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TITLE: Bargained Liberalisation: The Labour Movement, Policy-Making and Transition in Zambia and South Africa

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I. INTRODUCTION*

African countries are faced with a double challenge: to democratise and to restructure their economies towards a new growth path. These are separate, but linked - and potentially contradictory - projects.

There are two opposing views on the relationship between political and economic reform. An optimistic perspective reflected in much of the post-1989 policy perspectives of the World Bank and other donor organisations is to see these two projects as necessary and complementary. This is best captured in the work of Larry Diamond (1988; 1993; Diamond and Plattner, 1993), Richard Joseph (1990) and other advocates of "good governance," who raise political conditionality to an equal status with economic adjustment.[1] By contrast, a more sceptical reading of these two processes emphasises the contradictions between political and economic liberalisation. As Tom Callaghy argues, "if not handled properly, political conditionality might well impede rather than facilitate Africa's relinking to the world economy in more productive ways." In the absence of developmental democracies, which Callaghy doesn't expect to emerge any time soon, external donors should channel aid to "those actually undertaking difficult economic reforms and without being tied automatically to political change."(Callaghy, 1994:35) Thus, if there must be a choice between economic and political liberalisation, preference is given to the former.[2]

A similar equivocation towards democracy can be seen in Tony Killick's (1995) recent work on national economic adjustment. On the one hand, he stresses the importance of democratic accountability, yet on the other he praises the beneficial effects in East Asia of the "insulation of policy-makers from pressures exerted by special interest groups." (Killick, 1995:28) His hesitation towards democracy is reflected in his attitude towards trade unions. There are seven references towards trade unions, and all refer to them as special interest groups that restrict labour market flexibility and create "rigidities" in the economy that slow down its capacity to adapt. (Killick, 1995:22, 198, 252, 343, 349, 379, 381) This same view lies behind Callaghy's (and others') claim that the winners in adjustment are few, appear slowly, and are hard to organise, while the losers (including organised workers) are many, vociferous, and well organised - and may use their power under democracy to frustrate economic reform. In this sense insulation means protection from these constituencies who bear the brunt of adjustment, even if it means abandoning democracy.

In contrast to this pessimistic view, a recent collaborative project on the policy options facing new democracies highlights the tension between political and economic reform as the key problem facing new democracies but reaches the opposite conclusion regarding the role of trade unions. (Przeworski et al., 1995) In this treatment, economic liberalisation engenders a transitional decline in consumption that undermines attempts to consolidate democracy while threatening a return to authoritarianism or - in the worst case - social disintegration, descending into "decentralized collective violence." (Przeworski et al., 1995:110) The dilemma facing new democracies, the authors argue, is "how to create incentives for political forces to process their interests within the democratic institutions, when material conditions continue to deteriorate." (Przeworski et al., 1995:113)

The authors offer a social democratic alternative to neo-liberalism consisting of three recommendations. First, liberalisation must be accompanied by social policies that minimise social

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costs. Second, policies must be designed with a view towards growth, and finally, policies must be formulated and implemented through corporatist-style consultation and negotiation beyond the state and parliament to include unions, employers and other interest groups. (Przeworski et al., 1995:85) "Concertation" is central to their argument: it subjects the reform strategy to the competitive interplay of political forces, improves policy outcomes, builds support for the continuation of reforms, and helps consolidate democratic institutions. (Przeworski et al., 1995:82)

To the extent that consolidation depends on concertation, trade unions are essential actors in the development of democracy, indeed, consolidation depends on strong union organizations that can participate in pacting: reaching and enforcing agreements with capital and the state. The authors assert, however, that concertation is impossible because unions "are too weak and too decentralized to serve as partners..."[3] (Przeworski, 1995:82) The implications of this conclusion for the consolidation of democracy are, to be sure, distinctly troubling.

What is striking about this particular conclusion, as well as those of Killick and Callaghy, is that they are not based on any sustained analysis of trade unions' actual involvement in consolidation, nor is the gap remedied elsewhere in the growing literature in the field. This shortcoming is not simply empirical - that unions have been overlooked as subjects of investigation - it is, more importantly, conceptual. In the literature on both the transition to democracy and democratic consolidation unions are grasped from one of two perspectives. Some view them as powerful special interest groups whose rent-seeking behaviour in defense of their privileges blocks necessary economic reforms. Others, from a functionalist perspective, view unions as collective organisations with the power to restrain their members' wage demands, a necessary condition for liberalisation.[4] In this approach transition and consolidation are seen as outcomes of agreements between elites: labour is assessed in terms of its capacity to deliver its constituency to the conservative pact. This is ultimately a narrow perspective that underestimates the broader strategic role that collective actors - in particular the labour movement - have been able to play in democratisation.

By contrast, our view is that labour is a collective actor capable of shaping the character of democratisation through the disciplined and strategic use of power. A powerful and strategically sophisticated labour movement has the potential to reconfigure democratisation through participation in negotiated compromises. These compromises have the potential to discipline capital and the state and ensure that the social costs of adjustment are not borne by workers alone. Pacting should not be seen simply as functional to the consolidation of democracy, but as a conflictual process of class compromise, the results of which may produce workers' loyalty to democratisation. This approach thus emphasises the central role of the working class and working class organisation in understanding how democratic regimes are established.[5]

In this paper we examine two contrasting cases of trade union involvement in liberalisation, Zambia and South Africa. We chose Zambia and South Africa as they are the most important cases in Africa where labour played a central role in a successful transition to democracy. However, during the period of democratic consolidation the Zambian labour movement has been marginalised and has played little role in economic policy making. Relatively unconstrained by labour, the Chiluba government has pursued a fairly orthodox neoliberal adjustment, with high social costs which may in time threaten democratisation.

By contrast, the South African labour movement has achieved substantial - though uneven - outcomes from its engagement in policy making. Labour, through its collective power, has achieved an institutionalised voice in decision-making, which has forced government and business to negotiate certain fundamental economic policies, including privatisation, labour law and employment standards.

At the centre of both cases is the role of civil society in democratisation. In this paper we highlight the centrality of the labour movement, not as a substitute for civil society but as one of the most powerful formations within it. Under what conditions are civil society formations able to shape the outcome of democratisation? Under what conditions can they develop institutions that create new rules of the game to encourage a *bargained liberalisation* process?

Bargained liberalisation would appear to be a contradiction. *Liberalisation* implies the opening up of an economy and its unilateral adjustment to the market as a global force. It assumes an omnipotent global market to which individual states and social movements must conform on the basis of international competition. *Bargaining*, on the other hand, implies reaching non-zero-sum agreement between independent actors based on mutually accepted rules. It also presupposes the creation of institutions that provide opportunities for these agreements to be reached and enforced. The extent to which these processes are seen as contradictory depends on one's prior view of globalisation. If globalisation is seen as omnipotent, than bargaining is by definition impossible. If, on the other hand, globalisation is seen as exaggerated, as a contradictory and uneven social process, in short as contestable, then bargaining opens up the opportunity for challenging a country's engagement with the international economy. [6] Under bargained liberalisation, movements and institutional innovations become central to any understanding of responses to liberalisation.

This paper focuses on labour as one of the key actors in bargained liberalisation.[7] We stress two factors as central to labour's role in bargained liberalisation. The first focuses on labour's capacity to mobilise as an independent actor - from capital and the state/nationalist movement - a capacity founded on its own organisation of workers on the shop floor, its own finances, leadership, and organisational culture. The second concerns labour's capacity to use its power strategically: its ability to marshall its mobilisational capacity as an independent actor in pursuit of a broader transformative vision. This strategic capacity gives labour the ability to know when to compromise and when to advance in pursuit of its vision. Elsewhere we have called this approach radical reform, in which labour can use its power to influence policy-making in the direction of long-term social and economic transformation. (Adler and Webster, 1995)

The independence and strategic capacity of the Zambian and South African labour movements will be assessed against the background of two key variables: the character of the state and the country's insertion into the international economy.

The South African case represents an alternative to the two opposing views on the relationship between political and economic reform. It opens up the possibility - expressed but not investigated by Przeworski and others - of a bargained liberalisation process. At the centre of our argument is the significance of the emergence of an institutionalised voice for independent formations in civil society to shape the direction of political and economic liberalisation. Rather than viewing civil society uncritically as an adjunct of liberal democracy - as the "governance" theorists would have it - or as an impediment to the hard choices of economic adjustment, we argue for what Peter Evans has called "an effective state-society synergy." "The idea of 'synergy'," he argues, "implies that civic engagement strengthens state institutions, and effective state institutions create an environment in which civic engagement is more likely to thrive." (Evans, 1997, 3)

The notion of a state-society synergy has important implications for policy making in Africa. First, without some form of bargained liberalisation one is likely to have neither political democracy nor economic reform. A prerequisite for bargained liberalisation is civil society formations - such as labour - which are both independent and capable of using their power strategically. It requires that such formations gain an institutionalised voice in policy formulation through which they can engage systematically with the state over economic and social policy. These conditions appear most

favourable in South Africa, though we argue that they could emerge in Zambia and are relevant elsewhere in Africa.

II. ZAMBIA

A. The Colonial Period: The Emergence of the Labour Movement

The roots of labour organisation in Zambia extend back to the founding of the most important capitalist enterprises in the country: the huge mines of the copperbelt. Their establishment in the late 1920s was soon followed by collective action and organisation by black workers, who sidestepped the officially sanctioned dispute resolution system based on tribal elders.

The first major strike occurred in 1935. Though brief and easily suppressed, it demonstrated that "African mineworkers were already conscious of a common interest and were capable of organising concerted resistance within the urban environment." (Roberts, 1979:202) The African workers' action prompted white miners in 1936 to launch their own organisation - the Northern Rhodesia Mineworkers Union [NRMU] - to protect their own interests against the threat of African encroachment.

In 1940 the NRMU won wage increases after a short strike stimulated by wartime increases in the cost of living. But African workers - whose deprivations were far greater - launched a week-long strike across the copperbelt which was ruthlessly suppressed. A Commission of Enquiry later acknowledged the wage inequalities and granted modest increases for some workers, but refused to recognise African miners' status as workers or their right to form unions.

Notwithstanding official indifference, African political and workplace organisation grew during the second world war. Welfare societies were established across the copperbelt and then in workers' home rural districts, bypassing government-sanctioned and tribally based Urban Advisory Councils. These societies provided the first colony-wide political network for Africans, and in 1948 their leaders organised them into the Northern Rhodesia African National Congress, the first nationalist party. (Roberts, 1979:204; Rotberg, 1965; Tordoff, 1974)

Side-by-side with the development of community-based welfare societies, employees began to build representative organisations in the workplace. After the war these efforts were boosted by the new Labour Party government's support for "non-political" trade unionism in Britain's African colonies. (Davies, 1966; Cohen et al., 1978) Strong industrial unions for Africans emerged rapidly in Zambia. By 1948, there were unions at each of the copper mines, and in 1949 these merged to form the Northern Rhodesia African Mineworkers Union [AMWU]. Under pressure from the British colonial authorities the mining companies recognised the AMWU. It soon enrolled more than half the African workers on the mines, and became the cornerstone of the Zambian labour movement. (Roberts, 1979:205; Burawoy, 1972:13-16) Soon national unions were formed on the railways, and among government, building and timber, and garment workers.

Notwithstanding the decentralised and apolitical emphasis in colonial labour policy, these organisations combined to form the Northern Rhodesia Trade Union Congress [NRTUC] in 1951. In the following year the NRTUC joined with the ANC to fight white settlers' efforts to establish the Central African Federation and gain direct rule over the colony. (Akwetey, 1994:44; Rakner, 1992:72; Bates, 1971) Their resistance failed, and in 1953 Britain - now ruled by a Conservative Party dedicated to supporting white supremacy - granted self-rule to white settlers in the three colonies of Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland. (Minter, 1986; Roberts, 1979)

There are two important points that emerge from this early history. The first is that the unions - the

AMWU in particular - developed from the bottom up, and were based on relatively strong factory structures in the key colonial industries. These gave the unions power well beyond their numerical size. Strong branch structures gave the miners the ability to stop production of the colony's crucial foreign exchange earner. But these same structures meant that national leadership could not simply impose its will on the rank and file. (Bates, 1971:202)[8] The miners in particular demonstrated considerable militance. According to Bates, between 1950 and 1963 (the year before independence) there were 57 strikes and 143 other disputes at the Roan copper mine alone. (Bates, 1971:95) The strikes were caused by a multiplicity of social and economic factors, but as the national struggle intensified, so racial conflict on the mines heightened. Union organisation gave rank and file workers the ability to challenge these conditions directly.

The second is that prior to independence the unions were never subordinated to the nationalist parties. Indeed, support for the nationalist struggle did not imply absorption into the ANC, but was rather a constant point of debate in the labour movement, exemplified by the mineworkers' refusal to bring their members out in an anti-Federation strike in 1954. The NRTUC was divided between a radical leadership supportive of the ANC and the miners. The ANC itself split in 1958 (over the choice of strategies for opposing the Federation) with more militant members forming the Zambia African National Congress (which later changed its name to become the United National Independence Party - UNIP). (Chipungu, 1992)

The realignment in nationalist politics precipitated a parallel split in the labour movement. The miners followed the ANC while all other unions affiliated to the NRTUC broke away and created the Reformed Trade Union Congress [RTUC]. In 1960 the RTUC's General Council resolved to support UNIP as "the most progressive party," though the two organisations remained formally separate. But the institutional divisions in the labour movement were soon healed. The pro-ANC leadership in the AMWU was removed in 1961, paving the way for the miners to rejoin the mainstream of the labour movement, which was reunified under the United Trade Union Congress (UTUC). While the UTUC re-endorsed the NRTUC's political support for UNIP, its two largest affiliates - the miners and the railway workers - remained aloof politically. (Rakner, 1992:73-75) But the legacy of these splits produced a caution in the labour movement around political questions: support should not compromise solidarity or autonomy.

B. Zambia's First Independence: Labour's Struggle for Autonomy under Productionism

After 1964 UNIP pursued labour policies generally similar to those of governments in other newly independent African states. Under the ideology of productionism trade unions were seen as vital to improving productivity, expanding output, and increasing foreign exchange for financing ambitious programs of social welfare and reconstruction. Under productionism unions were to be included in corporatist institutions and transformed from structures representing their members' interests into administrative arms implementing state policy. Above all, unions were expected to produce labour discipline.

In the first years after independence in many countries this role demanded that unions quell rank and file opposition to the productionist regime itself - working harder for less money - and members' anger against expatriate managers and the untransformed colonial labour regime. In some cases - such as Tanzania and Kenya - unions sided with their members and were defeated and then reorganised into a compliant national union centre by their erstwhile nationalist allies. (Bienefeld, 1975, Bolton, 1978; Shivji, 1976, 1986; Sandbrook, 1975) In others, most notably Ghana, union leaders collaborated with the productionist regime and attempted to discipline members, with disastrous results for union organisation. (Crisp, 1984; Jeffries, 1975, 1978)

The Zambian case falls between these extremes, and marks a rather different trajectory from unions

elsewhere in Africa. UNIP moved to consolidate pre-independence union formations into a single statutory trade union centre, the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions [ZCTU]. UNIP's aim was for the ZCTU to act as a labour arm of the party's national development strategy, communicating to workers the productionist ethic. But this policy was implemented in a voluntarist fashion with a minimum of coercion.

Indeed, Bates' research demonstrates that rank and file workers were relatively uninterested in the new labour regime, and sought rather to gain the fruits of independence. As elsewhere on the continent, opposition to racist practices by expatriate managers was the spark for many strikes. (Burawoy, 1972) The number of recorded strikes increased dramatically after independence and remained high for the rest of the decade. (Rakner, 1992:76) Often these were strikes aimed as much against the union and the state as against management, as members were no more inclined to listen to the ZCTU's or UNIP's productionist arguments than they were to obey UNIP's colonial predecessors. Government policy was thus fatally flawed: if the union attempted to operate as a government agency and ignored this rank and file power, it would fail as a union and be unable to operate as a "labour arm" of government. (Bates, 1971:209) This "paradox of productionism" would prove to be an unresolvable dilemma for the Zambian government for the next three decades, and would serve as the foundation of union autonomy.[9]

According to Rakner, this paradox was felt most strongly within the ZCTU itself. Its stronger affiliates - which predated the founding of the federation and were largely untouched by its creation - demonstrated a "distinctive unwillingness...to be subordinated to party control." The affiliates - rather than the federation itself - "fought against the attempts to incorporate the unions into the party and defended their autonomous position." Irrespective of the ZCTU's progovernment pronouncements, the affiliates sought solutions to their problems through the independent assertion of power in collective bargaining and through the use of the strike weapon. (Rakner, 1992:78-79)

If the government's plans in establishing the ZCTU were ultimately unfulfilled, the reorganisation nonetheless had important unintended consequences for the labour movement itself. The traditional fragmentation of Zambian unions was overcome as unions competing in the same sector were merged into single affiliates. Furthermore, the ZCTU gave assistance to union organising, especially in the public service, which soon became a mainstay of the labour movement as the number of public service workers grew rapidly.

In the early 1970s the government embarked on a second effort to bring unions into a productionist regime. Two factors account for the renewed attempt: moves towards a single party state, prompted by growing political opposition towards UNIP; and a new emphasis on import substitution and economic independence, towards which workers' continued "indiscipline" posed a serious challenge. The two combined to persuade the government to assert new control over political and civil society.

UNIP's response to intensifying political competition in the late 1960s was the creation of a single party state in 1972, formally subordinating both the state administration and civil society formations to the party. The ZCTU and its affiliates were generally supportive of the single party state, except where it applied to them. The commission drafting the new constitution envisioned the labour movement as but one mass formation of the party, along with the women's and youth leagues. But the federation fought to maintain a separate and unique status in which it never affiliated to the party, but maintained seats on the party's highest decision making bodies. Through this formulation the unions hoped to maintain a *critical alliance* with the party. (Rakner, 1992:90) But the relationship between the party and the federation remained perpetually ambiguous.

The second factor prompting the new efforts to subordinate the unions to the dictates of productionism was UNIP's new commitment to economic independence. Zambia's political independence was perennially compromised by its economic and infrastructural linkages to the settler regimes in Rhodesia, Mozambique, Angola, Namibia, and South Africa. Economic independence was a necessity in a country dependent on its political enemies for skilled labour, manufacturing inputs, coal, petrol, and its main source of electricity. It was in response to this situation that Zambia embarked on an aggressive import substitution drive from the late 1960s. Nationalisation was a crucial component in the strategy, with the copper mines - nationalised in 1969-1970 - representing the largest prize.

Economic independence from the south and the diversification of the economy away from primary exports were explicit aims of the policy, and the unions were expected to play a crucial "patriotic" role in this regard. This updated version of productionism was distinctly less voluntarist than the first, and relied on important changes in the labour law to redefine the role of trade unions as actors within a state corporatist framework. The Industrial Relations Act (1971) was deeply contradictory, however.

First, it undermined unions by introducing employee- rather than union-based works councils on the West German model in every workplace of 100 or more workers. Works councils enjoyed wide co-determining power which tended, however, to cut across the unions' traditional collective bargaining prerogatives and representational rights. For this reason they were viewed with skepticism by unions and employers alike, who tended to ignore them.

At the same time, the new Act established political committees, an institution borrowed from the east block, and specifically Yugoslavian worker self-management. These committees ran parallel to works councils, but with a different aim: "to mobilise workers as party members, instill in them the spirit of patriotism, create awareness of national economic interests and guard against economic sabotage....[they were] intended to bring to workers a sense of discipline to improve productivity." (Rakner, 1992:84) As such they were immediately distrusted by workers.

Finally, the Act sought to curtail workers' collective action through the extension of essential services determinations as a means of outlawing strikes. It also established a cumbersome arbitration procedure which made a legal strike practically impossible. Taken together these changes created more confusion than control. A works council, a political committee, and a shop stewards council might all be operating within the same factory, blurring lines of authority and responsibility.

On the other hand, the Act brought about a dramatic strengthening of the labour movement. Three provisions - the principle of "one industry, one union", the mandatory affiliation of all unions to the ZCTU as the sole legitimate federation, and automatic and compulsory dues check off - significantly increased the power of the federation and its affiliates. Furthermore, the expansion of domestic industry and the growth in the state sector - both consequences of the development strategy - boosted employment levels and union membership, further increasing the resources flowing into the federation and its affiliates.

UNIP, in attempting to create a labour federation strong enough to discipline workers in pursuit of its developmental goals, unintentionally assisted the development of a movement that could act independently of the state.[10] Rather than increasing state control over labour, the creation of the single party state and the expansion of nationalised industry (with the state as employer) created new grounds for antagonism between UNIP and the working class, while changes in the labour law ironically created a more coherent and better resourced organisation that would in time give voice

and force to workers' grievances. Soon a new leadership, with little direct experience of the union-party alliance during the independence struggle and not beholden to UNIP would take over the federation, symbolised by the election in 1974 of 30-year-old Frederick Chiluba as Chairman General.

Workers' economic and political grievances grew in intensity by the end of the 1970s. The direct cause of discontent was the downturn in the Zambian economy caused by the unfortunate intersection of the world-wide fall in copper prices, the oil price shocks and rising interest rates. Zambia entered into a period of chronic balance of payments problems and - in the 1980s - a debt crisis, and into a series of structural adjustment programmes with the IMF and World Bank. But the proximate cause of the ZCTU's break from its ambiguous association with UNIP was not fundamentally economic. Rather it came about as a result of the labour movement's discontent with UNIP's extension of the single party state to local government.

In 1980 the government announced a restructuring of local government - formerly composed of relatively autonomous local administrations - under the direct control of the party. The ZCTU strenuously opposed local government reform. When the reform bill was passed by Parliament the federation declared it would refuse to comply with the new structures, signalling the first act of disobedience towards UNIP.[11]

The party responded rapidly to this breach of faith, suspending and later expelling 17 ZCTU and mineworkers' leaders from UNIP. Rather than accepting the federation's exercise of autonomy and criticism, the party leadership, according to Akwetey, "saw the ZCTU position as a challenge to its authority" and "began to perceive the ZCTU leaders as enemies of the party and issued threats to crush them. (Akwetey, 1994:59)

These repressive responses provoked a wave of wild cat strikes on the copperbelt, where 50,000 miners protested their union leaders' victimisation. The strikes soon spread across the country as postal and bank workers showed solidarity with the miners. Eventually the unions backed down: the ZCTU agreed to comply with the new local government act and their leaders were reinstated in the party. But a breach had opened in relations between the federation and the party, and before this wound could heal a new conflict emerged which would make the breach irreparable.

Within months of the resolution of the local government crisis, a shortage of mielie meal and demands for equal pay with expatriate miners provoked a new round of wild cat strikes on the copperbelt. At one of these conflicts a minister's car was stoned, and UNIP arrested 7 MUZ and ZCTU leaders, including Chiluba and the federation's Secretary General, Newstead Zimba. They were detained for four months.

The struggles over local government reform were the first serious conflict between the labour movement and the ruling party, though they were not the last. According to Rakner, the conflict demonstrated that the single party state could be challenged, but not from a position of alliance with the party: relations were never again the same between UNIP and the ZCTU. Moreover, the conflicts cemented the unity of the labour movement, and committed the MUZ to political struggle for the first time. But such political engagement would take place under the leadership of the ZCTU, now established as the policy and organisational centre of the labour movement. In less than a decade, the ZCTU was transformed from a crucial component in UNIP's state corporatist vision into the mainspring of opposition to the single party state.

Opposition to UNIP intensified in the mid-1980s as a consequence of deepening economic crisis and growing official corruption. Both grew from the centralised command economy whose political

expression was the single party state. Efforts to diversify the economy ultimately yielded a highly indebted nationalised sector, which was nonetheless unable to break the legacy of dependence. Rather the system provided rapid enrichment for a narrow stratum of party officials while encouraging widespread cronyism and inefficiency. Both economy and polity were fused under the system of presidentialism, in which the state corporations served as a massive source of patronage in service of President Kaunda's political objectives. The combination of chronic economic crisis and growing political authoritarianism eroded whatever legitimacy UNIP continued to enjoy. (Baylies and Szeftel, 1992)

As a result of the chronic debt crisis, Zambia was forced to implement seven different - and increasingly severe - stabilisation and adjustment programs between 1975 and 1986. Misplaced though they may have been as economic reform measures - by 1985 Zambia was the most indebted country in the world relative to its GDP - the IMF's efforts to roll back the state catalysed the growing opposition to the system. (van de Walle and Chiwele, 1994:9) With the support of the IMF and World Bank the government launched the Radical Reform Program, which envisaged a thorough liberalisation of the currency and interest rates, fiscal and monetary stabilisation, the reduction of consumer subsidies, and the privatisation of maize marketing. (van de Walle and Chiwele, 1994:10; Callaghy, 1990) The elimination of maize subsidies - an effort to reform the "urban bias" in development policies - prompted the most militant popular uprising since independence as thousands of people rioted on the Copperbelt in late 1986. (Riley and Parfitt, 1995; Rakner, 1992, Akwetey, 1994)

The riots were repressed, but the government reinstated the maize subsidies. However the uprising was followed in early 1987 by a three-month rolling strike initiated by the ZCTU's Zambian National Unit of Teachers [ZNUT] who were soon followed by junior doctors and nurses and then by agricultural workers. By the end of April the country was at a stand-still as group after group of union members struck against austerity measures - including subsidy withdrawal and public sector wage freezes and retrenchments - which threatened their security as both workers and consumers. (Rakner, 1982:116) Kaunda chose the annual May Day celebrations to announce a break with the IMF and the government's intention to "go it alone" under the auspices of a New Economic Recovery Program [NERP].

The ZCTU applauded the government's abandonment of the IMF-inspired liberalisation and urged a return to the statist system, notwithstanding that these policies had generated the crisis that prompted the external intervention in the first place. The NERP soon proved unworkable, and in 1989 the government restored its links to the IMF, though on more stringent terms than before, with renewed demands to liberalise the economy. As part of liberalisation the government undertook the first major reform of labour legislation, aimed at removing the provisions of the 1971 Industrial Relations Act that had strengthened the ZCTU. The reforms encouraged fragmentation and decentralisation by revoking the mandatory affiliation to the ZCTU and the "one-industry, one-union" provision, and requiring a two-thirds majority of the membership to apply funds in political campaigning. (Rakner, 1992:121).

C. Zambia's Second Independence: Labour and Democratisation under Neoliberalism

The shift in economic policy and the government's renewed efforts to rein in the unions precipitated the unions' final break with UNIP. The ZCTU's efforts to establish its autonomy and to gain influence over policy making had come to naught, and it now sought an alliance with other groups in civil society. The ZCTU's General Council had resolved in December 1989 to work towards the immediate reintroduction of multi-party politics, a demand that the federation repeated at a special UNIP national convention in March 1990 called to discuss democratisation. The UNIP leadership and Kaunda in particular opposed these demands. But mounting internal and external pressure -

and a renewed outbreak of rioting in June caused by an increase in maize prices - forced the government to change tack. In July it lifted the ban on opposition groups' right to organise political parties, and within days the Movement for Multiparty Democracy [MMD] was launched, with Chiluba as Vice-Chairman. (Rakner, 1992:59-63)

Over the next year MMD and other organisations - including foreign donors and human rights groups - fought with UNIP over the procedures for multiparty elections, which were eventually held in October 1991. The elections were a stunning rebuke for UNIP, as the MMD swept into office winning 125 of the 150 parliamentary seats. Chiluba, who had become MMD Chairman earlier in the year, won the presidency, receiving 76% of the vote. (Baylies and Szeftel, 1992:76; Bratton, 1992)

With the relaunch of multiparty politics the ZCTU was the only organisation with a national structure and material resources to fight an election campaign. These considerable assets were put at the disposal of the MMD: both the federation and its affiliates mobilised their district committees in support of MMD candidates, and supplied a major share of the party's financial resources. (Akwetey, 1994:65) The commitment to the MMD arose out of the federation's original policy of support for the most progressive party, originally established by the then-RTUC in 1960 when it chose to support UNIP over the ANC. In 1990, however, this policy was invoked to justify opposition to the ruling party and support for the opposition. The ZCTU did not hope to become a labour party, nor to substitute for a political party, but chose to work for the reinstitution of democracy with whatever forces shared a commitment to multiparty politics.

However, if the ZCTU provided the material basis for the MMD, its influence did not extend to the party's economic thinking. The MMD was not a labour party; rather it was a broad alliance of businessmen, professionals, and workers. These groupings shared little other than a commitment to multipartism and opposition to UNIP. Its leadership - and later its parliamentary caucus - was very largely composed of former cabinet ministers and parliamentarians who had fallen out with Kaunda and UNIP. These layers had come to oppose Kaunda's "socialism" and were strong advocates of economic liberalisation and engagement with the IMF. Where the ZCTU had also come to oppose the command economy, it however was staunchly opposed to economic liberalisation in general and structural adjustment in particular. But these positions were buried in the MMD, and the union federation reversed its long-held policy to adopt the MMD's stand. (Baylies and Szeftel, 1992) The ZCTU justified this about-turn in the hope that a democratically elected government would at least implement adjustment fairly.

Within a year of taking power, for example, the MMD government had in fact enacted many of the liberalisation policies Kaunda had attempted and failed to implement after the 1989 rapprochement with the IMF: the MMD removed all maize subsidies - the issue that had perennially plunged the Kaunda regime into crisis - and moved equally rapidly to introduce market-based interest rates and a liberalised exchange rate regime. By 1994 it had moved to a "cash budget" to stabilize government expenditure, and began to undertake broader structural reforms, including the dismantling of marketing boards, privatisation, and the downsizing of the public service. (van de Walle and Chiwele, 1994:27-41)

Despite these reforms, the new government soon began operating in a manner reminiscent of the party it had replaced. The presidentialist system had itself not been dismantled; indeed, Chiluba quickly reasserted his predecessor's habit of appointing cabinet members and senior civil servants according to the exigencies of ethnic and regional balancing rather than on merit. (Baylies and Szeftel, 1992:89-90) Nor did the multiparty elections lead to the hegemony of parliamentary politics: the presidency and the cabinet (particularly the core economic ministries) remained the

centres of power, while the MMD as an organisation was reduced to an electoral shell with little influence on policy (van de Walle and Chiwele, 1994:20-21; 18).

A number of observers have noted considerable continuity between the practices of the new government and UNIP, evident in the untransparent reshuffling of ministerial portfolios, the manipulation of the constitution and media for political advantage, and intimidation of political opponents. (Panter-Brick, 1994; Mphaisha, 1996) These practices came under the spotlight during the 1996 elections, in which the MMD was returned to office with an increased parliamentary majority. But some Zambian NGOs and most bilateral and multilateral aid organisations castigated the government's actions, and in the run-up to the elections foreign donors suspended program aid - including balance of payments support.[12] (Human Rights Watch, 1996; Adams and Bevan, 1996)

The ZCTU has criticised these undemocratic practices, but has remained relatively powerless to slow down, let alone reverse the government's economic liberalisation policies, nor to curb its more blatant political abuses. After the elections the federation found itself caught between its historic antagonism to liberalisation (indeed, its advocacy in the aftermath of the 1986 riots, of a return to commandist economic policies) and its support for the MMD's commitment to liberalisation. It had no feasible alternative to the new government's ambitious liberalisation program, save for criticism of the pace of implementation and concern for its social effects. Furthermore, the ZCTU had no clear policy for engaging government, beyond the general commitment to support the most progressive party. Nor did it possess a program for reconstructing the Zambian state, beyond its support for multiparty politics.

The federation had some hope that it would at least meet on a regular basis with ex-labour leaders now in government, but such meetings were held infrequently, and when they did occur, the unionists' advice was ignored or the meeting became an opportunity to inform labour of government policies. (Interview, Chirwa, 1996)

The federation was able to pressure for revision of the Industrial Relations Act by removing many of the anti-labour clauses enacted by UNIP in 1991, though it was unable to restore mandatory affiliation to the ZCTU or mandatory dues check off. One important addition to the Act was the creation of a formal purchase on decision making through a new Tripartite Consultative Labour Council [TCLC] with power to "advise the government on all issues relating to labour matters, manpower development and utilisation..." (Akwetey, 1996:13)

But the TCLC has not performed the role envisioned in the Act. It has no permanent secretariat, nor does it have any statutory right to review legislation. Its role is merely advisory, and its decisions are not binding. Furthermore, it meets at the convenience of the Minister of Labour, who for the first years of the first MMD government was Newstead Zimba - the former ZCTU Secretary General - who was identified by current ZCTU leaders as the most anti-labour member of Chiluba's cabinet. In 1996 the TCLC was convened only once. A top official of the Ministry of Finance referred to it as "that consultative body where once a year government informs labour of decisions that have already been taken." (Gostner, 1997:59-60; Confidential interview, Ministry of Finance)

Privatisation has been a particularly difficult issue for the federation. In 1992 Parliament created the Zambian Privatisation Agency [ZPA], an independent parastatal, to conduct the sale of state assets according to market-based criteria. While it endorsed the principle of dismantling the command economy, the ZCTU been adversely affected by the policy. More than 150 firms have been privatised since 1992 leading to considerable job loss and heightened anxiety for those still in employment. (Ginsburg, 1997:61; Akwetey, 1996:18)[13] The ZCTU, however, has advocated a more systematic approach to privatisation urging that profitable and strategic parastatals not be

privatised, that the state retain a share holding in some privatised companies, and that the costs not be borne by the poor exclusively. But these positions have not been formulated into an alternative policy, nor has the ZCTU used what influence it possesses to challenge the government. Though it holds a seat on the ZPA board, it has not used its presence to contest the general policy or the terms of specific sales. (Confidential interview, ZPA, 1996)

Notwithstanding this weakness at national level, some ZCTU affiliates have been able to use their shop-floor power to challenge these policies, or to fight for benefits once a sale has been concluded. This exercise of power has led to a number of militant confrontations between union members and managers. In May, 1996 workers at the newly privatised Dairy Produce Board protested against the new South African owners' decision to retrench without packages 200 of the company's 240 workers. In March 1996, 200 members of the ZCTU's National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Workers nearly lynched three managers of Hybrid Poultry Farm for their bad attitude towards workers, while in October the Managing Director of the Medical Stores narrowly escaped a similar fate during a heated meeting on the future of the business. (Buhlungu and van der Walt, 1997: 67-68) However, in the absence of a challenge to the national policy or a regular institutional presence in the privatisations themselves, these assertions of militance have been essentially reactive and unfocussed.

The most important protest against liberalisation was waged by workers in the ZCTU's public service affiliates, the Civil Servants Union of Zambia [CSUZ] and the National Union of Public Service Workers [NUPSW]. In early 1996 these unions organised a week-long national strike to demand implementation of a 45% wage increase granted by the Industrial Court. (Buhlungu and van der Walt, 1997:67) The year before the same unions had taken steps to launch a legal national strike over the packages offered to workers facing privatisation or rationalisation. (Interviews with CSUZ and NUPSW executive members, 1997) Both actions helped delay government plans to downsize the public sector and to stabilise recurrent expenditure.[14] Again, lacking both a coherent alternative policy and an institutional framework in which to bargain, labour can at best address some of the consequences of decisions, but only after they have been taken by government.

As a result of its participation in the MMD the ZCTU helped bring about the first change in government in Zambia since 1964. But the federation did not gain either a formal or informal purchase on decision-making. As under UNIP, policy is still tightly held within the ambit of the presidency, the cabinet, and foreign donors. (Akwetey, 1996:19) This is especially true with respect to economic policy, which is perhaps even more concentrated in elite hands than was the case under the previous government. (van de Walle and Chiwele, 17-20)

This result is an ironic outcome of democratisation in Zambia: labour's electoral ally has been able to implement programs its predecessor was powerless to pursue given labour's ability to block policy while in opposition. Van de Walle and Chiwele explain this irony in terms of Chiluba's overwhelming electoral mandate, which not only legitimises his rule, but has freed him from dependence on the ZCTU. This freedom was underscored by the MMD's continued electoral dominance in 1996, notwithstanding the ZCTU's neutrality in the election. Furthermore, the ZCTU's membership is concentrated in the major urban areas - the Copperbelt, Lusaka and Livingstone - such that most parliamentarians "have no reason to heed the power of organized labor in their district." Given the absence of any credible political opposition, the ZCTU cannot threaten defection from the government to gain leverage with the MMD. Moreover, though Chiluba himself may be more favourably inclined towards labour, this is not true of the MMD as a whole, nor of his cabinet ministers, who are drawn disproportionately from among liberals in the party. Given the fact that he knows the labour movement's strengths and weaknesses - and how far and in what ways he can push it - he has more space to pursue economic reform than Kaunda ever enjoyed. (1996:22)

The parliamentary political terrain has thus become increasingly unfavourable for the ZCTU, a fact reflected in the confusion over the federation's political policy. The ZCTU claims no longer to be in an alliance with the MMD. Though a number of its members - especially on the copperbelt - worked actively for MMD candidates in 1996, the federation itself remained neutral, choosing to defend the democratic process itself rather than fight for its erstwhile ally. However in interviews in late 1996 individual leaders showed considerable confusion over the federation's political policy. Some expressed support for the policy of neutrality, while others claimed that the federation was still in an alliance. Others asserted that the alliance was focused only on the need to reinstate multiparty democracy, and - perhaps reflecting on past difficulties with UNIP - that no trade union federation could afford to be allied with a ruling party. From this perspective - which appeared to be dominant - labour should be involved in "industrial politics" in which the primary objective is to defend workers' economic interests. (Gostner, 1997:59)

But aside from these political factors, the ZCTU's inability to influence policy must be understood against the background of the impact on the federation of economic liberalisation by taking into account the country's insertion into the international economy. In short, adjustment has not been kind to Zambian workers nor to their unions.

In 1990 the ZCTU's membership stood at 353,445 in 19 affiliates.(See Table 1) However, between 1991 and 1994 nearly 40,000 workers have been retrenched in Zambia, many as a result of privatisation.

TABLE 1: ZAMBIAN CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS, AFFILIATES AND MEMBERSHIP

AFFILIATE AND SECTOR	1990	1994
Airways and Allied Workers (AAWU)	8,558	3,010
Civil Servants (CSUZ)	28,000	29,000
Guards (GUZ)	13,000	8,000
Hotel & Catering Workers (HCWU)	7,000	9,693
Mineworkers (MUZ)	58,808	52,058
Building, Engineering and General Workers (NUBEGW)	25,000	14,310
Commercial & Industrial Workers (NUCIW)	27,000	26,000
Communication Workers (NUCW)	6,319	6,494
Plantation & Agricultural Workers (NUPAW)	16,674	18,332
Public Service Workers (NUPSW)	65,000	35,000
Transport & Allied Workers (NUTAW)	7,392	7,896
Railway Workers (RWUZ)	8,858	8,501
Typographical Workers (ZTWU)	1,219	2,500
University of Zambia & Allied Workers (UNZAAWU)	2,794	5,074
Electricity and Allied Workers (ZEAWU)	3,850	3,600
Health & Allied Workers (ZNUHAW)	1,219	3,030
Teachers (ZNUT)	36,000	40,000
Financial Institutions and Allied Workers (ZUFIAW)	11,754	10,116
United Local Authorities Workers (ZULAWU)	25,000	22,000
Total Membership	353,445	304,614
Losses due to disaffiliations		142,484
Losses due to retrenchment		38,346
ZCTU Membership 1994		162,130

(Shading indicates breakaway unions). Source: Akwetey (1996:18)

By 1994 the federation's membership had dropped to 304,614 indicating that a sizeable proportion of the loss of membership occurred because workers had simply "ceased to be members of the unions," a choice facilitated by the revocation of the mandatory membership clauses in the 1990 and 1993 Industrial Relations Act amendments. (Akwetey, 1996:18)

The most troubling impact of liberalisation has been the defection from the ZCTU of five of its largest affiliates, the first major split in the Zambian labour movement since 1959. The breakaway unions included the miners, teachers, and building and engineering workers (Chiluba's old affiliate). Together these defections meant the loss of nearly 50% of the ZCTU's remaining membership, and also deprived it of its leverage in crucial sectors of the economy.
In part the split was caused by personality differences, as new leadership was elected to replace senior officials who left for government. (ZCTU, 1996) But at a deeper level, these federations were divided over their responses to government policy, particularly privatisation. While most civil service affiliates (such as the CSUZ and NUPSW) see these policies as inherently threatening, others, particularly those organised in the emerging private sector, see considerable opportunities deriving from privatisation. The MUZ, in particular, views privatisation as a boon, in that it promises increased foreign investment in existing operations, more prospecting and the development of new mines, and - in the medium term - more jobs.[15] These affiliates' lack of concern for workers and affiliates in sectors more vulnerable to privatisation has led to accusations of sectoral opportunism. (Ginsburg, 1997:62)

In 1995 the breakaway affiliates attempted to launch a rival federation to the ZCTU, known as the Confederation of Free Trade Unions. But this initiative has thus far foundered, as the Industrial Relations Act presently allows for recognition of only one national trade union centre. The unions then established the Federation of Free Trade Unions, but the FFTU is prevented from operating as a trade union. The ZCTU has sought to delay amendment of the labour law to allow for multiple union centres, though this is clearly a rear-guard action as the government has adopted the ILO conventions on freedom of association which reject monopoly unionism.

The split has been extremely costly for the labour movement as a whole. The ZCTU has been deprived of the source of close to half its income from dues, making it more dependent than ever on foreign trade union donations. According to Akwetey, this has forced massive cutbacks in its educational and service functions to the affiliates. The loss of revenue thus threatens to place the unions in a vicious circle: retrenchments cannot be fought because the federation and its affiliates lack the resources to contest them or to develop alternative policy, while more retrenchments deplete resources further. Furthermore, the unions have been engaged in a protracted guerrilla war with the breakaway affiliates. Both sides have launched splinter unions to contest the other's hold over members, further draining resources while misdirecting attention away from their common adversaries. The government's removal of the requirement for mandatory affiliation to single industrial union - in other words, industrial pluralism - set up this rivalry, but the unions' inability to maintain solidarity and think strategically has been the direct cause of these troubles.

The fight between unions underscores the most important aspect of liberalisation in Zambia: that pluralism and competition does not stop short of the main advocates of democracy. The unions were the earliest and most powerful supporters of multiparty democracy in the

political sphere, but they could not resist the application of these same principles in the industrial relations sphere. UNIP was unable to make the transition from monopoly to competitive party politics, and now faces extinction as a political force. It remains to be seen whether the ZCTU will go the same way as the political system and the party to which it owes its birth and much of its strength.

At various points since independence the ZCTU was able to combine mobilisation and interventions in policy to challenge the UNIP government. The unions used this combination of militance and institutional work to carve an autonomous space for themselves within the single party state. They were able to construct a similar strategy to contest local government reform and structural adjustment. The most important example of the ZCTU's strategic use of power was in their protracted efforts to remove the single party state and ensure the move towards multiparty politics. However, since 1991 the unions have not shown the same capability to contest the consolidation of democracy. They lacked clear alternative economic policies, nor did they have any serious strategy for engaging with or transforming the state once multi-party democracy had been reinstituted. In both the political and economic spheres the unions have been marginalised from policy making, which is increasingly insulated in a narrow sphere comprising the presidency, economic ministries of the cabinet, and multilateral organisations.

Structural adjustment has in turn undermined the unions organisationally, contributing to the first splits in the movement since the colonial period, while it has generated considerable mass discontent and protest among the rank and file. However such militant action has been of a largely wild-cat and sporadic nature, and has been easily contained within the industrial relations system. Moreover, with the exception of strikes and threatened strikes by workers in the public service, these actions have been disarticulated from any sustained institutional interventions into policy making. In the absence of a broader strategy of challenging government policy and its articulation with militant action, labour is in danger of losing all control over the process of transformation which it led in the 1980s.

III. SOUTH AFRICA

A. Unions Under Apartheid: Building Union Autonomy under State-Led Industrialisation

1. Organisational Independence

While labour movements in much of the world have experienced declines in membership and influence during the 1980s and 1990s the South African labour movement has grown rapidly. The membership of trade unions grew dramatically from more than 700,000 in 1979 to nearly 3,000,000 in 1993. This involved a growth in union density from slightly more than 15% to 58% over the same period. (Macun, in press)

There are 213 registered trade unions, many of which are small craft unions or professional associations that are declining in membership.[16] (Department of Labour, 1995) However the broad trend is towards nation-wide industrial or sectoral unions in the core of the economy, including mining, metal, textile and clothing, retail and commercial, chemical, food, and the public service. Thus, although there are many unions in the country, the majority of union members are concentrated in the large national industrial unions in these sectors.

Many of the unions are affiliated to one of six federations. [see Table 2] On the face of it this suggests a degree of fragmentation in the labour movement, though the largest federation,

COSATU has more members than all the other federations combined. However, the labour movement in South Africa is deeply divided on grounds of race and political orientation. Historically South Africa had a dualistic industrial relations system, as had other settler colonies in Africa. Trade unions with non-African membership were recognised under the Industrial and Conciliation Act of 1924, while Africans were excluded from the formal industrial relations system and subject to tight control through the pass system. The dualistic system ended in 1979 when the Act was amended to cover all employees except migrant workers, farm workers, domestic servants and employees in the public sector.[17] The granting of formal trade unions rights to African employees legitimised the then-emerging black trade union movement, and membership figures skyrocketed.

TABLE 2: SOUTH AFRICAN UNION FEDERATIONS, NUMBER OF AFFILIATES, AND MEMBERSHIP, 1994

FEDERATION	AFFILIATES	MEMBERSHIP*
Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)	15	1,317,496 (45%)
National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU)	18	334,733 (12%)
Federation of South African Labour (FEDSAL)	16	257,258 (10%)
Federation of Independent Trade Unions (FITU)	24	236,000 (8%)
South African Confederation of Labour (SACOL)	4	54,290 (2%)
United Workers Union of South Africa** (UWUSA)	?	?

*The percentage in the membership column reflects the federation's membership as a proportion of total membership. **Estimates of UWUSA membership fluctuate between 30,000 and 100,000, but reliable figures are not available. Source: Macun (forthcoming).

COSATU and NACTU are essentially industrial unions of African semi-skilled workers, although COSATU is firmly committed to organising workers regardless of race, and has always had a significant number of coloured and Indian members. In recent years it has made some inroads among white workers as well. Indeed, its leadership has always included non-Africans in key positions.

These demographic differences express themselves in four major political traditions within the democratic movement, which structure the differing perspectives on labour's relationship to politics: the Black Consciousness/Africanist tradition, white racist unionism, the national democratic tradition, AND the shopfloor tradition. (Fine and Webster, 1989) NACTU's origins lie in the Black Consciousness political tradition, and the federation has more recently aligned with the Africanist tradition articulated by the Pan Africanist Congress, which broke from the African National Congress [ANC] in 1959 because of the latter's non-racialism.

The other major federations, FEDSAL, FITU, and SACOL have their origins in the old white-dominated labour movement, and are themselves divided in terms of skill and ethnicity. FEDSAL represents white-collar workers, and recently has taken on larger number of black members; it recently merged with a number of independent public service unions to form the Federation of Unions of South Africa [FEDUSA]. FITU and SACOL, on the other hand, represent skilled and semi-skilled white workers respectively, while SACOL is essentially a movement of Afrikaans-speaking workers. FEDSAL and FITU are both politically unaffiliated, though they have been historically hostile to the democratic

movement, while SACOL has been linked with the far-right wing Conservative Party.

UWUSA was launched in 1986 with covert funding by the apartheid state. Its membership is almost entirely confined to Zulu-speaking semi-skilled and unskilled workers affiliated to the Inkatha Freedom Party led by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi. It has virtually no organised presence in the workplace, but it has often played a divisive role acting as scab labour undermining efforts by COSATU or NACTU. (Harvey, 1996)

The national democratic tradition has the deepest roots in the labour movement, originating in the creation in 1955 of the South African Congress of Trade Unions [SACTU], which combined most of the then-existing unions organising among black workers. SACTU's alliance with the ANC involved a redefinition of its trade union role along the lines of political unionism. Lacking a strong power base on the shopfloor and faced with an increasingly hostile state and intransigent employers, SACTU mobilised the oppressed - across class lines - around the demands of the ANC's popular program, the Freedom Charter, adopted in 1955.

SACTU's involvement in the Congress Alliance was premised on the assumption that South Africa could not be understood in class terms alone, but that political change necessitated a national democratic struggle to liberate South Africa from white rule that was seen as a form of "colonialism of a special type." To this end, the Congress Alliance was a multi-class movement of organisations representing the broad oppressed groups in South Africa under the leadership of the ANC and aiming to establish a national democracy. In form and content, the Alliance - and particularly the relations between unions and the nationalist party - parallelled other national liberation movements on the African continent. SACTU's political role brought it into direct conflict with the state and the organisation felt the full force of repression in the 1960s. By 1964 it had ceased public activities in South Africa and operated in exile until the unbanning of the ANC in 1990.

When union activity reemerged before and after the Durban strikes of 1973, SACTU and the other formations of the Congress Alliance were in exile and their internal operatives were deep underground. The Durban unions ultimately merged in 1974 to form the Trade Union Advisory Coordinating Council [TUACC], the first progressive trade union centre since the repression of the early 1960s. In 1979 TUACC joined with other emerging unions from the Eastern and Western Cape to form the Federation of South African Trade Unions [FOSATU]. (Friedman, 1987) In fact, the legal proscription of the nationalist movements meant that in their formative years these embryonic unions were able to develop leadership, organise their constituency, and define their strategies and tactics relatively independently from the ideological orientations and models of the ANC, the South African Communist Party [SACP], and SACTU. The space created by virtue of banning and exile meant that the new unions could develop innovative approaches to organising that differed from the populist strategies and tactics of the nationalist-linked unions of the 1950s.

These emerging unions developed what has come to be known as the shopfloor tradition, best captured in a prominent 1982 speech by the FOSATU General Secretary, who proposed the development of a workers' political movement under worker control as an alternative to the national democratic tradition. (Foster, 1982) FOSATU's avoidance of political engagement was informed by an assessment of SACTU's errors, that its close identification with the Congress Alliance and its political campaigns caused its demise: political engagement, in this view, led to a neglect of workplace organising while inviting repression.

These unions emphasised the development of factory-level leadership democratically elected by rank-and-file workers and directly accountable to them. (Pityana and Orkin, 1992, Baskin, 1991) This particular strategic innovation came about in the early 1970s when the then-emerging black unions in Durban sought to avoid the growth of top-heavy office-bound leaderships. They were inspired by a programmatic commitment to worker control and to the need to survive state repression, which tended to be directed in the first instance at highly exposed national leaders. Furthermore, these unions were committed to building industrially-based structures, concentrating on shopfloor issues while remaining - for reasons of survival - unaffiliated to the exiled liberation movements.

Through the early 1980s black workers were experiencing the effects of a deepening social and political crisis, which can now be seen as the fundamental contradictions of the apartheid order. The crisis spawned a range of new social movements, including student, youth, civics, and community-based unions which contributed to the growing opposition in the townships, especially from 1984. The community unions' increasing success forced FOSATU to reevaluate its strategy of political nonalignment and its efforts to isolate a class-based politics from the broader national democratic struggle, a position that threatened to marginalise FOSATU from its own base.

The decisive break with political abstentionism was in November 1984 when FOSATU entered into joint action with student and civic organisations to participate in the first successful worker stay away since the Soweto uprising of 1976. (Labour Monitoring Group, 1985) FOSATU's shift brought the shopfloor and national democratic traditions closer together, and facilitated efforts to promote unity among the emergent unions. This unity was finally achieved by the creation of COSATU, which combined the industrial union emphasis of the shopfloor tradition with the political orientation - alliance with the ANC and SACP - central to the national democratic tradition. In one of their first acts, the new office bearers of COSATU travelled to Lusaka and endorsed the ANC's leadership of the liberation struggle.

COSATU's approach to the ANC marked the informal beginning of what is now known as the Triple Alliance between the ANC, SACP, and COSATU. It is significant that in this movement towards unity with the national democratic tradition COSATU entered the alliance not as a subordinate partner as was SACTU - lending its mobilisation power to the ANC's campaigns - but as an equal partner with an independent power base, strategy, and leadership. In this movement COSATU displaced SACTU.[18]

The intensifying internal insurrection in 1985 and 1986 provoked massive repression in June 1986. With the ANC and SACP still in exile, and internal political organisations under ban and leaders in detention or under trial, COSATU emerged as the *de facto* leader of the internal democratic movement. This position gave COSATU considerable influence over the course of internal politics. (Baskin, 1991)

By 1991 COSATU unions alone included more than 25,000 shopstewards, giving an average ratio of one steward to 50 workers. The shopsteward system gave workers power in production, a capacity to intervene directly in struggles challenging managerial control over wages, working conditions, and the organisation of production. Furthermore, as shopstewards constituted the pool from which more senior union leaders were drawn, the system enabled rank-and-file members to exercise an unprecedented degree of control over their officials.

Though the unions were initially dependent on foreign funding - largely from the European

social democracies - by the 1990s they were self-financing. (Southall, 1995) With the growth in numbers and the shift from a flat-rate to a percentage-based subscription system the unions accumulated large sums of money which cushioned them from the withdrawal of foreign funders' support after the first democratic elections. More importantly, self-financing meant that the unions were not dependent on support from the state or the ANC for their livelihood.[19] Finally, from 1990 COSATU experienced an increase in membership of nearly 50% to stand at nearly 2 million in 1996. (Filita, 1997)

A. 2. Strategic Sophistication: Radical Reform

The independent unions were distinguished from their predecessors in South Africa not only by their size, organisational depth, and independence, but also by their strategic sophistication. They successfully combined a radical vision with a reformist approach which we have called *radical reform*. In pursuit of the long-term goals of ending apartheid and creating a socialist economy, the unions emphasized legal means of struggle.[20] They sought inclusion of all workers within the industrial relations system, and decided to register their unions under the Labour Relations Act.[21] Finally, they eschewed involvement in national political issues and refused to align themselves publicly to any political movement.

Reforms were not regarded as ends in themselves, but rather as dynamic phases in a progressive struggle to achieve the long-term goals. With the strong backing of their members, shop stewards had the power to push for concessions from management, which not only created space for further advances, but also won concrete improvements in workers' conditions, thereby reassuring workers of the efficacy of direct action. There were two important components to the unions' approach to the strategic use of power: 1) democratic processes, to win voluntary consent from members for mobilization, and for restraint when necessary; and 2) tactical flexibility which included a capacity to distinguish principles from tactics, and to choose those tactics most likely to succeed, including negotiation and compromise.

The negotiation of recognition agreements, which set out the rights and duties of shop stewards and trade unions in the workplace, was an important step in establishing "the rule of law" on the shopfloor. Trade unions did not win these rights without a fight. During the late 1970s and early 1980s there were hundreds of strikes in support of demands for recognition.

Throughout the early 1980s workers and trade unions used their increasing strength and rights on the shopfloor to fight for better wages and working conditions: leave, hours of work, safety, and pensions became matters for negotiation. But workers were not only becoming a formidable force on the shopfloor, they were also beginning to engage in centralized industrial bargaining in the Industrial Councils established under the Labour Relations Act. These joint employer-union bodies provided a forum where unions could engage in industry-wide negotiations, which could potentially be extended to include industrial restructuring issues.

In its emphasis on political independence, tactical flexibility, and compromise with employers and the state the strategy stood in marked contrast to the political and military struggle then being waged by the ANC and its internal allies. Their strategy aimed at the state's overthrow through a national democratic revolution: a sudden shift in the balance of power in which the old ruling class was destroyed altogether. This strategy of revolutionary rupture stressed abstention from involvement in the apartheid state and all its institutions on the assumption that the leadership of any subject group would be coopted and the status quo would remain. By contrast, the labour movement developed a strategy of engaging rather

than boycotting the state, from an independent and disciplined power base resting on strong factory structures, held together through practices of democratic accountability. The differences between these two strategic visions caused innumerable conflicts between the emerging unions on the one hand, and the exiled ANC and the developing internal political movement on the other. However, the strategy of radical reform led neither to revolutionary rupture nor to co-option, but to the legitimization of the union as an institution and the rapid growth of unions in the 1980s.

The emergence of a powerful labour movement committed to radical reform opened up the possibility of a distinct role for the trade union movement in the process of transition to a new democratic order. Labour played a crucial role both in the initiation of the transition and in the transition itself. It was the best organised and the single most powerful constituency in the anti-apartheid resistance and through its protest action contributed to the chronic crisis that precipitated the transition. In the transition itself labour used its mass base to mobilise its constituents in support of its allies' positions in the negotiations and to bolster the ANC's campaign during the 1994 elections. But labour contributed more than collective muscle. Its economic and social policies supplied the core ideas for the ANC's electoral agenda - the Reconstruction and Development Programme [RDP] - and led to the development of innovative multipartite institutions that gave labour a direct voice in policy making.

However, even as COSATU was consolidating its leadership position in the late 1980s within the democratic movement, negotiations were developing between the ANC and the apartheid state over what was to become a "negotiated revolution." (Sparks, 1994) The beginning of the transition to democracy, symbolised by the unbanning of the ANC and SACP in 1990 and their return to above-ground politics in South Africa initiated as well the ANC's return to dominance within the internal democratic movement.

B. The Unions and the Transition to Democracy

B.1. Autonomy in the Alliance

Immediately following the unbannings, when the *de facto* alliance between the ANC, SACP and COSATU was formalised as the Triple Alliance, COSATU members expected that the federation would continue to play the same equal and independent role in alliance with the ANC that it had enjoyed over the previous five years. (Pityana and Orkin, 1992:58)

In 1991 COSATU's Central Executive Committee resolved to attend the Conference for a Democratic South Africa [CODESA, the multiparty national negotiating forum] in its own right or not at all. (Pityana and Orkin, 1992:61) However, when COSATU applied for membership it was refused and it was to be represented indirectly, via its allies, the ANC and SACP. (Webster and Keet, 1992) CODESA thus became a parliament-in-formation responsible for drafting the interim constitution and deciding on transitional arrangements. It was comprised of political parties representing political society: civil society formations - including COSATU - did not obtain direct representation.

This is the moment when the ANC formally established its dominance within the Alliance, and COSATU (as well as other allied civil society formations) were reduced to a secondary role, influencing ANC policy through lobbying and pressure, rather than wielding a share of direct power over decisions. From this point political parties - not the civil society organisations which shouldered the 1980s internal resistance to apartheid - were to be at the centre of the transition.[22]

B.2. Economic Policy: New Ideas and Institutions

Notwithstanding the ANC's leading role in the alliance, COSATU was never subordinated. It retained separate leadership, finances, and policy orientations. Moreover, as it claimed a right to participate in the political process of transition, so it also sought to intervene in the process of restructuring the economy. COSATU's economic interventions had their origins in projects launched in the late 1980s to analyse the nature of the economic crisis facing South Africa, and at a deeper level, to begin exploring economic alternatives, fearing that a political transition would simply entrench a non-racial crisis-ridden capitalism. (Joffe et al., 1995:xi; Gelb, 1990) In 1990 this research effort shifted, to "develop an industrial policy that could address the poor performance of South African manufacturing." (Joffe et al., 1995:xi)

The biggest challenge to economic liberalisation came not from the research effort, but from the struggles by workers to resist the unilateral restructuring of the economy. These struggles were exemplified by a three-day stay away in November 1991 to protest the apartheid government's IMF-inspired unilateral introduction of Value Added Tax [VAT]. One of labour's core demands was for the creation of a National Economic Forum [NEF] in which the unions could extend the transition's negotiation process to include economic restructuring. This institution was composed of civil society formations: business associations and trade union federations. As a result, it allowed the labour movement to have a direct purchase on policy decisions, something it had lost in the political negotiations which took place between political parties. In this realm, COSATU was not subordinate to the ANC.

In the perspective of Steven Friedman and Mark Shaw, who have conducted the fullest research on the unions' participation in the NEF, the unions were able to make gains through participation, however these were not as significant as the unions had originally hoped, and they came with costs. (Friedman and Shaw, forthcoming) The unions had proposed rather bold initiatives for industrial restructuring as well as a social plan to deal with the attendant social costs. The concrete gains made were less far-reaching: "agreement on a revised offer to GATT; overturning a government decision to raise the petrol price; [and] agreement on parameters for a public works programme and disbursement of money to organisations applying to run programmes." (Friedman and Shaw, forthcoming)

Moreover, participation imposed costs on COSATU and revealed many weaknesses in the organisation. Many of its top negotiators and policy makers became tied down in a process that led them to neglect their basic union work. In addition, union negotiators were unable to report-back on a regular basis about developments in the NEF, and positions taken in the Forum could not effectively reflect a mandate from the organisation. This weakness was revealed in a 1994 survey of COSATU members in which 80% knew nothing about the NEF and had never been present when there was a report-back on the Forum. (Ginsburg and Webster, 1995:67-68)

Researchers at the COSATU-linked research unit NALEDI made an even stronger criticism about the lack of participation at the NEF.

> Elements of the movement's leadership agreed to positions that were not only unknown to the broader leadership, but were, and in many instances continue to be, opposed by them. Hence the continued demands by some members and officials not to 'sign' or 'join' the GATT. (Lloyd and Rix, 1995)

Thus, not only were the members out of touch with developments in the NEF, but so were the federation's leaders, such that agreements could be reached at the NEF that did not reflect the positions of many in the federation. They point out that social democratic institutions such as the NEF should emerge only after substantial debate within the movement, "albeit often only at leadership level." This, argues Chris Lloyd and Steven Rix, has not been the case; instead, COSATU "has plunged into this institution without the guidance of such debate," allowing a small leadership clique to make decisions "on the part of a broad movement whose thinking is in the opposite direction." (Lloyd and Rix, 1995:14)

Finally, participation in the Forum revealed a glaring policy weakness in the federation, in particular that it did not possess detailed economic plans - the point made above with reference to the Industrial Strategy Project - but this point can also be extended to its lack of a social policy, and indeed the absence of a social plan. The absence of an economic framework was most obvious in "the NEF's macro-economic policy work group, which was meant to review current policy and, by implication, consider COSATU's proposed alternatives," however this group "failed dismally." (Friedman and Shaw, forthcoming) In the Forum the unions were able "to propose, but not to dispose," and as the 1994 elections came near the imperative became blocking and delaying policy until an ANC-led government could come to power.

C. The Unions Under Democracy in an Era of Economic Liberalisation

C.1. The Development of Multi-Partite Institutions

One of the first Acts of the new democratically elected Parliament was legislation merging the NEF with an apartheid-era relic, the National Manpower Commission to create the National Economic Development and Labour Council [NEDLAC].[23] NEDLAC is a statutory body composed of representatives of labour, capital, and the state, who sit in three chambers: Labour Market; Trade and Industry; Public Finance and Monetary Policy. A fourth - Development - chamber was created to include the broad range of organisations from civil society usually excluded from corporatist institutions: community and development organisations with a "mass base" and "definable national interests" which are independent of the state and not contesting parliamentary power.[24] (Webster, 1995b:25-26) NEDLAC's central objective is to reach consensus and conclude agreements on social and economic policies before they go to parliament. Although parliament is sovereign and NEDLAC is an advisory body, a potential consensus between the social partners would be difficult for parliamentarians to disregard.

The NEDLAC framework was first put to test in February 1995 when a new labour relations bill was tabled in the council, based on a negotiating document devised by a legal drafting team appointed by Minister of Labour Tito Mboweni. The bill proposed far-reaching changes to the industrial relations system, introducing for the first time enterprise-level co-determinist institutions called workplace forums, as well as extending union organising and representational rights while greatly strengthening the right to strike and legalising picketing. Indeed, the right to strike was subsequently entrenched in the new constitution following a COSATU-initiated general strike on 27 April 1996. At the core of the new system is a proposed statutory Commission for Conciliation and Mediation and Arbitration designed to shift work relations from adversarialism to a more participatory and co-operative style.

The bill thus laid the foundations for a new labour regime based on co-decision making. It thereby extended unions' powers beyond wage-determination and distributional issues to production matters, making important inroads into managerial prerogatives. These rights go beyond the workplace, providing labour with access to sectoral and national economic

policy-making through transformed sectoral negotiation chambers - called Bargaining Councils - and, ultimately, to NEDLAC. Taken together, these innovations provide labour with gains virtually unthinkable in any contemporary industrial democracy, and cut across global trends of deregulation of the labour market.

Employers and unions deadlocked within the first month of discussions on the negotiating document, and labour embarked on a campaign of mass action over the next two-and-a-half months to support its demands, particularly for centralised bargaining and outlawing scab labour. In July the NEDLAC parties announced a breakthrough that enabled the social partners to reach consensus. The agreement was produced after 149 hours of formal meetings between employers, labour, and government, and in late-night "conversation groups."

The bill was passed by parliament in September 1995, marking the first fundamental break with the industrial relations system established in the 1920s. The new system gives labour an institutional voice over economic and social policy and the potential to shift the balance of power in debates over the emerging labour regime. The opportunity was thus opened for labour to craft in the interests of working people policies over wages, employment standards, industrial policy, competition, privatisation, and trade.[25]

Furthermore, the process through which this consensus was reached is remarkable in itself. Labour was able to exercise both mass action and negotiation in institutions to reach tripartite arrangements that drew the major stakeholders together into a compromise agreement in which all parties had an interest. Although tripartism is time-consuming and elusive and arrives at agreements not completely satisfying to all participants, they can improve the quality of decisions, build political bases of support for the proposed reforms, and help consolidate democratic institutions. (Webster, 1995a)

If labour was able to develop a separate multipartite institution for influencing industrial relations and economic policies (see below), its interventions in the political transition occurred in a terrain where it did not hold an equal vote in determining outcomes. As noted above, the increasing centrality of political parties was reinforced once agreement was reached in CODESA on an election date, which was to be 27 April 1994. This immediately set in motion the development of an electoral programme and the construction of a political machine. In both of these areas COSATU would play an important role building and influencing the ANC - though increasingly as a junior partner to the ANC.

C. 2. Labour and The Elections

The ANC's electoral campaign came to focus around one major initiative: the Reconstruction and Development Programme [RDP]. The RDP originated in an attempt by the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa [NUMSA] to produce an *accord* that would tie COSATU's electoral support for the ANC to the latter's commitment to a working class program. (von Holdt, 1991; Gotz, forthcoming)

The ANC adopted the reconstruction accord, now re-titled as the RDP, in 1993 for very particular reasons of its own. Its adoption, Gotz argues, was an electoral gambit, rather than an article of faith, adopted in haste without thorough consideration of COSATU's and the SACP's vision of radical change, and it laid the basis for the recasting of the document's meaning in a direction more attuned to the ANC's complicated electoral needs. In particular, its macroeconomic orientation was redefined away from the unions' commitment to "growth through redistribution" to a direction more attractive to domestic and international capital,

with commitments to fiscal discipline and macroeconomic balance.

The redrafted RDP was sharply criticised on both procedural and substantive grounds at a special COSATU congress held in August 1993. The redraft was presented for adoption without being debated within COSATU structures, and its content had been changed to include a statement that "coherent, strict, and effective monetary and fiscal policies will be a cornerstone of our RDP." (Etkind and Harvey, 1993) The re-formulation provoked considerable debate at the Congress over what was seen as the thin end of the neoliberal wedge. However, COSATU adopted the program without suggesting an alternative to this call for fiscal discipline at the heart of the RDP. The RDP soon became the paradigm within which all development policies were to be discussed, an extended wish list in which the homeless, the landless, workers, and international bankers could take equal comfort. In other words, it became all things to all people. (African National Congress, 1994)

At the same special congress, COSATU constructed the other leg of its electoral strategy in support of the ANC. Twenty COSATU leaders were released to stand as parliamentary candidates on the ANC's list, including some of the organisation's most senior office bearers and strategists. A larger number of leaders were similarly released to stand on provincial lists (and later on local government electoral lists). The guiding idea was that such individuals would strengthen the capacity of the ANC and at the same time shape its direction towards labour's goals.

It proved difficult to fulfill these aims. Many ex-COSATU leaders gained influence, especially those few became cabinet ministers and chairpersons of parliamentary committees, but COSATU as an organisation did not. Indeed, it suffered what has come to be known as a "brain drain" in which many of its leading figures, especially at regional and local levels, left the organisation. (Buhlungu, 1994a, 1994b) An estimated 80 key leaders left the organisation at the time of the national elections; a much larger number of lower-level leaders left in late 1995 after the local government elections. In the National Union of Mineworkers itself more than 100 shopstewards went into local government structures.[26] However, once in government these individuals found themselves detached from any accountability to their old federation while being isolated from the centre of power in their home, the ANC. The ex-unionists did not form a COSATU caucus in parliament, and as ANC members they are subject to party discipline; indeed, a clause in the constitution compels MPs to resign their seats if they leave or are expelled from their party, which gives party leaders extensive power over dissident members.

The 1994 elections cemented the ANC's leadership within the Triple Alliance. By virtue of its overwhelming electoral victory, the ANC became the majority party in a legitimate Government of National Unity. As described above, the party leadership - principally the ministers and Deputy President Thabo Mbeki - now enjoyed considerable leverage over its MPs (including the ex-COSATU unionists in Parliament), not to mention the organisation's extra-parliamentary structures. Furthermore, it could now summon the vast resources of the state bureaucracy in pursuit of its policy goals. The transition from movement to Government had been initiated, if not completed.[27] In practical terms, this meant that policy developments such as the RDP, that had once been the object of bargaining within the Alliance, now became government policies to be developed within state structures, including a bureaucracy whose composition was largely unchanged as a result of the CODESA "sunset clauses" that guaranteed the positions of the old white bureaucracy.

From 1994 to 1996 the RDP became the ostensibly guiding document of the Government of

National Unity, located in an RDP Office within the President's Office, under the immediate authority of Minister Without Portfolio Jay Naidoo - ex-General Secretary of COSATU. Within months the Alliance's election document was redrafted into an official government White Paper. (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, 1994) However, the principles and programmatic objectives of the original RDP were reconceptualised as a long-term strategic vision to realign all government effort around clearly stated economic targets, leaving little room for labour-, or indeed civil society-driven change. (Gotz, forthcoming)

Furthermore, the macroeconomic shift noted above became even more pronounced in the White Paper which significantly strengthened the emphasis on fiscal discipline that first appeared in the draft presented to the 1993 COSATU special congress. It developed a more robust commitment to an export-led growth strategy while loosening the RDP's original emphasis on a basic needs strategy stressing the need to reduce state expenditure, privatisation, and promoting private sector expansion. For example, the RDP placed ultimate responsibility on the government "for ensuring that housing is provided to all," and that housing be affordable "to even the poorest South Africans." (African National Congress, 1994: 23). Instead the White Paper envisions a market-based approach to housing through "innovative financial institutions and instruments which promote domestic savings and extend financial services to those who do not have adequate access to these services." (Parliament, 1994: 25) But whereas the RDP articulated a vision of housing and community banks and mechanisms to make the financial sector responsive to popular needs (and maintained government as the provider of last resort), the White Paper drops any explicit suggestions on these lines, while a high interest rate regime puts housing finance beyond the means of most South Africans. (Parliament, 1994; Adelzadeh and Padayachee, 1994)

C. 3. Contesting Economic Liberalisation

The first contestation over liberalisation occurred in December 1995, when the government announced its aspirations to privatise important state assets. Labour responded by threatening a general strike and demanded the right to negotiate the terms of restructuring. After intensive discussions between the NEDLAC labour caucus[28] and senior government ministers, a National Framework Agreement [NFA] was accepted in February 1996. In terms of the NFA all specific instances of restructuring must be negotiated between government and the relevant trade union parties. Most importantly, the government agreed that restructuring should not be done at the expense of employment and where there are negative consequences for workers a social plan must be negotiated. (National Framework Agreement, 1996; Rix and Jardine, 1996) This labour-sensitive agreement stands in marked contrast to the unilateral embracing of privatisation by the MMD government in Zambia.[29]

The shifting meaning attached to the RDP provided a context in which government, business and labour began developing distinctive positions on economic policy. Business opened the public debate in January 1996 with a document advocating a standard neoliberal solution: economic deregulation; dramatic reductions in the deficit; trade liberalisation in the form of lower tariffs; rapid privatisation; lower corporate taxes; and increased labour market flexibility to be achieved through dual labour market policies. (South Africa Foundation, 1996)

Soon after business' document was published, COSATU released an alternative plan, "Social Equity and Job Creation," inspired by left-Keynesian thinking that has become the common position in the NEDLAC labour caucus. (Labour Caucus, 1996) The plan attacks neoliberalism and proposes instead a public and private investment policy geared towards job creation and growth. Central to the strategy is an active industrial policy to develop the

manufacturing sector along with social adjustment measures to provide for the social costs of restructuring the economy. Importantly, the document proposes a redistributive fiscal policy based on a strongly progressive tax system that will redirect spending towards social services for the poor. The program also articulates a vision of regional reconstruction and development tied to support for a third world debt write-off and closer trade union solidarity. Finally, it incorporates demands for worker participation, both at the shop floor in the form of union-based Workplace Forums and at the sectoral and national levels.

In the meantime, the Government was developing its own programme, the National Growth and Development Strategy [NGDS] which ambiguously straddled the neoliberal macroeconomic program of big business's approach and the redistributive and equity orientations of labour's document. (Inter-governmental Forum, 1996) However, this document was withdrawn because of opposition within the ANC and its allies, who criticised both its content and the process by which the document was written. As a result of this deadlock in the Alliance, the NGDS was never publicly released.

However, South Africa's first major currency crisis - starting in February 1996 - quickly overtook this debate, as the value of the Rand dropped by more than 25%. (Lloyd and Rix, 1996) In this context the government moved quickly to calm domestic capital and foreign currency markets by embracing a conservative macroeconomic framework developed by a team of policy makers including senior civil servants, representatives of the Development Bank of South Africa, and the World Bank. In June, after considerable internal disagreement within the Tripartite Alliance, Finance Minister Trevor Manuel finally released the new strategy, "Growth, Employment and Redistribution" [GEAR]. (Department of Finance, 1996).

GEAR puts forward ambitious targets. It aimed to achieve a "fast-growing economy which creates sufficient jobs for all workseekers." It also envisioned redistribution of income, the provision of sound services to all, and the achievement of 6% growth and the creation of 400,000 jobs per annum by the year 2000. (Department of Finance, 1996: 1) The controversial aspect of the plan is the means identified to achieve these goals. Its integrated strategy highlights fiscal deficit reduction, gradual relaxation of exchange controls, reduction in tariffs, tax reductions to encourage private sector (and especially foreign direct) investment, and restructuring of state assets (privatisation).

The ANC sought to win support for this shift in policy within the Alliance by a series of informal meetings with senior SACP and COSATU officials in the weeks before GEAR was released. ANC leaders stressed the precarious position they were in and the need to project confidence during the crisis, and that GEAR was the best means for doing this. The Alliance partners, while acknowledging the pressures on the government, queried the origins of GEAR and were critical of the lack of consultation. Indeed, the actual document was not tabled in the meetings - the COSATU and SACP leaders were shown only the section headings.

However once GEAR was released, the Alliance partners were angered both by its content - which they now saw for the first time - and because the government asserted that it was "non-negotiable", a position that was reiterated by numerous ministers and spokespersons. These two factors provoked anger from COSATU as well as among many figures in the SACP. COSATU General Secretary Sam Shilowa publicly criticised GEAR - tellingly at a seminar marking the 75th anniversary of the SACP - describing the strategy as an "unworkable and unwinnable" plan that "poses serious difficulties for the working class and

the country as a whole." Most significantly, Shilowa identified the distance the ANC has moved rightward from the original RDP by indicating that GEAR could never have emerged from the ANC before the 1994 elections. (*Sunday Times*, 1996; *Sunday Independent*, 1996)

Despite these criticisms, GEAR was ultimately formally endorsed by the ANC's National Working Committee, on which COSATU and SACP representatives sit, though COSATU has never adopted the policy. Yet no formal agreement could be reached in either COSATU or the SACP on how to deal with GEAR: some felt that the policy should be given a chance and the government should not be attacked during a crisis; others wanted openly to oppose the policy. The issue threatened to be divisive both within and between the parties to the Alliance; as one participant put it, "the debate became so shrill that people walked away from it."

However, silence over GEAR did not mean acquiescence, and during 1997 the terrain became more fluid. Firstly, line ministers experienced the consequences of GEAR's fiscal restraint and the implications this policy held for delivering on the government's social programs. Secondly, GEAR has not been delivering on its ambitious promises of employment creation and redistribution. In this context, COSATU and the SACP seem to be avoiding a direct confrontation over GEAR, and instead are resisting it indirectly, a strategy best illustrated by their involvement in the revision of the Basic Conditions of Employment Bill. Business has advocated greater flexibility in the labour market while labour has sought a reduction in the working week, increased maternity benefits, and has resisted attempts to "level downwards" workers' conditions of employment. After more than a year of negotiations in NEDLAC COSATU declared a deadlock and embarked on a campaign of mass action, including a one-day general strike in June 1997, and promises to intensify action until their demands are met and a the draft bill is further revised.

COSATU has pursued a sophisticated strategy, using its presence in NEDLAC to advance its argument, resorting to mass action when it has failed to win its demands there; but it has also indicated that it will use its alliance with the ANC in parliament to win revisions to the Bill. This is a clear example of how COSATU is able to act both inside and outside the state, using the combination of mobilisation and influence within the Alliance to force a bargained liberalisation.

In the long term, it will not be easy to bridge business's and labour's positions since they come from different economic paradigms and represent different conceptions of labour regimes. A pact, it has been argued, would discipline all parties: if labour is given increased influence over investment policy this will provide the possibility that the benefits of growth will improve living standards for workers and the poor. On the other hand, business, too, will gain advantages from a pact through providing labour with a strong stake in economic growth. This would contribute to industrial relations and wage stability, and thereby encourage investor confidence by providing business with increased certainty over key cost variables. Finally, government would be forced to develop macro-economic policies with respect to the interests of both capital and labour; at a minimum this requires a commitment to redistributive economic and social policies that perforce imply some relaxation of the government's cautious fiscal approach. This could be the core of a class compromise that could bring about an economic shift similar to that produced in the political transition: a turn away from the current neoliberal policy towards a program much more oriented to the needs of labour and the poor.

NEDLAC's institutionalised role in policy making provides some of the preconditions for a

challenges any notion of ultimate subordination of trade unions and worker acquiescence.

COSATU, too, has been reshaped by the transition process. It has lost layers of leadership to government and the corporate sector. It has had to learn new rules of the game, both in politics and in the market. It has for the first time opened a parliamentary office in Cape Town to lobby government and has begun to learn the diplomacy and power dynamics of dealing with an alliance partner in government. Arguably its biggest challenge is organising new segments of workers: both those now covered by the democratised Labour Relations Act (domestics, public service workers, farm workers), and the new sectors of the working class generated by globalisation (part time, casuals, home and contract workers). Notwithstanding its present numerical and strategic strengths, it might not master these new opportunities, and may in future shrink, facilitating its marginalisation.

Transition is not a cab to be taken at will: it does not stop short of its advocates, who are themselves transformed by political and economic liberalisation. Nor however, is its destination predetermined - least of all by external agents. Civil society formations - we have here analysed trade unions - can hope to shape the character of this transformation through a combination of collective action and institutional engagement which affords them an opportunity to bargain the terms of liberalisation. Unions can use their power to create institutions that provide workers with a collective voice through which they can formulate rules that both constrain capital and the state and promote more egalitarian policies. Clearly these possibilities do not exist in all countries in Africa, but our study suggests that possibilities for forms of bargained liberalisation do not exist only in South Africa.

ENDNOTES

1. This approach was endorsed by the World Bank itself in its landmark 1989 assessment of structural adjustment, *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth.* (World Bank, 1989) For criticisms of its adoption of governance and reconsideration of the role of the state, see Beckman (1990), Ferguson (1995), Harsch (1993), Lemarchand (1992), Mkandawire (1994), and Schmitz (1995).

2. Or as the political scientist Carol Lancaster put it - before joining the new Clinton administration as Deputy Administrator of USAID - "where a democratically elected government proved weak, inept, or corrupt, its replacement by a competent military government could, in the long run, lead to more rapid development and the prospect for a better standard of living for that country's citizens....Where a new military government appears stable and competent, the United States should continue financing ongoing aid projects..." (Quoted in Harsch, 1993:27).

3. In an earlier study, Przeworski gives three reasons why concertation is not feasible in less developed countries: unions represent only a small proportion of workers; they are not strong and centralised enough; and employers are hostile to them while government is ambivalent. (Przeworski, 1991:186).

4. We have argued elsewhere that Przeworski's work fits into this category, (Adler and Webster, 1995) but the same orientation is also present in the work of J. Samuel Valenzuela (1989).

5. This approach is broadly consistent with that taken by a recent comprehensive study of labour and democratisation in Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe by Rueschemeyer et al. (1992). See also a recent working paper by Collier and Mahoney (1995).

6. See Mosley et al. (1991) who identify variables to explain the capacity of states to deviate from World Bank conditionalities. Working from the Bank's own evidence, they find that conditionalities are ignored nearly half the time, and that deviation occurs in a systematic fashion: some states are able to chart a relatively independent path while others are not. Working from a different conceptual framework, but advancing similar conclusions, Martin (1991) assesses IMF conditionality as an outcome of bargaining in which the IMF does not always get its way, and that deviations occur in a systematic fashion. For a summary of different approaches to globalisation, see Murray (1997).

7. An analysis of labour's role in bargained liberalisation is not a substitute for consideration of the other key actors: business, other civil society formations, the state, and their interactions in the context of a particular country's insertion in the international economy. We hope that this more ambitious discussion will be the subject of further phases of this project.

8. According to Bates, who surveyed mineworkers in the late 1960s, "the interests of the local branch officials remain those of the workers....The local leaders simply do not possess the resources necessary to induce the members of the mining community to act contrary to their conception of their interests. The union's structure is ill-suited for downward communications, especially when the viewpoints they wish to transmit are at variance with the interests of the workers." (Bates, 1971:202).

9. Appreciation to Franco Barchiesi who coined the term and to the students in Dr. Adler's 1995 postgraduate seminar on "African Labour Movements: Struggles for Democracy," who helped develop the concept.

10. There have been similar ironic developments elsewhere in Africa. For Nigeria, see Otobo (1992) and Bangura (1991); for Zimbabwe, see Sachikonye (1993) and Wood (1988).

11. Indeed, the Mineworkers Union of Zambia declared that any leader of the MUZ (as the AMWU had been renamed after independence) standing in the local UNIP elections "should either withdraw or resign from leadership positions in the union." The union later dismissed sixteen shopstewards from their positions after they took part in party elections. (Rakner, 1992:101)

12. Aid was restored at a recent meeting of donor nations at the World Bank's offices in Paris, but human rights organisations continue to lobby for donors to pressure Lusaka to cease harassment of opposition figures and parties, the media and NGOs. (*Business Day*, 1997)

13. The World Bank has applauded the ZPA's record as a model for Africa. (World Bank, 1996)

14. These strikes seriously delayed the government's liberalisation plans and contributed to the criticism by foreign donors - especially the IMF and World Bank - that it was not living up to its adjustment commitments. The government's "foot-dragging" - taken as a sign of bad faith by the international community - was rather an indication of labour's ability to frustrate the roll back of the public sector.

15. Impartial assessments have favourably rated the medium-term growth prospects in mining, as reflected in the number of multinationals making serious bids for the state-owned Zambian Consolidated Copper Mines. (Bull, 1996)

16. However, the 1995 Labour Relations Act's provision preventing labour lawyers from representing workers at the new Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration has led to the unintended consequence of a proliferation in small unions. Most of these have been launched by unscrupulous lawyers and labour brokers.

17. Migrants were included under the Act through reforms during the early 1980s, while the latter groups were included only after the transition to democracy in the 1990s.

18. SACTU ultimately disbanded and was absorbed into COSATU when the ANC was unbanned, by which time very few of its personnel remained. (Southall, 1995)

19. By contrast, the SACP remains heavily dependent on financial support from the ANC. An unintended consequence of the new funding formula is that unions have amassed relatively large pools of money drawn from members' subscriptions. These have provided the basis for a controversial innovation: the creation of union investment arms in which excess funds are invested in private enterprises. (Naidoo, 1997)

20. It is difficult to label the emerging unions' economic vision, in part because they never publicly advocated one, due to repressive legislation which made support for socialism a serious statutory offense. However, it is possible to identify their ideas as socialist, with two dominant strands of thought. The first was an "old left," largely associated with the SACP, and looking towards existing socialism for its economic and political models. The second - and more hegemonic in the unions - was broadly "new left" in orientation, associated with university lecturers and graduates active in the new unions, who were influenced by the 1960s shopstewards movement in Britain, and ideas of participatory democracy, including Yugoslavian workers' self-management. Despite differences, both approaches had a vision of a future South Africa in which there would be a fundamental redistribution of wealth and power; workers' would control industry and agriculture, and the economy would be run along planned lines. This vision is captured most clearly in Richard Turner's seminal book 1972, *The Eye of the Needle.*

21. Unions sought recognition agreements from employers to gain access for their organizers to sign up members, and for shopstewards to meet during company hours. They aimed to establish formal wage bargaining, as well as grievance and disciplinary procedures to protect their members' interests. Registration under the Labour Relations Act was viewed as a tactical necessity, offering further protection for the new unions and enabling them to participate in all the institutions of the industrial relations system. For an overview of the debate on registration and its key participants, see Maree (1987).

22. An important symbol of this shift was the disbanding of the United Democratic Front [UDF], the organisation that had sustained hundreds of civil society organisations in the 1980s. Without the UDF these groups lost resources; more importantly they were deprived of the voice in national political affairs the UDF historically provided. Furthermore, the transition created unprecedented opportunities for upward mobility: many activists entered national and regional parliaments and local councils, the state bureaucracy, the corporate sector or withdrew from activism altogether. Though many such individuals continued to make contributions in these new spheres, their departures tended to deprive civil society of left intellectual leadership at the moment when it was most needed.

This trend can also be discerned amongst non-political organisations in civil society, such as NGOs, that faced a fiscal crisis with the withdrawal in foreign funding that accompanied normalisation in South Africa. These dynamics were sharply felt in the alternative media, and led to the closure of alternative newspapers and magazines and publishers. (On the media, see Shand, 1996)

23. The National Manpower Commission was established in the early 1980s as part of the labour reforms initiated by the Wiehahn Commission. It was a tripartite body appointed by the Minister of Labour, with the function of monitoring the new labour system and advising the government on manpower issues. It was immediately boycotted by the emerging unions until the transition to democracy, when they sought - unsuccessfully - to enter and transform it. (Schreiner, 1991)

24. COSATU never conceived of NEDLAC as a narrow corporatist project based on the "Big 3" of labour, capital and the state. For arguments on the need for a multi-partite forum and the dangers of "narrow corporatism," see Bird and Schreiner (1992).

25. This agreement did not win acceptance everywhere; in particular there was strong criticism from within COSATU, most prominently from the Witwatersrand Local, which condemned the consensus as a "miserable compromise." (von Holdt, 1995)

26. The movements from COSATU to local and regional government and to the private sector were more disruptive than the deliberate secondment to the ANC's parliamentary list. According to private assessments within COSATU, these secondments - far from weakening the federation - in fact created space for new leaders to emerge: beyond a small number of capable individuals, the federation was able to divest itself of considerable "dead wood".

27. In addition to any conscious diminution of the ANC as a movement, the transfer of cadre into all levels government and more recently a fiscal crisis necessitating wide-scale retrenchments have seriously weakened whatever grassroots capacity the organisation had been able to develop since its unbanning. As one confidential source suggested, "Shell House is an appropriate name, as the organisation has become a shell."

28. Consisting of COSATU, NACTU, and FEDUSA.

29. However, though labour won the battle over privatisation, it has had great difficulty taking advantage of the opening it created. (Ray, 1997)

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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

THE AFRICAN STUDIES SEMINAR SERIES

Monday the 10th of April 2000, 7th floor Richard Ward Building, room 7003 @ 16:00

The Neglected Role of Labour Relations in the South African Public Service

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INTRODUCTION[1]

As a consequence of South Africa's transition to democracy, public service workers now enjoy trade union and collective bargaining rights for the first time in the country's history. These changes provide public servants with opportunities to bring their conditions of service into line with industrial relations 'best practice' in the private sector, and for black workers in particular, to redress decades of racism, employment insecurity, and low pay.

Yet these reforms occur at a moment of straightened economic circumstances, which constrain possibilities for wage gains and employment growth. Moreover, the public service is undergoing massive restructuring, not only to overcome legacies of racial inequality and authoritarianism, but to transform the state into a more effective agent of development. The problems - under conditions of austerity - of addressing workers' wage demands and concerns for job security while redressing the legacies of apartheid will likely generate considerable conflict between workers and managers as well as between different groups of workers.

These difficulties exist in many areas of the South African economy. But labour-management conflict in the public service is not a narrow industrial relations issue of interest to the parties alone. The public service is, with more than 1,1 million employees, the largest single employer in the country. Through its procurement policies it is the largest single consumer of goods and services. The wages and benefits it provides have a massive impact on effective demand, particularly in provinces where public servants make up a large proportion of total employment. Through its direct expenditure on social services and development, and indirectly through the economic effects described above it is the most important single agent of reconstruction. Finally, for vast numbers of citizens the public service is the provider of last resort: its actions literally determine whether people live or die.

Thus labour relations conflicts in the public service will have crucial and long-lasting consequences for restructuring the state as an institution, and therefore for the government's ability to promote fiscal integrity, economic development, and service delivery. Such conflicts will thus inevitably spill beyond the boundaries of the public service to have an important impact on all citizens. But labour relations are not simply a 'problem' to be avoided at all costs, for example by limiting public servants' right to organise or strike, or by exempting the service from labour relations legislation. If labour-management conflicts point to the existence of a problem, they also hold out the promise of a solution. Negotiated agreements between government and organised labour may provide means for finding constructive solutions to the tangle of difficulties currently confronting the public service.

Public service labour relations is thus an important factor shaping the prospects for development in South Africa, and with it the fate of democratisation itself. But the possibility of developing modern labour relations practices in the public service, given its legacies of racially based paternalism and authoritarianism, and given fiscal constraints is a tall order. These practices do not emerge automatically as a consequence of the legislative inclusion of the public service in the Labour Relations Act and the extension of substantive and procedural rights to the sector. In the private sector these rights evolved over decades of

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[1] This is the introduction to a new collection, *Public Service Labour Relations in a Democratic South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, in press), edited by the author. The book is the product of a collaborative research project sponsored by the National Labour and Economic Development Institute. Thanks are due to Barbara Adair and Jeremy Baskin for detailed comments on an earlier version.

intense conflict, and remain imperfect, unevenly applied, and subject to reversals. It is difficult to imagine that the growth of labour relations in the public service will be any less fraught. However, if public service labour relations go wrong, the consequences could be profound for all South Africans. Thus the public service will be perhaps the single most important labour relations arena in the future.

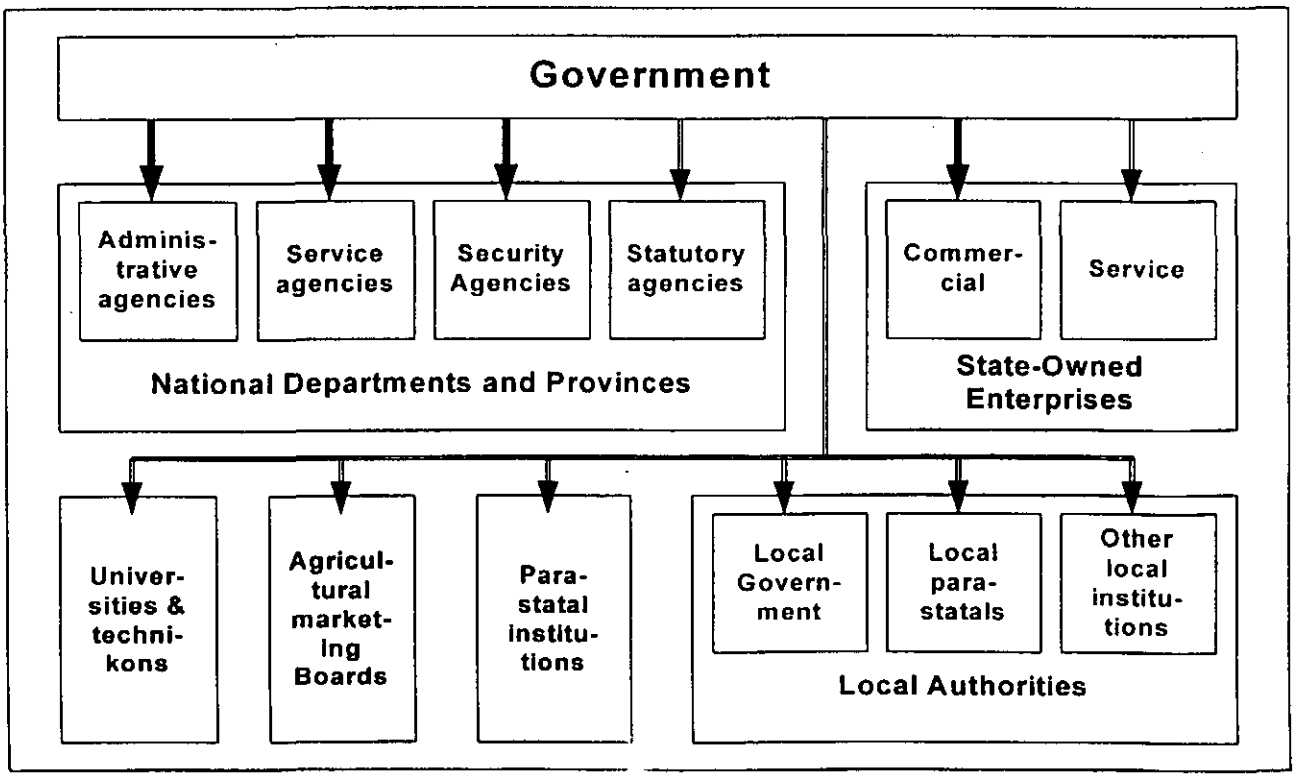
Yet the subject is almost entirely unresearched in this country. Much of the existing published material is descriptive and technical, oriented towards training officials in the rules and procedures of the public service itself. While such texts have their role, they are insufficient for preparing unionists, public servants, students and academics to confront the key issues in a public service undergoing transformation. The chapters in this collection are a first attempt to come to grips with this difficult but fascinating area of investigation.

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC SERVICE?

The public service is part of the broader *public sector*, and though the terms are often used interchangeably, they may refer to very different things. As this book focuses on the *public service*, it is important at the outset to define the term.

The public sector refers to all institutions public control where direct or indirect political control is exercised through appropriate legislation. In this light, the public sector includes a wide range of components: national and provincial departments, state-owned enterprises, and local authorities. These differ in terms of political control, relationship to the national budget, the method of wage determination, employment numbers and conditions, and the form of regulation and ownership. (See Figure 1.1)

Figure 1.1: The South African Public Sector

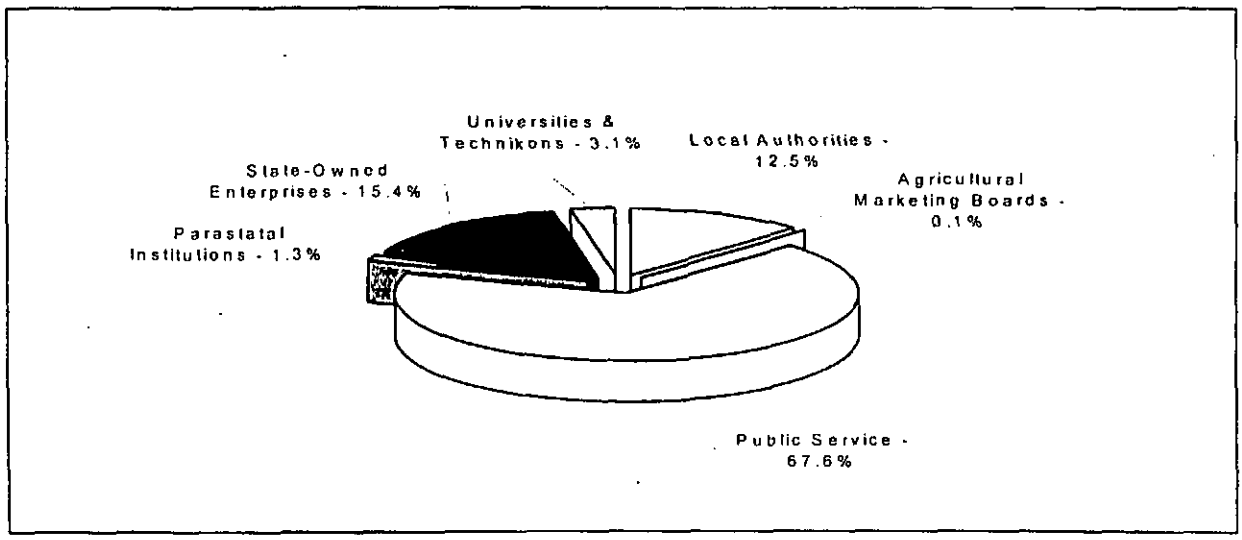


Public sectors vary greatly in scope and organisation between countries, depending on their own historical experience, politics, and needs. Moreover, in the last two decades the very nature of the public sector has undergone change under the influence of new market-based ideologies of governance and in the face of political shifts that have favoured right-of-centre political coalitions. As Waghorne points out in his chapter in this collection, there are no fixed definitions of either the public sector or - more narrowly - the public service that apply everywhere and for all time.

In South Africa the public sector as a whole employed nearly 2 million workers in 1996. (CSS, 1997) It included:

- the public service, defined as national and provincial departments, which was the single largest component of the public sector, accounting for more than two-thirds of all employment;
- state-owned enterprises, such as Transnet and Telkom, which accounted for another 15% of employment;
- local authorities, including city councils, municipalities, town councils, and the former regional services councils, which together employed approximately 13% of all public sector workers;
- and other components, including universities and technikons, marketing boards, and associated institutions which accounted for less than 5% of total public sector employment. (See Figure 1.2)

Figure 1.2: Public sector employment, December 1996



This book examines only the first and largest of these four components: national and provincial state departments. The emphasis means that some important dynamics in other areas of the public sector are ignored, such as privatisation of state-owned enterprises, local government restructuring, or the transformation of tertiary education. On the other hand, the narrower definition brings a number of advantages. By treating the public service as a single 'industry' (albeit one divided into different sub-sectors) covered by common legislation, the

discussion is focused on relations between a single 'employer' and a limited range of unions. Both the employer and the unions bargain in the same institution: the Public Service Bargaining Council was established in 1993 and reorganised in 1997 as the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC). The approach not only simplifies discussion of a complex subject, but allows for clear comparisons and for somewhat stronger generalisations to be drawn.[2]

Prior to 1994 the South African public service was complicated by the division of the country into 15 distinct administrations serving 11 different 'governments' which included the 10 apartheid-era 'independent states' and 'self-governing territories.'[3] The 1993 Interim Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which came into effect following the first democratic elections in April 1994, eliminated these apartheid-era creations. It established a single public service for the country as a whole composed of a central administration and the administrations of the nine newly created provincial governments.

As can be seen from Figure 1.2, the public service is the single largest component of the public sector. It includes national departments, provinces, and statutory agencies. It also covers educators employed in terms of the National Policy for General Education Affairs Act, 1984; personnel employed under the Correctional Services Act, 1959; and police personnel employed under the South African Police Service Act, 1995. The public service also includes the South African National Defence Force, the National Intelligence Agency, and the South African Secret Service.

In 1996 total employment in the public service was nearly 1,3 million, though this had fallen to slightly more than 1,1 million by the end of 1998. (For a detailed breakdown of public service employment see Baskin, Chapter 7) The vast majority of these workers were employed in the service delivery and security agencies.

Since April 1994, greater clarity has emerged on the division of powers and functions between national government and provincial government and this has affected the location of public service workers. As both the interim and final constitutions defined many service delivery functions - such as education and health - as provincial competencies, the majority of public service workers are in fact employed in the nine provinces.

LABOUR RELATIONS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE

In focusing on labour relations this collection examines the range of interactions between the employer and organised workers in the public service. In the main these interactions focus on

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[2] Our choice should not suggest any privileging of the role of the public service within the broad public sector; it is rather a practical choice defined by a series of research imperatives. Given the general shortage of reliable analysis of the public sector as a whole, we felt it wise to cover somewhat less ground, but to do so in greater depth. We hope that the completion of systematic studies of state-owned enterprises and local government will someday allow for a comprehensive assessment of the public sector in its entirety.

[3] These included the central administration of the Republic of South Africa and the four provincial administrations of the Transvaal, Orange Free State, Natal, and the Cape Province; the administrations of the 'self-governing territories' of QwaQwa, KwaZulu, Gazankulu, Lebowa, Kwandebele, and KaNgwane; and the administrations of the 'independent states' of Transkei, Bophuthatwana, Venda, and Ciskei, commonly known as the TBVC states.

remuneration (wage and non-wage) and conditions of service (including job grading and training, discipline, dispute resolution, affirmative action). However in both practice and law this relationship extends to a number of issues well beyond the employment relationship, including involvement in policy making in areas such as public service transformation.

For most of the twentieth century the public service was one of the most inhospitable sectors for worker organisation. The public service as a whole was excluded from the ambit of the Labour Relations Act (LRA), a condition that undermined collective action by all public servants, white or black. The very notion of 'labour relations' scarcely applied: no public servants, white or black, enjoyed the right to join a registered trade union and bargain collectively with the employer. They did not enjoy the right to strike, nor were they covered by mutually accepted procedures for discipline, retrenchment or grievances. Instead white public servants benefited from the range of discriminatory practices that served all white workers: citizenship rights, job-reservation, and social welfare. Moreover they were enmeshed in a deeply paternalistic system founded on patronage within Afrikaner nationalism. By contrast, black public servants faced the barrage of restrictions confronted by all black workers: the denial of basic citizenship rights, exclusion from the industrial relations legislation, repression by the security forces, employer hostility. In addition until the 1970s they were largely excluded from the racialised patronage networks within the state, except in the black homelands. While the wave of unionisation that washed over South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s swept away much of the employer unilateralism that characterised the workplace in the private sector, the public service remained an island where the employer's power reigned supreme.

Since 1912 the Public Service Commission administered all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including the determination of wages and conditions of service, discipline, and grievance handling. (See Macun and Psoulis, Chapter 4, in this collection) It unilaterally determined the nature of work through the determination of a Public Administration Standard (PAS) for each occupation, and developed a welter of regulations and legislation governing employment. No issue was too large or too small to be determined by the centralised PSC.

White permanent civil servants (almost exclusively male) gained a measure of collective representation with the establishment of the Public Servants Association (PSA). But in line with the apolitical and professional public service ethos instilled by the British colonial model of administration, this was a restrained body that played a limited consultative role in the Public Service Joint Advisory Council. On the rare occasions when the PSA pursued an issue of importance to its members it could be ignored by the PSC.

Yet the PSA's constituents did not lack reasons for complaint. As Posel argues in her chapter in this collection, white public servants were continually frustrated by the PSC's below-inflation rate wage increases, sanctioning of unfair dismissals, and deaf ear to employee's grievances. Curiously the PSC's arrogance never provoked the PSA to take collective action, and for Posel, the explanation is bound up with the system of patronage created by the NP..

Labour relations under apartheid

The NP politicised the PSC in efforts to remake the public service into an instrument for realising its apartheid policy, neatly reversing the long-standing demands for public service neutrality it expressed while in opposition before 1948. Instead the NP treated the public

service as a vast pool of patronage for party loyalists, even if this meant appointing incompetent whites unable to find employment elsewhere in the expanding post-war economy.

In restructuring the state to pursue apartheid policies the public service was itself remade in apartheid's image. Not only did this entail the notorious creation of separate administrations for the TBVC states and self-governing territories, but it also led to a flurry of regulations to entrench the position of whites within the public service. These provisions contributed to duplication of work, the proliferation of occupational classes, a bewildering array of bonuses and allowances, and a massive wage gap marked by high levels of inequality on the basis of race and gender.

The legacies of this political approach continue to structure employment relations in the public service as these very regulations were preserved during the transition. The legislative drafters of the LRA – largely ignorant of conditions in the public service – relied on the advice of senior bureaucrats who secured the conversion of all existing public service regulations into collective agreements. As a result, the same officials who had written these regulations to promote their own interests – such as favourable voluntary severance packages, extensive non-wage benefits, and generous leave provisions - ensured that these would be virtually enshrined in the new order.

If NP hegemony created infinite ways to deliver benefits to Afrikaners, it also bound public servants in a subordinate position to the party and state elite. Most civil servants could not easily find work in the private sector, and were equally vulnerable should the impediments to recruitment of black public servants posed by job reservation be relaxed. As Posel argues, they knew 'that they depended on the party for their jobs, which could be revoked just as easily as they were supplied. The pressure for conformism and compliance were thus enormous.' These tendencies are clearly revealed Garson's and Marks' chapters in this collection, which describe the authoritarian culture common in schools and the police. In both cases promotion - if not survival - depended on fulfilling the commands of one's superiors.

Public service labour relations, according to Posel, were characterised by an increasing gap between the formal rationality of the bureaucratic PSC and the NP's party political project. Nor was the NP keen to resolve this tension. As PW Botha's 'total strategy' gathered momentum from the late 1970s the NP could use patronage to maintain loyalty while simultaneously deploying a public service discourse to discipline avowedly right-wing civil servants bent on undermining reforms.

In this context the NP had little interest in pursuing the Wiehahn Commission's recommendation to extend labour rights to public servants. In the face of the historic upsurge in union organisation in the private sector during the 1980s the PSC ignored the Commission's advice and chose instead to extend the PSA's 'diffident and polite' 'non-adversarial' (in Posel's words) model to other public servants on a racial basis. Thus the 1980s witnessed the launch of a number of relatively toothless staff associations defined by race, occupation and geographic location.

The apartheid public service under pressure

The decline of paternalistic unitarism in the public service occurred in tandem with the transition to democracy. In the second half of the 1980s the new union movement began at

last to make inroads into the public service. Union advances led by affiliates of the Congress of South African Trade Unions came first in those state departments most implicated in the state-society conflicts beginning in 1984. As state institutions became targets of township protest, increasing popular pressure came to bear on the black public servants responsible for services in black areas: teachers, police and soldiers, health workers. These workers had their own complaints accumulated as a consequence of years of discriminatory policies produced by the PSC. Now many were being asked by mass movement organisations to take sides in the growing civil conflict, for example by observing stay-away calls or embarking directly on industrial action, as in the 'chalk down' protests by teachers or the rolling mutinies by soldiers in 1989. (See Garson, Chapter 9 and Marks, Chapter 10)

In these actions, black public servants' material grievances - apartheid on the job - merged with their own and their communities' wider discontent with NP rule. As elsewhere in the economy this yielded an explosive combination that produced militant social movement unionism. The budding unions in the public service were from the outset highly politicised, in the first instance because they were the only formations in the labour movement that faced the apartheid state both as oppressor and as employer. Where in the past this combination put black public servants in a highly vulnerable position and retarded union development, under conditions of mass mobilisation and widespread conflict with the state it transformed the public service into perhaps the most volatile labour sector in the country. With the growth of the mass democratic movement during the emergency and in the defiance campaign after 1988 it became difficult for the state to pursue any strategy of unilateral reform from above: labour protest had transformed the state itself into an unreliable instrument of NP rule.

Such volatility was heightened - not diminished - by the unbanning of political organisations in 1990 and the onset of negotiations over South Africa's constitutional future. Ordinary labour repression was made virtually impossible once the NP had committed itself to a negotiated transition and free political activity was restored. The signing of the Laboria Minute in 1990 between the government, COSATU, the National Council of Trade Unions and the South African Consultative Committee on Labour Affairs (a representative business body on labour relations issues) committed all parties to fundamental revision of labour law which included the long-delayed recognition of public servants' labour rights within a single Labour Relations Act.

COSATU's efforts to establish a union beachhead in the public service date from 1987, with the founding of the National Education Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU). However these organising efforts bore little fruit until 1990. In education the federation played a central role in drawing together the disparate staff associations and more radical teachers' organisations that formed in opposition to the official bodies. The South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) was launched in 1990, uniting teachers across the disparate provincial and racial education authorities. In 1989 and 1990 police and correctional services officers staged a number of dramatic strikes, workplace occupations, and protest marches, and launched the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU), which though it began as an independent union joined COSATU in 1994. (See Garson, Chapter 9 and Marks, Chapter 10)

These three unions were largely responsible for the biggest strike wave in the history of the public service between 1989 and 1993. As Macun and Psoulis write in their chapter in this collection, many of those who participated were not union members at the time, but joined after taking part in the strikes. The issues motivating the strikers were in nearly all cases the

same: wages, union recognition, solidarity with dismissed or harassed workers, and discriminatory treatment. There were few strikes in the civil service, still the preserve of the PSA and the other old-guard staff associations, and weakly organised by the COSATU affiliates. But civil servants did take action in the homelands, whose own repressive labour laws became a major target.

These strikes finally yielded a new labour relations dispensation, which saw core labour rights extended for the first time to public servants as a whole, with separate dispensations for educators and police personnel.[4] The legislation allowed for recognition of public service unions and collective bargaining, created dispute resolution procedures, and established a bargaining council for the public service with separate councils for teachers and police. (See Patel, chapter 6 and the chapters by Garson and Marks)

The new public service unions demonstrated considerable militance stemming from their double protest against apartheid and against the apartheid state as employer. During the transition his led to a second dual role: using their industrial muscle to block unilateral state restructuring (which would be deleterious to their members and would hamstring a future African National Congress government) and to push for transformation of the public service. In the context of the transition these interlinked imperatives made the new public service unions into the affiliates closest to the ANC.

Under these circumstances the new public service unions grew extremely rapidly after 1990. However after 1994 these conditions would also produce a strange inversion. Under successive ANC-led governments the politicised unions would find themselves under pressure to conform to the policy orientations of their political ally. At the same time, the old staff associations would transform themselves from the 'diffident and polite' organisations of the apartheid era into more effective representatives of their members' interests.

LABOUR RELATIONS IN A NEW DEMOCRACY

Power changed hands in April 1994 to the ANC-dominated Government of National Unity. However, daunting obstacles stood in the way of developing a public service, in the words of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), 'capable of and committed to the implementation of the policies of the government and the delivery of basic goods and services to the people of the country.'[5] (ANC, 1994:126)

These obstacles posed problems for the government and the unions alike, notwithstanding that in the few years since public service workers won labour rights they registered their greatest gains ever. However these advances occurred in an increasingly contradictory context, in which the fruits of democratisation for workers (improvements in wages and conditions of service, job security, bargaining power, involvement in decision-making) would increasingly run up against competing imperatives of boosting expenditure on services, transforming the state itself, and maintaining fiscal discipline. These tensions were

[4] Public Service Labour Relations Act, 1993; the Education Labour Relations Act, 1993; and the South African Police Service Labour Relations Regulations, 1993.

[5] The Government of National Unity came into existence following the elections and was comprised of the ANC, the NP and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).

temporarily contained with the adoption of a landmark three-year collective agreement in early 1996, but intensified with government's adoption of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution program (GEAR) in 1996. With the expiry of the agreement in 1999 the contradictions erupted into the first major conflict in the public service since the early 1990s.

Transformation

Given that its reason for existence was the promotion of apartheid, in both its culture and in its very institutions the public service was ill-suited to serving the development needs of the majority of the population. The NP's political projects shaped who was hired and promoted, where they were deployed and the character of their jobs. Most notably, the public service inherited by the ANC was strongly structured by a racial and gender division of labour resulting from decades of preferential hiring of white male Afrikaners. The priority given to party-political appointments meant that many public servants at all levels were hired for their loyalty rather than their ability to perform their jobs.

Moreover, the apartheid project shaped the very institutional integument of the public service. It was characterised by an uneven racial/geographic distribution of its services, the racial duplication of entire - incompatible and financially wasteful - administrative systems, and the preponderant power of the coercive institutions of the national security state.

Finally, the PSC's centralised rule-making power not only meant that modern labour relations practices were non-existent, but also made the public service highly inflexible. Ordinary workers were of course subject to its authority in the determination of wages and conditions of employment, but so, too, were senior public servants. Under PSC-rule senior officials were not managers in the conventional sense of the term: decision-makers with responsibility for the outcomes of their choices. Instead they were reduced to the status of administrators carrying out functions defined by the PSC within fixed regulations over which they had little influence. At both the top and the bottom of the public service hierarchy initiative, innovation, responsibility (and, therefore, accountability) were largely absent.

Given these legacies, transformation was as much about destruction as creation: not simply grafting new institutions and practices onto the old, but an ambitious program to change the public service's purpose, structure, and personnel composition. As a result, it was quintessentially a labour relations matter as the remaking of the public service simultaneously meant the reconstruction of workers' jobs, their relations with other employees, with their superiors and with the public they were expected to serve. From this point of view transformation entailed overcoming racial and gender imbalances; a commitment to education and training to develop public servants' skills, eliminating discrimination in salaries and benefits, and changing the public service's authoritarian culture and outmoded work practices.

Under the terms of the new LRA and in the common understanding of both government and labour, these changes were to be brought about through new *processes* of labour relations. On the one side these involved allowing workers' to organise and bargain freely with managers; on the other it required a change in the nature of authority, breaking the centralised power of the PSC and transforming administrators *into* managers endowed with decision-making power and responsibility. In short it entailed replacing the paternalistic model that had grown under apartheid with a system of labour-management bargaining that had developed in the private sector since the 1970s.

Given the enormity of transformation it is remarkable, looking back on the mid-1990s, that little explicit attention has been paid to its deeply contradictory character.[6] It was occurring in a politically sensitive milieu defined by 'sunset clauses' negotiated in the transition talks which made it difficult to replace the senior old-regime personnel who were transformation's very targets.[7] It was expensive: the enormity of redirecting public services to those who were once systematically denied such benefits entailed infrastructural and personnel expenditure of monumental proportions. Even assuming the goodwill of all parties and sufficient finances, these were - and remain - enormously complicated technical tasks: misguided policy and outright mistakes would be expected, and would inevitably cause delays. Transformation was rendered all the more difficult as service provision was to be maintained even as the instrument of delivery was undergoing change.

Finally, transformation generates its own conflicts, not only between employer and employees, or between old and new or white and black public servants, but within and between these categories as well. Transformation creates new winners and losers, and spawns new collectivities and alliances as well as new adversarial relations. These will not always coincide with the cleavages inherited from the apartheid public service, and will likely cut across established patron-client relationships. Indeed, in some cases they may create new ones. Given these difficulties associated with transformation, it is remarkable that it has not provoked either widespread breakdown or all-out civil war within the public service.

A strong case could be made that peace was maintained as a result of labour relations, which yielded improvements in wages and conditions of service, job security, and a relatively strike-free environment for most of the life of the Government of National Unity. However the means used to avoid war will not be readily available to the parties in the future.

Democratisation: Worker rights and collective bargaining

The Public Service Labour Relations Act (PSLRA) came into operation in August 1993 followed by enabling legislation in the education and police services sectors. These separate pieces of legislation were promulgated despite the agreement in the Laboria Minute to include the public service within the general labour relations dispensation. In part the legislation emerged from an immediate industrial crisis in the public service, which could not be systematically addressed outside of an appropriate legislative framework Yet the LRA itself was scheduled for fundamental renegotiation immediately following the installation of a new government. The PSLRA was thus an interim measure to create, virtually from scratch, appropriate bargaining structures and powers, as well as agreements about which issues would be bargained where, and appropriate representation from the employer and workers.

The Public Service Bargaining Council (PSBC) was established under the PSLRA and covered workers employed under the Public Service Act, excluding educators. According to

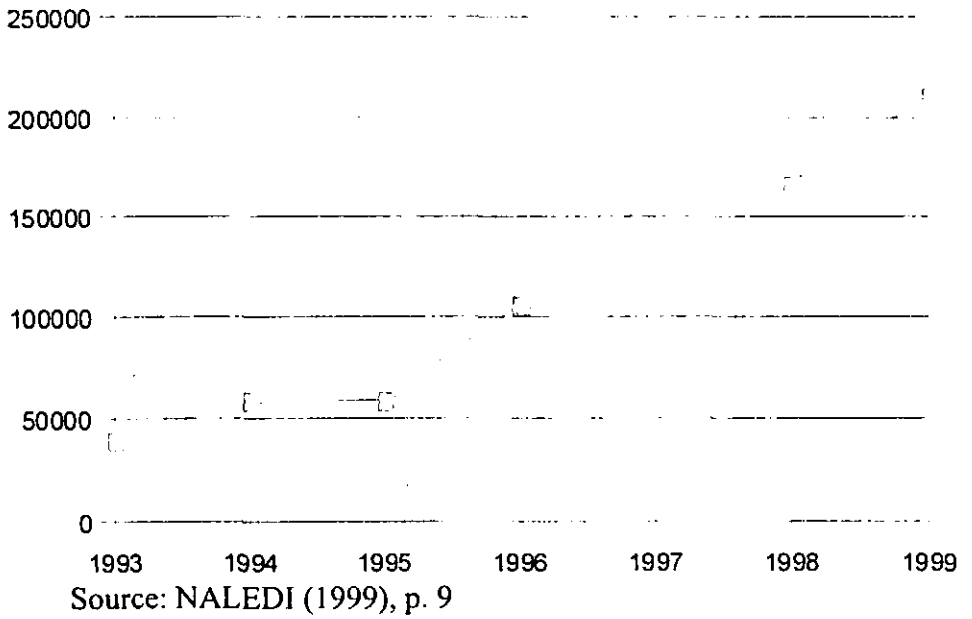
[6] Though the Presidential Review Commission on the public service acknowledges the existence of 'trade-offs' between transformation priorities, it does not begin to suggest what these should be, nor how they should be determined. (PRC, 1998: 2.1.4) Yet this acknowledgement is an important step forward over the earlier White Paper on transformation (DPSA, 1995), which did not even identify the problem.

[7] The ANC's concession on 'sunset clauses' granted a measure of job security to public servants from the old order.

Patel, both employer and employee representatives were weak and divided. The PSC - which had previously administered the public service unilaterally - was unable to adjust to the exigencies of bargaining, while its negotiators lacked basic labour relations skills. Employee representatives were similarly inexperienced and divided into two blocks, one composed of old-guard staff associations, the other of progressive unions led by NEHAWU. These problems entrenched adversarialism in the PSBC. Agreement on a settlement for 1993/94 was interrupted by the F.W. de Klerk government's unilateral implementation of an across-the-board (and below inflation) 5% increase. Nonetheless, a number of agreements were struck, including a wage settlement for 1994/1995.

Union membership increased rapidly, and in June 1999 stood at 981 816 out of 1 016 440 employees, giving an extraordinary union density figure of more than 96%.[8] (PSCBC, 1999) SADTU provides a good example of the rapid growth: its membership increased from 40 000 in 1993 to more than 210 000 in 1999, an increase of better than 420%. (See Figure 1.3 below; for complete union membership figures see Macun and Psoulis, Chapter 4)

Figure 1.3: SADTU membership, 1993-1999



Source: NALEDI (1999), p. 9

Though union density and growth rates are impressive, these do not provide an accurate index of union strength. Given the much more permissive labour law environment after 1994 and the relatively union-friendly orientation of government it would have been surprising if unions *did not* flourish. Their achievement is not, in this respect, exactly comparable to the organising gains registered by many private sector unions in the labour-repressive context of the 1980s.

[8] The PSCBC excludes from its coverage members of the South African National Defence Force, the National Intelligence Agency and the Secret Service. However, a recent Constitutional Court decision granted members of the SANDF the right to join a trade union, though the court was silent on the extent of rights soldiers would enjoy. (Constitutional Court, 1999)

Nor does density indicate the unions' degree of organisation. By contrast, in the 1970s and 1980s many private sector unions grew comparatively slowly, but on a factory-by-factory basis where they laid down strong shop floor organisation. Their emphasis on democratically elected shop-steward structures not only gave these unions a deep pool of leadership, but provided unions with the capacity to respond to members' needs and the ability to embark on disciplined action in pursuit of their interests. (Friedman, 1987; Adler and Webster, 1995) For the most part unions in the public service have not grown in this fashion, and workplace and intermediate-level organisation is generally weak. This is certainly the case among the old staff associations, which never professed to operate as representative trade unions, but also remains true of COSATU affiliates, despite their federation's long-standing commitment to shop steward organisation and leadership.

As Marks reveals in Chapter 10 on labour relations in the police service, neither the South African Police Union (SAPU) nor POPCRU have effectively translated into practice their in-principle commitment to developing shop steward structures. Effective organisation at shop floor and intermediate levels remains elusive and is not encouraged by the still highly centralised character of both public service bargaining and administration. The unions' capacity problems at these levels may compromise their ability to bargain in newly created provincial bargaining councils, and their ability to interact with management at all levels.

Finally, membership does not imply organisational loyalty. There is a marked tendency towards multiple union membership - where workers join one union to obtain benefits and another for political reasons - informally estimated at 80,000 or close to 10% of the total membership in the public service. This phenomenon has been relatively unknown in the private sector, where for black workers in particular union membership historically entailed a risky act of identifying with the unions' goals. 'Agency shop' provisions further dilute the meaning of union membership. Unions now receive 'agency' fees from public servants who are not members, but who nonetheless benefit from many of the collective agreements negotiated in the PSCBC. High agency shop fees induce workers to join a trade union, whether or not they identify with its goals.

Taken together, these factors suggest that high union density in the public service does not mean that the organisations possess effective power in their interactions with the employer. Their priority will need to shift to converting their massive numbers into organisational strength, especially as there is no room for further growth except through mergers or by poaching from other organisations. Those who fail to convert quantity of membership into quality of organisation may well find themselves on the defensive against management and the victims of their more successful rivals' poaching efforts.

The three-year agreement

In the 1994 bargaining round in the PSBC unions collectively put forward a set of demands that combined the old-guard staff associations' interest in a high overall increase and the progressive unions' interest for uplifting those at the bottom. The position called for a R1 500 minimum monthly salary and an across-the-board 15% increase. The unions expected that these demands would be met, given their membership growth, a new labour relations dispensation and the perception that the new government would be amenable to improving public servants' conditions of service.

Government rejected the proposal, and offered slightly more than a R1 000 per month minimum wage, with a freeze on salaries at the high end. The offer was rejected by all the unions, many of whom threatened to walk out of the talks. Government then offered a variable increase, starting at 20% for employees in the lowest grade, falling to 5% at the top, but the PSBC nonetheless deadlocked. The impasse was broken through high-level political intervention by then-deputy presidents Thabo Mbeki and F.W. de Klerk, and a wage agreement was reached only after commitments were made to create task teams to conduct a comprehensive investigation of the public service salary structure. The investigation was not completed in time for the 1995 round of negotiations, but the process was accelerated by a wave of wage strikes in the private sector and a particularly fierce wildcat strike among unorganised public service nurses.

The disparate positions of unions and government were eventually consolidated in a three-year agreement which not only went beyond the unions' original 1994 demand, but awarded the largest wage increase in the history of the public service, if not of the country as a whole. According to Baskin, (Chapter 7) the three-year agreement made a significant improvement in the minimum wage rate, which increased from R13 200 to R17 100 per year. The largest increase went to the lowest paid: Grade 1 workers received a healthy 29,5% increase, Grades 2-6 all obtained increases higher than 35%. (Jacklin and Machin, 1998: 14) No employee received an increase of less than 7,5%.

These increases - as large as they appeared - were made even more substantial by changes to the 'rank and leg' system of promotion. Where these promotions normally occur on an individual basis every two or three years, in 1996 all employees on Grade 1 were automatically advanced to Grade 2, whether or not they qualified on the basis of a performance review.

Plans for further increases in 1997 and 1998 were not realised, given problems in financing the agreement (see below). Still, in both of those years public servants received average increases at or above the rate of inflation, though improvements for those in the bottom grades were considerably higher, while senior managers' salaries were frozen.

As a consequence the agreement made major inroads into the public service wage gap. This legacy of the apartheid public service was reduced from 64:1 in 1989 to 25:1 in 1995 (after the first negotiations between the unions and the new government), then to 17:1 after the first year of the three-year agreement, and finally to 15:1 in 1998. (See Bhorat, 1997 and Patel's chapter on collective bargaining in this collection) Closing the wage gap through an improvement in conditions of the lowest-paid was one of the COSATU unions' core demands, and reversed the long-standing emphasis in the PSC to reward those at the top at the expense of the mass of black unskilled workers.[9] The three-year agreement also sought to simplify and extend the range of non-wage benefits available to public service workers. For example, women were ineligible for the public service housing subsidy, while many General Assistants (and other categories, including some teachers) did not receive pensions and 13th checks as they were considered casuals. (See Baskin, Chapter 7)

The hallmark of the three-year agreement was the link between wage improvements and

[9] For example, De Klerk's above-mentioned unilateral 1993 5% wage implementation included a 20% increase for senior managers.

broader restructuring and transformation of the public service. (See Patel, Chapter 6 and Baskin, Chapter 7) Improved conditions for those at the bottom were a key element of this vision, as were a reduction in the unwieldy occupational structure to 16 grades, reducing wage differences between grades, introduction of a new skills-based grading system, and a measure of job security through a moratorium on employer-initiated retrenchments. The new grading system aimed at overcoming the existing complex and arbitrary occupational hierarchy, which had been shaped by imperatives of maintaining the racial and gender hierarchy of the public service, rather than by an objective evaluation of job content or workers' skills. It was meant not only to break the apartheid division of labour, but to provide workers with career paths that could deliver advancement and further real improvements while developing the skills base of the public service.

The agreement's increases were to be financed through 'right-sizing' the public service. According to Baskin, the parties agreed in principle to 'right-sizing': that 'the size of the public service be related to "available financial resources",' though the meaning of right-sizing remains contested. For government this meant reducing the public service wage bill as a proportion of public consumption expenditure, while the unions stressed that employment levels must be determined by service delivery requirements. In the context of a moratorium on retrenchments 'right-sizing' was to be achieved through a management plan and a skills audit to provide an accurate account of existing employment and skills levels and a link between these and service requirements. In addition, the agreement emphasised freezing or abolishing vacancies, a program of voluntary severance packages (VSPs), attrition, and in the last instance, retrenchment of 'supernumerary' officials, though only after all possibilities for 'redeployment' had been exhausted. Finally, the parties agreed to restructure pension benefits, both to make early retirement more attractive to long-serving public employees, and to achieve savings through a reduction in the state's contribution from 18% to 15%.

The high-water mark of worker participation

Not only did the post-1994 public service rapidly develop the familiar institutions of pluralist bargaining, but both unions and government alike shared a commitment to developing deeper forms of worker involvement in decision-making. (See Patel, Chapter 8) The workplace forum provisions in Chapter 5 of the new LRA stimulated important debates in South Africa on the merits of co-determination: the development of forms of consultation and joint decision-making between management and employees. However, Chapter 5 was not the stimulus for the extension of worker participation in decision-making; indeed, the public service was in fact exempted from the relevant sections of the new act.

To a significant degree the interest in public service co-determination was impelled by temporary institutions and practices developed during the transition. Progressive unions made a concerted effort to check the unilateral prerogatives of the apartheid state by promoting the creation of broad transformation forums in public institutions in which a measure of power would be shared out among stakeholders. Many of these innovations survived the transition and provided models for new forms of public governance which were prominently featured in the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service. (DPSA, 1995) The White Paper envisioned worker representatives becoming directly involved in fundamental policy formulation as well as in implementation and monitoring at the enterprise level.

At many levels prospects for worker involvement in decision-making were far greater in the public service than elsewhere. Central bargaining in the PSCBC not only gives unions a

Voluntary Severance Packages

VSPs were perhaps the most glaring failure. They were meant to cut public service employment levels while freeing up funds to pay for the wage and non-wage increases. They did nothing of the kind. According to the Presidential Review Commission, very few posts vacated by VSPs were in fact abolished; most were filled by new appointees. In some cases the very same public servant who received the VSP returned through the 'back door' as a consultant, though this practice violated the severance terms. As a result, 'although the long-term savings ... are ... likely to be much smaller than predicted, the short-term costs have been much higher ...' (PRC, 1998, 3.2.4.2)

The VSPs shed neither 'dead wood' nor undesirable 'old guard' employees, but rather provided a lucrative escape for public servants with marketable skills. These departures were felt particularly sharply in health and education. Crucially, the VSPs did not yield anywhere close to the kinds of savings that were expected. As such savings were to be a source for funding the general wage increases granted in 1996 and projected for 1997 and 1998, the failure of VSPs put intense pressure on the fiscal sustainability of the entire agreement.

The retrenchment moratorium

The VSPs are not the only examples of unintended consequences issuing from the three-year agreement. A similar fate befell the moratorium on retrenchments, seemingly a major union victory. According to Baskin (Chapter 7), the moratorium did not prevent the loss of nearly 170 000 jobs or more than 13% of the workforce as public service employment fell from 1,25 million in 1996 to less than 1,1 million at the end of 1998. Ironically the cuts fell most heavily on the constituencies organised by the COSATU unions that fought most vigorously for the moratorium. They were heaviest at the bottom grades, NEHAWU's membership, though there was also an 8,5% decline in the police. These changes - along with the rehiring necessary to fill vacancies opened by VSPs - had a dramatic effect on the skills profile of the public service. The total number of jobs in the lowest grades (1 to 5) declined by over 19% while those in the middle category (6 to 9) increased by over 7%.

As the decline in police numbers shows, the cuts did not follow delivery or development priorities. Instead they appear to have been motivated by managers' desires to defend their budgets by cutting back on the unskilled beneficiaries of the wage increases and extension and equalisation of benefits. However, employment growth in the relatively expensive middle-range categories put upward pressure on the wage bill and offset any savings from the job losses at the bottom. Declining employment delivered neither cost savings nor a closer fit between policy priorities and personnel. It was the worst of both worlds for both unions and government: neither good 'right-sizing' nor cost-saving 'downsizing'.

Financing the agreement: Lack of alignment between the budget and bargaining

Given these developments, it is not surprising that the fiscal basis for the 1996 increases quickly eroded. Total personnel costs as a percentage of the budget (excluding interest expenditure) increased from 46,6% in fiscal year 1995/96 to an estimated 50,6% in fiscal year 1999/00. The situation was worse in the provinces, where personnel spending rose from 53% of provincial budgets in fiscal year 1995/96 to more than 59% in fiscal year 1998/99. It is this rapid increase in recurrent expenditure that provoked government demands for a

powerful platform, but the scope of issues bargained extends beyond conventional distributive issues. According to Patel (Chapter 8) many unionists believe they have the ability to raise a wide range of issues in central bargaining and through transformation structures at the institutional level, and hence have little need for the comparatively modest powers available in Chapter 5 of the LRA. Moreover sectoral bargaining councils in education and the police allow for consideration of broader policy questions in those areas.

Given the improvements in wages and conditions of service, involvement in policy-making and implementation, and the moratorium on retrenchments, it is not surprising that the public service was one of the least conflictual sectors in the country from 1994 to mid-1999. (Andrew Levy and Associates, various) Where the public service had been perhaps the most strike-prone sector in the years 1989 - 1993, with health workers, police, and teachers embarking on lengthy strikes, from 1994 this changed dramatically. Except for a prominent wildcat strike by nurses, largely in Gauteng and the Eastern Cape, there were no major strikes in the public service during this period, and comparatively few person-days were lost due to strikes.[10]

The nurses' strike ironically demonstrated the efficacy of public service labour relations. Their actions were prompted by pent-up frustrations over wages and working conditions, especially the increased workload caused by the extension of free health services in 1994. Moreover, public service nurses were unable to express these demands due to the absence of an effective nurses' union.[11] Far from a repudiation of the emerging labour relations dispensation in the public service, the strikes were an unfortunately clumsy effort by one occupational group to find a way of processing their demands *through* the system. In the aftermath of the strike most nurses did join unions, and participated in subsequent bargaining rounds in the PSCBC. There has been no repeat of the 1995 wildcat strike.[12]

Assessing the three-year agreement: Quick fixes, deferred problems

If the three-year agreement contributed to labour peace, it was unable to produce the conditions for sustainable transformation. Each of its key elements came undone.

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[10] This does not imply that no time was lost due to protest actions, demonstrations and stoppages, as opposed to formal strikes. For example, SADTU used these quite effectively in their winter 1998 resistance to the Department of Education's plans to terminate the contracts of temporary teachers. Such disruptions have been prevalent at the provincial and at enterprise levels - particularly in education - and have a definite, though impossible-to-calculate impact on person days lost. Nonetheless, in the first five years of ANC rule there were few - if any - national or even sectoral strikes in the public service - a marked improvement over the early years of the transition to democracy.

[11] These frustrations intensified after the South African Municipal Workers' Union (SAMWU) concluded a collective agreement which provided impressive increases to nurses working in municipal clinics, who often work in close proximity to those employed by provincial governments. In comparing SAMWU members' improvements with those provided in the PSBC - where nurses' interests were poorly represented - provincial nurses quickly discerned the gains possible through collective action, though not the difficulties involved in developing collective organisation. (See Adler, 1995)

[12] This aspect of the nurses' strike has been widely misunderstood. For example Adam et al. (1997) claim the nurses struck 'against their own union', though at the time the vast majority weren't organised. Moreover, they take the event as evidence of 'the inability of emerging corporatist arrangements to cope with a situation bordering on anarchy' rather than as an example of the inevitably messy stages in the evolution of these very arrangements. (See Adam et al, 1997: pp. 150-151)

review of pay policy and for ending the retrenchment moratorium, proposals that would guide their position in the 1999 wage dispute. Increasing personnel costs were said to be 'crowding out' other spending.

For both sides this problem highlighted a larger issue: the lack of alignment between the government's budget process and the annual wage negotiations in the PSCBC. This problem would intensify with the adoption of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) from 1997. Under the MTEF budget planning would be projected forward in three-year cycles, largely fixing expenditure on the public service wage bill well in advance of PSCBC negotiations. As a result, collective bargaining would become less about the size of the wage bill and more about its division. From the unions' perspective this fundamentally undermined collective bargaining.

A skills based grading system?

If the sustainability of the wage increases came under scrutiny, so too did the supposed transformation in the basis for determining remuneration. The three-year agreement was announced as a fundamental shift towards a skills-based grading system, borrowed directly from developments in the private sector, particularly in the metal industry. It was on this foundation that other union-initiated remuneration reforms were premised: flattening the occupational hierarchy by reducing the number of job grades, narrowing differentials within and between grades, and closing the overall wage gap. The new system promised to provide workers' with opportunities for training and career - and pay - advancement.

In practice the agreement ushered in no such thing. In a detailed study of public service wages and grading, Jacklin and Machin (1998) argue that the three-year agreement failed to include other initiatives on which a skills-based grading system depends: training, changes to work organisation arrangements and a reformed performance appraisal system. The inadequate opportunities for training meant that workers - especially at the bottom - would have limited or no opportunities for advancing within the system, and would likely be consigned indefinitely to their existing broad band.

The consequences of failing to move to a real skills-based grading system were made worse by changes to the 'rank and leg' promotion system. 'Rank' promotions refer to advances between employment grades, while 'leg' promotions refer to promotions within a grade. Public servants are normally eligible for promotion every three years, or at a minimum every two years if they are deemed 'preferentially promotable.' The benefits of promotion are substantial: rank promotions can result in as much as a 20% improvement in income. In the main, advancement within a broad occupational band (composed of a number of ranks) depends neither on a vacancy nor on funding for the post, nor in practice does it require meaningful assessment. Though in principle workers must be deemed 'promotable', in practice almost no one is held back. The 'rank and leg' system amounts to a regular bonus for employees unrelated to either individual performance or a rational assessment of the public service's skills requirements. Indeed, if a higher grade position is unavailable, workers will be paid at the higher rate even while continuing in their old job. The implications for the fiscus and for 'right-sizing' are thus considerable. The 1996 agreement in fact made the problems worse through the mass promotion of Grade 1.

Recent figures from the South African Police Service illustrate the perverse effects generated by the promotion system (see Table 1.1). The fact that there are nearly five times as many

sergeants and twice as many inspectors as constables is a reflection more of police officers' desire for and success in achieving promotion to senior positions than of the country's policing objectives and of the labour requirements necessary for achieving these. Nor do the figures reflect the police officers' skills nor the real content of their jobs: in cases where officers have been promoted to the rank of sergeant, they may in fact be working as constables: only their title - and salary - have changed.

Table 1.1: Selected ranks and salaries in the South African Police Service, as at January 2000

Rank	Number of employees	Number of employees
Constable	11,217	34,557
Sergeant	55,312	40,881
Inspector	25,620	63,042

Source: Unpublished statistics, Department of Public Service and Administration.

In addition to rank and leg promotions, workers may also apply for promotion between the broad occupational bands - a 'post' promotion - but success depends on the availability of a vacant funded post and workers must possess appropriate qualifications. Grade 1 workers - including general labourers - may have been promoted en masse to Grade 2, but in the absence of proper training programs, they have few opportunities to gain the qualifications necessary for a post promotion into Grade 3 jobs, such as clerical positions. In general, the same applies to more skilled workers applying for promotion from Grades 7 to 8 - from clerical to administrative officer positions - though such advances are relatively easier than for labourers attempting to move up.

In short the changes to the grading system, in the context of 'rank and leg' promotions, produced destructive results. Not only is promotion expensive, but it remains delinked from either worker performance or the public service's employment needs while - in the absence of proper training programs - workers are effectively consigned to a life within their broad occupational bands. As Table 1.1 indicates, changes to the promotion system would not only allow a better fit between employment, remuneration and needs, but could in fact finance an expansion in employment at lower levels.

The three-year agreement was signed two months before the launch of the government's new Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) macroeconomic strategy. And while it is probably true that the deal could never have been struck after GEAR, the strategy itself was not responsible for the three-year agreement's contradictions. Even before GEAR the government had been committed to a reduction in expenditure as a proportion of GDP, and to a reduction in the public service wage bill as a proportion of total government spending to make resources available for infrastructure development and other services. This put government in a very tight box for achieving its aims of transforming the public service. The equalisation of conditions of service could come about either through maintaining employment levels while reducing wages and benefits or improving remuneration while cutting numbers. Both the unions and government accepted the latter formulation, though with a priority on attrition, freezing posts, eliminating ghost workers, and reprioritisation of expenditure. Expansion of the wage bill would put pressure on other forms of government expenditure, in the absence of an increase in borrowing or increases in revenue through

higher taxation or other means, such as privatisation. But these steps are not only politically difficult, but fiscally problematic in the context of an untransformed state unable to spend effectively those resources it already commands.

Given this context the three-year agreement was poorly designed: it was inadequately costed (Baskin, Chapter 7), while additional elements crucial to its success (like adequate training programs or a means to effect sustainable personnel reductions) did not materialise. Many of its possible consequences, such as the likely effect of VSPs - which were obvious to observers at the time - were not addressed. Its authors were generally unaware of the complexity of many public service systems, and entered agreements with little understanding of their likely effects. ANC officials were in fact dependent on the advice of 'old guard' senior civil servants, who often ended up drafting new regulations, but with more concern for protecting their own prerogatives than for promoting transformation.

If the three-year agreement is viewed as a way of transforming government under tight constraints, it must be the seen as a failure. However, it may be judged differently if viewed as a crisis management exercise adopted with imperfect information under extreme pressure following two years of relatively unsuccessful bargaining in the PSBC. Judged against these criteria it was a qualified success - certainly in terms of ensuring labour peace - though at the cost of avoiding tough choices and deferring the core problems that originally motivated the parties to find a solution.

From agreement to conflict: 1999 and beyond

If the negotiators in the PSBC were able to defer long-term problems, the participants in its successor body, the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council, had no such luxury. Not only were the defects of the 1996 bargain well known, but negotiations for a new agreement began in late 1998 in the midst of South Africa's worst economic crisis of the decade.

The unions' initial common position was for a 15% across-the-board increase, while government responded with an offer of an average 5,7% increase. This massive gap remained through the announcement of the budget in March. At a PSCBC meeting at the end of April the government proposed a task team to review salary progressions, but would determine for itself whether to increase its offer based on the task team's recommendations. At this point all the unions in the PSCBC declared deadlock.

In July the dispute was referred to arbitration, but within days the government improved its average offer from 5,7% to 6%, with employees in the lowest grades receiving 6,2%, and those at the top 3,5%. At the end of July, following a one-day strike led primarily by the COSATU unions, government's offer was improved to an average of 6,3%, with a 6,8% increase for teachers. By this time the unions had reduced their demand to an average of 7,5%, with a somewhat higher increase for teachers. (PSA, 1999; Fraser-Moleketi, 1999)

In early August a number of unions again embarked on a legal strike - supplemented by public demonstrations organised by unions that had stayed out of the earlier protest. This was an unprecedented development in public service labour relations: the first time that progressive and old-guard worker organisations pursued a common program of industrial action. In fact, the strike marked the transformation of many of the old-guard unions into a more robust form of unionism. To an extent they have begun to shed their diffidence and

politeness, and have made use of the new possibilities in labour law for exercising power.

At the same time, the unions linked to COSATU were caught between their commitments to their base and their participation in the alliance with the ANC. The tripartite alliance yielded many benefits in the past when the COSATU unions were able to break deadlocks through appeals to the party, and especially to President Mandela. In the run-up to the elections alliance discipline effectively diverted COSATU unions from pressing their case in the PSCBC or in the streets. And after the 1999 elections, the alliance route was effectively closed; indeed, leading figures in the ANC began attacking public servants' profligacy, labelling the unions as special - and selfish - interests. Indeed, informal efforts to broker a compromise were fruitless, and on 7 September government took the extreme action of unilaterally implementing its final offer - a step taken previously in the short history of public service labour relations only by F.W. de Klerk in 1993. (Fraser-Moleketi, 1999a)

In issuing its unilateral increase government offered to 'work' with the unions on the 2000/01 round of salary negotiations, and to develop a comprehensive remuneration policy. However, the invitation to return to a forum in which the unions had expended considerable energy in return for a minor improvement on the employer's offer – which was then unilaterally imposed - must have seemed eminently resistible. Indeed, at the time of writing the unions continue to boycott the PSCBC, on the grounds that the wage deadlock continues - and some of the unions have pursued the matter through arbitration.

A 'score card' approach to assessing industrial conflict is seldom useful, but is even less appropriate in this case. Notwithstanding that the employer imposed its solution on labour, neither party's positions' addressed the fundamental questions facing the public service on which their own agendas depend: effectively linking budget, staffing levels, remuneration, and delivery priorities. This failure will have important consequences in the future.

Given the enormity and difficulty of these questions it is unfortunate, but not surprising that the bargaining turned on the issue of wages rather than the unresolved transformation matters. Informants close to the PSCBC negotiations indicate that an agreement was in fact forthcoming on a new remuneration policy, including fundamental changes to the rank and leg system. However, given the obvious attractions the old policies hold for public servants, unions rightly calculated that they could not sell the agreement in the absence of a real wage increase.

Explaining government's refusal to compromise is more difficult. In part its position was informed by the dynamics of the June 1999 elections. It effectively delayed proceedings in the PSCBC until after the poll. Then, as a result of the ANC's overwhelming mandate for a further five year term - with a near two-thirds parliamentary majority - government was in a politically unassailable position from which it could substantially increase its autonomy. The ANC likely concluded that the public service unions would be unable to mount a strike that could impose sufficient costs to force government to reconsider its position. Given the co-ordination between new and old guard unions COSATU's strategic and tactical choices were limited by the need to maintain a common front with partners untested in mass action. In addition, its choices were restricted by the exigencies of maintaining public support, which would not be easily forthcoming if the unions were seen to be disrupting 'delivery' in their fight against a popular government. Both of these conditions - government's unprecedented freedom of manoeuvre and COSATU's equally unprecedented constraints - no doubt reinforced the position of those in and outside of government committed to a strict

interpretation of GEAR and the maintenance of fiscal discipline. The PSCBC negotiations enabled these interests to steal the line of march on the trade unions and 'hold the line' on wages.

However, government's resolute stance on wages creates a number of substantial problems on its side. First, its position defers consideration of restructuring for yet another year. Meanwhile, the animosity generated by the dispute creates its own dynamics that make it more difficult to come to terms with these issues, when in the future - as is virtually inevitable - the parties must seek each other out to implement meaningful transformation of public service labour relations. The problems are qualitative, not merely quantitative, and depend on agreement between the parties; they cannot be resolved through victory in a labour relations 'war.'

KEY ISSUES IN PUBLIC SERVICE LABOUR RELATIONS

It is difficult, in the current climate of mutual recrimination, to discern a means that would bring the parties back to good faith bargaining in the PSCBC. Yet it is equally difficult to perceive a route for restructuring the public service that does not pass through the PSCBC. On every dimension of transformation the parties are faced with balancing competing imperatives that have been mutually acknowledged. There are few 'win-win' choices, and even fewer instances where the options can be rationally or neutrally determined. What are the key issues?

The budget

Since the beginning of formal labour relations in the public service a fundamental - and still unresolved issue - has been aligning negotiations over wages and non-wage benefits with the budget. Government draws up the budget beginning in the year prior to presenting it in parliament, in consultations between the Department of Finance, national departments, and provincial governments. Now that the Medium Term Expenditure Framework is in place, these discussions occur within three-year rolling budgets that have to a major extent fix allocations. The budget is then presented to parliament where its allocations may be interrogated.

At its heart the issue concerns two competing and difficult-to-reconcile principles. Government draws up budgets, and parliament is supreme: it alone has constitutional power to approve money bills. On the other hand wage agreements in the public service depend upon good-faith bargaining between parties in the PSCBC not only over the allocation of funds available for salaries and benefits, but over their total amount. As personnel expenditure is by far the largest single item in the budget, even small changes can have a massive effect on government's ability to meet its other obligations.

A bargaining process that generates agreements with little regard to these wider obligations would either upset other public priorities or would effectively render the agreement a dead letter. But the reverse is equally problematic, where the integrity of the budget trumps public servants' right to engage in collective bargaining, not only about the allocation of expenditure, but about its overall size. At present this is the case. In 1999 the budget effectively capped the amount available on personnel expenditure; the unions were unable to persuade government to change the allocation significantly nor could they marshal effective

power to force it to do so.

This is a common problem in public services in every democratic society. However, particular circumstances in South Africa add to the difficulty. GEAR targets limit room for manoeuvre, but these are not the origin of the difficulty. The overwhelming imperatives of service delivery and infrastructure development place burdens on government that for the foreseeable future will put pressure on the size of the public service wage bill. Attempting to overcome the legacies of the apartheid division of labour while at the same time retaining skilled public servants makes it difficult to trade off the needs of one employee constituency against another. Moreover, given the single-party dominant political system and the leadership's tight discipline over the parliamentary caucus, public service unions can exert little pressure on government to change the budget, either through lobbying or through the electoral process.

There is no easy or logical answer, but the present arrangement is unsatisfactory: it has produced repeated conflicts since 1994 that are wasteful of time and resources and generate considerable ill-will. Furthermore it generates perverse consequences for government's own plans for public service restructuring. As Baskin notes in Chapter 7, limiting bargaining to dividing up a pre-set amount will tend towards majority rule at the PSCBC:

> and this is likely to take the form of 'across-the-board' increases, or larger increases at the lower end of the salary scale. In the medium-term this will lead to erosion of the bargaining unit as lower-end employees are replaced by contracting out arrangements, and as higher-end . . . employees attempt to leave the bargaining unit . . .

A way forward is offered by the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), though this will severely test both parties. The MTEF enables all citizens to learn government's long-term budget priorities. Such transparency for the first time allows for accountability, as government can now be held answerable for its performance. A major problem arises, however, if the MTEF's three-year commitments are perceived to be imposed from above or are unresponsive to needs.

The MTEF includes - at least in rhetoric - mechanisms for popular participation in its formulation. But in practice such participation is de-emphasised by government, whose priority has been to establish executive authority over the budget process and to insulate it from external participation. (Gelb and Bethlehem, 1998) Such insulation effectively extends to parliament, notwithstanding the invocation of the 'supremacy of parliament.' Arguments that prioritise parliament's supremacy as against public service unions' involvement in the budget obscure the fact that parliament's budget-making powers are severely limited. Though the constitution gives parliament the power to amend money bills, such powers must be activated by a separate act - which has not been passed. This state of affairs 'renders the [parliamentary] budget process largely symbolic as the budget is determined wholly by the executive with Parliament having little or no say in its contents.' (Adair and Albertyn, 1999)

The test for government will be whether it will tolerate even minimal forms of involvement in developing MTEF priorities - including the allocation for personnel expenditure - from civil society groups, including the public service unions. This would be in line with the values expressed in the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service and the Presidential Review Commission report, both of which stress civil society partnerships and empowering citizens to share the responsibilities of governance. (PRC, 1998: 3.1.2, 3.2.3)

At the same time such participation would present a major challenge for the public service unions. It would require formulation of initial negotiating positions a year in advance, development of sufficient economic research capacity, and the development of cadres to engage with the MTEF process at the many provincial and departmental sites where and when it occurs. It also requires sufficient sophistication to engage with state technocrats and other stakeholders and the will to press the matter if their approaches are rebuffed, through public campaigns if necessary. Short of such an effort, their wage claims will carry little sympathy if presented as a fait accompli after the budget has been tabled in parliament.

Bargaining structures

Public service collective bargaining structures grew in equal parts from improvisation and imitation. Educators and police were able to gain a measure of recognition as a result of the crisis precipitated in these sectors by the struggle against apartheid. Whether or not there was a legal basis to do so the authorities in these sectors were forced to address workers' collective demands simply to ensure the continuation of state services in these areas. (See Garson, Chapter 9 and Marks, Chapter 10) The separate existence of bargaining councils is thus a by-product of the conflict that attended democratisation, reinforced by the fact that historically ministers in these areas have legal authority to set wages and conditions of service.

But the structures also evolved in imitation of the private sector and the development of centralised bargaining elsewhere in the economy. The PSBC was created as a vehicle for bargaining at the highest level of the public service as a whole. Its creation was facilitated by the existence of the PSC; unlike other sectors of the South African economy the determination of labour issues in the public service was already very highly centralised. In an odd way the establishment of centralised bargaining could occur much faster in the public service than elsewhere, as it meant transforming the existing PSC into a truly bipartite structure.

However, unlike almost any other sector, the public service was composed of but one employer and a multitude of distinctly different 'industries' that were further divided into 9 different provinces and more than 30 national departments. The federalism implicit in the constitution further complicates matters: some departments of state - education, welfare, health - are joint competencies of the national and provincial governments. Most of the managers and workers in these areas are in fact employed by the provinces. To further complicate things, different provinces organise their affairs in different ways, combining in one department functions that are housed in separate national departments. It has been a daunting task developing bargaining structures that suit the contours of the public service, without compromising the coherence of the sector as a whole and centralised bargaining. The same can be said about the kinds of issues bargained and the levels at which they are determined.

The model of industry-wide bargaining councils provided under the new LRA was crudely extended to the public service, creating an unwieldy mix of more than 40 provincial and departmental bargaining institutions, alongside the PSBC, the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), and the National Negotiating Forum (NNF). (Adair and Albertyn, 1999) The framework was not wanted by anyone, however a replacement was not immediately perceived.

Notwithstanding the conflict in the PSCBC over wages, considerable convergence occurred over the shape of bargaining. (See Baskin, 1999) Unfortunately not all the issues were resolved, nor formalised in agreements, and progress was thwarted by the dispute. In 1999 the old NNF was replaced by a new Safety and Security Bargaining Council (SSBC), and its membership was extended from police to all employees of the South African Police Service, including civil servants. In 1999 two other structures were established, the Health Sector Bargaining Council (HSBC) and the General Administrative Bargaining Council (GABC). The former includes all employees of the Departments of Health and Welfare (national and provincial) as well as public health and health and welfare professionals in other departments. Given that health is a provincial competence, the HSBC intends to establish provincial chambers for negotiating more detailed agreements. The GABC includes all employees not covered by the other bargaining structures. The ELRC continues to exist, and has developed provincial chambers in each province.

If considerable progress was made on the structures of bargaining there was less agreement about where issues are to be bargained. The underlying issue is finding a balance between common standards across the public service and accommodating the specific needs of the different provinces and departments. If wages and conditions of service are negotiated solely at the PSCBC, the sectoral and provincial institutions will be largely irrelevant. On the other hand the complete devolution of bargaining to the sectors and/or provinces could lead to intolerable conditions: either growing inequality between provinces or competition in which sectors attempt to outbid each other in pursuit of skilled staff. Solutions include converting bargaining in the PSCBC into agreements over minimum and maximum wages and progression ranges, rather than actual wages, or allowing it to ratify agreements made in other bargaining councils.

Restructuring management

A strong system of labour relations in the public service depends not only on strong unions, but also on capable management. However, the existence of public service management - in the true sense of the word - is a post-1994 phenomenon, and even then more rhetorical than real. One of the main aspects of transformation has been overcoming the centralised structure of administration symbolised by the old PSC. As Adair and Albertyn write in Chapter 5, this logically entailed the devolution of authority to lower levels of the public service and converting administrators into managers endowed with both power and responsibility.

As mentioned in the previous section, the Ministers of Education and Safety and Security already possessed powers to determine terms and conditions of employment for educators and police. Amendments to the Public Service Act in 1996 extended these powers to national ministers and, at the provincial level, to Members of the Executive Councils (MECs), who were given original powers to organise their departments, including the hiring and dismissal of employees. This parallels other legislation and regulations that make 'executing authorities' responsible for financial matters in their departments. The PSC's rigid provisions for disciplining employees were replaced by a collective agreement reached in the PSCBC in January 1999, which now allows for discipline to be managed according to standard labour-management procedures in a flexible manner and at the appropriate level.

However managers have not yet been given power to determine pay and conditions of service for their employees. These powers are still vested in the Ministers for Education and Safety and Security for educators and police and the Minister for Public Service and Administration

for all other public servants. In practice these are determined through bargaining in the PSCBC. Even the new powers granted under the 1996 amendments to the Public Service Act are limited. According to Adair and Albertyn 'executing authorities' may determine the organisational structure of their departments:

> however they may not retrench surplus employees and they must organise their department within the prescribed nationally determined grading system, which is inflexible and does not take account of sectoral needs and differences.

Though extending responsibility with one hand, the amendments take power away with the other, as executing authorities' scope for autonomous action is highly constrained by decisions at the highest level. Moreover, 'even within the departments and institutions, all decisions, no matter what they are, have to be made by the highest authority' as executing authorities who do not readily delegate powers to lower levels of management in their departments.

According to Adair and Albertyn, 'decision-making thus remains highly hierarchical with senior and middle management having very little decision-making power.' The state of affairs does not foster accountability and responsibility, nor does it allow for meaningful interventions by workers or their trade union representatives, except at the very highest levels. Notwithstanding massive efforts to transform the old public service, and the increasing importance of collective bargaining in place of the unilateral determinations by the old PSC, 'managers still do not "manage," but are responsible for ensuring that the employees abide by a complex set of rules and regulations, rather than concentrating on output and service delivery.'

The extension of financial responsibility to senior managers under these constraints produces perverse effects. Managers must fit their decisions about personnel deployment into calculations for meeting their financial obligations within fixed standards on wages and conditions of service. Personnel decisions are thus oriented towards budget concerns instead of being rationally linked to service delivery needs. Management tasks are made even more untenable as retrenchment has been blocked by the three-year agreement's moratorium, while redeployment is difficult, and dismissal - even for cause - is so time consuming as to be virtually impossible. The present conditions discourage creativity and initiative, and break the link between spending, development priorities, and the deployment of personnel.

But even if one could find an appropriate balance between national norms and standards and decentralised decision-making, this is not the most profound management problem. Far more difficult is overcoming the legacy of apartheid-era hiring practices that allowed vast numbers of unqualified people to become managers. A system that is able to develop centrally-determined norms and standards while encouraging managerial flexibility depends ultimately upon skilled managers. Indeed it demands highly sophisticated men and women who can understand and effectively maintain this delicate balance. These are not - in the main - the kinds of managers that the apartheid public service bequeathed to the new order. Their lack of proper managerial training is most glaring in the areas of financial management and labour relations, which seriously weaken their effectiveness in linking budgets and personnel with policy objectives. (DPSA, 1997)

These problems are of course uneven: some provinces are worse than others (especially those that absorbed former TBVC and SGT administrations), and the same is true of national

departments. But a number of high-profile public scandals have brought the problem of public service management into sharp focus. Recent reports from the Auditor General have shown that many departments are forced to roll-over their allocated budgets because they cannot disburse money. The Departments of Welfare and Health, for example, were unable to spend substantial portions of their national funds for poverty relief and AIDS prevention. Allegations of wide-spread corruption in the Department of Correctional Services have revealed that practices of patronage common in the old regime persist into the new, albeit deployed along ethnic - rather than merely racial - lines. These three cases are extremely worrying as they occurred at the national level of these departments, where it is assumed managerial competence is greatest.

Adair and Albertyn argue that new legislation will need to be passed that completes the transformation of management in the public service. Nonetheless the task of developing and training management to perform the responsibilities thrust upon it remains an overwhelming - and exceedingly long-term - priority of transformation. Good management is a necessary condition for good labour relations in the public service.

Right-sizing

As mentioned above, one unfortunate consequence of the 1999 wage dispute was to defer yet again progress on 'right-sizing' the public service. The unintended consequences of the three-year agreement's retrenchment moratorium and VSPs have still not been addressed, which has stymied efforts to align the size and deployment of staff with development priorities and the budget. Right-sizing still means different things to management and labour. For the former the priority has been reducing the public service wage bill as a proportion of public consumption expenditure, while for the unions employment levels are to be determined by service delivery requirements.

However both parties - at least in principle - recognise the other's priorities. Cutting the wage bill to reduce public expenditure without regard to the government's development goals makes a mockery of the budget, transforming it into an end in itself rather than a means to achieve political goals. In principle this position is rejected by government in all its policy documents, not only those on the transformation of the public service. The Presidential Review Commission observed that right-sizing:

> should be located within the macro-economic constraints established by GEAR, but should nevertheless be driven primarily by the need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery rather than by narrow budget considerations. (PRC, 1998:3.2.7)

The DPSA's recent report on its skills and service audit suggests that restructuring is a qualitative matter that does not easily produce savings, and that savings may come at the cost of affecting basic service delivery. (DPSA, 1999) The audit revealed that the public service as a whole is not overstaffed; rather many departments have inappropriate staff complements for their needs. For example provinces that incorporated old homeland bureaucracies have too many unskilled labourers, but a serious undersupply of higher-level managers, professionals, and support personnel. In another example, the audit showed that many township and ex-homeland schools suffer from a severe undersupply of support staff, essential to effective education. The report advocated an active redeployment strategy, rather than simple retrenchment (itself an expensive step). Moreover, the audit confirmed Baskin's

findings in Chapter 7 that while unskilled employment had declined, the number of skilled (and higher paid) employees - especially teachers - had expanded.

On the other hand, determining staffing by reference to service delivery alone - without reference to budget constraints - is even more problematic. Yet this position is rejected - at least implicitly - in a number of union policy documents. For example, the report of COSATU's September Commission on the Future of the Unions advocates an ambitious program for 'building a public sector that can deliver efficiently and effectively, and improve the working life of the members of the public sector unions.' (COSATU, 1997: 3.2) For COSATU this entails 'taking some responsibility for co-managing transformation,' by exposing corruption and ghost workers. At the same time, the approach acknowledges:

> there are limits on government resources, and unlimited needs. COSATU should reject the limits defined by GEAR, and continue to contest them. But even without GEAR, there would be limits. This implies trade-offs between different priorities.

COSATU still believes that a 'bigger, more labour-intensive' public service is necessary, but accepts that 'Participation with government . . . would mean that whatever choices are made, even hard ones, the unions would be willing to take joint responsibility for their implementation.' A similar position is at least implicit in a recent assessment of the public service strike written by two leading NEHAWU unionists. Though they disparage the notion of 'crowding out,' they do not reject the idea of trade-offs between components of the budget. (Makhura and Phadu, 1999)

There is thus - in principle - considerable overlap between positions. It remains to be seen whether the parties are able to reach agreements that resolve this key problem of transformation. And, even if agreements are reached at the PSCBC, it is questionable whether either management or labour have the capacity to implement and monitor these at sectoral, provincial, and institutional levels. Even if both sides find an accommodation that enables them to escape from the current impasse, neither has the capacity as yet to ensure compliance from their constituencies. Faced with an unreliable management echelon itself in need of change, management's victory in the 1999 bargaining round may prove short-lived: it will find it difficult to fight a two-front war with both labour and its own managers.

This state of affairs does not augur well for public service transformation. It also suggests a third possibility: that many managers and workers will find common cause in defending their inherited privileges against the restructuring agendas advanced by both government and organised labour. In this scenario, poor management structures may permit both old- and new-guard civil servants to direct public resources towards maintaining their own positions. There are many disturbing signs - as in the Department of Correctional Services - that apartheid-era patronage not only persists, but has opportunities to flourish in a situation precariously poised between the paternalism of the old order and the rational labour relations of the new. There is a considerable danger that the contemporary public service will recapitulate the situation under apartheid where the formal rationality of bureaucratic rules become increasingly distant from the real paternalistic relationships between management and labour. The public service may have been brought under the LRA, but it has not yet been remade in its image.

Faced with these possibilities, recent suggestions by ministers and senior officials that the public service be exempted from many provisions of the LRA and the Basic Conditions of

Employment Act may in fact backfire. Rather than promoting management hegemony or even fiscal discipline, such steps might in fact encourage practices of patronage quite at odds with formal models of managerial control. Though many may reject the notion, an employer truly interested in transformation of the public service and service delivery may have much to gain from bolstering effective unions and developing sound labour relations practices.

CONCLUSION

In the few years since South Africa's first democratic elections, incredible progress has been made in the development of a modern system of labour relations in the public service. Not only have unions and bargaining structures been established, but these have reached successful agreements on a range of distributive and non-distributive matters. The system has, for the most part, produced labour peace in what was until recently a storm-centre of industrial protest. These are remarkable achievements, not only considering the distance the parties have had to travel from the racist and authoritarian past, but also considering the fiscal and skills constraints facing the public service.

At the same time, the labour relations system has been more adept at deferring major problems than resolving them. In part this stems from the inherent difficulties of the issues. In part it is a result of mistakes, and the unintended consequences of agreements reached in haste and under political pressure. In 1999 the system broke down in a dramatic wage dispute, which saw government acting in a unilateral manner not seen since F.W. de Klerk's presidency. Yet the attention given to the dispute obscured the agreements made over the same period on the structure of bargaining, management, and other issues. It also masked the fact that the parties' principled positions are not significantly different and that they have a mutual interest in reaching an accommodation.

This does not imply that the new labour relations system can deliver agreements on the outstanding issues. The private sector has had nearly three decades in which to develop labour relations institutions, and effective managers and trade unionists to make them work. The public service has to catch up in less time, while facing more daunting issues, higher expectations from its intended beneficiaries, and the full glare of publicity when things go wrong. The stakes are high: labour relations will either unlock or slam shut the door to public service transformation, and will help determine whether the state can fulfil its obligations for development. To a great extent the fate of democratisation in South Africa rides on the outcome.

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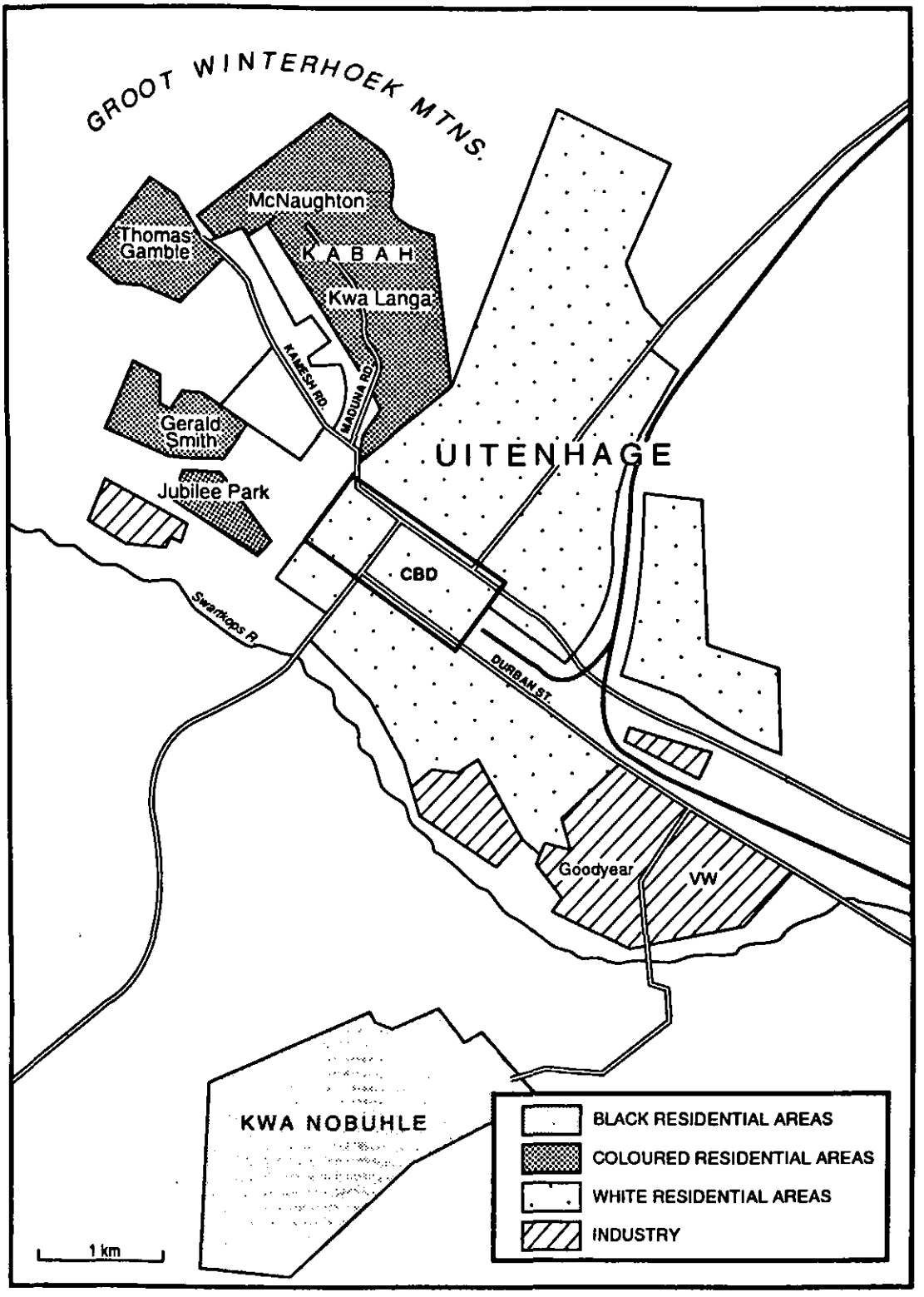
Seminar Paper
to be presented in RW 7003 SEMINAR ROOM
AT 4.00pm 19th SEPTEMBER 1994

Title: **Of Shop Floors and Rugby Fields: The Social Basis of Auto Worker Solidarity.**

by: **Glenn Adler**

No **366**

Uitenhage, Residential and Industrial Areas, c. 1970



I. INTRODUCTION*

Athol Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona's 1972 play, *Sizwe Bansi is Dead*, opens with the main character, Styles, sitting in his photographic studio in Port Elizabeth's New Brighton township, reminiscing about working at Ford some years before. He recalls the time when the General Foreman, "Baas" Bradley informed the workers about special duties for the day: they were to conduct an unprecedented "General Cleaning" of the factory. For hours the men struggled to remove accumulated dirt and oil from the machines and the factory floor. They were then handed brushes and were ordered to paint lines on the floor indicating danger areas, a concern for safety not previously shown by the company. Finally, they were ordered to take showers, and were provided with hitherto unknown luxuries such as hot water, soap and real towels, and were then given new overalls, tools, aprons, and gloves.

Finally "Baas" Bradley gathered the workers together to explain their unusual work regimen, using Styles as translator:

> "'Tell the boys in your language, that this is a very big day in their lives.'
> 'Gentlemen, this old fool says this is a hell of a big day in our lives.'
> The men laughed.
> 'They are very happy to hear that, sir.'
> 'Tell the boys that Mr Henry Ford the Second, the owner of this place is going to visit us. Tell them Mr Ford is the big Baas. He owns the plant and everything in it.'
> 'Gentlemen, old Bradley says this Ford is a big bastard. He owns everything in this building, which means you as well'....
> 'Styles, tell the boys that when Mr Henry Ford comes into the plant I want them all to look happy. We will slow down the speed of the line so that they can sing and smile while they are working.'
> 'Gentlemen, he says that when the door opens and his grandmother walks in you must see to it that you are wearing a mask of smiles. Hide your true feelings, brothers. You must sing. The joyous songs of the days of old before we had fools like this one next to me to worry about.' [*To Bradley*] 'Yes sir!'"[1]

The great man's visit is an anti-climax: Ford peers in from the factory door, abruptly returns to his waiting car and drives off. But if the visit was over, the working day was not: management immediately ordered the line speed doubled, pushing the workers to make up production lost during the general cleaning. Styles, angry at the games he must play to retain such a job, resentful of being "treated like a monkey," decides to leave wage labor behind him, and opens up his own business.

The fictional Styles opts out of factory life, and takes his chances in the lower petite-bourgeoisie of independent township entrepreneurs. The character is in part modelled on John Kani's actual experiences as a worker at Ford; Kani, of course, quit Ford to become one of the most accomplished actors in modern South African theater. But Styles' decision illustrates the limited choices available to black workers as a whole in the auto plants in the late 1960s. Blacks in general, and Africans in particular, received poor wages for performing the worst jobs, and faced virtually unbridled supervisorial despotism. For coloureds, the promise of union protection was still some years away, while Africans were to wait another decade for rights of union representation. It was only in the years after 1968 that African activists at Volkswagen even dared speak privately about unions. Opting out was not an act of opportunism, but of desperation; the only alternatives were either the false face of the smiling, minstrel-like puppet Styles was forced to become, or waiting patiently until conditions changed and some kind of union activity became possible again.

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*This paper is drawn from two chapters of my doctoral thesis, "The Factory Belongs to All Who Work In It: Race, Class, and Collective Action in the South African Motor Industry, 1967-1986," Columbia University, 1994.

In June 1980, barely a decade after the events portrayed in the first scene of *Sizwe Bansi is Dead*, Volkswagen workers embarked on a strike which could only have appeared as an unattainable fantasy to workers in the 1960s. In constructing their union, the workers provided themselves with the possibility of another option beyond the narrow range offered to Styles and his brothers. To opting out, selling out, or minstrelsy was added the choice of achieving individual aims by joining a collective force in pursuit of collective goals.

The 1980 Volkswagen strike was a watershed in the development of the autoworkers' union. Moreover, the Volkswagen workers' mass action was all the more unusual because workers were successful: they maintained discipline and were able to marshall their collective force with a negotiation strategy which could yield positive results. But most unusual of all was that their solidarity crossed the dividing lines defined by the government-imposed racial classification system: Africans joined with their coloured co-workers in industrial action and mass protest. The 1980 strike demonstrated a rare cross-race solidarity in contrast to unionizing efforts elsewhere in the country, including the one developing in the automobile plants down the road in Port Elizabeth, where workers fractured on lines of race, leading to years of bitter recriminations and internecine battles between unionists. Nowhere else in the motor industry had the union achieved such clear unity across racial lines. Despite its importance, such cross-race unity has been taken for granted in all accounts of the union and the labor movement itself. The basis of this solidarity is the subject of this paper.

In doing so, it will - for reasons of space - deemphasize shop-floor and broader social and political factors giving rise to militance which were, roughly speaking, similar for both coloured and African workers. Instead, it will emphasize social processes which help to explain why such militance was expressed in a non-racial manner uniting coloureds and Africans. A number of important social relationships, shaped in large part by the legacy of the uneven application of apartheid in Uitenhage, bridged racially defined community divides and brought coloured and African workers into close personal contact at work and off-work. Through these relationships both ordinary workers as well as labor activists came to identify each other as familiars rather than strangers, enabling them to devise a politics of solidarity that defied the statutorially defined racial categorizations. Non-racial unionism did not arise simply because workers shared similar grievances that enabled them to act collectively, but in large part because particular social movement activists were able to help workers define their problems in a non-racial way, and to provide non-racial class-collective solutions for these problems.

II. SOCIAL MOVEMENT EXPLANATIONS OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

One of the great difficulties in explaining collective action in South Africa - as elsewhere - is the tendency to separate macro-level or structural explanations from more agency-based and voluntaristic accounts of political and social events. In terms of theories of social movements, most explanations of collective action fall within the sphere, respectively of theories of New Social Movements (NSM), and Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT).[2]

NSM stresses larger structural processes which give rise to social movements and which shape the movements' ideological character. In large part, NSM sees social movements as a product of the transition from industrial capitalism and modernity to post-modernity and post-materialism. Not only do these movements take up qualitatively new demands, but they do so in a qualitatively different manner. Eschewing participation in established bureaucratic structures and institutions (usually, though not exclusively including party systems), these movements prefer forms of mass mobilization, direct action, and participatory models of democracy: a new form of politics supposedly characteristic of post-modern societies.[3]

RMT, on the other hand, focuses more on the internal life of social movements. Writers in this tradition spend less time analyzing the effects of social and political structures on movements; based on the assumption that grievances exist in all societies at all times, they prioritize the way organizations are created to mobilize such potential.[4] RMT thus examines the creation of social movement organizations

(SMOs), the activists/entrepreneurs who create and staff such organizations, and the resources they create and use in pursuit of their goals.

Neither approach, however, does a satisfactory job of addressing the problem of structure and agency. According to Klandermans and Tarrow, NSM "too easily assumes that mobilization potentials form spontaneously through societal developments," ignoring the fact that social movements themselves play a role in shaping peoples' ideas which impel them towards mobilization. On the other hand, RMT focuses too narrowly on how social movements mobilize, but largely ignores how changes in social structure create potentials for mobilization.[5] Stated another way, NSM too often tends to view collective action as a mysterious reflex "exploding," "emanating," or otherwise arising unexplained from structural conditions, while RMT may tend to emphasize activists creating their politics little constrained by external conditions.

Klandermans and Tarrow argue that an integration of the two approaches is necessary to understand "how the potential for social movements which emerges from the social and political structure...is *translated* into social and political action." They hope to illuminate processes which intervene between structural change and the activities of social movements.[6] Klandermans has developed the concept of "consensus mobilization" to account for social movements' efforts to help potential members interpret the grievances arising from structural change. Consensus mobilization will involve at the outset the movement helping people to identify the source of their grievance in systemic rather than personal terms, and to accept that systemic solutions are required. Furthermore, movements modify people's views of their grievances and, most importantly, what they can do about them; movements must facilitate what McAdam refers to as "cognitive liberation," a crucial step in motivating individuals to act.[7]

Perhaps the most important way in which consensus mobilization occurs is through what McAdam has labelled the "micromobilization context," which he defines as "that small group setting in which processes of collective attribution are combined with rudimentary forms of organization to produce mobilization for collective action."[8] Recruits to social movement activism are seldom drawn out of the blue, so to speak, but are instead already integrated into preexisting social networks conducive to mobilization.[9] Such networks provide "rudiments of organization" for a nascent movement, such as leadership, communication infrastructure, and other means which are necessary conditions for action. "As preexisting groups," McAdam argues, "these contexts provide the established roles and lines of interaction necessary for action to unfold." More subtly, and more importantly, these micromobilization contexts "supply the established structures of solidary incentives on which most social behavior depends....the myriad interpersonal rewards that attend ongoing participation in any established group."[10] Social movement activists may "appropriate" the established associational networks and emotional ties to such organizations and transfer them to the new movement.

McAdam's insight is to show how such micromobilization contexts link macro conditions favorable to mobilization to individuals' decisions to participate. Through the strong interpersonal ties already existing in micromobilization contexts, social movement activists are in a better position to produce "cognitive liberation." In such contexts potential recruits to the movement are not meeting strangers, but activists whose credentials are previously established in the group. Not only is such trust important, but recruits may also feel loyalty to the group and to leaders which facilitates their acceptance of ideas, and this may provide a subtle pressure against deviation. Thus, while previously developed attitudes favorable towards the movement may "push" a recruit towards activism, "a prior history of activism and integration into supportive networks acts as the structural 'pull' encouraging the individual to make good on his or her strongly held beliefs."[11]

The organizations and networks McAdam identifies do not have to be political in nature, nor do recruits have to be members of organizations. Micromobilization contexts may be formal organizations, formal or informal communication networks, and interpersonal networks. They may occur in all spheres of life: religious, school, youth group, or sporting bodies, as well as in ethnic, gender, and community groups. What is important is that through such prior engagement recruits will have already been introduced as part of apparently "normal" (i.e. natural) and "acceptable" activity to movement-like

organizational practices and rudimentary forms of collective action. In this way the existing, relatively non-controversial collective fabric of society provides the foundation on which activists build social movements.

The concept of micromobilization context helps to explain the way social movements translate structural possibilities into concrete action. For present purposes, it provides a crucial conceptual bridge which allows an explanation of the problem defined at the outset: how African and coloured auto workers came to act together, defining themselves as a "we," as a collectivity with certain shared meanings, identities, and interests, which could be translated into collective action.

III. FACTORY FLOOR ORGANIZATION IN THE AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

A. BLACK WORKERS' ENCOUNTERS WITH RACIAL DESPOTISM

When Elijah "Scoma" Antonie first entered the Volkswagen factory in February 1960, just one month before the Sharpeville emergency, Africans made up a small percentage of the VW workforce, and were confined to the most menial tasks in the factory. White supervision ruled the factory with an iron fist. Scoma was appalled by the blatant favoritism and discrimination:

> When I was introduced in that department it was said to me, "You see these whites who are standing here, they are all your foremen. Even if a white man says you must go and pick up shit, you must go and pick it up."

His first reaction was aggressive: "I will never pick up shit. I have come to work here. If a white man has done shit, it is for him to pick up that shit." Scoma was not alone. Though workers were quiescent during the 1960s, they were certainly not content with their lot. Fury lay under the surface calm.

Vuyo Kwinana entered the factory only in 1972. But when he arrived, he was told by his foreman that blacks cannot go to the toilet any time they pleased. "I have got to register my name according to the alphabet. A goes first to the toilet, then B second, then C third in order." On his first day Kwinana made a decision:

> I felt on that particular day, "I am not fit to work here." Half-past four will be too far for me to stretch, but I made it an option to stay in this department, clean out the waste, and throw it out the window.

Both Scoma and Kwinana entered the factory with ideas which predisposed them to reject such practices. When he joined Volkswagen, Kwinana had been a member of the ANC underground since 1957, and had served a two-and-a-half year prison term in the 1960s for being a member of the banned organization. Kwinana's father had been a leading - though conservative - figure in the ANC in East London, before the family moved to Uitenhage in 1951.[12] Vuyisile Tole was one of the activists who had recruited him into the underground; Tole had been a worker at Uitenhage's Fine Wool Products [Veldspun] and had been dismissed during a locally celebrated 1955 strike.[13] He had learned his trade unionism - and was himself recruited into the ANC and MK - via Raymond Mhlaba of the ANC and SACP and Themba Paulos of the ANC and TWIU.

Scoma had not been a member of the ANC, but he had gained an understanding of trade unions through lectures on the ANC and SACTU given by Zola Nqini, a local ANC and SACTU activist. He had also heard stories about the exploits of TWIU unionists and their strike against Fine Wool Products in December 1955.[14] Both Scoma and Kwinana developed second thoughts about confronting the Volkswagen foremen directly. Scoma was counselled by an older, more experienced worker:

> There was an ex-teacher who used to work in that department, and he called me to one side and said, "Hey, you've got to be very careful. You should go slow, because most of

> the chaps here are very weak and they can sell you openly to these whites." And I was wearing a school blazer then. Then as time goes on, I checked my way, how to make these people aware that a trade union is very useful.

Scoma adopted a wise policy, given the era. From the beginning of the industry in the 1920s through to the 1970s, foremen possessed vast discretionary powers, including the right to grant incremental wage increases for workers, and most significantly, the power to hire and fire. It made little difference that for most of its history white workers formed the bulk of the labor force in the motor industry: supervisorial despotism was a hallmark of the industry irrespective of the racial composition of the workforce.

B. THE FORMATION OF NUMARWOSA AND THE UAW

The conditions Scoma described in the 1960s did not begin to change until after an Industrial Council was established for the Eastern Cape motor industry in 1969. Oddly enough, the first breach in the wall of management authority was made by the white *Yster en Stal Unie*, which managed to use access to the National Party and the Minister of Labour and threats of imposing Job Reservation to win union recognition in 1967 and the subsequent establishment of an Industrial Council. The existence of an IC for the industry meant that the legal space existed to bring coloured workers into the same framework, and in 1967 the Trade Union Council of South Africa [TUCSA] sponsored an effort to organize coloured automobile workers in Port Elizabeth.[15] Within months factory-level organizing committees had been established at the three Port Elizabeth motor plants, Ford, General Motors, and Rover, and a new union was launched: the National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers of South Africa [NUMARWOSA].

Discriminatory practices on wage rates, promotions, and working conditions were foremost in workers' minds. Each of the organizing committees set about building on these grievances to create a wider base within their respective plants. At first they attempted to create a network of contacts in different factory departments. Most contact people, while not resistant to the idea of a union, were reluctant to meet, even secretly. They viewed a unionizing drive with considerable suspicion, remembering the bannings, treason trials, and other repression meted out to activists. Among those who were interested, few individuals were willing to take a leadership role. The factory organizers quickly identified a strategy to overcome workers' reluctance; they identified and engaged senior long-service workers who had some standing in the factory and in the coloured community, such as ex-teachers and rugby stars, and who were able - within the limits of the time - to stand up to foremen. The factory committee activists recruited such elder workers on an individual basis, and by bringing them into the project, eased entry for other workers who identified with them.

As the organizing base grew, every department would have one or two volunteers helping the organizing committee. These individuals would emphasize the workers' concrete grievances, especially regarding foreman and pay, rather than broader political issues. Their efforts were in part facilitated by the legality of their initiative: though workers were certainly opening themselves up to victimization, their recruitment to NUMARWOSA did not contravene any existing laws. Finally, the activists would not expose any names to management until they had enrolled a substantial majority of the workforce.

Starting in mid-1967 it took less than a year at Ford to sign up more than 50% of the coloured workforce. The union began holding regular general meetings in the community for the new membership. In April 1968, after ten months of organizing, the union elected an interim branch committee to administer the union's affairs, a leadership that could come out publicly as advocates of the union. After it became a formally registered union and gained entry to the IC in 1971, NUMARWOSA leaders began planning a more ambitious strategy of national industrial unionism. As it was slowly elaborated over the years 1971-1973, the strategy entailed an extension of its organizing efforts to Durban and the Transvaal, mergers with other unions organizing automobile workers, and the commitment to organizing on a non-racial basis.[16]

NUMARWOSA's Executive Council took its first policy decision to approach African workers in late 1972.[17] Its initial attempts were unsuccessful, partly because its organizing efforts were dissipated

across Port Elizabeth, East London and Uitenhage, and partly because, before the 1973 Durban strikes, there was no national impetus supporting African worker organization.

Moreover, there were significant legal obstacles: as a registered union, NUMARWOSA could not have African members. The union initially sent stop order forms to the companies they thought would enroll African workers, hoping to create a *fait accompli*. Management rejected this approach, and NUMARWOSA's leaders had to find ways to bypass the legal restrictions on African representation in registered unions. In April 1973, the union adopted a familiar strategy through which coloured and white unions had long dominated African workers: it established a parallel union, the United Automobile, Rubber, and Allied Workers Union of South Africa [UAW].

The aim behind the new approach was to organize Africans until the UAW's strength was comparable to NUMARWOSA's and then to merge the two organizations once the legal situation allowed such a move. In contrast to the typical TUCSA parallel union, whose leaders were appointed by the executive of the all-white union, the UAW would have leaders elected by the members, and a separate executive which could take decisions on behalf of the membership. The two unions held joint meetings, and formed a combined Advisory Council on which sat representatives from the executives of both organizations.[18] The UAW was never seen by NUMARWOSA as a means of control over Africans, nor as a permanent structure, but as nothing more than a tactical device for organizing Africans into one union of auto workers, once the legal climate permitted. Though UAW could not yet have recognized shop stewards on the factory floor, its leaders functioned as *de facto* stewards, who would be brought into NUMARWOSA's existing structures after the two unions united. The merger would finally occur in October 1980: NUMARWOSA, UAW, and the WPMWU joined to form the National Automobile and Allied Workers Union [NAAWU], the first truly national industrial union within the emerging union movement.[19]

C. FACTORY FLOOR ORGANIZATION AT VOLKSWAGEN

Volkswagen began hiring coloureds only in 1968, and NUMARWOSA immediately began organizing them.[20] In May 1969 more than 50% of the coloureds at Volkswagen were organized, and NUMARWOSA was soon formally recognized by management. At that point, Volkswagen management took the extremely rare step of introducing a Liaison Committee as a forum to address minor grievances of African workers. Though Volkswagen workers would soon challenge it's structure, the Liaison Committee at first operated as in other companies in South Africa: worker members and the secretary, Elias Jonas, were appointed by management, rather than elected by the workers.[21]

By contrast to NUMARWOSA's rapid gains among coloured workers, the process of organizing African workers was slow and painstaking, given their exclusion from the Labour Relations Act. Albert Gomomo was a worker in the Printing Department, which was in the area adjacent to Scoma, who worked in Dealer Aids. Gomomo had been a local activist in the PAC before it was banned, and had worked at the Gubb and Inggs woolwashery in the 1950s before coming to Volkswagen. Gubb and Inggs was near the Fine Wools plant, and Gomomo had been exposed to the TWIU activists who once organized in that plant. He was thus knowledgeable about trade unions and had a clear political perspective before coming to Volkswagen. Scoma did not know Gomomo, but Gomomo knew him, as Scoma was a player on the Swallows rugby club, which Gomomo served as an official.

Gomomo approached Scoma, and their first discussions focused on rugby. Only later did they focus on ANC and PAC politics. But Gomomo gradually encouraged Scoma to come forward and take a more active role in building organization at Volkswagen. The workers' mounting complaints about the Liaison Committee spurred them to discuss trade unionism.

Their first step was to talk with other workers in their respective departments whom they knew and trusted. Sometimes they would talk during lunch, or outside the factory after work in shebeens. They targeted other elder workers who had some experience of the ANC and PAC in the 1950s, and who had some experience in the trade union movement at that time. In their forays around the plant they would often encounter such workers, as many Volkswagen employees had worked at Fine Wools as their

first job. Mongameli Davids and a Mr. Ndingane were among the first to enter the network. They were, on their own initiative, working in a similar fashion in their own departments, finding three or four like-minded workers to engage in regular discussions. They worked secretly, linking back to Gomomo, in a cell system somewhat analogous to that developed in political struggle in the late 1950s.

In developing their organization, the network members discussed their general approach. They wanted to build a union, but realized that such a task was impossible for African workers at that time. They also developed their own critique of the failings of SACTU, in particular of its close links to the ANC, which saw committee members of the one organization serving on the committee of the other. As Scoma put it,

> That is a mistake. If the ANC is banned, it stands to reason SACTU is also going to be banned. Now in order to avoid that, we did not want to align ourself with the ANC directly. We wanted to be an independent body.

Independence paid another dividend: the nascent organization was non-partisan, and attracted activists from the camps of both exile organizations, as well as apolitical workers. Furthermore, the political independence of the initiative helped reduce ordinary workers' fears of joining an organization whose membership could be construed as "political." The early 1970s were so repressive that even a hint of connection to the banned liberation movements could result in intervention by the security police; the union's political strategy helped remove their efforts from the political field, and altered ordinary workers' calculus of participation in favor of engagement.

After the Liaison Committee was introduced, and workers became disenchanted with what they perceived as the stooge-like behavior of the management-appointed workers, the secret network came upon the idea that they could take over the Liaison Committee as a first step towards developing a union. Gomomo secretly introduced Scoma to contacts in other areas of the factory, canvassing them about putting him onto the Committee to ensure that such a step would not be seen as selling out to management. Gomomo recruited his younger brother, John Gomomo, as another candidate for the Committee.[22] Both Scoma and John Gomomo had excellent work records, so neither could be easily victimized, and they were not members of the banned political organizations. They could come forward as acceptable public fronts for the growing network.[23]

Scoma and Gomomo approached management to complain about the behavior of the management appointees to the Liaison Committee, and won the right to elect African workers to the structure. In 1971 both became members of the Committee, and once elected, they were able to win the appointment of a new secretary, Elcott Rhoxa, a staunch member of their circle. From the Liaison Committee they began to take up workers' grievances, operating as quasi-shop stewards. Much of their time was occupied fighting unfair dismissals and job upgrading cases, but they also pushed the company to finance community creches, a scholarship scheme for workers' children, and a sports stadium for Kwanobuhle township.

Targeting the Liaison Committee was strategically wise. Volkswagen had itself established the committee, and it was less threatening to management to mobilize workers around its inadequacies than it was to organize a union. Ordinary workers would feel more comfortable enlisting in the project, as their fear of victimization by management was reduced. In this way, the activists' strategy helped reduce an important obstacle for ordinary workers to join the organization.

The takeover of the Liaison Committee did not occur in a vacuum. From Scoma's first days on the Committee he had begun discussions with Chris "Papa" Williams, then NUMARWOSA President, and one of the strongest advocates in the union for the new policy of organizing Africans. Williams had been involved in non-racial rugby as a coach and manager, and, fortuitously, frequently found himself working in Albert Gomomo's department at Volkswagen. Through Gomomo the NUMARWOSA President was in close contact with the growing informal network among African workers. Scoma also had a number of close friends among coloured workers, against whom he played in local friendly rugby matches, and whom he knew from rugby administration. Through them he met the other

NUMARWOSA shop stewards and began to cement friendships. The NUMARWOSA shop stewards and the insurgent Liaison Committee members began to meet regularly prior to Committee meetings, to discuss the agenda, and to ensure that the subject matter of the Liaison Committee did not undermine what the union was simultaneously negotiating with management. In this way the coloured union ensured they would not be undercut by African workers, and also that workers would present a united front to management. Their joint work developed to the point where the NUMARWOSA shop steward and the Liaison Committee members met routinely to discuss all matters brought up before management.

These informal joint meetings were in place by 1973 when NUMARWOSA decided to form the UAW. Indeed, as Williams was one of the stronger advocates of the NUMARWOSA policy, it is highly likely that his experience with Gomomo and the other African workers at Volkswagen influenced his thinking on the broader union policy, as he had very direct and practical experience that such bonds could in fact be built.

With the creation of the UAW - at least on paper - the NUMARWOSA activists began wooing African workers. At Volkswagen the policy proceeded slowly, as the shop stewards invited the Liaison Committee insurgents to the NUMARWOSA offices in Port Elizabeth, and to the coloured union's offices in Uitenhage to discuss their joint problems. Slowly the idea developed that the Liaison Committee could serve as a base from which to organize African workers into the UAW, and seek some form of recognition from management.

The social networks, which were the foundation on which the union grew, were not limited to those between coloured activists in NUMARWOSA and Africans on the Liaison Committee. As the network Gomomo constructed was non-partisan, it intersected the ANC's clandestine cell system. Working underground, Congress members in Volkswagen strove to build the UAW by encouraging those within their influence to join.[24]

As Vuyo Kwinana reflected,

> We knew NUMARWOSA was very powerful as a trade union. We had no doubts about it, but our main purpose was to bring the black workforce over to NUMARWOSA's side....We fully influenced our people to join UAW and join NUMARWOSA.

Kwinana had no problems building a union which was politically "independent" from his own organization, nor was he under instructions to penetrate Volkswagen. But after experiencing discrimination in the company, he decided to help organize the workforce:

> I had to contact my organization afterwards, and told them about the plight of the workers. Then they said, "Do influence the workers as much as possible. We will try and assist you if we can." So my work was to destroy the Liaison Committee and establish a trade union at VW. That was my prime duties as an ANC worker, as an ANC member.

Through workers like Kwinana the cells influenced the Liaison Committee members to "motivate them what direction to take, what strategy to apply."

A cell member would secretly approach workers in his department whom he trusted and, after talking with them at length, would encourage them to move into other areas of the factory, from where they would remain in touch with him on a regular basis. Kwinana described the typical manner in which the cells - without announcing their identity - would influence workers:

> Scoma is in my department. He reports to me practically every day what their plans are in the Liaison Committee. We in turn, investigate from NUMARWOSA, because a friend of mine is...a coloured shop steward at Body Shop. He draws information from

> this coloured chap, and bring them to us. And we sit down to analyze the information brought by this coloured and to the Liaison Committee we said, "This is wrong. These people must not move this way, they must move this direction." And then we start to influence now and encourage the Liaison Committee to move in this line.

These individuals almost never became shop stewards or office-bearers of the union, but instead kept a low profile as ordinary workers on the floor, from where they could quietly exert their influence by *discussing issues with other workers.*

Themba Dyassi was a central figure in the clandestine system. He was a member of Kwinana's cell, and a welder in the Body Shop. He first became involved in politics at school in the late 1940s, and after being expelled found work in Uitenhage with a building contractor, but lost his job in the victimization which followed the November 1952 Port Elizabeth stay-at-home.[25] After finding work at Goodyear in Uitenhage, he entered the ANC cell structures, from where he was eventually recruited into MK. He was arrested in April 1964 while preparing to leave the country for military training. Sentenced to 2 1/2 years for membership in the ANC, he served most of his time on Robben Island, where he decided that upon his release he would return to factory work and attempt to build trade unions. In 1967 he got a job at GKV in Uitenhage, and after a brief spell back at Goodyear took a job at Volkswagen in late 1974. Dyassi deliberately avoided taking a leadership role in the union, and especially avoided becoming a shop steward. He preferred to remain on the line:

> Being a shop steward is a very difficult job because most of the time you are at the offices. But being a worker, we are amongst workers. You can actually see what is happening. Being a shop steward you are told what was happening there at the work place.

From his position on the floor Dyassi could directly influence workers in his area, bring them into the union, and mediate between ordinary workers and the stewards. He recruited promising individuals into the union and into the ANC underground structure, and provided valuable political education and discipline, especially to younger members. He was part of the bedrock structure of both the union and the ANC: both organizations' direct link to ordinary workers whom the movements wanted to mobilize.

The ANC cell network operated inside the factory, during lunch times and breaks, and outside the factory in the townships.

> We met informally outside the factory in the cell structure....we would ask a chap from VW, especially the coloureds, to come and drink with us over the Saturday, then we start questioning him, "What do you think about this and that?" We found that, more or less, they are very positive, they want to work closer, and sympathized greatly with the African. So we saw very fertile ground for us to influence them.

The coloured worker would not have been aware that he was meeting with the underground; as far as he understood, he was meeting ordinary Volkswagen workers in a social gathering at which they "talked shop." Through these networks the cell members gained a broad purchase on developments inside Volkswagen, and given the members' commitments to building the union, solidified its presence in the factory.

In Volkswagen NUMARWOSA developed something it lacked in virtually all its other workplaces: extremely close links between its leaders and prominent African workers who had legitimacy in the eyes of the African workforce. These connections made it far easier to present the idea of developing the UAW, which was, after all, a parallel union that could easily be construed as part of an oppressive strategy by coloured workers to dominate Africans. To have workers like Albert Gomomo and Vuyo Kwinana as advocates of the UAW helped clear away any misgivings about the organization's *bona fides*.

For reasons which remain unclear, the organizing drive only got started in 1975, perhaps because

of NUMARWOSA's preoccupation with withdrawing from TUCSA. But the Liaison insurgents affiliated to the UAW launched another drive between 1976 and early 1977. Volkswagen management was well aware that the Liaison insurgents were organizing a union, but they had no idea how successful the drive had been. They were soon to find out. In mid-1977 an unlikely pair of visitors appeared at the plant one day to meet the Managing Director, Peter Searle and Ollie Rademeyer, the Industrial Relations Director. The delegation consisted of Werner Thonnessen, Assistant General Secretary of the International Metalworkers Federation, visiting South Africa for meetings of the South African Coordinating Council of the IMF, and Johnny Mke, President of the UAW. It was no mere courtesy call: Thonnessen and Mke brought with them stop order forms signed by more than 60% of Volkswagen's African employees. Management quickly decided that UAW was supported by the African workers, and recognized it. Thus, well before the Wiehahn labor law reforms were announced, Volkswagen recognized the UAW, gave them stop-order facilities, and scrapped the Liaison Committee. To comply with existing law the members' stop orders were technically defined as contributions to a burial fund.

The four insurgent members of the Liaison committee immediately stood for election as UAW shop stewards, entering the structure established by the coloured union in the early 1970s. Scoma and John Gomomo were elected to the corps of 4 UAW and 4 NUMARWOSA stewards,[26] and were taken on shop steward training courses conducted by NUMARWOSA.[27] The two unions shared offices, held joint meetings, and made decisions together in a Branch Executive Committee which included elected representatives from both. UAW observers sat with NUMARWOSA in the Industrial Council, and together they plotted their strategy there. By the following year they were discussing strategies for merging the two unions. Thus, on the shop floor, the Liaison Committee insurgents - now recast in the role of UAW shop stewards - and the NUMARWOSA activists were realizing the strategy developed within NUMARWOSA in 1972-73 to build one non-racial industrial union of automobile workers.

What made the Volkswagen experience unusual is that at no other plant in the entire country did NUMARWOSA-UAW succeed in unifying coloureds and Africans into a single unit. At Ford a racial division of labor meant that coloureds were congregated at its Neave plant, while its Struandale Engine and Cortina Plants had almost entirely African workforces. UAW organized workers at Engine Plant, but they never successfully united with NUMARWOSA at Neave, the way the two unions had done at Volkswagen. Nor did UAW succeed at the much larger Cortina assembly plant. Instead, after a series of wildcat strikes in late 1979 and early 1980 this plant was to be organized by a breakaway African grouping which would soon form the Motor Assembly and Components Workers Union [MACWUSA]. At General Motors, too, the NUMARWOSA branch was long hostile to organizing Africans, and UAW never took off. After 1980 the overwhelming majority of African workers at GM would also be organized by MACWUSA.

IV: FRIENDSHIP AND FAMILIARITY: SOCIAL NETWORKS OF SOLIDARITY

An analysis of the workplace and labor process would certainly be important in accounting for why it was that *unions* formed as collective responses to shared conditions.[28] Workers' cross-race solidarity, however, cannot be explained simply by reference to their insertion into a labor process which engendered a sense of cooperation amongst workers and grievances against management. Indeed, very similar working conditions were present in the plants when whites were the bulk of semi-skilled operatives, and did not encourage the development of solidarity among them. It certainly did not foster solidarity between white and black workers when the latter came into the factories in the 1960s. Indeed, similar conditions of work were present in the Port Elizabeth auto plants, and workers there did not develop a collective body linking coloureds and Africans. An explanation of cross-race solidarity must therefore take into account social relations outside the factory.

A. APARTHEID'S CHICKENS COMING HOME TO ROOST: THE CONSEQUENCES OF KABAH'S FAILED REMOVAL

1. The Uneven Application of Racial Separation

Since the 1840s, Uitenhage's African population has resided in the Kabah Location. Kabah's population was always racially diverse: between the 1930s and 1950s coloureds made up approximately 25% of those living in the "African" location. From the 1950s, however, many coloureds left Kabah as new Municipally-built sub-economic and economic letting schemes were started in Gerald Smith and Thomas Gamble townships, and a freehold private housing development opened known as Jubilee Park. Nonetheless, many coloureds remained behind in Kabah even into the 1970s, and these coloured housing schemes were in fact built in extremely close proximity to the Location. Social contact between Africans and coloureds was the norm rather than the exception, and indeed, before the passage of the Population Registration Act in 1950 and the application of the Pass Laws for Africans, the line separating coloureds from Africans was rather fluid, more notional than statutory.

One of the main aims of apartheid legislation after 1948 was not simply the spatial segregation of residential areas, but the thorough separation of social, political, and economic activities. Group Areas, for example, were drawn in such a manner that a member of a certain group would not need to traverse another race's Group Area on the way to work or to shop. Virtually any form of contact was made extremely difficult. Other pieces of legislation enshrined this racist principle: new laws banned cross-racial sex or marriage, separate educational systems kept school children apart, while the Labour Relations Act of 1956 included clauses prohibiting different races from joining the same trade union.

Of course if the "blueprint's" aim was to achieve full segregation, it proved extremely difficult in practice to sort out the diverse, racially heterogeneous areas of certain cities, especially in the Cape Province where Africans, coloureds, and Indians all had long traditions of property ownership in areas zoned for white occupation under the Group Areas Act. The extent of heterogeneity differed from place to place, while the struggle to impose apartheid legislation proceeded at an uneven pace and was often resisted by local authorities.[29]

In Uitenhage, the central state's desire forcibly to remove Kabah consistently came undone, through a combination of resistance by the local Council, shortage of funds at the national level, and general bureaucratic inefficiency. Removals from Kabah to the new African township at Kwanobuhle began only in 1968, and even then, at such a slow pace that Kabah's African population remained relatively intact through the 1970s. With a huge urban influx due to the disastrous drought of the early 1980s, Kabah's population in 1985 was as large as ever. Its persistence was a continued affront to apartheid planners' dreams for a racially ordered community.[30] In Port Elizabeth, on the other hand, the extensive historical practices of local segregation, coupled with the removal of Africans from Korsten after 1955 meant that Africans and coloureds were almost entirely separated from one another by 1957-58.[31]

2. Contact Across the Divide

In contrast to the racially-engineered geography of Port Elizabeth, Kabah's delayed removal created structural possibilities well into the 1980s for contact between Africans and coloureds, who were either living in the same neighborhood or in close proximity. Most of these contacts grow out of the long history of contact in the community before it began to be chopped apart on the Procrustean bed of apartheid planning.

Workers who grew up in Kabah have rich memories of contact with people from other races. Most coloureds lived in the south-eastern section of Kabah, the Baines Road and Middle Street area. One African worker remembered the area clearly:

Middle Street, the street that was actually the dividing street between the coloureds and

> the Africans....So we used to grow up and play in the same street with the coloureds...that's where we got our Afrikaans. I didn't get my Afrikaans in school....We sort of got friendly with the coloureds. We regarded ourselves as one people.

The same worker recalls going to church services at the mostly coloured Apostolic Faith church and at the Dale Street Congregational Church, the latter under the leadership of Rev. C.W. Hendrickse and later, his son, Rev. Alan Hendrickse.

Other workers recall joining with coloured children to look after livestock on the north-eastern edge of Kabah. The bush provided respite for children in many ways, as one coloured worker recalled:

> Sometimes on hot days, there was a big dam...there at the other side of the hill, the other side of the bosch. We'd go there, learning each other how to fish....Well, we had no fishing rods. If you see a fish you have got a big stick, you just hit that fish with that stick. Sometimes you are fortunate, sometimes you are not fortunate.

A coloured worker, who grew up with Africans in Blikkiesdorp, across Maduna Road from the main area of Kabah, recalled what he and his friends did for entertainment:

> It was near to the bush, we as guys got a big place alone, where we always played rugby, go and play in the bush, cowboys and crooks. It was a lot of fun to live there.

The statutorily-imposed definitions of race and residential segregation upset what were in fact sometimes extremely close and comfortable relations between different "races." But the official categories did not mesh with people's direct experience in more ways than one. Color, alone, was hardly a clear demarcation of official racial identity, as one worker explained:

> You sometimes cannot easily identify a coloured from a black man. You can only identify him by listening to his speech, and you say, "Hey, this is a coloured man. I didn't know he was a coloured." Most people think that I'm a coloured...because of the color of my skin. It's what happens in most cases.

For the people themselves, social practices, such as language or adherence to African customary practices like circumcision and *lobola* were more crucial to determining group inclusion than were biological considerations, such as skin color or facial features. Social practices are of course far more malleable than biological characteristics, and people can adopt or reject certain practices for a variety of reasons.

Adoption came about through intermarriage in at least two cases among those interviewed. The mother of the worker who above described the Middle Street area, was the daughter of a Sotho woman and a coloured man, and was officially classified as coloured; the workers' father was a Xhosa. As a child the worker learned to speak Xhosa, Afrikaans, and seSotho. But his mother's brothers and sisters have coloured spouses, live in Uitenhage's coloured areas, and are legally considered to be coloured people. While his brothers and sisters are legally African, his cousins are legally coloured. This didn't present a problem for the worker concerned:

> I see them as my brothers and sisters. We are in fact one in the same people who see no difference at all. As far as they are concerned, I usually go there and sleep overnight and their friends in turn take us as their brothers and sisters. And also when they do come over to this end our brothers and sisters and our friends take them as the same.

Nor did the worker experience strife with his cousins over participation in his customs:

> When we do make our customs, some of them attend, because when there is meat, we *braai* [barbecue] the meat, cook the meat, they take it, they have no objections at all. And I've seen lately that the coloureds also have adopted some of our customs, because some of the coloureds are actually African people. If your mother is coloured and your

> father is black, and you choose to be coloured, you go and live in a coloured area and you grow up as a coloured, but since your father was an African, you still have to abide by your father's customs. And unfortunately for you, you are staying in a coloured area where these customs are not being practiced. But, I've seen changes lately that most of the coloureds [who have African fathers] are being circumcised.

These cases raise complicated questions about the processes through which people develop racial identities, a subject beyond the theoretical scope of this work. However, at a more prosaic level the social practices described above led to important interactions across legally-constituted communities, which reveal a great deal about workers' actual lived experience of race.

In the case of this particular worker, he regularly (though not frequently) had occasion to visit relatives in the coloured areas and for them to visit him in Kwanobuhle. Nor were the visits fleeting encounters for trivial reasons, but were in fact sustained over weekends, and were organized around important, meaningful family rituals. For many other workers, visits across the apartheid divides were extremely common, and covered a range of activities from spur-of-the-moment socializing, to political and union gatherings, to sports.

Almost two-thirds of the Volkswagen workers interviewed visited across the community/race divide on a regular basis. Well more than half the African workers visited into coloured communities, while almost all the coloured workers visited into African communities. On average, African workers paid more than 3 visits a month to coloured communities, while coloured workers paid just under 10 visits a month to African communities. Over half the workers interviewed visited across the racial divide at least once a month. A small number visited less frequently, while fewer than 4 in 10 never paid such visits.

By contrast, at General Motors African and coloured workers socialize across the racial divide rather less frequently than Volkswagen workers. African workers visited coloured areas an average of 1.5 times per month, while coloured workers visited African areas on average 3 times per month. One quarter of the coloureds and a third of the African workers interviewed at GM paid one or more visits across the racial divide. However, well more than two-thirds of all workers paid less than one visit per month, or never visited at all.[32]

The figures for coloured workers at GM roughly parallel the findings from Marianne Roux's 1973 survey of coloured automobile workers in Port Elizabeth. She found that only 22% of the coloured workers interviewed paid one or more visits to African work friends in the month prior to being surveyed. These figures are not due to a general lack of sociability among coloured workers in Port Elizabeth: 84% of the workers surveyed had paid one or more visits to other coloured work friends during the same period.[33] The image which emerges is of very frequent contact between Africans and coloureds in Uitenhage, though rather greater frequency of contact by coloureds to African areas than the reverse, but of very little similar cross-race contact between Port Elizabeth Africans and coloureds.

In contrast to the apartheid ideal of total separation, the statutory divisions between Africans and coloureds broke down in practice as a result of social interaction in a variety of spheres: people joined together in pubs, weekend parties, sport, churches, even in inter-marriage. In this wide range of activities African and coloured workers daily created social bonds of friendship and affection, contacts in which they learned first-hand of each other's lives, and came to share experiences and understandings. In large measure these exchanges formed the social basis of solidarity which supports a wide range of oppositional and cross-race social movement activity. Of course the imposition of a more thorough-going apartheid in Port Elizabeth did not prevent the emergence of strong social movements there, but it did profoundly shape the character of those movements, rendering it far more difficult for joint involvement of Africans and coloureds in the same project.

Of all the areas of social interaction, one in particular proved most important as the meeting ground between African and coloured auto workers. For both African and coloured men sport was one of the most important areas of community activity, and no sport had a greater purchase on their loyalty

than does rugby football. It was the dominant group sport among young African and coloured workers growing up in the Eastern Cape from the 1940s to the 1960s, and the way it was played in the two towns captures the differences in social interaction between Africans and coloureds in Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth.

B. KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE BALL: RUGBY, INTERACTION, AND SOLIDARITY

1. The Game of Choice

Rugby football is commonly associated with South Africa's white population, especially Afrikaners, where it assumes the dimensions of a civil religion.[34] In most of South Africa rugby is a white game, while blacks largely follow and participate in other sports such as cricket, road running, boxing, and of most importance, soccer. In the Eastern Cape, however, rugby has long been the game of choice for both African and coloured people, and is followed with religious fervor.[35] It is occasionally played between white and black teams, but more commonly, it is a game played by and between coloureds and Africans. Rugby is thus an important arena in which the two groups are brought together socially on a routine basis.

Rugby was imported to the Eastern Cape by British missionaries, and formed an important part of the curriculum at mission schools. In the missionaries' perspective, proper training in cricket and rugby were considered crucial to weaning Africans from tribal pursuits and fostering an educated, assimilated elite on an English model.[36] The first sides were based at these educational institutions. The first adult club was formed in Port Elizabeth in 1887, and the game quickly spread to towns throughout the region.[37]

According to Peires, since the 19th century the game has been closely associated with the central concerns of black communities, serving not only as entertainment, but "as a vehicle of popular culture and as an outlet for personal achievement and ambition" which always attracted the leading civic and intellectual figures. In communities with few avenues for personal or political expression, "energies which might otherwise have been devoted to local or national service were displaced into rugby." Indeed, in the last twenty years, Peires convincingly argues, rugby was transformed from a substitute for politics to "an arena of national struggle, attacking a particularly vulnerable heel of the apartheid state."

Such a transformation was aided by the National Party's own politicization of sport and its application of rigid apartheid to such pursuits. Sport *per se* could not be banned, though incredible obstacles could be thrown in the way of sports administrators and players.[38] Administrative pressures could be placed on undesirable sides or breakaway unions, by denying clubs access to facilities. In fact, it was the state's refusal in 1973 to recognize the Kwazakhele Rugby Union [KWARU], which had broken away from the official and racially-exclusive South African African Rugby Board [SAARB], which pushed KWARU into the arms of the South African Rugby Union [SARU], an affiliate of the anti-apartheid South African Council on Sport [SACOS]. KWARU was excluded from the well-serviced stadium in Kwazakhele, and state radio refused to broadcast the Union's matches. The heavy-handed action by the state rallied popular sentiment to KWARU, and virtually all of the better players and teams in Port Elizabeth moved over to the new non-racial union. KWARU became a nesting ground for non-racial political activists, including both Black Consciousness and ANC-aligned figures, who endorsed the goals of non-racial sport and opposition to state policy.

The government's encouragement of the game, if only on a racially divided basis, created space for people to operate and (within limits) to pursue their own agendas. Rugby matches were among the only places where blacks could legally gather into large crowds, and the events could be quickly transformed into political events at half-time or during a break in play: an impromptu speech might be made, a freedom song sung, a hat passed around for a political cause, or a moment of silence observed. At a less overt level, the political symbolism would not be lost on the audience if, at the occasional match between black and white sides, the black team demolished its opponent.[39]

2. Non-Racial Rugby and Social Interaction in Uitenhage

At an organized level, Uitenhage teams had long played together in "friendly" matches pitting sides from Kabah or Kwanobuhle against sides from the coloured areas or from the district. Such contact grew much more frequent when both coloured and African sides broke away in the 1970s from their respective racially-exclusive official bodies to join the SARU-affiliated Uitenhage and District Rugby Union where they would play fixtures together on a regular basis, and would compete for local cups and the Union and SARU championships. By contrast, after KWARU broke away from the SAARB, it formed a separate union within SACOS, while coloured sides in Port Elizabeth continued to play under SARU's Eastern Province Rugby Union. Thus sides from Port Elizabeth's African and coloured townships would not play together within the same league, but only on the occasional friendly basis, or at the level of inter-provincial play for the SARU championship.

Rugby brought African and coloured people in Uitenhage into extremely close contact. With the rising power of the SACOS-affiliated SARU in Uitenhage, teams began to integrate: in small numbers Africans joined once all-coloured teams, like Excelsiors, and some coloureds joined African sides, such as Swallows. These "cross-overs" were welcomed into the full range of club activity, which brought them into regular contact with teammates from across the race divide. One coloured worker who joined Swallows journeyed regularly to Kwanobuhle for practice and for matches. As a result, he established close friendships with his teammates, and would visit frequently:

> [Before the emergency] That was every weekend. I stay overnight sometimes in 'Nobuhle and in Langa location. Oh, I have got a lot of friends there. I've got a lot of African friends.

This particular form of integration was relatively unusual, as most teams remained strongly based in neighborhoods, and with the consolidation of Group Areas from the late 1960s, the racial separation of communities largely defined the character of the teams.

Notwithstanding the internal composition of the sides, during the season clubs affiliated to the Uitenhage and District Rugby Union would play each other every weekend, which meant that for some period of time coloureds would visit African townships and Africans would visit coloured areas. Teams would at least travel through different communities and players would be exposed to conditions faced by others. As one African worker put it:

> We happen to be staying together. Even in my team, we've got some coloured chaps, and even in my [rugby] Union we've got a coloured team from Rosedale and Gamble. So on weekends, sometimes you play there during the weekends, or they come here, or we play at Langa. Always together.

The keen dedication and single-mindedness sportsmen show on the field extended to their entertainments after the match: the game would often be but a prelude to a full evening or even weekend of socializing:

> Sometimes we play at their places. Some of the chaps they slept there. [Then] they take their coloured chaps, their friends which they have there, to Kwanobuhle.

The parties are often raucous affairs of singing and dancing, well supplied with barbecued meat and alcohol, but with a strong camaraderie among teammates, as well as between members of opposing sides. In this way people from different officially-designated races spent considerable time together in the intimate, personal space of a family home.

3. A Tale of Two Unions: NAAWU and the Uitenhage and District Rugby Union

Relationships established through rugby for purely social purposes played an important role in cementing

ties between workers which were drawn upon in the union's struggle for recognition and consolidation. Rugby was not simply a venue for social interaction between coloureds and Africans, but a site of contact between coloured and African *workers*. Workers in Uitenhage were keen sportsmen, both as participants and spectators. Half of those interviewed were themselves either active sportsmen or former athletes who had become administrators of sports clubs or leagues. Many more were simply spectators or club supporters. Though some of the shop stewards were retired athletes, none were simultaneously involved in sport and union activities, as sport consumed too much time.

Some of the key activists in the formation of the union forged their initial acquaintances and friendships on the rugby field. These relationships could be drawn upon in the workplace by the union struggling for recognition. Elijah Antonie, for example, was a player on Swallows football club when Albert Gomomo was an administrator, where Gomomo could take the measure of the man.

Finally, sport provided a forum for conscientization, for the development and transmission of ideas which could serve simultaneously to promote athletic and workplace unity between coloured and Africans. SARU had been launched in 1962, but made no inroads among African rugby players in the Eastern Cape until the early 1970s. KWARU's break with the SAARB was driven by administrative conflicts rather than principle, and initially it sought refuge as a separate union under SAARB, rather than taking up sides with SARU. It was only in 1973, after the SAARB - backed up by the state - rejected KWARU's application that the new union joined the ranks of non-racial rugby. The same situation obtained in Uitenhage, where the apartheid rugby bodies remained strong into the early 1970s. It was only after KWARU's break from the racial structures that Uitenhage sportsmen began discussing the possibilities of non-racial sport.

KWARU's existence provided an exit option for Uitenhage clubs dissatisfied - for whatever reason - with the Uitenhage African Rugby Board (affiliated to the SAARB). After the 1974 season the first split in the Uitenhage body occurred when one African team, Star of Hope, jumped to KWARU. The breakaway encouraged others to do the same, but sports activists on the Swallows Rugby Football Club had a more sophisticated strategy in mind.

Swallows was a powerful club in the Uitenhage African Rugby Board, fielding impressive teams in all three divisions, and it was one of the biggest clubs in the Board. But it also contained a large number of conscientized political and union activists who carried ulterior agendas with them into the club rooms.

Elcott Rhoxa was one such activist. He was once a player and later served as an official for Swallows. After obtaining his BA degree from the University of Fort Hare, he went to work at Volkswagen, where he became a member of the inner circle of union activists around Albert Gomomo - who was himself an official of Swallows - building representative shop floor structures for Africans and seeking unity with NUMARWOSA. When the union insurgents took over Volkswagen's Liaison Committee in the early 1970s, Rhoxa was elected as the Committee's secretary.

Rhoxa began his career as a sports activist while at Fort Hare playing in the SARU-affiliated South Eastern District Rugby Union, where he was recruited to the cause of non-racial sport by the Union's vice-president, a staunch member of the Pan Africanist Congress. Rhoxa's adherence to non-racial sport grew out of a principle:

> We should integrate so that...a player can be judged according to his merit. We don't want to see people playing according to their racial grouping....So we felt we should have one board where everybody's talent or performance can be measured, because we cannot know if I am a star in an African Board and this one is a star in a coloured Board, and you are a star in a white Board, then we will not know actually who is a star in South Africa. What we wanted was that South Africa be represented by all people who live in it.

His concluding line not only echoes the Freedom Charter, but also expresses an elemental concept of

justice and equality that individuals should be allowed to succeed or fail on their own merit.

But the cause of non-racial sport was promoted for both principled and instrumental reasons. According to Rhoxa, the attack on racial sporting structures simultaneously promoted the pursuit of broader goals extending well beyond the touch-lines on the rugby field:

> I felt that it is important now to politicize our members and the community through rugby, and then rugby now will be used as a platform to express our political aspiration. Rugby should not be played for mere pleasure. We should now use rugby as a weapon to break the racial attitude of the South African government. We felt that we should use it as a platform to conscientize our members. Because after we have joined the non-racial sport we started talking about the non-racial policy, how important, how advantageous it will be to us. And then the principles and policy of the African National Congress now also came into meetings, where it was also incorporated in the whole thing.

Where open political organization was impossible in the vicious repression of the 1960s, sport presented an opportunity for continued activity:

> If we establish a political organization, it will be in jeopardy, because it's easy for the government to ban it. But it will be very difficult for the government to ban sport, and say people should not play sport. But now you must use sport as a channel through which we can express our aspiration. What was important was that people should be rallied in that [non-racial] direction, they should be reorganized and repoliticized, so that they should know how we should live in this country.

Rhoxa worked with a number of other activists. Ronnie Boyce was also a student at Fort Hare, and along with other graduates from Lovedale and Healdtown, joined the efforts to bring Uitenhage's African clubs over to the cause of non-racial sport. Boyce was one of the UAW's original complement of four shop stewards at Volkswagen. There were also a number of graduates of Limekhaya High School in Uitenhage and Newell High School in Port Elizabeth who joined their efforts, the latter spurred on by their involvement in the South African Students' Organisation [SASO] and the Black Consciousness Movement, both of which were extremely strong in Port Elizabeth. A younger generation of activists, raised in the student movement of the 1970s thus found common cause in sport with older workers and activists, such as Albert Gomomo and Scoma, who had direct experience of the 1950s and the repression of the next decade.

Rhoxa tells the story of Newell alumni on Swallows who were pressured into non-racial sport as a result of growing embarrassment at having to represent an all-African team in the official structures while playing friendly matches against their former school-mates, now firmly in the KWARU fold. The sports activists manipulated these sentiments to encourage especially the younger players - who usually had direct or indirect experience of the student movements burgeoning around the country in the wake of the Soweto uprising - to leave the SAARB. In addition to these more political motivations, the sports activists generously folded into the mixture more pragmatic arguments calculated to appeal to the player's ambitions: that by remaining in the racial structures they would never have the opportunity to compete at an international level and that the splits which had occurred - and which would increase - would rob them of effective competition as the best teams left for the non-racial fold.[40] His story provides an excellent example of how micromobilization contexts exert sometimes subtle moral suasion on potential recruits to a movement: activists may use the recruit's desire to be well thought of by his peers as a way of coaxing him into participation.

Swallows did break with the Uitenhage African Rugby Board, but instead of following the Star of Hope Club into KWARU, the non-racial activists steered the club into the SARU-affiliated Uitenhage and District Rugby Union, making Swallows the first African club to join coloured teams in the cause of non-racial sport. Rhoxa was elected as the Swallows delegate to approach SARU for applications:

> So we decided to join the Uitenhage and District Rugby Union, which was then all coloured, now to show the people that we didn't join the SARU fold just because we wanted to accommodate ourselves, but what made us join them is that we felt we have adopted the *principle* of non-racialism.

The principle was not uniformly accepted, however. Some Swallows players and officials stayed behind in the Uitenhage African Rugby Board, but even some of those who went over to Uitenhage and District maintained their old consciousness.

The non-racial sport activists used various educational means to change these African sportsmen's attitudes. The activists' would often sit down with younger players and "preach" non-racialism:

> Now, fresh chaps who have joined us, we are trying to show them that rugby is not playing only for mere enjoyment. We have another cause, it is a matter of principle now, and that they should not look on rugby just as a sport. Some of them still have their racial attitude. When we play there [in the coloured areas] you see them shouting, "Coloureds," and all that, they use the word, "hottentots," which is that word for coloured. We try and tell them that, no, they should not speak in that manner now, and that they should see coloureds irrespective of color as a brother, since we play under non-racial sport.

These discussions would take place informally and casually, among the players and officials:

> When we come to the meetings we are dealing only with the business, but outside when we meet, we speak rugby. We also talk about the subject of non-racialism, how important and how advantageous to us....We leave rugby practices, as we go home on the bus, we are watching sport, and during off-season, when we meet we have parties, we also talk about rugby.

In this way they hoped to consolidate the political project of building non-racial rugby in the town.

These discussions would include mostly Africans and some coloureds, both non-workers and workers, and among the latter would be a considerable number of Volkswagen employees. In addition to the activists, there were seven or eight Swallows players who were Volkswagen employees, as were the club's President, Secretary, and Vice-Secretary. The activists' preaching thus fell on a broader network of Volkswagen workers, who in turn could influence their co-workers.

But Rhoxa and the Swallows were not alone. Other activists in the UAW, such as Kenny Tshaka, were also active in non-racial rugby politics; he later became a member of the UAW and then NAAWU Executive Committees at Volkswagen, but in rugby circles he was one of the non-racial activists from Star of Hope who chose not to move to KWARU. Instead, he launched a new club, Lions, which affiliated to Uitenhage and District. He played a formidable role conscientizing the mostly younger players who joined his team in the politics of non-racialism.[41]

The efforts by African sports leaders to bring the most important clubs over to the non-racial sports movement parallels and reinforces the efforts by workplace leaders to build a united body under the auspices of NUMARWOSA. In both cases, coloured activists had built organizations in the 1960s - Uitenhage and Districts in the case of rugby and NUMARWOSA at the workplace - and had broken free of racially restrictive national bodies - the South African Rugby Federation and the Trade Union Council of South Africa - but had not succeeded in bridging the racial divide against which they were founded.

In both cases, on a very local level African activists were themselves developing an inclusive policy of non-racialism which encouraged them to look for opportunities for broader unity. Indeed, the search for sporting and workplace unity often involved the very same individuals. Albert Gomomo, a crucial figure in the organization of workers at Volkswagen was simultaneously a major figure in the

development of non-racial rugby. Gomomo happened to be working close to Chris "Papa" Williams, who was simultaneously a key administrator in SARU rugby and the President of NUMARWOSA. Through such personal and sometimes rather serendipitous processes activists from both sides in these two spheres found each other. Thus the familiarity which preexisted in rugby smoothed the process through which coloured and African activists organized on a non-racial basis in the workplace.

VI: WAR OF MANEUVER: THE GREAT STRIKE OF 1980 AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE UNION AT VOLKSWAGEN

Jurrie Harris and the rest of the NUMARWOSA-UAW negotiating team had only a vague idea what the next few weeks would hold for them when they convened a general meeting of Volkswagen workers on Sunday morning 15 June 1980 in Uitenhage's Jubilee Hall. The meeting was a report-back on the wage talks then taking place in the IC in Port Elizabeth. The talks deadlocked on the first day after NUMARWOSA-UAW demanded a "living wage" of R2.00 per hour, up from the prevailing minimum of R1.15, while the companies offered only R1.30. When the local magistrate banned the report-back as well as a hastily planned meeting later that day at a church in Kabah, the workers were incensed, and decided then and there to stop work the next day to continue the report back, this time on company premises.[42]

On 16 June workers showed up for work at the normal time, but gathered on the lawns in front of Managing Director Peter Searle's office, to receive the aborted report-back. They directed their shop stewards, Harris, Johnson, and Mpushe to negotiate directly with top management, fearing that if they left the factory premises they would be locked out, lose their leverage over the company, and with it any chance to bargain.

Instead of a meeting with management, the workers were addressed by the Labour Relations manager, Ivan Broderick, who told them management would respond to their demands, but only if they went back to work. His intervention was not, to say the least, well received. Scoma relates the events which followed:

> He promised Peter Searle that he knows Africans, so he will be able to speak to them. Then Africans showed him that he did not know them. They let him come into the group, then they surrounded him, they started to beat him.

Kwinana was also present at the meeting, and adds the following details:

> He wanted to address the workers himself, that's where he got the beating. Workers told him, "We are sick and tired of your tactics. You are not our leader. Our leaders are the shop stewards, and...we give our undertaking to the shop stewards to meet Peter Searle and top management, not you." We didn't recognize Broderick and the Labor Relations Department *en bloc*. We didn't want our complaints channeled through them. We want channels through our shop stewards and to the top management, because we wanted a direct reply.

The workers forcibly rejected management's preferred mode of communication, and replaced it with their own chosen form of negotiation. The company had recognized NUMARWOSA and later the UAW in the hope of having a negotiating partner who could speak for the entire workforce. Now that "partner" was speaking with a unified voice backed up by thousands of workers gathered together on the company grounds. These spokesmen were not chosen at the spur of the moment, but had spent ten years establishing structures in the factory and building their own credibility as the workers' democratically elected leaders.

The shop stewards remained locked in discussion with management until the early afternoon, and returned to the workers without a settlement, whereupon the workforce voted to strike. They walked out the gates, and triumphantly marched through "white" Uitenhage following a number of different paths back to their respective townships. The largest contingent, made up almost exclusively of

African workers, headed southwest back to Kwanobuhle, crossing a large cement bridge over the Swartkops River, and passing a huge, foul-smelling sewerage plant before arriving home in the African township. The other group - made up of both coloureds and Africans - headed northwest along Durban Street and into the central business district, where they turned north towards Kabah and towards the coloured townships stretching off towards the foot of the Groot Winterhoek mountains. At the fork where Kamesh and Maduna Roads intersect, the workers separated, each to their own racially segregated residential areas: Africans and some coloureds towards Kabah, the mass of the coloureds towards the townships of Gerald Smith, Thomas Gamble, and Rosedale. The geography of the workers' march out of the factory itself highlights the racial and residential divisions between workers which elsewhere have undercut concerted worker action, but which Volkswagen workers had been able to overcome.

Gcinuhlanga Gxowa participated in the walkout and march through town. "To me it was a new experience," he said, "because I was used to the school strikes, and it was my first year at work." Student strikes in 1977 had been violently suppressed by the SAP, but Gxowa was struck by the "system's" different reaction to the Volkswagen workers.

> Actually the police were just standing in the center of the town, when we were passing and moving as that *huge* group of people from work, moving through the town. They were standing. They couldn't do anything, because we were the strongest force that they had ever seen in Uitenhage, and it was just orderly, so nobody was fearing anything.

Kwinana marched with some measure of pain and foreboding.

> I know what happens, I know the aftermath of a breakdown, what follows, because I know. I am the first one to be sacked, because they know they don't want me at the factory, because I was convicted for ANC activity before.

Nonetheless he was jubilant.

> We are commanding. *We* are commanding. The workers are commanding now. No more the police or the Labour Relations Department.

A new era of industrial relations had begun.

The strike continued for another three weeks, during which time the workers met daily in the car park in front of the plant. There they would gather to receive report backs from the negotiators, and make collective decisions. In such a way workers could recreate the "collective worker" identity normally imposed by the factory and its division of labor, but weakened once they walked out the gates. The Uitenhage Black Civic Organisation, a civic body dominated by NUMARWOSA-UAW shop stewards, provided an organizational focus in the townships, holding meetings, distributing leaflets, and conducting house visits. Furthermore, the informal networks among shop stewards and workers, as well as the ANC cell system developed during the 1970s provided communication and support links between workers which bolstered the strike. The strike was eventually settled through the intervention of an IMF negotiator who held talks with Rademeyer to broker an agreement acceptable to both sides.[43]

The workers' return to Volkswagen was as significant as their departure, because it was as uneventful as the walkout had been dramatic. Once the union had agreed to the settlement, all the strikers returned to work *en masse*, leaving no doubt that they were the true force representing the workers. During the strike the company had tried many times to crack the workers' solidarity: the gates remained open, and it offered to grant the wage increase to any worker who returned; VW even hired a helicopter to drop leaflets in the townships promoting their offer. No more than fifty or sixty workers responded. But once the union made its agreement, everyone returned.

The conclusion of the strike reaffirmed and validated the workers' initial motivations to act: they had risked a great deal by striking, and had not only won important concessions, but emerged intact with no victimization by the company nor by the police. The lesson regarding the advantages of disciplined collective action was evident for all.

In the years following the strike, the newly-merged union, NAAWU, would use the its resources - the strength and legitimacy of the shop steward system, informal networks, international intervention, and most importantly, the solidarity between African and coloured workers - again and again in a protracted "war of position" with management. In the immediate aftermath of the strike it was the first workplace where the new unions won the right to full-time shop stewards, workers paid by the company, who spent their entire working day involved in union affairs.[44] By the mid-1980s NAAWU had 5 full-time and 26 part-time shop stewards, giving the union an extremely deep base on the shop floor. In building off of its initial success in 1980, it won further concessions regarding disciplinary and retrenchment procedures and protection from supervisorial abuses which provided substantial benefits to its members and expanded workers' control.

VI: CONCLUSION: SHOPFLOORS, RUGBY FIELDS, AND WORKER SOLIDARITY

The structure of residential life in Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth produced in Uitenhage many opportunities for cross-race contact between Africans and coloureds, while producing a far more thorough segregation in Port Elizabeth. The informal and formal networks described by the concept micromobilization context were heavily shaped by these social patterns, and tended to reproduce them. In Uitenhage these social networks tended to include Africans and coloureds, while in Port Elizabeth they did not, and tended to remain bottled up in workers' racially defined communities. In short, the micromobilization contexts - and the patterns of familiarity, trust, and affinity - crucial for building the union in Uitenhage were defined as much by class as by race, while in Port Elizabeth, race was a far more prominent factor.

Relationships between African and coloured union activists in the workplace were thus facilitated by a range of prior contacts growing out of Uitenhage's racially mixed Kabah Location. These contacts were most pronounced in the micromobilization context of rugby. Rugby brought ordinary workers together in meaningful relationships which provided Africans and coloureds sustained involvement in each others' social lives away from work. At the level of union leadership, coloured rugby players served as intermediaries introducing African union activists to coloured shop stewards, softening their mutual distrust. In these ways, coloureds and Africans at all levels of the workforce could face each other as familiars rather than strangers; as acquaintances rather than with steely disregard for the alien "other;" as people with a store of common experiences rather than merely antagonisms; people to be included in a common organization around shared interests. The social experience of sport, as well as the broader social linkages sketched above constituted a set of bridging experiences and networks between coloureds and Africans, providing both the foundation and the means upon which a non-racial union could be built.

NOTES

1. The passage is quoted from Athol Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona, *Sizwe Bansi is Dead*, in Athol Fugard, *Statements* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1986), p. 7.

2. Sidney Tarrow, "Struggle, Politics, and Reform: Collective Action, Social Movements, and Cycles of Protest," Western Societies Program Occasional Paper No. 21 (2nd edition), Center for International Studies, Cornell University, 1991; and Bert Klandermans and Sidney Tarrow, "Mobilization into Social Movements: Synthesizing European and American Approaches," in *From Structure to Action: Comparing Social Movement Research Across Cultures*, edited by Bert Klandermans, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Sidney Tarrow (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1988).

3. For an argument on the distinctiveness of new social movements, see Alain Touraine, *The Voice and The Eye* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Ronald Inglehart, "Values, Ideology, and Cognitive Mobilization in New Social Movements," in Russell J. Dalton and Manfred Kuechler, *Challenging the Political Order: New Social and Political Movements in Western Democracies* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), pp. 43-66 and Dieter Rucht, "The Strategies and Action Repertoires in New Movements," in Dalton and Kuechler, *Challenging the Political Order*, pp. 156-175. The strongest criticism against the newness of NSMs has been levelled by Gunnar Olofsson, "After the Working-class Movement? An Essay on What's 'New' and What's 'Social' in the New Social Movements," *Acta Sociologica* 31:1 (1988).

4. Dalton, Kuechler, and Burklin, "The Challenge of New Movements," p. 9.

5. Klandermans and Tarrow, "Mobilization into Social Movements," pp. 13-14.

6. Klandermans and Tarrow, "Mobilization into Social Movements," p. 10.

7. McAdam explains cognitive liberation in terms of three interrelated cognitions: that people who ordinarily accept the legitimacy of authority come to believe that their rulers are unjust; that ordinarily fatalistic people, who accept the inevitability of existing arrangements, begin asserting rights that imply demands for change; and that people who ordinarily think of themselves as helpless come to believe they have the capacity to change their lot. In the absence of any of these three cognitive developments, people will lose either the motive or will for collective action. Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

8. Doug McAdam, "Micromobilization Contexts," in *From Structure to Action* edited by Klandermans et al., p. 134-135.

9. Doug McAdam, "Recruitment to High-Risk Activism: The Case of Freedom Summer" *American Journal of Sociology* 92:1 (July 1986).

10. McAdam, "Micromobilization Contexts," p. 136.

11. McAdam, "Micromobilization Contexts," p. 151.

12. V.M. Kwinana was a high school teacher in East London, and was the dominant figure in the town's more conservative "Congress B" faction; he also led the opposition to the activist boycott strategy endorsed by the 1949 Cape ANC Conference. Interview with V. Kwinana; Lodge, *Black Politics*, p. 57.

13. In December 1955 131 members of the SACTU-affiliated Textile Workers' Industrial Union at the Fine Wools struck work in protest of forced overtime, after the company refused their demand for an overtime rate of 2 shillings per hour. The workers were convicted of conducting an illegal strike, but the union chose to fight their convictions in the Grahamstown Supreme Court, which upheld their appeal. Not only did the workers win a wage increase, but through their legal action they established an important precedent that workers could not be compelled to work overtime unless their contract

specified such an obligation. See Ken Luckhardt and Brenda Wall, *Organize...or Starve! The History of the South African Congress of Trade Unions* (New York: International Publishers, 1980), 230; "Judges uphold appeal by Native strikers," *Eastern Province Herald* 23 May 1956. For years afterward, the TWIU's victory would resonate in Uitenhage workers' historical memories.

14. The lectures most likely occurred in the alternative schools set up by the ANC during the boycott of Bantu education after 1955.

15. The International Metalworkers' Federation provided a small grant to support the work of a part-time organizer. The man TUCSA entrusted with this task was Edgar Deane, secretary of the TUCSA-affiliated furniture union. Despite his later prominent role in the politically moderate and muddled TUCSA, where he was a member of the NEC, Deane had a solid left background in coloured politics, having played leadership roles in the Franchise Action Council, in the Congress-allied South African Coloured People's Organization, and in the Labour Party. See R.E. van der Ross, *The Rise and Decline of Apartheid: A Study of Political Movements among the Coloured People of South Africa, 1880-1985* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1986), 255-278, 307; Gavin Lewis, *Between the Wire and the Wall: A history of South African 'Coloured' politics* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1987), 267-274; Thomas Karis and Gail Gerhart, eds, *From Protest to Challenge*, v. 3, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1977), 12.

16. Most prominently, the Western Province Motor Workers' Union [WPMWU]. The search for allies brought NUMARWOSA into contact for the first time with the Durban grouping of fledgling unions organized by the Trade Union Advisory Coordinating Committee [TUACC], an alliance which would later provide the backbone of the Federation of South African Trade Unions and of the hegemony of shop-floor based industrial unionism in the new South African labor movement.

17. National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers of South Africa, Minutes of the Executive Council Meeting, 26 November 1972, "Organising of African Labour."

18. National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers of South Africa, "Minutes of the Executive Council Meeting," 24-25 March and 18-19 August 1973. Fred Sauls, NUMARWOSA's General Secretary, along with the Union's secretariat drew up the draft constitution of the UAW, which was then presented to the first general meeting of the new union for amendment and approval.

19. The links between NUMARWOSA-UAW and WPMWU grew closer through their joint experience in the South African Coordinating Council of the International Metalworkers Federation. In this context, both groupings lined up on the same side in opposition to the racist Confederation of Metal and Building Unions [CMBU], and slowly began to realize their common interests. They would be thrown together again in the talks which preceded the creation of the Federation of South African Trade Unions. For a discussion of the SACC, see Eddie Webster, *Cast in A Racial Mould: Labour Process and Trade Unionism in the Foundries* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985), Chapter 8: "The International Factor: The IMF in South Africa, 1974-1980."

20. The company employed coloured workers as a result of pressure from the government's threatened implementation of a Coloured Labour Preference Policy for the Eastern Cape.

21. For these reasons Liaison Committees would be the type of "reform" most preferred by management after the 1973 Durban strikes, when the old system of excluding Africans from the industrial relations system became palpably unworkable. Volkswagen was one of 118 companies who introduced "non-statutory" Liaison Committees well in advance of the strikes.

22. See the interview with Gomomo, "Union Organisation in Volkswagen," *South African Labour Bulletin* 11:1 (September 1985), and "Profile: John Gomomo," *South African Labour Bulletin* 15:3 (September 1990).

23. Indeed, John Gomomo went on to become Uitenhage organizer for the Ciskei National Independence Party - in the eyes of both management and the state, hardly a dangerous political association. He went on to become a full-time shop steward at VW, Vice-President and then President

of the autoworkers' union, and is today President of the Congress of South African Trade Unions. In 1990 he, along with other prominent ex-FOSATU worker leaders publicly announced their supposedly long-standing affiliation to the South African Communist Party.

24. This would include actual ANC cell members and the broader network of workers with whom they had contact, but who were unaware of their actual identity.

25. The action was called to protest the declaration of a state of emergency in the Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage magisterial districts in the aftermath of the New Brighton riots. The riots were in turn prompted by intensifying state repression against the Defiance Campaign and efforts by the Native Affairs Department to impose the provisions of the Urban Areas Act on Port Elizabeth.

26. The other shop stewards were Boyce, Mpushe, Harris, Redcliffe, Spiers, and Isaacs.

27. The company soon organized a European tour for the senior shop stewards from the unions, including *Yster en Stal*, to observe industrial relations systems in Germany, Belgium and Great Britain. Gomomo made extremely effective use of the trip, cementing bonds to the IG Metall union in Germany and the International Metalworkers Federation which would serve the union for years to come.

28. For further discussion of the labor process and the racial division of labor in the automobile plants, see Glenn Adler, "Skills, control, and 'careers at work': Possibilities for worker control in the South African motor industry" *South African Sociological Review* 5:2 (1993).

29. For a complete discussion of the application of the Urban Areas and Group Areas Acts, see Chapter 4 of my doctoral thesis, "Racial Segregation and its Impact on Working Class Communities in Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage."

30. The state's most recent effort to remove Kabah was facilitated by the nation-wide crackdown under the 1986 State of Emergency. Despite moving approximately 35,000 people from Kabah to a site and service camp on the outskirts of Kwanobuhle, not all Africans were removed from Kabah - in particular the residents of some 700 formal houses in the McNaughton section of the old Location remained. As the emergency waned, as migrations from the rural areas continued, and as the powers formerly granted under the Urban Areas and Group Areas Acts fell away, the state was helpless to prevent the massive re-population of Kabah, the situation which obtains today.

31. For further discussion of racial segregation in Port Elizabeth, see A.J. Christopher, "Formal Segregation and population distribution in Port Elizabeth" *Contree* 24 (1988); "Apartheid Planning in South Africa: The Case of Port Elizabeth" *The Geographical Journal* 153:2 (July 1987); and "Race and Residence in Colonial Port Elizabeth" *South African Geographical Journal* 69:1 (1987). See also Jennifer Robinson, "The Power of Apartheid: Territoriality and State Power in South African Cities-Port Elizabeth, 1923-1972," Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University, 1990; and Bev Taylor, "Removing Port Elizabeth's Notorious Korsten Slums in the 1950s," and "South End and Fairview Removals and the Development of Bethelsdorp," unpublished papers (1990).

32. The figures from General Motors must be treated with great caution, as the research was interrupted by a major strike over the firm's proposed disinvestment, when fewer than half the projected interviews were completed. For a discussion of the strike, see my article, "What's Good for General Motors?: Black Workers' Response to Disinvestment, October-November 1986" *Journal of Southern African Studies* 15:3 (April 1989). For a discussion of the effects of the strike on research possibilities see my article, "The Politics of Labor Research During a Liberation Struggle: Interviewing Black Workers in South Africa," in *International Annual of Oral History, 1990* edited by Ronald J. Grele (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing, 1993).

33. Marianne Roux, "Perspectives and Values of Industrial Workers: The Emergence of Socio-Economic Consciousness Amongst Coloured Workers in the Motor Manufacturing Industry in the Eastern Cape," Ph.D. diss., Stellenbosch University, 1977, p. 163, 159.

34. The centrality of sport, and rugby in particular, in white culture and politics in South Africa remains entirely undeveloped as a subject of academic inquiry. The forthcoming work by Dr. John Nauright, of the University of Otago in New Zealand should rectify this serious gap in our understanding of South African society. For a brief discussion of the role of sport in Afrikaner politics in the 1960s and 1970s, see Wilkins and Strydom, *The Super-Afrikaners*, Chapter 14: Sports Policy. The debate among Broederbonders and Nationalist politicians around the inclusion of Maori players on the New Zealand rugby team constituted one arena of conflict which precipitated the 1969 split in the National Party, leading to the formation of the Herstigte Nationale Party.

35. For social histories of sport in South Africa, see Tim Couzens, "An Introduction to the History of Football in South Africa," in *Town and Countryside in the Transvaal: Capitalist Penetration and Popular Response*, edited by Belinda Bozzoli (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983); Andre Odendaal, "South Africa's Black Victorians: Sport and Society in South Africa in the Nineteenth Century, in *British Culture and Sport at Home and Abroad, 1700-1914*, edited by ?; and Jeff Peires, "Rugby in the Eastern Cape: a history," *Work in Progress* 17 (April 1981).

36. See Odendaal, "South Africa's Black Victorians," 195.

37. Neither rugby nor cricket caught on with Africans in Natal, the Orange Free State, or the Transvaal. Odendaal accounts for the lack of interest in Natal by pointing to the very prominent role of American rather than British missionaries in African education in the Province, while the lack of interest in the Afrikaner republics to the north may stem from a similar lack of penetration by English missionaries and the far stronger restrictions on African education and an African middle class there. In Peires' words, rugby "was never adopted by the northerners who saw something ridiculous in the spectacle of a grown man running around with a ball in his hands." Peires, "Rugby in the Eastern Cape," p. 1.

38. Peires, "Rugby in the Eastern Cape," 3, 5.

39. Years after the event, black workers still spoke fondly of the game in the 1970s between an African side composed of players from the official SAARB and a touring British side, where the visitors won convincingly, but in which a Volkswagen player, (and later full-time shop steward) Aaron Balintulo scored a try. By contrast, the workers would laughingly emphasize, the British team completely overwhelmed the all-white Springbok rugby team, which was shut out.

40. The Springboks held the claim to represent South Africa as a whole and the racial bodies were not recognized overseas.

41. Tshaka played a surprisingly similar role in the factory. He was never elected as a shop steward, but was extremely important behind the scenes as an activist and "conscientizer" among the rank-and-file.

42. For a detailed chronology and a superb analysis of the factors leading to the strike, see Martheanne Finnemore, "The mobilisation of Black workers in the auto industry in the Eastern Cape, 1970-1983," MA diss., University of Port Elizabeth, 1984.

43. The IMF negotiator was Karl Casserini. The real impasse occurred when the company increased its offer to R1.40 per hour, which was rejected by the workers, who remained out on strike. After that Volkswagen threatened to fire workers who remained out, but delayed action while the talks with Casserini gathered momentum. Eventually the company increased its offer to R1.42, and agreed to meet the R2.00 living wage target within 18 months; though falling well short of their original demand, the workers accepted the offer and returned to work.

44. Volkswagen was the first company to agree to the demand, and was preparing to implement the agreement, but Ford in Port Elizabeth jumped first and announced their agreement, and have been wrongly credited with the innovation.

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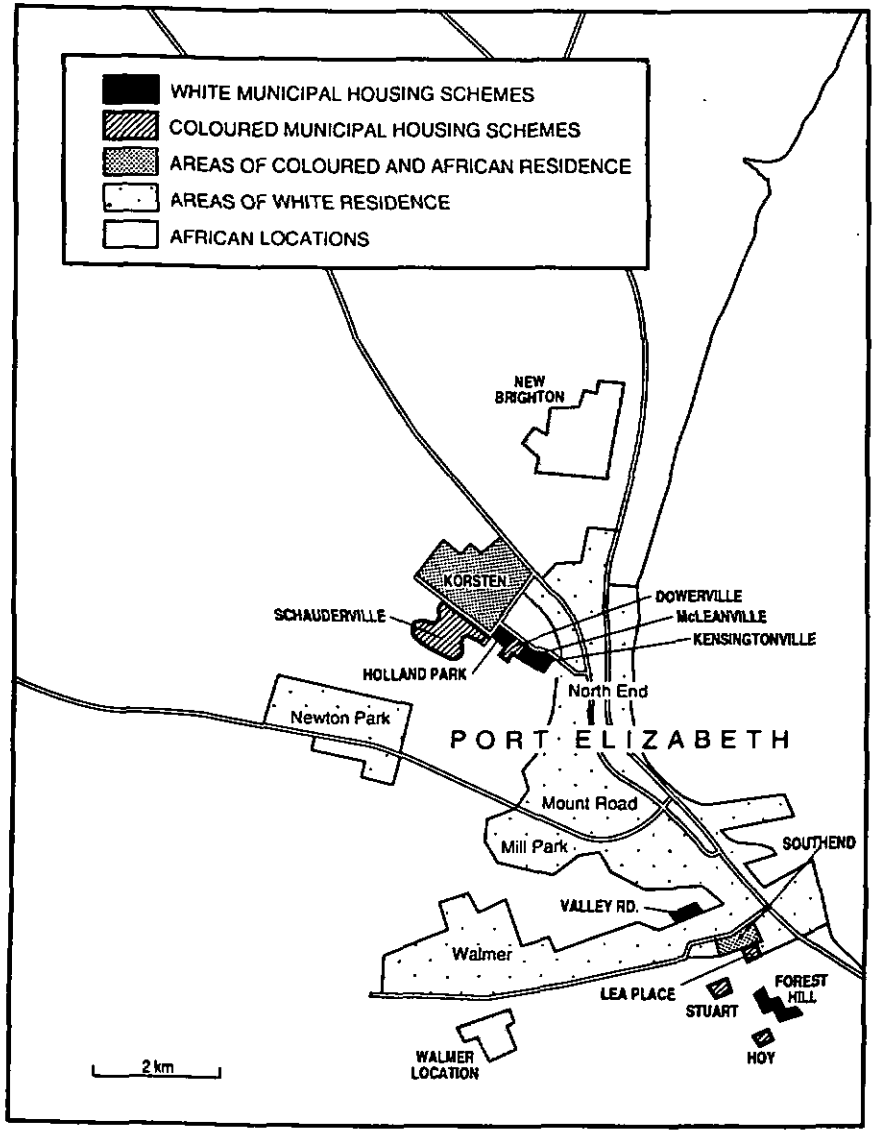
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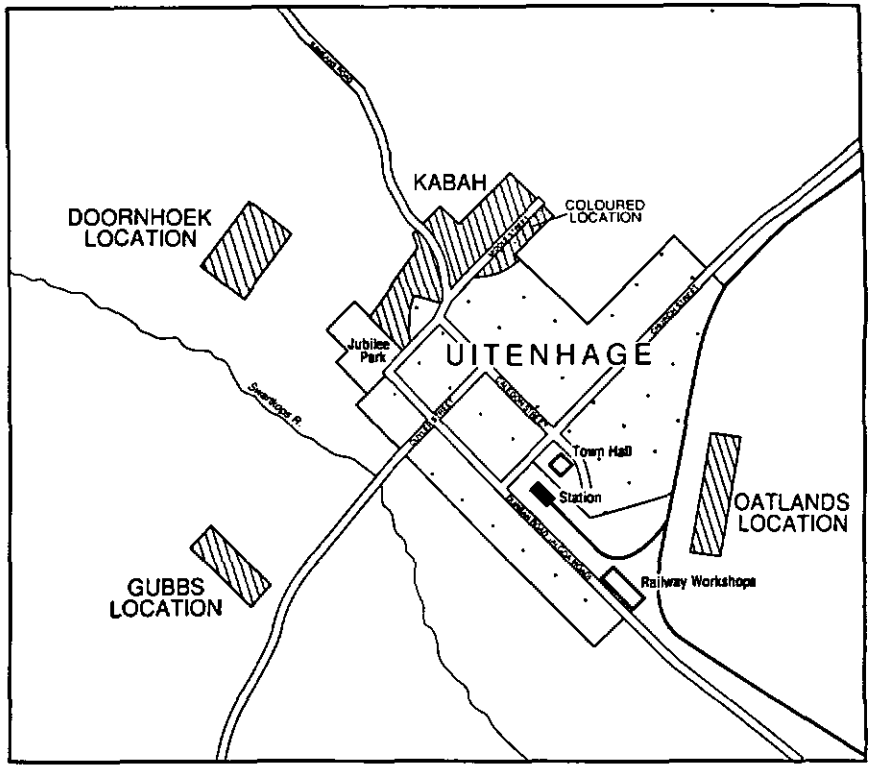
BY: GLENN ADLER

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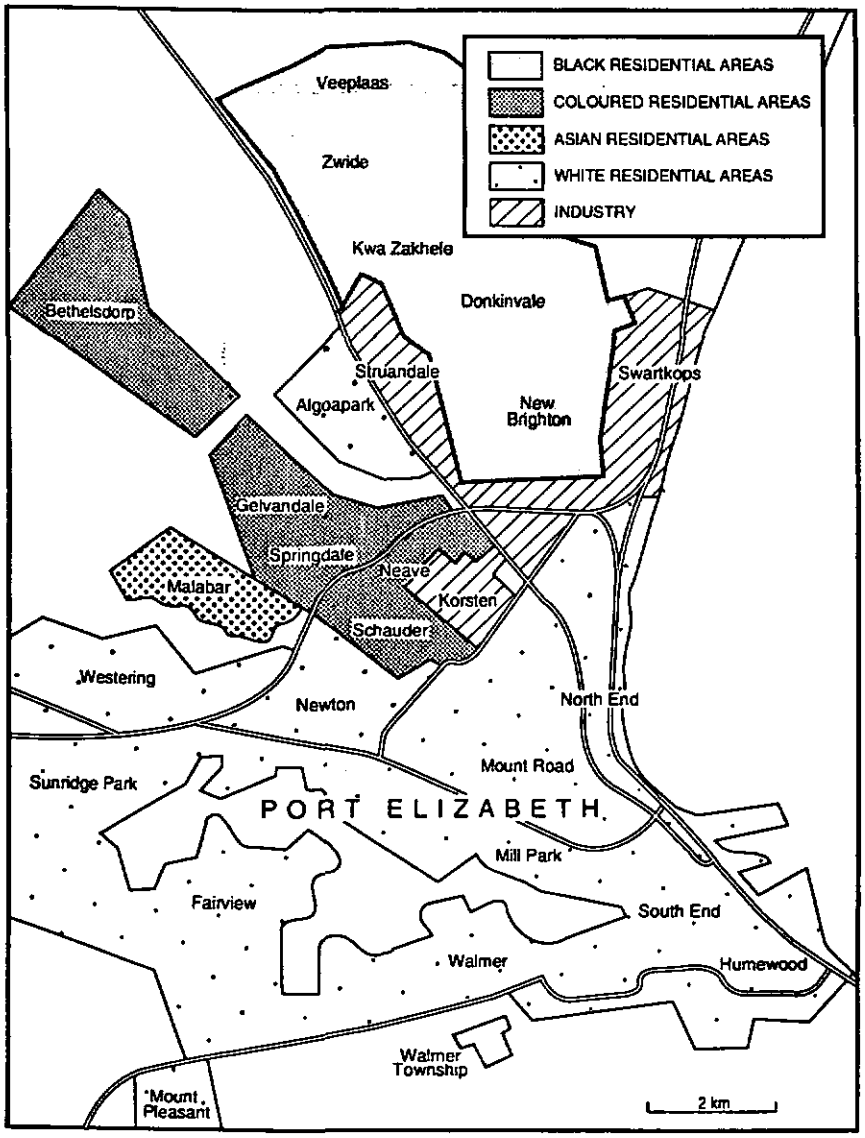
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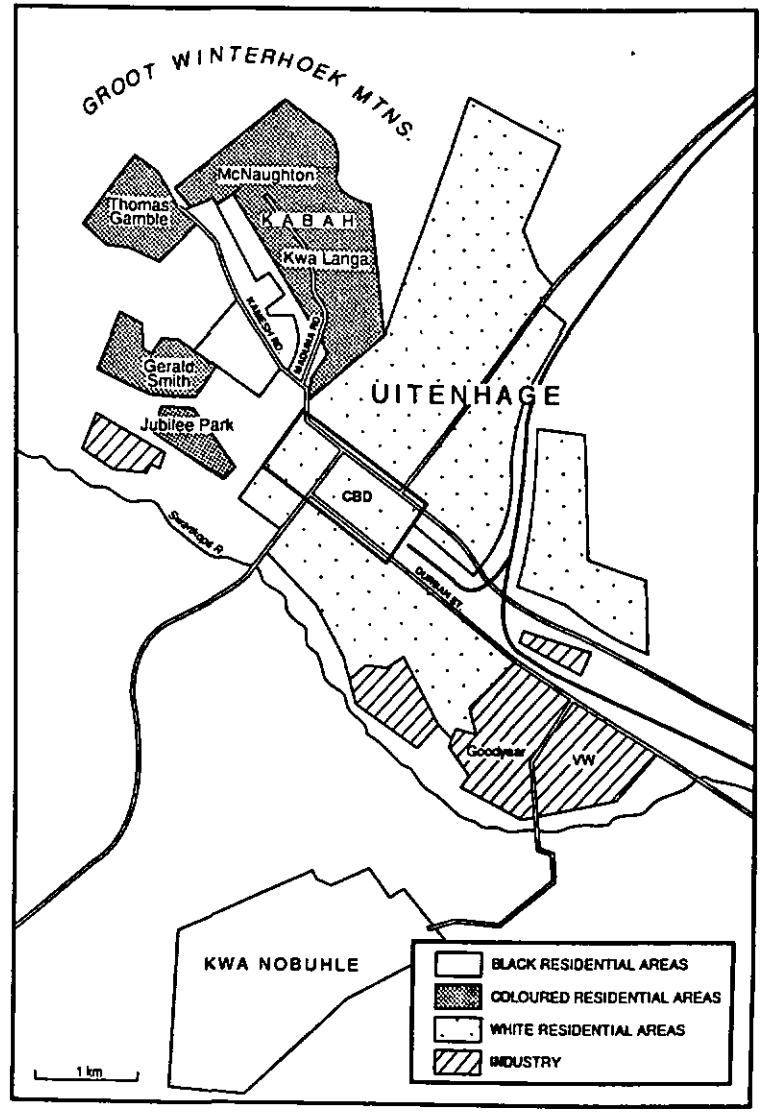
Map 1. Port Elizabeth Residential Areas and Municipal Housing Schemes, 1943.



Map 2. Uitenhage: Town and Locations, 1923



Map 3. Port Elizabeth Group Areas, in the period of high segregation, c. 1975



Map 4. Uitenhage Group Areas, c. 1970

I. INTRODUCTION*

In early December 1968 the Town Council of Uitenhage began the first forced removals of African people from the 124 year-old inner-city location of Kabah to the new township of Kwanobuhle on the southern Municipal boundary. The removals were the beginning of a comprehensive plan to make Uitenhage conform to *apartheid* urban policy principles by removing Africans from Kabah, where they had historically lived side-by-side with coloureds, and reproclaiming the old location as part of the growing coloured Group Area of the town. However, in the two decades that followed these removals, Kabah was never fully conquered by the state. Both central and local governments perennially failed to realise the goal of comprehensive social engineering due to shortages of funds, bureaucratic inefficiency, continued migrations from Cape country districts, and the stubborn efforts of ordinary people to stake a claim to urban space. By contrast, in 1968 Port Elizabeth was well along the path of near-total segregation. A decade earlier Africans had been virtually entirely removed to proclaimed townships, and in the late 1960s the Municipality was embarking on a program of removing coloureds from "white" areas. The result of these programs was that Port Elizabeth soon became among the most segregated cities in South Africa.

The Kabah removal was the culmination of more than twenty years of policy struggles within the South African state, and explicit rejection by the Uitenhage Town Council of both the Urban Areas and Group Areas Acts. It is quite remarkable that at the moment of greatest National Party power in the 1960s it proved quite unable to remake the world according to its will. Not only did it face profound resource problems and resistance from below, rendering the "purist vision" of *apartheid* unattainable in the short term, but the institutional means available to the central state to enforce its policies required it to rely on relatively undependable local authorities as essential sites of delivery of services and exercise of control. In July 1961, as the Uitenhage Town Council was about to conceded to central state pressure, the local pro-Government newspaper *Die Oosterlig* reminded the Councillors, "'Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's' is a good idea for them to bear in mind."[1]

Local authorities were nominally responsible for maintaining immediate conditions of accumulation for industry and commerce, and for the reproduction of the white as well as black working classes. These tasks were conducted, if not more commonly avoided, under severe structural constraints of fiscal dependence on white ratepayers. This dependence would lessen after 1973 when the central state ultimately usurped authority over the townships, but until then the NP government ruled through local institutions to which it could not simply dictate. Local constituencies heavily shaped Municipal responses to central policies, and local officials varied widely in their ability or willingness to comply, especially within UP strongholds. A politics of accommodation was necessary in which policy outcomes were the result of a rough and tumble political process of coercion and concession, though increasingly on terms defined by the central state. Nonetheless, it *was* a process of accommodation, which introduced a considerable measure of variability in the application of central policies.

If the central state could, in the end, demand that local authorities "Render unto Caesar," this seemingly confident assertion of power reveals in fact its opposite. In St. Matthew's account, Jesus' reply to the Pharisees marks the difference between a merely earthly power with its essential limitations, and that of a transcendent, omnipotent God. Similarly, once confronted with a challenge to its authority the central state had little to fall back on other than a dictatorial exercise of power, even vis-a-vis its own institutions, revealing the shallow and fragile nature of its own sovereignty. In this respect the invocation of ultimate authority marks its very limitation, as ultimately the central state was forced to rely on these very same institutions to exercise its power. This paper looks backward from the Kabah removals, tracing the genesis of the segregation policies themselves to demonstrate the essentially contested nature of state power in South Africa.

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*A previous version of this paper was presented in 1988 at the seminars of the Southern Africa Research Program at Yale University and at the Postgraduate Seminar of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London. The paper is drawn from a chapter of my doctoral dissertation, "'The Factory Belongs to All Who Work in It': Race, Class, and Collective Action in the South African Motor Industry, 1967-1986," (Columbia University, 1994).

As such, the research is influenced in important ways by Deborah Posel's insights into the nature of the South African state, particularly in her assessment of the state as an actor in its own right "engaged in ceaseless processes of struggle and accommodation, both internally and with subordinate as well as dominant classes."[2] It is curious that while her arguments about struggles over the meaning of apartheid have gained wide currency, there has been far less recognition of her invitation to investigate more thoroughly the coherence of the apartheid state itself.

This paper thus undertakes an institutional analysis of the development of policies of segregation in Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage. In addition to giving a sustained account of the evolution of such policies over the first decades of NP rule, it also self-consciously locates the discussion far away from the mainstream of debate on *apartheid*. Though both cities experienced rapid population increases throughout the period under review, the migrant labour system played a negligible role in the regional economy. In this respect, influx control and the contradictory relations between administrators, employers, and migrant and "urbanised" workers are relatively less important than in any other metropolitan area in South Africa. Instead, territorial apartheid and residential segregation was a far more central issue facing the central state and local authorities, as both attempted to deal with the racial ordering of space. Though this is an important issue elsewhere, arguably it is of greater salience in the Cape Province, given the enduring legacy of African, coloured, and Indian property (and franchise) rights. An immediate problem confronting the NP government after 1948 was reversing and eliminating patterns of residential integration, between whites and blacks and between those statutorily defined as Africans, coloureds, and Indians.

In this respect, the paper makes a departure of sorts by examining the virtually simultaneous enactment of the web of apartheid legislation in the two municipalities. Other analysts have tended to focus exclusively on either the pass laws, or the Urban Areas Act, and few have linked their implementation to the enforcement of the Group Areas Act. As a result scholars have missed the *combined* impact of these policies on localities.

II. URBAN SEGREGATION BEFORE APARTHEID

A. SEGREGATION IN COLONIAL UITENHAGE AND PORT ELIZABETH

Segregation in Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage dates from their founding. Cape colonial towns were the realm of white settlers, but many different groups were present at their start.[3] The black population included many Malay artisans and traders, as well as Khoi labourers, and initial residential divisions did not exclusively follow colour lines.[4] A.J. Christopher argues rather that informal patterns of class and social differentiation characterized residential growth in Port Elizabeth: mixed-race people were free to own land and some people of colour clustered in new industrial areas where many white workers also lived.[5]

However, white colonists did not consider the majority of indigenous people - "Africans" - to be citizens of the colony capable of owning property, and more importantly, viewed them as foreigners, temporary residents present only to labour. Africans were relegated to segregated, physically isolated "locations" on land deemed unsuitable for white occupation. In both Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage the first separate residential areas - initially for Khoi and later for Mfengu - were established on London Missionary Society ground close to the town centres.[6] After being created as Municipalities in the 1840s both towns established formal locations close to these original LMS locations.[7] Over time, these locations expanded and many entrepreneurs opened private locations to accommodate the increased African population.

By the time of Union in 1910 the pattern of segregation in Port Elizabeth diverged from that of its neighbour. The inner-city locations were the target of a sustained removal effort, perpetually delayed by the absence of funds to compensate site holders or to provide alternative accommodation in new areas. The removals finally occurred under the pretext of plague clearance, and most Africans in Port Elizabeth were moved to New Brighton, 8 kilometres from the centre of town.[8] But a loophole in the new law - Africans could be compelled to leave town but not to enter the location - enabled many to avoid the heavily controlled and expensive barracks housing at New Brighton and to move instead to

Korsten, a land development beyond the Municipal boundaries.[9]

Despite population increases, Uitenhage's original locations - including the oldest, Kabah - were never forcibly removed.[10] These were built on the periphery of the town, and did not impede the further expansion of either commercial or white residential areas. Furthermore, there was little upward pressure on land prices - an important stimulus for the white speculators behind the removals campaign in Port Elizabeth - as Uitenhage experienced a prolonged recession due to the chronic decline in the wool trade on which the town's economy was based.

Thus at the end of the colonial era in 1910, Uitenhage retained its first town locations on their original sites within the Municipal boundaries, the most important being the Kabah Location. By contrast, Port Elizabeth had passed through a period of prolonged struggle over the inner city locations, eventually leading to their destruction and the removal of the African population beyond the town border to the formal Location at New Brighton or to the growing squatter settlement at Korsten.

B. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND URBAN SEGREGATION BEFORE 1948

These differences in segregation patterns would increase as the two towns took steps to accommodate the rapid increase in the black population that accompanied industrialisation before and after World War II. Both Municipalities designed new housing schemes for African and coloured people, but these tended to reinforce the trends mentioned above. The Port Elizabeth Municipality built new housing for Africans, but within New Brighton; furthermore, its first foray into providing subeconomic housing for other workers yielded a series of segregated coloureds-only and whites-only housing schemes scattered throughout the city. The only exception to this pattern was Korsten. In Uitenhage, after consolidating four locations into the "old location" at Kabah in 1936, Municipal housing schemes for Africans and coloureds were located either in or adjacent to Kabah. As a result, Port Elizabeth's policies promoted a more thorough-going segregation between coloureds, Africans and whites, while in Uitenhage the divide was drawn between blacks and whites.

1. Port Elizabeth

As Jennifer Robinson's research shows, local industrial development sparked by World War I was not an automatic or natural reflex to market conditions, but bore the imprint of an entrepreneurial local authority seeking to promote Port Elizabeth industry and seize whatever opportunities were open to them. The expansion of the footwear industry and the first investments by the automobile multinationals were heavily encouraged by a Council willing to assume large debts to fund the expensive infrastructure essential to manufacturing and to offer fully serviced industrial townships ready for development. The resulting growth in the manufacturing workforce also prompted the Council for the first time to provide housing for Port Elizabeth's working class, and the Council's policies for public housing and for administering New Brighton Location earned it a reputation (which its promoters eagerly sought to embellish) as a liberal, progressive city.

While relying on the physically separated racially exclusive Location, the "liberal" Council eschewed the familiar mechanisms of pass controls for Africans formalized in the 1923 Urban Areas Act in favour of a paternalistic and pacifying administrative system, codified in extensive regulations executed through a personalistic Superintendent backed by a network of African "headmen."

If the physical segregation of Africans within urban areas was accomplished through an inherited framework of colonial restrictions, culminating in the Urban Areas Act of 1923, separating whites from all other people of colour was a more complicated process. Some Africans, coloureds, Indians, and Malay possessed property and voting rights in the Cape. But following World War I, the informal processes of segregation which date from the earliest colonial times intensified as a result of two separate processes. First, new private housing developments, especially those aimed at white buyers, began featuring restrictive covenants in their title deeds. The new language prevented purchase by anyone other than the defined group, which in the vast majority of cases limited ownership to whites.[11]

The other factor heightening the extent of separation between white and coloureds was the character of state provision of working class housing. The 1920 Housing Act enabled municipalities to

construct "economic" and "sub-economic" housing, but it mandated that such schemes be constructed on racially separate lines. The Port Elizabeth Municipality developed a number of such housing projects between 1923 and World War II, during which time more than 1,400 houses were built for Europeans, 2,000 for coloureds, and nearly 4,000 for Africans.

Those built for Africans were constructed as further extensions to New Brighton Location, known as White Location (310 houses begun in 1928) and McNamee Village (3,506 houses, built between 1938 and 1947). But the new Council houses designated for coloureds and whites were scattered around the city on available land, without reference to any overall framework of spatial separation of the races.[12] [See Map 1] These single-race schemes were often cited adjacent to one another, divided by a road or minor physical buffer strip, in contrast to the principles of broad racial zoning characteristic of later apartheid policies which saw whole sections of cities reserved for particular groups. Indeed, some of the Council housing schemes for coloureds were located in the southern and largely white residential areas of the city. These projects formed literal islands of racial occupation, with little intermixing between coloureds from the housing schemes and whites from the surrounding private developments. In 1936, while there were several areas in the city where substantial numbers of coloureds resided near whites, such as South End, North End, and Sidwell, (though rigid street-level separation predominated), there was only one area within the city boundaries where large numbers of Africans lived: Korsten.

Korsten's fast population growth and generally unregulated character contributed to the creation of a densely settled, unserviced area with high rates of disease and infant mortality. Officially Korsten was described as a slum, and the Municipal health department repeatedly lobbied the Council to have it removed on such grounds. Slum or no, Korsten was still a relatively attractive area for people who couldn't afford or obtain, or didn't want housing within New Brighton. It still lacked the more overt forms of Council control present in the location, and it was extremely close to industry. The very conditions which favoured settlement by Africans made the police anxious: they were worried by the absence of clear administrative jurisdiction over Korsten, by the irregular patchwork of wood-and-iron shack settlement making direct control difficult, and by the "intermixing" of Africans and coloureds which meant repeated violation of laws restricting liquor consumption by Africans. Many members of the Port Elizabeth City Council shared these concerns, and an additional interest: inspired by the expanding manufacturing sector, the Council eyed Korsten's central location as a prime spot for development of new industrial townships, converting "slums" into revenue-producing factory land.

Once Schauderville (for coloureds) and McNamee Village (for Africans) were launched in 1935 and 1938, the Municipality was able to begin condemning Korsten houses under the Slums Act and moving their inhabitants to the new segregated townships. But the removals never succeeded in emptying Korsten, nor in remedying the "slum" conditions which had nominally motivated the Council. In 1946 the population of Korsten had declined, but there were still 10,225 Africans and 3,614 coloureds resident in the area. Not only had the population of the town vastly expanded during the war, but according to Robinson many of the people who moved to McNamee Village and Schauderville were unable to afford the rents charged and ended up moving back to Korsten or to new squatter settlements even farther from town at Veeplaas, Kleinskool, Missonvale, and Bethelsdorp. In 1951 the African and coloured population in Korsten in fact returned to 1936 levels.

Thus, before World War II, the local government of "the Progressive city" had already embraced full racial segregation in its housing policies, albeit with important differences from the apartheid policies which would be enacted by the National Party government after 1948. The principle of segregation was applied to Municipal housing schemes, and tolerated, if not encouraged in the provision of restrictive covenants, but outside of the Location there was not yet a comprehensive vision of full-scale separation of residential areas. Certainly the scattered islands of racially exclusive housing estates created tricky planning problems in later years when central and local planners sought to create large, unified single race residential zones. But in its early embrace of separation between Africans, coloureds and whites, Port Elizabeth had a well-established tradition of segregation which would ease the Council's accommodation with post-1948 policies.

2. Uitenhage

In contrast with Port Elizabeth, the bulk of Uitenhage's industrial growth and population

increase occurred after World War II. Prior to that time the Council initiated no Municipal housing schemes, nor did it establish a formal African location. Furthermore, coloureds and Africans lived in the same Municipal Locations. In part Uitenhage's anomalous development stemmed from its small size and its delayed manufacturing growth, both of which limited its fiscal base. Within the Locations a clear policy of laissez-faire characterized official policy regarding black residence. After isolating Africans and coloureds in areas separated from whites, the Municipality paid scant attention to even the minimal levels of investment and administrative attention required by the "Location Strategy" used in Port Elizabeth.

In the 1920s blacks resided in four proclaimed Locations in Uitenhage: Kabah (the largest), Doornhoek, Gubbs, and Oatlands, situated respectively to the north, west, south, and east of town. [See Map 2] Between 1921 and 1936 the African population more than doubled from 3,187 to 6,588, while the coloured population grew by 42% from 3,052 to 4,334. For the first time in the town's history the 9,437 whites were not a majority of the population.[13] The new black population, however, was not composed of migrants. There was no marked imbalance in gender ratios; in fact throughout the period there were slightly more women than men in the town.[14] The indicators strongly suggest that the black population was not only becoming larger, but also more stabilized and permanently "urban."[15]

Kabah had electric street lamps, central water hydrants, and daily rubbish removal from central points. But conditions were generally deteriorating through the 1930s, and were even worse in the three other Locations which shared none of Kabah's amenities.[16] Depression and drought brought economic contraction, and combined with a steady inflow of people from the countryside contributed to a large increase in unemployment.[17] The Locations expanded to accommodate the increased population, as residents built their own houses, with the more well-off securing Council loans for purchasing building supplies.[18]

Against a background of growing population, unemployment, and uncertain finances, the Municipality sought means to cope with the continued movement to Uitenhage. It asked the government to proclaim influx controls under the Urban Areas Act, though it never applied its more draconian provisions.[19] In 1936 the Council moved to reorganize the locations by demolishing the three smaller Locations and moving the residents to Kabah. Rather than incurring the expense of building a separate coloured residential area, the Municipality intended to separate the groups within the Location.[20] Furthermore, the Council refused to subsidize new housing; instead, the new residents of Kabah would be encouraged to build their own homes with materials purchased from the Municipality on instalment. Both decisions would prove fateful for the future development of Kabah and segregation in Uitenhage. The Location would be out-of-step with evolving national policy regarding the separation of coloureds and Africans, and self-built housing would soon reproduce the slum conditions of the old locations.[21]

The Councillors saw themselves providing a valuable service for African and coloured residents of the three locations. "In fact," wrote the Town Clerk, "the hutholder from Oatlands Location is moving from what is an unhealthy and badly laid out slum to what the Council hopes shortly to make into a model location."[22] It was not to be. High death rates for Africans, especially a staggering rate of infant mortality testified to the grim conditions of life in the "model location."[23]

The problems in Kabah prompted the Municipality's technical staff directly concerned with control over Africans to develop new policies aimed at bringing Uitenhage into line with Location administration elsewhere. In 1943 the Location Superintendent composed a lengthy memorandum examining Kabah's problems, highlighting the continued presence of coloureds (a violation of the Urban Areas Act) whom white officials believed contributed to the illicit liquor trade, and the "highly unsatisfactory" housing, which could only be overcome through provision of separate sub-economic housing schemes for coloureds and Africans.[24] Embracing the principle of segregation, the Superintendent did not mention removal of the Kabah Location itself.

The Superintendent's policy considerations offer some insight into the views of the Municipality's Native Affairs bureaucrats. While he favoured segregation, he reminded the Council that it had resolved in October 1943 to make representations to the Minister for Native Affairs to amend the Urban Areas Act to allow Africans to acquire urban freehold property. As property holders, he reasoned, Africans would develop pride of ownership, and would be encouraged to erect suitable houses for themselves, freeing the Council from housing expenditures. The development of such a class of people would require

higher wages and right of freehold (within segregated areas), and recognition "that the detribalised urban Native is part and parcel of the urban areas...a member of a community separate from, but no less important than, the European urban population."[25]

The same themes were echoed two years later in a joint report by the Medical Officer of Health, Acting Town Engineer, and the Location Superintendent. This time, however, their solution entailed the removal of the entire African population: Kabah lacked room for expansion, and it was too close to the white areas, diminishing housing values and blocking further expansion of the [white] town. The report introduced a whole new policy proposal: the Kabah Location itself would have to be demolished and moved to Sandfontein, a municipally-owned farm east of town.[26]

The planning schemes of the Municipal technical staff remained on the drawing board for the duration of the Second World War. But their plans were extremely important in building an intellectual and policy framework for segregation in the post-war period, embracing the related ideas of extensive provision of freehold title, sub-economic [subsidized] public housing, separation of coloureds and Africans, and possible removal and resiting of the Location itself.

Towards the end of the war, the Uitenhage Council took two steps to secure the town's position in the post-war period, hiring a consultant to devise a general town plan and making an aggressive effort to attract industrial investment. The Council hired T.B. Floyd as its planning consultant, based on his reputation as one of the foremost participants in the town planning movement of the 1940s.[27] In Uitenhage, in addition to laying down recommendations for industrial, commercial, and residential zoning regulations, Floyd's plan dealt at considerable length with the long-running black housing problem.

Floyd's planning vision was more comprehensive than that of the local officials, and surprisingly conformed very closely to the principles of the future Group Areas Act. "The object of town planning," Floyd told a Uitenhage audience, "was, where possible, to zone a town in such a way that the European, coloured and Native sections of the population were separated by clearly defined natural barriers....Another principle was the elimination of situations which required the Non-European element to traverse the areas set aside for Europeans."[28]

The Kabah location failed the test of both "principles": coloureds and Africans were mixed together, the location was separated from white areas by a single street, and it was located on the northern side of town, requiring workers to walk across Uitenhage to reach the heavy industries situated to the south. Floyd's recommendations incorporated many of the themes developed in the wartime reports by the town Council bureaucrats, most importantly, moving the location east to Sandfontein. Africans would be provided with sub-economic housing away from white residential areas and close to the factories where Africans provided unskilled labour. The coloured section of the location would remain in place, and sub-economic housing would be provided for them towards the west, away from the white and present African areas.[29]

But his argument for removing Kabah was immediately attacked by various Councillors, and ultimately rejected. Many Councillors recalled the earlier removal of residents from Oatlands, Gubbs and Doornhoek Locations, and the Council's unfulfilled promises to provide a "model location." By an overwhelming vote the Council rejected Floyd's proposals for removing Africans from Kabah, and agreed to remodel Kabah on its present or an adjacent site, with emphasis given to developing a comprehensive sub-economic housing scheme.[30]

With the advent of World War II housing construction came to a stop throughout the country, even as thousands of people flooded into the towns for jobs in industries stimulated by the war. Housing problems were a major cause of the urban protest movements of the 1940s, and to cope with the housing crisis the Smuts Government created the National Housing and Planning Commission.[31] Previously Municipalities were unwilling to build housing, as most Africans could not afford rent levels necessary for recouping the debt incurred in construction. Loans from the NHPC, however, came at a reduced rate of interest, and included a formula whereby the central state would assume a large percentage of the losses on a sub-economic scheme.[32]

Following NHPC policy the Uitenhage Council solicited funds for creation of sub-economic

housing schemes for Africans, coloureds, and whites, as envisaged in the amended town plan.[33] A plan for an African sub-economic scheme was approved by the Council in 1947, and early the next year the central Government approved a loan of £99,390 for construction of 320 pairs of semi-detached units in an extension to Kabah. The area would be named McNaughton Village after the Location Superintendent serving during the consolidation of the four locations in the 1930s, and officials looked forward to the eventual expansion of the scheme to include 2,000 semi-detached units (4,000 dwellings), half built by the Municipality and half by the NHPC. In addition, the Council hoped to have a large portion of the town commonage surveyed and set out into residential plots which Africans would be permitted to purchase outright for construction of their own homes.[34]

Finally, funds would be sought for a sub-economic scheme of 100 units for coloureds in a newly cleared area west of Kabah, to be called Gerald Smith Township, and for a 60 unit sub-economic scheme for whites close to a new industrial area at the south end of town. The Council soon applied for a further sub-economic loan to expand McNaughton Village by 320 more semi-detached pairs. Thus, under the terms of the new NHPC sub-economic schemes, the Council agreed for the first time in its history to provide formal housing for its African population, and to provide racially segregated sub-economic and economic housing for coloureds and whites. It also developed a housing scheme for coloureds at Jubilee Park where plots would be available for purchase. Any removals would be voluntary with the promise of a better dwelling than that left behind in Kabah or the town.

Between the end of the war and the accession to power of the Nationalist government in 1948, the Uitenhage Town Council had approved a vision of development which rejected forced removals and aimed instead at stabilization of the African population in Kabah and a slow, voluntary segregation between Africans and coloureds. With the provision of central government funds through the NHPC the Municipality hoped to achieve what the earlier location reorganization had failed to accomplish: the establishment of serviced, hygienic, and above all low-cost housing for Location residents in compliance with the segregation provisions of the Urban Areas Act. Aside from receiving approval for their project and technical advice from the NHPC and the provincial townships board, the Council planned the future of the Location virtually without participation by representatives of the central state.

Rather than developing a long-term plan, the Council decided to look into the immediate problems of Kabah, hoping that "by the time we have dealt with the more urgent problems of Kabah, the land ownership question should be much clarified."[35] Indeed, after the election of 1948 the land ownership question would be solved, but in a manner not much to the Council's liking. But even as the Council dedicated itself to a plan to carry the town into the 1950s, its own industrial program was generating conditions which would foil all its efforts at control.

Between 1945 and 1946 the Council's industrial drive yielded dramatic results, transforming the political economy of the town forever.[36] The former key industries, woolwashing and the railway workshops, were now overshadowed by two representatives of the newly expanding automobile industry. The town's fortunes, linked to the Cape Midlands hinterland and to external markets since the widespread development of wool production in the 19th century, were now tied firmly to the premier twentieth century international growth industry.

The immediate effect of the boom was to provide employment. For the Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage metropolitan area total black industrial employment increased from 36% of the industrial workforce in 1935/36 to 56% in 1949/50. In absolute terms, the black industrial workforce increased from 4,288 in 1935/36 to 17,215 in 1949/50, an increase of over 300%.[37] Though no figures are available for Uitenhage alone, an estimate of the town's black industrial workforce in 1949/50 would be approximately 2,500. The industrial workforce thus grew at a much faster rate than the African population as a whole, which increased from 6,588 in 1936 to 16,942 in 1951, or by more than 150%, with the fastest growth coming in the five years after the war when the new factories came on line.[38] While the population of Kabah swelled, the number of Africans outside the Location doubled from 1,177 in 1947 to 2,127 in 1951, as families crowded into lodgings in the western end of town.[39]

Despite the introduction of limited influx controls in 1933, the African population had become the single largest group in the town. But the African population growth was part of a general migration to the town, which included a sharp increase in the coloured and white population as well. As was the

case in the 1930s, the increase in population was not a function of formal migrancy; indeed, the evidence suggests that whole families were moving to Uitenhage, or that families would soon join a husband who had found work in town.[40]

The pressing task for the Municipality was the straightforward issue of building enough houses and overcoming the squalid conditions in the Location. But as early as 1947, as the contours of Fagan-inspired policy were becoming clear, the Departmental Executive Committee cast serious doubts on the likelihood of the policy ever succeeding. "The number of applications from employers to the Location Superintendent asking for plots to be allocated to Native employees grows daily more formidable."[41] Unemployment had virtually been eliminated, and employers complained about the limited availability of labour in Kabah and pressed the Municipality to allow them to bring in more Africans from outside. Indeed, a Council committee recommended the repeal of the limited influx control measures enacted in the 1930s.

Industrialization brought about what the Municipality had long sought to avoid: a sharp and uncontrolled increase in the black population. By 1948 the Council had to act quickly to implement the now modest looking project agreed upon two years before, when it optimistically hoped to demolish sub-standard dwellings and relocate African and coloured occupants to separate Municipal schemes. In the months before the National Party electoral victory, the Council lacked a viable long-term plan for accommodating its burgeoning population, resources to build houses, and the power to regulate the town's population growth. A Departmental Committee of Enquiry into the administration of Kabah argued that such processes were natural, "and without turning a location into a concentration camp, it seems impossible to prevent it."[42] It was the intention of the National Party - in spirit at least - to do just that.

III. 1948 AND BEYOND: THE CENTRAL STATE, LOCAL COUNCILS, AND POPULAR RESISTANCE TO APARTHEID

The United Party Councillors in Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth entered the 1948 elections hopeful that the national housing question would soon be solved along lines amenable to their local policies: that the Fagan recommendations would be given statutory force upon the re-election of the UP Government. But the 1948 election changed the political calculus almost completely, as the National Party's narrow electoral victory cleared the way for enactment of apartheid legislation. Locally, HNP members were elected to Parliament and to the Councils, which remained, however, in UP hands. The shift was a small, but nonetheless significant watershed. For the first time since Union in 1910, the Uitenhage district did not elect a UP/South African Party member to Parliament.

A. THE GROUP AREAS ACT

The NP campaigned on an electoral platform advocating a fundamental departure in urban policy, especially regarding the reproduction of African labour power. According to Hindson, the short term policies expressed in the UP's Fagan Report and the NP's Sauer Report had much in common, but their "long term trajectories were radically different." Where Fagan accepted the inevitability of African urbanization, seeking to channel influx through "restrained" transitional segregationist measures, Sauer "wished to reverse African urbanisation and to build up reserve economies so that they could support the entire African population."[43] In response to the urban crisis of the late 1940s, the Sauer Report advocated a compulsory national system of labour regulation and labour control.[44]

The new legal framework which the NP rushed to create in its first years in office gave statutory force to many of the recommendations of the Sauer report.[45] These laws, jointly linked, aimed at regulating and limiting the movement of Africans to the cities, encouraging long-term shrinkage of African presence in the urban areas, and strengthening social and political segregation between all race groups. Amendments to existing legislation tightened influx control by linking it to controls over employment. African labour contracts would be registered, employers would be forced to pay a Native Services Levy into the local Native Revenue Account, and a reorganized labour bureau would be established as the institutional means for limiting movement from rural areas and distributing labour between the various sectors of the economy.[46]

Urban policies after 1948 were not merely a function of the political struggles over migratory labour, however. Municipalities and the central state developed initiatives to reorder, redistribute, and control urban populations as a whole, whether migratory or settled, African or "non-African". Rather than viewing the pass laws and the Urban Areas Act in isolation as a response to the problems of migrant labour, it is important to see how they intersect with other central state policies, especially with the Group Areas Act [GAA].[47]

In repealing a contradictory patchwork of provincial legislation, the Group Areas Act sought a comprehensive system of segregation which would affect all race "groups," including whites, by imposing control throughout South Africa over inter-racial property transactions and inter-racial changes of occupation.[48] The law depended on the prior identification of every citizen in terms of the Population Registration Act, and the placement of all individuals within designated racial groups. These groups would be assigned to a specific, racially homogeneous physical space: the group area. It specified a series of stages through which control would be progressively tightened leading to the ultimate declaration of full group areas, racially pure in terms of both ownership and occupation. The Land Tenure Advisory Board [LTAB], a legislative holdover from an earlier effort to control Indians, later reconstituted as the Group Areas Board, was given extremely broad powers under amendments to the Act to inquire into proposed group areas and to recommend proposals for proclamation by the Minister.[49]

The impact of the Act was profound: it not only gave the state dramatic new powers to remake the full physical field of urban life, but it universalised the systematic mechanisms of separation which were formerly wielded only against Africans.[50] The "pure" segregated residential areas were to be separated by great distances and wide "buffer strips." Finally, the Act posed a major threat to the stability of the Indian and coloured petite-bourgeoisie, by limiting their access to trading stands or factory sites in central cities.[51]

For local Councillors convinced of the efficacy of gradual and voluntary segregation and an integrated commercial sphere, the implications of the Act were profound. But the full power of the Act cannot be grasped when it is viewed in isolation: its awesome powers operated (admittedly unevenly and sometimes contradictorily) in the evolving thicket of apartheid legislation. In combination the GAA and the Urban Areas Act created enormous new state powers. If the latter Act carried the authority for segregating and controlling the movement of Africans, the former defined how the segregated areas were to be cited vis-a-vis all other racially defined sections.

B. THE POLITICS OF NON-COMPLIANCE IN UITENHAGE

Kabah - where it was planned at all - developed according to a vision quite at odds with the newly-evolving apartheid framework. In 1951 the 4,200 coloured residents of Kabah made up nearly a quarter of the Location population, and accounted for more than 60% of the coloured population of Uitenhage.[52] The remainder of the coloured residents lived in the town itself, interspersed with poor whites and Africans in the older western sections. On its eastern side the Location was separated from the white sections of town by a single street, while another road on its south-western side divided Kabah from the proposed coloured sub-economic scheme which the Council had been shepherding through the national bureaucracy since 1947.

Not only were coloureds and Africans living in close proximity in Kabah, not only were coloureds and Africans living in the town itself, but the Location was too close to the white sections of town and too close to the proposed coloured sub-economic scheme. Coloureds would have to be removed from Kabah to satisfy the requirements of the Urban Areas Act, and they would have to be moved a suitable distance away from Kabah and from the soon-to-be-declared "white" town to satisfy the buffer zone requirements of the GAA; furthermore, the Kabah Location itself would have to be moved. The wide gap between the legal ideal of racially pure areas and the incompatible conditions on the ground defined the terrain of the local political struggle over national urban policies.

How would the systematic policies be brought to bear on a seemingly intractable situation on the ground? The policy changes after 1948 were not meant to be instantly implemented. Hendrik Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs, accepted that no one would consider "stopping the development of South

Africa-not even for a period."[53] As Posel makes clear, in distinguishing between "purist" and "practical" interpretations of policy, there were limits on the purist approach, the extent of which would be established through real political struggle.[54] Since local governments were the primary apparatus of the state for intervening in the labour market, such bodies became a major site of conflict.

As a first step toward achieving its national goals, the Government enacted subtle, but extremely important changes in its legal relationship with local authorities. Under 1945 amendments to the Urban Areas Act the Minister was empowered to proclaim controls on African entry into an urban area "if requested to do so by a resolution...of any urban local authority...."[55] Some municipalities, such as Port Elizabeth, had opted out of the system, and remained "open cities" where Africans were not subject to the pass laws. Uitenhage's limited influx control measure from 1933 was never seriously enforced, and the Council looked forward to its repeal.

The Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952 reversed the scope of application of influx control: rather than being applied only where local authorities had requested it, influx control was automatically instituted throughout the Union. Under the new law the local authority was limited to asking for an exemption from influx control, and even then, the Government could refuse. The same Act provided for a compulsory national labour bureau system for all urban and rural areas, repealing a 1949 provision for voluntary establishment of labour bureaux.[56] Local authorities were stripped of an extremely important statutory power, while influx control was legally, though not yet in practice, extended from a piece-meal program to a national system.

As a second step, the central government shuffled the bureaucracies responsible for specific urban policies. The impact of the shifts quickly became apparent to local officials. In late 1951 S.B. Featherstone, the Uitenhage Town Clerk, received notification from the Secretary for Native Affairs in Pretoria that funding for the Municipality's proposed coloured sub-economic housing scheme would be delayed due to its "close proximity to the proclaimed Native location."[57] The coloured housing scheme, laid out under the housing policies of the previous Government, was cited outside the African area, in compliance with the Urban Areas Act (1945), but was just across the road from the Location, in violation of the new GAA.

Featherstone was incredulous. The Department and the Municipality both sought separation of Africans and coloureds in Kabah, "And yet you tell us summarily that the proposed site for a Coloured Housing Scheme is no good because it is too near the Native Location. Under existing conditions coloureds and Natives live together in the Location. Surely it is better to develop a separate area for coloureds alongside the Location even if it is near the Location."[58]

The Town Clerk's anger was heightened because the Council had expected rapid approval of its proposal. It had already purchased materials and hired labour, and delays increased expenditure for storing supplies and retaining workers. More importantly, the Municipality had received a formal circular a mere four days before receipt of the Secretary's letter announcing that the Native Affairs Department now had authority to review Housing Commission plans and possessed veto power over the choice of sites for housing schemes.[59] Previously such power was vested only in the National Housing and Planning Commission. The day before the Secretary's letter was written the Town Clerk had received an undertaking from the Technical Adviser to the National Housing Commission that he would personally discuss the matter of the coloured housing scheme with the Native Affairs Department.[60] The adviser was Adolph Schauder, architect of Port Elizabeth's "liberal" "Location Strategy" and a prominent figure in the UP; yet he was not informed of the content of the Native Affairs Secretary's letter. The Municipality confronted a new and bewildering rearrangement of bureaucratic forces, linked into power networks to which the UP Councillors enjoyed little or no access. In January 1952 the Council reached agreement with the Commissioner for Coloured Affairs and with the Native Affairs Department on the provision of a buffer strip between the proposed coloured scheme and the Location. Over 2,000 people would have to be removed and 300 houses demolished to make way for the buffer strip, which the Town Clerk derided as "the task which the Government Departments concerned have imposed upon the Council in return for the right to build a Coloured Housing Scheme...."[61]

If the fight over buffer strips was the preliminary bout, application of the GAA was the main event. The Council's role in the application of the Act was essential and the Land Tenure Advisory

Board began wooing it in 1951. The LTAB lacked detailed information about the town, and the Council's participation would legitimate the group areas project in the eyes of many local constituencies who were suspicious of the policy.[62]

As a first step the Council accepted the task of conducting a survey of the town to establish the precise racial character of ownership and occupation. "This is...the only thing which we as the local authority should do at this stage," Featherstone, the Town Clerk reported to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. He hoped that conducting the survey would satisfy the central state that the Municipality was cooperating while buying time for the Council. "I do not think we should allow ourselves to be rushed into action," he wrote, "My attitude is not an apathetic one but I am not keen that we should be the first in the Cape to invoke the machinery of the Act and make what might prove costly blunders due to ignorance of all the implications."[63]

On 17 October 1951 the entire Cape Province was declared a "specified area" in terms of the Group Areas Act, essentially freezing existing conditions.[64] The proclamation was a central state initiative further depriving local authorities of discretion in responding to the GAA. For the next year the Municipality refused to take the initiative in a series of minor dealings with the LTAB. Then in August 1953, the Secretary of the LTAB in Cape Town asked the Council whether it had reconsidered its position on the next stage of implementation, declaration of "defined" areas.[65] In defined areas the level of control over "interpenetration" would be increased: unoccupied property could not be built upon nor existing buildings extended without ministerial approval.

The step was a particularly dangerous one for the Council to take. "Specified" areas, the freeze on inter-racial changes of ownership and occupation, had been established from above by the central government in a province-wide proclamation in which the Council had no part. But because Municipal officials possessed the most accurate understanding of conditions on the ground, the Government expected them to play a major role in "defining" individual properties owned or occupied by individuals of one race in an area to be reserved for another. By participating in efforts to define areas, the Council itself would directly harm vested interests in the town, especially black businesses in white areas. At the end of August the Council's Finance and General Purposes Committee decided to accept the LTAB's request and directed the Town Clerk to report to the Committee any cases of "possible penetration."

But a curious lobbying effort began at the next full Council meeting where the members were to vote on the Finance and General Purposes Committee recommendation. During the meeting, the Council received an urgent letter from the Uitenhage Indian Congress, asking the Council to refrain from making any decision on the question to allow them time to study the Committee's proposals. Application of the Act, the letter warned, would "have grievous detrimental and widely devastating effects on...properties and the very existence and destiny of the future of the Indian community."[66] Three of the four authors were shopowners, and the Vice Chairman, D.R. Lalla, owned four properties. Their request was accepted, and the matter was referred back to Committee.[67]

At its next meeting the Committee received the deputation from the Uitenhage Indian Congress, including the four shopowners. The group stressed "the cordial relations which have always existed between the Indian community and other sections of the community in Uitenhage," and said that the Indians living or trading in town had been present there for more than fifty years, a presence which they did not regard as "penetration." The group asked that since the Act placed sole authority for racial zoning in the hands of the LTAB, which would eventually make its own representations to the Minister, "the Council should wait until this happens and not take the initiative...."[68] After considering the deputation's arguments, the Committee decided that the Council should defer the matter indefinitely, "to remove any suspicion on the part of the non-European sections of the community that the Council is acting against their interests...." The next week the Committee's new recommendation was carried by the full Council.[69]

The Council learned the Government's response within two weeks of the decision. The Finance and General Purposes Committee received notification from the National Housing and Planning Commission that the NHPC and LTAB had decided not to consider any applications for housing funds whatsoever until the LTAB had granted approval for the planning of group areas. Whether or not the LTAB meant what it said, the local officials who had just refused to cooperate with group areas

legislation were on notice that in the future they would have to seek approval for all housing plans from the very authorities they had just snubbed, and Uitenhage had numerous housing requests pending before the NHPC.

The LTAB approached the Council again in June, 1954, but in two years of debate Councillors could not decide whether "to take the initiative to see that people were treated in the most humane way possible" or to refuse to participate in applying a law likely to cause the "economic strangulation of the Chinese and Indian traders...."[70] In support of the latter position, Councillor Gerald Smith "objected to the very principle of the Act and...did not think the Council should take the lead...[A]s responsibility for the Act and its administration rested solely with the Government it should be left to them to apply it...."[71] When neither the full Council nor a special subcommittee could break the deadlock members essentially threw up their hands. In March 1956 the Council decided to "leave the problem to be handled by the LTAB."[72] The position became the official policy of the Council for the next six years.

At the meeting in October 1953, when the Council originally rejected cooperation following the protest by the Uitenhage Indian Congress, the leading NP member, Councillor Frans Conradie, reminded the members that Indians were but 1% of the town's population. Speaking in Afrikaans, he "could not understand why the Committee had so quickly turned around as a result of formal objection against the move which had been put forward by the Indian community." Indeed, why did the Council reverse itself after meeting a single Indian organization?

The Act would surely cause hardships, and the Councillors knew that they would fall most heavily on a small but important group: Indian, Chinese, and coloured businessmen and property owners. The question of removing coloureds from Kabah was no longer a policy issue: from the 1940s the body had accepted that goal. Councillors rationalized residential segregation on the grounds that hardships inflicted on blacks by removal were minimized because families received better houses in the new schemes than those they left behind in Kabah.

But the Group Areas Act's limits on ownership and occupancy threatened to deal a mortal blow to the economic well-being of those owning businesses in town. A 1959 Municipal survey identified 34 Chinese and 29 Indians as property owners in the town, holding at least 100 properties with a taxable value of more than £200,000. A 1955 survey identified more than 340 black-owned dwellings and nearly 80 shops.[73] Furthermore, as a result of the historical patterns of development on the western end of town whites owned at least 107 dwellings and 18 shops in likely coloured, Indian, Chinese, or Malay Group Areas, and would suffer hardships under the Act. Thus the holdings of a number of individuals - black and white - were rendered insecure. To expropriate all or part of these properties the Council would lose part of its tax base, be forced to pay compensation, and face the prospect of lengthy and costly litigation.

Indian, Chinese, and coloured businessmen were not only property owners, but voters, as well. Though in 1956 the NP succeeded in its protracted constitutional battle to remove coloureds from the parliamentary voters' roll, they did not fully disenfranchise them: coloureds and Indians in the Cape remained eligible to vote in local elections into the 1970s.[74] A 1959 survey of "non-white" voters listed 950 "coloureds," amounting to 19% of the registered electorate.[75] In a town where the Afrikaner electorate was increasing, and voted almost exclusively for the NP, a UP Councillor needed all the non-Afrikaner votes he could muster, and would be ill-advised to be seen threatening Indian, coloured, or Chinese interests.[76] If the Uitenhage Indian Congress and other bodies had special access to the Council, it was indeed, as Councillor Conradie emphasized, not because of their numbers, but because of their economic influence and political weight.

C. APARTHEID IN PE: THE CONSEQUENCES OF COMPLIANCE

1. The Urban Areas Act: Defiance, Riots, and the End of the Liberal "Experiment"

Port Elizabeth, like Uitenhage, emerged from World War II with a severe housing crisis. The town's population had grown almost as rapidly as Uitenhage's and for the same reasons: economic expansion during and immediately after the war, and from drought in the hinterland. The population expansion, and the near absence of Municipal construction had contributed to a housing problem far

worse than that which prompted the program of removals and segregated housing schemes of the late 1930s. Indeed, the efforts to remove Africans from Korsten in 1937 had temporarily reduced the number of people living there, but only slightly, and Africans continued to constitute the overwhelming majority of the population. By 1951 there were actually more Africans resident in Korsten than before the removals. The City Council reaffirmed its pre-war Location strategy, and refused to comply with the new national influx control legislation. Yet, as Robinson shows, these policies were increasingly out of step with post-war reality.[77]

Most importantly, the City Council faced a new threat from below: the increasingly organized African working class in Port Elizabeth, led by a resurgent African National Congress and Communist Party. Economic downturn in the late 1940s exacerbated the problems of social reproduction, especially as the motor industry was hit by restrictions on CKD material imposed to redress the national balance of payments crisis. The deteriorating social conditions, and especially the apartheid proposals of the National Party Government generated a resurgence of black political protest, which was as strong in Port Elizabeth as in any other area of the country.

A renewed ANC with local leadership drawn from the ranks of working class residents protested proposed rent increases in 1945 and 1947, and in 1949 staged a militant four-month boycott of a steep rise in bus fares by South African Railways and Harbours.[78] The Eastern Cape, and especially Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage, were also the centres registering the strongest response to the ANC's 1952 Defiance Campaign.[79] The growing political mobilization around the campaign, and the intensification of both the central and local state's police response led in October to a violent riot. At the New Brighton train station a Railway policeman shot a man whom he suspected of stealing a tin of paint. The angry crowd which gathered at the scene killed a passing truck driver, and moved on to destroy white-owned properties in the township, killing 3 more whites in the process, while the police killed seven Africans.[80]

The National Party disingenuously laid responsibility for the riots at the door of the Port Elizabeth City Council and its "liberal" policies. The importance the government attached to its attack on the Council is shown by the prominence of its chief spokesman: none other than Hendrik Verwoerd, apartheid's architect as Minister of Native Affairs, who would later serve as Prime Minister during the most brutal period of NP rule. The riots provided Verwoerd with a convenient opportunity to discredit resistance to his Native Affairs policies in the run-up to the 1953 elections, in which the NP was in no sense assured of success.[81] Four days after the riot he travelled to Port Elizabeth for talks with NAD and SAP officials, pointedly snubbing the Mayor and City Council by sending a departmental official to convey his views. That night, in a public speech at an NP rally, Verwoerd pronounced the liberal "experiment" a failure, and threatened to impose influx control himself if the Council failed to act.[82]

In the aftermath of the riot Port Elizabeth came to resemble a military zone, with Permanent Force armoured convoys carrying out "routine training exercises" on the city streets.[83] Armed police were placed on every bus travelling to New Brighton, more armed policemen were on duty at the bus terminus, and the vehicles stayed out of the township, letting off passengers half a mile away. The ANC called for a transport boycott until the police were removed, and the following day the boycott was virtually total. Four days later the SAR&H System Manager met ANC leaders, the police were removed, and the action called off. But that very same day the City Council made decisions which would give the ANC far greater cause for concern.[84]

On 28 October, ten days after the riot, the City Council voted by an overwhelming majority to request the Minister of Justice to enforce the Riotous Assemblies Act banning all open-air meetings by Africans in the city and to request the Minister of Native Affairs to impose a curfew.[85] Ten days later the powers were granted by the Minister of Justice, who also banned 52 African leaders in the Eastern Cape under the Suppression of Communism Act, and invoked War Emergency Regulations giving the police power of summary arrest. The emergency restrictions applied not only in Port Elizabeth, but in Uitenhage, Peddie, King William's Town, and East London, all of which were important centres during the Defiance Campaign.

As Robinson points out, in the face of pressure from the central government and its local supporters - including a growing proportion of PE voters - liberal Councillors could retain belief in the

benevolence of their policies by laying responsibility for the rising tide of protest on agitators rather than on the material conditions Council policies had themselves spawned. At the October 28th Council meeting Urban Areas Commissioner Brand's presentation of the pass laws strongly emphasised their utility in weeding out undesirables, an act of salesmanship keenly attuned to the Councillors' own self-justifying perspective.[86]

By its actions the City Council may have hoped to preempt the central state from imposing an even more draconian response, but the moves only heightened the crisis. In response to the ban and curfew, the ANC Eastern Cape Regional Committee called for a stay-at-home on November 10, "to continue until God Almighty has changed the hearts of the City Councillors."[87] In the days before the stay-at-home police reinforcements rushed to Port Elizabeth, while the Council, local employers and senior representatives of the SAP and Ministries of Native Affairs and Labour hammered out common strategies. The City Council and Government departments threatened to dismiss any employees taking part in the action, though local industries adopted a more lenient approach of "no work, no pay," perhaps as a result of experience gained from months of strikes sparked by dismissals of workers arrested in the Defiance Campaign. Before the stay-at-home, the local Executive Committee of the ANC negotiated with the Mayor, and agreed to limit the strike to one day in return for the Mayor's promise to reduce the curfew to three months and the ban on meetings to one month.

The protest, like the bus boycotts and the Defiance Campaign before it, was a total success in both Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage as nearly all African workers stayed away from work. Retribution was swift, however, as approximately 5,000 Africans were fired, with the harshest responses coming from Government departments.[88]

The central government blamed the stayaway on the Council's "liberal" policies, and in its aftermath made renewed calls to apply influx control. As noted above, the amended influx control legislation removed local discretion in its application, and through a Parliamentary proclamation made the laws automatically applicable in all towns with more than 20,000 African residents, including Port Elizabeth. Though the Council had requested an exemption from the legislation, Verwoerd rejected their appeal. Instead he accused the Council of "dereliction of duty" in failing to carry out obligations under the law, such as inaugurating a labour bureau and registering African service contracts.[89]

Central ministries in Pretoria were closely monitoring events in Port Elizabeth, and applying pressure to force compliance with their aims. When Eiselen, Secretary for Native Affairs heard press reports about the Mayor's promise to the ANC to rescind the curfew and ban, he rebuked the Town Clerk for the Council's ignorance of the emergency laws they had themselves invoked, which could only be altered by the national Government. After informing the Town Clerk that Verwoerd would not recommend withdrawing the restrictions, "*even when the position has returned to normal*," [emphasis added] Eiselen warned the Council "not [to] compromise itself or the Honourable the Minister by making any promises which may not accord with the desires of the Minister."[90] Once mounted on the tiger of political repression, the Council found it very difficult to avoid ending up inside.

On 15 January 1953 the Council agreed to implement the influx control provisions of Section 10 of the Urban Areas Act and authorized establishment of a local labour bureau.[91] Clinging to its legacy of liberalism while caught between a militant black resistance movement and an increasingly interventionist central state, the Council justified its capitulation on grounds that it would administer the restrictions more fairly. It asserted that the laws would allow greater control over the "*tsotsi* [gangster] element," and increased protection for "bona-fide" Africans against those from outside flooding the job market. The draconian provisions of the Urban Areas Act would therefore be administered in the best interests of Port Elizabeth's Africans!

2. Group Areas

In contrast to the intense political fight over the Urban Areas Act, the Council had far fewer qualms about compliance with the GAA. Despite the Council's preoccupation with the local emergency and influx control, city agencies had been busy for over a year conducting the initial research for planning group areas. Rather than rebelling against the GAA, as had the Uitenhage Town Council, a majority of the Port Elizabeth Council saw the legislation as a logical extension of a long-standing Municipal

segregation policy.

In mid-1952 a Joint Town Planning Committee was established, consisting of representatives of the Port Elizabeth and its adjacent Walmer Municipality, the Port Elizabeth Divisional Council (governing the unincorporated area of the Port Elizabeth magisterial district), and representatives of central state ministries. The Joint Committee developed the first proposals for Group Areas with a view to coordinated planning for the entire metropolitan area.[92]

In December 1952 the Committee forwarded its proposals to the Land Tenure Advisory Board. As a result of years of local segregation - especially in the proliferation of racially restrictive covenants in new housing developments - the Committee felt that many areas in the city could be declared group areas immediately. There were a number of "problem" areas, however. Though coloureds had been segregated in Municipal housing schemes, these were scattered like islands throughout mostly white residential areas, so there was no single zone of coloured residence in the city.

To accommodate these areas, the Council deviated from the principles embodied in the Act and pursued by the LTAB, which sought to create wide zones of single-race residence with sufficient land for expansion, and separated by broad buffer strips.[93] By contrast, the Council's initial proposals minimized the disruption and tremendous expense which would ensue from moving people from the many scattered areas and rehousing them in a single zone.

First, its definition of "coloured" included Malay, Chinese, and Indian people, though the Population Registration Act defined these as separate groups, and the GAA stipulated that each "group" be accommodated in a separate area. Furthermore, it declared Group Areas wherever large concentrations of coloureds were already living, whereas the Act demanded that they be relocated to a single, large group area. The plan established "free areas" in zones where large numbers of coloured and Indian businessmen already owned shops. Finally, in an effort to soften the blows on present citizens, the proposals envisioned segregation as an extremely long-term process, and granted families 60 years to move if they lived in an area specified for a different group.

Ultimately the LTAB (renamed the Group Areas Board in 1955) overrode all these deviations, and in 1960 submitted its recommendations to the Minister of the Interior. The scattered islands of coloured residence, including South End, Fairview, Lea Place, Stuart Township, and the pockets in North End and Korsten were declared part of the white group area, though evictions were to be deferred for the time being. Proposals for free areas for coloured and Indian traders were rejected, and all were to be moved to the border of the coloured group area. With minor exceptions the recommendations of the Group Areas Board served as the basis for the final group areas proclamation in Port Elizabeth on 30 May 1961, eight years after the first proposals were submitted to the LTAB. Notwithstanding the local officials' rationalizations that cooperation with the government would permit a fairer application of the Act, their proposals were uniformly rejected in favour of a pure vision of segregation dictated from above. [See Map 3]

The rather abstract process of planning did little to change the immediate conditions. Despite differences between the Council and central government over the disposition of areas like South End, both bodies agreed that Africans resident in the town must be removed to New Brighton, and that coloureds be removed from Korsten to the existing coloured schemes in Schauderville. Actual removal and - more important - funds for building alternative accommodation in the officially "preferred" residential area were far more intractable problems.

3. Forced Removals

The Urban Areas Act and Group Areas Act gave the Municipality interlocking legal authority and powerful new state institutions to remake Port Elizabeth on the Procrustean bed of apartheid social engineering. To conform with the new vision of racial planning, the local and central state would have to destroy the residential checkerboard which had resulted from generations of piecemeal official and private segregation. People living or owning property in areas defined for other "groups" were to be moved to the "proper" area, where alternative accommodation would have to be provided to prevent further squatting. Korsten and nearby Dassiekraal were the state's first targets in its effort to transform

Port Elizabeth into an apartheid city.

Unlike the removals and housing schemes of the late 1930s, these policies were meant to bring wholesale changes in residential and commercial ownership and occupancy, permanently altering the urban map. The earlier removals from Korsten had been hampered by the slow provision of housing in McNamee Village, and by the limited authority to evict Africans under the Slums Act. By contrast, the second action against Korsten was bolstered by the provisions of the amended UAA, making it an offense for Africans to live outside of a formal location.[94] Not only could Africans be moved *en masse*, but the enhanced repressive arsenal provided by new pass laws and labour bureaux could prevent them from returning, and passes could be used to differentiate between "illegal" Africans and legitimate coloured residents. Furthermore, the Government's acceptance of "Site and Service" housing in the Kwazakhele extension to New Brighton enabled it to move people at a rate unencumbered by the slow pace of house construction. Finally, Africans owning property in Korsten would ultimately be expropriated, not under the UAA, but under the provisions of the GAA, which prevented ownership by persons outside of their prescribed group area.

The Korsten removals began in April 1956, and by the end of 1957 more than 28,817 people had been moved to Kwazakhele. Little resistance was offered, despite the strength of ANC organization in Port Elizabeth.[95] By 1960 there were slightly less than 2,200 Africans living in Korsten.

As Taylor points out, the Korsten removals signified "the conclusive containment and control of the majority of the identified working class...." In 1951 31% of Africans in Port Elizabeth lived in the "wrong" area, outside designated Locations. By 1960 the figure was reduced to 16%, and by 1985 to 4%.[96] The greatest increase in segregation of Africans in Port Elizabeth during the twentieth century occurred over the period of the second Korsten removals, so that by 1960 segregation between coloureds and Africans was almost as thorough as between whites and Africans.[97] Despite the massive population growth for both coloureds and Africans over the period, the removals policy succeeded in "canalising" such growth into racially segregated areas defined and controlled by the state.

The state's preoccupation with removing Africans to Kwazakhele had postponed any attempts to address the backlog of housing for coloureds. The natural increase of the population was enough to cause considerable overcrowding in Schauderville, Dower, and other coloured housing schemes. These housing projects were inadequate to start with, but the huge migration of coloureds to Port Elizabeth during the 1950s came at a time when very few houses - and no sub-economic schemes - were built by the Municipality for coloureds.[98] The proclamation of group areas in 1961 added immensely to the problem, as coloureds living in South End, North End and other parts of the city would have to be rehoused in the new coloured group area stretching north from Schauderville.

These removals occurred throughout the 1960s, and though the bulk of the coloured population had been relocated by 1970, some smaller areas were cleared only in 1984. The pace of removals was slowed by a number of financial and political problems.[99] The central government's unwillingness to fund sub-economic housing schemes created immense stumbling blocks to the removals mandated by the GAA, while the Municipality was unwilling to subsidize the losses which would inevitably result from placing poor coloureds in economic housing where they couldn't afford the rent.

The removals were startling simply in terms of the magnitude of people moved: in 1985 290 people lived in Fairview, compared to some 10,400 in 1970. Of 6,556 coloured residents of South End in 1960, only nine remained twenty years later. By 1980 only 586 coloureds lived in North End where 1,695 had lived in 1960, and virtually of these people were gone within three years.[100]

In the space of two decades the NP's apartheid policies reversed community patterns which had developed over 150 years in North End and South End. In the case of South End the term "erased" is literally appropriate: save for two mosques, the original buildings were razed; even the rectangular street grid was destroyed and a new curvilinear pattern superimposed on the old. The demolitions resulted in the devastation of vast tracts of the city to make way for racially acceptable "redevelopment," which arrived decades later. In the interim, areas subjected to group areas clearances stood empty and forlorn, mute monuments to apartheid. These systematic acts of destruction were aimed not simply at uprooting groups of people, but at destroying all vestiges of entire communities. These outlying coloured areas

were far from the centre of the city, often far from work, and were not only cut off from the African townships and white areas, but were differentiated by class and were also isolated from each other.[101]

In remaking the residential map of Port Elizabeth, the removals orchestrated under the amended Urban Areas and Group Areas Acts also transformed social relationships within and between legally defined "groups." Coloureds and Africans were effectively physically separated in the Port Elizabeth municipal area by the late 1950s, while coloureds were gradually removed from white areas by the early 1970s. In spite of the tremendous surge in population after 1951, when the coloured and African population more than doubled, by 1970 these increases were almost entirely accommodated within the exclusively defined boundaries of segregated group areas and African townships.

D. UITENHAGE: THE CONSEQUENCES OF NONCOMPLIANCE

1. Passes and Protest: Policies Towards Africans

At the same time that Port Elizabeth Councillors were collaborating closely with the LTAB in the further segregation of the city, the Uitenhage Town Council dug in its heels at every stage of the process. Of course Port Elizabeth was a more prominent target than the smaller city, and came under intense pressure from the central state to conform. The NP government was especially aggressive after the 1952 riots launched Port Elizabeth's local debate into the mainstream of national political struggles over Verwoerd's policies towards Africans. Such concerted pressure was not applied in Uitenhage until the late 1950s and early 1960s, a full decade after the Port Elizabeth Council agreed to cooperate. The delay is a crucial factor in accounting for differences in segregation between the towns. Where Africans were generally removed to distant New Brighton by 1957, the old Kabah Location remained intact well into the 1970s. Even more important, where segregation between Africans and coloureds in Port Elizabeth - well advanced before 1948 as a result of local processes - was virtually completed by the late 1950s, in Uitenhage such processes were just beginning by the late-1950s, and reached their peak only in the mid-1970s.

The UP majority on the Uitenhage Town Council was extremely sympathetic to the plight of Indian and coloured property owners under the GAA, and sought to exert local discretion where possible, but their attitude towards African residents of the town was considerably different. Much of the discretion in policy towards Africans had been removed from local authorities and transferred to the central state bureaucracy by the NP's amendments to the UAA. The Uitenhage body followed it's neighbour's traditional approach to African affairs, believing the influx of Africans could be successfully controlled by means other than the strict pass control regulations of Section 10 of the Urban Areas Act. In January 1951 the Native Affairs Committee, chaired by the liberal Councillor E.S. Rens, had resolved not to apply those elements of Government's labour control where local authorities were still allowed a measure of discretion.[102]

It was still necessary, for example, in terms of the Native Laws Amendment Act for the Minister to consult with the local authority regarding establishment of labour bureaux. At first the Council agreed to study the question. But it was not until mid-1953, after Port Elizabeth established a bureau, that the Council agreed in principle to the creation of one in Uitenhage. But before the Council could act definitively, and without consultation, Government Notice no. 2004 of 1953 declared Uitenhage a "prescribed area" under the Urban Areas Act, unilaterally establishing a Native Labour Bureau.[103]

Nor was it mandatory for Uitenhage to apply the Native Services Levy Act, as the original law [Act no. 64 of 1952, section 2] applied automatically only to towns with more than 20,000 African inhabitants.[104] The Council did not desire proclamation of the Act in the town, as local industry was extremely hostile to its provisions.[105] At the end of 1957 the Municipality was again discussing application of the Act to Uitenhage, and while the Mayor expected the law would be applied "sooner or later," the Council applied to be exempted from the levy.[106] Opposition to these measures was never couched in terms of the infringement of rights of Africans. Rather the primary considerations of the Council were the costs associated with the projects, burdens imposed on business, and doubts about the effectiveness of the controls themselves.

Soon the Native Affairs Department would take a hard line on the Native Services Levy, but

only as a power play within a much more important fight: the removal of Kabah. The question of the Location's future had been a non-issue since the Council's 1945-46 commitment to upgrading Kabah. In a September 1955 meeting with the LTAB to discuss group areas planning, Council representatives very briefly referred to the Location, but all agreed that "at this stage it would be an uneconomic and impractical proposition to try and move the Location."[107]

But in July 1957, Brownlee, Chief Native Commissioner for the Eastern Cape, bluntly informed the Council that under new Native Affairs Department policy no housing loans would be granted to a local authority whose Location did not conform to buffer strip requirements. A 500 yard buffer strip would be required between Kabah and the white suburbs and between the Location and the new coloured sub-economic scheme.[108] The Municipality had not cleared the buffer zones in 1952 when it was ordered to move 1,800 persons and 300 dwellings. In the interim many squatters had moved to those areas and the NAD was demarcating a far larger buffer zone, which would necessitate moving the most densely settled sections of the Location: over 11,100 persons and 1,242 dwellings.[109]

But Brownlee had something else in mind. Rather than go to the expense of creating a buffer strip, which would involve extensive compensation to those moved, while leaving Kabah intact, the Council, he suggested, should consider moving the entire Location. Brownlee recommended that the new Location be sited to the south, in the direction of Port Elizabeth, which the NAD was promoting as a point of concentration of black residential areas in Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage. The Chief Native Commissioner, perhaps unconsciously, fully resuscitated T.B. Floyd's 1945 town planning recommendations. To induce conformity, Brownlee offered to delay for one year the extension of the Native Services Levy Act to Uitenhage. Even so, in late October 1957 the Council rejected the unsolicited advice from NAD, on the grounds that the resiting of Kabah Location would be "quite impracticable."[110]

It did not take long for the other shoe to drop. In reply to the Council's action and without warning NAD announced in late October that the Native Services Levy Act would apply to Uitenhage retroactively as from 1 October. The Town Clerk applied to the Department to extend the period, as local officials had no means to begin collecting the levy, but Brownlee refused, and demanded that arrear service contract fees be collected from business or the Municipality would be held liable for the uncollected monies on its Native Revenue Account.[111]

The Council rapidly set to work investigating the potential costs for upgrading or resiting Kabah. In August 1958 the Council resolved in principle to acquire a farm southeast of the town for a new African location. The Town Clerk stated the Council's motives most succinctly: "the Council basically has no particular concern as to whether the Location remains on its present site, or is resited...the issue now has come down to one purely of finance...."[112]

After a two-year dispute about which farm to purchase, the renamed Bantu Affairs Department [BAD] stepped in and persuaded the Council to purchase the farms "Boschoogte" and "Naroes," to the south-west of town across the Swartkops River. The Councillors were worried about the cost of developing the farms, and some reconsidered upgrading Kabah. In a meeting with the Council the Under-Secretary of BAD, Louis Smuts reiterated the Department's demand for the Council to relocate Africans and reserve Kabah for coloured housing, but dangled the carrot of financial support for the move. "If the Council and the Department worked together," he said, "the problem which appeared to be a major one would not be found to be so difficult."[113] Still the Council hesitated. Some members favoured buying the two farms suggested by BAD, others championed another site, while some opposed relocation entirely. All were worried about embarking on a project riskier than anything previously attempted by the Council.

When Smuts returned for another session of the Council-in-Committee in November 1960, he laid down the law. "The Department," he informed the Councillors, "would under no circumstances allow the Kabah Location to be extended" and another site had to be found. The UAA, he asserted, provided that it was the duty of the local authority to provide accommodation on a site approved by the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, and he would impose a decision if the Council did not act.[114] Only one Councillor advocated retaining Kabah at its present site. In January 1961 the Council reversed its 1945 decision and subsequent determinations regarding Kabah, and agreed to remove the

Location.

The Council's decision cannot be separated from the climate of growing political opposition by blacks, but especially by Africans which developed in Uitenhage, as elsewhere in South Africa during the late 1950s. In contrast to the earlier deliberations on the application of group areas to Uitenhage, the decisions regarding resiting of Kabah were made behind closed doors, in secret Council sessions. Whereas prominent members of the coloured, Indian, and Chinese committees had the opportunity to address the Councillors, the Council welcomed no representatives of the African people. Some Councillors did indeed provide a channel of communication to the ANC, and were willing to at least tolerate its presence in the township. But these attitudes became unpopular as protest movements developed in the town through the 1950s. As their suffering grew under the repressive central state policies increasingly being enforced through the local authority, African residents mounted more direct forms of protest against apartheid and its institutional embodiments, both nationally and locally. Politics polarized increasingly between the ANC and the Government, with the Council drawn inexorably towards the latter.

Uitenhage was a stronghold of the ANC throughout the decade, and was one of the organizations' most active branches in the Cape. Uitenhage was one of the best-mobilized centres in the Eastern Cape during the 1952 Defiance Campaign.[115] Unlike Port Elizabeth, where many protests occurred at the New Brighton train station, civil disobedience in Uitenhage generally occurred in the centre of the "white" town at the market square, railway station, and law courts. Yet these were generally peaceful protests and many of the criticisms of unjust laws were shared (at least privately - and unbeknown to the protestors) by UP Councillors. Whatever liberal sympathy might have existed for Africans, however, did not extend to subsequent Congress campaigns, which met a far less tolerant response.

The 1955 school boycott was extensive in the town, even after ANC provincial and national leaders distanced themselves from the campaign.[116] The most serious confrontations occurred over the application of Pass Laws to women in 1957 when police violently dispersed anti-pass protesters, and made mass arrests.[117] The education boycotts and pass protests were followed by the prominent 1958 General Election stay-at-home, and by a number of more localized strikes and protests.

In part, the change arose from the altered party composition of the Council. The newly-elected NP members of the Council made important political and ideological interventions on the body: bi-lingualism in all Council meetings and documents was first introduced in 1954 for example, and NP members led efforts to segregate town parks and the morning market.

Perhaps the most significant NP representative was Frans Conradie, who served between 1953 and 1957, when he was elected to the Provincial Council. His rise in the NP was meteoric: married to a prominent Afrikaans writer, he was a local and Eastern Cape Representative on the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs, Member of the Provincial Council, then member of the Executive Council of the Cape, and later MP. But these positions were facilitated through Conradie's real connections, growing out of his membership in the Broederbond, where he served on the Executive, and from the early 1960s, as Convenor of its secret watchdog committee on Coloured Affairs, and as a member of the committee on Relations with English.[118] These connections would prove invaluable for the NP and the central state in the upcoming efforts to extract compliance from the local Council. Conradie's law partner, G.J. Pieterse, was also a member of the Broederbond, and served intermittently on the Town Council from 1958 to the early 1970s. Pieterse was secretary of the first branch of the Afrikaanse Sakekamer to open in a town once dominated by English-speaking businessmen.[119] It was these individuals who led the local attack against the Faganite tradition on the Council, and especially against the ANC. Their first major initiative was a 1954 attempt to thwart the planned annual meeting of the Cape ANC at Kabah even though a permit had been granted and the ANC had already paid the fees for the Location hall.[120]

As in Port Elizabeth after the 1952 riot, the internal and external NP actors were able to intensify pressure on the UP Council by using the local "unrest" as a pretext to justify the increased restrictions provided through the UAA and GAA. Councillors who had previously opposed stronger controls now sought methods, including registration of service contracts, to eliminate such "undesirable

elements" from the town.[121]

Where Indian organizations, which represented a mere 1% of the population, had been able to influence Council policy directly, African organizations, most especially the ANC, could mobilize large constituencies throughout the 1950s, but could not gain the ear of the Council. In contrast to both the way it handled the group areas legislation, and the manner in which it discussed T.B. Floyd's 1945 recommendations for removing Kabah, the Council agreed to the main lines the NAD policy without concern for the interests of those most affected, especially once the Government eased the Council's fiscal burden.

2. Group Areas, Again

When the Secretary of the East Cape Committee of the Group Areas Board (the transformed LTAB) saw press reports in mid-1961 that the Council had agreed to resite Kabah, he wrote to the Town Clerk to renew the campaign for group areas.[122] Since Kabah would eventually be cleared, plenty of prime land would be opened up for possible coloured settlement. The thorny group areas problem could be simplified.

On 17 July 1961 the Council met to consider his request and a UP Councillor managed to push through a resolution declaring "that the Council does not wish to discuss the question...or to submit proposals..." But where in years past large majorities stood on principle in rejecting any participation with the GAA, by 1961 the Councillors lamely claimed to be too preoccupied with plans to resite the African location to take up such a vexing issue. And even then the resolution passed only narrowly.

"Council snubs Group Areas Board," was the headline in the Johannesburg-based *Sunday Times*, while the Port Elizabeth *Evening Post* editorialized that "Most Councillors have stood firm against the great hardships which compulsory racial grouping would bring." But the pro-Government *Die Oosterlig* interpreted events differently. "The constituency in which the town lies has sent representatives of apartheid to the Assembly and Provincial Council. The majority in the City Council is therefore a mere island in the political sea." The editorial concluded, "'Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's' is a good idea for them to bear in mind."[123]

The Afrikaans daily had a far clearer reading of the prevailing balance of political power. In the 1958 General Elections the NP greatly increased both its number of seats and its share of the popular vote. In both the 1960 referendum and the 1961 general election it one a majority of the (white) popular vote, which translated into a massive parliamentary majority. The local UP Councillors could hardly claim to be representing the majority of white opinion when their national party was being consistently beaten in election after election. In June 1962 the Council accepted without opposition a resolution to submit group areas proposals to the Department of Community Development.

However, agreement was possible only once a compromise had been forged to reduce the hardships for Indian and Chinese traders. The proposal came from none other than G.J. Pieterse, of the local law firm Conradie, Pieterse & Campher. Through his past participation on the Council, Pieterse was well aware that the body had no objections to residential segregation, but that it balked at any restrictions on business, which "should be left undisturbed."[124] The Council's position clearly contradicted the principles of the GAA, and would lead to permanent deadlock. But Pieterse identified a way around the impasse: he recommended that the Council petition the government to declare a free trade zone, allowing "non-white" businesses to continue in something like their current form.

Pieterse developed the strategy while preparing an application for a local Indian businessman who sought a group areas permit. His client was none other than A.S. Kooverjee, a landowner, businessman, and member of the Uitenhage Indian Congress. Kooverjee was also a central participant in the delegation which had successfully pressured the Council to reverse itself in 1953 and refuse to cooperate with the LTAB. Kooverjee had made a shrewd choice of lawyers. Pieterse's partner was now an insider in Broederbond and Cape provincial government policy-making circles; the lawyers' knowledge of the Council and their connections to the responsible central ministries made them extremely well-positioned to broker a group areas deal between the Council and the government.[125]

With hopes of obtaining such an exemption, the Council's major objection to the GAA fell away, and four months later it voted unanimously to cooperate with the central Government in the planning of group areas and agreed to submit formal proposals for application of the Act to the town. From that date until the proclamation of group areas in Uitenhage on 20 October 1967, the Council cooperated with the Government. [See Map 4] A familiar argument - well rehearsed in Port Elizabeth in 1952 - served as justification for its action: "Now...the Council has decided to prepare a plan, arguing that if it does not do so, the Government will intervene...and impose something far more drastic for the victims of the Act."[126] By "trying not to be cruel," as the *Evening Post* put it, the Council reversed its long-standing position of noncompliance with a centrepiece of apartheid legislation. An era of Municipal contestation of apartheid policy had come to a close.

Local Afrikaner notables had spun a new web of influence to the central state and to the NP, shouldering aside the old UP political network whose connections to the centre had been severed since 1948. Where Councillors and officials, especially the Town Clerk, had faced a decade of governmental coercion and brazen interventions, the 1960s promised a different mode of politics. The space for opposition had all but disappeared, and the new power brokers no longer had English surnames. The character of politics in the town was transformed more thoroughly than at any time since the reestablishment of British rule at the Cape in 1806.

Uitenhage Town Councillors, unlike their counterparts in Port Elizabeth, had consistently framed their choices as either noncooperation with an unjust policy, or working within the legal framework to apply the harsh regulations as fairly as possible: "trying not to be cruel." At the end of the day, local defensive battles could delay but not reverse central policy. Faced by a central state willing to wield new resources in an effort to gain control, local officials accepted the second option, to work within the rules of the game as established by the NP, fearing that policies would be forced upon them, as occurred in Johannesburg and Cape Town. These rules were as much ideological as legal or bureaucratic, and they became the basic framework within which the Council would pursue policy towards Africans and coloureds until the 1980s.

In playing by the rules, however, the Council was aided by a compromise which carefully accommodated the one black constituency towards which Councillors could least afford to be cruel. Coloureds, Indians, and Chinese businessmen and property owners had access to the Council by virtue of property and the franchise, and they used their assets at key points to influence the Council. For Africans, no such avenues existed to the Council or to the state. Possessing neither property nor the vote, they had little to offer to the Council. Indeed, the issues motivating their growing protest movement in the 1950s could not be satisfied except through a transformation of a political system in which the Council itself played a crucial role, and which even the most liberal Councillor had no interest in altering. The few whites who were willing at least to entertain African grievances became increasingly isolated as the decade passed and the tide was running against their form of paternalism. Between 1957 and 1960 the fate of the Uitenhage's century-old African community was sealed behind closed doors where economic efficiency and the tax burden to be borne by the largely white ratepayers were the only factors taken into account. Council hostility to the removals dissipated once the central state agreed to assist in the financial burden of relocation.

Not only did the Council agree to virtually the same policy they had rejected when it was suggested in 1945 by their own expert town planning consultant, but they revived another legacy of the town's past. By purchasing the farms "Boschoogte" and "Naroes" for the new township, they unknowingly sited the new township, Kwanobuhle, "Place of Beauty," on land used as a concentration camp during the Anglo-Boer War.

IV. CONCLUSION

A central theme of this paper is the growing central state control over local affairs, particularly over the reproduction of the urban black population. Before 1948 the Council was relatively unhindered by the central state in its efforts or (more accurately) non-efforts to house blacks. In practice the relative freedom meant inaction, as neither the Council nor the Government would supply sufficient funds for upgrading black communities. But through the 1950s, and especially after 1957 the space for local

opposition narrowed considerably. Three key factors account for this process.

First, the central state formally narrowed the scope of Municipal discretion in implementing central state policies; the respective Ministers came to wield virtually dictatorial powers to pursue policies over the heads of recalcitrant local authorities. The process culminated in the early 1970s when Municipalities were formally stripped of authority over their coloured, Indian, and African residents.

Second, the central state began to exert greater bureaucratic pressure on the Councils by reorganizing lines of authority. Central ministries which had not previously been involved in particular issues now held veto power over local decisions.

Third, the new bureaucratic machinery at the national level and the political will to use it gave the central state much greater power to manipulate local authorities' fiscal dependence, thus enabling it to force agreement with national policy. On the one hand, departments could threaten to withhold funds for completely unrelated projects to force compliance with directives of NAD or the LTAB. On the other hand, extraordinary grants of funds could be made to defray the cost to local authorities of implementing national policy, thus enabling the central state to buy compliance. These deals were brokered through a new stratum of Afrikaner political operators, replacing the old UP businessmen and politicians who dominated many Councils before 1948, and linking the local authority to the central state and National Party.

Over the previous decade the central state had reorganized important parts of the state apparatus, increased its penetration of the state as a whole, and had developed its legal/ideological and administrative capacities to intervene more directly in civil society in pursuit of its policy goals. By 1961-62 as the costs of opposition increased, as the benefits to be gained by cooperation increased, and as the likelihood that the NP would never be replaced by a UP government grew, Councillors wavered in opposition and quietly went ahead with implementing apartheid policy. In the end, however, the central state was able to force local authorities to comply with apartheid policy - "to Render unto Caesar" - but it could not remake the world in its own image. The Council's stalling efforts unintentionally succeeded in delaying proclamation of Group Areas in Uitenhage until 1967 (six years after Port Elizabeth, even though Uitenhage presented far fewer planning problems), and the removal of the Kabah Location did not start until December 1968. The removals to Kwanobuhle were continually stalled by funding problems, which delayed the construction of more houses, thereby further slowing group areas removals, since Africans had to be removed from the land in Kabah before housing for coloureds could be built. Both projects were thus consistently slowed so that through the 1970s there were still parts of town where coloureds and Africans lived either in the same area or very close together.

When the state was finally able to embark on the segregation project, it faced the new political economy of the 1960s boom: the expanding motor industry, and a burgeoning industrial workforce. These demands on local authorities were not accommodated in the central state planners' blueprints. As the UP Council had been caught in the late 1940s with a dated solution unable to cope with contemporary problems, so too the Government's agenda for reorganizing urban residential and commercial space could not cope with changes brought about by the economic boom of the 1960s.

At the very moment when Africans and coloureds were moving into semi-skilled and skilled job positions in the expanding automobile industry, the state was running into extreme difficulties in its task to segregate the black working class in Uitenhage. In Port Elizabeth, the segregation between coloureds and Africans was completed in the 1950s, before the industrial boom, and subsequent growth in the working class could then be channelled into racially separate communities. In Uitenhage, the delays in the application of group areas and urban areas legislation meant that the 1960s expansion occurred in communities not yet reconstructed by apartheid planning principles. Working class formation in Port Elizabeth was thus fractured on lines of race between coloured and African workers, bottled up in spatially separate residential areas deliberately planned by apartheid bureaucrats to impede social interaction across communities. In this respect, the application of *apartheid* planning principles to Port Elizabeth intensified a pattern of racial segregation in place from the colonial era, and led to the almost total separation of races. Class became relatively less salient as a principle of residential ordering, and communities became differentiated on racial grounds.

By contrast, the pattern of segregation in Uitenhage was not nearly as well-ordered before 1948. While blacks and whites were generally separated, the Kabah location was a mixed race community, where most coloureds lived either with or in close proximity to African people. As a result of struggles between the central state and the City Council, and later due to financial difficulties in building suitable accommodation, the NP's racial policies did little to alter these patterns, at least not before the mid-1970s. As a result, working class formation in Uitenhage occurred on a terrain not fully defined by *apartheid* principles, not fully differentiated on racial grounds, which allowed possibilities for contact and coordination across racial lines in common communities. These social links created rich bonds of familiarity between coloured and African workers, and networks of social interaction in Uitenhage, while the more thorough application of apartheid in Port Elizabeth impeded the development of such bonds - indeed, was targeted at destroying them. Such bonds between African and coloured workers would soon give a powerful boost to the growth of non-racial trade unionism in Uitenhage from the early 1970s, when industrial organization revived.

NOTES

1. "Koppige Stadsraad," *Die Oosterlig*, 21 July 1961.

2. Deborah Posel, *The Making of Apartheid, 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), vii.

3. A.J. Christopher, "Formal Segregation and population distribution in Port Elizabeth," *Contree* 24 (1988): 5.

4. A.J. Christopher, "Race and Residence in Colonial Port Elizabeth," *South African Geographical Journal* 69, no. 1 (1987): 6.

5. Christopher, "Race and Residence," 5.

6. J.B. Peires, *The House of Phalo: A History of the Xhosa People in the Days of Their Independence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 74-76. Gary Baines, "The emergence of black labour unionism in Port Elizabeth and the disturbances of October 1920," (MA diss., Rhodes University, 1989.

7. W.S.J. Sellick, *Uitenhage Past and Present: Souvenir of the Centenary, 1804-1904* (Uitenhage: Uitenhage Times, 1904), 70. Baines, "The emergence of black labour unionism."

8. Maynard Swanson, "The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900-1909," *Journal of African History* 18 (1977): 387-410. See also Joyce F. Kirk, "The African Middle Class, Cape Liberalism and Resistance to Residential Segregation at Port Elizabeth, South Africa, 1880-1910," (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1987), 193. Christopher, "Race and Residence," 10; Gary Baines, "The colonial origins of segregation: The case of Port Elizabeth's Native Strangers' Location," paper presented to the Eleventh Biennial Conference of the South African Historical Society, University of Stellenbosch, January 1987.

9. Baines, "Black Labour Unionism;" and Kirk, "The African Middle Class." See also Joyce F. Kirk, "A 'Native' Free State at Korsten: Challenge to Segregation in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, 1901-1905," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 17, no. 2 (June 1991): 309-334.

10. Cape of Good Hope, *Reports on the Public Health for the Year 1896* [G.42-'97], 145; *Census of the Cape of Good Hope 1904, Preliminary Report of the Director of the Census* [G.80-1904], 58.

11. Christopher, "Formal Segregation," 7.

12. Port Elizabeth Municipality [henceforth PEM] 220/71. Housing Department, "Report on Housing," 20th September 1963.

13. Republic of South Africa, Department of Statistics, *Population of South Africa, 1904-1970* (Pretoria: The Government Printer, 1976). John A. Banach, "The Cape Midlands: Its Demography (1911-1960) and Regional Income (1954/55-1959/1960)," Occasional Paper Number 14, Institute for Social and Economic Research, Rhodes University, 1969, pp. 53-58.

14. By contrast, the national ratio of African men to women in towns was 2.2:1 in 1936. Doug Hindson, *Pass Controls and the Urban African Proletariat* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987), 53. Cape Archives (henceforth CA) 3/Uit 42 File 261o, Uitenhage Municipality Location Census, 23 June 1930; CA 3/Uit 37 File 261 v. 9, July 1934-May 1935, Uitenhage Municipal Locations, n.d.

15. These demographic characteristics distinguish both Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage from almost all other urban areas in South Africa, where for the first half of this century the African population was overwhelmingly comprised of migrant workers.

16. CA 3/Uit 38 File 261 v. 12 August 1936-January 1937, letter from Town Clerk to the Secretary for Native Affairs, 19 August 1936, "Proposed Abolition of Oatlands Location".

17. Among adults, the unemployment rate in 1930 was less than 10%; in 1935, it had risen to 36%. CA 3/Uit 42 File 261o, Uitenhage Municipality Location Census, 23 June 1930 and CA 3/Uit 37 File 261 v. 9, July 1934-May 1935, Uitenhage Municipal Locations, n.d.

18. CA 3/Uit 38 File 261 v. 11, November 1935-July 1936, letter from Town Clerk, Uitenhage to Town Clerk, Graaff-Reinet, 9 April 1936, "Housing Schemes for Cape Coloureds."

19. *Union Gazette* 2143, 13 October 1933, Proclamation No. 222, 1933. CA 3/Uit File 261 v. 9, July 1934-May 1937 Report of Locations Sub-Committee, 17 August 1934, p. 3.

20. CA 3/Uit 38 File 261 v. 11, November 1935-July 1936, letter from Town Clerk to Town Clerk, Graaff-Reinet, 9 April 1936, "Housing Schemes for Cape Coloureds."

21. CA 3/Uit V. 37 File 261 V. 9 Location Matters General July 1934 to May 1935, "Overcrowding and dilapidated Houses at Locations: Recommendations referred by Health Committee." CA 3/Uit 37 File 261 v. 9 July 1934-May 1935, Minutes of Native Affairs Committee.

22. CA 3/Uit 38 File 261 v. 12 August 1936-January 1937, letter from Town Clerk to the Secretary for Native Affairs, 19 August 1936, "Proposed Abolition of Oatlands Location."

23. CA 3/Uit 4/1/191 File 26 v. 1, Census and Statistics January 1937-October 1943, Extract from report of Medical Officer of Health, 7 August 1941, "Vital Statistics for Year Ending 30 June 1941."

24. CA 3/Uit 4/1/225 Housing General 74 v. 1, March 1940-April 1945, extract from report of Location Superintendent, 7 December 1943.

25. Historical and Literary Papers Library [henceforth HLP], University of the Witwatersrand, Margaret Ballinger Papers, A410/B2.14.13 Correspondence, Native Affairs, Land 1941-1951, letter from A. Park, Mayor of Uitenhage to Mrs. M. Ballinger, 3 May 1944, "Right of Natives to Acquire Freehold Property within Urban Areas."

26. CA 3/Uit 4/1/225 Housing General 74 v. 1, March 1940-April 1945, Joint Report of Medical Officer of Health, Acting Town Engineer and Location Superintendent to Housing Committee, "Sites for Proposed Sub-Economic Housing Schemes," 11 January, 1945.

27. *The Times* [Uitenhage], 4 December 1946; see also Floyd's own books: T.B. Floyd, *Town Planning in South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter, 1960), 48-49, and T.B. Floyd, *More About Town Planning in South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter, 1966).

28. Uitenhage Municipality [henceforth UM] 13/1 "Interim report on general lines of development for Uitenhage," by T.B. Floyd, May 1946.

29. UM 13/1, Report of Proceedings of Town Council, 27 June 1945 "Town Planning Scheme," and UM 13/1 Extract from Council Minutes, 17 September 1945; *The Times*, 25 July 1945, "Town Planning at Uitenhage."

30. UM 13/1, Extract from Council Minutes, 17 September 1945, and UM 13/1, Minutes of Council, 19 November 1945, extract of Report of Native Affairs Committee, 12 November 1945.

31. See A.W. Stadler, "Birds in the Cornfield: Squatter Movements in Johannesburg, 1944-1947," in *Labour, Townships and Protest*, edited by Belinda Bozzoli (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1979); and Amanda Younge, "Housing policy and housing shortage in Cape Town: 1942-1980," *Africa Perspective* 21 (1982): 12-13.

32. Floyd, *Town Planning in South Africa*, 84. See also Peter Wilkinson, "Providing 'Adequate Shelter': The South African State and the Resolution of the African Urban Housing Crisis, 1948-1954," in *Working Papers in Southern African Studies, Volume 3*, edited by D.C. Hindson (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983), 66-67, 76.

33. CA 3/Uit 4/1/184 File MJ20 v. 1, Location Enquiry, June 1947-October 1952, letter from Town Clerk to Chief Native Commissioner, King William's Town, 11 September 1947, "Uitenhage Municipality: Proposed Native Village."

34. UM, letter from Town Clerk to Mr. S.I. Misrock, 21 March 1950.

35. CA 3/Uit 4/1/184 MJ 20 v. 1, Location Enquiry, June 1947-October 1952, "Report of Departmental Executive Committee on Enquiry into Administration of Kabah Location," 21 July 1948.

36. The first coup came with the decision by US tire manufacturer Goodyear to site its only South African factory in Uitenhage. In the same period the state-funded Industrial Development Corporation financed a new textile company, Fine Wool Products [Veldspun], employing more than 500 persons, and taking advantage of the town's proximity to the sheep farms of the Cape Midlands. The South African Railways began a phased expansion of the existing railway workshops, boosting employment well beyond 1,200, and a tanning company and another textile firm opened factories. Finally, in 1946, Studebaker formed South African Motor Assemblers and Distributors [SAMAD] to manufacture cars under license from the American parent, the first roots of the firm which would eventually become Volkswagen of South Africa.

37. B.D. Phillips and C. de Coning, "Secondary Industry in the Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage Region: a Structural Analysis," Research Report no. 2, Institute for Planning Research, University of Port Elizabeth, 1969, p. 57.

38. Between 1936 and 1946 the African population increased 5.2% per annum, but between 1946 and 1951 rate jumped to 13.8% per year; the rate of increase between 1936 and 1946 exactly parallels the national average, while the rate for the following five years far surpasses the national figure of 6.6%. Hindson, *Pass Controls*, 67.

39. CA 3/Uit 4/1/184 MJ20 v. 1, Location Enquiry, June 1947-October 1952, Record of Proceedings of Departmental Executive Committee Enquiry into Administration of Location Department, 21 November 1947.

40. CA 3/Uit 4/1/191 File 26 v. 2, Census and Statistics, March 1944 to April 1950, "Population. Uitenhage Town and Location," 10 April 1947; UM File 26 v. 3, Census and Statistics, May 1950 to August 1956, Letter, Uitenhage Magistrate to Town Clerk, "Population Census, 1951," 16 July 1951.

41. CA 3/Uit 4/1/184 MJ20 v. 1, Location Enquiry, June 1947-October 1952, p. 7.

42. CA 3/Uit 4/1/184 MJ20 v. 1, Location Enquiry, June 1947-October 1952.

43. Hindson, *Pass Controls*, 59.

44. Stanley Greenberg, *Legitimating the Illegitimate: State, Markets, and Resistance in South Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 38.

45. As Posel stresses, the report was less a bold blueprint than an unwieldy compromise between different interpretations of *apartheid* within Afrikaner nationalism. Not only did the report itself fudge the differences between "purist" and practical versions of apartheid, but the legislation derived from the Sauer Report was subjected to further concessions to the UP opposition and (if only indirectly) to the popular resistance mounted by the ANC, SACP and other forces in civil society. See Posel, *The Making of Apartheid*, Chapters 2-4.

46. Hindson, *Pass Controls*, 59; and Deborah Posel, "The Meaning of Apartheid before 1948: Conflicts of Interests and Powers within the Afrikaner Nationalist Alliance," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 14, no. 1 (1987): 136-139.

47. Act no. 41 of 1950, *Statutes of the Union of South Africa, 1950* (Pretoria: The Government Printer, 1950). The Act required extensive amendment throughout the 1950s, to overcome initial inconsistencies and oversights, and to address new problems unforeseen by the Government. In addition, legal tests, and as will be clear below, popular challenges as well as resistance within the state continually sent the Government's lawyers back to the legislative drafting table. See Alan Mabin, Comprehensive Segregation: the Origins of the Group Areas Act and its Planning Apparatuses," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 18, no. 2 (June 1992): 405-429.

48. Muriel Horrell, *Laws Affecting Race Relations in South Africa* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1978), 71; see also L.R. Dison and I. Mohamed, *Group Areas and Their Development* (Durban: Butterworths, 1960).

49. F.P. Rousseau, *Handbook on the Group Areas Act* (Cape Town: Juta, 1960), 44.

50. The Act was the official justification for the forced removal of more than 830,000 people between 1960 and 1980. Surplus People Project, *Forced Removals in South Africa, Volume 1: General Overview* (Cape Town: Surplus People Project, 1983), 6.

51. Horrell, *Laws*, 262-3.

52. CA 3/Uit 4/1/191 File 26 v. 2, Census and Statistics, March 1944-April 1950, "Population: Uitenhage Town & Location."

53. Quoted in Greenberg, *Legitimating the Illegitimate*, 39.

54. Deborah Posel, "Interests, Conflict and Power: the Relationship Between the State and Business in South Africa During the 1950s," paper presented to the Annual Conference of the Association for Sociology in Southern Africa, University of Cape Town, 1985, p. 15.

55. Simon Bekker and Richard Humphries, *From Control to Confusion: The changing role of Administration Boards in South Africa, 1971-1983* (Grahamstown: Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1985), 205-210. The authors identify the important amendment to the Urban Areas Act, but do not dwell upon its consequences for local authorities.

56. Hindson, *Pass Controls*, 63.

57. UM 74L/1, letter from Secretary for Native Affairs to Town Clerk, "UM Proposed Coloured Township adjoining Native Location."

58. UM 74L/1, letter from Town Clerk to Secretary for Native Affairs, 7 November 1951, "Uitenhage Municipality: Proposed Assisted 3/4% Housing Scheme for Coloureds."

59. See Wilkinson, "Providing Adequate Shelter," 77.

60. UM 74/5, 30 October 1951, "Report of the Town Clerk to Housing Committee."

61. UM, Town Clerk to Native Affairs Committee, 24 January 1953; Memorandum from Superintendent of Kabah to Town Clerk, 9 December 1952, "Proposed Coloured Housing Scheme & Buffer Strip."

62. William J. Davies, "Patterns of Non-White Population Distribution in Port Elizabeth with Special Reference to the Application of the Group Areas Act," Series B, Special Publication no. 1, Institute for Planning Research, University of Port Elizabeth, 1971, pp. 25-6.

63. UM Town Clerk's Report to Finance and General Purposes Committee 8 September 1951, "Group Areas Act."

64. By Proclamation no. 220 of 1951. The proclamation introduced "occupational control" and "control of acquisition" such that no one could acquire ownership of a property from an owner of a different racial group, nor could anyone occupy property which had been occupied by a person of a different group prior to the proclamation.

65. UM, Report of the Town Clerk to Finance and General Purposes Committee, 8 August 1953.

66. UM, 207/2, Letter to Mayor from Uitenhage Indian Congress, 21 September 1953, "Defined Area of the Group Area Act."

67. UM, Town Council Minutes, 21 September 1953.

68. UM 207/2, Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, 12 October 1953.

69. UM 207/2, Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, 12 October 1953.

70. UM, Report of Town Clerk to Finance and General Purposes Committee, 12 June 1954; UM, Record of meeting between the Government's Reference and Planning Committee and Representatives of the Uitenhage Municipality, 9 June 1954.

71. UM, Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, 5 December 1955.

72. UM, Minutes and Proceedings of Town Council-in-Committee, 27 March 1956.

73. UM, Town Treasurer to Town Clerk, "Proposed Establishment of Group Areas in Uitenhage," 4 October 1961; UM 207/2, "Meeting of Subcommittee appointed to draft Proposals for Group Areas," 4 March 1955.

74. In 1958 the NP failed in its efforts in the Cape Provincial Council to remove coloureds from the common Municipal roll, and place them on a separate roll to elect local boards in their own Group Areas. Coloureds remained eligible as municipal voters in the Cape until 1972. Horrell, *Laws*, 57-9. See Gwendolen M. Carter, *The Politics of Inequality: South Africa Since 1948* (New York: Praeger, 1958), especially Chapter 4, for an excellent account of the crisis caused by the National Party's schemes to eradicate coloured franchise rights entrenched in the 1910 constitution; and Leonard Thompson, *The Cape Coloured Franchise* (Johannesburg: Institute of Race Relations, 1949).

75. UM, Town Clerk "Concentration of Coloured Group in Uitenhage," 30 October 1959.

76. A.S. Du Toit, "Housing and Population Study of the European Population of Uitenhage," Research Report no. 5, Institute for Planning Research, University of Port Elizabeth, 1970, p. 9.

77. Jennifer Robinson, "The Power of Apartheid," Chapter 7, "Forging a new mode of control: Riots, Removals and Regulations."

78. Tom Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983), 52-54.

79. Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage accounted for more than 30% of the national total of those arrested during the civil disobedience campaign. Lodge, *Black Politics*, 46; see also David Carter, "The Defiance Campaign: A Comparative Analysis of the Organization, Leadership, and Participation in the Eastern Cape and the Transvaal," *Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, vol. 2 (London: Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, 1971).

80. In September 10 ANC Eastern Cape leaders were arrested in coordinated swoops, charged under the Suppression of Communism Act. The state action sparked a new round of protest as 350 people were arrested the next day defying segregation at rail stations, the biggest single protest since the Defiance Campaign began. Almost as a prelude to the October riot, a crowd gathering at New Brighton station grew angry when a Railway policeman accosted a woman defier, prompting the crowd to surge around the officer. Unlike the policeman who shot the suspected paint thief on October 18, this officer wisely "released the woman...and the crowd settled down." "350 Defiers arrested in PE 24 hour protest campaign," *Evening Post*, 12 September 1952. The event was but one of a growing number of such clashes between Port Elizabeth blacks and police reinforcements and army detachments that had been rushed to the area.

81. Even more violent riots had occurred in East London and on the Witwatersrand, where influx control was firmly in place, but Verwoerd used the New Brighton event as a pretext for a very public campaign against his opponents.

82. "Verwoerd issues ultimatum to P.E.," *Evening Post*, 23 October 1952; "Bus Boycott in New Brighton," *Evening Post*, 21 October 1952.

83. "Rumours follow column," *Evening Post*, 22 October 1952.

84. "Bus Boycott in New Brighton," *Evening Post*, 24 October 1952; "Bus boycott called off. Armed guards are removed," *Evening Post*, 28 October 1952.

85. At the meeting, G.A. Brand, Urban Areas Native Commissioner for the Cape Eastern Area, reiterated Verwoerd's views on the failure of the "experiment" and his threat to intervene if the Council failed to apply influx control. PEM, Minutes of Proceedings of Council-in-Committee, 28th October 1952; "Meetings banned in P.E. from today," *Evening Post*, 7 November 1952; "Curfew and Riotous Assemblies Act now in force," *Eastern Province Herald*, 8 November 1952.

86. The position was reiterated in subsequent approaches to the Council by other state officials. The Native Commissioner for Port Elizabeth wrote to the Town Clerk that under the Native Laws Amendment Act only workers who are required for industries will be allowed to enter the town, while those who are removed will be barred from reentering. "What effect, if any," he wrote, "do you consider will the removal of a large number of unemployed and 'won't work' natives have on the defiance campaign and crime in general?" PEM 169/7, Native Affairs in City, February 1952-November 1952, letter from Native Commissioner PE to Town Clerk, 5th November 1952.

87. PEM 169/7, Native Affairs in City, February 1952-November 1952, letter from G.X. Tshume, Secretary ANC Eastern Cape Regional Committee to Town Clerk, 3 November 1952; see also Lodge, *Black Politics*, 54.

88. PEM 169/7, Native Affairs in City, February 1952-November 1952. Schedule of returns submitted in reply to Departmental Circular no. 79/1952. PEM 169/8, Native Affairs in City, November 1952-December 1952, Minutes of Proceedings of Native Affairs Committee, 14 November 1952; "Hundreds without their jobs today," *Evening Post*, 11 November 1952.

89. Robinson, "The Power of Apartheid," Chapter 7. "Levy Act is law from January 1, P.E. must comply," and "P.E. told to control influx, Minister sends reproof," *Evening Post*, 14 November, 15 December 1952.

90. PEM 169/8, Native Affairs in City, November 1952-December 1952, letter from W.W.M. Eiselen, Secretary for Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 1 December 1952.

91. PEM 169/9, Native Affairs in City, January 1953-May 1953, Minutes of Proceedings of Special Meeting of the City Council, 15 January 1953; Minutes of Proceedings of Council-in-Committee, 15 January 1953.

92. Davies, "Patterns of non-white population distribution," 110-112.

93. "Outline of P.E. planning scheme," *Evening Post*, 5 December 1952; "P.E. policy has made race zoning easier," *Evening Post*, 6 December 1952; Davies, "Patterns of nonwhite population distribution," 115-117.

94. Robinson, "The Power of Apartheid," Chapter 7.

95. For a convincing explanation, see Janet Cherry, "The Making of an African Working Class - Port Elizabeth 1925-1963 (MA diss., University of Cape Town, 1992).

96. Bev Taylor, "Removing Port Elizabeth's Notorious Korsten Slums in the 1950s," unpublished paper, 1990, p. 24; and A.J. Christopher, "Apartheid Planning in South Africa: The Case of Port Elizabeth," *The Geographical Journal* 153, no. 2 (1987): 200.

97. Christopher, "Formal segregation," 11-12.

98. Bev Taylor, "South End and Fairview Removals and the Development of Bethelsdorp," unpublished paper, 1990, p. 5.

99. Taylor, "South End and Fairview Removals."

100. Department of Geography, University of Port Elizabeth, and PEM 196/5, Union Government Census, 1960.

101. Christopher, "Apartheid planning in South Africa," 202.

102. UM, Minutes of Natives Affairs Committee, 29 January 1951.

103. UM, Town Clerk's report to the Native Affairs Committee, 26 September 1953.

104. Horrell, *Laws*, 77; Union of South Africa, *Statutes of the Union of South Africa, 1952* (Pretoria: Government Printer, 1953), 979.

105. UM, Report of the Town Clerk to Finance and General Purposes Committee, 6 October 1956, "Round Table Conference with Industry."

106. UM, Town Council of Uitenhage, Mayoral Review 1956/1957, 6 September 1957, p. 21.

107. UM, 207/3, Record of Meeting of Sub-Committee of Finance Committee with Eastern Cape Committee of Land Tenure Advisory Board, 30 September 1955.

108. UM, Report of the Town Clerk to Native Affairs Committee, 27 July 1957, "Visit of Mr. Brownlee."

109. UM, Committee Reports and Minutes, January-June 1958, Special Report of Town Clerk to Native Affairs Committee and to Finance and General Purposes Committee, "Further Development in Native and Coloured Areas and Associated Matters," 14-15; UM 74L/2, Memorandum from Superintendent of Kabah to Town Clerk, "Proposed Coloured Housing Scheme & Buffer Strip," 9 December 1952.

110. UM, *Minutes of Proceedings of Town Council*, 21 October 1957, Report of the Native Affairs Committee, 30 September 1957.

111. UM, Minutes of Proceedings of Native Affairs Committee, 27 January 1958, "Registration of Native Service Contracts: Date of Operation in Uitenhage."

112. UM, Town Clerk's Report to Special Committee Appointed to Investigate Further Developments in Native and Coloured Areas, 3 February 1960.

113. UM, Minutes and Proceedings of Council-in-Committee, 7 March 1960, "Proposed Resiting of Location."

114. UM, Minutes of Proceedings of Council-in-Committee 3 November 1960, "Proposed Resiting of the Location."

115. UM, Committee Reports and Minutes, Minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee, 10 November 1952; and "Strike Hits Town's Textile Factories," *Eastern Province Herald*, 11 November 1952; "More than 600 strikers lose their jobs," *Eastern Province Herald*, 12 November 1952.

116. See Lodge, *Black Politics*, 126-128. UM, Committee Minutes and Reports, July-September 1955, Report of Superintendent of Kabah to Native Affairs Committee, 23 July 1955, "School Boycott ANC."

117. See Julia Wells, "The history of black women's struggle against pass laws in South Africa," (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1982); Cherryl Walker, *Women and Resistance in South Africa* (London: Onyx Press, 1982); Richard de Villiers, "Resistance to the extension of passes to African women, 1954-1960," African Studies Institute seminar paper, University of the Witwatersrand, 1979; and Tom Lodge, *Black Politics*, Chapter 6: "Women's protest movements in the 1950s," especially pp. 144-146. UM, Committee Reports and Minutes, Monthly Report of Superintendent of Kabah to Native Affairs Committee, 28 September 1957; and "Defiant women set fire to books," *Eastern Province Herald*, 30 July 1957.

118. Ivor Wilkins and Hans Strydom, *The SuperAfrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond* (Johannesburg: Jonathon Ball, 1980), 398-405; also "September 17 is nomination day," *Eastern Province Herald*, 11 August 1956.

119. "Sakekamer branch to meet today," *Eastern Province Herald*, 27 July 1957.

120. Though their main proposal was turned back by the UP majority, the NP councillors pushed the Council to grant the permit only on condition that the SAP be allowed to attend each session, and after the affair, the NP members successfully urged the Council to adopt strong regulations modelled on those in New Brighton to control meetings. Councillor Ernest Reds "pointed out that the African National Congress was in any event holding weekly meetings in the open in the Location and that as this was not an illegal organization their meetings could not be stopped." During debate on the issue, Councillor Conradie said, "We cannot close our eyes to the fact that we are giving hospitality to an organization which, although not declared illegal by the Government, is no friend of the White man." UM, Town Clerk's Report to Native Affairs Committee, 27 March 1954; Minutes of Native Affairs Committee, 29 March 1954; Minutes of Town Council, 20 April 1954. "Move to stop A.N.C. talks fails," *Eastern Province Herald* 22 June 1954.

121. UM, Report of the Superintendent of Kabah to Native Affairs Committee, 23 July 1955; UM, Committee Minutes, January-March 1956, Minutes of Proceedings of Native Affairs Committee, 14 February 1956.

122. UM, Report of Town Clerk to Finance and General Purposes Committee, 11 July 1961.

123. *Sunday Times* [Johannesburg], 23 July 1961; "Justice stand in Uitenhage," *Evening Post*, 1 August 1961; "Koppige Stadsraad," *Die Oosterlig*, 21 July 1961.

124. UM, Town Council Minutes, 19 February 1962.

125. UM, Town Council Minutes, 19 February 1962.

126. "Trying not to be cruel," *Evening Post*, 14 June 1962.

✓ ADLER

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

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 7003 (7th floor) at
4.00p.m. **MONDAY 5TH OCTOBER 1992**

Title: Skills, Control, and 'Careers at Work': Possibilities for Participatory Management in the South African Motor Industry.

by: Glen Adler

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INTRODUCTION

Much of the writing on the South African motor industry assumes that the coming of the multinational automobile company brought with it the transplantation of the repertoire of production techniques developed under the rubric of Fordism. Whether inspired by Taylorist assumptions about scientific management or Braverman-inspired criticisms of the degradation of work, there is general agreement in the literature on the generally low levels of skill, high levels of monotony, and general dehumanisation associated with work in the auto plants. While most analysts pay close attention to the low-volume character of the local industry when discussing the crisis of high-cost production in a saturated market, no one has investigated the obvious point that low-volumes should have a dramatic impact on the nature of work itself.

This paper departs from the conventional view of the labour process in the motor industry, and argues that analysis until now has failed to come to grips with the complexity of work in the industry. Indeed, rather than viewing the industry as one dominated by deskilling and dehumanisation driven by rapid mechanisation, the perspective developed here is that jobs require far greater thought and direct physical control over execution than is allowed for in the Fordist model. Workers not only perform more complicated tasks than similar workers in the United States and Europe, but are invariably able to perform a very wide range of jobs as well. Workers are not reduced to mere appendages of machines controlled ultimately by supervision or production engineers in time and motion departments. Rather, an elaborate system has developed in South African automobile plants where workers develop a wide range of skills, which may be described as "allrounder" status. Instead of seeing workers as possessing few or no skills, this paper makes use of the concept "tacit skills" to argue that automobile workers possess a wide array of carefully developed abilities.

Workers' problems in the industry grow less out of the conventional grievances identified in the Fordist approach - monotony and degradation - than out of a deeply felt injustice at the heart of the system of job grading, reward, and promotion. The formal job grading system bears little similarity to the actual tasks workers perform, failing in the main to recognise their tacit skills and allrounder status. Nor is there any comfortable fit between jobs and level of education. Thus, while workers' knowledge on the job - their skills - are crucial ingredients in the company's success, workers themselves remain largely unrecognised and generally unrewarded for their contribution. As a result, workers develop a sense of deep frustration in their working lives, leading to profound demotivation, with little sense of a future. These attitudes are important products of the labour process, and have extremely serious implications for productivity in the industry.

The technical division of labour is not the source of these problems; rather they grow out of an informal personalistic system of control dominated by white foremen, which has two distinct tap roots. Supervisorial domination was *the* mode of control in the factories from their inception in the 1920s through to the 1960s when trade unions and industrial relations departments usurped many of the functions of foremen. Supervisors' continuing control over promotion is a legacy of this system, though in a

covert form adapted to the modern system of labour relations. The second root lies in the historical practices of job reservation in which whites protected their own positions while controlling the pace and form of entry of blacks into the factory through manipulation of definitions of skill and job categories.

Supervisors' informal practices around promotion make use of the dominant modes of these two historical traditions: first, the importance of personalistic ties of patronage to particular foreman, and second, a deep-seated racism which privileges whites. Thus, despite the transfer to the industrial relations system (labour relations, trade unions, and the Industrial Council) of powers of hiring and firing, wage increases, and discipline, in actual practice, foremen maintain great, though hidden powers which allow them to subvert the formal promotion system seemingly monopolized by labour relations.

By admitting the existence of tacit skills amongst automobile workers, this paper hopes to lay bare an extremely important area of conflict in the factories. At the same time, however, it also aims to expose an extremely valuable asset workers possess. Their depth of skills has afforded management with a very rare flexibility in deploying manpower, a priceless ability to rotate workers as the volume of work or absenteeism demands. Such capacity - virtually unremarked in the literature - is one which has been very carefully cultivated by automobile companies in Japan, one universally viewed as central to their success in cutting production costs.[1] Japanese producers have similarly viewed workers' job knowledge as a resource to be cultivated in the quest for improved productivity; indeed, managements bestow upon such workers higher status, better wages, and greater job security. The view that South African automobile workers are essentially cheap, relatively unskilled labour denies them their dignity and obliterates abilities they have struggled to develop. But, more importantly, the view also ignores a crucial factor which makes production possible at all. If developed and rewarded, workers tacit skills could play an extremely important role in efforts to improve productivity in the industry.

Thus far, however, these grievances associated with skills and promotion have not resulted in worker action. In most cases the informal system is taken as an inevitable fact of life, impervious to change. Some companies - perhaps with eyes open to the true material basis of production in their plants - are already attempting to build systems of workplace participation, especially schemes involving workers in fault-finding and redesign of jobs.

But such objective conditions may also serve to promote an intervention by the labour movement into the organization of production. In other countries trade unions have won effective control over precisely such processes, greatly expanding worker control in production. Perhaps the conditions described in this paper could serve as the basis for unions to colonise the internal labour markets of firms, and gain control over crucial elements of the labour process. In so doing, they might place themselves in a powerful position to influence the development of the industry, while at the same time providing their members with substantial rewards.

PART I. SKILLS, CONTROL, AND CAREERS AT WORK

Issues of skill and control are closely linked concerns in any labour process. Workers' possession of skill, their knowledge of the job, confers on them some measure of control over production. This control obviously becomes a problem under systems of private ownership in which the workers are not themselves the owners of the means of production. How can a private employer ensure that his goals will be met in the time, and at the quality, and cost desired?

Frederick Winslow Taylor understood that workers' possession of skills stood behind the process known as *soldiering*, workers' conscious efforts to restrict output to protect their earnings and conditions of work.[2] It was in workers' self-interest for owners to remain ignorant of how fast work could actually be done, to preserve their own estimate of the value of their work. Taylor's famous management principles aimed to overcome soldiering by systematically gathering the knowledge of workers, separating conception from execution of work by transferring "brain work" from workers to management, and by formulating precise instructions for each worker which define the tasks to be done, the procedures to be followed, and the time allowed. These principles were meant not simply to routinise work, but, more importantly, to transform power relations fundamentally by transferring skills - and therefore the control over production - from workers to management.

Taylor's innovations coincided with the experiments by American automobile producers at the turn of the century which would have even more dramatic affects on workers' skills and control over production. These experiments transformed an industry based on specialised production by artisans of small batches of expensive units into the quintessential mass production industry. Henry Ford's manufacturing breakthrough was the culmination of advances from a range of mass-production industries. He combined innovations in fabrication techniques and materials from the metal working industry with a simple, well-designed car adaptable to a multitude of driving conditions and markets.[3] But Ford's major breakthrough was to integrate those advances with experiments in two separate areas of production to form the continuous production system.

The first was to master advances in new machinery and transport mechanisms to facilitate the continuous flow of materials in assembly. Ford's engineers developed a myriad of single-use machines fed by unskilled workers to perform simple, precise, and rapid operations. These machines were meant to eliminate all hand work from the machining of parts, thereby removing any imprecision in manufacture. and were were arranged in the exact sequence of manufacturing operations from the first sub-assemblies through to the final product. Experiments in transport mechanisms linked these machines together; gravity slides and conveyors moved the job between each worker while providing a ready supply of components when and where they were needed.

Ford combined these innovations in production organisation with Taylor's "scientific management" techniques for dividing skills and routinizing work.[4] The modern assembly line led to rapid deskilling and fragmentation of work, which permitted greatly

increasing efficiency and accuracy of production while vastly reducing the dependence on skilled labour and workers' ability to resist the intensified pace of work.[5]

The image of assembly work as fundamentally low skilled activity derives from these interlinked legacies of Taylor and Ford. Oddly enough, their descriptions parallel the Marxist tradition which emphasises the increasing deskilling and growing alienation of workers as an inevitable consequence of the growth of capitalism.[6] Managers are portrayed as omnipotent, and their best-case plans are taken as reality, while workers' own roles are ignored, particularly their resistance to managerial initiatives.

Jean Leger's recent thesis on South African mining contains a lengthy examination of another approach to workers' skills. In elaborating the concept of tacit skills, Leger argues that the labour process is always a dual process of conflict and cooperation, in which management never gains absolute control over production.[7] In Leger's discussion skill is not seen narrowly as the product of some educational or training programme. Rather, all human activity entails the exercise of some skill. He identifies two important aspects of "tacit skills." First, what are often assumed to be routine tasks may involve conscious and unconscious processes which are learned experientially; they cannot be articulated in formal statements, nor learned through detailed instructions. Such an approach may help to define the skills present in a familiar task like riding a bicycle, or the more specialised tasks associated with "the tricks of the trade." Second, social skills must also be taken seriously as essential components of any labour process: cooperation, trustworthiness, congeniality, and obedience.

These skills are described as "tacit" for the simple reason that they are not formally recognised nor are they rewarded. Powerful groups may have interests in denying their existence, while those in possession of such skills may be powerless to articulate their interests. Rather than seeing skills as some objective datum, Leger prefers to view them as social constructs. The social construction of skill results from social processes which involve power relations between individuals and groups in which certain occupations are defined as skilled or unskilled.[8]

This approach does not hold that all skills are equal, rather that the common tripartite distinction between skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled "grossly underrate[s] the working knowledge required and the skills exercised in these occupations....there is no such thing as unskilled work and...the term is humiliating to the workers so labelled."[9] Craftsmen learn their skills through apprenticeship programs, and through on-the-job experience where they master the art of applying abstract principles to specific problems. Their skills are general, and may be applied in diverse situations. Their skills are formally recognised and accredited. They carry their skills with them.

Tacit skills, however, usually take the form of "plant specific" skills, in which workers acquire a store of very detailed knowledge of the particular processes in their factory or industry. These skills are seldom developed in formal training programs, but can only be learned on the job through watching other workers or through informal education conducted by factory elders. The fact that workers are taught "by doing," rather than in formal training is not an index of the lack of skills associated with the

work, or of the value of the skills to overall production, but of the particular kinds of skills.

Such skills may be especially well-developed in older factories where machines "develop quirks that only their operators can anticipate and control."[10] They may not be recognised in any formal sense, but they are essential to the smooth operation of the plant; they therefore also possess power to disrupt production. At the same time, workers with plant-specific skills are extremely vulnerable to plant closure or relocation: they cannot transfer their accumulated experience into a certificate which allows them to compete for another job. They may come to share with management a commitment to maintaining the long-term viability of their enterprise. Leger's approach indicates the importance of seeing the labour process as an affair in which workers are more than pawns in management's schemes. If workers are active participants in production, their positions are in part the result of their own actions and designs.

The American sociologist Charles Sabel has produced a concept which helps to capture workers' own involvement in production. The "career" refers to the series of tasks a person chooses "that successively challenge and require the development of whatever powers one takes as the measure of human worth." Different work groups have different ideas of success; "they differ about which powers define dignity, which jobs count as disgraces and which as accomplishments..."[11] Sabel asserts that the worker's world can be understood as a whole, in which a range of experiences and ambitions "combine according to stylistic canons that the worker recognizes as his own." Insofar as these canons shape a worker's responses to events, his behavior cannot be understood without taking them into account.

Taken together, the two concepts of tacit skills and careers at work will help to provide a different understanding of the labour process in assembly line work in South Africa, and simultaneously, to grasp the deep frustration workers encounter when their skills go unrecognized and unrewarded and their career aspirations unfulfilled.

PART II. THE FORDIST FALLACY AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

The South African industry dates from 1924, when Ford opened an assembly plant in Port Elizabeth. General Motors followed its American competitor to Port Elizabeth in 1926, and the two companies dominated the industry until the post-war period when European competitors entered the South African market.[12] In the 1960s Japanese companies opened plants, and in a decade began to dominate the market. But the decisive transformation in the industry occurred in the early 1960s, when the government passed import-substitution legislation forcing multinationals to source an increasing percentage of their components within South Africa. Previously the industry had been organised on an assembly basis only, relying on parts imported from overseas in a disassembled form.[13]

The program quickly led to the expansion of the industry, as a number of new foreign producers rushed to establish assembly plants. Assemblers could easily meet the first stage of local content through inclusion of components already produced in South Africa. Subsequent stages, however, would be impossible to meet without further investment in manufacturing operations by the assembly firms and components suppliers.[14]

The 1960s expansion had a dramatic impact on employment. Overall employment grew by 437%, increasing from 8,918 in 1961 to 39,011 in 1975, an annual rate of just over 29%. As significant as the overall increase, however, was the change in the racial composition. Where whites accounted for just over half the workforce in 1961 (52.1%), coloureds 27.6%, and Africans 20.3%, the figures virtually reversed fifteen years later, with Africans amounting to 44%, whites 34%, and coloureds 22%.[15]

Not only had the automobile industry developed a majority black workforce, but blacks were increasingly clustered in the main semi-skilled occupations at the heart of the assembly and manufacturing operations. The changing size of the workforce, racial composition, and the advance of blacks to higher skill levels should not obscure an important qualitative change in the character of employment. These workers were no longer employed solely in assembly work, but in a wide range of occupations within the new manufacturing facilities in each plant. Whole new workforces were needed at those firms opening up engine plants and press shops, with skills never before required in the assembly industry: skilled workers such as tool and die makers, machinists, and electricians; semi-skilled die setters, sheet metal workers, motor mechanics; a whole range of semi-skilled operators of lathes, drill presses, grinding machines, and presses; and new categories of quality control technicians to monitor the manufacturing output.

The government's reluctance to intervene to limit the market meant that growth was characterized by extreme fragmentation. Virtually every MNC automobile producer entered, and soon South Africa reproduced in miniature the competitive dynamics of the international market.[16] Car companies competed through the demand-side practices of product differentiation used in the European and American markets, resulting in the proliferation of models and variants, fragmenting still further the already competitive market. The latest models were provided, promising frequent turnover and high retooling costs, and the motor firms were routinely the most prolific advertisers among South African corporations.

What possibilities as may have existed for internal economies of scale were lost, and the companies resorted to battles for the relatively well-off, upper segment of the market, which meant white consumers, corporate fleet purchasers, and the government. These conditions had a dramatic impact on the labor process, placing a premium on appearance - which rendered the system sensitive to sabotage and other forms of resistance - and the multiplication of models created high job content for workers required to assemble a number of different models and variants on the same line.

The transition to manufacturing had a dramatic on the nature of the labour process in the industry. Yet, the available accounts have often misunderstood the character of work in the automobile plants, as the studies have been based on a logical fallacy, that firms could be treated as a black box in which the internal labour processes could simply be deduced from the conditions of mass production in the home country.[17] This is particularly true in the structuralist Marxist tradition of analysis of South African industrialisation. In this approach, the motor plants have been singled out as pioneers in the transition from manufacture to machinofacture in South Africa, the latter being a profound change in relations of production in which handicraft processes are replaced by machines tended by semi-skilled operatives, marking the "real subsumption" of labor to capital.

Rob Davies has applied such a perspective in explaining the origins of the "civilised labour policy" of the Pact Government. General Motors, according to Davies, was "perhaps the most mechanised single plant in South Africa during the Pact period," and it was in the company's interest to employ relatively well-paid whites, because they had internalised appropriate capitalist virtues which suited them to such mechanised work."[18] Leaving aside theoretical criticisms of the concepts machinofacture and subsumption, the depiction of the labor process and workforce at both GM and Ford is entirely inaccurate for the years 1924 to World War Two. The first automated assembly lines were installed only in 1948, and it is impossible to accept Davies' claims about machinofacture prior to that date. To compound the problem, the period when more recognizably "Fordist" techniques were adopted - from the 1950s onward - coincides with the erosion, rather than the strengthening of the white monopoly on employment.

Yet, even more sober and empirically attentive analysts fall victim to the deductive fallacy. Roger Southall's otherwise excellent assessment of the rise of unions in the automobile industry nonetheless attempts to read off the South African labour process from Robert Blauner's analysis of alienation and the assembly line in the United States.[19] Similarly, the work of researchers at the University of Port Elizabeth, under the direction of the industrial psychologist Roux van der Merwe, evaluated the skill levels of jobs in nine manufacturing sectors in Port Elizabeth, including the motor industry. They too, appear to take the division of labour at face value in their assessment of workers' jobs, and conclude that median job complexity for auto workers was below the average for all the sectors analysed in the survey.[20] The same study was uncritically drawn upon in an otherwise superb study by Jan Roux who concludes that auto workers have low skill levels, and have been "stripped of any form of control, both over the ordering of tasks, and over the speed at which they had to be executed."[21]

The shortcoming of each of these presentations is that in decontextualising their studies of the labour process, they ignore a crucial feature of the South African industry: it's low volume character. It is rather surprising that such an obvious feature of the industry is not taken into account. Most of the same authors readily admit the effect low volumes have on profitability: producers are forced to spread their investments over a limited output; economies of scale are impossible, unit costs are

high, and producers are thereby forced into raising prices in a highly competitive market. High prices further restrict demand, and so the vicious cycle begins again.

However it is posited here that these same conditions have a decisive impact on the labour process, which fundamentally differentiates South African production from the processes in metropolitan countries.[22] First, the level of output from any South African plant is but a fraction of the output from a plant in the industrialised countries. In addition, South African producers, oriented as they are to the white market and with no hope of economies of scale, do not compete by cutting prices, but by differentiating their product through a range of makes and models, offering a wide array of options.

Workers on the line therefore operate in a very different environment to workers in the United States, Europe, or Japan. An assembly line in such plants may be producing as many vehicles in an hour as a South African line produces in a day; workers on the line have far less time to perform their tasks, and are of necessity given fewer tasks to perform. According to a retired Ford (South Africa) Production Director,

> In a North American line you'd probably get 60 [vehicles] an hour, he's probably loaded to about .9 of a minute, he only gets time to put on the front door handle and the rear door handle. Where here a chap is in a plant producing a vehicle every two minutes. So his work load changes quite significantly.

The South African worker may be responsible for a number of operations which in America would be performed by a number of workers.

The proliferation of makes and models complicates the picture. An American plant might be responsible for producing a single make of car, and workers on line would face the same model - with the same operations required - over and over again throughout the day. On a South African line, a worker may encounter a number of different makes, each with an assortment of models (different engine sizes, two door, four door, etc.). The condition means that the South African worker must be able to identify the part appropriate to a particular car. According to the Ford Director,

> See, basically what determines work content is the number of parts you handle. If you take a line in the US plants...you probably find that the basic vehicle has got something in the neighborhood of about 5,000 line items. There might be a couple of thousand or so of options. So the labour is handling possibly between 6,000 and 7,000 line items. A line item count in a plant like Volkswagen or Ford Motor Company here or Toyota will be 17,000 to 18,000....So you've got fewer number of operators assembling those to the product, it stands to reason they are going to have to know more about the product than people at a higher rate of production.

In sharp contrast to the repetitive monotony of overseas assembly lines, in South Africa the greater job content means workers are performing a variety of tasks in a constantly changing order:

> We were building 150 units a day with a mixture....The repetitiveness of work was alarmingly low. As a matter of fact, in many instances operators were only repeating the exact same cycle eight times a day, although they were operating on 150 units a day. Whereas in the states it could be 60 times an hour.

Workers must master the operations necessary to fit the appropriate part in the proper manner within the time allotted, or else he will find himself "drifting out of station," or moving down and interfering with the worker below him on the line. For this to be done successfully, the worker must learn a variety of tacit skills, usually from more experienced colleagues on the line:

> Q: Did you get any help from the other workers?
> A: Yes.
> Q: What did they do?
> A: Sometimes they helped me. Sometimes they showed me the "how to," the art of doing it.
> Q: "The art." What do you mean?
> A: You see, say you fit a tail light, and you are working in a line that is moving. Someone will tell you, "This thing has got four screws. Put the light in and fit the washers, the bolts."

Later the same worker expanded on how he learned the procedures:

> Or maybe, if you do something like as I have been fitting in there, this window winder, you may fiddle in putting it in, not knowing the exact way....Say that the thing is laid this way, you are checking it another way, and sort of holding it on the side, so someone will tell you, "No, put it this way and in." I mean, the art.

But fitting parts to a body on a moving line presents its own difficulties, which the worker must learn to master. Here a worker describes the process of "working up the line," whereby he places the part in a number of vehicles at once, and then fits each one, working back to his starting point:

> Someone will tell you, "Before you do that, take six lights [walk up the line] and put in the different cars and come back with them." You see, the art, the way of doing it is easier for you. More than taking it from [the bin] and putting it in the car. The car is here at that time. Now you left it there...you have to come back [to the bin] again and take a light, and the car is going forward, see. Now by that time you are drifting out of station.

Furthermore, a South African plant will integrate a far wider range of production activities than first world plants. Organizationally, an assembly plant in the United States or Europe will only assembly cars, and will be fed from a separate engine plant and a separate body plant, which may even be located in different regions and in separate divisions of the corporation. In South Africa low volumes mean there are not sufficient economies of scale to warrant the establishment of separate plants. Most companies conduct all or most of these operations under one roof, so that the workforce will contain an extremely wide range of occupations.

Most workers in assembly and basic metalworking operations learned the work from other workers. Rising up the graded job hierarchy, workers in intermediate occupations requiring formal certification, such as metal finishing, acquired their skills in the Volkswagen training centre, or in private study which enabled them to pass national trade tests.[23] Still higher up the hierarchy, Volkswagen trains a wide array of artisans through formal apprenticeships, and a die-setter, two electricians, and a toolmaker were among those interviewed who had acquired their skills through such in-house programs.

Workers lower down in the hierarchy were often indeed performing "simple" tasks, such as fitting components on the assembly line or spot welding in the Body Shop. Nonetheless, many had acquired multiple skills to the point where they claimed the ability to perform all the jobs on their line or in their department. Many had developed such skills through their own initiative, by watching other workers. Some had done so by being temporarily reassigned by the foreman to another job when a worker was absent. One worker explained the source of his "training" as follows:

> I learned these other jobs only by helping other people. Monday, then the man who is doing the job is not here, and then they take somebody from our line and then I must learn how to do his job....The other jobs there, nobody ever taught me how to do them, no, I have just learned them by seeing.

And on the same lines, another worker said:

> I'm only responsible for fitment. Door fitment, bonnet fitment, fender fitment, and tailgate fitment. That's what I'm doing here. I'm fitting the bonnets. If for instance, the guy who is fitting the fenders, he's not at work, I have to do that, as well.

One operator in the Press Shop (at the bottom of the pay grades), reports that he can do the work of the die-setter (at the top of the grades):

> A: If the setter is not there, I handle it,I can control the department, because the foreman is coming to ask us, "Do you know this part?" I say, "Yes." "How do you do this part?" I say, "All right, I show you how to set this machine for that part. How to make it right."
> Q: How did you learn that?

A: Since I have a long time doing that job, no one has ever learned me how to do it, but I only see, on this job now, they did like this, they did like this.
Q: Did that foreman that you described, did he show you those things?
A: No, he didn't show me. He only worked in front of me. I am just keeping an eye when they are working.

These allrounder skills possessed by line operators provide management with an extremely valuable asset: workers can be rotated to different posts as the volume of work or absenteeism demands. There is no expensive retraining required, and no interference from cumbersome work-rules, as stipulated in union contracts in the United States or Britain. Such manpower flexibility certainly enables management to cut costs, by relieving it of the need to retain temporary workers or a larger-than-necessary staff.

From the workers' point of view however, such allrounder status does not prove to be such an asset. While it is possible to achieve a formal allrounder status, known as utility man, and to jump a pay grade as a result, many workers claimed to possess these skills without being recognized. Not only don't they receive a full grade increase as a result of their skills, but in fact they are frustrated that they often perform the work of higher graded workers, without receiving even a temporary increase. One worker commented as follows:

> Well, I'm easy to go there, but some other, they have a question. "Why must I go and do that job? That is Grade 5 and I'm Grade 2, and I'm not supposed to be there. I'm supposed to help the same grade as I."

Another worker stressed the same theme:

> They promise such things. Once they say, "If there are more than about five jobs in the same line, they will give you something. But they ask how many jobs you know, you know seven jobs, eight jobs, then you get nothing. Now the only thing they ask, as far as I am concerned, is when there is anybody who is absent, they just check on that note that somebody can do that job,and they take you and put you there. You do different type of jobs during the week, although you get nothing for that.

Despite developing multiple skills, and in some cases, certificated skills, workers were divided on the marketability of their abilities. Those who had obtained nationally recognised qualifications felt secure in their ability to find work elsewhere, and felt they had learned skills at Volkswagen which would be of use to them in the future. At the other extremes, some workers who had not obtained formal or informal allrounder status felt they had attained very little. A Press Shop operator complained, "No, no, no, no, you just take your small child and come and operate this." Another, who installed the electrical harnesses in the vehicles, complained that he did not know other operations in the car, and described his job as "an empty bucket, it's not enough information." Yet others, especially allrounders in the

assembly lines, and especially metal finishers and painters felt that their skills could provide them with a livelihood in the township, repairing cars. Whether or not management formally recognises such workers as possessing skills, a majority of those interviewed felt they had acquired abilities which would be of use to them in the future.

PART III: THE RISE OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Prior to the 1970s, foremen possessed vast discretionary powers, including the power to grant incremental wage increases for workers.[24] But the foreman's disciplinary arsenal did not end with wage setting. He also enjoyed the ultimate discretionary authority: the power to hire and fire. The contractual basis for hourly-rated production workers was the so-called "hourly basis," which meant simply that they could be fired on an hour's notice. There were no formal procedures for appeal.

One retired General Foreman from Ford described the dismissal process in the following way:

> A: A fellow will come to you in the morning and I'll say, "Well, George, where were you yesterday? Where were you the day before?"....Now just about two or three days after that, he's out of work again. Well he says, "My wife is not well. She's just had a baby"....There's a weak link. That fellow, you've got to get rid of. Get rid of him straight away, because he's upsetting these fellows around this area. You see, when you're working with a team of people, and you've got one bad egg, there's encouragement somewhere....So you've got to tie that down. And the only way to tie that down is to get rid of him.
> Q: And the decision making would be entirely up to the foreman?
> A: Up to the foreman, yes.
> Q: And if he had a dispute, would there be anywhere for him to go?
> A: No, no, no, you just give it to him. You know, you just get your General Foreman, you superintendent, and you tell him, "Okay, I fired this fellow and this is the reason why." And then I'll just take in another man.

Ollie Rademeyer, former Industrial Relations Director for Volkswagen reinforced the story by relating an anecdote from General Motors:

> You've probably heard it. The biggest optimist in the work force is the guy who brought his sandwiches to work, because he had no assurance that he'd still be there at lunch time.

A Volkswagen worker relates the same view from the receiving end:

> Ag! We sort of were ill-treated by the white people here. Just like if, say, you are a foreman in my department, if you don't like me, you have to just chase me very, very easily away, drive me away, out of the

> factory....The guy who was responsible for that section used to say, "Well, I don't like this man. He must go." And then he go, whether he likes it or not.

These most blatant supervisorial abuses began to be curtailed in the 1960s, when a union began organising white workers. At first the firms replied as they always had, with an iron fist. They had successfully resisted "interference" from unionising drives for over 30 years "with typical American methods," according to W.G. Ballinger, one of many who had attempted organise workers. "In effect, he wrote, "this means that attempts to organise the workers breaks on the rocks of victimisation."[25]

In the 1960s, however, white workers used political channels and made a successful appeal to the government for protection. The Minister of Labour launched an Industrial Tribunal investigation of the industry for "unfair labour competition" between whites and blacks, which resulted in Job Reservation Determination No. 16 of 1964. In essence, all jobs then occupied by whites were permanently reserved for whites; in addition, a number of restrictions were placed on the sorts of jobs blacks could occupy. For example, no black person could be employed welding jobs outside of a jig. The Determination would have been disastrous for the companies - if it were enforced - but the government offered exemptions from the regulation. As Rademeyer relates:

> So we then entered the period of the glorious exemptions. I've never in my life seen such a farce as that thing....Many jobs that could have been performed...by whites because they were out of jigs, we put into jigs. I mean, a jig is a jig. You can take a job that really can be easily performed outside of a jig and just build an angle-iron frame around it and say, "that is a jig. It can now be performed by a non-white"....if there was a difficult job where they couldn't get whites and they had non-whites, they'd just put a jig around it....Then [the government inspectors] would say, "Yes, but it wasn't done in a jig before." We'd say, "Ja, but you see this model, the 1962, is more technical."

But the determination achieved its aim: to restrict the companies' ability to introduction black workers into the factory. In essence, no black could be employed if there were whites available to perform the work. Rademeyer is quite explicit about the bind the companies were in:

> The companies played the game to a certain extent in that any genuine white worker who presented himself at your gate and he hadn't been to prison for six or seven months in the last two years, you said, "Okay, give him a try. He's white." Any bloke they referred to you, "Give him a try." So that you didn't actively kick whites out.

Job Reservation would have a long-term impact on the company. More than ten years after implementation of the policy, an audit of the application of the "Sullivan Principles" at Ford discovered that 45% of white workers interviewed did not have Standard 8, though all were employed in the highest wage grades; none had entered

the company below the middle grades. For black workers, on the other hand, a Standard 8 certificate was a necessary qualification for advancement to the higher grades, and very few were employed there.[26] Indeed, more than twenty years after implementation of the determination, black workers were still complaining about the incompetence and lack of qualifications of white workers and supervisors who were nonetheless senior to them.

In essence the companies exchanged recognition of the white union for exemptions on job reservation, and in 1969 an Industrial Council was established for the industry. A union for coloured workers began organising in 1967, and was admitted to the IC in 1971, and it soon began organising among African workers in the Eastern Cape plants.

The development of unions is paralleled by the growth in the industrial relations bureaucracy at each of the companies. Formerly personnel and human resources departments had been extremely minor divisions of each firm, handling pensions, benefits, and the security guards, but from the late 1960s they became rapidly developing power centres. The staff expanded along with the general growth in employment, but also to keep pace with new functions, especially those related to regulating labour relations on the shop floor. Functions which were once the preserve of foremen were transferred to the new bureaucracy, and subjected to formal rules and procedures. The former Industrial Relations Manager at Ford commented:

> We've taken it away from the [foreman] for the sake of good labour relationships. I mean for no other damn reason....To ensure that if you get two people breaking the same rule,that the punishment is going to be the same, given the same circumstances.

The former Production Director at Ford echoed the same view:

> I'm fully of the opinion that a lot of the need for a union was as a result of foreman malpractice....It was just a case of saying to the foreman: "Look, you follow this set of rules so that anything that you do with your labour is consistent with what other foremen are doing."

Hiring and firing was now formally performed by Labour Relations, while wage rates were the subject of negotiations between employers and unions in the Industrial Council. Discipline, though meted out by line supervision, was increasingly subjected to review and appeal through company-union grievance procedures, conducted between shop stewards, labour relations officers, and foremen. In short, the formal discretionary power of foremen was substantially reduced by the development of the internal and Industrial Council industrial relations system.

One foreman in the Volkswagen Body Shop, a particularly tough, big, barrel-chested man, recalled the time when supervisors wielded such power:

> Those were nice days! When we had control of the [pay] increments, we had control over the workers. You can kill his wife or his children,

> but don't take his money away. Now there's no incentive for workers to work harder.
>
> In the late '60s, early '70s, if you don't like a guy's face you could fire him....Now you've got to get your facts straight.

The former Industrial Relations Manager at Ford substantiated the view:

> [The foreman] could no longer give an employee a *kicker*. He's got to check with somebody else before he could *kicker* an employee. Do you know what a *kicker* is? A kick in the ass!

Indeed, the institution of a regularised, rule-bound industrial relations system is one of the factors most often quoted by workers at Volkswagen in accounting for what they most like about the company. They are protected in a variety of ways by the union, particularly from unfair dismissal and victimisation by supervision. One Volkswagen worker eloquently summed up the change:

> We used to say, "If the master say or do that, you used to go and run to do that without questioning why." But now we've got *why* now. They don't like that *why*....I mean, because we used to go and do whatsoever. If he said, "Go there and do that and whatsoever," now we haven't got the right, before '80 to ask him, "Why?" He must explain *why* he send me there, because I'm working here.

Maller's recent research on Volkswagen uncovered the same response. When asked why they joined the union, over 80% of black workers cited the need to defend workers' rights, including protections against arbitrary discipline or dismissal.[27]

PART IV. INFORMAL AUTHORITY: THE FOREMAN'S REVENGE?

Despite the development of formal systems for regulating work noted above, foremen nonetheless continue to possess extremely important power over the most basic factory processes, especially promotion. It is asserted by virtually all the interviewees that foremen continue to posses power over wage increments made in the time between across-the-board increases mandated by the Industrial Council. Workers, especially those in higher grades, claim these increments account for a none-too-frequent difference of fifty cents or one rand in hourly pay rates between white and black workers performing the same tasks. In addition, foremen seem to retain considerable power over the distribution of overtime work, which interviewees claim is parcelled out on a racial basis. During periods of short time such unequal treatment can have a very immediate effect on workers' pay packets.

Within the official system, job grading and promotion are subject to the strict controls of the labour relations system. According to the formal system, job vacancies are to be filled by the Personnel Department after notification of any vacancies by supervision. The Personnel Department advertises posts on in-company bulletin

boards, conducts examinations of applicants, and selects appropriate candidates based on the results of the examination.

In practice, however, the system almost never worked in the formally described manner. Instead, virtually all workers interviewed described an informal system in which foremen still wield ultimate control over who gets promoted. When asked to describe the procedures relating to promotion, only one worker said that the actual system in fact corresponds to the formal rules. Those who responded to the question (18 workers) claimed the real promotion procedure operated through favoritism on the part of foremen, racism, or identified a complete mismatch between education and promotion. Many expressed indignation at the promotion of less qualified whites ahead of higher qualified blacks.

> Well, say, for instance, there's a job open for an Assistant Foreman. What they will do, if there is a white guy they know that would also be in a position for that job, and myself also make application for that job, they prefer that white guy to go into that job before they consider me. And, in a lot of things, you will find that they will mostly push the white guy to go into certain jobs before they push any black guys into that job.

Another worker commented:

> How do you like...being taken to be an operator in the lines here, while the very supervisor, or the superintendent, or even your manager is less educated than yourself? How would you like that? That's something wrong, man. That's something wrong, really.

And another:

> We did sit last time with a foreman that can't even make out a time sheet. He asked somebody from the people working under him to do his time sheets. I mean that's unfair, in my opinion.

Racism was one frequently stated complaint, but others complained equally bitterly about favoritism, in which foremen promote workers - African or coloured - who are tied to them. One worker commented that promotion is not a case of what you know, but of "Who do you know?" The informal procedure is to approach one's foreman to ask for promotion. The system seems to be wired in such a way that foremen can obtain advancement for select individuals. According to the procedures (and comments by foremen themselves), they should not have such power, but actual practice is different:

> I found out when inside of Volkswagen, when you apply for a job here you are wasting your time. That is number one...You just couldn't apply for a job inside. You just have to go to the foreman or supervisor concerned to tell him that you want that job....You just don't have to apply for the job inside. If you apply you are wasting your time. You can apply, and you are being called for an interview. They interview

you and they say, "We'll call you back." You will never be called back again.
Q: How do you find out about a job?
A: You have to move around to the people concerned. Tell them you want the job...you want to work under his belt, you want to work under him.

Another worker repeated a similar story, but gave more details of the actual hidden mechanisms of supervisorial control over promotion:

> I heard about the job. It wasn't on the board. I heard about it, somebody told me about the job. So I went up straight to the foremen, asked him where it was, like that, if there was a vacancy and he told me, "That you must first bring in your matric, the only requirement is that you must have some experience of repairman job...

Another worker extended a discussion of these mechanisms, and provided this most telling story of the way he received a promotion from the lowest pay grade to die-setting, one of the highest graded and apprenticed jobs:

> I applied for die setting. Actually, my general foreman...he told me about the vacancies but the notices wasn't on the board yet. So I had to see this guy *****.

The foreman had informed the worker of an extremely important opening, even before it was relayed to Personnel, and referred him to the foreman in the department concerned:

> I went straight to his office and I told him about this vacancies that will occur in the Press Shop. And he asked me, who told me about this, and I said, no, **** [his general foreman]. He said, "It's confidential. It's only between me and him." And he said, "Okay, fill in a form, and bring your certificate tomorrow."

The worker retrieved his Standard 8 certificate and returned to the foreman:

> "Okay, you are in for the thing." So it's about three days after that I started training die setter, and I've qualified last week.

Through personalistic ties to foreman, this particular worker made a leap over 4 wage grades into the artisanal "elite." He now receives more than twice his original wage, and possesses a certificated skill he can take with him anywhere in the country. Finally, one worker captured the informal - and hidden - character of such processes with a thoroughly apposite piece of Afrikaans vernacular:

> I did make application for a foreman job, and through the time that I was waiting for the application, somebody told me long before it was out, "[Another] man is gonna get the job." So what we are calling in

> Afrikaans is *smokkel*. It's not a man that has got the capabilities and the man that has got the qualifications that do get a job, it's a man that has a link with a supervisor or with a manager that do get a job and that's unfair.

What is the basis of such personal ties?

Many workers claim that race is the fundamental divide, with whites being favoured above all. But the worker described above is coloured, and African workers have also benefitted from such relationships on the basis of possessing (or being seen to possess) appropriate attitudes:

> You know, the situation here is politicised, racialised. The relations between workers and the bosses are also regulated by racial considerations, political considerations, you know, attitudes that can affect your progress, if you are deemed or are seen as somebody who have your own mind. Then you suffer in this set-up. You suffer in this set-up. You must just be moderate. And then you get the right chances for moving up....If you have definite political inclinations, chances of advancing are minimal. It *is* like that.

One Grade 7 worker with a matric, explained with contempt the approach which would likely bring success:

> So if we go as far as assistant foreman, and if you are lucky enough, and then you have got to be a friend of the boss, buy him pies and a cool drink, and let him shout at you like anything, let him say disgusting things about you, and you don't say anything against him, you just smile and scratch your head all the time, and then you'll probably be a foreman.

The general feeling amongst workers was that they could do little to change the system. Some saw the practice as inherent in the racial system of South Africa, and nothing short of total political transformation would ever alter it. One man summed up the situation by saying it made him utterly demotivated. Another protested, "I don't even bother to apply any more. I just want to quit."

Thus, despite the formal - indeed the quite substantial - deracialisation of the workplace and the institution of a representative system of labour relations, fundamental processes on the shop floor remain part of an informal system of personal control by white supervisors. While workers may no longer be dismissed or denied wage increases by despotic supervision, their futures with the company, their expectations of a career at work, remain subject to their foreman's discretion.

These informal practices seem to violate fairly deeply held values of justice, especially as related to equality of opportunity. One might have assumed that black workers would come to expect such treatment as a norm, and many were extremely clear in explaining the informal promotion system as a normal part of South African life: as in

'that's just the way things are.' But such recognition doesn't seem to have blunted the sense of morality. "If they can upgrade me," one worker said when asked about his plans for the future, "if they can send me to the training school, I can go there. Then if I failed, I won't blame them, I'll blame myself." He seemed to suggest that he could adapt to individual failure, but could not accept conditions in which he did not even get the opportunity to test himself. The informal promotion system therefore corrupts the relationship between, on the one hand, skill, education, and desire, and, on the other hand, the chances for promotion. The system plays havoc with workers' expectations and calculations about the future, rendering their "career at work" into little more than the plaything of their foreman's caprice.

> We have to meet that particular foreman of that particular job that you want to do. Then you speak to him. If he likes you, then he will accept you. If he doesn't, then it is bad luck.

The absence of clearly defined job ladders, which would at least allow workers some expectation of a career at work, could possibly have contributed to the view of most of the workers, who could not envision themselves working at VW in five or ten years' time.[28] Only a small number identified working at Volkswagen as a possibility. Others expected to be in their own business, unemployed, seeking further education, or dead! A large number didn't know what they would be doing. One worker summed up the pessimistic mood: "I don't think I'll be here in 10 years, if god spares me!"

PART VI. THE CONSEQUENCES OF INFORMAL AUTHORITY

The pessimism voiced by workers is an unfortunate consequence of the organisation of control in the labour process in the industry, rather than resignation with factory or assembly line work *per se*. As described above, contrary to popular assumptions, workers in the industry possess an array of skills which are certainly useful to the company, and to a number of the workers themselves. Given the ability to translate their tacit skills into a career at work, such skills could also provide workers with a basis for personal development and self-fulfillment. By not recognizing the importance of tacit skills, both the automobile companies and the union are tarnishing an extremely valuable asset through tolerance of a system of informal despotism.

Labour relations systems in other countries, most notably the German system of co-determination have institutionalised workers' control over the very processes which in Volkswagen are controlled by foreman. Manpower training and promotion, in short the processes central to establishing careers at work, are part and parcel of the legal system of co-determination, and unions have entrenched rights to participation in manpower policy-making. As a result, trade unions are able to achieve employment stability and extensive training for their members. Wolfgang Streeck makes the argument that such deepening of skills has provided German producers with a highly qualified work force, and argues that such capacity is an important part of the foundation for the German producers' extremely successful strategy of building and

marketing extremely reliable high-quality vehicles.[29] In short, Streeck notes a very close connection between union participation in training and promotion, and economic success.

Some companies in South Africa, notably Nissan, have seemingly come to a similar conclusion. They have developed policies adapted from Japan which tap into workers tacit skills, and while providing higher status for participating, though not yet financial rewards. Regular communication groups, the so-called "Green Areas" where workers meet to discuss each day's work, are attempts to marshall workers' tacit skills to improve production. Volkswagen, too, is experimenting with such policies, and has promoted "ikayalam" ["my house" in Xhosa] where groups of ten "workers gather in the foreman's area at the start of each working day and 'specify the work content for the day and decide who does what and when.'"[30] According to Maller, the initiative aims "to coordinate common interests on the shop floor by drawing workers into co-operative, non-union structures in production."

It is not clear, either at Nissan or Volkswagen, whether such structures will offer workers any substantial rewards, most especially a "career at work." No automobile company has yet come forward offering guarantees of job security or lifetime employment characteristic of the German and Swedish co-determination systems or Japan. It is clear, however, that South African unions have not responded to these management initiatives, except to reject them. But perhaps these responses are short-sighted. While many of these programmes - including the one at Volkswagen - appear to be schemes for avoiding unions and replacing them with company-controlled structures, the material basis which permits the experiment may also be claimed by unions. Tacit skills are at the core of these participation schemes, and unions may be able to develop their own schemes to develop such skills. If they can colonise skill development - perhaps in a variation of the German model - they will not only be making an effective inroad into central managerial prerogatives, but they will also be able to provide substantial material rewards to their members.

ENDNOTES

Methodological note: the interview material reproduced in this paper formed part of the research for my doctoral dissertation. 40 Volkswagen workers were organised in a cluster sample covering all sections of the factory, stratified according to skill, age, and wage grade. The interviews were conducted using standardised, open-ended questions, to allow scope for comparison of results while allowing respondents room to expand on their ideas.

1. In Sweden and Germany the systems of co-determination which spawned such flexibility were forced on employers by powerful labour movements (in Germany) and by a coalition of labour and Social Democratic governments (in Sweden).

2. For an excellent review of Taylorism, see Jean-Patrick Leger, "'Talking Rocks' - An Investigation of the *Pit Sense* of Rockfall Accidents Amongst Underground Gold Miners," Ph.D., University of the Witwatersrand, 1992, pp. 7-11.

3. Alan Altshuler, et. al, *The Future of the Automobile*, p. 14. Hounshell painstakingly reconstructs the development of mass production at Ford and places the advances in the context of the historical evolution of industry in America; David A. Hounshell, *From the American System to Mass Production, 1800-1932* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), especially Ch. 6, "The Ford Motor Company & the Rise of Mass Production in America."

4. In Hounshell's subtle analysis of the advent of mass production at Ford, he makes a fine distinction between Taylorist scientific management and Ford's practice. "Taylor took production hardware as a given and sought revisions in labor processes and the organization of work; Ford engineers mechanized work processes and found workers to feed and tend their machines....the machine ultimately set the pace of work at Ford, not a piece rate or an established standard for a 'fair day's work.'" Hounshell, *From The American System*, pp. 252-253.

5. The historic developments at Ford's Highland Park plant allowed a massive expansion of output. From 1,700 vehicles produced in 1903, Ford's first year, production grew to 10,000 in 1908 with the introduction of the Model T, to 300,000 in 1914 when the assembly line was fully installed, to 1.9 million in 1923 when Model T sales peaked. At that point Ford was producing 44% of the world's output (excluding the company's factories in Canada and England). Ford cut production costs by more than half within five years of introducing the assembly line, and fifteen years after introduction, the price of a Model T dropped to one-third its original level. Rhys Jenkins, *Transnational Corporations and the Latin American Automobile Industry* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987), p. 14. See also Stephen Meyer III, *The Five Dollar Day: Labor Management and Social Control in the Ford Motor Company, 1908-1921* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1981). According to Meyer, Ford's "Five Dollar Day" was not intended primarily as a

motivational device (as, after all, Ford relied on the pace of the line rather than normative means to motivate workers) but as a strategy to obtain the best labour available by outbidding his Detroit competitors.

6. Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974); see Peter Armstrong's review of criticisms of Braverman and a defense of his deskilling argument, in "Labour and Monopoly Capital," in Richard Hyman and Wolfgang Streeck, eds., *New Technology and Industrial Relations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988).

7. Leger's work follows Cressey and MacInness, who argue that the labour process must be understood in terms of the dual nature of the commodity. Peter Cressey and John MacInness, "Voting for Ford: Industrial Democracy and the Control of Labour," *Capital and Class*, No. 11 (Summer 1980). These authors reject the Marxist concept of the real subordination of labour to capital. Capital may purchase means of production and labour as exchange values, but the actual use value may only be realised by workers themselves. At some point, any labour process must enable workers to produce use value; hence, workers will always control the detail of work, and at the heart of the labour process will be a cooperative relationship between capital and labour. See the extremely valuable and clear examination of these concepts in Judy Maller's recent book, *Conflict and Co-operation: Case studies in worker participation* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1992).

8. Leger explains that in the case of women workers, feminist writers have shown how "women's work" is systematically devalued and defined as unskilled, even in cases where women are now doing jobs previously performed by men. Similarly, Leger examines the processes where the definition of skills on South African mines depended on the race of the worker performing the job. Leger, p. 63.

9. Leger, p. 13.

10. Charles Sabel, *Work and Politics: The division of labor in industry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 62. Sabel quotes from William Kornblum's description of a Chicago mill: "[W]hile the mill hand may have no generalizable skills, he is intimately familiar with the idiosyncracies of a particular mill. This is a familiarity which may take years to acquire....The machinery seems to have a personality of its own and the men who coax steel through it know they cannot be easily replaced with new men. This contributes to an egalitarian spirit among mill men of different seniority; all are pitted together against the whims of a cantankerous old steel mill."

11. Charles Sabel, *Work and Politics: The division of labor in industry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 80.

12. For a survey of the development of the industry, see my paper "From the 'Liverpool of the Cape' to the 'Detroit of South Africa': The Automobile Industry and Industrial Development in the Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage Region," Paper presented to the Conference on Port Elizabeth's Place in the History and Historiography of South Africa, Port Elizabeth, September 1992.

13. The exceptions included components which could be competitively produced in South Africa, such as soft trim, paint, glass, and tires. In the late 1950s, however, such locally produced items accounted for a mere 18% of the value of the car.

14. In 1971 investment in the industry exceeded R200 million, three-quarters of which had been made in the previous ten years. In component manufacturing, investment rose from approximately R15 million in 1961, the year before the Local Content program took effect, to an estimated R100 million ten years later. Through 1967 the motor firms had invested about R155 million in their assembly and manufacturing operations, increasing to R200 million in 1971. The overall sales of passenger cars increased rapidly from 75,938 in 1961 to 229,031 in 1975, but the growth of components industry was faster still. The index of the physical volume of production for motor vehicles increased from 85.1 in 1963 to 199 in 1975, compared to an increase in parts and accessories production from 84.3 in 1963 to 479.3 in 1975. The actual value of locally manufactured components bought by the motor firms increased from just over R13 million in 1961 to R180 million in 1973. See Ieuan L. Griffiths, The South African motor industry," *The Standard Bank Review*, No. 631 (October 1977), p. 14, 19; P.J. Nieuwenhuizen, *The South African Component Manufacturing Industry* (Johannesburg: Federation of Component Manufacturers Associations, 1977), p. 13; and N.J. Swart, *The South African Motor Industry-in an International Context* (Pretoria: die Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut, 1974), p. 168.

15. Unpublished employment figures, January 1960-January 1987, National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa, Pretoria; and Industrial Tribunal, "Report," 1964, p. 8. In the combined automobile manufacturing and components industry, employment more than doubled from 30,400 in 1964 to 64,700 in 1975, while the ratio of black to white workers increased from 1.64:1 to 2.22:1. Nieuwenhuizen, *The South African Component Manufacturing Industry*, p. 67.

16. In 1972-73 the following MNCs were represented in the South African passenger car market, either through wholly-owned subsidiaries or on a contractual basis with South African-based assemblers:

Subsidiaries	Contractual Agreements	
Ford	American Motors	Citroen
General Motors	Datsun	Renault
Volkswagen	Toyota	Fiat
Chrysler	Mazda	Alfa Romeo
Leyland	Peugeot	Volvo
BMW	Mercedes	

There were 21 manufacturers represented in South Africa (including commercials), producing 44 models of passenger cars (with 229 variants), for a market of 342,000 vehicles. The Volkswagen Beetle was the model with the maximum production, amounting to 21,000 units. By contrast, there were 10 manufacturers in Brazil, producing 38 passenger car models for a market of 609,000, and the model with the

maximum production amounted to 149,000 units. Swart, *The South African Motor Industry*, p. 189-190, 196.

17. Perhaps this fallacy results from the fact that most research on the industry relies on published statistical sources, closed-question surveys, and interviews with production management, rather than on participant observation and intensive interviewing of shop floor workers.

18. Rob Davies, *Capital, State and White Labour in South Africa, 1900-1960* (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1979), pp. 203-208.

19. Southall asserts that the South African labour process facilitates effective unionisation, "not least because the bulk of the work on the assembly line is excruciatingly monotonous." He then gives a precis of Blauner's examination of highly rationalised assembly line work, in which "job fragmentation and deskilling were inherent in the process...leaving workers with minimal autonomy, with the unskilled being subject to the greatest pressure." He then asserts, "Notwithstanding South African manufacturers' occasional tendency to ascribe to blacks an animalistic sense of rhythm, there is no reason to suppose that the latter find assembly line production any less alienating than do workers elsewhere." Roger Southall, "Monopoly Capital and Labour's Response: Emergent Unionism in the South African Motor Industry," mimeo, University of Ottowa, 1984, p. 17.

20. See the contribution by Joy Welch, "The Technology Dimension," in Sylvia Miller and Roux van der Merwe, eds., *Labour Turnover and Organisational Effectiveness*, Industrial Relations Unit, University of Port Elizabeth, 1980.

21. Jan Roux, "Labour Control in the Eastern Cape Automobile Industry, 1970-1974," Africa Seminar, Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, September 1984.

22. Of course the same conditions would apply in other low-volume countries producing for their internal markets, such as Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, the Philippines, Australia, and generally most third world automobile assembling countries.

23. The Industrial Council agreement establishes the wage grades and subsumes each job in the factory within the categories. At the time of research, the agreement consisted of 8 grades, from Grade 1 (the lowest) to Grade 8. Minimum pay levels were also established in the agreement, as well as periodic across the board increases for the life of the agreement.

24. In fact, the only automatic increase occurred when workers moved from beginner to permanent status after three months on the job. In the absence of any systematic wage setting mechanism, all increases were based on merit, as decided by the production manager in consultation with the foreman. Unless he remained on good terms with supervision, a worker would have no other means short of a Wage Board investigation to increase his wages.

25. Report by Representative W.G. Ballinger to the South African Trades and Labour Council," 20 December 1939, Ballinger Papers, University of Cape Town A3.II.11.1 [from a microfilm copy held at CPSA, Reel 1], p. 2.

26. Jan Roux, "Capitalist Control and the Labour Process in the Eastern Cape Automobile Industry," BA (Hons), African Studies, University of Cape Town, 1984, p. 111.

27. Maller, *Conflict and Cooperation*, p. 112.

28. Workers may also have been expressing realistic assessments of the likelihood of VW surviving through economic crisis, political upheaval, and international sanctions.

29. Wolfgang Streeck, "Industrial Relations and Industrial Change: the Restructuring of the World Automobile Industry in the 1970s and 1980s," *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, V. 8 (1987).

30. Maller, *Conflict and Co-operation*, p. 137.

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

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 7003 SEMINAR ROOM
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Title: **Political Instability and African Entrepreneurship.**

by: **Fred Ahwireng-Obeng**

No **349**

POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND AFRICAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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NOT TO BE QUOTED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

SUMMARY

Several close observers of African economic development believe that political instability (PI) has stunted economic progress in Africa by decreasing private entrepreneurial activity. However, whether African entrepreneurs themselves regard PI as an obstacle or an opportunity, how they respond to it and how it affects their behaviour as entrepreneurs are questions yet unanswered. This inquiry is the central focus of the paper. The evidence from the African business and political literature, periodicals and daily newspapers suggests no simple, direct relationships between PI, the volume of entrepreneurial activity and national welfare. On the other hand, different kinds of PI tend to create different sets of opportunity conditions for profitable entrepreneurial initiatives. African entrepreneurs have responded rationally to potentially high private pay-offs resulting from PI and resorted to survival strategies to offset perceived and real obstacles. A considerable part of these initiatives are socially unproductive, suggesting the need for African governments to forge mutually beneficial coalitions with entrepreneurs in order to increase national welfare. The real problem is whether reliable coalitions are feasible.

1. INTRODUCTION

The African historical record lends no support to the familiar idea that political instability (PI) decreases entrepreneurial activity. However, the evidence does confirm that different kinds of PI encourage or deter different forms of entrepreneurship. As a result, three decades of unstable political climate in sub-Saharan Africa have changed the character of its indigenous business sector. Indeed, the identity of entrepreneurs, the formality or informality of their enterprises and their degree of creative adaptation, expansion or innovation have all been determined in part by political instability.

Those who see political instability as a curb on enterprise argue that it induces frequent and unforeseeable changes - and hence uncertainty - in the rules of business activity. This interferes with politically feasible sets of coalitions assembled by the entrepreneur and so prevents him or her from operating profitably in the legal or formal economy. Under conditions of instability, state controls intensify excluding the entrepreneur from the mainstream economy and leaving him to carry on his activities underground. The resulting reduction in formal economic activity reduces the state's limited tax base. Moreover, continued instability often leads to withdrawal of foreign financial assistance. As a result, economic development is stunted (Mbaku 1989, pp.58-59). Another version of this thesis asserts that uncertainty arising from PI diminishes the entrepreneur's rewards and contribution to the economy by reducing the availability and marginal productivities of factors of production and disrupting the timing and organization of the production process. Production failure is usually accompanied by increased risk of capital loss and emigration of entrepreneurial and managerial expertise to escape financial hardships and personal political harassment. In this way, the scope of entrepreneurial activity is curtailed (Fosu 1992, pp.830-831).

A major conceptual problem underlying many investigative studies on Africa is that they are based on simplified assumptions about the nature of political instability (McGowan and Johnson 1984; Mbaku 1987; Fosu 1992). Fosu's study, for example, applies an index of political instability at the elite level, taken to mean successful, attempted or planned coups d'état as proxy for political instability in multiple regressions based on a production function framework to show that political instability has a deleterious impact on economic growth (and entrepreneurship) in sub-Saharan Africa. It ignores other important kinds of PI which are the outcome of contradictions in the role of the modern African government.

The present paper defines political instability as "the condition in political systems in which the institutionalized patterns of authority break down and the expected compliance to political authorities is replaced by violence intended to change the personnel, policies or sovereignty of the authorities through injury to persons or property. It is the result of conflict between different groups over the values according to which rewards are allocated in the political system" (Morrison 1989, pp.122-123). Five types of conflict - elite, factional, communal, mass and popular - are examined. The definition of entrepreneurs used here is taken from Marsden as those who "innovate and assume risks. They hire and manage labour forces. They open up markets. They find new combinations of materials process and products. They initiate change and facilitate adjustment in dynamic economies" (Marsden 1990, p.1). The aim of the paper is to examine from the available literature how seriously African entrepreneurs regard the problem of political instability, how they respond to it, and how it affects their behaviour as entrepreneurs. In the next section the origin of PI is traced

to the fragility of modern African governments. The opportunity conditions so created are outlined in a descriptive model in section three. Section four examines entrepreneurs' responses to these conditions and section five concludes the paper.

2. POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND THE MODERN AFRICAN GOVERNMENT

Clapham (1991, p.91) suggests that the modern African government typically contradicts itself in exercising its functions (the purpose for which it exists), its power (what it is able to do) and its accountability (the relationship between itself and the people it governs). First, the state provides basic public needs and the opportunity for individuals to pursue their own goals. However, it frequently grants favours and opportunities for individuals and groups at the expense of their fellows. Second, the country's economic power base and the government's legitimacy, or the moral basis for government, are usually weak, which means it either exercises too much power to survive or too little for fear of rebuttal. Third, its own values and those of civil society which it governs are often irreconcilable. These contradictions usually leave the government fragile and at odds with civil society. The government naturally resorts to the politics of control rather than practise political democracy in order to safeguard its stability and power. Private enterprise, the means by which individuals acquire wealth and power outside government, becomes a threat which must either be frustrated or lured to subjugate to government control. The conflict that ensues is not only between government and private business but also between government and other social groups - students, professionals, academics, chiefs and religious leaders - who are affected by government action. Another dimension of the conflict takes place among a broad range of social groups competing to influence political decision (Chazan *et al.* 1988).

This kind of conflict is classified as elite conflict and takes the form of lobbying, petitions, demonstrations and strikes in a vicious interaction of bad politics and poor economic management. When intense it escalates into *coup* attempts and successful coups d'état. And when injudiciously handled the elites themselves organise their constituencies on the basis of class and ethnic identity to make factional demands. For example, divisions frequently arose between ideologues and technocrats in Nyerere's Tanzania and in Mobutu's Zaire, in which party functionaries, senior civil servants and military personnel contested among themselves to curry favour with the president. The continuous factional conflicts in Nigeria, Cameroon and Sudan are caused by ethno-regional leaders competing for political control. In Kenya, Zambia and Nigeria government has responded to factional conflicts by appointing factional leaders to political decision-making positions. Some military regimes in Ghana (between 1969 and 1979) and Nigeria (in 1979) avoided factional conflicts by succumbing to demands to transfer power to civilian governments. However, the Biafran succession from Nigeria (1967-70) resulted from failure of the Federal Government to accede to factional demands.

To the extent that the Biafran succession developed into a full-scale war, it may be classified together with the Katanga succession in Congo (1960-63), the Sudanese civil wars (1955 and 1962-72) and the civil wars in Chad as communal conflicts. By definition, they are "violent actions by members of one or more communal groups to challenge the state's territorial integrity and protest existing distribution of authority and reward with the aim of redistributing them among communal groups or between communal groups and the national government" (Chazan *et al.* 1988, p.191; Morrison, 1991, p.123).

Another type of PI is mass conflict and involves revolts or revolutions in which insurgents of a political movement attack agents and supporters of

established political authority (Morrison 1991, p.124). Mass conflict is rare in Africa with exceptions such as the Ethiopian revolution which transformed the entire social order following the overthrow of the monarchy. However, popular conflict, in the sense of popular acts of protest and disengagement from formal authority by communities and groups who are socio-economically dislocated, is widespread in Africa in the form of "informal" activities. This form of response reflects a quest for protection from uncertainty, an attempt to control accessible resources in as many ways as possible and a willingness on the part of the deprived to reduce susceptibility to misery (Chazan *et al.* 1988, p.199). In Ghana, Nigeria, Somalia, Zaire, Kenya, Angola and elsewhere, the informal activities are organised through various institutions such as trading alliances, craft guilds and women's associations. But they are not always non-violent. Anti-social activities ranging from armed robbery and gangsterism to black market activities have thrived in the past three decades (Chazan *et al.* 1988, pp.199-200).

No African country is free from any one of these five kinds of political conflict. Different types of conflict appear in different combinations in various countries at stages of the process of political maturing. Political instability does not necessarily have a negative impact on the entrepreneurial role. Out of the various types of conflict, new kinds of political coalitions appear and new entrepreneurial opportunities emerge. The next section explores this thesis.

3. OPPORTUNITY CONDITIONS FOR AFRICAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A DESCRIPTIVE MODEL

The following model is based on suggestive evidence from the entrepreneurship literature and defines the theoretical basis of the paper (Broehl 1982; Wilken 1987; Baumol 1988):

(a) Entrepreneurs will generally undertake activities most likely to yield personal wealth and position regardless of whether the activities contribute to productivity increase, economic growth or increase in per capita income (national welfare).
(b) As entrepreneurship is not always productive, it is likely to influence national welfare not only by its size but also by the direction it takes.
(c) The size and direction of entrepreneurship are dependent on the entrepreneurs' private profits or the rewards and incentives offered by current institutional arrangements.
(d) In less developed areas, such as Africa, entrepreneurs seek and realize business advantage more often through political coalitions than through market interactions. Private profits can be substantial under conditions of political instability.
(e) Profits are a function of the type of political conflict which in turn determine the degree of threat to the security of government. The degree of insecurity of government determines the extent of government control, the nature of government-business relationships, and so the security of person and property of the entrepreneur, uncertainty and risk of capital loss.
(f) The government-business variable appears in a general model of entrepreneurial supply (the size of entrepreneurship) as S, where productive entrepreneurship (+E) is equated with national welfare (Y) and is a dependent variable on the function of economic conditions (X) and non-economic conditions (Z) and S such that:

$$+E = Y = f(X, Z) + S$$

The S variable is assumed to be promotional, protective or corrective of business or antagonistic to it. Moreover, it is exogenous and so influences all other variables namely Z X and E.

(g) Determinants of the X variable are the availability and quality of production factors and size and composition of the market. They influence E and Y to the same extent.
(h) The non-economic factors in Z which promote entrepreneurship include: social integration and mobility, non-marginality, high entrepreneurial legitimacy and pro-entrepreneurship ideology and high institutional (social and political) security.

The relationship between insecurity arising from political conflict and entrepreneurship has received diverse interpretations in the literature. Many authors believe that insecurity of all forms increases governmental interference and control, creates uncertainties and threatens the entrepreneur with unnecessary risk as asserted by the primacy of the PI thesis (Easterbrook 1949; Brozen 1954; Brandenburg 1964; and Katzin 1964). Peterson and Berger (1971) as well as Kirzner (1973) hold the opposite view that entrepreneurship is more likely to be enhanced under turbulent conditions than under stable conditions. However, others believe that a minimal security or moderate certainty is necessary (Cole 1959; McClelland 1961 and Kuznets 1966). These viewpoints contrast the Schumpeterian idea that the essence of entrepreneurship is to create insecurity in stable conditions (Schumpeter 1961). But, Redlich (1958) suggests that insecurity does not necessarily decrease entrepreneurship, although it may result in business loss or fear of intimidation by some entrepreneurs who will be unlikely to increase their insecurity by assuming a more entrepreneurial role. We add that as different kinds of political conflict generate a different mix of political coalitions and opportunity conditions, different levels of private pay-offs become attainable which in turn determine the direction and size of entrepreneurship.

We now examine specific entrepreneurial responses to the mix of opportunity conditions generated by political instability in Africa.

4. ENTREPRENEURIAL RESPONSES TO POLITICAL INSTABILITY

The pre-independence historical record of African entrepreneurship reiterates four themes: First, African entrepreneurship was positively elastic to political action. That is, the role of political authority was critical to its success or failure (Iliffe 1981; Hopkins 1988). Second, the continent's entrepreneurs were drawn from diverse social, economic and ethnic groups. Third, the majority of entrepreneurs showed considerable originality in adapting to their external working environments. Fourth, the entrepreneurial spirit stimulated a wide range of activities in trading, artisanal work, farming, transport and small scale manufacturing (Hopkins 1983). These entrepreneurial activities have shifted strategically since the time of independence to take advantage of political instability or to avoid its potentially ill effects. Also, the political role of African entrepreneurs has changed from passive to active agents for reform. The classic idea of Milton Friedman (1962) that "the business of business is business" no longer applies here.

African entrepreneurs have performed this new-found role with considerable self-interest. After nearly two decades of PI and revolutionary climate in South Africa, characterised by boycotts, worker stay aways, international sanctions and administrative breakdown in black residential areas, private sector organisations have formed alliances to promote the cause of political reform. Even so, these organisations, including black business, local white business and foreign business, pursue different strategy sets reflecting their different power bases and constituencies. Black business supports and promotes protest strategies but white business rejects them and rather restricts its involvement to economic issues. Foreign business,

however, deals with a more eclectic range of issues and a wider variety of strategies. This diversity restrains successful involvement (Lee *et al.* 1991, pp.116-124).

Elsewhere in Africa the private sector has largely failed to bring pressure to bear on governments to relax their domination of public policy for a more consultative approach. In 1984, the Rawlings Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) administration in Ghana decided that the share of the private sector must exceed that of the public sector by 1991 (Tangri, 1991). Despite this commitment, the security and revolutionary arms of government continued to harass indigenous entrepreneurs for unproven offences. The government failed to protect them from the impact of its market-based reform policies including devaluations of the local currency, positive and high interest rates, and unfair competition from cheap imported goods. Further, government intervention strengthened through stringent rules and regulations in employment, taxation, investment and import-export procedures. The private sector responded with anger and frustration and by 1992 more than 500 local industries had closed down (West Africa 1992, p.1572).

According to a recent World Bank report reflecting a vision of Africa's economic future, the central role of its entrepreneurs is to stimulate demand for low-cost products and services that they produce by creating jobs (World Bank 1989). There is, however, considerable difference of views on which entrepreneurs, formal or informal, are better disposed to perform this task. Formal or modern entrepreneurs are those who hire labour and are part of the formal economy; and informal entrepreneurs are the self-employed or micro-entrepreneurs who employ unpaid family members and who usually operate outside official regulations (Marsden 1990, p.2).

The report projects that informal sector employment will rise by 6 percent annually from 1990 to 2020. The sector's contribution to GDP will rise by 7.5 percent annually and its labour productivity will increase by 1.5 percent. However, labour productivity in the formal sector is expected to grow marginally at two percent annually. This means that the formal sector's contribution to total GDP will decline from 47% to 32%.

This scenario - the expansion of informal entrepreneurship and contraction of the formal - can also be inferred from the evidence of the response of Africans in production, commerce and the services to the various types of political instability. Generally, high intensity political instability constrains large-scale production and creates the environment conducive to micro and informal production. Low intensity political instability such as popular conflict induces informal entrepreneurship in all sectors. Consequently, the dualistic structure of entrepreneurship tends to shift towards the informal.

Elite Conflict

In several African countries, elite conflicts explode into military coups d'état to usher in new governments with new macro-economic policies including: price management/liberalisation (such as exchange rate adjustment, reduction or increase in subsidies); budgetary reform and institutional restructuring (such as entrepreneurship policy). Invariably, African governments differ in their attitude toward indigenous entrepreneurs. Some, like the Rawlings regime, the governments of Guinea, Mali in the 1960s under Keita, Benin, Congo Brazaville, Angola, Mozambique, Somalia and Tanzania discouraged indigenous African entrepreneurs from emerging. The obvious response was the growth of informal, parallel or black markets. Some used political power to acquire private property and business interests. This is parasitic capitalism typical

of Zaire and Zambia under Kuanda, the last years of Tubman and the early years of Tolbert of Liberia. However, the political leaderships in Kenya and Nigeria have always allowed local entrepreneurs to play an important economic role (Iliffe 1982, pp.77-87).

Frequent changes in economic policies usually affect public servants, wage earners and the unemployed the most. Their response is to drift to the informal sector, thus creating competition and reducing their earning capacity. To adjust their tastes to match their declined purchasing power, they embark on innovative local repairs. When goods become expensive or scarce, or commodity prices offered to producers are low, informal market activities are the popular response. Producers and speculators smuggle to and from neighbouring countries (Chazan *et al.* 1988, pp.254-256).

An alternative response, quite popular in Ghana and Nigeria, is for displaced urban dwellers to "go back to the land", that is return to their villages of origin to undertake subsistence agricultural production. A few cases of urban professionals turning to plantation agriculture have, however, been reported (Ewusi 1987; Chazan *et al.* 1988, pp.254-256).

Large-scale migration, another adjustment strategy, is dominant in West Africa. During the early years of Rawlings' rule, many Ghanaians migrated to Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire. This meant, in effect, a flight of entrepreneurial talents to the host countries. However, most immigrants are usually restrained from undertaking large-scale, formal business and are obliged to mount informal enterprises.

Factional Conflict

The political conflict in South Africa may be considered as a special case of factional conflict,taking the form of a racial conflict between blacks and whites. At the corporate level, it is a conflict between the black owners of labour and white owners of capital backed by a racist government. As a result, the private sector functions in an unstable, hostile environment, characterized internally by the sanctions of political uncertainty at the workplace and outside it and externally from international economic isolation. Decades of living under siege have made the industrial sector structurally uncompetitive and entrepreneurs are concerned more with protection and survival than with expansion (Financial Week, April 2-8 1992, pp.24-25).

Given the importance of political stability as a consideration for investors, South Africa ranks 59th just behind China, Poland, Hungary, Israel, Saudi Arabia and Hong Kong (41st) in the 1991 International Country Risk Guide of 129 countries of which the US places ninth. In view of South Africa's relatively unimpressive ranking, its private sector suffers severely from flight of capital and lack of foreign investment.

Communal Conflict

The evidence on entrepreneurial responses to communal confict is rather inconclusive. Large-scale agriculture has been difficult under war conditions although small-scale farming has had mixed fortunes. During the Mozambican war Lonrho, a multi-national, committed about $20 million in agribusiness joint venture and was earning about one million dollars profit annually by 1989. However, it spent 15% to 20% of its production cost on hiring private militias to protect its estates from Renamo attacks. High security cost meant that only large-scale investment in agriculture could be profitable (African Business, June 1991). The war destroyed traditional coping strategies among farming communities and undermined the existing exchange entitlement network

(Mozambique Information Office 1992, p.2). The Sudanese experience was however, different. In the midst of the civil war, the besieged people of Juba turned faeces-ridden waste ground in the city into food plots to produce about a third of their basic food requirement (Daily Times, 6 January, 1992, p.10).

War conditions could also stimulate profitable entrepreneurial initiatives in eco-tourism and the ivory trade. The rebel war in Rwanda boosted neighbouring Uganda's tourist industry when bush fighters sent Rwanda's mountain gorillas scurrying for safety across the border into Uganda. The Ugandan government responded by inaugurating a profitable eco-tourism programme (Africa Analysis, 18 Sept. 1992, p.14). Similarly the war in Mozambique launched a buoyant ivory trade, for guns and war material but drastically reduced the country's elephant population from about 55 000 in 1974 to 13 350 in 1992 (New Ground, Spring 1992, pp.18-19).

In mining and general trading, the civil unrest in Zaire and the war in Angola gave mixed business prospects for South African entrepreneurs. By November 1991 the turmoil in Zaire had sent cobalt prices from $15.50 in September to $25.27 (the average price during the 1970 unrest was $70). Stocks fell fast and as Zaire dominates world production the situation benefitted South African producers - Rustenburg Platinum and Impala Platinum - who extract it as a by-product of platinum. South African exporters found lucrative business in Zaire, from fresh produce, mining and manufacturing equipment to processed foodstuff, taking advantage of the superior quality and cheaper prices of their products. The South Africans appeared also in newly accessible Mozambique, rebuilding hotels, breeding cattle and seeking contracts for the supply of commodities ranging from plastics to shipbuilding items (The Star, 9 October 1991; The Citizen 23 April 1992; Business Times, 10 November 1991). However, the $125 million trade between Zaire and South Africa frequently came to a temporary standstill during periods of looting, arson and riots in Zaire.

The Angolan war created many other unforseen business opportunities for the unemployed, Zairean immigrants and local merchants. The brief return to peace and stability in that country in 1992 meant that patrolling soldiers in key diamond areas be withdrawn to ensure free mobility. When the government introduced a law to legalise the right of Angolans to own and sell diamonds with the aim of mopping up diamond stocks among the population, the unemployed expressed their entrepreneurial proclivity and did a $500 million-a-year business in diamond sales (Southern African Economist, October 1992, p.40). At the onset of the war in 1975, most of the Portuguese immigrants who had dominated the private sector left the country. The openings left in a wide range of skilled and unskilled vocations were filled by Zairean and other immigrants. Parallel markets opened up everywhere to supplement the centrally planned economy which could not afford to provide the people's needs. When the traditional caravan network of long-distance trade collapsed from the destruction by the war of the country's communication infra-structure, the merchants in the highland areas grasped the opportunities of air-transport to ferry goods to other provincial areas. This private enterprise expanded to reach supply sources in Lisbon, Rio de Janeiro and Paris (Birmingham, 1988).

Other parallel market operations were illegal and inimical to economic growth. Refugees from the Mozambican civil war flocked to the country's informal sector. But it became ruled by Mafia-style entrepreneurs, taking advantage of the poor and war-displaced people, by hiring them as hawkers to evade tax. Similarly, the parallel market in politically unstable Sierra Leone became so pervasive that it impinged on the functioning of the formal economy. Most foreign exchange transactions including exports, imports and

migrant remittances were channelled through this market due to lack of confidence in the country's political and economic management (African Economic Digest, 13 July 1992).

Popular Conflict

Socio-economic conditions in most African countries reveal *sustained* deprivation and neglect. These circumstances induce collective informal entrepreneurship within community groups. The groups conduct self-help schemes, operate occupational collectives and undertake profitable commercial ventures. Others, however, run smuggling and black market syndicates which could be socially undesirable. The frustrations of popular conflict manifest themselves also in petty thefts, industrial sabotage, embezzlement, armed robbery, thuggery, tax evasion and other forms of criminal entrepreneurship (Chazan *et al.* 1988, p.199).

The policy of apartheid illustrates an extreme case of this type of conflict. Apartheid literally means that the black communities in South Africa were relatively deprived of basic human needs. Their response was to evolve a distinctive, informal sub-culture, an informal means of human expression and survival. For example, they introduced *shebeens* as underground focal points for recreation similar to the British public house and the American speakeasy, when the white regime prohibited the consumption of "European" alcohol (Nkosi, 1965, p.14; Sampson, 1956, p.703; Nakasa, 1975, p.57; Hart, 1991, p.77). Similarly *stokvels* or rotating savings and credit associations became an immensely popular means by which blacks acquired venture capital in a society where they were deprived access to formal sources of finance. The informal culture is so deep-seated that transforming informal, black entrepreneurship into formal types, is one of the major problems in South Africa's transition to a non-racial, economic democracy.

5. CONCLUSION

A curvilinear relationship between political instability and private entrepreneurship can be implied from the African experience. Entrepreneurs operating large manufacturing enterprises have been adversely affected particularly by high-intensity political instability such as wars. Prolonged interruptions to production, insecurity and uncertainty have squeezed many out of business. At the same time the trading business has become lucrative. Also, both high and low intensity PI have provided favourable sets of opportunity conditions for micro and informal entrepreneurship. The evidence suggests further that socially unproductive black-market activities are widespread, which means that private profits are considerable. In effect, African entrepreneurs have reacted rationally to a wide range of politically unstable situations.

Political instability has modified features of African entrepreneurship in various notable ways. Industrial entrepreneurs have reacted to the disastrous impact of instability on their sector by consulting more frequently with their governments than ever before to influence public policy. However, the interactions are not always cordial. Besides, two changes have accompanied the preponderance of informal business. First, a new breed of operators has joined the sector. This includes well-educated or highly-skilled public-sector workers who have lost their jobs, those seeking to supplement their incomes, and families displaced by conflict particularly the more vulnerable women and children. Moreover, the new breed are more sophisticated in their innovations such as substituting for imported inputs and creating new markets under chaotic political conditions.

The expansion of the informal sector indicates the capacity of the entrepreneurs for adjustment and survival. But the sector alone provides neither the panacea nor the basis for sustained economic development. African entrepreneurs have shown also that given growth-directed incentives from the mixed fortunes of political instability, they have the potential and dynamism to undertake productive economic activities on a wider scale. A successful policy to promote productive entrepreneurship will depend on government-business coalitions accomplished to protect the interests of both parties while seeking to maximize national welfare. Nonetheless, this scenario is improbable for practical reasons.

We have depicted the modern African government as a fragile, insecure institution constantly drawn into various types of institutional conflicts with its constituencies. Consequently, it is difficult to imagine that governments will engage their business sectors in mutually trustworthy coalitions. Coalitions are least likely in Tanzania, Ghana, Benin, Angola and Mozambique where evidence of African socialism or anti-entrepreneurship policy is common. In Zaire, Ivory Coast and Zambia where parasitic capitalism was practised by the political elites any coalitions are likely to be shaky. The most probable scenario could be found in Nigeria and Kenya where post-independence governments have consistently nurtured indigenous entrepreneurship (Iliffe 1983, pp.64-87). Ultimately, African governments will have to show transparency, openness, predictability and the rule of law to win the confidence of their entrepreneur class.

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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED SOCIAL RESEARCH

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SEVENTH FLOOR, SEMINAR ROOM 7003
AT 4PM ON THE **14 OCTOBER 1996**.

TITLE: The UN's Experience of Demobilization, Disarmament, and Reintegration in Southern Africa

BY: **CHRIS ALDEN**

NO: 411

THE ISSUE OF THE MILITARY:

THE UN'S EXPERIENCE OF DEMOBILIZATION, DISARMAMENT AND REINTEGRATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

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The Issue of the Military: The UN's Experience of Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration in Southern Africa

> "What about the people who were at the battlefront during the liberation of our country, and who are not educated? What are we going to do? Many of us are illiterate people who only know how to fight. Now we are being threatened by intellectuals who were lucky to be sent abroad by SWAPO to study for the benefit of the Namibian nation."[1]

In early 1995, Boutros Boutros Ghali released an amended version of his now famous Agenda for Peace. According to the Secretary General, the composition elements of the United Nations' peace support programme consisted of preventive diplomacy, peace making, peace enforcement, peacekeeping and peace building.[2] More than any other single element in Boutros Ghali's typology, the military stands at the crossroads of all points on this peace continuum: it is the trigger of conflict, it is primary instrument of violence, it is the enforcement arm of international law and it is the ultimate symbol of reconciliation. From technical issues of disarmament and demining to the human dimension of reconciliation and reintegration into society, the question of the military ranks as the most complex and volatile components of any peace support operation. Devising an approach which takes into account both the multi-faceted nature of demilitarization and its varied time frame is one of the pressing challenges for the international community in the wake of the onset of peace.

This article will analyse the United Nations' experience of demilitarization in Southern Africa with reference to the issues surrounding the transition from an emergency situation to a developmental context. The three UN peace support operations in Southern Africa, namely Namibia, Mozambique and Angola, will be examined to assess the international organisation's role in that process. In so doing, the article highlights a number of themes, including the importance of developing a regional approach to demilitarization; the imperative of cooperation both within the UN itself and with the international donor and NGO community as a whole; and the need to develop a greater understanding of the efficacy of "targeting" demilitarization programmes towards ex-combatants in light of the broader goals of demilitarization.

I. Between Emergency and Development: Theoretical Parameters of Demilitarisation and Peace Building

Demilitarisation of combatants, a process which encompasses the demobilisation and disarmament of troops and their reintegration into society,[3] holds as its premise that combatants are particularly dangerous elements to interject into the fluid post-conflict situation. Both the perpetrators and, as often, the objects of brutalizing violence, combatants have the capacity to disrupt the fragile peace settlement, either by returning to open hostilities with their opponents or resorting to armed banditry

in the aftermath of formal peace. Accordingly, it has become a kind of cardinal principle that these self-same volatile elements and circumstances can be offset through a targeted programme which builds on the structured demobilization and disarmament of combatants in conjunction with some form of monetary and educational incentives designed to facilitate their peaceful reintroduction to civilian life. This two phased approach to the question of demilitarization of combatants is composed of both the short term objectives of emergency assistance and the long term objectives of development. As such, it is well-ensconced within the emergency/development continuium as it is currently manifested in peacekeeping operations and subject to all of the complexities inherent in that process.

The demilitarization programmes instituted by the UN have, in the main, recognized the necessity of extending the scope of demilitarization beyond the short term objectives of demobilization and disarmament. In the lexicon of the UN, peace building represents the transitional point between the demobilisation of combatants and their full reintegration into society.

> Peacemaking and peace-keeping operations, to be truly successful, must come to include comprehensive efforts to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace...(T)he concept of peace-building as the construction of a new environment should be viewed as a counterpart of preventive diplomacy...[4]

Nevertheless, further conceptual clarity on the matter of emergency concerns and development imperatives, and their relationship to the objectives of demilitarisation, is needed if UN peace support operations are to act effectively in this area. In this same vein, it is therefore noted that the controversies which often attend project design and implementation in demilitarization are themselves a product of this disjuncture between the emergency and development ethos.[5] Indeed, it is the contention of one SRSG that this disjuncture is one of the major failings of UN Peace Support Operations.[6] More than a mere intellectual oversight, to be recognized and corrected, the gap between emergency and development ethos is rooted in and finds institutional expression in the differing UN agencies which make up peace support operations. Another element which further complicates the situation is the role of the international NGO community which itself is divided along the emergency and development fault line and, accordingly, acts with varying degrees of autonomy from the UN peace support operation. This has the Janus effect of, at times, contradicting the aims of the mission and, in other instances, ameliorating the oversights or failings of the UN.

II. The UN, Demilitarization and the Southern African Context

In the aftermath of colonialism and apartheid, intensified by the struggle to dislodge these elements through force of arms, Southern Africa is a landscape awash with the brutal legacies conflict. Super power intervention further contributed to the immolation of the physical, social and indeed, spiritual terrain of the region. And while the conflicts in Namibia, Angola and Mozambique were often disaggregated into discrete confrontations, the common denominator of apartheid South Africa, a regional hegemon anxious to reshape Southern Africa in its own image, and an extensive ideologically-based external intervention, belies cognitive approaches (and the attendant policy implications) which are predicated on the inviolability of the state system. Demilitarisation, as it has become abundantly clear in the wake of UN involvement in Southern Africa, is not a national problem but rather a regional one.

The three cases from Southern Africa -- Namibia, Angola and Mozambique -- provide concrete examples of UN involvement in demilitarization, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of its changing approach in the region. Most notably, the UN refined its demilitarisation programme to include both short and long term components as well as moving towards an integrated and comprehensive approach to the issue of the military. In each case study, the following areas will be examined: the demilitarization programme as conceived in the peace settlement; the demilitarization programme as organised by the UN peace support operation; and the record of implementation.

Namibia and UNTAG

Established in the wake of the signing of the New York Accords in December 1988, Namibia was the first post-Cold War mission of the UN, the largest peacekeeping operation since the ill-fated mission to the Congo and the most complex ever undertaken by the organisation. As such it posed a series of challenges to the UN's capacity to conduct a multi-dimensional operation that incorporated elements of traditional peacekeeping as well as novel components in such areas as police and elections monitoring. Its successful resolution, despite some serious incidents, gave considerable encouragement to the international community as to the efficacy of extending the UN role in peacekeeping world-wide.

A. The Peace Agreement and Demilitarization

The agreement formally ending the conflict in Namibian had in fact been drawn up in 1978 under the auspices of the UN's Western Contact Group. Security Council Resolution 435 (1978), which called for the withdrawal of South African military and administrative control over the territory and democratic elections, formed the basis for the cessation of hostilities and the transition to independence. Following the assent of all parties to the New York Accords, the Security Council passed resolution 629 (1989) which officially established the mission to Namibia. Accordingly, the UN was charged with the supervision

of the cease fire, monitoring of the conduct of the South West African Police (SWAPOL) police and observing the election campaign. The time table for the operation was to cover twelve months and contained the following steps:

* a cease fire was to be formally established on 1 April;

* the disbanding of the SWATF and SWAPO and the reduction of SADF, from a high of 32,000 to nil by 8 November 1989;

* elections were to be held 16 November 1989.

All of this was to take place in tandem with the Cuban withdrawal from Angola, overseen by UNAVEM I (see below).

Overseeing the implementation of the entire process would be a Special Representative of the Secretary General and a South African appointed Administrator-General. To fulfil the stated aims of SC Resolution 435, UNTAG would be structured to include a civilian component, a police component and a military component. The civilian component consisted of the Special Representative's Office, which was supported by 42 smaller political offices established across Namibia's ten regions, and would provide overall direction and coordination to the mission, as well as prepare the foundation for UNDP involvement after the mission; an Independent Jurist who would arbitrate on matters relevant to the peace process; the UNHCR, which was responsible for the repatriation of refugees in advance of the elections; an electoral division, which would oversee voter registration and monitor the elections in November 1989; and a logistics division. The police and military components are discussed below.

B. UNTAG and Demilitarization

In the Namibian case, the UN mission's involvement in demilitarization was conceived wholly in terms of short term objectives, that is to say, the demobilization and disarmament of combatants. No provisions for reintegration of former soldiers were introduced into the programme, nor were they the recipients of any targeted projects, assistance or funding beyond that provided in the course of their stay in the reception areas.

The first aspect of the United Nations Transitional Authority Government's (UNTAG) role in demilitarization centred around the supervision of the confinement and withdrawal of South African troops from the territory and the concomitant repatriation of South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO) guerrillas from their bases in southern Angola and Zambia. Linked to this was the monitoring of the cease fire between the former foes. To fulfil these objectives, UNTAG was to bring in a team of 200 military observers and 7,500 peacekeepers. Their task was to monitor the following:
With

* the restriction of the South African Defence Forces (SADF) to bases within Namibia by 1 April 1989 and their subsequent withdrawal from the territory, with the first reduction to 12,000 troops by 14 May 1989, 1,500 troops by 1 July 1989 and total withdrawal by 8 November 1989;

* monitor the dismantling of the SWATF, commando and ethnic units and their disarmament by 1 April 1989;

* monitor the disarmament and repatriation of SWAPO forces, including the confinement of selected forces to bases in Angola and Zambia[7];

* policing of official entry points into the country and reception areas for returnees.

The second aspect of UNTAG's role in demilitarization was the monitoring of the Namibian police and those elements of the SADF which had taken up civilian functions during the transition period. Complicating the situation further was the incorporation of the notorious counter-insurgency unit, Koevoet (Crowbar) into SWAPOL. With SWAPOL given the principal role in maintaining law and order during the transitional period, it would be the UN mission's 360 CIVPOL members job to ensure that it did not engage in acts of intimidation against the population during the run up to the election. The use of CIVPOL in fulfilling this task was one of UNTAG's innovations: no other mission had undertaken such a direct and extensive policing role.

C. Implementation

The implementation of the demilitarization programme was subject to the problems and constraints facing UNTAG. Despite having literally years to prepare for the mission, when it came time to implementing the objectives of SC Resolution 435 (1978), it was clear that little work had been done to realize the actual mechanics of the operation. In the first instance, delays in the passage of enabling legislation by both the Security Council, which only authorized the particulars of the operation on 16 February, and the General Assembly, which gave its approval two weeks later, cut an already narrow margin for deployment of UNTAG to the bare minimum. At the heart of these delays was a dispute over the mission's budget, which pitted SWAPO and African states anxious to see UNTAG maintain its full force strength in the event of a return to hostilities and the Security Council members, who believed that conditions had changed substantially in the territory to warrant a reduction in size and cost of the mission. Ultimately, the Security Council prevailed and UNTAG peacekeeping troops were decreased to 4,650 (while officially remaining at the original figure), reducing overall costs from US$700mn to US$446mn.

With regard to the actual mission, some problems emerged due to uncertainties as to UNTAG's chain of command. For instance,

while the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Martti Ahtisaari, was nominally head of the mission, given the specialized agencies institutional and financial independence from New York, initially there were difficulties in coordination. This was to impact upon the already problematic communication between New York and the field headquarters, as well as adversely effecting communication between the different components of the mission in Namibia.[8] Unwieldy procurement procedures, which obliged UNTAG to forgo purchasing material from nearby South Africa so as to maintain adherence to international sanctions, and insufficient logistical arrangements in the field, was a further obstacle.[9] Nevertheless, the overall picture of the mission was one of cooperation and successful coordination between the different elements of the mission.

The first and most dangerous crisis came in the early days of the UN mission with the unexpected infiltration of hundreds of SWAPO guerrillas from their bases over the border. As the SADF had been confined to bases, SWAPOL undertook to repel the incursion alone. SWAPO contended that the intention of the incursion was merely to move its forces into Namibia as part of the larger demobilization exercise while the South African officials declared it to be an outright violation of terms of the peace agreement. Though UNTAG had already been alerted to possibility of SWAPO incursions at least a month before it actually took place, it was clear that neither New York nor the field office in Windhoek had made provisions for this contingency.[10] Faced with a choice of unilateral action on the part of South Africa and the implications of such action, UNTAG agreed to allow the SADF to suspend its confinement and respond to the incursion by releasing six battalions. Over 200 SWAPO members were killed and, after a meeting of the Tripartite Commission[11], Sam Nujoma announced that SWAPO would return to its bases outside Lubango, in Angola, under UNTAG escort. By 13 May, the cease fire was back in place.

Another issue which clouded the demilitarization process was the incorporation of Koevoet into the police force which had, inexplicably, won UN approval in advance of the UNTAG mission. With a deserved reputation for human rights abuses, there were fears that intimidation of the electorate would be effectively sanctioned in the guise of policing. Complaints by CIVPOL, whose task it was to pair up with SWAPOL, as to both the conduct of Koevoet and that of the police in general provoked a crisis.[12] After much negotiation, Ahtisaari and Pienaar, the Administrator-General, worked out a compromise which saw Koevoet members leave the police and CIVPOL numbers increase substantially to 1,500. The last former Koevoet members left the police at the end of October 1989.[13]

Much of the formal disarmament and demobilization process was effectively run outside of the UNTAG framework with the UN playing the role of observer or monitor. In the case of SWAPO, disarmament took place in Angola and Zambia followed by registration of repatriated refugees, inclusive of former guerrillas, at selected Assembly Areas over a seven day period.

As noted above, the SWATF disbanded in advance of the UNTAG mission and, though its arms were stored on South African military bases, the UN had difficulty gaining access to these facilities to verify their contents.[14]

Despite continued reports of intimidation and covert South African assistance to an anti-SWAPO coalition, the elections went ahead on schedule. With nearly all of eligible Namibians voting, SWAPO was elected to power with 57% support to rival DTA's 28.5%, while the smaller parties picked up the rest of the votes.[15] The UNTAG mission, the UN's first significant post-Cold War peace support operation, was viewed as a success.

Angola and UNAVEM II

In the case of Angola, the UN peace support operation was reconstituted three times, in the first instance because its mission was extended and later due to the failure of the previous effort. The United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) I, running from 1989 to 1991, was the complement to the UNTAG mission in Namibia, monitoring the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. UNAVEM II, created in the wake of the successful implementation of both UNAVEM I and UNTAG, was a more ambitious mission that undertook both a monitoring and, in some instances, facilitating role in what was to have been Angola's transition from war to peace. UNAVEM II's failure, exacerbated by a host of mitigating circumstances, cast a shadow over the UN's ability to conduct multi-dimensional peace support operations.

A. The Peace Agreement and Demilitarization

The signing of the New York Accords in December 1988, which included provisions for the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola and South African forces from Namibia, was to see the first direct UN involvement in Angola. Responding to a request by the Angolan and Cuban governments, on 20 December 1988 the Security Council passed SC Resolution 626 (1988) establishing a United Nations mission to verify the withdrawal process in Angola. In this capacity, the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM I) oversaw the departure of 50,000 Cuban soldiers, a process which was scheduled to take 30 months. In order to complete its assignment, UNAVEM I was assigned a team totalling 70 military observers under the command of Brigadier General Pericles Ferreira Gomes, the Chief Military Observer. The first contingent of military observers arrived on 10 January 1991 and they began taking up positions across the country. Working from January 1989 to May 1991, the UN mission was able to complete the pullout of Cuban troops ahead of the established time table of July 1991.

Concurrently, peace talks were held under the auspices of the Portuguese government with the introduction of representation from the United States and the Soviet Union in the later stages of discussion. With the failure of the Angolan government's 1991 offensive against the Unita stronghold in the southeastern corner

of the country underscored the inability of either party to secure victory through force of arms. At the sixth round of the talks in early, the Angolan parties finally agreed to a comprehensive peace settlement which included a cease fire, demobilization and the country's first democratic elections.

The Acordos de Paz para Angola, or Bicesse Accords, were signed on 1 May 1991 in Portugal. They consisted of:

* a cease fire between the Government and Unita set to take effect on 31 May 1991 and to be administered by a Joint Commission staffed by both parties and monitored by the UN;

* the demobilization of Government and Unita troops and their integration into a unified national military, to be completed in advance of the elections;

* elections to be scheduled between September and November 1992 and monitored by the international community.

In a further agreement known as the "triple zero option", neither side was permitted to purchase new armaments and the international community (primarily in the form of the United States and the Soviet Union) was charged with ensuring that no transactions occurred.

In order to implement the peace agreement, the Bicesse Accords established a series of commissions to administer the introduction of its provisions. A Joint Political-Military Commission (CCPM), staffed by senior representatives from the Government and Unita, was created to manage the overall implementation of peace agreement. The representatives from Portugal, the United States, and Russia were given observer status on the commission while the UN was confined to the position of "invited guest". Linked to it was the Joint Commission for the Verification and Control of the Cease-fire (CMVF), set up to oversee the cease fire process. The Joint Commission on the Formation of the Angolan Armed Forces (CCFA) was the third institution created by the Bicesse Accord. In addition, a number of working groups charged with overseeing specific tasks, such as demobilization, de-mining, the police, and humanitarian assistance, were established under the auspices of the commissions.[16]

The success of the withdrawal process encouraged the two main Angolan adversaries, the Government and Unita to request further UN assistance in the fulfilment of their own bi-lateral peace process. Though the UN had acted as an observer to the negotiations at Bicesse, its role in the structuring of the peace process had been severely circumscribed by one of the parties to the final agreement. Unita had wanted a strong UN presence in the country with substantial powers while the Angolan government, anxious to uphold its sovereignty, sought to limit the UN role.[17] The end result was that the position of the UN in the process

would be, according to the plan, limited to monitoring and verifying a range of aspects of demilitarization of the conflict. These were:

* the end of hostile actions between the Government and Unita, including propaganda by 15 May 1991;

* the cantonment of all military forces to designated Assembly Areas by 1 August 1991;

* the demobilization of all military forces, including the collection and disposal of weapons;

* the creation of a new national army;

* and, the neutrality of the national police force, especially with regard to its fulfilment of provisions for human rights.

B. UNAVEM and Demilitarization

The demilitarization programme in Angola was essentially short term in emphasis, though there was some provisions made for long term components. The short term programme focused on the demobilisation and disarmament of combatants through a jointed supervised process which included a limited UN role as monitors. This heavily circumscribed role for the UN was one of the factors which contributed to both the collapse of the demilitarization programme and the popular perception of overall UNAVEM failure. As for the long term components of demilitarisation, provisional plans were made for targeted programmes that undertook training of ex-combatants, but these were neither integrated into a broad-based approach to reintegration nor (with the outbreak of fighting) were they allowed to operate.

UNAVEM's involvement in Angola's programme for demilitarisation centred on monitoring the cease fire, assuring the neutrality of the national police force, observing the process of demobilisation, and supporting the formation of a new national army. Marshalling its limited human and financial resources to this task, UNAVEM created teams of observers who were attached to counterpart teams of Government and Unita representatives established by the various commissions. Their role was to check if the Angolans were carrying out their work in a fair and unbiased fashion; there were no enforcement provisions as such provided for in the Bicesse Accords and certainly none directly available to UNAVEM. UNAVEM monitors were obliged to fan out across the six main regions of the country -- Luanda, Huambo, Lubango, Saurimo, Luena and Mavinga -- and take up positions in one of the eighty-two locations there.[18] From this vantage, UN officials were to carry out their mission to monitor the fulfilment of the peace agreement.

The verification of the cease fire was the responsibility of the (CMVF). To fulfil this mandate, the CMVF sent teams to each of

the fifty Assembly Areas and the thirty-two "critical points". While the Assembly Areas had, where possible, UNAVEM military observers attached to them, the designated "critical points", ports and other areas which could serve as conduits for lethal material, were permanently staffed by UNAVEM observers. In addition, UNAVEM developed a mobile reaction team to investigate violations in either those areas which it had no permanent presence or places outside of its established monitors.

Monitoring the conduct of the National Police was another responsibility of the CMVF. The incapacity of UNAVEM to carry out its mission was perhaps most vividly underscored in this area. With only 89 monitors on hand, it was immediately obvious that UNAVEM would not be in a position to fulfil its stated duties. In a belated and inadequate response to these difficulties, the strength of the UN police observer contingent was increased in May 1992 to 126 personnel.[19]

Demobilization was the responsibility of a working group formed by the CCPM. The programme for demobilization called for the cantonment of the Government's FAPLA and Unita's FALA forces at 50 designated Assembly Areas by 1 August 1992. Once in place, the majority of the estimated 120,000 FAPLA troops and 65,000 FALA troops would be disarmed and brought into civilian life. At the same time, an equal number of soldiers from both sides, numbering 50,000, would be assigned to the new army, the Forcas Armada, Angolanas (FAA). Training for those selected for service with the FAA would be the responsibility of Britain, France and Portugal, under the overall supervision of the CCPM. UNAVEM officials, operating in teams of two, were to be posted at each of the Assembly Areas where FAPLA and FALA were to gather. Notably, while some financial support targeting the demobilized soldier's integration into civilian life had been mooted amongst some elements of the international donor community, no concrete provisions for its dispersement had been developed at this late stage.

C. Implementation

The process established by UNAVEM for the investigation of allegedly cease fire violations proved to be inadequate. Compounding problems was the slow deployment of UNAVEM observers, caused both by delays in New York and difficulties created by the two parties, which meant that the verification of demobilisation and disarmament was not fully operational until 30 September 1991. All in all, there were sixteen incidents which, according the UNAVEM officials, in themselves could have resulted in a renewal of significant conflict.[20] Nonetheless, open hostilities were by and large suspended during the build up to the elections in late September 1992.

The neutrality of the national police force was a source of major dissent between the government and Unita. The creation of the Rapid Intervention Police, popularly known as the "Ninjas", invoked severe criticism from Unita officials as they were outside of the established demilitarisation programme. Trained

by the notorious Spanish Guarda Civil, the Rapid Intervention Police were composed of several military units drawn from the army and the security forces and numbered approximately 4,000.

The actual demobilization of Angolan soldiers was a dismal failure. Conditions in the Assembly Areas were appalling, lacking all the pre-requisites for such an operation such as proper shelter, food and water. Rioting Government soldiers, protesting the absence of basic necessities in the Assembly Areas and the overall slowness of the demobilization process, threatened to demobilize "spontaneously". The unwillingness of the Government to provide the requisite transportation and foodstuffs for the assembled troops proved to be a major stumbling block in the demobilization process. Efforts by UNAVEM military observers to develop an accurate count of the number of demobilized soldiers were hampered to the extreme by the shortage of UN personnel. Insufficient controls for monitoring the movement of troops, causing UNAVEM military observers to resort to weekly estimates of encamped troops, rendered UN monitoring irrelevant.

In contrast to FAPLA, Unita forces remained largely disciplined and under central control. However, the leadership proved to be generally unwilling to engage its troops in the demobilization process. Unita cited the lack of preparation on the part of the international community for the integration of its troops into civilian life as a reason for withholding from the process.[21] The difficulties of gaining access to Unita-controlled territory further impeded UNAVEM in its efforts to keep abreast of the situation in the field.

Despite these shortcomings, by May 1992 70 per cent of the 160,000 soldiers were in the Assembly Areas but of these, only 6,000 had actually been demobilized.[22] By June the figure had increased to 20,000, with 85% of Unita troops in place and 37% of Government forces in the Assembly Areas. By 7 October (a week after the election) UNAVEM officials claimed that 96,620 FAPLA troops had been demobilised.[23]

Accusations and counter accusations of violation of the demobilization process increased as the deadline for disarming Angolan troops neared. As noted above, Unita claimed that the Government converted several military units into paramilitary units and placed them under the control of the national police. At the same time, the Government reported that Unita was illegally holding 20,000 troops in reserve in Cuango Cubango province. A UNAVEM investigation team subsequently verified that several hundred unaccounted FALA troops were in fact in that area but, due to the lack of UN personnel, were unable to bring them into the demobilization process.[24]

Linked to the problems of demobilization were obstacles hampering the establishment of the new national military. These included lack of facilities (adequate or otherwise) for soldiers, apparently a result of both the illegal sale of government material by the military and the re-allocation of resources to

training and equipping the Rapid Intervention Police.[25] Despite the failure to move forward on establishing a new national army, in order to maintain the facade of adherence to the Bicesse Accords, the Government and Unita held an official ceremony on 27 September inaugurating the FAA.[26] As late as October, only two of the sixteen were rehabilitated for use and 8,800 soldiers had been integrated into the new national army.

Against this increasingly somber background, over 90% of the eligible Angolans voted in the election, with dos Santos winning 49.6% to Savimbi's 40% in the presidential race, while the MPLA secured 54% to Unita's 34% for seats in the legislature. Short of the requisite 50% for the presidency, the two leaders were obliged to conduct a run off election; this was never to happened. Savimbi, claiming fraud, remobilized his troops and began a military campaign to consolidate UNITA positions in early October. Within a few weeks, Luanda itself was gripped by fighting as the government launched a counter strike against Unita. Persistent efforts by UN officials to broker a cease fire between the two warring Angolan factions came to naught and, by the end of January 1993, the Secretary General observed that a state of civil war existed in Angola. The continued violations of truces forced the downsizing of UNAVEM II and with resignation of the Special Representative in May 1993.

Mozambique and ONUMOZ

The demilitarisation programme in Mozambique, in contrast to the Namibian and Angolan examples, adopted an approach which deliberately sought to link short term objectives with long term goals. Utilizing the international NGO community to a greater extent than in previous operations, and cognizant of the recent debacle in Angola, the UN mission to Mozambique (ONUMOZ) put together a coordinated effort which rivalled UNTAG in size but far exceeded it in breadth.

A. The Peace Agreement and Demilitarisation

The General Peace Agreement (GPA) signed by the Government of Mozambique and Renamo in October 1992 called specifically for UN participation in the areas of the monitoring of the cease fire, providing humanitarian assistance and monitoring of the elections. The SRSG, Aldo Ajello, in cooperation with the Western powers which had been party to the negotiations in Rome, convinced the Government and Renamo to formally establish the Supervising and Monitoring Commission (CSC) as the central authority overseeing the implementation of the GPA. The CSC's mandate included the settling of disputes between the parties, any question of interpretation of the GPA and a coordinating role for the subsidiary commissions to be established. The Cease Fire Commission, the Commission for the Reintegration of Demobilizing Military Personnel and the Joint Commission for the Formation of the Mozambican Defence Force were created to managed specific aspects of demilitarization.

The time table set by the parties to the GPA was as follows:

* the cease fire to commence 15 October 1993;

* demobilisation to be completed by 1 April 1993 and the subsequent formation of a new national army;

* and elections to be held in October 1993.[27]

B. ONUMOZ and Demilitarization

The demilitarization programme employed by ONUMOZ sought to integrate the international community's efforts in supporting short and long term demilitarization. Short term components included the monitoring of the cease fire and the supervision of the demobilization of combatants. Long term components focused on projects which targeted ex-combatants, including provisions for a two year subsidy, job referal and training programmes. Underlying the UN's demilitarization plan was the desire to separate the demobilization process from that of the electoral process.[28] And, in contrast to UNAVEM II, sufficient financial and human resources were made available to fulfil these ambitions.

Monitoring the withdrawal of foreign troops from Mozambique, a condition Renamo had insisted upon at Rome, was the first task of the UN demilitarization programme in Mozambique. It was decided to bring 7,500 UN peacekeeping troops into the country to monitor their departure and take up positions along the transport corridors. The Cease Fire Commission (CCF), composed of the Mozambican parties, representatives of the international community and members of ONUMOZ, worked to ensure that peace was maintained in the rest of the territory. The terms of the Commission were specific: it was to investigate allegations brought to it of violations of the cease fire agreement signed in Rome.

The demobilization of combatants formed the second part of ONUMOZ's involvement in demilitarization. A specialized unit attached to the mission planned and implemented demobilization. A team of four UN personnel were assigned to each of the 49 Assembly Areas where they were to oversee the process, including the registration of combatants, disarmament, the selection of soldiers for the new army and formal demobilization. Education, entertainment and general logistical arrangements were also their responsibility.

The last short term component of demilitarization was the creation of a new national army. It was initially envisaged that the new army would consist of 30,000 soldiers, equally divided between former Government and former Renamo troops and trained by the British, French and Portuguese.[29] The Joint Commission for the Formation of the Mozambican Defence Force was to be the point of intersection between the Mozambican parties and key members of the international donor community.

The long term component of demilitarization, namely the Information Referral Service (IRS) and the Reintegration Support Scheme (RSS), fell under the auspices of the United Nations Office for Humanitarian Assistance Coordination (UNOHAC). These latter measures were to be integrated into the actions taken by the Commission for Reintegration (CORE), the institution established by the Rome Agreement to direct the process of re-integrating soldiers and refugees into civilian life. The IRS was conceived as a mechanism for providing demobilized soldiers with access to information on the job market as well as basic information on aspects of the reintegration programme. Originally falling under the auspices of CORE (which proved to be ineffective), its eleven provincial offices were actually run by IOM.[30] Using a Trust Fund administered by the UNDP, the RSS was to provide demobilized soldiers with eighteen months of subsidies in the form of cash disbursements given at local branches of the Banco Popular de Desenvolvimento.[31] By providing a reasonable assurance of financial support for an extended period of time, it was hoped that the former combatants would find employment in their districts and, concurrently, integrate into the local community. To assist in this process, vocational kits consisting of agricultural tools, seeds, and food rations for up to three months were given to de-mobilized soldiers upon departure from the Assembly Areas. UNOHAC used a host of development and refugee support agencies to implement these programmes. For example, in the area of de-militarization, UNOHAC contracted out to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to organize transportation of demobilized soldiers while for long term assistance, UNOHAC turned to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) who, in partnership with the Ministry of Finance and IOM, put into play the RSS.

Finally, the monitoring of conduct of the election campaign was the responsibility of the UN's Civpol. Numbering 128 (later expanded to 1,114), Civpol was attached to Mozambican police units to assure that the electoral process was conducted in an atmosphere free of intimidation and, concurrently, that human rights of citizens were respected.

C. Implementation[32]

With a six month delay in bringing the mission up to full strength in Mozambique, a new time table had to be set which called for the concentration of troops in the Assembly Areas to begin in September 1993 with full de-mobilization completed in May 1994; the new army to be operational by September 1994; and the election to take place in October 1994.

The initial step in implementing the demilitarization programme was to bring in the UN peace keeping forces to monitor the withdrawal of Zimbabwean and Malawian troops. Despite delays that held up their introduction until August 1993, a total of 6,000 peacekeepers were finally put into place. Concurrent with the introduction of UN troops was the monitoring of the cease fire between the Government and Renamo by the CCF. As the majority of violations involved unauthorized troop movements

rather than shooting incidents, the task of monitoring was confined to assessing claims of position and territory.[33] In the interim, the GPA mandated separation of forces was abandoned as adherence to it would have delayed the peace process further.

The next phase of demilitarization, the demobilization of Government and Renamo troops, proved to be exceedingly problematic. In an especially ambiguous passage, the GPA had allowed for "dual administration" of territory controlled by the Government and Renamo (which was to be reconciled before the elections through a joint commission on territorial administration), thus giving way to conflicts over everything from internal movement to taxation. In addition, the clash over siting of Assembly Areas, which fell victim to strategic manoeuvring the Government and Renamo, was only brought to a close through a compromise brokered by the SRSG.[34] As a result it was not until November 1993 that twenty of the 49 Assembly Areas were officially opened to receive troops while the rest did not become operational until February 1994.[35] The slow pace of demobilization, a product of lengthy indecision and confrontation by the Mozambican parties, fuelled dissent amongst combatants housed within the Assembly Areas. Months of confinement in the monotony of the camps gave way to demonstrations and riots, targeting both local military and UN officials.[36]

With pressure to commence the demobilization from both the international donor community and the soldiers themselves, spurred in part by the approach of newly established deadlines for the mission, ONUMOZ decided that the first demobilizations should take place mid March 1994. The assembly phase was completed on 15 August, in spite of uneven cooperation from the Government and Renamo, with the final total of registered soldiers being over 86,000.[37] Nevertheless, approximately 5,000 Government troops and 2,000 Renamo troops remained outside of the official demobilization process.[38]

The establishment of the Forcas Armadas de Defensa de Mocambique (FADM) was another contentious aspect of the demilitarization programme. Training of trainers was slow to start, while joint command of the new army was only agreed upon in January 1994 and 80 officers were appointed in June to command the newly created infantry battalions. Delays in the supply of new equipment and the renovation of inadequate training facilities, coupled with the prolonged process of identifying new soldiers forced the compression of training into six weeks. Unhappiness over the prospect of being forced to continue in the military brought about strikes and desertions.[39] By election time in October 1994, less than 10,000 soldiers had completed their training and Mozambican officials were lowering the target size for the FADM to 15,000 at arms.

The long term component of demilitarization, introducing measures for the long term maintenance of the demobilized troops, was taken up by UNOHAC's IRS and its RSS. With the able assistance of IOM (which played the principal role in reintegration as CORE failed to materialize), the transportation of demobilized

soldiers and their dependents to their chosen destinations occurred with minimum problems. The subsidy scheme commenced without significant hitches while the IRS offices received numerous enquiries and assisted in job placement.

The elections of October 1994 were marred by one last crisis. The Renamo leader, Afonso Dhlakama, pulled his party out hours before the polling was to begin; however, concerted pressure on the part of the Western powers and the SADC leadership caused him to reverse his decision. The result was a turnout of over 85% and the election of the Government's candidate, Joaquim Chissano, to the presidency by a margin of 53% while Dhlakama received 33%. In the legislative elections, the Government party, Frelimo, won 129 seats to Renamo's 112, with the rest of the seats going to smaller parties. Declaring the mission a resounding success, ONUMOZ withdrew from Mozambique by late December.

III. The Future of Demilitarization and UN Peace Building

If the Southern African cases cited here are to serve as any guide, it is principally to suggest that the issue of the military and the UN's role in the demilitarization process deserves renewed consideration on a number of levels.

First, *demilitarization knows no boundaries*. To cite but a few examples, some of the demobilized soldiers from Koevoet were to re-appear as Unita soldiers after the collapse of the Angola peace agreement. In Mozambique, official disarmament proved to be hopelessly inadequate, with a further 22,000 arms unearthed from amongst 146 undeclared weapons caches, and many arms finding their way into neighbouring South Africa and Zimbabwe.[40] The successful transformation of the regional heritage of conflict, especially those issues of a military nature, requires an atmosphere of active and institutionalized cooperation between the states of Southern Africa. An approach which is predicated upon an understanding of economic assymetry and porous borders in the region would in all likelihood stand a better chance of minimizing post-conflict problems than one which treats each conflict as a discrete, state-based situation. To cite two examples, programmes which seek to coordinate the disarmament phase of demilitarization in one area with an increase in cross-border surveillance would, hopefully, act to stem the traffic in small arms; equally, it is reasonable to assume that economies of scale could be achieve in developing a regional approach to the costly task of demining. The preliminary structures emerging out of the SADC framework are a significant step towards providing a forum for devising regional strategies to the address post-conflict management issues.[41] In this regard, it is possible in future settings for the international community and in particular the UN system, through the initiation of a short and long term demilitarization programme integrated across state boundaries, to make a stronger commitment to the promotion of an enabling environment for tackling the post-conflict problems of demilitarization on a regional basis.

Second, *implementation of demilitarization programmes requires not only conceptual clarity as to the emergency/development continuum but ongoing coordination between the UN, the international donor and NGO community.* Clarity between emergency and development is, with a few exceptions, well understood in terms of actual conceptualization of demilitarisation programmes; this can be readily seen in the sophisticated approach to demilitarisation applied during the ONUMOZ mission. However, translating that into a coordinated approach that effectively pools the resources of the relevant UN and non-UN agencies as well as the host government and donors, is still proving to be problematic. In fact, while the three case studies cited here seem to present a picture of deepening cooperation and coordination both within the UN system and the NGO community, events in Angola indicate a disturbing trend away from that approach. UCAH, the local coordinating body established by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in Luanda, maintains its distance from UNAVEM III while the NGOs are at pains to ensure their independence of action from UCAH.[42] Enduring institutional biases which range from considerations of mandate to more prosaic matters keep the international community from acting effectively in collaborating together in demilitarisation. Furthermore, the perchance for UN and NGOs to introduce elements into demilitarisation programmes which can only be construed as self-serving (e.g., promoting the inclusion of a component into the demilitarization programme whose sole virtue is that it matches the institution's selected expertise), endangers what is already a volatile situation.

And third, *further analysis of the long term component of demilitarisation needs to be undertaken.* Studies by the World Bank and private consultancy firms do not as yet provide sufficient evidence to state unequivocally that the utilization of a targeted approach to reintegration is the most efficatious policy.[43] These preliminary findings, especially as they rely heavily on case studies whose reintegration programmes are very much in progress, should be treated with caution. The selection of target groups, which spill over into the post-conflict development process, can act to re-affirm the ex-combatants identity and give him a sense of entitlement and expectations that is beyond the means of the post-conflict state. At its most egregious, the Namibian government's belated formulation of Development Brigades, with their severe cost implications and attendant social problems, is a marked failure of targeting.[44] At the same time, it is readily understood that for many soldiers, resort to arms -- whether in the form of military service or banditry -- is the only real means of "employment" available to them. A programme which actively responds to the immediate financial and employment deficencies of former combatants while recognizing the longer term imperative of social integration would be ideal. An earlier version of Mozambique's Reintegration Support Scheme, which provided incremental financial assistance over a set time period and linked such support, effectively, to a fixed domicile, was one effort to couple targeting concerns with the promotion of integration into the local community.[45] Still, given the centrality of

demilitarisation to the peace process and its sustainability, it behooves the international community to develop a better understanding of this process.

With the future of multi-dimensional peace support operations of the kind cited in this paper in question, perhaps it is important to re-affirm a central point about the UN and demilitarisation. Succintly put, should UN peace support operations be involved in the long term component of demilitarization? The answer is a qualified yes. The overlap between short and long term components of demilitarisation, whether it is in the area of the linkage of the demobilisation process to reintegration measures or developing local capacity to manage long term reintegration projects, necessitates integrated planning at the earliest possible moment in the demilitarisation process. And, it is logical to assume that a coordinating authority such as the UN would serve as an integral part of that process. However, with its uneven record in Southern Africa and elsewhere, the logic of the centrality of UN involvement is less appealing. For demilitarisation to succeed against all odds, and the post-conflict state is rife with crippling problems, it needs a better UN than the one we have today.

ENDNOTES

1. Letter to the Editor, The Namibian 23 July 1990.

2. Boutros Boutros Ghali, Agenda for Peace 1995, New York: United Nations, 1995, pp.12-29.

3. See the World Bank, Demobilization and Reintegration of Military Personnel in Africa: The Evidence From Seven Country Case Studies, Africa Regional Studies Report No. IDP-130, Washington, DC: World Bank, 1993; Chris Alden, "Swords into Plowshares? The United Nations and Demilitarization in Mozambique," International Peacekeeping, Summer 1995, pp.175-176.

4. Boutros Ghali, op.cit., p. 61.

5. Undoubtedly the clearest expression of this overlap between the immediate concerns of peacekeeping and those of development can be found in the area of demining.

6. Interview with Aldo Ajello, 16 September 1994.

7. It should be noted that disarmament and confinement to bases was organized through UNAVEM I while repatriation was linked to the UNHCR's programme.

8. UNTAG: Description and Analysis of the Mission's Operational Arrangements 9 September 1991 (draft), pp.265-266.

9. Ibid., pp.263-268.

10. Private communication.

11. The Tripartite Commission was established by the Brazzaville Protocol of 1988 and included South Africa, Angola and Cuba, with the United States and the Soviet Union serving as observers.

12. UNTAG, op.cit., pp.208-209.

13. V. Fortna, "United Nations Transition Assistance Group in Namibia", in W. Durch, ed., The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping: Case Studies and Comparative Analysis, New York: St. Martins Press 1993, p.359.

14. Interview with Omar Halim, Deputy Chief of Staff, UNTAG, 16 March 1996.

15. AWEPA, Consolidation of Democracy in Namibia, AWEPA Electoral Observer Mission, December 1994, Amsterdam: African-European Institute, 1995, pp.7-9.

16. A. Vines, "Angola and Mozambique: The Aftermath of Conflict", Conflict Studies 280, RISCT, London, May/June 1995, p. 12.

17. M. Anstee, "Angola: the Forgotten Tragedy -- a Test Case for U.N. Peacekeeping," International Relations vol XI, No.6,

December 1993, p.497.

18. Fortna, op.cit., p.395.

19. "United Nations Angola Verification Mission II," United Nations Peace-Keeping Operations: Information Notes 1993 Update No. 2, New York: United Nations November, 1993, p.26.

20. T. Ohlson and S. Stedman, The New is Not Yet Born: Conflict Resolution in Southern Africa, Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1994, p.111.

21. Vines, op.cit., p.9.

22. Ibid., p.110.

23. "United Nations Angola Verification Mission II," United Nations Peace-Keeping Operations: Information Notes 1993 Update No. 2, New York: United Nations, November 1993, p.21.

24. World Bank, op.cit., p.41.

25. Vines, op.cit., p.10.

26. Human Rights Watch/Africa, Angola: Arms Trade and Violations of the Laws of War Since the 1992 Elections, New York: Human Rights Watch, 1994, p.13.

27. AWEPA, General Peace Agreement 1992, Amsterdam: African-European Institute, 1992, pp.34-36, 42-44, 48-50, 56-64.

28. Interview with Ton Pardoel, Chief Technical Unit Officer, 26 May 1994.

29. AWEPA, General Peace Agreement 1992 Amsterdam: AWEPA/African-European Institute, 1992, p.30.

30. IOM press release, Maputo, 24 May 1994.

31. Each Government and Renamo soldier received six months of their regular salary plus bonuses (with a minimum of 75,000 meticais) from the Government, with half of that given to them at the point of official demobilisation and half given to them in the district of resettlement. Upon completion of the Government subsidy programme, the a donor established provided a further eighteen months of support.

32. For a full account, see C. Alden, "Swords into Plowshares? The United Nations and Demilitarization in Mozambique" International Peacekeeping 2:2, Summer 1995.

33. AWEPA, Mozambique Peace Process Bulletin, August 1993, No. 5, p. 5.

34. J.P. Borges Coelho and A. Vines, "Pilot Study on Demobilization and Re-integration of Ex-Combatants in

Mozambique," Refugee Studies Programme, Oxford University 1995, pp.3-6.

35. An additional difficulty was the issue of the Government's para-military forces, something not adequately addressed in the GPA. Estimated to number 155,000, Government militias were scattered across the rural areas, often only nominally under the authority of district or provincial officials. It was only in January 1994 did they actually begin to disarm with two-thirds of their number demobilized by July. Interview with Colonel Pier Segala, Cease Fire Commission, 14 September 1994.

36. CCF, "Problems/Incidents in Assembly Areas and Other Areas," ONUMOZ, Maputo, September 1994.

37. Africa Confidential 23 September 1994, vol 35:19, pp.3-4.

38. Ibid., p.4; interviews with senior ONUMOZ officials.

39. AWEPA, Mozambique Peace Process Bulletin, July 1994, No. 10, p.5.

40. Africa Recovery, December 1994, p.14.

41. The Inter-State Defence and Security Committee, which grew out of a Front Line States initiative, is one example; the controversial Association of Southern African States (ASAS) is another. J. Cilliers, "Towards Collaborative and Co-operative Security in Southern Africa: The OAU and SADC," in J. Cilliers and M. Reichart, eds., About Turn: The Transformation of the South African Military and Intelligence, Halfway House, SA: Institute for Defence Policy, 1996, pp.208-216.

42. Interview with senior UCAH officials in Luanda, 12 August 1995; interview with NGO officials in Luanda, 12-14 August 1995.

43. See for example World Bank, op.cit.; R. Muscat, "Conflict and Reconstruction: Roles for the World Bank", policy paper, Washington, D.C., 21 November 1995; Creative Associates, "Other Countries Experiences in Demobilisation and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants", workshop proceedings and case study findings, Washington, D.C., March 1995.

44. O. Angula, "Development Brigades: New Deal to Train the Forgotten", Namibia: Development Briefing 2:10/11, April/May 1993, p.3; S. Shikangalah, "Development Brigades: The Namibian Experience", in J. Cilliers, ed., Dismissed: Demobilisation, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Africa, Halfway House: Institute for Defence Policy, 1996, pp.70-71.

45. This clause was changed in the final version, allowing ex-combatants to change the bank which administered their subsidy to accomodate those individuals who wished to move residence.