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AUTHOR: Jeremy Krikler

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**WILLIAM MACMILLAN
AND THE WORKING CLASS***

by

**Jeremy Krikler
(St. Antony's, Oxford University)**

My thanks to Colin Bundy for his criticisms of an earlier draft of this paper. Mona Macmillan provided important biographical data - not available in written sources of any kind - in stimulating discussions held whilst I was working on the Macmillan Papers, which are held in her house in Berkshire: her kindness and hospitality will not be forgotten.

William Macmillan's contribution to South African historiography is a formidable and complex one. His Cape Colour Question and Bantu, Boer and Briton demolished the historiography which preceded his own. Theal, the historian whose works dominated the study of history in early-twentieth century South Africa and against whom Macmillan took up the cudgels, has only an ideological interest for the contemporary student. In Theal's endless tomes, ideology is dressed up in uncited documents and the analysis presented reads as no more than a pedantic apologia and justification for colonial dispossession. It was Macmillan who launched the decisive scholarly attack upon the historiography dominated by Theal. The Cape Colour Question and Bantu, Boer and Briton were, in their time (the 1920s), forceful exposés of 'histories' which, through their unfettered ideological bias, distorted the historical record. The magnitude of Macmillan's achievement in this regard is best appreciated by surveying the historical literature that he was to consign to oblivion: judged by its scale, Macmillan appears a giant.¹

Macmillan, however, performed another pioneering role, one directly germane to the subject of this study. Moving beyond the archives, he conducted researches into the origins and character of poverty in South Africa in the 1910s and 20s. Study of the urban poor of Grahamstown, the rural dispossessed generally and active involvement in the Witwatersrand labour movement led him to produce a rich series of studies dealing with the conditions of working people and, at times, their struggles. It was most probably these writings, concerns and involvements which so "alarmed" many South African liberals of his own day and impelled one of their leading lights, Edgar Brookes, to complain that Macmillan and his followers spoke "the language of Johannesburg with the accent of Moscow".² This statement, of course, tells us more about Brookes than Macmillan for the latter, as will be revealed, displayed an abiding antipathy to the Bolshevik Revolution. But, clearly, Macmillan's interests and concerns were rather unique amongst his fellow-academics.

In fact, some of his comments have a surprisingly contemporary ring to them. Consider, for example, these lines:

The South African history which is really important is that which tells about the everyday life of the people, how they lived, what they thought, and what they worked at...what they produced and what and

where they marketed, and the whole of their social organisation. (3)

Written more than seventy years ago, this sentence reads like a manifesto for "people's history". The concerns it expresses guided some of Macmillan's researches: hence the fact that his writings have provided insights and data for recent works of South African social and economic history.⁴ Macmillan's contemporary relevance needs to be accounted for. This essay seeks to explain and characterise his concern with poverty in South Africa and his involvement in the labour movement there.

1. THE FORMATIVE YEARS

a. Stellenbosch, 1891-1903

Born in 1885, son of a minister-schoolteacher who emigrated to the Cape Colony, Macmillan arrived in South Africa early in his sixth year. His childhood and youth were marked by the financial insecurity of his family ("I was always well aware that the family pennies had to be counted..."): it was the sudden loss of work that led William's father, the Reverend John Macmillan "to prospect" for a source of income at the Cape. That source of income he ultimately found - as master of a College boarding-house in Stellenbosch - but it was not to prove secure. For the sleepy colonial society of Stellenbosch was to be swept by the political storms that arose in South Africa in the closing years of the nineteenth century: it was cleaved in two by the Jameson Raid in 1895 as its Dutch- and English-speaking wings coalesced around the causes of Boer independence and British imperialism respectively. The Afrikaner "ruling class in Stellenbosch" - as Macmillan was later to call it - very rapidly squeezed John Macmillan out of his position so that by the time William was 15 his family had "no fixed" "income". By 1900, then, his father's "financial situation" was already "very difficult" and it was never to be retrieved: "For the remaining years of his life he was increasingly short of funds." It was only a grant and scholarship which enabled the young William to pursue his studies in Europe and even whilst a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, he was already sending financial assistance home.⁵

Combined with the financial insecurity which the young Macmillan suffered was a certain cultural alienation. As a member of the small Scots community of Stellenbosch, fierce in its pride of the old country, he defined himself against the growing Afrikaner nationalism in the town and was "chafed" by its historical mythology - standard fare in the classroom: indeed, a comparison of the myths taught him at school in Stellenbosch with Macmillan's later historical work suggests that he may have been drawn to demythologizing certain aspects of the South African past precisely because of the character of the early teaching he received.⁶ The sharp divisions that characterised colonial society at the Cape on the questions that were ultimately to be fought out in the Boer War manifested themselves even amongst school students: for "four years after the Jameson Raid", Macmillan was later to recall, "I became one of a small minority at loggerheads with the great majority of my schoolfellows." Macmillan himself considered this decisive for his future development, believing "those years" to "have largely determined the course of my further story. Had things been otherwise, I might have been absorbed into Cape life as a loyal colonial."⁷

Two final facets of Macmillan's Stellenbosch years need to be noted: his relationship to its predominantly 'Coloured' working class and the importance of Christianity in his early formation. As the early chapters of his autobiography reveal, Macmillan inclined towards the British-inspired political tradition of the Cape, with its qualified but formally non-racial franchise. This inclination appears to have been partly the upshot of the place of his minority Scots community in Stellenbosch's colonial society as the British Empire and the Boer Republics moved ever-closer to open conflict after the Jameson Raid: Macmillan, quite obviously, was a member of a community which owed allegiance to the British Empire and which was likely to champion the Cape 'liberal' tradition against the more racist political philosophy of the Boer Republics. He is likely, however, to have imbibed the Cape tradition from a second source, one far more intimate than that alluded to above: his parents. The Reverend John Macmillan, whose great influence upon him William was later to acknowledge, had once been a missionary in India and would doubtless have inclined to the paternalistic Cape tradition in whose forging missionaries (including the great Scottish missionary, John Philip) played an important role. In-

spired by the Christianity of his father - of whose ministerial station William was intensely proud and which he "stroved to live up to" - the young Macmillan came to believe that "religious instruction" ought to be undogmatic and "adapting itself" to the times in which it was situated: the step from such beliefs to a 'socially relevant' religious practice was obviously not a great one. And it was a step Macmillan was later to take.⁸

Macmillan's early life, then, appears to have immunised him against the virulent forms of racism against people of colour that were characteristic of so many white South Africans of his day. His upbringing was, of course, still thoroughly colonial. He may later have drawn attention to the fact that the 'Coloureds' of Stellenbosch - the "great working class section of the community" - were not subjected to the residential segregation of later years and that some of their number attended school with him. But he was also to recall that "small boys", such as he was at the time, "were of course not encouraged to visit their homes." Nevertheless the young William's comparatively benign attitude to people of colour is manifest; and it must have been strongly reinforced by the fact that Stellenbosch's "Coloured population was", as Macmillan was later to put it, "enthusiastically on our side" in the growing confrontation between Boer and Briton - a confrontation in which Macmillan was to lose an elder brother, killed in action whilst serving with the British.⁹

b. Europe, 1903-1910

The financial difficulties of his family and his peculiar brand of Christianity were to prove important for Macmillan's political and intellectual development in Europe. He took up his Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford University at the age of 18. If the particularities of his situation in Stellenbosch alienated him from the majority of his school-fellows, neither did it admit his assimilation to the dominating social stratum of the undergraduate world which he now entered. (Financial pressures dogged him in Europe; not only was he to send financial assistance home whilst an undergraduate, but his father insisted that he stretch the funds of his Scholarship, designed for three years, to cover a fourth.) The "vast majority" of his fellow-students had come to Oxford from "English public

school(s)" and his social discomfort with them was keenly-felt and well-remembered. His College, Merton, was run by "bloods" (those with an aristocratic lineage) "and those with money enough to act as bloods." They lived "high" and "fast" and "ignored us humbler people." Not surprisingly, Macmillan was "relieved to have" his "first year in digs rather than in college".¹⁰

In such circumstances, Macmillan's Christianity became something of a social refuge: as he was later to admit, in his first year at Oxford he was rather isolated from his College and "mostly out of things"; consequently, he was drawn to Mansfield Chapel, finding it "congenial" and the high calibre of sermons delivered there stimulating. Macmillan's Christianity, however, was one cut off from the Oxford Establishment (he was of the "Scotch Church" and was regularly attending its services by the time he left Stellenbosch). For he and his co-religionists in Oxford - where the power of the Church of England was almost "overpowering" - Mansfield College (with its Chapel) "provided an important link and focal point", offering the "Scotch undergraduates" "weekly services conducted by the most eminent Scotch churchmen of the day." The circles Macmillan now "came to move in were well aware of the social questions in England - slum conditions and unemployment and the seamy side of English life". He and his friends were very soon in "search of a practical application of Christian principles".¹¹ The "social questions" to which Macmillan alluded appear ultimately to have become this field of application. Whilst Macmillan's early life provides clear evidence of why he, in particular, found his way to the socially-concerned Christian circles of Oxford, it does not explain how or why those circles found their way to the "social questions" which agitated them. A brief excursus on the historical development of late-Victorian and Edwardian England is necessary to account for this and, indeed, to describe the forces which were to be decisive - at least in part - in shaping Macmillan's attitude to working people.

The last decades of the nineteenth century were momentous ones for the working class. "The protracted hiatus in the development of the [English] labour movement between the 1840s and the 1880s" had at last come to a close. This hiatus, in the decades following the decline of Chartism, is partly to be explained "by the length and hesitancy of the transition between workshop and factory as modal

types of industrial organisation in England." These were the years during which the working class was recomposed, its structures altered "at every level, as the figure of the collective labourer in an integrated work process was generalized."¹² The foisting of the factory-system upon the labouring population was of cardinal importance for three reasons: first, it made for the real as opposed to the merely formal, subsumption of labour under capital¹³; second - as noted above - it helped to plunge the working class into a period of radical social and political dislocation; and third, by breaking up crafts and concentrating immense numbers of un- and semi-skilled workers into single production units, it laid the basis for unprecedented gains in trade union membership and organisation. Macmillan arrived in England at a time when the dislocation alluded to above had ended and when the gains for trade unions were very much in evidence: in the years immediately following the great London Dock Strike of 1888, the number of unionised workers leaped to one and a half million; by 1900, this figure stood at more than two millions and, by 1914, it was four millions.¹⁴

The growing industrial strength of the working class was augmented by its burgeoning electoral power: reforms in the franchise in 1867 and 1884-5 made working people (or, more precisely, working men) a constituency which could no longer be ignored. It was a constituency, however, rooted in a class which had ceased to be revolutionary - hence the willingness of "the rulers of Britain", as Eric Hobsbawm has argued, to accommodate (partially) the "mass agitations of the poor" by periodically widening the franchise: these rulers resisted a significant extension of the vote during Chartism's heyday precisely because at that time they "believed" "democracy" "to imply social revolution".¹⁵ The decline of a revolutionary class consciousness amongst English workers which followed the defeat of Chartism has been noted by conservative, radical and Marxist historians alike.¹⁶ The broad mass of working people, chastened by the "mass mobilization of force against Chartism" and demoralized by the failures of what Lenin called "the revolutionary epoch of English labour", moved rapidly to support reformist and evolutionary methods for the improvement of their lives.¹⁷ Their movement in this direction was facilitated by the significant liberalization of the British state which occurred in the mid-nineteenth century - a liberalization which was itself a response to the revolutionary pressures of the 1830s and 1840s.¹⁸ These are the underlying historical reasons for a fact which is of particular significance for

this study: the industrial and political power of the working class which was to exercise a gravitational pull upon intellectuals like Macmillan - was a power for reform.

Another crucial development in late-nineteenth century Britain was the dissolution of laizzes faire economics and the political ideology associated with it. The three most potent dissolvents of these were the onset of the "Great Depression" after 1873, the rise of three new great industrial competitors of Britain (Japan, Germany and the USA), and the increasing power of the trade unions themselves: the latter's intervention in the market - to raise the price of labour-power through the collective action of its owners - was a fait accompli by the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁹

The dissolution of the hitherto-dominant economic orthodoxy combined with the new mass struggles for better working and living conditions (centred on the efforts of an increasingly-powerful reformist trade unionism) to draw many middle-class intellectuals into a typically late-Victorian and Edwardian project: the 'scientific' study of 'the poor' in the belief that the findings of such study could provide the basis for enlightened interventions by the state. The ideology attendant upon such a project became particularly deep-rooted because it could be implanted in a new social stratum then emerging in Britain. For, as Hobsbawm has pointed out, it was only in the thirty years before 1914 that there emerged "en masse" in Britain that "nouvelle couche sociale" composed of: the "educated senior administrator or bureaucrat, the technologically or scientifically trained manager or businessman...the office-worker, (the teacher in)...a national system of primary, secondary and higher education." The growing importance of the "nouvelle couche sociale" is manifest: between 1881 and 1911, the number of males employed in public administration rose from 100 000 to 300 000, whilst the number employed in the professions and their subordinate services increased by two-thirds in the same period. This new stratum initially found it difficult "to find a firm place in the middle and upper-class structure of late Victorian Britain" and was therefore drawn to what Hobsbawm (perhaps mis-)designates ~~the~~ "middle-class socialism".²⁰

It was a combination, then, of the factors mentioned above which gave rise to the political and intellectual milieu which was to

Be decisive for Macmillan: this was the milieu of Booth and Rowntree's classic studies of poverty in London and York, of the Fabians (the self-proclaimed "intellectual proletariat"), of Toynbee Hall - the pioneer social settlement in East London where people from the universities could live with the poor, study their conditions and attempt to improve the latter's lives and education. The political boundaries of this milieu were clearly demarcated: a belief in the necessity for social change was to be inculcated in the powers that were through the collection and presentation of data which revealed the extent of poverty and the gains in 'efficiency' that would be achieved through the expansion of the state's powers; the existing institutions of society - and the modified versions of them produced by their subsequent evolution - were to be the agents of such change; and, finally, such change as was effected was to be incremental and gradual in nature - i.e. evolutionary rather than revolutionary.²¹

The boundaries of this political culture were to prove the barrier-limits of Macmillan's prescriptions for ending poverty in South Africa. Here, however, we need only note that it permeated Oxford University and the circles Macmillan came to move in. This permeation, however, was a recent phenomenon: in the late-1860s, the University had been reactionary enough to drive Thorold Rogers (later to be a pioneer of "people's history") from his professorship for the militancy of his anti-Tory opinions.²² But the University could not entirely isolate itself from the historical developments in late-nineteenth century England to which we have alluded above. In 1899, for example, Ruskin College was established with the express purpose of providing places at Oxford for working-class students: the College, of course, was the progeny of the reformist political and intellectual culture described above - a fact which was made patently clear in 1906 by the revolt of its students who characterised its teaching as "a disguised propaganda in favour of the capitalist system."²³

Macmillan, however, was soon to be steeped in this culture. Toynbee Hall - that curious admixture of Christian charity (it had been founded by Canon Samuel Barnett in 1884) and Fabian study and activism - had a marked influence upon the socially-concerned Christian undergraduates at Oxford. "I constantly heard of Toynbee Hall", recalled Macmillan of his time at Oxford, "and other such attempts to study and help" the poor: and at the very end of his

life, he was still struck by its activities in Oxford: "in my first summer term, on Whit Monday, the sponsors of Toynbee Hall and other such settlements brought up large parties of East-enders to disport themselves on or by the river." Still more decisive for Macmillan's intellectual development was that part of his undergraduate curriculum whose existence can be traced directly to the milieu described: that course of lectures, by A.L. Smith, which dealt with "'political and social questions'" and which "became", Macmillan later wrote, "part of my own history". These lectures included analyses of such matters as "population, poor law, federations, and notably the historical development of the socialist movement." Smith's teaching was considered by the future historian to be crucial to his intellectual formation.²⁴

As important as the influences above in propelling Macmillan's inclinations and sympathies in the direction they were ultimately to go, however, was his direct experience of the social distress of Edwardian England and Scotland. His enforced frugality did not permit much of the continental travelling undertaken by the Rhodes Scholars of his day: when the College closed for vacations he was forced, for six months of the year, into what he dubbed his "double life": penny-watching vacations during which he cycled across England. It was through these trips that he "became aware of the great varieties of English social life, and...the tremendous divisions that existed. My interest in social conditions was enormously stimulated," he was later to remark, "and this I suppose was an unconscious preparation for the social studies which...became my life's work."²⁵

Macmillan, however, did not merely witness this social distress as would a sensitive student observing the suffering of people external to him, as it were; it was made immediate to him through the social dislocation and economic need suffered by a broader community to which his own kith and kin belonged: the Scottish crofters. For his uncle, Duncan Macmillan, was one of these, a tenant farmer upon the Balmacaan Estate of Glen Urquhard in the Highlands of Scotland. In his undergraduate years, Macmillan visited his crofter cousins and was so moved by the plight of the Scottish peasantry in general - and, we may be sure, by that of his family in particular: they had been evicted from their ancestral plot and placed on inferior ground - that he felt constrained to publicise their plight.²⁶ This

he did in a paper delivered to the Broderick Club at Oxford University in March 1906. This short study, memorable for its strong sense of social injustice buttressed by statistical evidence, is an impressive analysis (by an early-twentieth century Oxford undergraduate) of the socio-economic vice which fastened upon the tenant farmers of the Scottish Highlands from the early-nineteenth century onwards. Quite obviously a landmark in Macmillan's intellectual development, his paper - entitled "Highland Deer Forest" - merits summary here:

"Crofter evictions began early last century when the Napoleonic wars created a mania for sheep-farming...." This "mania" largely subsided after the American Civil War when "this industry" began "finally" to decline, at which point "impoverished Highland landlords" began to convert "a large &...increasing area of the Scottish Highlands into a playground for English plutocrats & American millionaires...". That is to say, since 1872, a great swathe of territory had been converted into deer forests and "the total acreage 'under deer'" had risen from 1 and 3/4 millions to 3 m's in 1904." This had brought catastrophe to the crofters whose customary rights to the glen were liquidated: "not only is trespassing prosecuted with the severest rigour of the law but the crofters on these estates are forbidden to take lodgers; or if lodgers should inadvertently trespass on the sacrosanct forests the offence is visited on the head of the unfortunate native, his host." A "disastrous change" had thus been wrought in the lives of so many "by the extinction or expulsion of the crofters and the conversion of the scanty remnant...into a population of menials." No doubt, the landlords had benefitted from the conversion of crofter land into hunting ground "but the point is that forests are detrimental to the happiness of the greatest number as even their predecessors the large sheep farms were which benefitted a few big men...while crofters are left to starve on the moorland or to eke out a precarious existence by the sea." Macmillan also referred to the chronic landlessness amongst crofters in the Hebrides, the extreme subdivision of landholdings there and the reduction of so many to 'squatting' in that region. In the Highlands of Scotland, Macmillan concluded, "the evils of landlordism have put the people 'agin the landlords' at any price & made the most truly conservative people imaginable into the most ardent Radicals....So we may well say with the suffering Gael... - 'bas gha na feidh' - Death to the Deer!"(27)

Macmillan could not have penned these lines - with phrases such as "a playground for...plutocrats &...millionaires" or "the evils of landlordism" - had he not felt the crofters' plight so intensely

and personally. And the essay, however immature it appears within the larger corpus of Macmillan's writings, reveals something of his quintessence as an intellectual. Beginning with a discussion of the values to be drawn from the analysis (in this case: that when "the sacred rights of property" are "opposed to the best interests of the country", they have but "the slightest claim to continued recognition"²⁸), the "Highland Deer Forest" goes on to provide an historical analysis of the origins of the contemporary crisis (using government commission reports as source-material) and actually advances proposals for its resolution. Indeed in structure the essay is not dissimilar to Macmillan's great study of the origins of South African rural poverty which was published more than a decade later²⁹. This youthful and impassioned essay - with its weaving together of scholarship and social sensitivity, analysis and activism, documentary and field research³⁰, past and present - foreshadows so many of the mature Macmillan's studies - as to convince one that his historical preoccupations and methods of analysis, at least those of his South African years, were being definitively set during this time.³¹

Taking up his divinity studies in Aberdeen in 1906, he was already firmly "Liberal" in his opinions.³² Such a description of his views may appear misleading. In fact, it is perfectly consistent with the milieu described earlier. It needs to be remembered that during the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Liberal Party was the political focus, not only of a great many social reformers but of most politically-conscious workers as well; in the early-twentieth century, many who supported the party would later vote Labour.³³ By the end of his first winter in Aberdeen, following his own "bent", Macmillan read to "the theological society" an original composition which he was later to describe as "more a Fabian tract on current affairs than a treatise on theology." Studies at the König Wilhelm University of Berlin in 1910 lent intellectual rigour to his values and perspectives. But these were firmly held by this time. Shortly before he commenced his studies in Berlin, he was dismissed from his post at the Welsh public school at which he taught. In the school magazine, his students jested at his (Scottish) rendering of "the ir-ron law of wages" - a cryptic pointer to the fact that he had based his teaching of the sixth form on the lectures he had himself received from A.L. Smith. He was dismissed from his post for political reasons.³⁴

At the end of his life, Macmillan described his "short summer semester in Berlin" as "probably" having "had more influence" on his "later career than anything" he "learnt elsewhere". Formally enrolling for a thesis on poor-relief, drawn to the social historians and "directed" to the famous economist Gustav Schmoller whose lectures he "never missed", Macmillan's time in Berlin sharpened his skills as an analyst of poverty. When he returned to Britain at the end of it, he was persuaded by an aunt (and aided financially by her) to complete his divinity studies, which he decided to do in Glasgow rather than in Aberdeen. It was in Glasgow that he "discovered...an 'East-end' university settlement along the lines I knew in London": Joining the settlement, Macmillan lived "on the very edge of the Cowcaddens" - a "notorious" slum area of Glasgow. The view from his window was of "chimney-pots and all-pervasive smoke such as the sun could never really penetrate." His duties for the settlement took him into streets "where the police only went in pairs". And in "great tenements" he "often found people crowded together so that they used the bed in relays - a night shift followed by a day shift." Recalling the scenes more than half-a-century later, Macmillan wrote that he had "never forgotten the experience".³⁵

Would Glasgow, with its slums, its large industrial working class, its political radicalism (it was the centre of the Socialist Labour Party), its militant workers of the Clyde - would this Glasgow have shifted Macmillan still further to the left, beyond his 'social Christianity' and the Fabianism which he appears, perhaps only half-consciously, to have embraced? It is a question which should be posed, if only to stress that the (majority) reformist tradition of the British labour movement, which so influenced Macmillan and other intellectuals of his day, was counterposed to a minority (at times, revolutionary) tradition - a tradition whose influence produced a radically different type of intellectual. But this remains a hypothetical question. For in 1910, "before" he "had got into anything like" his "stride in Glasgow" - he had only been there a few months - he "received a telegram" which "curtly" instructed him to report to Grahamstown in South Africa. A little while before, Macmillan had "unhopefully" applied for a job in the newly-created Department of History and Economics at the university in the town. His application had been successful. At an annual salary of £340, he "was to be lecturer in charge of the new dual Department."³⁶

ii. THE SOUTH AFRICAN YEARS

a. Grahamstown and the Urban Poor, 1911-1916

When he took up his post in Grahamstown in 1911, Macmillan's formative years were at an end. He was still to be subjected to the impact of events, some of them momentous, yet to unfold. But his responses to them appear to have been set by this time. A belief in the power of ideas buttressed by convincing evidence, in the need to achieve change through the reforming of existing institutions and policies, a distrust of revolutionary theory and method, a firm adherence to a socially-concerned Christianity - these were the guiding ideas of Macmillan during his South African years. They bore the lineaments of the political and intellectual tradition which nurtured him during that formative decade in Europe spent as student, journalist and teacher in England, Scotland, Wales and Germany. It is that tradition, and the influence it had upon him, which accounts for so many of his activities on his return to South Africa as his first two publications suggest - Sanitary Reform for Grahamstown and A Study of Economic Conditions in a Non-Industrial South African Town, both published in Grahamstown in 1915.

The second of these pamphlets seemed to crystallize his entire political and intellectual development in Europe. Based upon a first-hand knowledge of the conditions of the town's white poor acquired through personal investigation, the pamphlet is imbued with his social Christianity with quotations from the chapters of Romans, Bishop Gore ("the first charge on...industry must be the life and welfare of its workers") and the prophet Jeremiah.³⁷ In calculating "the poverty line", he drew upon Rowntree's study of York and some of what he had learned in Germany³⁸: indeed, his analysis is informed and powerfully strengthened by a sophisticated statistical methodology. And the effects of Macmillan's experience of Scottish slums are manifest too, as is evidenced by his reference to "the Cowcaddens of Glasgow".³⁹

A Study of Economic Conditions in a Non-Industrial South African Town provided a concentrated economic profile of Grahamstown and presented a programme for the relief of its poverty. At the national level, it proposed the creation of a Ministry of Labour to see to "labour problems" and it stressed the necessity for "far greater

public vigilance and supervision in questions of Public Health" as well as "more vigorous and intelligent control and direction of National Education." Charity, warned Macmillan, would be entirely inadequate to the task of liquidating poverty: "a serious national policy of Prevention" was needed.⁴⁰ At the local level, he stressed the role that the municipal council could play: improved sanitation and abattoirs were urgent requirements and he recommended them to the local town council; he suggested the creation of "a central committee to co-ordinate the work" of the various voluntary agencies then providing assistance to the poor; the formation of "a Labour Bureau or Exchange" was another of Macmillan's proposals - this, he argued, would aid the unemployed to find work and employers to procure workers; more "thorough training in skilled trades" and "more guidance on the destiny of growing youths" as well as better education were also required if they were to be saved "from the blind alley and the pit." Finally, Macmillan urged the necessity for workers to combine into unions to improve their wages and conditions. And he gave particular advice to women workers: for too long they had "acquiesced" to "the scandalous sweating" of their labour "owing to the...pernicious pocket money theory"; now it was necessary for them "to organise, to investigate, to lay the facts bare." Macmillan's suggestions in this regard, however, should not be taken to be the fruit of a belief in the need for workers to combine to strengthen their position in the class struggle intrinsic to their existence. Conceptions of class struggle were alien to him, even as they were to the Fabians in the metropole, and nowhere in his writings or politics were they to find a place.⁴¹

In many ways, then, Economic Conditions in a Non-Industrial South African Town was a classically Fabian tract: the presentation of data as a spur to social action, the recommendation of reforms, the emphasis on the role of local government (the municipalities were a favourite Fabian focus and Macmillan was to return to them in a subsequent pamphlet^{41a} - all bear testimony to this. Little wonder that one of Fabianism's founding-fathers, Sydney Webb, saw fit to give Macmillan's study of the white poor of Grahamstown "a short notice in the New Statesman, referring to it as being "on Booth, Rowntree, Bewley lines".⁴²

There was, however, another - more disturbing - aspect of Fabianism whose marks Macmillan's study bore. The Fabians' political horizons were always bounded by the status quo: it was the existing struc-

ture of society whose modification it sought and its propoganda was always directed at the ruling class: conversion not compulsion was its method. And Macmillan's essay constituted no break from this aspect of Fabianism. Tied to the status quo, he argued his case in the idiom - one might say with the prejudices - of his audience. His paper, for example, was overwhelmingly concerned with the white poor - in a colonial society, this was the only section of the poor deemed to have the right to remedial measures. Moreover Macmillan's pamphlet had its compliment of phrases such as "depressing our own race, making a healthy white South Africa impossible" or "our white civilization"⁴³ - in short the idiomatic stock-in-trade of a prejudiced colonial society. Indeed, his advice to the white working class sat nicely with their prejudices: the cheap, unskilled black workers, argued Macmillan, through their competition in the labour market, tended "to degrade whites down to and below their level"; this, he suggested, was "the solid basis of the native menace". To counter it, there was "need for organisation and co-operation by the [white working] men themselves and by the public."⁴⁴

To combat white poverty, then, Macmillan was, in effect, proposing that white workers and "the public" (by which presumably he meant the white middle class) combine against the black working class. Politically dangerous, the argument was also intellectually weak. If, as Macmillan argued, much white poverty was caused by the depressing effect upon wages and conditions exercised by the presence of still more exploited workers below the whites, then the conclusion, logically, had to be different from the one drawn by Macmillan. Put simply, the elevation of the wages and conditions of the most exploited, i.e. the black, workers would end the 'undercutting effect' alluded to by Macmillan; there could be no "native menace" where all workers worked under the same conditions and fought for their betterment together. The political and industrial answer was a combination of white and black workers against their exploiters not, as Macmillan suggested, a combination of the white working and middle classes against the black worker. The latter simply strengthened the antagonism between the white worker and the 'cheap' unskilled black; it did not attack what Macmillan saw to be a major problem - the depressing effect on the working class generally of the presence of a large body of 'cheap' labour.

Given the manifestly Fabian inspiration of Macmillan's Grahamstown studies, it is perhaps not surprising that it was during the years

he was stationed there that he first made formal contact with the Fabians. Early in 1916, Macmillan journeyed to England and there made "contact with Beatrice and Sidney Webb", experiencing at least once their "famous Sunday afternoon tea in Grosvenor Terrace". Sidney, in fact, encouraged Macmillan's efforts in Grahamstown and even attempted to find funds for him. Once established, Macmillan's links with the Fabians proved important: his private papers reveal that he maintained fairly close contact with them during his South African years and, during the 1920s, he "never failed to make a date with Sidney Webb when" visiting London; ultimately he was to lecture in the Fabian Lecture series.⁴⁵

On his return from England in 1916, Macmillan must have been fairly satisfied with the fruits of his labours on behalf of the poorest section of the white working class of Grahamstown. His article on sanitary reform had "succeeded at least in getting the Town Council to set enquiries on foot". One of his suggestions in his pamphlet on poverty in Grahamstown - the establishment of a Labour Bureau - appears to have been taken up. His efforts and investigations may also have been one of the spurs to the creation of the Grahamstown Social Welfare League in 1915, an association to which he became secretary in the following year.⁴⁶ At the end of 1916, Macmillan presented a report to the Grahamstown League which was to be published under the title Poverty and Post-War Problems. Seeking to locate Grahamstown's social problems in a national context, and paying particular attention to the difficulties returning soldiers might face, this pamphlet stressed the need for, *inter alia*: state aid for soldiers' families "for some months after the end of the war", a comprehensive public works programme, a fuller development of South Africa's resources through the building-up of its economic infrastructure and a more efficient system of taxation. Stressing the need for "heavier" taxes, Macmillan provided something of a moral critique of the life-styles of the wealthy: "We must learn that to meet the unparalleled scarcity, an undue private extravagance is wrong, and in the presence of squalid poverty a positive danger."⁴⁷

Poverty and Post-War Problems was to be the last publication of Macmillan's years in Grahamstown. In 1917, he was to move to Johannesburg to take up the Chair of History at the university there. From this point onwards his imagination was captured by the problems and politics of the two basic segments of the South African

working class: the rural dispossessed and the Witwatersrand proletariat, the largest and most militant in Africa.

b. Macmillan and Agrarian Working People

Macmillan's general interest in rural poverty had been kindled, as we have seen, by his experience of the plight of the crofters of the Scottish Highlands. But it was an urban phenomenon which led his searching intelligence in quest of the origins of what he termed the "South African Agrarian Problem". That phenomenon was the squalid, teeming slums of Johannesburg - the city in which he was based for the final decade-and-a-half of his South African years - with their "Afrikaans-speaking refugees from the country districts." It was, as he was later to stress, "this large and growing number of displaced white country-folk in Johannesburg" which "invited re-research into the conditions in the backveld from which they came."⁴⁸ The growing importance of "poor whiteism" as a political question no doubt also drew his attention to the mechanics of its origins in the rural world.

The great work which ultimately grew out of these concerns of Macmillan's was, of course, The South African Agrarian Problem and its Historical Development (Johannesburg, 1919). Initially delivered as a series of lectures, the study was based upon arduous personal investigation and field research which provided him with a first-hand knowledge and experience of the conditions of the Afrikaner rural poor.⁴⁹ Macmillan's Agrarian Problem has remained, to this day, a remarkable exercise of the historical imagination whose insights have recently been paid tribute to in the most serious survey of the historical literature on the South African rural world yet published.⁵⁰ Its lacunae, some of them major (for example, the absence of any real discussion of class struggle), do not detract from the fact that, in many ways, the essay remains the boldest attempt to think a quintessentially South African agrarian economy in terms of its epochal experience. Scanning more than a quarter of a millennium, it focussed upon the essential structure of the agricultural economy - its fatal contradictions, the culture it supported - which the Boer colonists carried across the sub-continent.

A comprehensive analysis of the theory advanced by Macmillan in this seminal work cannot be undertaken here. But certain aspects of his Agrarian Problem do require detailed assessment because of their

relevance to his attitude to working people and capitalism. The first of these is the connection he drew between the accumulation of commercial agriculturalists on the one hand and the poverty and increasing landlessness of the Afrikaner rural poor on the other. Sketching the deep, underlying contradictions within pre-capitalist Boer agriculture, and how these were by themselves generating poverty and low productivity⁵¹, Macmillan turned to the effects of the sudden eruption into this world of the mineral revolutions of the nineteenth century. The sudden agglomeration of people into new industrial centres, and the creation of new markets, attendant upon these revolutions demanded that the subsistence-dynamic of much of Boer agriculture be replaced by a ruthlessly commercial one: the immense and terrible difficulties of adjusting to such an agriculture were, for Macmillan, at the root of the "Agrarian Problem".⁵²

A sense of transition, a determination to integrate his analysis of the South African rural world into the wider patterns of world history, illumines Macmillan's analysis. The profound "transition" through which his generation was living, he wrote, "is not unlike that which Europe underwent in centuries, in the passage of feudalism and the coming of industrialism."⁵³ Commercial production in agriculture led landlords to bring more and more of their land under their direct control: consequently, their poor tenant farmers-on-the-half "had to go". According to Macmillan, even after World War One, most Afrikaner working people in agriculture remained with - in the clutch of the sharecropping system (he compared it to "the métayage system of France and Italy"), but it was rapidly giving way "at one end to tenant-farming, at a fixed rent, and at the other to the wage system...".⁵⁴

Macmillan's sense of this transition to capitalism, however, was a critical one. There can be little doubt that he believed the transition to have resulted in a degradation of human relationships. "Merely human relationships", he wrote, were "giving way, as they did in Europe in the 16th century, to a cash nexus." The old moral economy of the agrarian world was being broken down by the advance of capitalism: for Macmillan, the great advantage of the "shares system over that of day labour" was the security or "fixity of tenure" which it could give the sharecropper. This was now evaporating with the advance of new norms in agriculture: "competition" was breaking down "custom". Agricultural zones which had long been accustomed to commodity production, such as the Cape's "ostrich belt", were precisely the areas in which the problems of poverty were most

acute.⁵⁵ For Macmillan, then, the commercialisation of agriculture in South Africa produced both wealth and poverty. And if the Afrikaner tenantry increasingly made for the towns, this was not because the industrial bright lights beaconsed them there but because those tenants were being rapidly ground down into a position of abject and absolute dispossession; the epigraph of the Agrarian Problem, it should not be forgotten, is Thomas Hardy's famous sentence on the centrality of compulsion to urbanisation:

...the process humourously designated by the statisticians as 'the tendency of the rural population towards the large towns', being really the tendency of water to flow uphill when forced by machinery. (56)

"The South African Agrarian Problem", Macmillan was later to recall, "marked a turning-point in my life and work, a diversion from poor-whites to poor-blacks."⁵⁷ There are four likely reasons for this shift. First, his field research amongst the Afrikaner rural poor, and his rural travels generally, most probably brought him into contact with the still more intractable problems of agrarian distress amongst black people; second, the massive black proletariat on the Witwatersrand - with its poverty and struggles - may well have exercised a gravitational pull upon Macmillan's interests and studies forcing him to look into its rural origins as had the Afrikaner slumdweller of Johannesburg so compelled him earlier; third, the inexorable advance of segregationist ideology and policies, which Macmillan doughtily opposed, is likely to have driven him to concentrate his research upon the social conditions of black working people so that he might be well-armed, at least empirically, in the battles he was to fight so passionately; finally, as he himself was later to point out, his historical research in the 1920s led him into the field to witness at first-hand the results of the policies and conflicts that he was tracking through the documents of the nineteenth century.⁵⁸ Whatever the reasons, however, Macmillan was now set to fill the lacunae in his earlier social studies - studies from which the great majority of working people in South Africa had been excluded.

The path-breaking studies which were to emerge from Macmillan's new interests were, once more, based upon arduous investigative travel. They were to yield some of his most fertile writings: The Land, the Native and Unemployment (Johannesburg, 1924) and, above all, Complex South Africa (London, 1930). At the centre of Macmillan's analysis of the plight of the black rural population was its massive and sudden

dispossession:

...the Bantu millions have had to face a prodigious social revolution. They have been called upon, in the space of three generations or less, to adapt themselves, somehow or other, to live on what may be put at a rough estimate at about one-fifth of the land they lately held. (59)

The analysis of conditions within the Reserves - with their congestion, malnutrition, poverty and dependence upon the earnings of migrant labourers - remained unrivalled within the corpus of South African studies for almost half a century. No less pioneering was his detailed exposition of the condition of black farm workers - their poverty, insecurity, subjection to draconian laws. Groping around the concept of alienation, he argued that the "wholesale insecurity" of these primary producers on the land was "a fatal bar to progress" in South African agriculture. "'Squatterry'", he declared, had to be ended and replaced by "security of tenure".⁶⁰

One of the most important facets of Macmillan's analysis of black rural producers lay in his analysis of the origins of the relationships of tenancy in which they lived on white farms. He was careful, for example, to place the word "squatter" in inverted commas⁶¹: for the people so designated were, in most cases, merely utilizing land which their ancestral communities had used for decades before the imposition of private property upon the countryside. Macmillan - like Engels⁶² in one of his analyses - saw the origins of "squatting" (and the seigneurial relations which attended it) in the continuing encroachments of colonists upon the land of indigenous rural communities. Land was conquered and parcelled out under the very feet of its inhabitants who were now compelled to work for their new masters: "This, of course, is the truth about native "squatting"..."⁶³

Macmillan's prescriptions for ending agrarian distress were many and varied: a brake upon the accumulation of land by great magnates, a graduated land tax, 'fair' rents, minimum wages, improved education for the poor, even the ownership of their plots (by white tenants at any rate) and more land for black peasants were recommended by him at one time or another.⁶⁴ But his most constantly-reiterated demand was for security of tenure for black and white tenants alike⁶⁵; this, he believed, was the key to advancing agricultural productivity.⁶⁶ There can be little doubt that this was the most deeply-felt of the recommendations which he made. And the familial springs of it in the Scottish Highlands are likely to have made it so:

at the end of his life, in his autobiography, Macmillan was to comment that he "still" believed that "the tenants' lack of legal status ought to be remedied"; and on the preceding page he made a significant submission: "Perhaps a slight knowledge of crofting conditions in the Highlands made me concentrate on the question of land-tenure."⁶⁷

There is something conservative, in the best sense of the word, in Macmillan's proposed remedies for the ending of rural poverty. Appalled at the results of proletarianisation - slums, insecurity, unemployment - he sought not the transcendence of its world, a decisive break towards a future society. He desired, rather, that steps be taken towards a rural idyll of prosperous, secure smallholders. Give the sharecroppers a bigger share of the produce they draw out of the earth⁶⁸, make them secure on the land, he seemed to say, and all will be well with the tenants - they will not need to flock to the towns. A world of crofters - before their evictions, before the sheep and deer took their place on the land - seemed to him the most wholesome of all:

...the shares system in all districts must be put on a legal footing, regulated by independent land courts, and made the basis of the peasantry we desire to create. Then and only then - with fixity of tenure - cooperation and improvements in agricultural method will begin to have a fair chance, and crofter areas on the Scottish model may be made to supply that easier access to the land which it must be our policy to secure. (69)

By the time Macmillan penned these lines, the possibilities of creating such a peasantry in South Africa were being liquidated with a ferocious swiftness. If there was to be a future of plenty and security for the primary producers on the land - or, indeed, in the towns - the means of attaining it would be radically different from those proposed by Macmillan, as would the world those means attained. In the first instance, it would have to be based upon the very existence of a proletariat and its potentialities and not on an impossible desire to create an idyllic version of the epoch preceding proletarianisation itself.

c. Macmillan and the Labour Movement

One logical starting-point for an analysis of Macmillan's relationship to the South African labour movement is his Agrarian Problem. The latter is a work in which he articulated, clearly, certain socialist - or quasi-socialist - perspectives akin to those of an English thinker who was to have a fairly important influence upon him: the

historian and social critic of 'industrialism', R. H. Tawney. For in the Agrarian Problem provided a critique of accumulation for accumulation's sake, just as Tawney did. Describing the praise lavished upon the free-spending capitalist as "stupid"⁷⁰, Macmillan passionately argued that:

It is true, though the twentieth century tends to forget it, that the production, and more especially the accumulation of wealth for its own sake, is, as Aristotle also wrote, "contrary to nature".(71)

The thread of such values is continuously interwoven with the scholarship of the Agrarian Problem. To take an example from the early pages of the book:

It is necessary...to insist, even dogmatically, that it is the prior necessity to combat poverty and bad conditions, and the vicious economic ideas and practices which result in moral as well as physical starvation, in order to create opportunity for the very beginnings of...real liberty.(72)

Whilst Macmillan's comments bear comparison with those of Tawney (he claimed that much South African poverty was the child of "industrial civilization"⁷³ as Tawney might have attributed much of England's poverty to 'industrialism'), it is important to stress that Macmillan had arrived at these values independently. The Agrarian Problem was published in 1919; The Acquisitive Society, the work in which Tawney was to set out ideas which echoed those of Macmillan was published two years later, in 1921; and Macmillan only met Tawney for the first time in 1920: he well-remembered the "walks" they enjoyed together and the large amount of "lively inspiration" he received from the "famous economic historian", as well as their "common concern with the cause of workers' education" (Tawney was one of the founders of the Workers' Educational Association).⁷⁴ But the facts speak for themselves: the Agrarian Problem pre-dates The Acquisitive Society or Macmillan's meeting Tawney. One might assume that the intellectual tradition which produced Tawney - analysed so carefully by Raymond Williams⁷⁵ - is likely to have had some role in the fashioning of Macmillan's perspectives as well.

One final feature of the Agrarian Problem needs to be stressed: Macmillan's integration of the values outlined above into the programme, as he saw it, of the labour movement generally. That movement, he argued, "may have originated...as a question of poverty" but it had become "a good deal more" than this. The stronger trade unions had transcended the battle for a mere human existence for the working people and had now passed on to questions of "profiteering" and the redistribution of wealth: "to-day...active unrest arises less from

the problem of poverty than from a new consciousness of a Problem of Wealth or Property." ⁷⁶

Macmillan had written that line in 1919. He had, in fact, been in Johannesburg, centre of South Africa's working-class radicalism, since 1917 and from that point onwards, he had "busily" set himself "to understand the forces at work" there. Almost immediately, he made contact with the radical "skilled artisans" employed by the municipality: "very good men whose...concerns got little attention from the so-called Labour Party" of the day. ⁷⁷ Once on the Rand, he was very soon lecturing on labour relations and playing an active role in the Workers' Educational Association, becoming its president in the early-twenties and later extending his activities within it to black workers, above all those unionised by the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union. ⁷⁸

Macmillan's involvement in the South African workers' movement and the talks which he delivered before working-class audiences guide us directly to the character of those of his perspectives which appear to have been socialist. There was nothing revolutionary in them. In a talk to the members of the Typographical Union in May 1924, he rejected the "Bolshevik method" and unequivocally embraced what he seemed to view as a reformist English road to the "New Social Order": "Force", he declared, "is Destructive not Reconstructive". ⁷⁹ But, as he stressed in a lecture to engineering workers, the key to improving the material condition of working people lay in "organisation". This was the "lesson of History" and, moreover, "the only means" by which workers could train "for wider control alike of Industry & the Fruits of Industry". ⁸⁰

Another notable feature of Macmillan's values at this time is the degree to which they bore the lineaments of Tawney's influence. The notes which he made for both the lectures referred to above make this manifest. In his talk to the engineering workers he defined the Labour Movement as "a just protest" against the "moral injustice" of a society structured as "organised greed", and he went on to refer specifically to Tawney's Acquisitive Society, providing details of its publication and price. Indeed, in emphasising to his audience the problems of the landless Afrikaner poor streaming off the land, he rejected - in a most Tawneyesque way - the idea that something called "Industries" were the great panacea for socio-economic ills: on the contrary, he argued, "They make for slums and exploitⁿ". The

"sacred" rights of "Property", he asserted, were "hardly older" than the post-Reformation years: "even Feudalism" had recognised no absolute right to it, as evidenced by its tying together of "Land & Service". And to the Typographical Union, he emphasised that a "very strong section of University men everywhere" shared with workers an opposition to exploitation, "greed" and "acquisitiveness" and were "in favour" of a "New Social Order".⁸¹

The reference to the shared values of workers and "University men" was not accidental. There was nothing rhetorical in it: Macmillan was engaged in a sincere search for common ground between the universities and the unions. When, in 1922, Tom Mann - the famous British trade unionist - addressed an engineering workers' meeting on the Rand to which Macmillan was invited, the manner in which he introduced himself struck Macmillan as "charming". This was to take "his bow to myself and the others" and address "the meeting, 'Workers by brain and with hand'".⁸² This was a formula Macmillan accepted with evident enthusiasm. In the same year as Mann delivered his speech, Macmillan was referring, in a lecture to the Amalgamated Engineering Union, to the "fellow suffering of Scientists fr. (om) Exploit. (ation) of Brains & Research." And he began his talk to the typographical workers in a most comradely way: "Fellow workers".⁸³

There was, of course, no real equivalence of the 'mental' and 'manual' labourers Macmillan referred to. He was, quite obviously, not the "fellow worker" of the people he addressed. Not only was his income, his job security (a tenured professor) and his ability to acquire property much greater than that of the average typographical worker, he certainly did not suffer from the "exploitation of Brains and Research" to which he referred. And yet, notwithstanding this important reservation, we must still concede that Macmillan embraced the formula "workers by brain and with hand" not in the way the Fabian aristocrat did - Beatrice Webb's diary reveals the way it could be used to signal an alleged superiority to workers⁸⁴ - but in order to express his solidarity with working people. For Macmillan came before workers, whom he considered the "best of audiences", with neither the condescension of the cloistered academic nor the sentimentality of the romantic researcher. Considering it a "privilege" to be able to address their meetings, which he sometimes did critically, his integrity and solidarity were immediately perceived by the working people with whom he came into contact.⁸⁵ A large proportion of the audience which assembled to hear Tom Mann speak, for example,

was - as a trade unionist later confided to Macmillan - "against professors being any use to the labour movement, and came to see the fun, but they left strong supporters of...yourself..."⁸⁶

Macmillan's role in the South African labour movement, however, was more of an activist one than the analysis so far suggests. Not only did he advise the Amalgamated Engineering Union on how it should structure itself (he believed it should combine features of both craft and industrial unions⁸⁷), he also attempted to inculcate in white workers a consciousness of the ultimate identity of interests of all workers, black and white. In his W. E. A. lectures, he was careful to hold the "Exploited Natives" before his (white) audience⁸⁸ and, on at least one occasion, he enjoined it to consider "the Natives" to be "still weaker & more exploitable workers". Their problems, he asserted, were connected to those of the white poor and there could be "No Remedy for either...short of [a] new Social Order" which carried South Africa beyond the blights of "Exploitⁿ & Acquisitiveness".⁸⁹ In fact, one of Macmillan's last interventions before leaving South Africa in the early-thirties was on behalf of black workers: on October 1st 1931, at "a conference of municipal workers" to which he had been "invited as an observer", he "harranged the assembly on the subject of passes" - a key issue for black workers but one which few white trade unionists ever took up.⁹⁰

Macmillan's modest attempts to bring black and white workers together, or at least to engender in white workers a recognition of the still greater exploitation suffered by black workers, points towards a significant change which had occurred in his thinking since his Grahamestown years: in one of his publications of those years, it will be remembered, he seemed to imply a necessity for the white working and middle classes to combine against the black proletariat. It was, no doubt, the realisation of the dangers of such an approach, brought home to him by the advance of segregation (whose ideology promised the liquidation of white poverty through just such an alliance), that accounts for this shift in his perspectives. Once the danger became manifest to him, Macmillan - to his credit - began to muster powerful arguments against such a strategy. Some of their most cogent formulations are to be found in Complex South Africa, a book which was, in many ways, a scholarly and passionate intervention against the segregationists. In that work, he stressed that in those areas of the Cape where the "Poor White" problem was most chronic, Africans were in a tiny minority and, therefore, the problem could not

"be attributed to Native complications."⁹¹ The nub of the problem in regard to the competition between white and black workers in the towns, argued Macmillan, lay precisely in the fact that the black worker was 'cheaper' than the white and consequently could be utilised to undercut the wages of the latter. The way out of this class quandary was not segregation but the raising of the condition of black workers; once that was done, they could no longer be used to undermine the position of the white working class:

In the end...the Poor Whites are little more than the 'resevoir' of unemployed to be found wherever Western industrialism has dislocated an old agrarian system. Yet the dread of Native competition with white derelicts distorts counsel, and leads away from the obvious deduction that if dependence on servile labour is indeed a factor in the making of Poor Whites the first remedy is the amelioration of the lot of these 'servile natives....the cry is for defensive measures, from an industrial Colour Bar onwards, which can only, and do all too effectively, make the natives poorer still, and to that extent an ever more real 'menace'.(92)

"Colour", emphasised Macmillan, "may be a peculiar social complication, but it is still only an accident, and in economics the blackness of the Native makes no difference. The problem he represents is in essentials that of 'dilution', familiar enough to workers in Europe when the war brought about an invasion of the skilled engineering trades by women."⁹³

It would be well to conclude this analysis of Macmillan's involvement in the South African labour movement with an exploration of his attitude to workers in struggle. This may conveniently be done by focusing upon two militant strikes about which he wrote: the Johannesburg Municipal Workers' Strike of 1919 and the Rand Revolt of 1922.

The 1919 strike was triggered by a retrenchment resolution of the Johannesburg Municipal Council which affected about thirty artisans at the power station. Ultimately, all municipal workers struck in solidarity with those threatened with unemployment, shutting down "all municipal services of light, power and tramways" except those needed for emergencies. The next decisive step was the strikers' establishment of a Board of Control which cancelled the authority of the municipal council, and began to run and direct its services as well as collect its revenues into a trust account. Ultimately, the militancy of the municipal workers (who were white) was undermined - and in this their experience proved to be a microcosm of the tragedy of the white working class in South Africa generally - by

their racist response to an outbreak of militancy by black workers over the issue of passes: indeed, the editions of the Rand Daily Mail of early-April 1919 reveal a directly inverse relationship between the militancy of these two groups of workers, the whites' declining as the blacks' ascended. (The editor of the newspaper, it should be noted, exploited the relationship, calling for a closing of white ranks and an end to the strike in face of the mobilisation of black workers). And Macmillan himself was under no illusions as to the fact that one of the "main influences making for moderation" in the ranks of the municipal workers was "apprehension of native unrest." Ultimately, however, the strike forced nine councillors to resign, discredited the municipal council (even the Rand Daily Mail called for its temporary dissolution) and secured the rescission of the retrenchment resolution.⁹⁴

One of the notable features of the strike was the militant socialism of many of the workers. (Perhaps, too, some of this socialism was not fatally flawed by racism for, at one of the mass meetings during the strike, the workers were addressed thus by one of their leaders: "The time had come when every worker, white and black, would be entitled to a better and fuller life. They must be treated as human beings instead of profit-earning machines".) At the meeting at which the Council decided to proceed with the threatened retrenchments, workers issued threats from the gallery and, "rising to their feet", sang the Red Flag; at a strikers' meeting in the Town Hall, "the big organ" was decorated with the Red Flag whilst the banner of the "International Socialist League" was proudly displayed on the platform; one member of the Strike Committee, Mr. McQueen, "described the action of the workers as revolution"; and the Rand Daily Mail noted that "some of the strike leaders speak as if they regarded the Board of Control as a permanency....as the first Soviet in this country....What they preach is Bolshevism of the most evil kind...". The fears of middle-class South Africa were, no doubt, exacerbated by the fact that as the drama of the strike unfolded, revolution and counter-revolution were ~~described~~ in desperate combat in Central and Eastern Europe. Indeed, the very editions of the Rand Daily Mail that carried news of the strike carried far more ominous tidings from afar: "The Troubles of Germany", "New Spartacist Outrage", "The Revolution in Hungary", "War Against the Bolsheviks", "The Allies and Russia", "Bolshevik Peril".⁹⁵

What, then, was Macmillan's attitude to the municipal workers' strike?

He, in fact, wrote an analysis of it, which was published in the Rand Daily Mail in April 1919.⁹⁶ One of its notable features is its opposition to what Macmillan termed the initial "revolutionary bias" of the strike: those on the Board of Control, he wrote, who were "pulling heavily in the direction of a Soviet, in the belief that The Revolution had come" "were irresponsible influences". The "mass of workmen", he insisted did not "accept literally the common interpretation...of Bolshevism, and are more interested in the much wider Labour movement. This wider movement appears to them a long-looked-for message of hope, and is quite divorced in their minds from war and revolution which have created chaos in Russia and a large half of Europe." Having thus signalled his antipathy for revolutionary struggle, he also revealed a distaste for working-class militancy of any kind: he complained that the militant "methods of the Power Station strike" of the preceding year "deserve(d) the criticism even of the trade union movement, and helped to create the difficult situation out of which this trouble sprang."

Chiding revolution and radical methods of struggle, Macmillan nevertheless was careful to point to the provocation constituted by the municipal council's retrenchment resolution. This was bound to lead to a struggle: "The plain fact is that society is divided into two camps whose points of view are so widely different that misunderstanding is inevitable." "Rising" and "excessive" "prices and profits" were spurring the organisation of workers and without "adequate insurance against unemployment, the...demand of Labour for shorter hours holds the field as the only attempt at a definite policy in the matter." The "wider labour movement", he pointed out, and here was a clear reference to himself and others like him, "has captured the imagination and idealism of men in all classes who look toward the realisation of the new social order."

Macmillan's article issued a warning, directed - it appears - at the ruling class. He seemed to enjoin it to exercise moderation in its dealings with workers: "widespread discontent like the present, reinforced as it is by ideas...is among the mightiest of all revolutionary forces." And then in a memorable line which mocked the municipal council, he continued:

That great force, even as manifested in one small corner like ours, is not to be damned back by the Dame Partington's mop of a municipal council that is resolved to 'stand firm'. (97)

The great Rand Revolt of 1922, which erupted three years after the municipal workers seized control of the local council services of Johannesburg, was the first major workers' insurrection South Africa had known. During it, "nearly all" of Macmillan's "friends and acquaintances" "volunteered for service as special constables" against the strikers. Macmillan, however, "was too involved with the workers to do this. I knew", he later recalled, "that the best of the men had a case." Remaining in Johannesburg for the duration of the crisis, he was secretly aiding a "moderate" trade unionist who was to be "in hiding for several months" (Macmillan does not make clear the party - government or militant workers - from whom the man was hiding) and, "without committing" himself "made attempts at mediation".⁹⁸

Macmillan's reflections upon the revolt of the white mine workers were published in the New Statesman in May 1922, under the title: "The Truth About the Strike on the Rand".⁹⁹ Curiously, this important contemporary analysis of the insurrection has remained almost entirely neglected for half-a-century. Its merits are best viewed in relief - that is, against the weaknesses and silences of more recent analyses.

In Class, Race and Gold, Frederick Johnstone - using the indices of what one might call 'parliamentarism' - argues that "the political position" of white workers was utterly different from that of black workers in the 1920s and that their rights made them "politically free".¹⁰⁰ Clearly, the white workers themselves took a different view: they were, for example, aware that their trade union rights did not even guarantee them the elementary right to be heard by their employers. (Johnstone himself points out that the Revolt was triggered by the Chamber of Mines' refusal to continue negotiating with union leaders whom the Chamber went on to insult as people of low "mental calibre".)¹⁰¹ The right to vote, moreover, did not prevent white workers from feeling alienated enough to join battle with the military and police forces of the state: an insurrection - one put down by, amongst other methods, artillery bombardment and the storming of workers' districts - cannot be said to be the response of people who feel themselves to be "politically free".

The striking originality (even today!) of Macmillan's interpretation of the Revolt lies precisely in its emphasis upon the political

unfreedom and alienation of the white working class and their importance in the detonation of the Revolt. A fundamental cause of the strike, argued Macmillan, was the dictatorial attitude of the mineowners in whose ranks "panic and reaction" held sway: their deliberate refusal to negotiate with the leaders of the organised working class was, for the workers - held Macmillan - a more crucial issue than that of wages. And he placed this fact in the wider context of the poor political voice accorded working people by a bourgeois state:

The Union Parliament is truly representative in its middle-class, landlordly and capitalist outlook, and affords little encouragement for Labour to look to it for sympathetic redress of its grievances....

Indeed, working people could look forward to no more than 15% of parliamentary seats in South Africa: "Inevitably, therefore, South African Labour leans to the policy of 'direct action'...". As to the violence of the strike, some of the responsibility for it "must rest on the employers who determined to allow the strike to drift to a 'settlement' by starvation, and whose attitude was hybriatic to a degree", some of them openly calling for bloodshed. There was a clamour for martial law "and probably many of the men started shooting because they thought the other side would inevitably shoot them - to drive them back to work."¹⁰²

Macmillan would have disagreed with another of Johnstone's judgments, his conclusion that the events of the Rand Revolt "must be seen as the most dramatic...manifestations of a struggle between ...mining companies...and white workers over the determination of the precise mode of operation of the system of racial discrimination".¹⁰³ Such views Macmillan rejected as superficial. The opposition of white workers to the repeal of the industrial colour bar, he believed, was no mere jockeying for racial privilege: "what is involved", he stressed, "is the whole question of their standard of life." The root of their opposition lay in the minewoners' attempt to destroy worker intransigence and the conditions of employment won by it by flooding the mine-shafts with a wave of "defenceless and exploitable" African workers.¹⁰⁴

Macmillan, it should also be said, appears to have written his article against the revolutionaries of the strike. He knew well-enough the militant and vibrant socialist culture on the Rand - it was strong enough for the leaders of the insurrection to go to the gallows defiantly (singing "The Red Flag"), and it was deep enough for

a young Jeppe schoolboy to add Marx, Engels, Lenin and Daniel de Leon to the pleiad of his childhood heroes.¹⁰⁵ In his article, Macmillan curtly dismissed the views of the "Marxian Socialists" of the South African labour movement as "crude, violent and...antiquated"; and he even tended a little to an 'agitational' theory of the insurrection in arguing that the recently-proletarianised Afrikaner mineworkers with their strong (Boer) Republican sentiments and military traditions were, "to the 'Red' Internationals, as clay to the hands of the potter...". On the other hand, however, he dismissed the "theory of long premediation and organisation" on the part of working-class leaders: if these had existed, he reminded his readership, nothing could have prevented "the sacking of Central Johannesburg or the destruction of the mines" on "March 10th or later" when the authorities had not yet mustered forces sufficient to quell the rising. The idea, mooted in the British press, that the insurrection was the product of "Russian machinations" was "moonshine".¹⁰⁵

Macmillan's short analysis of the strike has its faults - he greatly underestimated the degree of collusion between the mineowners and the state authorities, he dismissed the revolutionaries (yet surely the revolutionary ideology of many of the workers and their leaders was decisive for transforming a strike into a rebellion), he left black workers and white working-class racism (a crucial factor in limiting the insurrection) out of his main argument. Yet, when all this has been said, one must still praise Macmillan for the sensitivity of his analysis. Not content to demean utterly the white worker insurgency of the days of March 1922 ("the upheaval of the Ides of March" as he called it) by concentrating only on its racist aspects, he lent dignity to its many victims by focusing upon the class springs of the conflict: "It remains that it was a strike against dictation, prolonged and embittered by the threat and fear of retrenchment and unemployment."¹⁰⁶

iii. CONCLUSION

Macmillan's views, and involvement in the South African labour movement reveal - with all their limitations - an impressive consistency and integrity. It would perhaps be fitting to conclude this analysis, however, by pointing to the fundamental contradictions in his thought in relation to the workers' movement and its ultimate goals. His attitudes were, as we have shown, essentially

a product of the reformist tradition of English Labour tempered by an anti-acquisitiveness. The somewhat contradictory mixture of Fabianism and 'anti-industrialism' that he embraced was shared by similarly placed intellectuals in Britain - for example, the historians R. H. Tawney and Barbara and J. L. Hammond, all of them writers who influenced Macmillan.¹⁰⁷

Nobody who has worked through the documents of his South African years will deny that, notwithstanding certain lapses, Macmillan desired an ultimate economic equality for all people. Abjuring revolution and class struggle (he commended the allegedly "harmonious community of interest between owner and tenant" of pre-commercial sharecropping¹⁰⁸), he sought to achieve this equality in the classically Fabian way - by presenting data and fashioning arguments of a logic superior to that of his conservative opponents. In this, he was similar to Tawney whose writings also sought to convert all to the collective project of creating an economy of equality. The error (one is almost tempted to write "delusion") of such writings has been stated by Raymond Williams, with characteristic fineness of judgement:

It is difficult...not to feel, as of much of the writing in this tradition, that although it recognizes what Tawney calls 'the lion in the path' (i.e. those benefitting from, and prepared to fight to maintain inequality), it yet hopes that the path can be followed to the end by converting both traveller and lion to a common humanity. For Tawney (and we should add Macmillan here)...the...inequality and the avoidable suffering of contemporary society are subject...to a moral choice; when the choice has been made, it is then only a matter of deliberate organization and collective effort (rather than implacable class struggle). (109)

Those in power are seen to be "his kind of men, and will understand his language: if they do not, he has only to say it again."¹¹⁰

Hence it was that Macmillan addressed all his major writings not to the oppressed (he was not seeking to rally them) but to those in power: even his famous researches into the plight of the peasantry in Herschel were undertaken in order to spur the government into benevolent action on behalf of black peasants in general; his findings were presented to General Hertzog's government, the most segregation-minded one in South African history until after World War Two; not surprisingly, his discoveries - many of them startling - were completely ignored.¹¹¹ Addressed to those in power - like those of the Fabians elsewhere - Macmillan's writings inevitably grav-

itated towards the idiom and even the ideology of his opponents. Thus, even a book like Complex South Africa - one of the most important contemporary critiques of segregationist policy - reveals those confusing lapses which often marred the force of Macmillan's arguments: in arguing for the extension of the Cape's formally non-racial franchise (which gave propertied blacks the vote) to the Union as a whole, he wrote:

We are indeed much more likely to get the attention needed for the Reserves - even to make them effective separate areas if we so wish - if we bind the handful of rising natives to us...(112)

And in addressing white trade unionists, he went even further. Here are his own comments on his lobbying those unionists to support development loans for the Reserves:

I found the approach...that made most impression was to steal a little "segregationist" thunder and to press to ease the situation (caused by the competition in the labour market between "cheap" black labour and that of the whites) by organised development in the Reserves, offering openings for native artisans in native areas.(113)

Here the slippage from the "New Social Order" to segregation is well-nigh complete and the dangers of Fabian strategy sadly manifest. It is not clear if Macmillan ever perceived these dangers although a comment at the end of his life suggests that he became acutely aware of its naivete:

In my innocence...I overlooked the fact that the ruling classes in South Africa have a genius for merely ignoring inconvenient facts, however accurate, and in all these years I never really succeeded in making the facts bite. It might have been better had I thrown caution to the wind, and worked for a straight fight.(114)

The characteristic honesty and the painful self-criticism of these words make them melancholy and even poignant.

Macmillan's approach to the attainment of what he saw to be the goal of the labour movement - a society without exploitation and acquisitiveness - was, in fact, profoundly unpolitical. That society was to be brought about without struggle, without the political mobilisation of the rural dispossessed and the urban workers whose oppressions he so keenly felt. Economics and political struggle were, for him, radically divorced from one another - as is suggested by the following remark:

my early reading and my researches in the field made me more certain that African problems were determined by economics, and I was inclined to put economic improvement before social and political, to an ex-

tent which made some of my students detect a neo-Marxist.(115)

Such an approach is, of course, antithetical to that of a Marxist for whom "capitalism is, after all, a politico-economic phenomenon"¹¹⁶ and for whom fundamental economic change can never be achieved without political struggle.

Macmillan's views on the political rights of black people (i.e. most workers) during his South African years reveal the central fracture (the break between politics and economics) in his thought. Desiring an improvement in the economic condition of black working people, he still proposed to leave them voteless: the Cape franchise, cast across the Union, was all he pressed for in 1930 in Complex South Africa; as for the masses, he did not feel them ready to be political actors: "in the mass", he wrote, "they" are "still" "incapable" "of full citizenship." Or, still more stridently: "The semi-barbaric masses are nowhere near ready to acquire a swamping vote."¹¹⁷

To sum up, then, "the realisation of the new social order" - to which Macmillan signalled his allegiance in his article on the power workers strike - was negated, from beginning to end, by his rejection of class struggle and his separation of politics (except in its most elitist forms) from the project to create economic equality. As a general rule, the goals of a political movement must be inscribed in its strategy. That, perhaps, is the central message of Macmillan's failure even to begin realising "the new social order" - a message made all the more powerful by the sincerity with which he desired that realisation. "He who wants the end", wrote Gramsci in a famous line, "must want the means."

Footnotes

1. The backwardness and manifold prejudices of 'pre-Macmillanite' historical studies in South Africa has recently been explored by Jayaraman Naidoo in "W. M. Macmillan: South African Historian" (unpublished MA thesis, University of South Africa, 1983), pp. 1-31.
2. See Bruce Murray WITS, The Early Years: A History of the University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg and its Precursors 1896-1939 (Johannesburg, 1982), p.129
3. W. M. Macmillan The South African Agrarian Problem and its Historical Development (Johannesburg, 1919), p.23.
4. See, for example, Saul Dubow Land, Labour and Merchant Capital in the Pre-Industrial Rural Economy of the Cape: The Experience of the Graaf-Reinet District, 1852-72 (Cape Town, 1982), p.i. Perhaps the most well-known use of Macmillan's insight and data in a recent study is Colin Bundy's in his chapter on the peasants of Herschel in his The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry (London, 1979).
5. See the first four chapters of Macmillan's autobiography My South African Years (Cape Town, 1975); quotations from pp. 7, 57, 58 and 64.
6. See Ibid., pp. 48-9. On these pages of his autobiography, Macmillan details "the favourite national stories" at which he "chafed" whilst at school. Two of these - "the tale of the Black Circuit" and "the sorrowful tale of Slaughter's Nek" - he was to 'demythologize' in his first major historical work: see The Cape Colour Question: A Historical Survey (Cape Town, 1968 edition), pp. 88 - 91.
7. Macmillan My South African Years, p. 52.
8. For the information on which this paragraph is based, see Ibid. chapters 1 - 4; quotations from p. 24.
9. Ibid., pp. 21-2, 52 & 60.
10. For the information on which this paragraph is based, see Ibid., pp. 66-8 & 79; quotations from pp. 66 & 67; my brackets.
11. Ibid., pp. 62, 68, 74-6.
12. Perry Anderson Arguments Within English Marxism (London, 1980), p. 45.
13. The distinction is, of course, Marx's. Its explicit formulation is to be found in "Results of the Immediate Process of Production", an appendix to the Pelican edition of Capital, Vol. 1. Formal subsumption refers to the mere subordination of an existing (let us say, artisanal) labour process to capital; the real subsumption of labour under capital takes place when a labour process, subordinated to capital, is transformed by it as well. The displacement of manu- by manufacture is an example of the latter; historically this was associated with the destruction of artisanal forms of production and their replacement by the capitalist mode proper. See K. Marx Capital Vol. 1 (Harmondsworth, 1982), pp. 1019 - 1038.

14. For these statistics, see Eric Hobsbawm Industry and Empire (Harmondsworth, 1972), p. 165 and David Thomson England in the Nineteenth Century (Harmondsworth, 1973), p. 187.
15. Hobsbawm Industry and Empire, pp. 125-6.
16. See, for example, the comments of the conservative Lewis Nami-er in The Revolution of the Intellectuals (Oxford, 1971), p.3; the argument on p. 375 of that classic radical work The Common People 1746-1938 (London, 1938) by G. D. H. Cole and Raymond Postgate; and, finally, from the Marxist tradition, see the quotations from Perry Anderson's "Origins of the Present Crisis" (New Left Review, 23) provided by E. P. Thompson in "The Peculiarities of the English", p. 70 of his The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays (London, 1980). On pp. 70-1, Thompson also supports the contention that the working class's passage to reformism followed the defeat of Chartism. (We have had to cite a secondary source for Anderson's views because NLR 23 appears not to be available in South Africa, from where this article was written.) We should also note that the decline of a revolutionary class consciousness amongst English working people that followed the defeat of Chartism is implicitly argued by Nami-er and Cole and Postgate.
17. Quotations from (respectively) Hobsbawm Industry and Empire, p. 126 and Leon Trotsky (quoting Lenin) in The Revolution Betrayed: What is the Soviet Union and Where is it Going? (New York, 1980), p. 303.
18. The classic study of this process is John Foster's Class Struggle and Industrial Revolution: Early industrial capitalism in three English towns (London, 1974).
19. See Eric Hobsbawm Labouring Men (London, 1971), p. 260. Hobsbawm, however, does not mention the trade unions in this connection.
20. Ibid., pp. 267-8. My brackets.
21. The political milieu described in this paragraph is perhaps best-known as Fabianism. I have drawn its essential features from sources too numerous too mention - Trotsky's polemics and Cole and Postgate's knockabout, though not inaccurate, portrait amongst them. A fine compressed description of Fabianism may be found in Leslie Derfler Socialism Since Marx: A Century of the European Left (London, 1973), pp. 29-31; and Eric Hobsbawm's essay "The Fabians Re-considered", pp. 250-71 in his Labouring Men, is indispensable.
22. For Thorold Rogers and the context in which he wrote, see Raphael Samuel (ed.) People's History and Socialist Theory (London, 1981), pp. xxiv-xxvii and Raphael Samuel. "British Marxist Historians, 1880-1980: Part One. New Left Review, no. 120, March-April, 1980, pp. 38 & 40.
23. See Cole and Postgate The Common People, p. 470
24. Macmillan My South African Years, pp. 76 & 78.
25. Ibid., pp. 79-80.
26. For Macmillan's visits to his crofter cousins, see Ibid., pp. 83-5. The removal of Macmillan's family from their ancestral plot, and their placement upon inferior ground is information provided by Macmillan's wife, Mona, in a conversation with the writer in February, 1984. In his essay, "Highland Deer Forest" (full refer.

ence provided in the following footnote), Macmillan noted that his paper was based upon his summer travels to the Scottish Highlands: see p. 1 of "Highland Deer Forest".

27. Macmillan Papers (in the custody of Mona Macmillan of Long Wittenham, Berkshire), Writings, Pamphlets etc., Folder entitled "1907-1910, Oxford and Glasgow", unpublished paper entitled "Highland Deer Forest" presented to the Broderick Club at Oxford University: manuscript dd. 8/3/1906, 7 pp.

28. Ibid., pp. 1-2.

29. The South African Agrarian Problem and its Historical Development (Johannesburg, 1919).

30. It can be argued that Macmillan engaged in field research for this slim undergraduate study. As noted (and referenced) in footnote 26, his paper was partly based upon his summer travels in Scotland.

31. This statement needs qualification: it only applies to Macmillan's later socio-historical studies.

32. Macmillan My South African Years, p. 88.

33. Hobsbawm, for example, notes that "the bulk of the politically conscious working class" voted for the Liberal Party in the latter half of the nineteenth century. See Industry and Empire, p.132. As Raphael Samuel has noted, on p. xxiv of People's History and Socialist Theory, people's history first emerged in Britain as "a self-conscious literary and intellectual practice", politically linked to the radical wing of the Liberal Party which, in the 1860s and 70s, was making its "first hesitant alliance" with the trade unions. When such facts are recalled, Macmillan's "Liberal" (with a capital el) opinions are explicable.

34. Macmillan My South African Years, pp. 90, 99-104.

35. Ibid., pp. 101-2, 104-5.

36. Ibid., p.106.

37. See W. M. Macmillan Economic Conditions in a Non-Industrial South African Town: A Preliminary Study (Grahamstown, 1915), pp.1, 9 and 16.

38. See Ibid., pp. 2-3 and My South African Years, pp. 120-1.

39. Macmillan Economic Conditions in a...Non-Industrial...Town, p.4.

40. Ibid., pp. 1-2 & 16.

41. For Macmillan's proposals for local action, see Ibid., pp. 12-13 & 15-16; Macmillan's advice to women workers and his belief in the necessity for combination can be found on pp. 12-13.

41a. See W. M. Macmillan The Place of Local Government in the Union of South Africa (Johannesburg, 1917).

42. See Macmillan My South African Years, pp. 124-5.

43. See Economic Conditions in a...Non-Industrial...Town, pp. 6 & 11.

44. Ibid., pp. 6 & 12.

45. See Macmillan My S. A. Years, pp. 124-5 & 195. For evidence of Macmillan's contact with the Fabians in his private papers, see Macmillan Papers, Letters, 1917-18 File: Peace (hon. sec. of the Fabian Society) to Macmillan dd. 26/4/1917, 17/10/1917, 14/5/1918; and Galton (general secretary of the Fabian Society) to Macmillan dd. 18/7/1923 in the 1922-1925 File. Quotations from the autobiography.

46. See Macmillan My South African Years, pp. 119, 121 & 127.

47. Macmillan Poverty and Post-War Problems (Grahamstown, 1916).

48. Macmillan My South African Years, pp. 129-30.

49. For this research and investigation, see Ibid., pp. 130-46.

50. See Beinart W, Delius P, Trapido S (eds.) Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South Africa 1850 - 1930, "Introduction", pp. 2 - 6.

51. Macmillan Agrarian Problem, pp. 24 - 33, 35, 38-9, 41, 45, 48-51, 58-59, 72-75 & 98.

52. Ibid., pp. 36 & 41.

53. Ibid., p. 63.

54. Ibid., pp. 63, 69 & 81.

55. Ibid., pp. 63, 78-9 & 81.

56. Ibid., p. 2.

57. Macmillan My South African Years, p. 146.

58. He made this latter point in his autobiography: see Ibid., p. 146.

59. Macmillan Complex South Africa, p. 120.

60. Macmillan's studies of farm workers and reserve dwellers are to be found in Complex South Africa and The Land, the Native and Unemployment. Quotation from p. 10 of the latter.

61. See, for example, The Land, the Native and Unemployment, pp. 6, 9 & 10.

62. In one of the last letters that he wrote to Marx, Engels argued that "it is certain that serfdom and bondage are not a peculiarly medieval-feudal form, we find them everywhere or nearly everywhere where conquerors have the land cultivated for them by the old inhabitants." Quoted on p. 33 of Rodney Hilton et al. The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism (London, 1982).

63. Macmillan The Land, the Native and Unemployment, pp. 5-6.

64. For such prescriptions, see Ibid., pp. 3, 9, 10, 12-13; and Complex South Africa, pp. 102 & 261; as well as Agrarian Problem, pp. 66 & 94-5.

65. For this reiteration, see Complex South Africa, pp. 102, 253 & 263 and The Land, the Native and Unemployment, p. 13.

66. See Complex South Africa, pp. 102 & 253.

67. Macmillan My South African Years, pp. 133-4.

68. Macmillan called for an improved share for the sharecroppers in Agrarian Problem; see pp. 82-3.

69. Macmillan The Land, the Native and Unemployment, p. 13. In his Complex South Africa (p. 253), Macmillan wrote: "There is no reason why... some natives should not - like some European big game hunters - have their chance as peasant-holders: so long as they pay reasonably fixed dues, and at least the best of them be given secure tenure and full inducement to improve both their land and themselves."

70. Macmillan Agrarian Problem, p. 103.
71. Ibid., p. 6.
72. Ibid., p. 16.
73. Ibid., p. 85.
74. See Macmillan My South African Years, pp. 152-153.
75. See Raymond Williams Culture and Society, 1780-1850 (Harmondsworth, 1961), pp. 214-223.
76. Macmillan Agrarian Problem, p. 19.
77. Macmillan My South African Years, pp. 147 & 154-5.
78. Ibid., pp. 152, 159 & 161.
79. Macmillan Papers, Writings, Pamphlets etc., File: "S. A. 1913-24", Papers labelled "Tr. Unions & WEA 1922< +", lecture entitled: "Typo Union 19/5/1924".
80. These quotations are drawn from the second of two lectures which Macmillan delivered to the Amalgamated Engineering Union after the Rand Revolt. So that researchers might locate this untitled document more easily, we shall provide the title of the first of those lectures: "The Trades Hall etc. - Elston. The A. E. U." The lectures are to be located in Ibid..
81. The sources of these quotations will be found in the two preceding references (i.e. footnotes 79 & 80); the text makes clear, at various points, from which of the lectures the various quotations are drawn.
82. Macmillan My South African Years, p. 158. For the letter inviting Macmillan to Mann's address, see Macmillan Papers, Letters etc., 1922-1925 file, Johannesburg No. 1 Branch of the Amalgamated Engineering Union to Macmillan dd. 10/10/1922.
83. Again, see the sources in footnotes 79 & 80 for these quotations.
84. See, for example, the May 14th 1926 entry to Beatrice Webb's diary (in Margaret Cole (ed.) Beatrice Webb's Diaries 1924-1932 (London, 1956), p. 97.). With reference to certain middle class intellectuals who militantly supported the General Strike of 1926: "What is the good of having professional brain-workers to represent you [i.e. workers], if they refuse to give you the honest message of intelligence..." My brackets.
85. The quotations come from Macmillan Papers, Writings, Pamphlets etc., File: "S. A. 1913-1924", Papers labelled: "Tr. Unions & WEA 1922< +", lecture entitled: "Typo Union 19/5/1924".
86. R. M. Brown to Macmillan, n. d., quoted in Macmillan My South African Years, p. 159. I could not locate this letter in the Macmillan Papers; it may have strayed into an incorrect file.
87. See Macmillan Paper, Writings, Pamphlets etc., File: "S. A. 1913-1924", Papers labelled: "Tr. Unions & WEA 1922< +", lecture entitled: "The Trades Hall etc. - Elston. The A. E. U." (post-Rand Revolt lecture). Macmillan appears to have inclined to craft unionism: for example, in 1919, he called "the attention of the leader of the parliamentary Labour Party, Colonel F. H. P. Creswell, to the point of view of 'craft' as against 'industrial' unionists." See Macmillan My South African Years, p. 155.
88. Macmillan Papers, Writings, Pamphlets etc., File: "S. A. 1913-24", Papers labelled: "Tr. Unions & WEA 1922< +", lecture entitled: "Typo Union 19/5/1924." My brackets

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89. See Ibid., second lecture (no title, no date) to the Amalgamated Engineering Union, the first of which is labelled "The Trades Hall etc. Elston. The A. E. U.". My brackets.
90. See Macmillan My South African Years, p. 212.
91. See Macmillan Complex South Africa, pp. 63-4.
92. Ibid., p. 16.
93. Ibid., p. 42.
94. The information in this paragraph is drawn from the numerous articles on the municipal strike in the editions of the Rand Daily Mail of March and April, 1919. The quotations are from, respectively, the Rand Daily Mail, 1/4/1919, p. 5, "Town Council and the Strike" and Rand Daily Mail, 19/4/1919, p. 6, "The Strike and Unrest" - the latter was an unsigned article by Macmillan.
95. Paragraph constructed from Rand Daily Mail, March 10th, 27th, 29th and April 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1919.
96. Rand Daily Mail, April 19th, 1919: "The Strike and Unrest: Some Thoughts on Present Discontent". This article was not signed by Macmillan but there can be no doubt that he was its author. Not only is there a copy of it in the Macmillan Papers (see Writings, Pamphlets etc., File: "S. A. 1913-1924"), it is replete with the tell-tale signs of his idiom: it referred to "brain workers", "the new social order" etc.
97. Ibid.
98. See Macmillan My South African Years, pp. 156-7.
99. See Ibid., p. 158 and The New Statesman, Vol. xix, no. 474, May 13 1922, pp. 145-6.
100. Frederick Johnstone Class, Race and Gold (London, 1976), pp. 49-50.
101. Ibid., pp. 133-4.
102. See Macmillan, "The Truth About the Strike on the Rand".
103. Johnstone Class, Race and Gold, p. 136.
104. Macmillan, "The Truth About the Strike on the Rand".
105. The young schoolboy was Eddie Roux: see Eddie and Win Roux Rebel Pity: The Life of Eddie Roux (London, 1970), p. 10.
106. Macmillan, "The Truth About the Strike on the Rand".
107. Tawney's influence upon Macmillan has already been made manifest in this paper. In The Cape Colour Question, in fact, Macmillan made specific reference to Tawney's Aquisitive Society and his Religion and the Rise of Capitalism: see pp. 30 and 278 of the 1968 re-issue of The Cape Colour Question: A Historical Survey (Balkema, Cape Town). In My South African Years, in fact, Macmillan was to write: "...I was eager to throw what light I could on my particular branch of social history from others working in parallel fields and this time (i.e. a visit to London in the 1920s) I found not only R. H. Tawney but J. L. Hammond, whose work I found highly relevant and who passed me on to others in his field." (p. 194 of the autobiography; my brackets). See also Naidoo's thesis "Macmillan: South African Historian", pp. 49 & 55 for the influence of these historians upon Macmillan. Whilst researching for this paper, Mona Macmillan (the late William's wife) confirmed the importance of the Hammond's social histories for Macmillan.
108. This is the implication of comments of his on p. 100 of Complex South Africa, from which the quotation is drawn.

109. See Raymond Williams Culture and Society, p. 219. My brackets. I should state here that the portion within the final set of brackets renders the tone of Williams judgement more strident than it is. But it has been included with particular reference to Macmillan to suggest the antithesis of his own political programme. It would most probably apply to Tawney as well.

110. Ibid., p. 220.

111. See Macmillan My South African Years, p. 186.

112. Macmillan Complex South Africa, p. 278.

113. Macmillan My South African Years, pp. 210-211; quotation from p. 211.

114. Ibid., p. 146.

115. Ibid., pp. 196-7.

116. See the comments of John Foster in "The Declassing of Language", New Left Review, No. 150, March/April 1985, p. 37.

117. Macmillan Complex South Africa, pp. 13, 277-8; quotations from p. 13 and 277.