, A.N.C. Penhalonga to N.C. Umtali 17 June 1927.
19. See for example, the case reported in the South African Native Affairs Commission 1903-1905, vol. 4, p. 119.
20. On a small mine see, H.J. Lucas, 'Early Days on a Small Working', Rhodesiana, No. 20, July 1969, p. 17. In the compounds of larger mines, a woman would frequently live with one chamwario (lover-husband) but sell her services to other miners. See for example D3/32/21, Case No. 1609 of 1923.
21. D3/32/3, Preliminary Examination, Case No. 121 of 1913.
22. For the George Haridi case see, D3/32/22, Case No. 899 of 1924. The Chilopola case is perhaps untypical since there appears to have been an element of 'witchcraft' present in the 'recruitment' of women. This does not, however, detract from the facts about their loss of kin see, D3/32/23, Case No. 1991 of 1924.
23. A neat if somewhat anecdotal illustration of this is to be found in L. Vambe 'An Ill-fated People!' (London 1972), pp. 198-200. Vambe recounts the story of Misi the first prostitute in Mashonganyika.
24. N3/22/6, A.N.C. Shamva to N.C. Mazoe, 3 March 1921.
25. S1175/17, Inspector of Native Compounds to Medical Director, 16 Feb. 1931.
26. For 1905 prices see, D3/19/3, Case No. 58 of 1905. In the Wankie Colliery compound in 1920 Yao mahure from Kota Kota town charged 2/6 a time - Chirwa interview op cit. (It is significant that Chirwa stressed that these women came from Kota Kota in Nyasaland. This accords with the impression that is gained from the evidence of court cases - see for example, the case of Chilopola in footnote 22 above. Any detailed study of prostitution in central Africa in the future could do worse than start by examining religion, family life and the socio-economic structure of Kota Kota town in the early 1920s) On mines other than Wankie, where the competition amongst mahure was less keen, the average price of the 1920s appears to have been 5/- see, D3/32/20, Case No. 528 of 1923. For the role of credit tokens (valid at the mine store) in prostitution see, G.N. Burden, 'Nyasaland Native Labour in Southern Rhodesia' (mimeo. Salisbury 1938), appendix 'B'.

27. NB6/1/17, Report of the Acting Inspector of Native Compounds Division 1 for the year ended 31 March 1905.
28. See for example NB6/1/20, Report of the Inspector of Native Compounds Selukwe Division for year ended 31 Dec 1907.
29. Chirwa interview, op cit. Alec Chirwa felt that women and beer - in that order- were at the base of 'faction fights' at Gath's Asbestos mine compound in 1922, 1923, 1926 and 1934.
30. Southern Rhodesia, Report of the Committee Appointed to Enquire into the Prevalence and Prevention of Scurvy and Pneumonia amongst Native Mine Labourers, 1910, paragraph 63. See also A3/12/19/1, Acting Compound Inspector, Hartley, to Medical Director, 14 July 1915.
31. N3/22/6, A.N.C. Shamva to N.C. Mazoe, 3 March 1921. The mayor of Bulawayo was not anxious to eliminate prostitution in the Bulawayo location for the same reason. See his evidence to the Native Affairs Commission 1930, Chairman H.M. Jackson) in ZAN 1/1/1, pp. 47-48.
32. See for example NB 6/1/17, Report of the Inspector of Native Compounds, Sebakwe Div. 1 for the year ended 31 March 1905 or Southern Rhodesia, Debates in the Legislative Council, 4th Session of the 7th Council, 30 May 1923, col. 65, speech by the Medical Director,
33. N3/22/8, C.N.C. to Sec. Dept. of the Administrator, 1 Oct. 1918.
34. S 1175/17, Inspector of Native Compounds to Medical Director, 24 April 1931.
35. The police should 'deal with young girls and married women who run away to mines, and whose parents or husbands desire to get them back. I do not think it would be advisable to go beyond these classes of women on mines". S138/60, C.N.C. to Staff Officer, British South Africa Police, 30 Sept. 1931.
36. At Globe & Phoenix mine, workers in the compound hospital had to pay £2 for treatment in the 'red light ward' see, S1175/6, Report of the Inspector of Native Compounds Matabeleland, July 1927.
37. The Cam & Motor mine at the time employed about 1 800 workers. For evidence about venereal disease at the Cam & Motor compound see S1175/2, Report of the Inspector of Native Compounds Salisbury, Oct. 1925, and S1175/7A, Report of the Inspector of Native Compounds Dec. 1928. In 1927 it was estimated that 75% of all Black workers at another large gold mine - the Rezende in Mashonaland - had a history of venereal disease. See Southern Rhodesia, Conference of Superintendents of Natives and Native Commissioners of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia, held at Salisbury, 12 Dec. 1927 p50.
38. Estimates based on figures contained in S.R., Reports on the Public Health, covering the period 1906-1933.

39. N3/21/1 C.N.C. to Sec. Dept. of the Administrator, 20 Sept. 1916.
 40. Southern Rhodesia, Debates in the Legislative Council 4th Session of the 7th Council, 30 May 1923, cols. 54-65.
 41. See for example, Southern Rhodesia, Report of the Committee Appointed to Enquire into Native Education, 1925, p.91.
 42. The visits to the mine compounds were organised by Indian middle men who owned the means of transport in the location. See for example, S1175/7A, Report of the Inspector of Native Compounds Dec. 1928. See also, ZAN 1/1/1, Native Affairs Commission of 1930, oral evidence of Mshwelo (p.88), C.N.C. (p.15) and Sagonda (p. 58)
 43. The system was introduced at Wankie in late 1928 see, S1175/7A, Report of the Inspector of Native Compounds Matabeleland, Aug. 1928. By June 1931 it was also operating at the Lonely mine see, S1175/18, Report of the Inspector of Native Compounds for June 1931.
 44. Ibid. Also S1175/18, Report of the Inspector of Native Compounds for August 1931. Not all managers were equally willing to arrange for the system which the state desired. See for example the problems with the reluctant management of the Sherwood Starr mine in ibid.
 45. S138/22, N.C. The Range, Enkeldoorn, to C.N.C. 13 Feb. 1933.
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THE AFRIKANER STRUGGLE FOR AN EFFECTIVE VOICE IN
THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMY PRIOR TO 1948 (f).

During the years immediately before the Anglo-Boer War and for several decades afterwards, Afrikaans-speaking Whites poured into the cities. The White urban population of South Africa grew from 36% in 1890 to 75% in 1946. In the nineteenth century, urbanization for Afrikaners had been concomitant with anglicization. Indeed in the first two decades of the twentieth century, Afrikaans-speaking workers had become deeply involved in the labour movement, especially in the Mine Workers' Union. Leaders of the Afrikaans-speaking community, especially churchmen, fearfully anticipated the complete disappearance of the Afrikaner. Lead by post-war Afrikaner nationalists like Dr. Malan, they raised the cry, "Back to the land".

By 1918, however, a group of Afrikaners on the Rand had discovered that the very pace of urbanization led to the growth of Afrikaans-speaking ghettos in the great cities, wherein an urban Afrikaner culture could be nurtured vis-a-vis both the English-speaking bourgeoisie and labour aristocracy and also unskilled Black labour. An elite organisation, the Afrikaner Broederbond, largely formed of teachers and ministers, but with some worker members, was founded in 1919 to foster the enthusiasm for Afrikaans and Afrikanerdom within the cities. Although it became a nation-wide organisation after going underground in 1922, the Broederbond never lost touch with its urban origins, and saw its major task as the "arousal of Afrikaner national self-consciousness" especially in town. Only by mobilising urban Afrikaners could the Broederbond achieve its ultimate goal, "the Afrikanerisation of our public life and our education in Christian-National direction!"

Since the 1930s, then, Broers had realised that cultural unity around Christian-National ideals could not be limited to the platteland but must extend to the rapidly growing numbers of urban Afrikaners as well. This was achieved by absolute insistence on Afrikaans language schools and strong support for General Hertzog's policy of 'civilised labour' which used state power to elevate White South African standards of living above those of their Black compatriots.

In the 1930s, however, the Afrikaner Broederbond also mounted a direct attack on the economic front. As early as 1934, Professor I.J. du Plessis, a major Broederbond theoretician, had published an article proposing what he called volkskapitalisme. The threat to Afrikanerdom lay not in capitalism as such, he argued, but rather that the proceeds of capitalist enterprise were benefitting English-

speaking individuals rather than the Afrikaner community. Afrikaners must break into the world of English-speaking capitalism and multi-racial trade unions and transform both for the benefit of the Afrikaner volk;

"The purpose of our economic struggle is thus national, even Christian-National, as against the personal and sectional. As organised Afrikanerdom, we wish consciously to take part in the economic development of our land, naturally in order to ensure our own existence but above all to restore our people to prosperity and so enable it to fulfill its God-given calling In the past we accented as inevitable that the masses who were unable to adjust to capitalism quickly or well enough should drop down to poor Whiteism. Sympathetically we belittled them and separated ourselves from them, or at best offered them 'alms' in a philanthropic manner . . . Meantime this process of adjustment was destroying our people by denationalisation of its economic leaders and proletarianisation of its producing masses. But in the awakening of self-consciousness the people has become aware of this also, and the new ethnic movement is intended to prevent the further destruction of the Afrikaner people in an effort to adjust to a foreign capitalist system and to transform it so that it fits our ethnic nature".

In order to achieve this goal, the Afrikaner economic movement had to fight on two fronts. On the one hand it must Afrikanerize big business and on the other it must save the workers for the volk. Afrikaner volkskapitalisme must thus both win control of the economy and also prevent class division in Afrikaner ranks. It was on the latter front that the need for decisive action seemed most urgent in the 1930s. In the words of Professor Cronje, "the Boer culture must be carried into the English-cosmopolitan life of the city", in order that "organised Afrikaner action in the city will day by day become more purposeful and more irresistible".

In 1936 Piet Meyer returned with a doctorate from Amsterdam and became assistant secretary of the Federasie van Afrikaner Kultuurorganisasies (F.A.K.) (an acknowledged Broederbond front organisation). He immediately proposed a national kultuurraad whose purpose was to enlist the help of the F.A.K. and the Dutch Reformed Churches to organise Afrikaner workers into Christian-National labour

unions. On October 4, 1936, Meyer, along with Nic Diederichs, Albert Hertzog, and an Afrikaner banker named Frikkie de Wet met in Johannesburg to found an organisation which would provide financial backing for Christian-National Afrikaner trade unions. They called their organisation the Nasionale Raad van Trustees. Since the Mine-Workers' Union of the time, under the leadership of Charlie Harris, was hopelessly corrupt, and since the majority of White mine-workers were Afrikaners, they undertook first to organise on the mines.

Within five months the new Afrikanerbond van Mynwerkers had forced Charlie Harris to wrap up a 'closed shop' with the Chamber of Mines. Protests streamed in from the Afrikaans churches and platteland cultural organisations, but to no avail. The United Party government refused to intervene. There was nothing for it but to disband the Afrikanerbond van Mynwekers and found a 'reform movement' within the M.W.U. itself. By 1939, the threat of these 'Hervormers' was such that Harris was forced to ban union elections. But he had not reckoned with "the hand which guides the fate of men and nations". On June 15, 1939, before the new oligarchal constitution could be ratified, Harris was assassinated by a young Afrikaans-speaking mine-worker. There are those who believe that the Divine Hand was itself prompted in this matter, but the courts found no evidence of conspiracy.

New elections were called and the reform movement seemed on the brink of victory when the war froze all union activity to ensure maximum productivity. But the organisation of the Afrikaners within the M.W.U. did not stop. Albert Hertzog was able to muster the support of the Ossewabrandwag, the Blankewerkersbeskermingsbond and Dr. Verwoerd of Die Transvaler. By 1946, the Mine-Workers' Union was ripe for an Afrikaner takeover.

The Hervormer's efforts to capture Solly Sach's multi-racial garment workers' union were much less successful. The women of the garment workers' union, English, Afrikaans and Coloured alike, returned violence with a militance of their own. In 1944 the full support of the Dutch Reformed Churches was swung behind the Hervormers on behalf of 'White womanhood', but to no avail. Nevertheless, the swing to the National Party in the Rand in 1948 was due in no small measure to the dedicated efforts of Albert Hertzog, Piet Meyer, Nic Diederichs and Verwoerd, to "save the unions for the volk".

However, Afrikanerization of the trade unions was but one thrust of the whole movement for volkskapitalisme. The other was the Broederbond effort to break into capitalism. Despite the assistance of the State since 1948, the movement to capture capitalism for the sake of Afrikanerdom cannot be said to have been fully successful. The intentions,

however, were clearly stated at the Economic Volkskongres in 1939. Capitalism must be transformed from its base in liberal individualism to an ethnic system which would work to the good of the Afrikaner people as a nation. This was to be achieved by Afrikaner control of both production and consumption. Afrikaner capital should thus be organised to support Afrikaner enterprise, both by investment in Afrikaner business and by purchase of Afrikaner goods. For this purpose, M.S. Louw proposed the establishment of a specifically Afrikaner business house (Federale Volksbeleggings), and H.F. Verwoerd urged the formation of Afrikaner consumers co-operatives. Funds were to be controlled by the establishment of an Economic Institute of the F.A.K., whose membership was made up entirely of Broers. Short-term loans were made to up-and-coming Afrikaner retailers after 'investigation' by the Broers of the Economic Institute. An Afrikaner Chamber of Commerce was founded. Thus although by 1950, Afrikaners still numbered only about ten percent of all White businessmen in South Africa, the Broederbond had achieved a remarkable degree of control in Afrikaner business life.

Economic advance for ordinary Afrikaners during the 1940s, however, was but slight, and a result of long-existent racist labour legislation rather than the Broederbond economic movement. The economic 'great leap forward' for the Afrikaner bourgeoisie came after the victory of the National Party in 1948 when the whole force of the state was mustered on the side of the Afrikaner economic endeavour. But economic success has led to the disintegration of Christian-National volkskapitalisme, rather than its rigid imposition on South African business life. That however, is another story.

(f) My book, The Rise of Afrikanerdom, to be published by the University of California Press in January 1975 gives a rather more complete treatment of the Afrikaner economic movement within the context of the development of the Broederbond and Christian-National ideology and the struggle for power before 1948.

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CONFLICT ON THE MINES: 1974.

Welkom, Western Holdings, and Free State Geduld Mines. (f)

Mine faction fight - admittedly on a larger scale than usual - or something much deeper? That is the first question which needs to be analysed in seeking an explanation for the 24 murders and 227 assaults which - apparently inexplicably - started on that bloody weekend at Welkom in mid-February.

One thing it was not. It was not a management-labour confrontation of the kind that shook South Africa and the mining industry at Western Deep Levels last September. The resentment then was over wage increases and changed pay differentials. On the other hand, whether worker-management communication at Welkom was all it should be is an open question.

Nor was the Welkom violence the outcome of a simple faction fight that escalated. It was essentially inter-tribal not intra-tribal.

No one knows for sure what really lay behind the frustration and anger the Sothos felt towards the Xhosas. But there are at least two factors which may help to explain both the attacks and the subsequent mass exodus of 14 000 Black mine workers, mainly Sothos, back to their homelands.

The first is a simple human one; lack of women, particularly acutely felt by the Xhosas (a minority on the mine). The Sothos, in contrast, enjoyed access to the women of the nearby Thabong township with its mainly Sotho population.

The Xhosas understandably resented the success enjoyed by their Sotho workmates and this, so the Sothos claim, led the Xhosas to make sporadic attacks on returning Sothos and their women.

Embittered by the failure of the indunas and the mine management to intervene effectively, despite the Sothos having offered proof of Xhosa attacks and having threatened that, if they continued, they would leave the mine, the Sothos decided to take matters into their own hands. Mass reprisals followed.

Peace was eventually restored. Or so it seemed. But within hours Sotho mine workers started leaving the mine and this soon became a mass exodus from Free State

f. This section of the article is taken from 'The Financial Mail' March 8th, 1974.

Geduld, Western Holdings and Welkom which has left them with less than half their African labour force.

That is the background as far as we can establish it. But complicating these tragic events are deep underlying political tensions.

The Sothos frequently taunted the Xhosas that their nation was not really independent, while the Sothos themselves were caught up in Leaboa Jonathan's power struggle at home, with the majority of them backing the opposition Congress Party.

It would be surprising therefore if Congress Party infiltrators did not try to exploit the rising tide of anger and resentment in the hope of creating a situation in which Sotho workers would decide to down tools, return home and strengthen the anti-Jonathan camp.

This political element in the situation is nevertheless, discounted by police investigators who view the killings simply as a tribal clash, despite the fact that there is a surprisingly high degree of party political organisation on the mines concerned, and intense pro and anti-Jonathan feelings.

The existence of this political dimension seems to be confirmed by the fact that both Jonathan and Congress Party leaders vied with each other in welcoming home the returning mine workers. Indeed Jonathan has since promised that his government - and not the Chamber of Mines - will in future be responsible for recruiting labour in Lesotho and that he will negotiate directly with Pretoria on mine recruitment and working conditions.

Clearly mine-labour relations generally have been moving out of the era when recruitment and contract terms were purely a matter for private enterprise. Access to Mozambique labour has long been conditional on prior government-to-government agreement; and Homeland leaders have also indicated that they have decided to make labour a matter of inter-State policy too. They may well have taken this further when they met the Prime Minister this week (March 8th).

More immediately it is, of course, desperately necessary to restore harmony on the mines affected, to re-establish a basis for peaceful inter-tribal co-operation, and to get the mines back to full production again. To this end government representatives will preside over two mass meetings at the mines on March 11 at which Lesotho and Transkei leaders will, it is expected, address their people.

So far so good. We hope goodwill will be speedily restored. But to maintain it and to reduce, if not eliminate the risk of future strife, longer term remedies are needed to remove the causes of frustration (which predisposes men to violence); to normalise living conditions; and to accommodate rising levels of political consciousness - not to mention Black consciousness - which threaten to burst the compound-migrant labour system at its seams.

To dismiss the Welkom killings as mindless tribal violence is tempting, but dangerous.

There is indeed no historical enmity between Xhosa and Sotho. Rather is the explanation to be sought in a combination of factors.

Firstly the acute sexual frustration felt by mine workers, in this case particularly by the Xhosas.

Secondly there is the boredom of a monotonous, barrack-like existence in which the close proximity of man to man means that even a petty quarrel between two individuals can flare up and quickly draw in everyone else.

Thirdly, for those workers who are becoming increasingly politically sophisticated and who sense that they are part of the rising tide of Black consciousness, the compound system (which, after all, was evolved in the last century) must be felt as an increasingly intolerable strait-jacket.

Nothing short of the phasing out of the migratory labour system which separates men from their womenfolk, can eliminate these tensions. And it would be surprising if this does not soon become a pre-condition which African leaders will seek to impose on Pretoria for the mines' right of access to their labour.

Welcome as that transition would be, it would have to be flanked by a programme of industrialisation around the goldfields. Mine workers' womenfolk would also need employment. And as each mine became worked out, the growth points established could provide the nucleus for the additional work opportunities that will eventually be needed - by both White and Black.

This, of course, would mean vast expenditure by the mines and the State on housing, education and infrastructure. But what better investment could there be than one which would go a long way towards guaranteeing the continuity and productivity of South Africa's major asset?

Welkom Mine, 8th April 1974

Some six weeks after the unrest in Welkom had subsided one man died in No. 2 hostel during a new outbreak. A speech by Miss Stella Sigcau, Minister of the Interior for the Transkei, (Daily News, 9th April) underlined the contrast between the support given to the Lesotho miners by the Congress Party (and Jonathan) and the attitude of the Transkeian government to Xhosa miners involved:

"I urge them to strive always towards the maintenance of labour peace and to guard against being intimidated by those who pretend to be the friends of the workers, whilst actively engaged in subversive activities or nefarious purposes of their own".

Western Deep Levels Mine, (Anglo-American Group) 15-17th April.

Ten men died during inter-tribal fighting between Xhosa and Sotho miners, which broke out over the Easter week-end in No. 3 hostel. Fighting began after the death of a Sotho miner in a quarrel. Sotho, and later Malawian miners withdrew their labour and demanded repatriation. Western Deep expected a production loss of 30%. The mine chairman, J.W. Shilling, told the shareholders at their Annual General Meeting, on May 1st, that the clashes had no other cause than 'inter-tribal conflict and friction.'

Lorraine Gold Mine, (Anglo-Vaal Group), Afternoon of Tuesday, 28th May.

Two men were killed (one by a police bullet, one apparently by fellow-miners) during the course of a riot at the No. 3 shaft compound after pay negotiations had broken down.

Thus, three months after the events of February, unrest returned to Welkom but centred now on wage claims and had no apparent tribal or inter-tribal structure. The comparison was with Western Deep Levels at the time of Carletonville, not with Western Deep in April 1974.

As had been the case at Western Deep in September 1973, and was to be the case at Harmony, the trouble came after what were, by past standards, substantial pay rises. And again it appears to have been senior workers who, in maintaining their own specific interest, focussed and fired the militancy of a substantial body of workers. The senior workers, who had a standing demand that production bonuses be included in their basic pay, amended this by a demand for further increases. Negotiations broke down and the riot followed. The following day management capitulated to the extent of granting an increase of 33% to all workers. Until the arrival of the

police the violence of the workers appears to have been haphazardly directed: a beer-hall was fired, windows were smashed. The police were said to have fired warning shots only, and the man shot dead was said to have "jumped above the crowd".

Harmony and Merriespruit Gold Mines, Virginia, OFS (Rand Mines Group) 9-15th June.

These two mines are 6km. apart and are, it appears from press reports, jointly administered at top management level. They are close to the Virginia Mine (also Rand Mines Group) which has the largest compounds in South Africa. The week ended with a force of police standing by at Virginia. All three mines had been given the same pay increases (subsequently raised, as at Lorraine, after the rioting).

The rioting, which took place at Harmony No. 2 mine on the 9th and 10th and at Merriespruit on the 11th, again began after a wage dispute. Though I have seen no follow-up on a report that the "cause of the riot was similar to Carltonville" this might indicate that once again specific claims by senior men supplied the spark.

At Harmony (where four men were killed, one by police "firing under extreme provocation") the pattern of violence took an unusually distinct form. Compound Manager, Bill Soutar noted that when the miners first attacked the flats and persons of the compound indunas, they were possibly attacking the nearest symbol of authority. From there the miners appeared to move against selected symbolic targets in an ascending order which duplicates the system of control in a compound. Thus, Soutar's office was next attacked, followed by the administration offices where files, including long-service records for all miners in the Virginia area, were destroyed (together, however, with furniture etc. - so it may be stretching things to see it as a deliberate act). After this the rioters turned their attention to the mine's training centre. During the rioting, a policeman who was telephoning for reinforcements saw the telephone smashed to smithereens by a brick hurled through the window. Another policeman commented: "I am going to the border in two weeks' time. I am looking forward to a quiet life". At Merriespruit, one man was killed.

Workers at both mines were later to accept pay increases "well in advance of 10%, but attempts to negotiate during the tense day of the 10th failed". Manager Honnet was shouted down while the workers are reported to have made claims for 500% increases. Reports were also received that Harmony workers were going into the town of Virginia to spread the mood of their strike to municipal workers there .

15th June

Reacting to Lorraine and Harmony, and in order to forestall the spread of the unrest, the Chamber of Mines announced wage increases ranging from 33% to 50%, raising the novice's minimum wage to R1.20 a shift or R31.20 a month. Simultaneous wage increases were given to White miners such that the average increase (R50) was almost R20 more than the minimum level for Black miners. Nevertheless, Black wages had been raised 140% since the gold price had started to rise in 1972.

29 July - 2 August

During this week, at the well-attended and much reported annual convention of the South African Institute of Personnel Management, Anglo-American spokesmen, with qualified approval from the Mining Industry as a whole and even the right-wing South African Confederation of Labour, revealed a strategy for modernising the labour structure and labour relations in industry as a whole. They were reacting not only to unrest on the mines but also to immediate and long-term threats to the established pattern of labour recruitment in neighbouring Southern African states - notably Malawi and Mozambique, suppliers of 50% of the current labour intake on the gold mines. President Banda had suspended recruiting in Malawi following the deaths of 74 miners in the Francistown air crash of April 2nd, and the continued flow of labour from a Frelimo-governed Mozambique seemed doubtful in the long term.

Rapid progress towards market-determined and worker-negotiated wage-structures, the phasing-out of the wage colour-bar while delicately fiddling the job colour-bar to appease the White miner, Black South Africans back on the mines en famille, revised labour practices and better drilling and stoping techniques on the old mines, mechanisation from the surface down on the new, civil rights as a necessary extension of civil wages: this was the programme promoted.

The unionisation of Black miners was nevertheless regarded as problematic given the present labour structure. On the 13th August, however, Anglo appeared to take the plunge: the corporation, it was stated, would be prepared to give a Black union full recruiting rights on all its mines. Chief Buthelezi and the Progs gave support, which was needed because the Minister of Labour, Viljoen, "regarded the decision in a serious light" and P.J. Paulus of the White Mineworkers Union reportedly called for a government investigation of Anglo-American.

While the new deal hit early snags (another was the flop of a recruitment drive for 50, 000 Black South African-

an workers promoted over Radio Bantu) the old deal continued to vibrate with tensions in the second half of the year.

Western Holdings Gold Mine, Welkom (Anglo-American Group)
Saturday night, August 31st 1974.

Three men died and forty were injured in what was described as a "brawl". Mention of the national identities of the casualties and combatants was studiously avoided either by the reporter or his source on the mine, and one began to gain the impression that inter-tribal incidents were being deliberately played down.

E.R.P.M. Gold Mine, Germiston (Goldfields S.A. Group)
Sunday night 13-24 October.

All the events at E.R.P.M. - inter-tribal fighting between Malawian and Sotho miners, withdrawal of labour by Malawian and then Shangaan miners - took place in the South-Western compound. Ironically, the one man killed in the fighting was a Motswana. Relationships with neighbouring Black states on the migrant labour issue were now delicately balanced, and an immediate apology was rendered to the Botswana government. As so often, the large-scale fighting developed out of a quarrel between two men: and (as one may suspect) the cause of the quarrel was also typical - a shortage of beer, or if you like, a conflict over a scarce resource (for example, women, money, entertainment).

The odd thing about the withdrawal of labour by the Malawians which followed was that they enjoyed an immense numerical majority over the Sothos with whom they worked on day shift (1,600 - 100). Mine spokesmen were adamant that the question of Malawian security was not "the real cause" of the strike, though they had no idea what the real cause was. In the end, the Malawian strike dragged on until the men were repatriated: despite its origin it seems to resemble the incidents at West Rand Consolidated.

The Shangaans in the South Western Compound, who rioted and then went on strike on October 20th, had not been involved in the inter-tribal fighting. Their mood was militant but their demands were never articulated, because they refused to appoint representatives, and management resorted to teargas and dogs when they arrived to put their case en masse. Two miners were badly mauled and the hard core of militants made this the basis of their demand for repatriation.

Western Deep Levels Gold Mine (Anglo-American Group),
week-end of the 19-20th October.

The strike by 1,400 Malawians following the week-end stabbing of a Malawian miner was evidence of what appeared to be a growing disaffection among Malawians on the Reef

mines.

Hartebeesfontein Gold Mine, Stilfontein, Transvaal (Anglo-Vaal Group), Tuesday night, 22nd-25th October.

The rioting and subsequent strikes spreading sporadically from compound to compound originated in a pay dispute and maintained this focus, though management refused to budge on the date (December 1st) set for wage adjustments. Once again senior workers - 'boss boys and team leaders' - made the explicit demands and led the strike action. The 'ringleaders' arrested, represented all the tribal groups on the mine. The senior men claimed R6 a shift.

The Tuesday night riot took place in the No. 4 Shaft compound. One miner was shot dead and another wounded, but the police who contained the riot, claimed that they had not used their guns. Another miner was found stabbed to death.

The following day strike action for the same pay increases was taken in the No. 7 shaft compound, and police baton-charged a group of strikers who disrupted traffic and damaged cars on the road outside the compound.

On Thursday, with the men from No. 4 and No. 7 back at work, No. 5 was on strike. This brought 750 men from No. 4, who work underground with the No. 5 men, out again, but by Friday, the strike was fading.

West Rand Consolidated Gold Mine, Krugersdorp, Wednesday November 13th.

According to management, this was a peaceful strike which had "nothing to do with pay and nothing to do with fighting either". The men, 1,500 Malawians, simply said that they were tired of working and wanted to return to Malawi. A year of turbulent labour relations in the gold industry was ending quietly, it seemed. The miners handed in their pass-books and sat around in the sun. That night 100 riot policemen with dogs were out there on standby.

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RUMBLINGS OF DISCONTENT:

Strikes in the Sugar Industry

There have been strikes at five mills in the past month. Of interest, is the similarity in style, strategy and the demands made, which suggests that a process of 'imitation' was operating. All the workers involved were migrants, living in compounds, and in each case all the workers (except the Whites who sometimes scabbed) came out on strike.

The first, on the 15th October at the Felixton mill (Hulletts), in Empangeni was precipitated by a management initiated liquor raid in the compounds. It is illegal to brew beer in the compound, and some of it was confiscated. The off-duty workers, angry at this encroachment on their severely circumscribed lives, responded by running through the mill, shouting and waving sugar cane. This form of picketing proved effective - the night shift workers joined the strike and all returned to the compound to spend the rest of the night singing and chanting, most probably exhilarated by a sense of freedom in having broken out of the strict confines of compound life. The presence of 15 policemen, dog-handlers and detectives outside the compound, did not hinder the festivity.

The following day, the workers, surrounded by police, congregated outside the compound while the works committee held discussions with the Department of Labour. The workers demanded the dismissal of the compound manager who had conducted the raid. They returned to work that evening on the basis that management would investigate their grievances.

The second strike at Empangeni Mill, took place on the 25th October. The night before the off-duty workers had run through the mill brandishing sugar cane and were joined by those on shift. The police were called and remained throughout the duration of the strike. After a night spent dancing on the football field, the workers congregated there the next day. They refused to negotiate through the works committee. Management issued an ultimatum by means of a Department of Labour official, that either the workers elect a six man delegation before 1.30 to negotiate, or they would be fired. The official told them that the strike was illegal and advised them to return to work. He was shouted down by the workers.

The police then told them to disperse, which order was repeatedly ignored. The police then provoked a skirmish by moving into the crowd with dogs. A section of the crowd broke through the police cordon and headed for the compound from where they hurled stones, bricks and bottles at the police. Several workers and policemen were

injured. The police then threw tear gas at the crowd and stormed the compound, driving the workers out.

This police action had the desired effect - the workers were forced to return to work, not being given a chance to express their grievances. So management is unaware of the reasons of the strike. Their dependence on the police to settle labour disputes by such repressive actions is shortsighted to say the least.

The reasons for the strike are unknown, but a reporter of the Mercury (26th October) claims that some were dissatisfied with compound food, some with the wages and some did not know why they were striking. The fact that no demands were made suggests that the strike was an expression of general discontent.

The third strike at Darnall, also Huletts, on the 14th November was started by 150 workers. This number increased to 500 as news of the strike spread throughout the mill. The strikers carrying sticks roamed the surrounding residential area, to stop workers and cane trucks going to the mill. The White residents and children from the Darnall School were escorted by a contingent of police armed with shotguns, teargas grenades, gasmasks and dogs to the Darnall Club for protection - this organised action by Blacks was obviously interpreted as a threat to their lives. Newspaper reporters were encouraged to leave the area for their safety.

The strikers congregated outside company offices and refused to elect representatives. Management in turn refused to speak to them if they didn't. On management insistence that this was the only alternative, they elected a six-man delegation which included three works committee members. They demanded a R20 increase over their R59.84 monthly minimum wage. This was refused - increases would only be forthcoming when management decided - March 1975. The delegation also questioned whether the 10,7% increase made in October had actually been backdated as promised. Management promised them that their domestic grievances would be investigated within two weeks and finally issued an ultimatum to the workers that they return to work by 10a.m. the following day, or be fired.

The next day, the workers on being told of the ultimatum returned to work. To ensure that they took the threat seriously, management had buses on standby to take home any workers refusing to work.

On the night of the 17th November, 200 workers at Melville sugar estates refused to start work. Again the police were called to interfere and they were greeted with stones from the workers. When they refused to listen

to police orders to disperse, they were attacked by dogs.

Management refused to grant a demand for a R20 increase per month and issued an ultimatum that either the workers return to work by 10 a.m. or be fired. The 10a.m. shift broke the strike when one worker, accompanied by some policemen walked towards the mill. The hesitant workers followed.

On the 18th November, 400 workers at the Gledhow mill stopped work and surrounded the administration offices demanding a R1 increase. They had received a 10% increase on the 1st October, the minimum basic monthly wage being R55.

The police were called, 100 arriving with riot equipment and dog-handlers. The Department of Labour was also contacted, and officials negotiated with the workers. Management's position was that they either return to work or be fired.; no increases would be given since the workers would be receiving a 10% increase in April in terms of the Industrial Conciliation Agreement. The workers agreed to start the 6p.m. shift. However, when the police left the mill, the workers refused to return to work. They were told to leave the premisses and collect their pay the next day. They refused to leave, and demanded immediate payment. Further negotiations ensued and they agreed to return to work.

While similarities in the strikes suggests that the workers were 'imitating' other strikers, this does not mean that they had no grievances - rather the possibility of taking concrete action to rectify them had to be demonstrated. And while management may have temporarily destroyed any belief in the effectiveness of such action, this does not mean that the grievances and dissatisfaction have been destroyed. However, its expression has been repressively controlled by management in collaboration with the police. Once more management in South Africa have demonstrated that no incursions on management's control and monopoly of decision-making will be tolerated.

Sympathy Strikes.

However, despite the pessimistic outlook which events in the sugar industry might induce, the numerous sympathy strikes which have taken place during the past month, reveal the organised solidarity of some workers.

The strike at Motor Assemblies in Durban (22nd - 25th October) arose out of the imposition of disciplinary action on 27 men in the paint shop who failed to do overtime. Overtime is part of the contract of employment, the workers having to do 2 hours overtime, 4 days a week. Management had originally planned to fire the workers but

decided in conjunction with the liaison committee to impose a three day suspension. On hearing of the proposed action 260 workers in the paint shop downed tools. They were sent home and the factory closed.

The following day, they returned to work and elected two spokesmen to speak to management who said that walking off planned overtime was not acceptable as it interfered with the production process. The workers expressed their grievances with the overtime system. They had to work overtime continuously something they felt was not necessary because they were often on short-time. They claimed that when more than the 350 quota of cars for the day had been produced, the remainder were not marked on the production board, but put aside to be used when the workers were on short-time. So they felt that working overtime was detrimental to their interests. It was agreed that the 27 could return to work. Management promised to reply to their grievances by 3 that afternoon, after discussion on the matter had been held with the management committee. The workers received no answer by 4.30 so clocked out, refusing to work overtime.

They returned the next day (Thursday 24th October) only to find a notice on the gate forbidding the paint shop workers from clocking in their cards. Two hours later they were told that they were dismissed and were paid off.

They then went en masse to Bolton Hall to consult with the Secretary of the Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers' Union. He went to speak to management who said that they would be reemployed on Monday on a merit basis. They would be re-employed; that is, would be paid the basic rate, disregarding length of service and would lose their bonus. On Monday, 213 workers reported to work. Six were not reemployed.

So the action of the 27 workers served both to elicit a demonstration of solidarity and the expression of the workers' dissatisfaction with the overtime system.

On October 14th, another action of solidarity occurred at J & P Coats factory in Randfontein, a textile factory. 15 African and Coloured machine-operators were given the choice by management through the liaison committee, of either accepting a reduction in wages or a reduction in staff. The necessity for this was due to a decline in trade in the industry. The workers unanimously decided to accept a reduction in wages in the form of a four day week. Of course, each worker wouldn't have known whether he/she was to be fired, but only by united action could each be protected. It was also in the interests of management - the manager said, "Rather than fire workers I

prefer to do what is done overseas and reduce working hours. If you are forced to fire trained labourers you can't be sure they'll come back when you need them."

50 African workers at Plastigran Pty. Ltd. were all fired after striking. The reason for the strike was that 8 workers had learnt from the foreman that they were to be retrenched. So the rest of them stopped work. On returning the following day, they were told that they had been paid off. Subsequently, 25 of them were reemployed.

Likewise at a Springs glass works, Pilkingtons, 300 workers refused to work on the 7th and 8th of November because a fork-lift driver, who had been with the firm for 12 years was dismissed. The chairman of the works committee had approached various officials of the company about the matter. The workers assembled and were told by management that the dismissal was justified because the driver had repeatedly refused to wear the safety clothing provided and was a negligent driver. The workers were dissatisfied with the many instances of dismissal which appeared to have no justifiable reason. Their demands for reinstatement were refused so they went home.

The following morning the workers assembled outside the factory. The works committee pleaded with them to return to work. The works committee chairman was not allowed to enter the grounds.

The next day all the workers reported for work, but were told that they had to pass through the offices of Mr. Rautenbach, the Personnel Manager. The 8 works committee members were not re-employed because they had 'instigated' the dispute; 14 others were also dismissed.

The works committee was elected in May at the instigation of the Department of Labour. While wages were reviewed as a result of the works committee, they felt that they had no control over dismissals.

The works committee members, jobless after the strike, laid a charge against the employer for victimisation. They were helped financially by the Urban Training Project. Represented by Mr. Wentzel, the workers asked the judge for an order that they be re-instated. They claimed that they were victimised and dismissed while acting lawfully as members of the committee. They asked for an order in terms:

- a) Interdicting the company from dismissing or otherwise victimising them, or any other employee in terms of the Bantu Labour Relations Regulations Act.
- b) Declaring their dismissal to be null and void and reinstating them in their former employment, alternatively

reinstating them pending the determination of the criminal prosecution of the company for contravening the Act.

c) Ordering the company to pay the costs of the action.

The company denied the allegations, saying that the men threatened to resign and did so by staying away from work. They disputed whether the order sought was competent. The dispute on papers was whether or not the workers had resigned - the workers denied this.

In terms of an order by the Supreme Court on the 26th November, the workers agreed to withdraw the application and intention to proceed with prosecution. They agreed on behalf of themselves and their fellows whose employment was terminated, to co-operate with management. They undertook to raise productivity, to get the warehouses back to normal and to strive for bonus earnings where applicable. They agreed to work for continuous improvement in productivity ; output methods and quality of production. They undertook not to participate in or promote activities relating to go-slow, illegal work stoppages or strikes and will collaborate with management "in the maintenance of harmonious relationships and attitudes". They also undertook to disseminate these undertakings among fellow workers and to foster their spirit and intent.

The company undertook to re-employ the applicants and others seeking reengagement and their employment would be deemed continuous; there would be no victimisation arising out of the application. They also undertook to uplift standards of supervision and communication as quickly as possible by expanding its internal and external training programmes. They undertook to establish various committees to improve relationships and agreed to consult with the full works committee with regard to dismissals arising from redundancy. It also agreed to formally recognise the trade union. The company however, reserved the right to dismiss an employee for a reasonable cause. It accepted no liability for the applicants costs in bringing the application or for any loss of earnings. Each party would be responsible for their own costs. However, the agreement states, "as a gesture of good faith and recognising that the families of the applicants and their co-employees may suffer hardships as a result of the launching of the application, the company will pay the applicants' attorney R2000 to be utilised as he may deem fit to overcome any hardships".

These signs of growing solidarity and victories are encouraging, as is another type of strike - which perhaps could be called 'dignity strikes', two of which have occurred recently. At Pepsi Cola Bottling Company (Mobeni) 50 labourers stopped their work of offloading trucks because they objected to the manner in which a white staff

member issued instructions. The labourers were preparing to leave the factory, when the liaison committee contacted management to sort out the matter. Management in turn called in the police, but the strike ended half an hour later.

At the Big Chief Bakery at Hammarsdale, workers struck on the 31st October in sympathy with an African supervisor who had been accused of theft by the night shift baker. The workers left the Bakery and were immediately replaced by the morning shift workers. The workers involved have all been fired. The manager said, "the men walked of the job and therefore sacked themselves. We have no intention of taking them back. In fact we have already replaced them with redundant labour from the textile industry. There is no shortage of labour in Hammarsdale".

Linda Ensor, Managing Editor, South African Labour Bulletin.

LABOUR REPRESSION.

One of the facets of the repression and control of labour in South Africa, is the denial of the right of workers to withdraw their labour. To remove this right is to remove the most effective weapon of workers in their battle against employers. However, despite its illegality workers continue to resort to this means of negotiation. Some employers refuse to negotiate and have on the encouragement from the Department of Labour, attempted to suppress all attempts by workers to participate in decision making by taking retributive action against them. Six trials have taken place in the last month.

On October 8th, 139 labourers from Prefabricated Concrete Industries (Pty) (Witwatersrand) appeared in court for striking illegally. They pleaded guilty and were fined R40 each or 60 days, half of which was suspended for three years. They had gone on strike on the 4th October for higher wages - the minimum wage is R15. They rejected an offer by management of an immediate R3 increase and R2 a week after the end of December, so management called the police. In giving evidence, the Labour Officer claimed that strikes were the result of outside instigation by African trade unions who wanted to cause unrest. He told the court that only by imposing heavy penalties could "this sort of behavior" be stopped. Despite the absence of any concrete evidence, the magistrate in sentencing them concurred with these sentiments.

87 workers from IMTA Ltd., a carpet factory in Pietermaritzburg appeared in court, being charged under the Bantu Relations Regulations Act for striking on the 25th of February. Originally 92 people were charged but 5 paid R10 admission of guilt fines. No evidence was lead and the case was remanded to the 9th December.

On October 18th, 131 workers of a total of 159 charged with participating in a strike at Paper Sacks Ltd. on the 30th July (see SALB Vol.1 No: 5) - paid admission of guilt fines. The state withdrew charges from the 16 the remaining 12 who failed to answer summons being the objects of a police search.

Mr. Colgian Mbhali appeared in court on the 25th October, charged with inciting a strike at Pinetex (Frame Group) in New Germany. The state alleged that the strike was planned for the 3rd May. As yet only the state has presented evidence. The witnesses were workers who claim that Mr. Mbhali, an organiser for the National Union of Textile Workers, on two occasions told them to stay away from work - once on a bus and then at a shibeen in Clermont. One of the workers admitted on cross examination

that he was a spy paid R10 a week by the company to spy on the workers. The case was remanded to the 26th January 1975.

50 Africans and 1 Indian from Hypack Products appeared in court on the 7th November for striking illegally. (for details of the strike, see SALB Vol.1 No. 5). Originally 82 were charged but 31 paid admission of guilt, thereby weakening the position of the workers who refused to do so. The charge against the Indian was withdrawn, but the prosecutor said 13 other employees were to be issued with summons. The case was remanded to the 2nd December, when the workers were found guilty, being charged R30 fines or 30 days. Appeals by their lawyer, Mr. C. Nicholson, that an eight day trial was punishment enough for people with such scarce resources, were ignored.

270 workers from the Randburg Municipality who went on strike because a clerical error had resulted in them being short paid, were held in custody over the weekend after the strike. 200 agreed to return to work, so were released on their own recognisances. Their case was remanded to the 12th November. The remaining 70 were remanded in custody because they refused to return to work and appeared in court on November 6th. They were sentenced to R20 fines or 20 days. Most of them paid the fines.

Linda Ensor, Manag Editor, South African Labour Bulletin.

LABOUR IN THE KIMBERLEY DIAMOND FIELDS

What was the role of Blacks on the Diamond Fields? To what extent and in what ways did they contribute to the establishment and success of the diamond industry? I will examine the early history of Black participation in the mining economy of Griqualand West, omitting the equally interesting and highly complex problem of the reasons for and effects of, this participation on the rural end of the migrant labour spectrum.

The Griqua, Batlapin and Koranna were dispossessed of their wealth (i.e. land) firstly informally by White miners, speculators and farmers, and later by formal annexation. This had tremendous implications for the tribes in the Cis-Molopo area; the Griqualand West Rebellion of 1878 was almost certainly caused primarily by land deprivation and the general economic decline of the local peoples, and that this revolt was crushed, only at great expense, by the British Army.

At first political power and control moved largely into the hands of the White miners themselves. Diggers' Committees were set up to ensure good government and provide rules and regulations relevant to the circumstances. Later with the advent of Imperial rule in the form of the Commissioners Administering the Government (1871-2) and the Southey/Currey regime (1872-5), power came to be concentrated in the hands of British officials and an Executive Council, and laws applying to the Cape Colony were extended to the area, all miners having to submit to state control. The issue then arose as to whether Blacks and Whites had equal rights to hold miner's certificates and employ servants.

The crisis of the Black Flag Rebellion of 1875 was principally caused by White miners wishing to prevent Blacks operating as miners, as distinct from labourers or servants. Although the 'Rebellion' was unsuccessful, and Southey took a strong line in support of the principle of equal rights for all before the law, his removal from office soon afterwards and the adoption of a more 'realistic' policy by Lanyon, his successor, seems to have resulted in the decline of an independent Black miner class.

Mining at this early stage (up to 1876) was still a relatively simple and small-scale enterprise, engaged in by individuals or groups who employed up to ten labourers per claim. (Only after 1874 was a miner allowed to work more than one or two claims (no more than ten) and were joint-stock companies allowed). Large mining companies only began to emerge after 1876 when changes in legislation and the growing difficulty of mining operations led

to a transformation in the nature of the industry. These companies now employed White and Black labour in large quantities.

In every case after 1875 where a clash of interests occurred between White and Black, or between the Mining Companies and Labour, the state took a fairly partisan attitude.

On racial issues two instances can be cited. The state was prepared to take up arms against the indigenous tribes who had been dispossessed of their lands and their livelihood by the events of the 1870s. The Griqualand West Rebellion of 1878 marked the end of the Griqua and local tribes as a significant factor in the history of the area. On the Fields themselves, although the White Miners' Disturbances of 1872 and 1875 against the rights of Black miners had been officially put down, the legal position of Black subjects was gradually eroded after August 1875 when Southey was dismissed.

On labour issues, the passing of the legislation facilitated the growth of joint stock companies which militated against small-scale mining. The State committed itself to the protection of Company property by acting against striking workers in 1884 (White Miners Strike over searching) and in 1889 against a Black miners strike. On both occasions workers were killed by Company guards and police. The State was prepared to aid large companies like De Beers by supplying it with Convict Labour at very little cost, and it was prepared to actively intervene to protect large-scale employers against IDB. After 1884, it even undertook to police and supervise searching at public expense.

There were three significant groups of Blacks involved in the events that took place on the Diamond Fields:

- a) 'Native' Claimholders and Diamond Dealers,
- b) Black Convict Labour,
- c) the great bulk of Black workers who worked as paid labourers on the mines of individual (Black or White) miners, as well as for the companies that sprang up from the late 1870s. The evolution of the Compound System was to be a signal feature of the history of this group.

A. Claimholding and Diamond Dealing by Blacks 1871-75

Without doubt one of the most significant themes in the history of relations between the Digger Community and the British Government in these years must be seen to be the tug of war between those who defended the legal right of all British citizens (Black or White) to hold Diggers Licences and to employ 'Native Labour' (amongst whom Lieut.

Governor R. Southey and J.B. Currey, Secretary to the Government, must be seen as foremost protagonists); and the other group, clearly the majority of White Diggers, Dutch and British and 'foreign' who argued that Blacks should not be allowed to hold claim licences or miner's certificates.

The fact is that Blacks had responded from the very earliest days of the 'Rush' to the opportunity presented to get-rich-quick by seeking diamonds. A report from the "Argus" correspondent at Klipdrift as early as 15th July 1870, noted that "many diamonds had been got on the surface by natives" and that Stafford Parker had set himself up as head of the "Mutual Protection Committee" to "consider all relations and disputes between the natives and diggers" at nightly meetings.

In 1874 the Inspector of Diggings reported 30 White and 120 Coloured claimholders at Bultfontein digging.

In the following year a petition to Southey signed by 125 Black miners and diggers at Du Toit's Pan and Bultfontein, and on behalf of "all other Coloured persons", expressed alarm at the course of events that had led up to the Black Flag Rebellion, and stated that if "unjust and unreasonable demands" of the White miners were complied with, (i.e. the removal of licences from Black claimholders) this would bring "poverty and ruin upon your Petitioners".

The reasons for this antagonism to Black miners were multiple. A myth took shape that Coloured claimholders were more successful than White ones. Matthews states that: "A great deal of animosity towards the natives existed about this period (1872). Part of this feeling was originated from many White men not possessed of claims being jealous of their Black brethren digging at Du Toit's Pan and Bultfontein".

Also most important, especially when reinforced by the considerable racial prejudice present amongst the White community, was the fact that Blacks who held Diggers Licences could receive stolen gems and sell them legally. "Our only security against constant robbery by our servants was the difficulty they found in disposing of the diamonds they could not legally hold", wrote one White miner. All Black miners were potential IDB's as far as the Diggers Committees were concerned, and had to be treated as such. The only way to prevent Blacks indulging in IDB was to do away with Black miners!

An additional factor was that Black miners could legally employ servants and in the eyes of the Diggers Committees this merely created a loophole for 'vagrants' to legally obtain passes and 'hang about' the diggings for

the purpose of indulging in IDB. The number of persons contracted to Black miners was claimed to be in the region of 800 by November 1874.

Although the Orange Free State Ordinance (No. 3) of 1871 respecting the Diamond Fields did not specifically prohibit Blacks from holding claim licences, it left the management of the Diggings for the most part in the hands of the Diggers Committees, and they were usually very clear on this point. For example, the Rules and Regulations framed by the Committee of Diggers on the farm Voortuizicht in 1871 made it quite clear in Article 10: "that no licence to dig on the farm Voortuizicht be granted to a native". These attitudes and policies became a feature of White digger politics in the years that followed.

After the British annexation of Griqualand West in October 1871, numerous petitions reached the Commissioners Administering the Government, pressing for the reimplementa-tion of this law for the return of the government of the Fields to the Diggers themselves.

These demands were followed in July 1872 by serious disturbances instigated by White miners including tent burnings, at De beers, New Rush, and a consequent break-down of law and order. The Commissioners first reacted by declaring a state of emergency and enrolling special constables to preserve law and order. However, after meeting representatives of a Diggers Committee, two of them (Giddy and Campbell) agreed to issue a Proclamation suspending all diggers licences held by natives and other Coloured persons.

In future all applications from Coloured persons for digger's licences had to be made in writing and be supported by at least five respectable White diggers. This clearly placed Black claimholders at the mercy of White diggers, and there were reports of the latter taking over claims belonging to Blacks.

Thompson, the third Commissioner, however dissented from the decision of his colleagues - and was backed firmly by Governor Barkley - who maintained that "under no circumstances could the Proclamation be approved or confirmed", as it was contrary to "reason and justice". Accordingly a new Proclamation confirmed the right of Blacks to hold claims as before and restored the position that had pertained prior to 23rd July 1872. But this was not the end of the issue. White reaction continued. At mass meetings of White miners from August 1874 onwards, the question of IDB and the role of the Black miner again assumed prominence.

While there was some sign of White support for Southey when he took a hard line against the White miners who began to arm and drill in the streets of Kimberley, he was barely able to avoid an outbreak of violence in what came to be known as the Black Flag Revolt. White vigilantes patrolled Kimberley under arms.

Southey's analysis of the situation was sound. "A point had thus been reached at which the persons engaged passed from passive resistance to open breach of the law, and the government had before it the alternative of enforcing the law at all hazards or yielding upon a point which not only involved a question of the control of the township but the deeper and graver question of relations between H.M.'s White and Coloured subjects."

One of the main causes of the Rebellion, wrote Currey, was "a desire to bring the native races into more thorough subjection than is possible under the Constitution of this Province".

Only with the arrival of Imperial troops at the end of June was order restored. But ironically, after this considerable stand on the principle that Barkley had himself defended so strongly in 1872, Southey and Currey were dismissed from office when the Governor arrived at the Fields.

In November of 1875 a committee was appointed by a general meeting to examine the question of government and control of the mines but the whole issue of 'Native Claimholders' appears to have evaporated by this time and is never again encountered in my reading of the literature.

The 'Native Problem' on the Diamond Fields now becomes a 'Labour Problem'.

B. Convict Labour

"In the convict barracks, or (De Beers) branch gaol, the perfection of the compound system may be said to have been reached. The only important difference being that between compulsory and voluntary service". The use of convict labour from the early 1880s, firstly on the brick-yards and on public works, and then on the Diamond Mines set the pattern for labour relations in the years to come. According to Matthews, who is usually reliable, some 67,000 prisoners passed through Kimberley jail between 1873 and 1887, so the significance of convict labour should not be underestimated. In the eyes of employers, this kind of rightless and powerless workforce was so ideal that De Beers Mining Company undertook in 1884 to build and operate a convict station at its own expense, to house 3-400 convicts. "I see no reason why it should

not prove most successful in application, and beneficial also to the public and to the government", reported the Inspector of Diamond Mines.

The arrangement not only relieved the government of the cost of maintenance and discipline of convicts and took the pressure off the congestion at the crowded Kimberley jail/asylum/ hospital/ poorhouse (!) but it also supplied the De Beer's Mine with much sought after labour. The De Beers Company Branch Convict Station was said to be by "far the best and safest prison in the country" and guaranteed hard work from prisoners from sunrise to sunset (even though this was specifically against the law) at very low cost to the Company of housing, feeding and clothing the convicts. Seymour Dallas, the superintendent of the De Beer's Station told a commission of inquiry in September 1887 that the maximum cost per annum of supplying a man with clothes and blankets (they slept on the floor) was £2.1.7.

In addition the Company paid the Government 2d per day per convict. A report on the station in 1890 estimated that this arrangement brought in approximately £1000 per annum clear profit in addition to the fact that it took the burden of discipline and management of the convicts off the state.

The report of the Committee on Convict and Gaols reported with satisfaction on the fact that these convicts "appear to be very tractable and docile". Little wonder since in the few days that it visited the mine it had a number of complaints from convicts about the amount of brutality that existed, and the liberal use of the sjambok. The Police Magistrate was supposed to visit the mine once a week to consider complaints from prisoners and see to their welfare. However, it appears that he was not only in the pay of the Company for carrying out these duties but that he seldom went beyond the formalities of writing down complaints, even when individual White overseers were notorious for their brutality towards the convicts.

Although Dallas agreed that he had "no legal right to punish any convict", he admitted that such punishments were carried out. Sawyers mentions that stocks (for three hours at a time), solitary dark cells and the cat were used as modes of punishment. In effect, in this situation law fell into the hands of the White overseers. The registrar of Natives admitted to the commission that he did nothing to see that justice was done either within the prisons or in the courts when Blacks were brought to trial, mostly for pass offences.

What emerges is a fairly grim picture of large num-

bers of men being arrested and jailed for minor offences, and then finding themselves working for virtually nothing for periods of a minimum of three months, under a system of rigorous discipline and sometimes subject to a certain amount of brutality without real access to legal authorities.

The coincidence of interests between a capitalist mining company and state authorities on the issue of Convict Labour set the stage for the introduction of the Compound System on the Diamond Fields.

C. Black Labour and the Evolution of the Compound System.

It has been estimated that some 300 000 Africans came to work on the diamond mines between 1871 and 1875, with an average of something like 10 000 being present on the Fields at any particular time.

These men were drawn from all over Central and Southern Africa, but seem to have come principally from certain areas. The returns of the Servants Registry Office/ or Natives Registry Office as it was variously called, give a fairly detailed picture of the numbers of labourers at the Fields at any specific time, but it must be remembered that then, as now, not all servants are registered by any means, and all figures from official sources must be treated with some reserve.

I have taken a sample from two time-periods to attempt to get an idea of where labour was drawn from. The numbers of men involved in the 1873-4 period were mostly from the Mahawas (\pm 12,000), and then much further down the list come the Shangaans (\pm 2,500) and Basuto (\pm 1,500), and even further down Zulus and Batlapin. In the later period selected, 1883-4, "Secocoeni Basutos" (\pm 2,000) and Shangaans (\pm 700) feature fairly strongly, with a significant increase of the Zulu (\pm 600). The low participation of Cape Colonials is significant, as is that of the Griquas, Koranna and Baralong living in the immediate vicinity of Griqualand West.

The figures show too an increase over time in the participation of tribes living in present-day Rhodesia and Mocambique.

The hardships, both natural and man-made, of the journey to the Fields which sometimes took up to three months, were severe. Cold, lack of food and drink and fatigue took such a toll on migrants that it frequently rendered them incapable of working when they arrived at their destination. Southey took measures to protect these men from exploitation on their arrival and even gave instructions for a new hospital to be built to which they

were to be sent if in a poor condition.

Apart from the physical hardships encountered, labourers who had to cross the O.F.S. en route to the Diamond Fields were frequently molested or arrested and imprisoned for pass offences.

Another hazard encountered by potential work-seekers was TOUTING. "In connection with the Kaffir labour market" writes Angove, "not a few White men amassed quite a fortune by riding out of the camp on horseback along the road leading to the Transvaal by which the Kafirs generally arrived. When the touts met a gang of boys coming to the camp, they engaged them there and then at a stipulated wage. Should the tout have gone a considerable distance before he fell in with any natives, or if the gang he met were insufficient in numbers, a halt was made at the nearest watering-place, where the party waited until other gangs of boys arrived who were also engaged on the same terms as the previous ones. All being ready for a start, the tout would form up his army of raw Kafirs in marching order, and riding in front, enter the camp with an air of much consequence. In the camp the boys were taken to an open space, where they were made to sit down whilst the tout sent word around among the diggers informing them he had a gang of boys to sell. The diggers requiring labour then went to the place, which resembled a slave-market in modified form, where they selected the boys they required. One pound per head was the price the tout generally received". These men were then taken to the magistrate's court and registered as servants to their new masters. This enabled the master in the event of (the servant's) laziness or disobedience to bring him to the police station for probably a dozen lashes of the cat.

Not surprisingly, these "newly-purchased boys" frequently ran away. As Blacks frequently broke contracts and left the Diamond Fields, "Return Passes" were instituted by the Registrar of Servants in an attempt to prevent them doing so. On the one hand this evidence seems to point to some level of labour consciousness amongst Blacks, at this early date, and on the other it shows a willingness by the authorities to take steps to prevent them exercising the right to withdraw their labour.

There was a certain irony in the situation however, as increased attempts to control labour and pressure to halt the flow of guns to Blacks, merely had the effect of creating a labour shortage. J.B. Curry pointed out in 1873 that the administration should be careful not to harass natives too much, lest they cease to offer their labour at all. These problems became so serious by 1876 that the Governor appointed a Commission "to report upon the Supply of, and Demand for Native Labour within this

province," and legislation was enacted as a result of its recommendations which "provided for the better protection of Native Labourers" by introducing a more rigid contract and pass system. This was a clear indicator of the change in climate for Blacks that the Lanyon administration introduced on the Fields.

For the most part contracts seem to have been for about three months, though this is largely impressionistic. Having been employed by a Digger, labourers faced fairly grim conditions, usually working from sunrise to sunset, with poor accommodation (if supplied at all), and a diet of mielie-pap and offal. The dangerous conditions of work on the Dry Diggings also made for a high accident rate, especially amongst Black workers.

Salaries for Black labourers seemed to vary from 15/- per week to 30/- per week and there is some evidence that relatively higher wages were paid to some individuals in the early years. By 1886 there is a more or less uniform wage of 7/6 - 15/- per week plus food and accommodation.

'Native Labourers' were always IDB suspects, and the whole question of labour control frequently centred around the question of searching servants and preventing them from keeping the diamonds they found and selling them to 'Kopje Wallopers' (itinerant diamond dealers) or 'Kafir Eating House' keepers. A search for a solution to the connected problems of a well-disciplined labour force, and means of controlling IDB, led to the evolution of the Compound System, based on the model of prison compounds (as above). In 1885 the Inspector of Mines reported that "it is now generally accepted that the best safeguard against illicit traffic will be in housing mining employees in compounds, so as not only to bring them under better control, but also to separate them from the bad influences incidental to frequenting any questionable canteens or stores. The effect upon Kafirs of providing regular barrack accommodation on their employer's floors, where they would be well housed, regularly looked after and attended to in sickness by a medical officer, where they could provide themselves with food and clothes worth the money paid for them, and where in moderation and under restraint from excess they could procure wholesome liquors; would be undeniably beneficial."

By 1892 there were twelve Compounds in Kimberley housing 9 000 workers.

The Compound system, like the use of convict labour, gave to employers almost complete power over the Black labour force, and even though a Protector of Natives was appointed to look after the rights of 'compound natives'

his influence and control does not seem to have been great.

The issue of 'searching' which arose in the early 1880s, illustrated the degree of stratification that had taken place in the labour force of the Diamond Fields. Although by 1880 it was established that Blacks were largely labourers, and mechanics and overseers were White to a man, the issue that caused a real division and which led to the 1884 Strike of White miners was that of being stripped for searching. White miners did not object to Blacks being submitted to this treatment, but refused to do so themselves, in the end won their case against management, and as a result formed a trade union movement to protect their interests in future. The great strike at the Wesselton Compound in 1894 in which six men were killed by the police and 300 dismissed from their jobs showed that no similar successes would be allowed to be achieved by Black workers.

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EVIDENCE AGAINST THE SCHLEBUSCH REPORT

Dear Editors,

You can perhaps imagine my shock at discovering for the first time through your journal that the Schlebusch Commission considers a rather naive, badly transcribed and thus error-ridden, paper which I wrote five years ago as part of the 'revolutionary ideology' underpinning the Wages Commissions. At least that discovery cleared up one matter: a few months after I left South Africa in 1970, to begin post-graduate studies in Britain, the Minister of the Interior prohibited my return. As is now usual in these cases, he declined at the time to inform me of his reasons. My fellow 'conspirator' Clive Keegan was I understand, banned on the recommendation of Schlebusch.

Though as a socialist I remain convinced of the validity of the central kernel of the ideas towards which I was groping in 1969, viz. that at the root of the hardships and sufferings experienced by the African people lies the capitalist mode of production which robs the workers of the products of their labour, the naivety of the analysis and proposed tactics in the paper in question should as you pointed out in Keegan's case, have been sufficient to have disqualified it as a piece penned by a 'trained communist'. More important than that though is that the paper did not at that time nor subsequently have any influence on actual NUSAS policy. I did not myself attend the seminar at which the paper was distributed, and I understand from delegates that it played no significant part in the proceedings. In fact it would have just as logical for Schlebusch to have quoted the papers of speeches of the occasional conservative students, whose views NUSAS sought during this period of reassessment, as indicative of the fact that NUSAS was fundamentally a conservative organisation. As for the wages commissions as you pointed out, I played no role in them and was not even in the country when they were set up. Halton Cheadle and Dave Hemson I may have briefly met in 1968, but I can not claim to know them, and certainly never discussed strategy with them.

Though you are undoubtedly right to attribute Schlebusch's overall acceptance of 'conspiracy theory' to factors other than dishonesty, I cannot myself believe that years of infiltration by the Special Branch did not yield more accurate a picture of the inner workings, forces, influences and ideologies within NUSAS. In which case the Commission's selection of data to 'prove' this particular 'conspiracy', including the elevation to prominence of my uninfluential paper, becomes merely another unsur-

prising but sordid little example of the depths to which the powerful and priveleged of South Africa are prepared to go in order to preserve their domination.

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BOOK REVIEW.

FRANCIS WILSON:LABOUR IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOLD MINES 1911 - 1969(Cambridge University Press 1972).

In trying to understand South African society - both its history and present structure - one has to grapple with a fabric of myth, misconception, propaganda and lies. So that when reading the writings of those who have managed to cast aside this obscuring fabric one often feels a sense of rediscovery of one's own country. Reading Francis Wilson's book has contributed to my personal process of rediscovery. This is particularly true in that he has refined the somewhat crude view that I had of the gold mining industry. Along with most school boys I knew that the mines were very significant in South Africa's industrial development, that they earn valuable foreign exchange and that in some rather comfortable way they depend heavily on African migrant labour. My knowledge is now somewhat more detailed as regards the structure of the industry. However, as regards the question of migrant labour I am less certain as to what has been clarified and what has been obscured.

Let me deal briefly with Wilson's outline of the structure of the industry concentrating on aspects that I feel are particularly interesting. The first aspect is the almost legendary financial power of the Chamber of Mines. This organisation, set up mainly to deal with labour, is almost the industry's public relations arm and like most organisations it manages to be more palatable than those somewhat sinister 'Rand Lords' of the past. That it is the more apparent form of a powerful set of financial interests may be best appreciated from the following:-

"By 1969 Chamber of Mines, which in 1968 had broadened its constitution so as to include not only gold and coal mines in the Transvaal and Orange Free State, but all types of mines in all four provinces, had, in the words of its president, 'a membership of 16 financial companies and 108 mining companies, including gold, uranium, coal, diamond, platinum, antimony, asbestos, and copper mining companies.' Its gold mines alone employed more than 400,000 men and produced a record total of 31,28 million fine ounces of gold which formed 7.5% of the gross national product for the year." (Page 28)

The Chamber and the companies it represents clearly form a powerful financial lobby, a power which has had considerable impact on labour policies. The collusion in the labour field has probably been a major factor in shaping the whole system of labour control in South Africa.

What is also of considerable interest is the very substantial power of the Anglo-American Corporation within the gold mining industry. Through a series of cross holdings and the resultings interlocking directorships its influence would appear substantial. To quote Wilson:-

"The dominance which Anglo-American had acquired by then (1965) is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that of the twenty eight mines that had started producing gold in the twenty years after the Second World War only one did not have an Anglo American nominee on the board of directors."
(Page 27)

The emergence of the group system or the mining finance houses is related to the problems encountered in mining. The costs of developing a mine are very large (as an indication Wilson gives a figure of R60 million in 1969), yet not all mines are successful and there is a wide variation between the rich and poor mines. In 1969 the five wealthiest mines accounted for more than half the working profit of R306 million. The group system would appear to be the best way of handling such wide fluctuations in profit and large capital expenditure.

The monolithic nature of the mining groups does disguise some interesting divergencies. Four of the five richest mines are owned by Anglo American, which is a significant fact given the problem of the poor mines. This can give rise to differences in labour policies with the richer mines being better also to accomodate rising wages. So whilst Wilson does not suggest that this is the basis for substantial disagreement it does point to the fact that there are not entirely homogeneous interests within the Chamber of Mines. Anglo's role in leading the recent wage rush would seem to suggest this.

As Wilson points out, "The three factors determining the revenue of a mine are the total amount of ore that is broken, hoisted and milled, the grade of the ore milled and the price of gold." (Page 33)
Profits in turn depend on keeping down the cost of breaking and milling that ore. Since for most of the

century the price of gold has been fairly constant (apart from devaluations) the pressure for cost reduction is considerable. As a percentage of revenue the African cash wage bill ranged from 13,7% in 1936 to 8,9% in 1969 which might apparently suggest, in view of the order of magnitude of the percentages, that gold profits can't be attributed to "sweated black labour." When one realises, however, that in 1936 the ratio of Black to White workers was 8,4 : 1 and in 1969 9,1 : 1 then just how little the vast bulk of workers were getting is staggering. If wages had been markedly higher the profit position would have been very different and I find it hard to agree with Wilson's more optimistic view that the impact of wage increases spread over time would not have been as stark as implied by the present gap.

This pressure for cost reduction is reinforced by an element of irreversibility in gold mining since once ore has been by-passed it is very difficult to mine it at a later stage. So ore that is payable today may be rendered unpayable and, therefore, irretrievably lost tomorrow by a rise in costs. This is particularly true in the marginal mines. The continual hope is a rise in the gold price. Changed mining technology is not much use in an old mine since the costs of conversion are apparently very high.

So whilst the mass of profits earned is large this disguises some more intricate problems in the profit calculus of individual mines, or groups for that matter. It is also clear why the recent increases in the gold price have been important although it is evident that a high rate of inflation will remain a problem, since gold being the commodity is, does not allow for the passing on of cost increases.

Probably one of the most staggering facts to emerge from the book is that in real terms Black wages were almost constant from 1911 to 1969. In fact since real wages fell between 1889 and 1911 the story is even more dismal. The usual counter that you cannot only take cash wages but must also allow for payments in kind is a dubious one. As Wilson shows both Black and White workers receive payments in kind. Taking these into account the overall position regarding Black wages does not change. Other aspects of the work situation emerge such as no overtime pay for Blacks until 1944 and no form of ear protection for drillers until 1969 which for most industries where labour can form unions, would never have been tolerated.

Wilson deals at some length with the relationship between Black and White employment where the trade union power of the latter has militated against change. He argues that White unions have prevented Blacks from rising to more skilled jobs and, therefore, earning higher wages. The mine owners would be amenable, he argues, to higher Black wages linked to the performance of more skilled jobs. Such a link would have the two-fold effect of relieving the skilled labour bottleneck and also of making Black wages more competitive with those in the manufacturing sector. The gap between mining wages and those for Blacks in manufacturing is large, so that it is largely with the assistance of their recruiting agencies and pass laws controlling labour movement, that mines (and White agriculture) continue to employ people at their extraordinarily low wage rates. However, as the threat of labour boycotts and foreign governmental influence increases so must labour supplies from South Africa be considered. This factor along with the rise in the gold price must be largely responsible for recent significant increases in wages.

The size of recent wage increases and the short time period over which they have been effected, along with the inordinately long period where real wages remained constant, raises doubts in my mind as to the extent to which White trade unions were in fact the stumbling block to African advancement. Undoubtedly they were a factor. Yet surely such a wage structure cannot be viewed as entirely contrary to the interests of mine owners. Their interests are not only to earn profits but to earn the maximum profits. Bearing this in mind, one might not so easily accept the rhetoric of White trade union power being the major stumbling block to change. The complete lack of adequate training until fairly recently seems to bear this out.

The question of skills is a vexing one in the South African context and probably particularly so in mining. One can never be sure whether skill relates to the actual requirements of the job or whether it merely relates to a definitional requirement of White worker protection. This means that Blacks are all too often already doing crucial skilled jobs which are not defined as such. One, therefore, has to be wary of suggesting that eliminating the colour bar will allow for Blacks occupying more skilled jobs and earning higher wages. Such reasoning also seems to implicitly accept that wages are closely related to job content in a scientific fashion, which despite pretensions to the contrary is not the case. Greater skills and higher wages have also usually been related to a more stable labour force, so as Wilson says:

"However, if the colour bar were to be removed, the picture would change entirely. No industry can afford to have a 100% annual turnover of its skilled labour force" (p. 139).

I do not believe he provides sufficient evidence for such a contention for the reasons I suggest - what exactly is a skilled job and who is doing them now and can we relate skills to higher wages in such a seemingly automatic fashion? More separation of myth, rhetoric and fact is needed and being somewhat more skeptical I feel we should remember that wage rates are more a product of economic interests than time and motion studies.

This brings me to a more substantial problem I had in reading the book. As indicated at the outset, the question of migrant labour and labour supplies is to my mind less satisfactorily dealt with. Of course one cannot criticise an author for not writing five hundred pages rather than close on two hundred. The former would have meant a complete labour history of Southern Africa, in which the gold mines have played such a crucial role, whereas the latter does not allow for this. The author's intention is best expressed in his own concluding sentences:

"This work has been done in the hope that it serves to shed some light on one small aspect of the Southern African scene and that it will help, with the work of other social scientists, to inform the debate about future policy on which our well-being depends..... The cure may demand political action: the diagnosis requires economic analysis" (p.155).

It is the very last sentence that gives rise to problems for it is symptomatic of the conventional emphasis on separating economic analysis from political issues. This implies in itself a particular approach to the problems examined. The alternative is not to divide the political and the economic for purposes of analysis but to integrate them more successfully into the analysis in order to better understand the political economy. I shall not attempt to elaborate on the divergence between what might be labelled the conventional and political economy approaches for much has been written on it. (1)

I would argue that Wilson is somewhere between the two approaches, this being illustrated both by his use of conventional marginal analysis and the interpretation of certain anthropological data. I shall try and clarify this and indicate the problems of interpretation that it leads to, by taking the questions of labour exploitation

and labour supplies.

Wilson discusses Black labour exploitation by their fellow White workers initially in terms of marginal revenue product curves and constant Black wages (pp. 142-144) but then correctly says, and I quote at length:

"However, analysis of exploitation in the narrow technical sense of the term is inadequate for it begs a more important question. Even if it were to be shown that Black mine workers are not being paid less than their marginal revenue product it could be argued that they are being exploited in the sense that the whole supply curve for labour is manipulated by the political and economic powers within the economy for the benefit of the privileged. The powerful cannot avoid the charge of exploitation merely by showing that workers are not paid less than their marginal revenue product. So long as one group of workers is denied the power to withstand pressures from other power blocks within the economy, so long as one group of workers is denied the opportunity to use any skills that they may develop, so long will it be true to say that that group of workers is being used by others for their own end. And that is exploitation" (p. 144).

Why then even give attention to exploitation in the technical sense for in fact it verges on the entirely trivial? The substance to the contention that exploitation can be explained by marginal revenue product curves rests on a sophisticated general equilibrium process where the wage rate is determined by the interaction of consumer demand, factor supply and the technologically determined marginal productivities of capital and labour. But this substance falls away since as has been shown (once again) comparatively recently, the real wage rate is determined not within the economic system but outside it and, therefore, by political and institutional factors. (2) It is the understanding of these latter aspects of the Southern African political economy that is required; marginal analysis obscures more than it illuminates.

Yet whilst in almost poetical terms Wilson states that exploitation is a more substantive issue than marginal revenue products, he does not in fact incorporate this into his analytical framework. I would argue that this can be fruitfully done by realising that both the low wage level and labour migration were initiated by

the process of primary (or primitive) accumulation in the industrial sector, particularly the mining sector, in South Africa. G. Arrighi outlines the essentials of the analysis, as follows:

"Broadly speaking, primary accumulation can be defined as a process in which non-market mechanisms predominate and through which the gap between productivity in the capitalist sector and productivity in the non-capitalist sector is widened. The process is completed when the gap is so wide that producers in the latter sector are prepared to sell their labour-time 'spontaneously' at whatever wage rate is consistent with steady accumulation in the capitalist sector. Once this situation has been attained, the Lewis postulate of the predominance of market mechanisms in the reallocation of labour from the non-capitalist to the capitalist sector of the economy becomes realistic, though political mechanisms continue to play a subsidiary role" (3)

What is implied by this process of primary accumulation is that the underdevelopment of the traditional sector is integral to the development of the industrial or modern sector. The concept of underdevelopment and the theoretical approach involved avoids the trap of mistaking the contemporary objective fact of the existence of pervasive dualism as the explanation of labour migration. Dualism is the symptom of an historical process, not its cause.

Here again Wilson seems to fall between the two approaches for he is clearly aware of, and lists, the numerous non-economic and legislative factors that have been used to generate labour migration. He deals with the poverty in rural areas (particularly in South Africa) which makes these people less peasants than a form of rural proletariat who rely on agriculture to supplement wage income. Yet without further interpretation he cites evidence that migrants gain economically from labour migration as if such economic motivation makes the process more palatable. This would seem to implicitly accept the dualism thesis of a movement from low productivity - low wage areas to those of higher productivity - high wage areas. Unless, however, one retains the perspective of dualism as a process of underdevelopment, it is all too easy to misunderstand the dynamic of the situation.

Since complete proletarianisation does not take place the traditional sector has played an important role in maintaining the low wage structure and labour migration.

That certain groups migrate because it is economically sensible is not the substantive issue for within the structure the alternatives are limited.

The substantive issue is to understand the dynamic of the situation since this provides the context in which to assess alternatives. Meillassoux states the matter as follows:

"Capitalism acts in two different ways. On the one hand it elicits a sector of production built up in its own image through the presence of capital and its corollaries - private control of the means of production and wage earning. On the other hand it feeds off the pre-capitalist sectors through the mechanism of primitive accumulation- with the contradictory results of both perpetuating and destroying them at the same time" (4)

Two problematic issues are raised here. The one is the 'image of capitalism' that exists in the peripheral areas and the other, the dual process of perpetuation and destruction of the traditional sectors. The 'images' are characterised by capital intensity and 'cheap labour' - a combination that conventional economics would find difficult to deal with.

These factors pose a number of problems for change, of which I shall try and give a brief indication. For instance as Wilson points out, more could be done to develop rural areas so as to raise incomes for the family group. How could this be done? If it is to be a substantial attempt then there are a number of consequences. Such peasant production will have to compete with more capital intensive White agriculture - can it do this and will the latter accept such competition? If it attempts to compete by itself becoming more capital intensive, does this not merely exacerbate the problem by further destroying the traditional sector and so increasing the need to create employment? Yet by its very nature the capital intensive industrial sector has a limited capacity to expand employment. If we add to this complicated nexus of tendencies, the impact that rising wages, in say manufacturing, will have on choice of techniques and therefore employment creation, then it is clear that proposals for change need to be carefully assessed.

Of course, one cannot expect Wilson to deal with this whole complicated range of developmental problems in his book, the scope of which is much more limited. I raise them to show how different approaches can lead to the id-

entification of different problem areas and the consequent obstacles to change. The point is that Wilson seems to hover between two theoretical paradigms. So for instance dualism is not seen as the product solely of low productivity, but then neither is it seen as the product of capitalist industrialisation. Low Black wages in the mines tend to be attributed in large part to White trade unions but the question of the mine owners interests is not adequately examined. As a result an important dimension of the effect of increased skills, higher wages and a settled labour force is not discussed. I would suggest that the impact of removing the colour bar might prove less hopeful if it were.

In short, therefore, I am suggesting that if more attention were given to understanding the overall political economy, then we might get the question of race in clearer perspective. We may then be a little less sanguine about the reforming potential of some proposed changes. If the underdevelopment nexus briefly outlined above applies, then neither education, higher wages, trade unions, removing the colour bar or rural development are justified *per se* merely because they appear enlightened in themselves. They require searching examination in the context of the dynamic of the political economy so that they can be allowed to fulfil their progressive potential rather than in fact merely marginally modify the structure.

I learnt a great deal about the structure of the gold mining industry. However, on the question of labour migration and the colour bar, that process of rediscovery mentioned at the outset found itself in somewhat of a cul-de-sac.

References

- 1) See for instance M. Dobb: "Theories of Value and Distribution" (C.U.P. 1973) or Hunt and Schwartz (eds.) "Critique of Economic Theory" (Penguin). For the different interpretations that the approaches imply for South Africa see Martin Legassick: "South Africa: Capital Accumulation and Violence" (Economy and Society Vol 3 No 3 August 1974) and "The Frontier Tradition in South African Historiography" (University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies Collected Seminar Papers No. 12).
- 2) See M. Dobb: "Theories of Value and Distribution" for an excellent debate in this regard.
- 3) G. Arrighi and J. Saul: "Essays on the Political Economy of Africa" (Monthly Review Press 1974).
- 4) C. Meillassoux (ed.): "The Development of Indigenous Trade and Markets in West Africa" (C.U.P. 1971).

Anthony Hocking - "Oppenheimer and Son"
McGraw Hill 1973.

This is , perhaps inevitably, a disappointing book. We learn that "Ernest" and "Harry" are nice, unassuming men, kind to their subordinates, and interested in such things as paintings and horse-racing. Their professional activities, as described by Hocking, sound like nothing so much as a friendly game of Monopoly down at the Club. "As a start, purely as an exploratory measure, Harry moved into Cabada: he bought a 14.5% stake in a big Canadian corporation" On it goes, for page after page, as Oppenheimer and Son are lucky enough to land on Mayfair and Park Lane, and clever enough to "Take a chance". They win the game because they are more willing to follow an intelligent hunch in the early stages, and much more able to do so in the later stages.

Ernest Oppenheimer came of a modest German family, and followed his brothers and cousins into the business of dealing in South African diamonds. The family got into the game at a very early stage, and expanded with it. The diamond industry soon became the very symbol of monopoly, with the single producer, De Beers, selling to a Syndicate of dealers who divided the market between them. Ernest Oppenheimer worked for Dunkelsbuhler, a founder-member of the syndicate. Through Dunkelsbuhlers, and through his involvement in South African politics, he was able to establish the connections necessary for victory. His first "Take a Chance" began inauspiciously when he was forced by anti-German rioters to flee Kimberley after the sinking of the liner, Lusitania, by a German submarine in 1915. But this lead him along the well-trodden road from Kimberley diamonds to Rand gold.

On the Rand he successfully played the hunch which lead to the founding of Anglo-American by borrowing an idea from an American mining engineer. The idea was that the gold-bearing reef extended deep down below the Far East Rand. The established mining houses were dubious but Oppenheimer, through Dunkelsbuhlers, and through contacts established for him with U.S. politicians (Hoover) and bankers (J.P. Morgan) was able to raise the necessary capital. From this basis he was able to get back into the diamond industry, apparently by using confidential information leaked to him by Sir David Graaff M.P., through former cabinet minister Hull. This information enabled him to beat De Beers in the race to buy up the S.W.A. diamond deposits in the wake of South Africa's take-over of that territory from Germany. There followed a series of complicated manoeuvres (little clarified by Hocking's description) at the end of which, in 1929, Oppenheimer was the chairman both of De Beers (the producer), and of the diamond-buying syndicate.

It would be beyond the scope of this review to go further into the long series of financial deals which have led to the present position, in which Anglo now controls more than 10% of South Africa's GNP, as well as large holdings in a string of other countries. Oppenheimer and Son won the game because they were, and still are, a little quicker and a little cleverer than the other players. This much can be gleaned from Hocking's account. But this leaves the most important questions unanswered (not to mention unasked). Because of course it is not a game of Monopoly. It is a serious business involving the economy of a country and the lives of hundreds of thousands of workers. To understand this fully it would be necessary to explore two dimensions which are almost entirely absent from Hocking's book; the social structure and the psychology of power.

Both literally and figuratively underpinning Oppenheimer and Son, and all the other players in the game of Monopoly, are several hundred thousand miners. The question is, why is the situation structured in such a way that the financiers who raise the capital seem to benefit so much more from the work of the miners than the miners themselves do? This does not happen of its own accord. There are a whole series of institutions which play a part in determining the relative power and the relative reward of financiers and miners. To make sense of the whole thing it would be necessary to delineate the operation of these institutions, and show how they make it possible for a relatively small group to play at Monopoly with the nation's resources.

The second dimension which Hocking fails to explore is the dimension of personality. He tries, of course, to present a "fully-rounded picture" by talking about such things as the wartime activities of Oppenheimer and Son, about their houses and about their hobbies. But this tells us nothing which is relevant to an understanding of these problems;

a) What kind of drive is it that makes a man spend his life in the single-minded accumulation of wealth and power?

b) What does it do to a man to have such wealth and power? What does it mean to be so important that the Prime Minister has you brought home from the war: "Fighting in the Western Desert was all very well, but, as Smuts had pointed out more than once, it was no place for the heir to one of the world's great industrial empires. He might tempt fate once too often: better come home while the going was good" (p 208).

