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1983-06
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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

African Studies Seminar Paper
to be presented in RW
4.00pm JUNE 1983

Title: Class Contradictions and Class Alliances: The Social Nature of ICU Leadership, 1924-1929.

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No. 133

CLASS CONTRADICTIONS AND CLASS ALLIANCES: THE SOCIAL NATURE OF ICU LEADERSHIP, 1924-1929*

*As this stands, the very structure of the paper intensifies the contradictions it attempts to tease out. A substantially revised version has been published in the Journal of African History, 25, 3, 1984.

Helen Bradford

> '(The ICU) differed from the ANC in one other important respect: Its leaders were not drawn from the "respectable classes". They had come straight from the ranks of the workers themselves, and they had a ruggedness and militancy that men accustomed to making obeisances before authority found outrageous.'[1]
>
> 'Whereas in European trade unionism, trade union leadership had developed organically from the working class, in the ICU movement had been created and a leadership imposed more or less from the outside. From the outset, therefore, the movement was characterised by the cult of personality and by contradictory bourgeois aims.'[2]

Startling though the contradictions between these two quotes are, there are three reasons for utilising both of them to identify the social origins of Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU) leadership. Firstly, the class nature of Union leadership changed markedly over time. Between 1919 and 1924, the ICU was, as Ngubane suggests, largely led by men who were themselves wage-earners, or had spent years working as unskilled labourers, or had as little education as most ordinary workers. Epitomizing organizers of this period was James la Guma, a branch secretary from 1920, and assistant general secretary from 1923 to 1926. Of French-Malagasy origin, la Guma was eight years old when apprenticed as a leather worker; ten when he participated in his first workers' demonstration; in his teens when labouring on the diamond diggings near Luderitz; and in his early twenties when he led a diamond miners' strike and pass resistance there in 1918-1919.[3]

After the Pact electoral victory of 1924, however, petty bourgeois Africans began to replace working class 'Coloureds' as organizers. Top leadership positions were filled by men like Allison Wessels George Champion: president of the Transvaal Native Clerks Association, landowner, and 'immediate future leader of the rising Native Middle Class'.[4] Middle leadership became the province of men like Samuel Dunn, proud possessor of a 100 acre allotment in Dunn's Reserve.[5] And the branch positions were eagerly taken up by scores of teachers, traders, clerks and craftsmen - a veritable army, as Bonner indicates, of middle class reformers.

The distinction between levels of the Union suggests the second reason for retaining the notion that organizers had varied class backgrounds. Commonly, paid positions (from branch secretary upwards) were from the mid-1920s filled by middle class blacks. Sometimes these organizers were chosen on the basis of political criteria, such as recommendations by African National Congress leaders or prominence in certain organizations. More commonly, appointees fulfilled considerably less stringent criteria, such as membership of kinship, service-

mens' or old boys' networks. As one disgruntled member expressed it, ICU policy was one of 'Jobs for friends of pals'[6] - and the friends tended to have similar social backgrounds to their middle class pals.

At a local level, however, a considerably more democratic procedure operated in selecting members of the eleven-person executive, of whom only the branch and assistant branch secretaries were paid. Since officials were sensitive to the need to create a sense of popular control, most local leaders (sometimes including the secretary) were elected at the first or second Union meeting. Consequently, social groups other than the black middle class were represented on branch committees. Strong grass roots pressure in favour of those with prestige in pre-colonial society often manifested itself, and occasionally - like the chief who became chairman in Bethal - members of the traditional elite braved the wrath of officialdom to become Union leaders. Far more frequently, wage-earners were elected to the committee. Thus in Estcourt, the branch executive included road workers as well as a shop assistant chosen for his prowess in the soccer club. In Middelburg, the first chairman in 1926 was a water-cart driver employed by the municipality, while the same position was filled in Pietermaritzburg in 1929 by a domestic servant. Some executives may even have fulfilled their constitutional obligation of representing all sectors of labour by including farm workers. Whether they did or not, it is clear that minor officials were often - in the words of a contemporary opponent of the Union- 'half-educated or raw natives'.[7]

Not that petty bourgeois blacks were excluded from branch positions: indeed, they almost certainly predominated on committees established in small country towns. In part, this was because ICU officials who arrived in a village tended to gravitate towards members of the elite for organizational assistance - and hence bathed such men in the aura of the Union.[8] In part too, it was because many members of the intermediate strata were already viewed by the masses as having political skills, and as being capable of challenging the white man successfully. In addition, as will be indicated below, middle class blacks often had their own reasons for flocking to take up branch positions.

This brings us to the third - and for the purposes of this paper, the most important - reason for the co-existence of conflicting accounts of the social origins of ICU leadership. This is the contradictory nature of the petty bourgeoisie itself. In capitalist society, the middle strata stand 'between the dominant relations of production of capitalism - that is to say the capital/labour relation - and as such (are) pulled two ways'.[9] By juxtaposing the inconsistent claims that ICU officials originated in the working/capitalist classes, it is possible to capture some of the ambiguities of their petty bourgeois nature.

Unfortunately, however, few commentators on ICU leaders have examined the extent to which they arose from the under classes. Instead, many liberal and radical scholars have tackled the problem of ICU organizers' alleged failure of the masses in terms of the leadership's elitist/bourgeois nature. Thus the former have perceived Union officials as lagging behind the masses largely because they had passed through the appropriate ideological institutions. Christian blacks of this period, they have argued, were prone to constitutional methods of struggle. Schooling reinforced this: 'a policy of insistent, but re-

spectful moderation ... suited the inclinations and experiences of the leaders of the ICU, many of whom had been educated by white missionaries and shared some of their assumptions about the possibilities for gradual expansion of African opportunities in South Africa.'[10] And since they were immersed in the 'Cape tradition' they naturally associated with white liberals, which further distanced them from the restive masses.[11]

Radical intellectuals on the other hand have explained leadership defects in terms of class, rather than such superstructural phenomena as mission schools and Victorian virtues. Why did officials - who unfortunately had not the faintest idea of theory and tactics - rush around the countryside enrolling pre-determined losers rather than organizing the proletariat? 'The reason for this negligence can be traced to their elite or petit-bourgeois background.'[12] Wherein lies the explanation for leaders' personal ambition and lack of commitment to the struggle? In the fact that they were not members of the working class. Why were they so susceptible to moderate forms of protest? Because teachers, clerks and the like 'had won sufficient stake within the existing system to identify themselves with certain tenets of liberal ideology ... (and) were not by nature socially radical'.[13] From all shades of left-wing opinion emerges a litany for the masses: trust not the petty bourgeoisie, for the stench of their privileged backgrounds rises from the graves of their class suicides.[14]

Interestingly enough, both liberal and radical accounts of ICU leadership assert the existence of a strong relation between the social origins of organizers and the ideology they articulated. Indeed, too strong: there was not, as liberals claim, a one-to-one relationship between organizers' passage through certain institutions and the beliefs they espoused. Nor were political and ideological orientations as class-specific as the revisionists argue: membership of the petty bourgeoisie cannot account for practices ranging from disorganized thinking to dissolute living. Furthermore, the ICU's message was also crucially dependent on the nature of the organization into which they were incorporated, and on the kind of constituency into which they were integrated.

Nonetheless, it is undeniably true that the social nature of the leadership affected the content and form of the Union's discourse. In particular, the background of rural organizers crucially influenced the way in which the ICU operated in the countryside, which became a major arena for Union activities at precisely the same time as the class nature of leadership was changing. And it is only by focusing on plebeian as well as elitist aspects in the make-up of these officials of the latter twenties that it is possible to resolve a contradiction permeating so much of the historiography of Union leadership. Namely: that members of the much denounced petty bourgeoisie headed one of the largest organizations ever to operate in Africa, and mobilized rural blacks in a way no South African movement has accomplished before or since.

The consensus amongst radical historians that (paid) ICU organizers of the later 1920s had not developed organically out of the working class is fairly accurate. In a society in which some 66 per cent of Africans were non-Christian, about 80 per cent were labourers or rural cultivators, nearly 90 per cent were illiterate, and almost 100 per

cent had no voice in parliament,[15] ICU officials were predominantly Christian, educated males, drawn from the middle strata, and including amongst themselves a good sprinkling of voters. There is clearly some justification for terming them part of the elite, and it is these aspects of their backgrounds that will be examined first. Since the great bulk of the Union's support was drawn from Natal,[16] it is organizers in this province who will receive the most attention.

In many and probably most cases, ICU officials were the children of the privileged. Some obtained their preferential access to resources through being related to pre-colonial ruling groups. More frequently, they were the sons of professionals such as ministers or teachers. To a significant degree, they were also drawn from a rural elite: from relatively wealthy families based on freehold property, on mission reserves, on locations and even on farms. Prosperous rural cultivators were being slowly strangled from the late nineteenth century, but many - especially those in the eastern Cape and Natal - survived long enough to direct their children to alternative paths of privilege.[17]

In so doing, they took good care to name their offspring in a way symbolizing acceptance of the cultural superiority of their white rulers. While the overwhelming majority of Union leaders had English (often Biblical) names, some - like Cecil Rhodes Mama and Conan Doyle Modiakgotla - bore even more overt signs of originating in households which approved of the civilizing mission of the imperialists. Acquiring an identity as a child of God, a reader of books and a citizen of the Empire was an integral part of the childhood of numerous ICU organizers. So too was emulating the lifestyles of wealthier whites, with some leaders having fathers 'who insisted upon us living and behaving as respective (sic) Europeans'.[18]

In consolidating a group of black 'AmaRespectables', church had been crucial for the parent generation. By the 1920s, Christianity had diffused outwards to win over one third of the African population, and education rather than spiritual beliefs characterised the new elite. Even so, most ICU leaders were immersed in the religion of missionaries at both home and school. They were spared the sermon on the eighth commandment given Lovedale students in 1929, in which pupils were told of the sanctity of property and the sinfulness of Communism. But most members of the black elite were subjected to equally crude religious practices, designed to inculcate a faith in which obedience to God was inextricably tied to subordination to white capital and to class differentiation.

If religous instruction was important in separating the sheep from the goats, then secular education was at least as powerful. The very form of tuition taught students to revere individual achievement, to bow to authority, and to emulate the lifestyles of their conquerors. Similarly, content was directed at teaching pupils to equate civilisation with colonial expansion and barbarism with tribal Africa. Thus English was far and away the most important subject, while geography syllabuses usually revolved around the characteristic features of British colonies. Often arithmetic was taught in terms of purchasing consumer goods, while history examinations in Natal crudely emphasised the facts of conquests with questions like: 'What took place on December 16, 1838?'[19]

So in ways ranging from teaching the secrets that distinguish mental from manual labour, through to encouraging the singing of 'Rule

Britannia', mission schools devoted much effort to nurturing a black middle class imbued with the values of Cape liberalism. Their success - together with that of other institutions - was reflected in the fact that some 25% of Africans enlisting for overseas duty in World War I were drawn from the educated elite, mainly from the teaching profession. Amongst the many future ICU organizers who demonstrated loyalty to the Empire in this way was the well-schooled Jason Jingoes, who joined up partly because 'I, as a member of the British Commonwealth, felt deeply involved'.[20]

Yet if education was one pathway to liberal values and the middle strata, it was a straight and narrow one. In 1924, only 702 African pupils were in grades higher than Standard 6, while eight years later merely 5% of school-age children were in classes above Standard 2. In such a society, paid Union organizers of the later 1920s were intellectual giants. Almost certainly, the great majority had passed Standard 2. A considerable number - including at least one third of the 1927 National Council - had obtained their Standard 6. Many had attended teacher-training institutions, while not a few had actually completed the three year, post-Standard 6 course which qualified them as instructors. Nor was all this force-feeding on mission school diet restricted to head office leaders. Of the seven branch organizers whose educational histories are known, all had passed Standard 6. Three had qualified as teachers, and four - in a country where only about 100 Africans held Junior Certificates - had their JC's. Strange bedfellows though they may be, right-wing 'dominees' and left-wing historians are at least accurate in complaining that the ICU of this period was run by 'geleerde Kaffers'.[21]

Most 'educated Kaffirs' of this period did all they could to avoid the harsh conditions and low wages of unskilled labourers. Many, probably most ICU paid officials, had previously been white collar employees. As such, they had helped reproduce the subordination of blacks to white employers, white authority and white culture. James Dippa, one of the numerous ICU organizers who had been a mine compound clerk, had participated in waking workers at 4 a.m. and sjambokking them into line. Albert Nzula, one of the many state employees who subsequently became ICU organizers, had translated magisterial pronouncements to those convicted under the pass laws. And Gilbert Coka, who like the majority of Union branch secretaries had been a teacher, had been actively involved in instilling the inferiority of manual to mental labour and of black to white lifestyles. Understandably, such employees evoked a volatile mixture of admiration and anger from ordinary blacks. As Es'kia Mphahlele succinctly expressed it when writing of Marabastad life in the 1930s, other women felt 'at once jealous, envious, annoyed and humble' when Ma-Lebona repeatedly stressed that she had once been a school mistress.[22]

At this point, it is necessary to note that ICU organizers were not always male. There were female delegates to conferences, female branch leaders, and - at least in the eastern Transvaal and Natal - female officials who organized for a separate Women's Section of the ICU. But black women, subordinate to men in almost every sphere and isolated from most political activity, were hardly obvious leadership material for a male dominated protest movement. Hence they were always in a tiny minority among Union officials, and at least some appear to have reached these positions through their relationships with male

officials. (As Elijah Ngcobo recalled, the minimum duty of the wife of an organizer was to join the Union, otherwise 'the members of the ICU would ask the leader where his wife was'.)[23] Moreover, it appears to have been middle class women - like the nurse Miss C B Ntombela - who most easily broke through the web of constraints inhibiting female participation. As with their male counterparts, such women often had interests which were opposed to those of ordinary blacks.

If both male and female white collar employees were often antagonistically placed vis-a-vis the masses, so too were middle strata blacks able to earn an entirely or partially independent living. In the context of the ICU, this was particularly evident when organizers retained an interest in property. Johannes Mogorosi, the Kroonstad branch chairman who simultaneously ran an eating house and rented three stands in the location, was wary about risking his investment by prolonging Union protest over municipal rates.[24] Sam Dunn, who was probably using outside labour to produce sugar cane on his allotment, was noticeably antagonistic to the advocacy of strikes. Then there was Champion, whose world view was profoundly shaped by his inheriting an interest in his father's holdings in 1921; his ownership of an Inanda plot worth £210; and his investment of ICU funds in Durban property held in his own name. According to him, the Communists wanted a system in which 'men like myself who hold landed property should be dispossessed of them and these properties should be given to other people who have less than I have ... That is where I disagree with Communism'.[25] Prone to such delightfully unambiguous statements, Champion is deservedly the darling of radical historians of the ICU's petty bourgeois leadership.

In addition to Champion and Dunn, there were a number of other ICU organizers who retained an interest in land, including Abel Ngcobo and Richard Mdima who rented mission reserve plots in Natal. In this period, it was still possible to consolidate privilege by channelling salaries or profits into the rural areas. Thus there were ministers - including the father of ICU organizer Selby Msimang - who saved thousands of pounds for farms, as well as teachers, traders and lawyers who were simultaneously progressive farmers and landowners. Moreover, it was becoming increasingly lucrative to rent out such land, given the ongoing squeeze on both market- and subsistence-oriented rural blacks. Between 1915 and 1936, the population on African-owned farms in Natal actually doubled, and the rack-renting, land-grabbing proclivities of kholwa landowners certainly earned them the hatred of many poorer Africans.[26]

If the economic interests of middle strata Africans were often opposed to those of the masses, then their political concerns also tended to set them at a tangent to the popular classes. Many members of the intermediate strata were able to escape some of the worst forms of political coercion to which most blacks were subject. Like numerous Natal ICU officials, some were allowed to join the 'izemtiti': those exempt from customary law and from various pass regulations. Or they might be excluded from forced relocation in segregated townships, or from 'native' taxation, or from some of the other myriad laws that repressed blacks and made the world safe for white capital. Even the vote was possible, since the values of Cape liberalism were still entrenched in the qualified franchise. By 1927, 16,481 male Africans, including some ICU officials, had been adjudged sufficiently alienated

from workers and poor peasants to be politically incorporated into the state.[27]

Culturally too, middle strata blacks were often differentiated from the masses, insofar as many had both the income and the inclination to participate in the 'civilization' of the white dominant groups. Apart from being distinguished by their religion and education, they also tended to be disproportionately represented amongst those whose diets excluded mealie meal, or who played tennis in clubs like the Daffodils, or who danced to the strains of swing orchestras in swallow tails and ties. There could have been few rural Africans in the Kranskop district who owned, as did the ICU branch secretary James Ngcobo, three suits, three ties, a Stetson hat, and the entire gamut of equipment deemed necessary by motor cycle fanatics. Such status symbols, representing as they did social distinctions and the extent to which middle class Africans had accepted the world of white capitalists, could evoke considerable antagonism from the under classes. Blacks were certainly aware of the slick style of many ICU officials, and some bitterly resented Union organizers' attempts to ape the white man culturally.[28]

The various differences between the black middle classes and the masses tended to be reflected in separate organizations. Champion for instance was a founder member of both the Roodepoort Progressive Society and the Exempted Natives' Association of South Africa. In the early 1920s, like ICU officials Selby Msimang and Alexander Jabavu, he was also involved in various Chamber of Mines financed institutions, established to regain the allegiance of the black elite after the post-war explosion of protest. These included the Johannesburg Joint Council, which provided an arena for members of the African middle classes to voice their grievances, and the Bantu Mens' Social Centre, where the African elite was expected to while away leisure hours in respectable activities. Finally, Champion was by 1927 also prominent in a black businessmen's organization - the United National Association of Commerce and Industry Ltd - and in the late 1920s he succeeded Kadalie as Minister of Labour in the African National Congress.[29]

All such associations, together with those like Native Advisory Boards, provided organizational experience for innumerable ICU officials. Apart from fostering a self conscious elitist identity, they also often promoted ideals and tactics overtly opposed to those of 'irresponsible agitators'. Indeed, this was the initial aim of Congress, which was the body in which numerous ICU organizers served their political apprenticeship. More than two thirds of the delegates to a 1927 Union conference belonged to the ANC, and they were undoubtedly influenced by its programme of equal opportunity for progressive individuals and its tactics of constitutional suasion. To an ever-increasing extent, they were also affected by the projects of white liberals. In early 1929, Kadalie claimed with considerable accuracy that Union business was being 'delegated to a coterie of Europeans and natives who assembled in the Bantu Mens' Social Centre'.[30]

Also of significance in the development of bourgeois aspirations amongst ICU leaders was the Garveyist movement. 'Africa for the Africans' was a slogan that greatly appealed to many actual and aspirant middle class blacks, not least because of the class character of its nationalism. In the United States, the Universal Negro Improvement Association placed enormous stress on creating a worldwide network of

Negro businessmen through a six million dollar self help fund. Inspired by this example of mobilizing funds on a nationalist ticket, the ICU's first business venture was 'The Black Man' company, promoted in 1920 by such ICU-cum-UNIA members as Kadalie. The aims of the undertaking included the establishment of co-operative stores, the publication of a journal '*The Black Man*', and the organization of African workers 'by means of establishing a Branch ... of the Company in various centres deemed necessary by the Directors'.[31] In attempting to create a trade union wing of their economic self-help movement, members of the African petty bourgeoisie preceded their Afrikaner counterparts by more than a decade.

ICU efforts to harness the masses behind the creation of an elite independent of wage labour continued throughout the 1920s. Perhaps the most striking example of this was provided by Henry Tyamzashe, who in 1927 told readers of the Union's newpaper that:

> 'Carpentry, shoemaking, cabinet-making, co-operative societies, wholesale stores, banks, schools, religious work, and a thousand and one other business ventures are all avenues which the Native could exploit independently and with success ... A six million shilling fund will produce £300,000. This is enough money to start one thousand £300 ventures all over the country ... This will sound the death-knell of all those bad laws and Ordinances.
>
> Thus we advise an industrial policy that will make the Native scratch for himself. When it is discovered that the South African black man is determined to fend for himself, those who look upon him now as if he were a child of three years will only be too glad to come forward and share the profits and privileges of the country with him.'[32]

Encouraging the African labourer to 'scratch for himself' - or more accurately, to scratch for his leaders - was hardly the most worker-oriented industrial programme. Like innumerable other facets of the ICU - ranging from organizers' obsession with electoral politics through to their addiction to fast living - it was rooted in the bourgeois aspirations of Union officials. As liberal and radical historians have stressed, most leaders of the 1920s were drawn from an elite objectively and subjectively opposed to the black masses along certain economic, political and cultural lines. This, together with their simultaneous support for many of the interests of the white dominant groups, was to infuse the very fabric of ICU ideology and organization in the countryside.

Yet ICU activities in the rural areas were never unidimensional. In precisely the same year that Tyamzashe penned the above, Union organizers in Kroonstad distributed a red pamphlet which urged:

> 'Now is the time to consolidate and strengthen the LABOUR MOVEMENT in preparation for the next SOCIALIST COMMONWEALTH ... WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE, YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR CHAINS.'[33]

Far from having being 'completely bought off' as has been alleged,[34] the petty bourgeoisie of the 1920s clearly had some life in it yet. To understand how middle class organizers came to be traipsing around the countryside calling for the overthrow of capitalism, it is necessary to examine other - distinctly plebeian - aspects of their background.

Of cardinal importance is the fact that the black middle strata of this period were being brutally undermined. From the late nineteenth centry, economic weight and political dominance were shifting from merchants and landowners to mining capitalists, manufacturers and commercial farmers. In the process, an African labour force was created on a scale and with a speed that left little room for 'black Englishmen'. From the 1890s, the peasantry and the mercantile-missionary-liberal axis that supported it were under vicious attack. By the turn of the century, all African chiefdoms were being radically reshaped under the twin impact of colonial conquest and the burgeoning mining industry. And by Union, black allies were being sought amongst illiterate chiefs and headmen rather than enfranchised peasants and professionals, while the policy of segregation[35] was permeating all the fissures of South African society.

As already noted with regard to the Joint Councils, attempts were made to halt this process of erosion when the black middle classes became involved in the post-war upsurge of popular protest. As well as the private initiatives of white liberals and the Chamber of Mines, there occurred a hydra-headed attempt by the state to co-opt the African intermediate strata. Various political safety valves were created, in the form of Native Advisory Boards, Local Councils and 'native' conferences. Simultaneously, draft bills eased the impact of pass laws on the middle strata, and offered urban freehold rights and better housing conditions to 'more advanced natives'.[36]

But these were the solutions of large mining capitalists, and they were strongly opposed by many struggling farmers, white wage-earners and members of the white petty bourgeoisie. As black resistance subsided during the 1920-1923 depression, and as white wage-earners' opposition to African advancement intensified and culminated in the Rand Revolt, so the costs to monopoly capital of consolidating a black middle class were re-evaluated. The South African Party government itself abandoned the abovementioned draft legislation, spurred on by the ongoing flood of 'poor whites' into the towns and the fact a weak national bourgeoisie was seeking allies against imperial interests. And when the National Party-Labour Party coalition government came to power in 1924, it extended all measures hampering the development of the black middle strata. Thus within three years the political representatives of national capitalists and white wage-earners had introduced the Native Bills (which threatened to strip the African elite of the vote and to confine them to 13% of the land); they had passed the Native Administration Act (which reinforced the subordination of educated blacks to chiefs and headmen); and they had done all in their power to encourage the movement of whites rather than blacks into skilled positions. As a disillusioned Kadalie argued in 1926, the government had not lived up to its promise of redistributing the goods previously reserved for big finance amongst all South Africans. Instead, it had given 'the (black) child stones in the form of the

Colour Bar Bill, enforcement of Pass Laws ... (and) the retrenchment of Natives from state undertakings ...'[37]

It is in the light of these attempts to crush the African elite that the emphasis by many radical historians on the bourgeois nature of the petty bourgeoisie is particularly misplaced. In all capitalist societies, the middle strata are pulled in two directions by the contradictory forces of capital and labour. Because of the racial nature of South African capitalism, the traction of the subordinate classes on the black petty bourgeoisie is especially powerful. And in the context of the class levelling policy of the state and capital in the 1920s, as well as the enormous impact on the intermediate groups of struggles in the wider society, it is impossible to assume that the elite automatically identified upwards rather than downwards.

Instead, the potential for downward identification by the sub-elite who predominated in ICU leadership positions was present almost from the moment of their birth. Nearly all of them were born after 1886 - indeed, many were conceived after 1900 - and their lives were intimately affected by the tightening of the noose around the middle strata. Gilbert Coka, for instance, was born in 1910 as the son of relatively prosperous Vryheid 'squatters'. Two years later, the landlord demanded the labour services of Gilbert's elder brother, and his parents were forced to leave for town to safeguard their children's education. But like so many other ICU organizers, Gilbert was a junior son, disadvantaged as regards life chances in comparison to his elder siblings. By the time he was ready for secondary education, his father could no longer scrape together the required £10 - £20 p.a. Consequently Gilbert spent part of 1923 herding cattle, and it was only through teaching for a year that he was able to clamber into secondary school.[38]

Partly because pupils like Coka were often intimately acquainted with the struggles of the under classes, these mission schools were less successful than liberals have claimed in instilling moderate methods of protest. On the contrary: Champion was in fact expelled for organizing students against the missionaries' disciplinary regime, while innumerable ICU officials must have been affected by the 1920 conflict at Lovedale, their alma mater. In the midst of countrywide popular struggles linked to soaring inflation, the students here refused to eat the cheaper bread foisted on them. About 300 of them hoisted the Red Flag and marched on the school, where they gutted the grain store, wrecked the electric power house, smashed every window in the church, and stoned the principal.[39] The theory that mission education inculcated submission is clearly somewhat threadbare.

So too is the belief that ICU officials were once-and-for-all imbued with liberal ideas at these institutions. Firstly, ICU leaders - unlike many of the older Congress officials - were taught at a time when schools were being wrenched into line with the policy of segregation. To an ever increasing extent, mission education of the 1910s and 1920s was directed at preparing pupils for lives of obedient subordination rather than equal opportunity - and as such was bitterly resented. Secondly, the world views of the dominant groups are transformed as well as absorbed by those to whom they are imparted. Thus ICU leaders who had spent years learning of the British Empire told their audiences the English were savage cannibals before they were conquered by the Romans, while Thomas Mbeki told farm labourers 'of

the rise and fall of the Kingdoms starting with the Roman Empire right up to the republic of America. He said, "the writing is on the wall"'.[40]

If schools were not particularly successful in instilling beliefs in eternal British superiority, neither was immersion in the so-called Cape tradition. Especially after Union, English 'friends of the natives' were at best largely impotent and at worst amongst those who brutally suppressed black aspirations and protest. Disillusioned by ruling class responses to their wartime sacrifices, inspired by world-wide struggles against colonialism, and wooed by Afrikaner nationalists, the African elite of this period grew increasingly sceptical of their British inheritance. By 1920, even Congress leaders were denouncing the imperialist government for having betrayed them, while the Nationalist Party had the support of all major black organizations - including the ICU - in the 1924 elections.[41]

Equally problematic is the notion that religious indoctrination by white missionaries automatically helped reconcile Union leaders to the rule of white capital. For one thing, Christian ideology was often at odds with the daily reality of life in a racially oppressive society, and was therefore explicitly rejected by some organizers. For another, members of the sub-elite were in this period transferring their allegiance to Ethiopian churches. Not only did they learn techniques of mass organization here, but they were also immersed in Biblical tales of deliverance from bondage and in sermons which promised black ascendancy over whites. Militant nationalism, rather subservience to white rule, was the overwhelming message imparted by these separatist bodies.

It was from these churches that were drawn most of the ministers and lay preachers who became ICU organizers. (One such enterprising man was Lucas Sethabela of Lindley, who had for years been attempting to sue the Brethren Mission Church for expelling him as their preacher. His ultimate solution was to win chairmanship of the local ICU, to establish the *Union* Brethren Mission Church, and to continue 'the quarrel for he trust the money of the ICU'.)[42] And almost certainly, it was to these churches that the majority of Union organizers who adhered to Christianity belonged.[43] Small wonder that the religious idiom that infused the Union's discourse was hardly that of apologists for white bourgeois rule. As Alex Maduna told his Graaff-Reinet audience in 1927 (before repairing to a separatist church to enrol members):

> 'The white man tells you of a great man living in the sky beyond the clouds and his teaching is peace on earth and good will to men, but the white man means suppression and suppression means revolution. Furthermore, the white man tells you there is a hell, a big fire waiting for you. The only hell the black man has is this suppression under which we all live.'[44]

It was precisely because Maduna could claim that *all* blacks experienced hell on earth that an alliance between the middle strata and the masses was possible. If being Christian, educated and a voter did not necessarily distance a Union organizer from the masses as much as liberals have assumed, neither did membership of the petty bourgeoisie.

In particular, for a substantial section of the middle strata, the all-encompassing grievance of racial discrimination incorporated the three major plaints of the masses: low wages, pass restrictions and lack of land.[45]

Self-employed blacks certainly had an indirect interest in a general increase in wages of their overwhelmingly black clientele. But it was for those forced into the servitude of the salariat that the issue of pay was of the essence. Most received pitifully inadequate salaries, a tiny fraction of what was earned by whites in equivalent jobs. (As Reverend Dube stated sourly in 1931, 'It does not matter how much a Native has improved or qualified himself, he is only "A Kaffer"; that is the ordinary white man's view, "He is only 'A Kaffer' and ought to get a Kaffer's wage".')[46] Moreover, the pay of those at the lower levels of the salariat - such as most mine clerks and teachers - was often at best only marginally greater than that of labourers. Even amongst those salaried employees who secured higher earnings than workers, greater impoverishment was often experienced: either because they were fully proletarianized, or because they were frantically trying to maintain 'civilized' standards.[47]

Impelled by economic necessity, and inspired by the example of the white salariat and black labourers, there was consequently a post-war surge of collective organization amongst white collar Africans. This was especially noticeable amongst teachers, a profession into which many blacks moved reluctantly and from which they escaped with relief. Even state officials commented on the 'lean and hungry look' of black school staff in 1919,[48] and shortly afterwards a national African Teacher's Union was formed to fight the miserably low salaries. With little success: throughout the 1920s, teachers continued to receive £2 - £5 a month, irregularly paid at long intervals. Since, in 1928, 79 per cent of the Natal staff and 70 per cent of those in the Free State were unqualified, a large proportion of teachers were in fact concentrated at the lower end of this salary scale, and struggling to make ends meet. Small wonder that the ICU's branch secretaryship - at £4 a month - was attractive to these men, many of whom were so disillusioned with their posts that they were entering the job market every three months.[49]

Passes were another grievance shared by both the masses and the middle strata. Understandably, the sub-elite was especially hostile to these controls: exemption was not for example applicable to unqualified teachers in the Free State, to ministers in most independent churches, or to hawkers. Moreover, it was becoming ever more difficult to join the 'izemtiti'. After the draft bill easing the burden of passes for the elite was abandoned in 1923, a South African Agricultural Union resolution - 'That exemptions be more restricted' - was given legislative force in 1927. Almost simultaneously, Kadalie's application for exemption was rejected, and like so many other ICU officials, he was harassed by pass laws throughout his period in the Union.[50]

Not that the 'izemtiti' escaped the drag-net of pass control. They still had to carry their exemption certificates and remained subject to police harassment. Furthermore, letters of exemption were only applicable in the province of issue, and at least one member of the 'izemtiti' found himself once again subject to the full battery of pass legislation when transferred as Union organizer from Natal to the

Transvaal. In addition, even exempted blacks continued to be forced through a veritable thicket of municipal pass laws - which, to the horror of the Cape elite, was extended countrywide in 1923. In the Free State, such local controls which affected Union organizers included visitors' passes, residential passes and stand permits, as well as seeking work passes, employment registration certificates, work-on-own-behalf certificates and entertainment permits.[51]

If the issues of wages and passes could serve as the foundation for a class alliance, so too could that of land. The most notorious turn of the screw preventing middle strata Africans from acquiring land was of course the 1913 Land Act. Under its repressive provisions, only forty two applications by Africans to buy land in the three northern provinces were approved between 1919 and 1928. And although there was another rash of administrative and legislative action in the 1920s, the difficulties faced by blacks in obtaining credit, and their meagre incomes, were steadily making legal restrictions redundant. Thus in 1922, a government report referred to the 'gradual but certain elimination of the Native landowner'.[52] By 1926, African owned holdings were less in area than ten years previously, and Champion was in the process of selling the plots he had inherited from his father. Little wonder that prominent members of the black middle classes felt it pointless to identify areas where Africans would be allowed to purchase farms, since '(t)he Native had no money and his earnings capacity was being kept down by the Colour Bar Act'.[53] Indeed, a number of struggling landowners and less well established members of the middle strata had by the 1920s abandoned their faith in the capitalist land market, and were simply arguing that land should be *given* to blacks.[54]

If the African sub-elite was able to unite with the masses on a number of key issues, this was also partly because they too were being battered by the forces of proletarianization. Most obviously, this was evident with regards to land. Not only landowners but also those who had invested in cattle and crops in the urban areas, or had access to plots in the countryside, were deriving ever less support from their rural base. According to a spokesman for a Natal mission station in 1918, 'there is nearly always a famine there. The natives have not got enough gardens to work'.[55] As Sam Dunn discovered, even a 100 acre allotment was inadequate to make an independent living and he was amongst those ICU organizers impelled off the land into the urban labour market.[56]

White collar employees were also subject to the forces of proletarianization. During World War I, it was noted with concern that 'the openings for merely book-learned Native men and women are few. The tendency to close all clerical occupations to Natives makes teaching almost the only non-manual vocation open to them'.[57] By 1921, less than one per cent of African males could find work as professionals, interpreters, shop assistants or clerks, and the large majority of Congress members were educated blacks unable to find jobs suited to their qualifications. After the Rand Revolt, and more especially after the election of the Pact government, 'Colour Bar' measures heightened the barriers to middle strata advancement. Simultaneously, the teaching conduit began to prove incapable of absorbing those emerging from mission schools. Although the number of African staff in Natal and Transvaal schools swelled by 50 per cent between 1925 and 1930 - it-

self a poignant indication of desperation amongst educated Africans - this was often at the expense of qualified teachers (thrown into unemployment because untrained instructors were cheaper) or married women. And by the end of the decade, teachers, clerks and artisans were all in oversupply, while state functionaries were anxiously intoning that job opportunities for educated Africans were 'everywhere deplorably limited'.[58]

Educated blacks of this period, then, were frequently forced into unemployment, into living on their wits, and into becoming ordinary labourers. This was especially common amongst schooled foreign-born blacks, unable to speak the vernacular, and hence unable to serve as transmission belts between white capitalists and black workers. Amongst the significant number of alien blacks in ICU leadership, many had suffered this fate. West Indian-born J G Gumbs, for instance, was a qualified chemist reduced to serving as a rigger on the docks during his presidency of the Union. Similarly Nyasaland-born Kadalie, although he had held a succession of white collar jobs in colonies to the north, was forced to work almost exclusively as a packer, messenger and parcel 'boy' for three years after he moved to South Africa in 1918.[59]

Self-employment tended to be equally insecure and frustrating, and in 1921 less than 0,1 per cent of the African male population were traders, hawkers or artisans. Whether carpenters or card-sharps, most independent operators faced the problems of fierce competition, lack of funds and dependence on penurious consumers. Their development was rigidly restricted by the state: particularly in rural towns, municipal authorities tended to be extrememly sensitive to the interests of the white petty bourgeoisie and to farmers' fears of a labour shortage. Thus Peter Malepe, ICU organizer in Parys from 1927, was in 1928 allowed to hawk wood in the location, but was on principle refused permission to run an eating house. African traders were in fact prohibited in the Free State, and here as elsewhere, burdensome licence fees, exorbitant rents for stands, and a myriad petty restrictions stifled most other forms of accumulation.[60]

Consequently, even if the scramble into self-employment was achieved, the probability of being extruded as a proletarian was considerably greater than that of emerging as a capitalist. 'I am not making a living, I am making only a little bit of a living'[61] complained a butcher in 1931, doubtless expressing the feelings of the various butchers who were prominent in ICU branch structures. Like Doyle Modiakgotla, a building contractor with no fixed job when he became an ICU official, such Africans were constantly being forced into the ranks of the lumpen-proletariat or the working class. Independent black shoemakers - those 'typical working class intellectuals'[62] as conspicuous in ICU branch leadership as in the East Anglican rural uprising of 1816 and Paris in the Year II - were amongst the numerous small-scale operators being squeezed out of their trade. Many if not most mission trained craftsmen were in fact unable to subsist through working for themselves. It is likely that James Ngcobo - 'a bricklayer and carpenter by trade, and an architect by profession' - was economically insecure as well as professionally frustrated before becoming branch secretary in Kranskop.[63]

Thus it was that numerous supposedly 'petty bourgeois' ICU leaders had at one time or another spent considerable lengths of time in the

ranks of the working class. Some had previously worked as underground miners, experiencing to the full the horrors of compound life, low wages and vicious white overseers. Like the educated and exempted Thomas Mbeki who became Transvaal Provincial Secretary, others actually joined the Union as labourers. One J Malaza, previously a farm worker, was appropriately enough the district secretary for Bethal, and captured the attention of audiences in this area by relating how his baas had nearly thrashed him to death in his youth.[64]

Of course, it was possible for middle strata Africans to fall further than the law-abiding working class or the unemployed. Before joining the ICU, numerous organizers were no strangers to such everyday features of black existence as acquiring aliases or being jailed for offences against racially oppressive laws. A significant proportion, however, had a shadier past than this. Stealing from white employers was a favourite way of closing the gap between middle class incomes and the cost of living, and prominent organizers such as Alex Maduna and Sam Dunn both had such thefts in their backgrounds. Not atypical was the criminal record of Simon Elias, an important Free State leader who appears to have been an independent legal agent before becoming a Union official in 1925. In 1907, after three years of working for a pittance for a Bloemfontein commercial firm, Elias was instantaneously sacked when he asked for a rise. He decided then and there that 'I could not work for a white man unless he considered I was a human being'. But the following eighteen years of self-employment were difficult ones, and in 1910 Elias spent a month in jail for theft. Five years later, his repertoire had expanded to housebreaking and theft, for which he earned three months hard labour or a £15 fine. Apparently, the sentences neither served as a deterrent nor taught him to conceal his tracks: in 1925 he spent three months in prison for stealing from the ICU.[65]

Bluntly claiming, then, that ICU officials had a 'petty bourgeois background', is a singularly inadequate way of capturing the divisions within and dynamics of this grouping. 'Petty bourgeois' Congress officials, for example, differed markedly from their ICU counterparts. A significantly higher proportion of Congress leaders appear to have been relatively economically secure, often with independent sources of income, and - judging by the number of overseas degrees that studded their ranks - considerably better educated. (According to ICU leaders, Congress men were the 'Old Brigade', or 'the upper stratum of the native bourgeois', or the 'good boys' who graced the Chamber of Mines clubs.)[66] ICU leaders on the other hand were drawn largely from the frustrated sub-elite - the penurious salariat and those losing access to independent livelihoods - from whose ranks men were constantly disappearing into the proletariat or more marginalized groups. As Congress intellectuals sourly perceived the situation, their ICU counterparts were half-educated, lower class youths, with a penchant for separatist churches and Communism.[67]

It was indeed true that numerous educated blacks of this period were open to ideas with a socialist content, partly because of their closeness to the under classes, and partly because of their own intimate knowledge of capitalist exploitation. Amongst them was Herbert Msane, who, a decade before becoming ICU branch secretary in Greytown, was a mine labourer involved in the Industrial Workers of Africa, a union established by white socialists. As one of the considerable

number of future Union organizers involved in the post-war protest against passes and low wages, Msane wrote a pamphlet denouncing the exploitation of black workers by white capitalists. Another IWA veteran who became an ICU leader was William Thibedi, a teacher who also spent years in the Communist Party (CP). Especially after 1924 when it resolved to concentrate on the black proletariat, the CP had a profound influence on the development of ICU intellectuals. The first Union branch in the Transvaal was in fact established by white Communists and their African recruits, who included Thomas Mbeki. By 1926 five members of the ICU's National Executive were Party members, and even after their expulsion in this year, passionate denunciations of capitalism remained regular features of ICU meetings. Tactically and theoretically, black Communists were often more sophisticated than other African organizers, and the CP certainly concentrated the minds of some middle class ICU organizers on the aspirations of workers and peasants.[68]

Not that exposure to socialist ideas was essential for this identification. In 1921, Tyamzashe claimed bitterly that most trained craftsmen were unable to find work, and hence lived 'riotous degraded lives, associating with the lowest class, and even with criminals'.[69] Given the policy of class suppression and racial oppression associated with segregation, such fraternisation was almost inevitable even for those who were neither unemployed nor labourers. Lower middle class Africans, living cheek by jowl with other blacks in overcrowded townships, meeting them at soccer, church or dancing hall, and often forced by starvation incomes into illicit beer brewing, were repeatedly being hurled back into the milieu of workers and the marginalized.[70]

This occurred to an even greater extent in the countryside, where penurious middle class blacks tended to be drawn relentlessly into the way of life of the under classes. As principal of a ramshackle school in a Natal reserve, Gilbert Coka for the first time in his life lived in a hut and subsisted largely on mealie meal. Through daily visits to pupils' homesteads, he also gained an intimate knowledge of the hardships of families of migrant labourers. Most rural teachers were similarly impelled into living near and with the people - to overcome their own isolation, to maintain school attendance, and to win favour with local notables who generally had considerable power over their posts. For ICU leaders like Jacob Nhlapo, who taught for two years at a Reitz farm school before becoming a Union branch secretary there, such linkages with influential families and parents were of crucial importance in ICU penetration of the countryside.[71]

As Coka discovered, ethnically-based cultural events were also of help in integrating him into the community. Even when middle class blacks were drawn from households which had partially dissociated themselves from chiefdoms, they generally grew up speaking the language of a particular ethnic group, participating in some of its political and cultural practices, and acquiring a pantheon of its heroes who had resisted white conquest. Thus in addition to racial oppression, ethnic traditions could be used to elide class differences. Champion, for instance, put the fact that he was, 'of course, a pure-blooded Zulu' to good effect in Durban, where his Xhosa-speaking predecessor had won little support from the overwhelmingly Zulu migrant population.[72]

Another way in which organizers and schooled blacks were drawn into communities was through their role as elaborators and disseminators of ideas. As the only fairly well educated people available, they also often served as mediators between local Africans and white authority. In the countryside, for instance, rural blacks often sought out the teacher 'for help and advice in their own difficulties of various kinds; he often occupies a position of authority and respect, and by virtue of the education he has acquired he is frequently interpreter to them of the European civilization'.[73]

Understandably, such middle strata blacks did not necessarily interpret that civilisation or offer the advice their white superiors would have preferred. Self-interest alone usually necessitated some sensitivity to the needs of the community: if self-employed Africans dependent on black clients could rarely afford to become known as 'Enemy of the Natives', neither could those like teachers whose position depended largely on good relations with the local people. Furthermore, the servile position of middle strata Africans with regard to white capital and the state considerably inhibited their desire - or ability - to act as collaborators. Consequently, educated blacks could well come to identify with those against whom they were expected to represent white authority, but whose daily struggles and hardships closely paralleled their own.[74] And when rural Africans elected such men to ICU branch committees, it was frequently in recognition of the fact that they had served not as petty bourgeois henchmen of the white dominant groups, but as organic intellectuals of the black under classes.

There was always the possibility, however, that middle class ICU organizers could act in either of these roles. On the one hand, as we have seen, they were derived from social groups which were economically, politically and culturally distinct from - and often opposed to - the masses. It is on these bourgeois aspects of their background that both liberal and radical historians have focused, thereby considerably enlarging our knowledge of how leaders' elitist origins influenced the Union's ideology and organization in the countryside.

On the other hand, a central argument of this paper has been that the bourgeois nature of the ICU's petty bourgeois leadership has been overemphasized by these scholars. Firstly, institutions such as school, church and parliament were less important in moulding liberal world views than has been suggested. Secondly, the ICU leadership was able to identify with the black under classes on the key issues of wages, passes and land - and this meant that the class content of their liberatory message was of considerably more relevance than that of Congress. As Charles Kumalo neatly expressed it, 'The ICU fought for freedom. Those of the Congress also fought for freedom, but didn't talk about money.'[75] Thirdly, this identification was possible partly because the ICU's leadership was mainly drawn from a sub-elite, which had established organic links with workers, peasants and the marginalized, into whose ranks these struggling middle class men were continually being drawn.

The contradictory nature of the leadership was reflected in the ICU's discourse, where socialist demands jostled with those of bourgeois nationalists, and where contempt for the illiterate heathen coexisted with adulation of the black worker. To move beyond those lib-

eral scholars who have dismissed this as confusion, it is necessary to root these inconsistencies partly in the very nature of the intermediate strata, pulled in different directions by antagonistic social forces. And to move beyond radicals who have swept away contradictions by focusing almost exclusively on the bourgeois aspects of the ICU message, it is essential to grasp that sections of the middle strata were linked to, shared the interests of, and were being thrown back into the under classes. Otherwise, it becomes impossible to comprehend how 'petty bourgeois' leaders could adopt the following preamble to their constitution in 1925:

> Whereas the interests of workers and those of the employers are opposed to each other, the former living by selling their labour, receiving for it only part of the wealth they produce; and the latter living by exploiting the labour of the workers; depriving the workers of a part of the product of their labour in the form of profit, no peace can be between the two classes. A struggle must always obtain about the division of the products of human labour, until the workers through their industrial organisations take from the capitalist class the means of production, to be owned and controlled by the workers for benefit of all, instead of for the profit of a few ... This is the goal for which the ICU strives along with all other organized workers throughout the world.'[76]

NOTES

1. J Ngubane, An African Explains Apartheid (London 1963), 87.

2. P Bonner, 'The Decline and Fall of the ICU - a case of Self-Destruction?' in E Webster, ed., Essays in Southern African Labour History (Johannesburg, 1978), 117.

3. T Karis and G Carter, From Protest to Challenge, Vol. 4, (Stanford, 1977), 53; H and R Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa 1850-1950, (Harmondsworth, 1971), 266-267.

4. Church of the Province of South Africa (CPSA), University of the Witwatersrand (UW), Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union Records, A924, File 3, W Ballinger to W Holtby, 2 September 1930.

5. Pietermaritzburg Archives Depot (PAD), Chief Native Commissioner (CNC), 39/4, N2/8/3(27), Part I, Sam Dunn to CNC, 8 October 1929.

6. University of Cape Town (UCT), Forman Collection (FC), B2.59, 'The ICU Funds' by G Lenono.

7. Star 25/8/27. Information in this paragraph is drawn from J Jingoes, A Chief is a Chief by the People (London, 1975), 100-105; The Workers' Herald (WH) 18 March 1927; UW, African Studies Institute (ASI), Oral History Project (OHP), interview with C Kumalo by V Nkumane (VN) and Helen Bradford (HB) at Mooi River 28 November 1981; Central Archives Depot (CAD), Middelburg Municipal Correspondence (MMC), 4 January 1920, T Ramonti to Sub-Native Commissioner (SNC), 10 April 1926 (thanks to Rob Morrel for archival and press information relating to Middelburg); UW, W Ballinger Collection (BC), A410/C2(g), File 4, L Greene to W Ballinger 1 March 1929.

8. The Middelburg Observer (MO) 15 May 1926; G Coka, 'The story of Gilbert Coka of the Zulu tribe of Natal, South Africa' in M Perham, ed., Ten Africans (London, 1936), 296-297.

9. P Bonner, 'The Transvaal Native Congress 1917-1920' in R Rathbone and S Marks, eds., Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa (Harlow, 1982), 271.

10. S Johns, 'Trade Union, Political Pressure Group, or Mass Movement?' in R Rotberg and A Mazrui, eds., Protest and Power in Black Africa (Oxford, 1970), 707-708.

11. Accounts from which these remarks are drawn include Johns, 'Trade Union'; P Walshe, The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa (London, 1970); M Benson, The Struggle for a Birthright (New York, 1966). And although it is difficult to classify them as 'liberals', see also Simons and Simons, Class and Colour.

12. Bonner, 'The Decline and Fall', 118.

13. T Lodge, 'Black Opposition: a historical perspective', The Black Sash, (February, 1979), 16-17.

14. Other accounts from which these remarks are drawn include D du Toit, Capital and Labour in South Africa (London, 1981); K Luckardt and B Wall, Organise or Starve! (London, 1980).

15. 1921 Census Report, UG 37 - '24, 240, 243, 244; Walshe, Rise of African Nationalism, 240.

16. In 1927, over 60 per cent of Head Office finance was derived from Natal, and membership here in this period was more than double that of any other province.

17. Sam Dunn and Clements Kadalie were amongst those related to chiefs, while Henry Tyamzashe, Abe Phoofolo and Selby Msimang were amongst those who were the sons of professionals. Organizers with rural connections included Champion, Abel Ngcobo and Gilbert Coka. Cf. C Bundy, The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry (London, 1979), 140. Organizers possibly connected to the Mfengu peasantry were Ethelbert Maliza, born in Fort Peddie, qualified as a teacher, and in favour of extending Land Bank facilities to Africans, and Absolem Geduka, described as a 'Fingo of 28' in 1928.

18. PAD, CNC 39/4, N2/8/3(27), Part I, Secretary of Native Affairs (SNA) to CNC, 25 August 1928, enclosing petition from the Dunns. See also CAD, Department of Native Affairs (NTS) 49/328, A Champion to Prime Minister 28 September 1931, where Champion refers to enjoying 'a European standard of living since my birth'.

19. C Loram, The Education of the South African Native (London, 1917), 318.

20. Jingoes, A Chief is a Chief, 74. Information about the war is drawn from A Grundlingh, Die Suid-Afrikaanse Gekleurdes en die Eerste Wêreldoorlog, D. Litt. en Phil., Unisa, 1981, 207-208. ICU leaders who enlisted included Sam Dunn, Doyle Modiakgotla, Jason Jingoes, S Bennett Ncwana and J H London.

21. Notule van die Vyf-en-Vyftigste Algemene Vergadering van die Nederduitse Ger. Kerk van Natal, April 1928, p57. Educational statistics: see Walshe, African Nationalism, 77; Report of the Native Economic Commission, UG 22 - '34, 90. Standard 6 graduates included Kadalie, Champion, J Kokozela, W Makgothu, A Jabavu, and H Tyamzashe. The branch organizers referred to are J Mancoe, E Maliza, and A Nzula, all of whom had qualified as teachers; N Tantsi, E Maliza, J Nhlapo and G Coka, all of whom had their JC's; and J Jingoes, who had at least Standard 6.

22. E Mphahlele, Down Second Avenue (London, 1973), 60. Cf. also A Gramsci, Selections from Prison Notebooks (London, 1978), 14. Other information drawn from WH 15 May 1926; R Cohen, 'Albert Nzula: the Road from Rouxville to Russia', in B Bozzoli, ed., Labour, Townships and Protest (Johannesburg, 1978); Coka, 'The story of Gilbert Coka', 285; C Kadalie, My Life and the ICU: The autobiography of a black Trade Unionist in South Africa (London, 1970), 222.

23. UW, ASI, OHP, interview with E Ngcobo at Bulwer by VN and HB, 3 December 1981. Other information drawn from WH 15 December 1926, WH 15 June 1927, Star 31 May 1927, P Wickins, The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa, Ph.D., University of Cape Town, 1973, 272. Women organizers included Mrs Elias, Mrs Lande, Miss Mildred Ngcayiya, Bertha Mkize, Mrs Pearse, Mrs Busakwe, Magdalena Mashalane and Miss Maggie Maguga. Mrs Siluma and Mrs L Mkwanazi were respectively Chairlady and Secretary of the Womens' Section which was organizing female workers in the Eastern Transvaal in late 1926.

24. Bloemfontein Archives Depot (BAD), Supreme Court, Free State Division (HG) 4/1/2/253, Case No. 101 of 1927, J Mogorosi vs Rex.

25. CAD, NTS 7665, Minutes of Evidence of Native Riots Commission, 337-338.

26. PAD, CNC 36/7, N2/2/2(28), CNC to Rev. Jessop 1/6/27, R Mdima to Inspector of Locations 30 May 1927; S Marks, 'John Dube and the Ambiguities of Nationalism', Conference on 'South Africa and the Comparative Study of Class, Race and Nationalism', New York, September 1982, 4, 16-17.

27. Walshe, African Nationalism, 240. Those who were exempted included Champion, Zondoni Hlubi, Kenneth Makanya and Thomas Mbeki, while voters included Kadalie and S Masabalala.

28. PAD, Kranskop Criminal Records, Case No. 158 of 1928, Rex. vs. J Nel and others; Mphahlele, Second Avenue, 64; Ons Vaderland (OV) 12 October 1928, WH 15 June 1927.

29. Wickins, ICU., 265-266; S Trapido, 'A Preliminary Study of the Development of African Political Opinion 1884-1955', B.A. Hons., UW, 1959, 28.

30. Star 25 January 1929. See also Star 7 January 1928.

31. CAD, Department of Police (SAP) Conf. 6/698/19, Abridged Prospectus of 'The Black Man' Company. See also Walshe, African Nationalism, 168.

32. WH 15 October 1927.

33. BAD, Bloemfontein Municipality Files (MBL) 4/6/4/46, enclosed in Town Clerk Kroonstad to Town Clerk Bloemfontein 11 June 1927.

34. P Bonner, 'The 1920 Black Mine Workers' Strike: a preliminary account', in Bozzoli, Labour, Townships, 289.

35. M Legassick, 'The Making of South African "Native Policy", 1903-1923: The Origins of Segregation', Institute of Commonwealth Studies (ICS) seminar, 15 February 1972.

36. R Davenport, 'The beginning of urban segregation in South Africa: the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 and its background, Occasional Paper No. 15, Institute of Social and Economic Research, Rhodes University, 1971.

37. Wickins, ICU., 241. See also J Wells, 'The Exclusion of African Women from the pass laws: the Native Urban Areas Act, 1923-1945', paper given at University of Natal 29 April 1980; R Bloch, 'The State in the townships: state, popular struggle and urban crisis in South Africa 1970-1980', mimeo.

38. Coka, 'The story of Gilbert Coka', 274-288.

39. R Shepherd, Lovedale (Lovedale, 1940), 338; Star 27 April 1920.

40. WH 18 March 1927. See also M Legassick, 'The Rise of Modern South African Liberalism: its Assumptions and Social Base', ICS Seminar paper 1 March 1972; Report of the Superintendent of Education for the year 1929, NP 3, 1930, 12.

41. Walshe, African Nationalism, 71, 90, 104; Kadalie, My Life, 60; S Neame, 'The ICU and British Imperialism', ICS Vol. 1, 1970.

42. BAD, Lindley Municipal Files (LLI) 2/1, N9/10/2, B Moshanyana to Magistrate Lindley 26 April 1928.

43. D Jabavu, 'Christianity and the Bantu' in M Stauffer, ed., Thinking with Africa (London, 1928), 121.

44. Star 24 June 1927.

45. Report of the Native Economic Commission 1930-1932, (NEC) UG 22-'34, 100.

46. UW, CPSA, Evidence to the Native Economic Commission, (ENEC), Box 6, 6262.

47. In 1920, mine clerks were averaging some £3-£5 a month, which was no more than the earnings of many underground miners. See also M Wilson, 'The growth of peasant communities' in M Wilson and L Thompson, eds., The Oxford History of South Africa, Vol. 2, 59.

48. Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education, UG 29 - '36, 16.

49. R Peteni, Towards Tomorrow, (Morges, 1979), 22; Report of Committee on Native Education, 39-40, 109; P Cook, The Native Student Teacher (Pretoria, 1940), 11.

50. Report of the Native Affairs Commission for the year 1923, UG 47 - '23; E Brookes, The Colour Problems of South Africa (Lovedale, 1934), 11; Kadalie, My life, 91, 146.

51. UCT, FC, B3.102, J Kunene to A Champion 24 September 1927; Star 27 May 1927; Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on the Native Pass Laws 1920, UG 41-'22.

52. Report of the Native Affairs Commission for the year 1922, UG 36 -'23, 11. See also M Lacey, Working for Boroko (Johannesburg, 1981), 389.

53. Report of the Native Affairs Commission for the years 1925-1926, UG 17-127, 72.

54. Minutes of Evidence of the Natal Natives Land Committee, UG 35-18, 181.

55. Ibid., 105.

56. PAD, CNC 39/4, N2/8/3(27), Part II, Minutes of meetings with 57 members of the Dunn family 14 September 1931.

57. Loram, Education of the Native, 149.

58. UW, CPSA, ENEC, evidence of the Kranskop magistrate 14-15. See also 1921 Census 244; Report on Native Pass Laws 5; Report of Committee on Native Education, 27; Peteni, Towards Tomorrow 19-20; Report of the Superintendent of Education for the year 1929, 66; NEC 88-89.

59. Kadalie, My Life, 33-37.

60. 1921 Census, 244; Bonner, 'Transvaal Native Congress', 286-87; BAD, Parys Municipality (MP) 1/1/7, Minutes of Town Council meeting 26/1/28.

61. UW, CPSA, ENEC, evidence of C Mbolekwe, 8518.

62. A Peacock, Bread or Blood (London, 1965), 49-50. See also E Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (Harmondsworth, 1977), 172; BAD, Kroonstad Municipality (MKR) 1/3/8/1, Native Affairs Committee meeting 9 July 1931. Bootmaker organizers include Alphabet Caluza of Weenen, Stephen Nkosi of Vryheid and Joseph Bhengu of Empangeni.

63. PAD, Kranskop Criminal Records, Case No. 158 of 1928, Rex. vs. J Nel and others. See also A Dodd, Native Vocational Training (Lovedale, 1938), 44, 106; H Tyamzashe, 'Why have you educated me?' in F Wilson and D Perrot, eds., Outlook on a Century (Lovedale, 1973), 210.

64. Jason Jingoes and Herbert Msane had both worked as miners, and the former had served as a domestic servant in his youth. See OV 23 December 1927 for Malaza.

65. Wickins, ICU, 87, 497, 667; UW, CPSA, BC, File 3, P Seme to A Champion 9 November 1928; BAD, MBL 4/8/1/81, Minutes of a meeting of a municipal Wages Commission (for Elias' work experiences); BAD, HG 4/1/2/240, Case 124 of 1926, Rex. vs. S Elias. Elias Kuzwayo, a Natal secretary, had an even worse record than Elias. He was convicted for theft in 1918, for housebreaking and theft in 1920, for theft again in 1924, and was dismissed from the ICU for theft.

66. WH 15 December 1926; CAD, Department of Justice (JUS) 289, 3/1064/18, T Mbeki to G Hardy 25 June 1926.

67. Star 21 January 1928; Jabavu, 'Christianity and the Bantu', 121.

68. F. Johnstone, 'The IWA on the Rand: Socialist Organising among Black Workers on the Rand, 1917-1918', in Bozzoli, Labour, Townships, 255-265; Bonner, 'Transvaal Native Congress', 294; E Roux, S P Bunting (Johannesburg, 1944), 70-72. CP members who were ICU leaders included J la Guma, E Khaile, T Mbeki, J Nkosi, A Nzula, S Silwana, J Gomas and R de Norman. TWK 'Mote was among those who did not join the CP but was considerably influenced by it ideologically, while A Maduna was a renegade CP member by the end of 1926.

69. Tyamzashe, 'Why have you educated me?', 210.

70. Bonner, 'Transvaal Native Congress', 278.

71. Coka, 'The story of Gilbert Coka', 284-287; Peteni, Towards Tomorrow, 71.

72. CAD, NTS 7665, Minutes of Evidence to Native Riots Commission, 342.

73. I Schapera, 'The Teacher and his Community' in H Dumbrell, ed., Letters to African Teachers (London, 1935).

74. Kadalie, for example, claimed that 'it was the systematic torture of the African people in Southern Rhodesia that kindled the spirit of revolt in me' - Kadalie, My Life, 78.

75. UW, ASI, OHP, interview with C Kumalo.

76. 'Preamble to the 1925 Revised Constitution', in South African Labour Bulletin, 1,6,(1974), 21.