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A F R I C A N S T U D I E S I N S T I T U T E

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Title: Stay-Aways and the Black Working Class Since the Second World War - The Evaluation of a Strategy.

by: E C Webster

No. 077

Stay-aways and the Black Working Class since the Second World War - the evaluation of a strategy.

E.C. Webster

"one fine morning all the workers in every industry in a country or perhaps in every country, will cease work and thereby in at most four weeks will compel the propertied classes, either to submit or to launch an attack on the workers, so that the latter will have the right to defend themselves and may use the opportunity to overthrow the entire old society". Engels.[1]

There is a widespread belief, among some who hope for change in South Africa, that if only all Blacks withdrew their labour, the whole structure of South Africa would collapse. It is a subject which has received little academic attention.[2] It is my intention in this paper to examine this notion in three parts. In Part I a brief history of stay-aways between 1950 and 1961 will be given. In Part II its reemergence in Soweto will be examined. In Part III the limitations of the stay-away as a tactic of working-class action will be discussed and contrasted with the more wide-spread plant-based action of the 1970s. (This is not meant to imply that limitations do not exist in plant-based action.) The Namibian general strike of 1971-2 is excluded from this analysis as its relative degree of "success" demonstrates the uniqueness of that situation - viz. the existence of a reasonably self-sufficient rural base to which striking workers could withdraw. Yet even in Namibia workers could ultimately, says Moorsom, not escape the major contradiction in their strategy "that although access to peasant resources considerably expanded their power to prolong resistance, they could no longer, as a matter of inescapable necessity, opt out of wage-labour indefinitely - the platform of the strike committee embodied a tacit acknowledgement of the irrevocable necessity of wage-labour."[3]

Part I : Stay-at-homes 1950 - 1961

The stay-at-home emerged as a specific tactic of black resistance in South Africa when in December 1949 the African National Congress (ANC) adopted the Programme of Action aimed at non-collaboration, a disobedience campaign and a general withdrawal of labour. (Table 1) The Programme of Action had been presented first to ANC Annual Conference of 1948 but had been referred back to the National Executive and Provincial Councils. A.B. Xuma, president at the time, revealed his basic sympathy for the principle underlying the stay-away when he spoke in his presidential address of the way South Africa

relied on the African workers "the backbone of the economy and industrial structure of South Africa - invincible atomic bomb".[4] The acceptance of the Programme of Action by the ANC marks a change in the strategy of the ANC, signalled by the establisment of the ANC youth league in 1943 and growing cooperation between CNETU, ANC, CP and the Indian Congresses.[5]

The stay-away was first used on 1st May 1950 as a day of protest to mark the general dissatisfaction of the African people with their position in the country. A similar stay-away was held on 26th June 1950. The Guardian reports that the Rands Industries came to a standstill when at least 80 percent of the African, Indian and Coloured workers remained at home and observed May Day as Freedom Day. They recorded that 500 Blacks had been dismissed for not coming to work. Street parades were held on May Day in Cape Town, Durban, Bethal and Bloemfontein.[6] A second stay-at-home was called for by the ANC for the 26th of June as a national day of protest and mourning. Selby Msimang, Provincial Secretary of the ANC, is reported to have said to workers that "you can tell your employers that the day of protest is not directed against them, but that it is a protest against the propsed laws of the country".[7] Essentially it was a protest against the Suppression of Communism Bill, the Group Areas Bill and what was described as "all discriminatory laws in South Africa". The National Day of Protest Co-ordinating Committee claimed that in Port Elizabeth, Durban and most of the Natal areas a complete stoppage occurred. In Johannesburg and the Reef towns the majority of black people stayed at home. Transport from the townships came in empty, only a handful of black dockworkers reported for duty and about three quarters of the black railway staff stayed away from work. Thousands of Africans and Indians stayed away in Natal - 60 percent in Durban stayed away, bringing the textile, tobacco and furniture industries to a complete standstill. At least 30 printing, clothing and laundry establishments were closed for the day, while in 40 other establishments there was an acute shortage of labour.[8]

Although a third stay-away was held in the Cape Peninsula on 7th May 1951, that year saw a change in tactics from stay-aways to Passive Resistance. The Joint Planning Council at its November meeting, put forward the defiance campaign and industrial action

as the two choices before Congress. As between these alternatives, the planners recognised "that industrial action is second to none, the best and most important weapon in the struggle of the people for the repeal of unjust laws, and that it is inevitable that this method of struggle has to be undertaken at one time or another during the course of the struggle".[9] Nevertheless, they opposed, though they did not positively exclude, industrial action in the initial phase of the struggle. Leo Kuper gives three reasons for this decision. Firstly, he argues, that the Council's terms of reference did not specify economic change and besides the two Congresses did not have an agreed economic policy. Secondly, the Council, apart from J.B. Marks, Yusef Daidoo, Ahmed Cachali and Walter Sisulu, did not picture the struggle as one of class. They emphasised, instead, colour as the basis of their subordination. A third factor was the weakness of the African trade union movement at this time.[10] It has also been argued that "the class composition fo the leadership had tended to prefer methods of moderation at every stage in the liberatory struggle, reflecting the mood of the most conservative elements of the middle class".[11]

For five years the stay-away was not used by the Congress movement as a tactic of resistance. During these intervening years two events were crucial in the developing strategy of Congress; the first was the launching of SACTU in 1955 as the trade union wing of Congress, the second was the signing of the Freedom Charter. However, 1957 opened with the popular and successful bus boycotts in Alexandria, Sophiatown, Lady Selbourne and Mooiplaas. Responding to this new mood of militancy SACTU launched a campaign for higher wages, calling for a pound a day with the slogan Asinamali. This was followed by a successful stay-away on 26th June estimated to have been 80 percent effective on the Reef.[12] Colonel J.J. Kruger acting Deputy Police Commissioner for the Witwatersrand, appealed to employers to "take a firm stand with native employees who did not arrive at work". L. Lulofs, President of the Chamber of Industries, stated that the pound a day was "reckless and completely irresponsible". A private circular to employers was distributed telling them to warn their African employees that "absence on June 26th would be a breach of contract. Illegal abstention would be dealt with by way of summary dismissals. Banishment from urban

areas will follow". The circular continued "leniancy and indulgence at this juncture would be followed by dire consequences. The demonstration fixed for Wednesday must be faced by industry with resolute solidarity and a refusal of our labour force to be employed as political puppets".[13]

At least one employer, the Johannesburg City Council, took these warnings seriously, and after a 75 percent stay-away among African building workers, dismissed a number of members of the African Building Workers Industrial Union (founded in 1957 and affiliated to SACTU). In a circular to all Africans in the housing division A.J. Archibald, Director of Housing, said "in future strikes all employees participating would be automatically suspended. African foremen and clerks "absent during strikes" would be considered "unfit as leaders" and automatically discharged or demoted". Others might also be discharged and will not readily be employed in a similar capacity elsewhere. Learners would have their learnership cancelled. All men in conditional employment will automatically be sent back to their homes, and those occupying municipal houses may be deprived of them".[14] In addition 1957 saw a rapid increase in Wage Board activity. The government recommended the re-investigation of the position of general unskilled workers, on the Rand, in Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria, Bloemfontein, East London, Port Elizabeth and Kimberley, who fell under Determination 105, which had not been revised since 6th November 1951. Minimum wages payable to them were £1.7 a week. New determinations were to be drafted for the laundry, cleaning and dyeing trade in all principal towns; the bread and confectionery industry on the Witwatersrand and Pietermaritzburg, stevedoring in the four main ports; the clothing industry in the Transvaal and uncontrolled areas and for the meat trade in the principal centres. These determinations revised the trend of declining real wages after 1958.[15]

However, in spite of the effectiveness of the stay-away on the Reef, their seems little sign of any organised attempt to call a strike. There was no picketing apart from some stickers saying "stay home June 26th", which appeared in some areas. The slogan Awisphatiwe (we don't touch work) seems to have sprung up spontaneously from the workers themselves.[16]

In contrast with the relatively spontaneous and successful stay-away of 1957, the 1958 stay-away involved more planning but was a clear failure. At the end of 1957 SACTU launched a new organised campaign under the slogan of a pound a day. At their December conference there was a talk of a general strike to achieve this demand. A mass national conference of workers was called for in Johannesburg in March 1958 to start a general campaign for this minimum wage demand.[17] However, what started out as a trade union matter was soon extended to become a United Congress campaign with new slogans. Luthuli, President of the ANC at the time, clarified the all-class nature of the congress alliance when he emphasised that although the campaign was headed by demands for a national minimum wage, it included an "all round increase in wages for all workers; the abolition of the pass laws, security of employment; end to job reservation; rent increases and Group Areas; and the right to vote and be elected to the government of the country". In addition, Luthuli stressed that this conference must avoid two errors. "Firstly the error of assuming that a "Workers Conference" is the same thing as a trade union conference. It is not, especially in this country where the overwhelming majority of workers aren't organised into unions. Secondly, the error of forgetting that Congress is not exclusively a workers organisation; it has in its ranks businessmen, professionals, housewives, etc." He concluded by saying "let us take care not to concentrate only on the factories and ignore the townships, where we are strong. Workers, after all, live in the townships, so we must secure delegates from these townships elected by working people at township meetings".[18]

It was decided at the National Workers Conference to stage a national stay-at-home during the coming General Election (April). In the words of one of the delegates "if we cannot vote on a ballot paper we shall find another way to vote". A resolution to participate in the pound a day campaign was among the resolutions passed. Support was, however, far from solid. Feit alleges that many of the younger ANC members mutinied at the thought of non-African control of the ANC that seemed implied by participation in the campaign, and against a new campaign in the name of "Workers". This manifested itself in violent demonstration, leaving the ANC sorely divided against itself.[19] Officials of five African trade unions on the

Rand - the GWU (African womens branch), African Bakers' and Confectioners' Union, the African Motor Workers Union, the African Tobacco Workers Union (separate sections for men and women) - gave their support to the Africanist refusal to participate in the stay-at-home. "We as responsible trade union leaders do not believe that the proposed decision will help native workers, many of whom are living below the breadline, to win better wages. Rather we believe it will harm our cause. Consequently we ask employers to cooperate to ensure, as much as possible, the safety of their workers".[20] Possibly a more plausible explanation was the nature of Congress itself. The leadership of Congress, it was argued, transformed an essentially working-class campaign into a broad political front and placed at the fore a different slogan ("the Nats must go") which related to the coming election.[21] The underlying assumptions of this parliamentary strategy were made explicit by Harmel when he put forward the C.P. two-stage revolutionary strategy arguing that the process of economic growth in South Africa will break down the irrationality of apartheid leading to a democratic revolution. He said that "the type of despotism we still endure in the Union in this age...is a kind of freak, an anachronism which cannot hope much longer to survive". It was on this basis that the Congress Alliance was persuaded to direct their attention to the white electorate.[22]

The three day stay-away planned for April 14th - 16th fizzled out into an almost complete fiasco and the organisers, as a consequence, officially called it off after the first day. On the Witwatersrand less than 10 percent stayed away, although Indian stores were closed. Port Elizabeth, an old ANC stronghold, had a 50 percent stay-away to begin with but it tailed off during the day. In Durban 30 percent stayed away. However, as the Transvaal Chamber of Industries noted in a privately circulated memo, "in isolated and sporadic instances some organisations were very seriously affected and that absenteeism continued even after the protest was officially called off by the organisers".[23] The clearest example of an almost completely successful stay-away on this occasion was Sophiatown and Newclare.[24]

Why did this stay-away fail? Firstly, the ANC was divided over the campaign, leading to confusion among the members. The Reverend

Gawe, for example, a leading ANC figure in the Eastern Cape, issued a press statement which seemed to suggest that the Workers Conference had nothing to do with the ANC. In Natal the ANC was completely divided over the decision and there was no united preparation for the campaign. Leading Congress officials in many Reef towns openly broke the call, and the workers were left in confusion. Added to this division within the leadership a number of leading Africanists (Madzunya) condemned the protest. Furthermore, within the weeks preceding the stay-away the English language press and The World in particular, reduced the effectiveness of the campaign by publicising extensively opposition to it. The World ran many stories casting doubt on the possibility that the boycott would succeed. The Star featured quotations from supposedly important ANC leaders against the stay-away and the Natal Mercury printed on its front page the message in Zulu from the Paramount Chief of the Zulus calling on the people not to take part in the stoppage.[25]

Secondly, it seems likely that the campaign would have had a better response if the slogans had been confined to a pound a day, with the trade union movement at the centre of the campaign and the appeal directed mainly to the industrial worker. Workers seemed unable or unwilling to sacrifice their wages for the three days the strike was planned to last over a political issue. Needless to say the Nationalists increased their overall majority in parliament from 96 to 103. A third factor was the presence of police in all areas during this three day protest. On the one hand this involved displays of power by parading Union defence force tanks, calling out the entire police force and placing the army on standby and banning meetings. On the other hand, as in Sophiatown, it involved police intimidation through indiscriminate baton charges, assaults and a threat of being endorsed out. In Durban stevedores were forced out of privately-owned compounds by police when they refused to do any overtime during the three days of the campaign. When, on the Tuesday, those who did go to work downed tools and refused to work unless paid one pound a day, the police were called and they were forced to return to work.[26] In Dundee 371 African workers were arrested for having stopped work during the stay-at-home.[27]

Finally, there had been intensive activity amongst the employers' organisations on the Witwatersrand since June 26th 1957, encouraging

them to establish liaison with "responsible native opinion", pointing out to them the wage increases that had been put into effect. In a memorandum distributed by the Transvaal Chamber of Industries after the 1957 stay-away it said "where the liaison existed the employers were able, on the one hand to explain the abortive nature of the proposed action of their workers and, on the other hand, to indicate that emplouers would take a serious view of any disruption caused by workers who stayed away from work".[28]

The New Age, a Congress newspaper, saw the question of organisation as the key to why the campaign did not succeed. Their answer was to call for more organisation "it is significant that the stoppage was most complete wherever organisation was best - in Port Elizabeth and Sophiatown, in the Reef industries like milling and textiles, where the militant trade unions are strongest - slogans are not good enough. The only answer is to build the strength of the people on sure foundations to organise the workers to give their machinery in which they have confidence"[29]. It was this change in emphasis that was to lead to the establishment of factory committees which were to combine both industrial and political functions. Congress argued the need to combine both functions, because "wage issues were very often unrealizable in straight trade union terms. If advanced workers made demands they would be charged. The only way to take up wage issues was in the context of a national campaign, campaigning in a big way to create a climate which would force the government and employers to give concessions". This, says Lambert, meant factory committees were to be rushed into national campaigns neglecting plant-based strike action. In fact strikes were to decline, as Table 2 shows, in 1958.[30] Both the change in strategy and the decline in wages (see Table 3) may be factors causing a decline in strikes. Yet Luthuli as president of the ANC seemed to see the campaign purely in terms of a demonstration. Consequently he felt that the stay-away succeeded in as much as it made the demands of the people known to the government, but that the people did not respond as the organisers had expected them to the call. "The African people as a whole did not measure up to that call".[31]

SACTU responded to the failure of the 1958 campaign by pursuing its pound a day campaign and a membership drive for 20,000 new members.

The ANC declared 1959 an anti-pass year. By December there were again calls from the rank and file for a general strike against the passes. This demand became pressing and at a Workers Conference in early 1960 there was talk from the delegates of a national stay-at-home.[32] The focus on pass laws was no doubt in part a result of the tightening up of their administration over this period in the face of growing structural unemployment estimated at 1.2 million in 1960.[33]

However, meanwhile the rival organisation Pan Africanist Congress, having split from the ANC in 1958 from a broadly Africanist perspective, was now competing with the ANC for mass support. On the 18th March the Pan Africanist Congress announced that an anti-pass campaign would begin on the 21st March. Members were instructed to leave their passes at home and present themselves in small groups for arrest at police stations. Their aim, writes Lodge, was to bring industry to a standstill and no one was to work until the pass system was abolished and a minimum wage established. "With the overcrowding of the prisons and a total strike the government would have to meet these demands. This would be a first stage in achieving independence and a non-racial South Africa by 1963. The leaders were to be in the forefront of those arrested and all were to reject bail, fines or defence". In fact little organisational preparations had been undertaken by the PAC. There can be little doubt, argued the S.B. in their evidence to the Sharpeville inquiry, that had the labour supply been affectively withheld in the Vereenging-Van der Byl Park area (steel, power) that the economy could have been seriously affected.[34] In the meantime, the ANC's plans had crystallised and a more carefully planned stay-away campaign was to begin on the 31st March.[35]

The campaign led, as is well-known, to a major confrontation in Sharpeville and, to a lesser extent Langa. The ANC, having stood aside on the 21st March, now called for a national day of mourning on the following Monday, 28th March, and the national stay-at-home followed. In most large industrial areas the workers stayed at home and in areas where it occurred there was a 90 percent response. In Sharpeville and in Langa the stay-at-home lasted for as much as ten days. The government seemed, for a moment, to hesitate when passes

SURVEY OF RESPONSES TO THE STRIKE CALL

REGION	INDUSTRY/SERVICE	SAMPLE RESPONSE OF INDIVIDUAL FACTORIES	GENERAL
Johannesburg	Textile	100% strike out of 250	First four factories closed for all 3 days. No response at Amato where Union suffered after the '57 strike.
		45 workers out of 50	
		495 500	
		495 500	
		16 17	
	Laundry	100% all 3 days. 6/40 drivers attended work.	In addition to the 3 surveyed here 9 factories employing 1000 workers closed down for the period.
		100% strike out of 300	
		76 workers out of 80	
	Food and Canning	325 workers out of 500	No response at LKB Benoni.
		100% strike out of 80	
		100% 50	
	Furniture	100% strike out of 60	
		100% 100	
		300 workers out of 400	
		154 160	
	Clothing	100% response	In all Provinces. One factor: clothing industries, hit by border industries. Many on short time. Many Manufacturers did not mind closing down.

REGION	INDUSTRY/SERVICE	SAMPLE RESPONSE OF INDIVIDUAL FACTORIES	GENERAL
Durban	Clothing	80% for 3 days	
	Textile	70% - 50% 1st and 2nd days	
	Distributive	50% 1st day only	
	Timber	70% - 80%, -30%, -40% 1st and 2nd days	
	Sheet metal	70%-80%, -50% 1st and 2nd days	
	Metal	50%-60% 1st day only	
	Twine and bag	80%, 40% 1st and 2nd days	
	Milling	60% 1st day only	
	Chemical	50% - 60% 1st day only	
	Sweet	100% for 3 days.	
	Leather	60% - 70% Bata shoe Co. closed 3 days	
	Match	50%	
	Municipal	-	Warnings of dismissal.
	Docks & Railways		Police and army cordoned off compounds and forced to work.
	Indian traders	Total response on 1st day.	
Pietermaritzburg	Howick rubber	All 1500 workers strike.	

focussed broadly around national political issues. The large scale work stoppages which have occurred in recent times, wrote Clack in the early '60's, are only incidental strikes, having been political demonstrations against general rather than industrial disabilities.[43] This is not to deny that plant-based strikes took place during this period; see Table II which provides evidence of strikes during this period. When plant-based strikes occurred, SACTU often gave direct support. Two examples will indicate this. In the Consolidated Textile Mills in Durban in 1957 SACTU and ANC gave vigorous support to the strikers. In 1958 3,000 African workers went out on strike in the Amato Textile Mills for higher wages and received support from SACTU and the ANC.[44] Yet, while SACTU gave support to plant-based action, such action was clearly secondary, as a strategy to the stay-aways. What underpinned the stay-away as a tactic is a theoretical assumption that a tight interrelationship exists between economics and politics. SACTU's assumption was that "the organising of this great mass of African workers was linked inextricably with their struggle for political rights and liberation from old oppressive laws. Every attempt to organise themselves was hampered by general legislation affecting their right of movement, domicile and political representation. Every effort for higher wages, better working conditions or the reinstatement of unjustly dismissed fellow workers, was immediately met by the full force of the state".[45]

This led, some have argued, to the subordination of the trade union struggle to the movement for national liberation, where organisational energies were continually diverted into politically based stay-aways.[46] This, we have argued, was what happened in 1958 when the essentially worker-based slogan of a pound a day was appropriated and turned into the false slogan of the "Nats must go". While it is true that after the 1958 failure SACTU went on a major recruiting campaign aimed at 20,000 new trade union members, members were signed up into SACTU without being properly organised, so that support eventually fell away when unions failed to improve material conditions.[47]

Yet, if, as Bonner suggests, we situate SACTU in its historical context, we see SACTU's dilemma more clearly.[48] This was a period of recession where the material conditions of Africans were

deteriorating. Between 1948 and 1958 wages dropped by 5% and again between 1957 and 1968 by 1%. (See Table 3)

Furthermore, the rate of growth of employment in manufacturing declined from 5.6% between 1945 and 1950 to 1.6% between 1950 and 1960.[49] Faced by these deteriorating conditions black workers responded through a ground swell of popular resistance such as bus boycotts, and SACTU had to choose either to let this wave of opposition sweep past them or respond positively by trying to direct it into a more viable and sustained opposition.[50] Not surprisingly they chose to try and capture it, but lacking any adequate organisational base they were forced to use the limited tactic of the stay-away - a tactic as we have seen, that is most effective when some form of factory organisation existed.

It is clear that the political leadership during this decade perceived the stay-away, with the possible exception of the PAC's quasi synidcalist overtones in 1960, as largely a demonstrative weapon and lacking adequate organisation at the point of production, they saw that the weapon had limited value. To dismiss the stay-aways as ineffective demonstrative acts of protest that constituted no threat to the structure of power and simply led to a tightening of the repressive apparatus, is to fail to situate this strategy in the political economy of the time - a political economy which, we have argued, was for many blacks deteriorating in material terms.

Yet to situatethe strategy in the political economy is not to deny that opportunities were missed, particularly in the organisation of the urban working class. Had all options of non-violent change been explored when the ANC took the decision to embark on violence? I want to argue in the final section that it was not simply that the decision was premature; it failed to locate the struggle on the battle ground where workers could establish viable intermediary institutions to win the confidence to take on wider struggles.

Part II - The Re-emergence of the Stay-Away - Soweto 1976

The stay-away was only to re-emerge 15 years later, seven weeks after the June 16th demonstration against Bantu education in Soweto, when the newly-formed SSRC organised, as its first action,

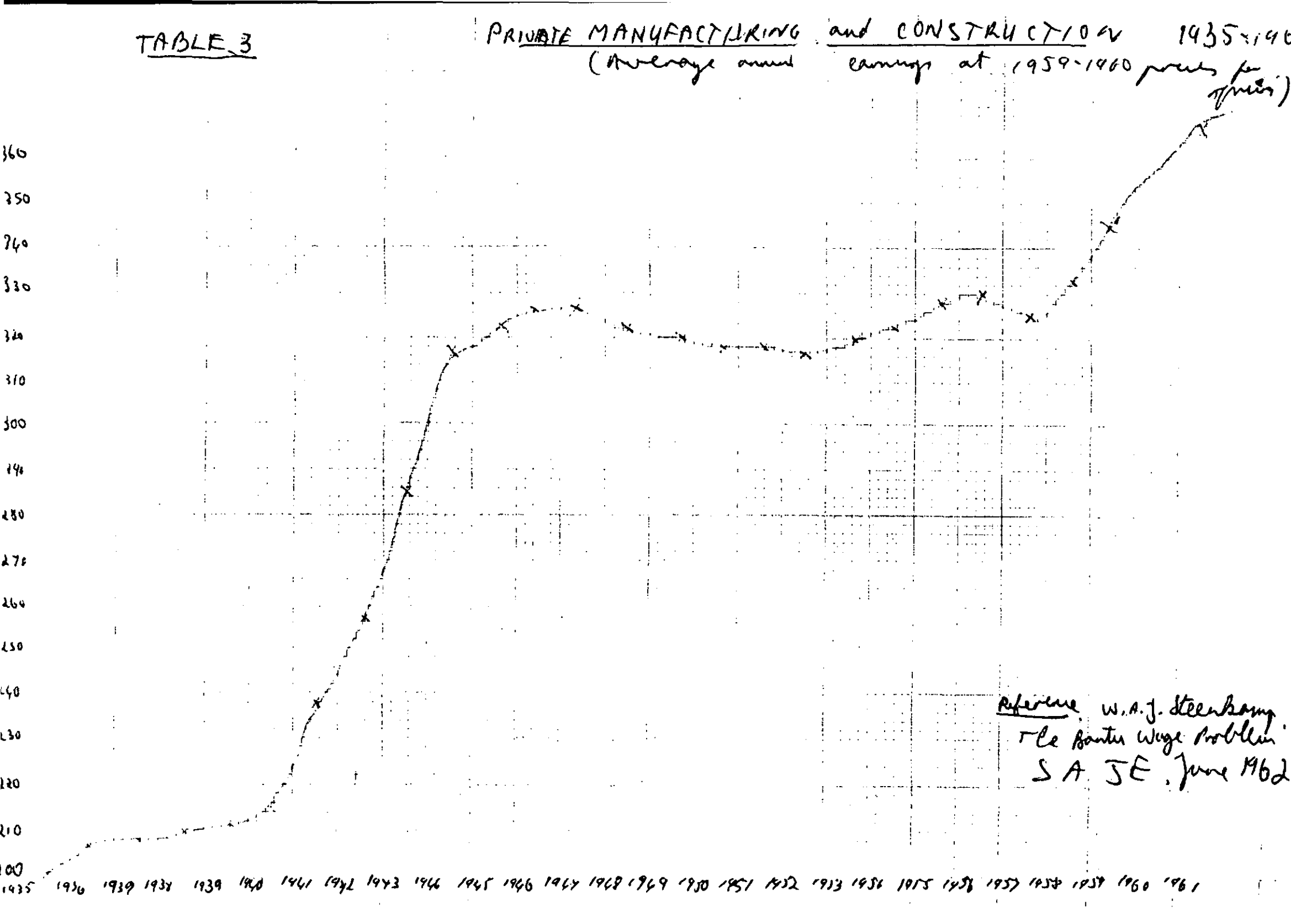
TABLE 1. BLACK STAY-AWAYS IN S.A. SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

	Date	Proposed Duration	Area	Objective	Organizers	Effectiveness *
1.	1 May 1950	1 day	Witwatersrand	General political protest Communism Act	CP, ANC & Indian Congresses	Partial success
2.	26 June 1950	1 day	National	Racial Communism Act discrimination	ANC and Indian Congresses	Partial success
3.	7 May 1951	1 day	W. Cape	Protest against removal of 'coloured' vote	Franchise Action Council	Partial success
4.	26 June 1957	1 day	National	£1 a day	Congress Alliance	Success
5.	14-16 April 1958	3 days	National	Protest against General Elections	Congress Alliance	Failure
6.	21 March 1960	Indefinitely	National	Pass laws	P.A.C.	Partial success
7.	28 March 1960	1 day	National	National Day of Mourning	Congress Alliance	Success
8.	29-31 May 1961	3 days	National	National Convention	National Action Council	Partial success
9.	4-6 Aug.1976	3 days	Johannesburg	Bantu Education Detained students	S.S.R.C.	Success
10.	23-25 Aug.1976	3 days	Johannesburg	" "	S.S.R.C.	Success
11.	13-15 Sept.1976	3 days	Reef	" "	S.S.R.C.	Success
12.	16-17 Sept.1976	2 days	W.Cape	" "	?	Success
13.	1 - 5 Nov. 1976	5 days	Reef	" "	S.S.R.C.	Failure
14.	16-17 June 1977	2 days	Reef	Day of protest over 1976	S.S.R.C.	Failure

*See Part III of my paper on the notion of successful stay-away

TABLE 3

PRIVATE MANUFACTURING and CONSTRUCTION 1935-196
(Average annual earnings at 1959-1960 prices for this)



Reference W.A.J. Steenkamp
The Bantu Wage Problem
SAJE. June 1962

a three day stay-away on the 5th, 5th, 6th August 1976. Announcing the call for a stay-away Mashinini, president of the SSRC, said "We had gone as far as we could and now it was important that we strike at the industrial structure of South Africa".[51] The SSRC seemed to be firmly in control in the townships; road blocks prevented Putco buses and taxis from going to town, students picketed at the thirteen railway stations in Soweto, and the trains were virtually empty. Under cross examination, at the SSRC trial at Kempton Park during 1978, a state witness described how they were told by Mashinini, SSRC president, to stop people going to work. He said "that bigger school-children should get to railway stations and talk to the parents not to go to work, persuade them from going to work".[52] Sometimes bus drivers were threatened and city-bound workers were stoned and forced to turn back. One Putco bus driver giving evidence at the same trial, gave evidence of how children stopped the bus (on 4th August) and ordered the passengers inside the bus to get out saying "You know you have been told not to go to work --- as a result the children then picked up stones and stoned the bus".[53]

Johannesburg's firms reported on an absenteeism rate of 50-60%. Enterprises were affected in different degrees, one large department store reporting absenteeism as high as 75%, while manufacturers in the food, motor accessories, tobacco, rubber, electrical, hotel and finance sectors reported figures ranging from 30-50%.[54] The SSRC claimed 85% effectiveness. Whatever the precise figure, the SSRC had demonstrated their ability to ensure the withdrawal of labour in Soweto. To what extent this first stay-away was a popular demonstration of support for the SSRC is difficult to ascertain. Without doubt some of the workers were genuinely intimidated. But it is equally certain that there were many who stayed away in sympathy with the students' aims. However, workers were confused as to what they would gain by staying away from work. The SSRC was demanding the release of detained students and abolition of Bantu education, but to many workers these demands were remote. They were taking the risk of losing their jobs for a campaign that failed to pose specific demands. Furthermore, the SSRC made one crucial mistake in early August for which Soweto paid dearly - they ignored the hostel dwellers.

During the second stay-away (23rd, 24th & 25th August) absenteeism was higher, between 70 and 80%. In some cases in the retail

distributive trade work attendance was down to 25%.[55] This was in spite of greater harrassment and fewer road blocks and pickets at the railway station. At the entrance to Soweto a hugh contingent of police stood guard and students picketing at the stations were far out-numbered by riot police in armoured hippos. Part of it was the result of a concerted attempt (neglected in the first stay-away) on the part of the students to maintain solidarity with the workers. During the preceding weekend they had distributed leaflets calling for a student-worker alliance. However, it was during this stay-away that the migrant workers went on the rampage leaving 70 people dead. Whether the "Zulu backlash" was a spontaneous outburst of men wanting to go back to work, or whether it was planned and foiled by security forces, is difficult to ascertain. Newspapers gave numerous accounts of overt police collaboration in the "backlash" and Buthelezi, after careful examination, concluded that the incident appeared to have been stage-managed by the police.[56] Police, of course, denied these allegations, pleading inability to stop the rampage. The following comment by General Prinsloo summed up their attitude. "I have no knowledge of these rampaging Zulus, but if it is happening I am not surprised. If people want to organise themselves into resisting Tsotsis we can't stop them. The people are getting very fed up with the things that are happening in Soweto."[57]

However, what is clear is that the students failed adequately to consult and explain to the hostel dwellers why <u>they</u> should stay away from work. The majority of Soweto hostel dwellers are migrant workers, only entitled to live in Johannesburg for the 12 month period they are lawfully contracted to work for a specific employer. They come from rural areas and regard their time in the hostels as temporary. They tend to be perceived by township residents as being culturally and geographically separate from the townships. There are various derogatory terms coined by the township residents, such as <u>amoveralls</u>, (the overall wearers), that accentuates their aloofness from the hostel dwellers and illustrates their general attitude of disdain.[58] However, the fact that they participated fully in the September stay-aways does seem to suggest that the rampage could have been prevented by more careful attention to the specific priorities and interests of hostel dwellers.

The third stay-away (13th-15th September) brought hostel dwellers, Soweto students and parents together in a joint campaign of up to 80% effectiveness in Johannesburg.[59] Over the weekend the SSRC distributed this leaflet. (Exhibit B3 Court Record)

A Z I K H W E L W A!

Parents: Co-operate with us! Workers: Stay away from work!

Hostels: Do not fight!

STAY AT HOME: Monday 13th, Tuesday 14th and Wednesday 15th September, '7

NO VIOLENCE! NO BLOODSHED!

SOWETO STUDENTS REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

Once again we appeal to Parents and all Workers to co-operate with us.
We call upon our parents and workers to stay away from work from Monday 13th to Wednesday 15th September, '76.
This will be a proof that you are crying with us over those cruelly killed by police and those detained all over the country in various prisons without trial.

WE STRONGLY OBJECT TO:

1. The shooting of Black people by Jimmy Kruger's police.
2. The arrest and detention of Black people and calling them agitators.
3. The killing of already three men in detention and calling it suicide, (in Durban, King Williamstown & Cape Town).
4. One uncalled-for so-called train accident in Benoni - this reminding us of the Dube and Langlaagte accidents where our people died painful deaths.
5. The cutting down of our parents' wages who had stayed away from work in sympathy with their killed sons and daughters.

UNITY IS STRENGTH!

POWER IS IN OUR HANDS!

In Johannesburg and the Reef areas, the engineering industry stated that between 25-60 percent of the workers were absent.[60] The Financial Mail spotcheck of firms revealed a 50 percent absentee rate in Premier Milling, 50 percent in Advance Laundry, 50-70 percent in the O.K. Bazaars, 60-70 percent in Checkers, 20-50 percent in Edgars Stores and 80 percent at the University of the Witwatersrand. However, the largest hit was the Johannesburg Transport Department where 90 percent of the African bus drivers stayed away.[62]

Using direct methods reminiscent of the 1958 and 1961 stay-aways, police went from house to house in parts of Soweto and Alexandria asking why people were not at work, and either ordering them to go to work or arresting them.[63] Initially the police said the operation was not connected with the stay-away, it was a "crime preventitive operation aimed at flushing out criminals and layabouts".[64] Later Brigadier Kriel admitted that it was "a clean up operation aimed at protecting those who wished to work and rounding up agitators".[65]

The third stay-away showed signs of spreading beyond Soweto. Although a call for a three-day stay-at-home in Pretoria was unsuccessful, about a quarter of Krugersdorp's workers stayed away. The day the third stay-away ended on the Reef one began in Cape Town, (15th & 16th September). At least three leaflets were circulated in an attempt to disrupt the strike. Two, printed in English and Xhosa, opposed strikes outright. A third, widely circulated among passengers at railway stations and bus terminals read "Workers please note, our big strike for Wednesday and Thursday, is postponed until next week. We will call on you again". Thousands of anti-strike leaflets were dropped from a helicopter over the townships. However, police were able to trace down at least one pamphlet distributed, (at soccer grounds and mosques in Cape Town) and calling for the stay away on the 14th and 15th.[66] In spite of these disruptive tactics, the strike achieved 80 percent effectiveness.[67] The clothing industry, with a 49,000 labour force, lost two full days of production. Only between 10 and 30 percent of workers showed up on these days. About 150,000 to 200,000 Cape workers forfeited more than a third of their weekly pay packets to obey the strike call. Other employers announced the dismissal of employees who stayed away on Wednesday, but even more workers stayed away on the Thursday.[68] The two-day stay-away in Cape Town cost the city more than three million man hours (375,000 man days).[69]

The third stay-away was clearly the most successful of the four stay-aways called for by the SSRC in 1976 and included the participation of large numbers of Coloureds in the Cape. Attempts had been made to consult parents and workers and it spread for the first time beyond Soweto to a significant extent. In fact in terms of man hours

lost and the number of employees involved, the September stay-away would be the largest strike since the Second World War. In Johannesburg and the Cape Peninusula alone, half a million workers (300,000 in Johannesburg and 200,000 in the Cape) stayed away. This is considerably larger than the Department of Labour's figures for the Durban strikes in 1973 (98,029 employees involved and 229,137 man days lost). Thus we have the curious situation of the largest "strike" not being recorded in the official statistics because an industrial dispute is generally accepted by the Department of Labour to deal with matters affecting the employer/ employee relationship alone.[70] A fourth stay-away, called for five days (1st - 5th November), was a failure.

While clearly the series of police raids and harrassment during this period had seriously affected the ability of the SSRC to organise effectively, and develop a consistent strategy, the failure of this stay-away brought out, above all, the limitations of both the SSRC and the tactics they adopted. Essentially the value of the stay-away lay in its demonstrative power and its limitation was that one could not go on for too long simply demonstrating without a clear objective which linked up with the interests of the majority of those participating. The demands put forward before the fourth stay-away by the SSRC president, Khotsu Seathole, were too vague and unrealistic to link up with workers. The press statement released by Khotsu called upon "Mr John Vorster, Jimmy Kruger and their white facist, racist, oppressive regime to:

a) Resign en bloc.
b) Release all political detainees
c) Open detente with our black parents
d) Stop killing our brothers in the ghetto.[71]

This stay-away was ignored by the vast majority of workers. Workers, as Kane-Berman describes, were in a dilemma - as parents, and as blacks, they no doubt felt they should support their children, as breadwinners they may be prepared on occasion to lose a fair day's wages but naturally they will be reluctant to jeopardise their jobs, particularly at a time when unemployment was running high.[72] Furthermore, employers made it clear in advance that they would adopt a tougher attitude than they had during the early stay-aways.

The Transvaal Chamber of Industries had recommended employers take up a tough attitude of "no work and no pay".[73] Some workers had already been dismissed because of previous stay-aways. Migrant workers, in particular, feared deportation to the rural areas if they broke their contracts by staying away from work. Furthermore, the fact that the black trade union movement on the Witwatersrand did not respond to the stay-aways was also indicative of the gap between the black students and organised black labour.[74]

Part III - The Implications of the Stay-Aways

We have identified and examined fourteen stay-aways between 1950 and 1977. Of course a clear difference exists between the early and later stay-aways. The latter stay-aways take place in the context of a structurally transformed economy - of growing capital intensity and massive foreign investment since 1961 and the consequent development in the size, strategic location and consciousness of the black working class. Furthermore, the earlier stay-aways were organised by the Congress movement on a national basis and consisted of older and more established leaders. They had, through SACTU, an organised link with the working class. The 1976 stay-aways on the other hand, were called for by the youthful and inexperienced SSRC who, except for two days in September, were essentially Soweto-based. They emerged after a relatively short period of activism and never established links with organised labour. Their political education had been drawn in large part from the black consciousness movement in contrast with that of the Congress movement and its more clearly formulated programme based on the Freedom Charter of 1955. A further crucial difference lay in the length of the stay-away; besides the 1958 stay-away, which failed, and the 1961 stay-away, which was only partly successful; all the stay-aways in the 1950's were one-day demonstration stoppages. The stay-aways called by the SSRC, however, were not less than 3 days and sometimes, as in November, 5 days. This suggests that the SSRC strategy went beyond a mere demonstration as with PAC in 1960. It seems to have had quasi-syndicalient overtones.

However, the differences are less significant than two crucial similarities. The first similarity lies in the response of the state and employers. Here the initial threat of mass action, coupled with employer recommendations for reform in the conditions of urban Africans, turned inevitably to hardening of attitudes, coupled with harrassment and subsequent banning of the leaders and their organisations. A memo distributed by the Transvaal Chamber of Industries after the 1958 stay-away is remarkably similar to that sent by the Chamber to the Prime Minister after the 1976 stay-aways. The 1958 memorandum draws attention to the "solid political and economic reasons for dissatisfaction" among the black population. Proposals by the Chamber include raising wages by "permitting dilution of skilled labour", better and cheaper transport, reduction in house-rents, and improved amenities in the townships and improved methods of communication with workers.[75] The 1976 memo from the Chamber of Industries advocates better transport, improved township amenities, streaming of influx control, and money for housing.[76] In neither memo is the question of trade unions for blacks tackled. Likewise the response of the state in banning the ANC and PAC in 1960 and the banning of 17 black consciousness organisations in 1977 follows a similar pattern.

The second crucial similarity lies with the organisational problems raised by the tactic itself. The central problem with the tactic lies in the fact that the maximum weapon of the stay-away against the system, is a simple absence through the withdrawal of labour. In essence, the worker surrenders all initiative to the employer. This has two implications. Firstly, as we argued in our explanation for the limited success of the 1961 stay-away, with all townships sealed off by police and army road-blocks, with all newspapers taking part in the "conspiracy of silence", the situation becomes confused. The organisers cannot make adequate news available to the workers because they have limited access to the media. However, the more important implication is that stay-aways allow employers to reduce labour costs on their terms. This can be best illustrated by the employers' threat to those who stayed-away of retrenchment and dismissal during the 1976 stay-aways.

In a letter sent by the Transvaal Chamber of Industries to its members, the president recommended that employers "turn their attention to labour saving devices to lessen their dependence on their labour force."[76] On an earlier occasion, after the second stay-away, he said that employers were looking into their dependence on African workers. "Most industrialists feel they are too vulnerable and may pay renewed attention to lessening their dependence by employing more Coloured or by increasing mechanisation."[77] Other industrialists have denied that the increased mechanisation was a result of stay-aways. "Automation has nothing to do with Soweto. We are following the overseas pattern and it would have to come anyway" said Norman Gilbert, Chairman of machine Tool Merchants Association. Of course Gilbert is right to stress the trend towards mechinisation since the Second World War. The growth in capital intensity for the economy as a whole has been growing at the steady rate of 2.4 percent between 1946 and 1975.[78] However, the point is not that the stay-aways caused retrenchment and mechanisation but that simply by staying away employers were able to dismiss what they saw as redundant or uncooperative employees in a recessionary climate. Clearly the danger of dismissal is considerably greater in periods of high unemployment. Thus labour costs were reduced without any specific resistance to this process of intensifying labour exploitation. It is interesting to contrast the lack of specific work-place objectives in the stay-aways with factory-based resistance by the trade unions to retrenchment at this time. In September and October 1976 workers at the Armourplate factory in Springs went on strike in order to make management honour an agreement to put employers on short-time rather than retrench three workers.[79] Similarly the Metal and Allied Workers Union, after a survey of retrenchment in a series of engineering firms on the Witwatersrand, made specific recommendations to management.[80]

The second limitation in the stay-away is that it is an essentially township-based tactic. Of course it is precisely the township-based nature of the stay-away that has been its attraction - it is easy to mobilise township residents, particularly when you don't have organisation at the place of work. But it is unable to mobilise those sectors where workers are housed in tightly-controlled situations, isolated from townships, without alternative sources of food or family support. Thus the key productive sector of mining

was not affected by stay-aways. Similarly, in September 1976 the South African Railways was not affected because most of the workers live in compounds outside Soweto.

Finally, lacking co-ordinated organisation and the financial resources for a long strike, workers cannot stay out indefinitely. To do so is to starve. Even if food is stored in advance the families cannot hold out for long because of the presence of children, the sick and the aged. The townships can be easily sealed off by the police - they have been built to specification to allow tight surveillance and control by small numbers of police.[81]

Workers seem to have understood these limitations very well when, instead of supporting the train boycot called for on February 1st 1973 in Durban, they decided to continue with their plant-based action. Nearly a third of those who were asked why people did not join the train boycot gave, as an explanation, either that workers were more concerned with striking for wages or that they lacked organisation.[82] This decision highlights the crucial difference between the stay-away on one hand and plant-based action on the other. The crucial feature of plant-based action is that it focusses around issues generated in the work-place. As table 4 indicates, the pattern of strike activity was to change dramatically in 1973 when after a decade of low strike incidence, a wave of plant.based strikes was to emerge reaching a peak in 1973. As a sustained form of working-class action, independent of formal organisation, these strikes indicate a growing maturity of working class consciousness.[83] The strikes were to achieve significant wage increases and led to relatively few dismissals and prosecutions.

Table 4 [84]

Comparative table regarding disputes and strikes:

Year	Disputes without stoppage of work		Disputes with stoppage of work			Strikes		
	No.	Employees involved	No.	Employees involved	Manhours lost	No.	Employees involved	Manhours lost
1973	47	3 846	115	22 744	261 586	246	67 338	1 389 873
1974	33	4 126	185	19 932	109 372	189	37 724	653 243
1975	21	2 790	148	10 699	44 514	119	11 847	101 688
1976	16	1 087	124	10 566	45 437	105	15 725	130 675
1977	9	426	49	7 084	69 135	38	7 866	50 761

Although strike action was to decline in the years following, a higher level of strike activity was sustained throughout the 1970's than any other period since the Second World War. These strikes followed the familiar pattern of employer-support from the Department of Labour, followed by police action, management intransigence and essentially work place demands such as higher wages, union recognition, better conditions, etc.[85]

Out of this renewed working class militancy, 5 different groupings of worker organisations were to emerge in the 1970's. By the 31st of August 1975, the Institute of Race Relations listed 59,550 members of the Black trade union movement, roughly divided into 5 positions:-

1) the parallel unions affiliated to TUSCA
2) Black Allied Workers Union
3) the Urban Training Project unions
4) TUACC Trade Union Advisory Co-ordinated Council, and
5) the Western Province Workers Advice Bureau.[86]

However, whereas in the 1950's most African trade unions were closely linked with the popular resistance in the townships, these unions of the 1970's, with the exception of Black Allied Workers Union, were to maintain a clear distance from the stay-aways of 1976. Formed in 1972 as the trade union wing of the Black Consciousness movement, the Black Allied Workers Union has articulated a strong political orientation and has limited shop floor organisation Drake Koka, one of the leaders of Black Allied Workers Union, was alleged in the SSRC trial to have arranged for the typing of pamphlets during the stay-aways. Furthermore, Black Allied Workers Union, in a memo submitted to the 63rd session of the International Labour Organisation in Geneva, in June 1977, claimed to have collaborated in the organisation of the stay-aways in 1976 "in solidarity with their own children and country men, Black workers, under the basis and aegis of Black Allied Workers Union and brother unions, obeyed and collaborated in the call and launch of 4 stay-away strikes (June to November) irrespective of the law that prohibits Black workers from striking".[87]

While large numbers of clothing workers in the Transvaal and Western Cape participated in the stay-aways, it was certainly not because of support from their leadership. Many workers were often in

phenomenon which at a certain moment follow with historical necessity from the social relations". "The general strike, she says, must not be seen as an isolated revolutionary rupture, but rather a sign- subordinate and demonstrative of wider revolutionary struggles to come". To see it, as anarcho-syndicalists said as Bakunin did, as a lever to introduce social revolution, is to misunderstand it. The general strike demonstrates the power of the masses to withdraw their labour and therefore the dependency of the system upon them. But they remain demonstrations, not organised challenges. Consequently the effectiveness of a stay-away is evaluated in terms of the percentage of blacks who stayed away from work.

A successful stay-away, the organisers argue, is one where large numbers of blacks stay-away from work: a failure is one where very few stay-away. But this, of course, is to focus only on one dimension of the stay-away - ultimately a successful stay-away is one where the shock effect of the demonstration of power reverberates through to the dominant classes in a way that forces them to realise the necessity for reform. The Wage Board activity which followed the 1957 stay-away is such an example. But to see it as an alternative to organisation in the factory or to prolong the stay-away is to misunderstand it as a strategic weapon. This is of particular importance in a situation of recession and high unemployment where the stay-away provides capital with an opportunity to intensify exploitation and through state repression to demonstrate the weakness of the working class.

The implications are now clear; the strike is fundamentally an economic weapon, which easily boomerangs if used on terrain for which it is not designed. Since the nature of the economy as a system is ultimately a political question, it follows that strikes have only a relative and not an absolute efficacy in the economic struggle itself.[92] However it is primarily, though not exclusively through the struggle for higher wages and the establishment of intermediate institutions in the work-place that black workers can acquire the confidence and the organisation to take on the broader political struggles.

Footnotes

I would like to thank Tom Lodge, Johann Maree, Karel Tip, and Philip Bonner for reading parts of this paper and making helpful suggestions.

1. This quote from Engels is reproduced in Luxemburg's famous defence of the general strike after the 1905 Russian Revolution, Luxemburg, R. (1906) The Mass Strike, the Party and trade unions, Ceylen, Young Socialist Publications 1970. It was to lead to a celebrated debate between the Leninist theory of organisation and the so-called theory of spontaneity - a position which can be attributed to Luxemburg only with important reservations. The difference between the two is not to be found in an underestimation of mass initiative but in an understanding of its limitations.

2. There are three partial exceptions; Marcus Arkin, "Strikes, boycotts - and the history of their impact on South Africa". S.A.J.E., 1960; R.W. Johnson, How Long will South Africa Survive? Macmillan 1977; Socialist League of Africa (1961), "South Africa: Ten Years of the Stay-at-Home", International Socialism 5.

3. R. Moorsom. "Workers' Consciousness and the 1971-72 Contract Workers Strike", South African Labour Bulletin, Vol.4, No. 1 & 2, p.136.

4. Walshe, "The rise of African Nationalism" C. Hurst & Co., 1970, p.289.

5. For further discussion of the 1940's see O'Meara (1975) "The 1946 African Mine Workers Strike and the Political Economy of South Africa". Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Studies, Vol.13, No.2. July 1975.

6. The Guardian, 4.5.1970. These claims have been questioned by Walshe, The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa and Mary Benson, Struggle for a Birthright

7. The Guardian 22.6.1950.

8. The Guardian 29.6.1950. The degree of success in this campaign on the Witwatersrand has been questioned by some writers. See Walshe and Benson above.

9. Report of Joint Planning Council, November 1951.

10. Kuper, Leo, Passive Resistance in South Africa, New Haven, 1957, p.104 & 105.

11. The Socialist League of Africa, ibid.

12. New Age, 4.6.57.

13. New Age, 4.6.57.

14. New Age, 18.7.57.

15. R. Lambert, "Black Worker Consciousness and Resistance in South Africa: 1950 - 1961". M.A. University of Warwick 1978, p.99-100. I would like to thank Rob Lambert for allowing access to his dissertation.

16. New Age, 4.6.57.

17. New Age, 13.2.58.

18. New Age, 13.2.58.

19. E. Feit, Workers Without Weapons, Archon Books 1975, p.109.

20. Natal Mercury, 10.4.58. These unions were to form a year later FOFATUSA.

21. The Socialist League of Africa, ibid.

22. Africa South, Vol.3, No.2, Jan-March 1959, p.12-17.

23. New Age, 13.11.58 - reproduced after the stay-away.

24. New Age, 17.4.58.

25. New Age, 17.4.58.

26. New Age, 1.5.58.

27. New Age, 24.4.58.

28. New Age, 13.11.58.

29. New Age, 17.4.58.

30. Lambert, ibid. p.

31. New Age, 24.4.58.

32. The Socialist League of Africa, ibid.

33. Charles Simkins and Duncan Clarke, Structural Unemployment in South Africa, Natal University Press, 1978. Pass offences increased from 76,760 in 1957 to 142,959 in 1959.

34. Cape Times, 5.5.60.

35. Tom Lodge, "The Cape Town Troubles, March-April 1960", Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol.4, No.2.

36. Workers Unity, August-October 1961.

37. Workers Unity, August-October 1961.

38. Workers Unity, August-October 1961.

39. Drawn up for the National Consultative Committe (NCC) from Organiser's Reports May 1961. I have a certain amount of uncertainty about the value of this Report. Firstly, I'm not sure whether the Report demonstrates the opening

proposition. Secondly, the organisers may have sent in Reports to satisfy the leaderships overall strategy.

40. Workers Unity, August-October 1961.

41. Workers Unity, August-October 1961.

42. Personal communication with Barash Hirson, member of SLA.

43. G. Clack, "Industrial Peace in South Africa", British Journal of Industrial Relations, 1962.

44. For the Consolidated Textile Mill strike see Natal Mercury 12.6.57 and New Age, 11.7.57, 18.7.57, 15.8.57, 10.10.57. For Amato Textile Mills see New Age 20.2.58.

45. Feit, Workers Without Weapons, p.32.

46. Feit, ibid.

47. Feit, ibid.

48. Bonner, "Black trade unions in South African since the Second World War", unpublished paper.

49. Meth, "Are there skill shortages in the Furniture Industry?" SALB, Vo.4 No.7, p.16.

50. Bonner, ibid.

51. Quoted in Peter Horn, Soweto and After an unpublished lecture delivered at UCT in August 1978.

52. Court record. State vs SSRC, p.1475.

53. ibid., p.1486.

54. Financial Mail, 6.8.76.

55. Thirteenth Special Report of the Director-General on the Application of the Declaration concerning the Policy of Apartheid of Republic of South Africa, ILO, p.4.

56. Sunday Tribune, 29.8.76.

57. ibid.

58. M. Peskin and A. Spiegel, Migrant Labour Project : Urban Hostels in the Johannesburg Area. Unpublished, pp.33-34.

59. A survey of Race Relations in South Africa 1976, p.69.

60. ILO Report, ibid. p.5.

61. Financial Mail, 17.9.76.

62. Rand Daily Mail, 14.9.76.

63. Kane-Berman, Soweto: Black Revolt and White Reaction, Ravan Press 1978, p.119.

64. Rand Daily Mail, 14.9.76.

65. Rand Daily Mail, 15.9.76.

66. Evidence produced in the State vs. Y.C. Hoffmann, J. Parker and I. Jackson 1977, Cape Town. They were charged under sec.2 of the Terrorism Act for producing and distributing pamphlets designed to undermine law and order. They were found not guilty.

67. Financial Mail, 15.9.76.

68. Amanyano, September 1976.

69. Sunday Express, 19.9.76. It is not clear how these calculations were made.

70. "The term 'dispute' is not defined in the Industrial Conciliation Act. However, it is generally accepted that a dispute will only be regarded as such if it deals with a matter affecting the employer-employee relationship. For example, if workers stopped work in protest against the Government, it would probably not be regarded as a dispute to which the machinery of the Act could apply". Trade Union Directory, 1978, published by TUSCA.

71. Court Record Exhibit.

72. Kane-Berman, ibid., p.117.

73. The Star, 1.11.76.

74. A stay-away, the 14th identified in Table 1, was called for in June 1977 but failed. In June 1978 three Y.C.W. members were arrested and charged with, amongst other things, conspiring to organise a strike of all black workers in Kroonstad in commemeration of the Soweto unrest. Evidence was led that they had intended to obtain, prepare and manufacture petrol bombs and explosives to damange the Kroonstad power station, etc. Two of the three were found guilty and each jailed for 5 years. At the time of writing the judgment in the case of 11 SSRC members charged with sedition had not yet taken place.

75. New Age, 13.11.58.

76. Transvaal Chamber of Industries, memo to P.M. July 1976.

77. Financial Mail, 27.8.76.

78. Hindson, Conditions of Labour Supply and Employment of African Workers in urban based industries in South Africa, 1946-75. Workshop on Unemployment and Labour Allocation, Pietermaritzburg, 1977.

79. G.A.W.U. "Report on the Strike at Armourplate Safety-Glass" SALB, Vol.3 No.7, June-July 1977.

80. M.A.W.U. Memo on Retrenchment in the Metal Industry, SALB, Vol. 4, No.4, July 1978.

MAWU made the following 5 recommendations:

a) the Industrial Council should ban all regular overtime work.

b) Where empty order books justify retrenchment, firms should rather elect to work short-time.

c) Adequate notice should be given to workers who are to be retrenched.

d) Firms should agree to re-hire retrenched workers when jobs are available.

c) Management should discuss retrenchment fully and frankly with employers.

81. R.W. Johnson, How Long Will South Africa Survive? p.297.

82. IIE, The Durban Strikes 1973, p.54.

83. See Hemson, "Trade Unionism and the struggle for liberation in South Africa", Capital & Class, no.6.

84. Empact, November 1978, Vol.1, No.2.

85. "Strikes and the African Worker", SALB, Vol.3, No.7, June-July 1977.

86. Survey of Race Relations 1975, p.206-207.

87. Memo submitted by BAWU at the annual conference of the ILO June 1977.

88. Fisher, "Class Consciousness among colonized workers in South Africa" in T. Adler, (1977), Perceptions on South Africa, University of the Witwatersrand, p.346-37.

89. Kane-Berman, ibid.

90. Douwes Dekker, et al. "Case Studies in African Labour actions in South Africa and Namibia, in Sandbrook & Cohen, The Development of an African Working Class, p.219.

91. For a statement of TUAC's position on shop-floor representation, see SALB, Vol.4, No.8, p.1.

92. "Pure reliance on the general strike as such has nearly always been doomed to failure. The fundamental reason is evident: a stoppage, on however massive a scale, is not the same thing as a substitution of one social order for another". Perry Anderson, "The limits and possibilities of trade union action" in Blackburn and Cockburn (eds.), The Incompatibles, Penguin 1967, p.270.