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or
Diamonds are Forever - But Gold is for Now!

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WHATEVER DID HAPPEN AT JAGERSFONTEIN?

or

DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER - BUT GOLD IS FOR NOW!

by

Baruch Hirson, Julia Wells, and Judie Jancovich.[1]

The Turbulent Years - 1913-1914

On Saturday, 5 July 1913, the day after the declaration of a general strike, and a night of riots, British troops confronted crowds in central Johannesburg.[2] They dispersed groups in the streets, and then forming a square, fired volley after volley into the gathering crowd. Thereafter they fired at any civilian who came into view. More than twenty were killed, and several hundred were injured.

The 4th July had been no less violent. Dragoons and Mounted police, wielding pickhandles and flat swords, dispersed a meeting at which a general strike in support of the mine workers was to be announced. The crowd scattered, and stopped trams and trains running; burnt down the central railway station, and the Star newspaper building; looted gunsmiths, and broke down shop fronts. In neighbouring Benoni, where the strike began, crowds rampaged through the streets, burning down buildings, and beating up scabs. In other mining towns there was an uneasy calm. The cycle of violence only ended when Generals Botha and Smuts (the Prime Minister and his Minister of Defence) intervened on Saturday afternoon, and conceded the main demands of the striking miners.

Two weeks later, at a protest meeting in Cape Town, Rev. R. Balmsworth in a scathing condemnation of the shootings, stated:

> If you ask me who were the worst enemies of the town... I would say, the military, and those upper class hooligans who directed this cruel work. It is a strange thing to say, but nobody seemed afraid of the strikers, everybody was afraid of the soldiers.[3]

Olive Schreiner, novelist and socialist, believed the massacre

> should have served to show the mass of our people in this country the true conditions under which we are living. The death of those innocent persons will not have been in vain, if we make the light it has shed on our position as citizens of

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[1] Julia Wells did the research work on the woman's anti-pass campaign for her PhD; Judie Jancovich sought out the information on Jagersfontein; and Baruch Hirson found new material on the strikes, for a biography (together with Gwyn Williams) on D Ivon Jones.

[2] The country's defence force had just been reorganised, and was not ready for action; therefore British troops were requested by General Smuts. They were also undoubtedly more 'reliable'.

[3] Reported in Cape Times, 21 July 1913.

> South Africa one which will dominate our future actions, political and social.[4]

In a letter to Edward Carpenter she wrote:

> If they shoot us down in this way the moment WHITE labourers strike, what will it be whenever the native moves? And they are bringing in more and more oppressive laws against the latter. We have just passed a terrible native Land Bill - the worst bit of work we have done for years.[5]

It was too much to hope that in South Africa, whites would have learnt 'the true conditions under which [they] were living', but Olive Schreiner's fears of what would happen when the black workers moved, was tragically borne out on Friday, 9 January 1914. White railway men were out, and a general strike imminent, when several hundred Sotho workers refused to go underground at the diamond mine in Jagersfontein.[6] They were confronted, not by troops, but by over a hundred white workers, armed with shotguns, rifles and revolvers. Several volleys were fired, killing at least sixteen and wounding thirty-six (some seriously).[7]

First reports of this massacre in the press, were buried amidst news of the railway strike - and what appeared was bizarre, Nine thousand blacks had risen and stormed into the town, but were driven back by 500 neighbouring farmers, alongside miners armed by the diamond company. White women and children reputedly fled to Fauresmith or nearby hills, or found refuge in the town hall.[8] Later reports were more detailed, but still alarmist. Following the death of one of their compatriots, the Sotho in the mine stopped work and 'were in a most turbulent state'. They had 'created much

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[4] Ibid.

[5] Letter to E. Carpenter, quoted in Labour Leader, 28 August 1913. There is no copy in the Carpenter collection at Sheffield.

[6] Jagersfontein, in the Orange Free State, was six miles from Fauresmith. It boasted five hotels, a public library, two banks, and a town hall. The population, of some 8-9,000 (mostly black mineworkers) was largely concentrated in the mine, which produced the best quality diamonds in South Africa, and accounted for 10% of the country's output. They were sold almost exclusively in the USA. It had an authorised capital of £1m. pounds, half in preference shares paying cumulative dividends of 25% per annum. All other profits went to the other shares!

[7] There were garbled accounts in the South African press at the time, but no reports on the independent inquiry in Basutoland. R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill: The Life and Times of W.H. Andrews, Worker's Leader, Stewart Printing, Cape Town, c.1942, pp.160-1, gives a brief account; Terence Ranger consulted the Lesotho archives for his 'Faction Fighting, Race Consciousness and Worker Consciousness: A Note on the Jagersfontein Riots of 1914', South African Labour Bulletin, Vol.4, No.5, September 1978.

[8] These reports, with few variations, appeared in the local press, and were repeated in the British press: see e.g. Star, 10 January 1914; Manchester Guardian, 12 January 1914.

disturbance and smashed a number of houses in the compound',after moving initially 'determinedly towards the town, and it was only a shower of bullets which impeded their mad rush ...'[9]

Much was ascribed to the example set by white workers, and the Deputy Inspector of Mines, saying that the Sotho were aware of the strike on the Rand, concluded that:

> They ... understood that the whites were actually fighting - probably from not being able to distinguish in meaning between striking and fighting. It is notorious how quickly natives get into and how easily they become affected by excitement and unrest. Further comment is unnecessary (sic).[10]

He also claimed that the main culprits were several hundred Sotho workers, transferred from the Premier diamond mines in Pretoria, after striking seven weeks previously.[11] He also 'dismissed without comment' complaints of 'abuse of natives by miners [which] were of the most vague and illusive character'. It was 'purely a matter of rioting and disorder among a proportion of the native employees having had to be met by armed force'.[12]

Yet, Daniel Molipha (or Molifa), a Sotho miner, had died as the result of injuries received underground, and three white miners were accused of murdering him. One man was charged, but went free because of 'insufficient evidence' and the Attorney General refused to prosecute the others. There the matter rested - one further moment in the history of South Africa's working class that was buried with its victims, until disinterred many decades later.

In this paper we focus on some of the struggles of the pre-war years, and explore the factors that led to the radicalisation of leading members of the all white South African Labour Party (SALP). What seems to need explanation is not only this change, but given the extent of the clashes, why so few were affected; and why it was the strikes of white workers (and the miners in particular), but not the struggles of other ethnic groups - that pushed them to the left.

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[9] Transvaal Leader, 12 January 1914. Other local and foreign reports were similar.

[10] Deputy Inspector of Mines, Bloemfontein, 24 January 1914, 'Report to the Government Mining Engineer', Colonial Office (CO) 417/545.

[11] Police brought in to subdue the workers, had fired into the crowd and killed three and wounded nineteen.

[12] Ibid. This strike was reported in the press, and a report of the inquiry on the 'riot' of 23 November 1913 appeared in the Transvaal Leader, 3 January 1914.

Struggles, Convergent and Divergent

There was little peace in the Union of South Africa before the outbreak of the First World War. The institutions of the new state had to be restructured, or developed, and that included unifying the railways, drafting a national budget, establishing a new and unified defence force, The whites split into hostile camps after 1912, and Afrikaner nationalism reemerged under the wing of General Hertzog's National Party, with a populist rhetoric against British imperialism and demands for equal language rights. Concurrently, Gandhi emerged as a leader of the Indian petty bourgeoisie in a campaign against discriminatory taxes and marriage laws, precipitating a strike of indentured labourers on the sugar fields and the collieries, The African peoples, smarting at their inferior position in the new Union constitution,[13] were devastated by the new Land Act, and women in the Free State campaigned against the passes. And white workers, particularly on the Rand, were engaged in bitter struggle to improve working conditions, stop redundancies, and secure recognition for their trade unions.

Perhaps the politicians anticipated trouble in 1913. The press painted a sombre picture, lightened only by stories of society scandals. There was talk of the 'black menace' and warnings of a black revolt; reports on the conflict between Botha and Hertzog; fears of war in the Balkans; and concern over widespread famine in the countryside and economic stagnation in the towns. One commentator, referring to mid-1913 said:

> Depression reigned in South Africa; the unemployed wailed; the unemployable agitated; uncertainty stalked everywhere; we were all carrying on a hand-to-mouth existence.[14]

This was the backdrop to demonstrations, passive resistance, and strikes; imprisonments, massacres, and illegal deportations.

In May that miners at the New Kleinfortein mine came out, and all eyes turned to the Witwatersrand. Even the Balkan crisis took second place. In Britain, the Daily Chronicle noting that the Rand produced 42% of the total world gold, predicted 'dire financial disaster' if its flow were interrupted, with 'grave difficulties on the [world] money markets ... and a crushing blow to the Union of South Africa whose ... gold Industry is the keystone [to its

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[13] Blacks were excluded from parliament, and only a minority of men in the Cape had the vote.

[14] N. Levi, Jan Smuts: Being a Character Sketch of General the Hon. J.C. Smuts, K.C. MLA, Minister of Defence, Union of South Africa, Longmans, Green, Bombay, 1917, p.201.

finances]'.[15] The Daily News, fearing war in Europe urged the Botha government to stop the strike spreading, least there be a temporary curtailment of the gold supply,[16] and the Financial Times spoke of 'financial crisis' if shipments were suspended for long.[17] Only the Financier and Bullionist said that 'without adequate financial preparations being made', the strike could not last, but added in its next issue, that even if settled soon there would still be political uncertainty, and a 'somewhat dubious outlook for money'.[18]

Strikes on the Rand reverberated through the country, precisely because of the centrality of gold in both the local and international economies. No other campaign in 1913-14 affected the social and economic fabric of the country as did a strike in the gold fields, and no other protest brought so many persons into action. Africans alone protested over the Land Act, and Africans and Coloureds condemned the arrest of black women in the OFS; Sotho workers were shot in Pretoria and Jagersfontein but evoked no protest meeting, despite condemnation in the Basutoland Council. Only the Indian campaigns, had the support of a few devoted white intellectuals - most white workers and 'socialists' being antagonistic.[19]

The indifference, or open antagonism, to the struggles of other ethnic groups, underscored inter-community conflicts. The African Congress rejected a resolution of solidarity with white strikers in July 1913; Coloured leaders all but ignored the massacre of whites; and Gandhi said he would not campaign when white workers were on strike.[20] White workers ignored the struggles of other communities, or turned their guns on them (!). The SALP wanted all Indians repatriated,[21] and supported the Land Act because 'the government was carrying out one of the planks of the ... Party platform'.[22]

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[15] Daily Chronicle, 4 July, and 7 July 1913. South African gold production was £38m. ex £92m. world wide.

[16] Daily News and Leader, 3 July 1913.

[17] Financial Times, 4 July 1913. On the 7th. the paper spoke of an 'immense sigh of relief' because the strike was over.

[18] Financier and Bullionist, 4 July and 5 July 1913.

[19] The support of 'Tolstoyans' for the Indian campaign was exceptional, but these were isolated whites, and only later, when colliery and sugar field workers were on strike, did a few white trade unionists and socialists offer messages of solidarity.

[20] Gandhi was reluctant to embarass the government, but see Transvaal Leader, 10 January 1914, 'Indians want to Help Strikers'.

[21] F.H.P. Creswell, speaking in the Legislative Assembly, quoted in Rand Daily Mail, 13 May 1913.

[22] W.H. Andrews, speaking in the Legislative Assembly, as quoted by Rand Daily Mail, 16 May 1913.

These ethnic conflicts permeated the entire society, encompassing white workers and overseers who spurned the labourers; the 'ganger' (or contracting white miner) who was 'baas' to his black 'gang'; and all who employed black servants - whether they were white, Coloured or Indian. Barriers due to religion, language, and culture were not impermeable, but were nonetheless there, and affected members of all ethnic groups. The overbearing attitude of whites, and particularly of workers, combined the contempt of the artisan class for the unskilled worker. with that of colonial overmaster to local 'native'.[23]

Ultimately, the relationship between man and man, and between the ethnic groups was influenced by events on the mines, which dominated the economy. Together with the railways, tramways and docks, which serviced the mines and were controlled by the state or local authorities, they employed most of the country's working class, outside of agriculture and domestic service. Thus, most labour legislation, reflected the interests of the mines, and this reinforced the divisions of labour along colour lines in the country, It also decided the position of black women in society - but that was largely by exclusion. In the early decades of the twentieth century, the towns on the Witwatersrand were overwhelmingly male dominated, and this sex imbalance had a profound effect on family relationships, and a devastating effect on the development of the children.[24]

There is one further dimension of ethnic division that has not previously attracted attention - and needs further investigation. Struggles by different ethnic groups did not reinforce each other, but set communities even further apart. The whites on strike demanded that blacks be kept out of some occupations; black women opposed passes that whites insisted they carry; black miners wanted bullying overseers removed, and so on. There were also slogans (or beliefs), and methods of struggle, that set the groups apart. Satyagraha and courting arrest was not a tactic that many whites would adopt, and the millinarian beliefs expressed by Indian labourers during their strike (and particularly their hope that rajahs would rescue them - or punish them!) could find little resonance from other communities.

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[23] This included the rights to vote, sit in parliament, man the bureaucracy, join the armed forces and become officers.

[24] A study of the impact of segregation on black children, so urgently needed, is outside the scope of this paper.

Black Friday ... And Bloody Saturday[25]

There were 38,500 white workers employed on the Witwatersrand in 1913: some 22,000 on the mines, and 4,500 on the railways, the rest distributed in the building trade, tramways, print shops, electric power works, and small workshops.[26] The mines employed some 200,000 Africans, mostly as underground labourers; other Africans were employed in domestic service (or as washermen), or in the many workshops. All were unskilled, and most were employed for heavy manual workers, or as carriers and cleaners.

Trade unions consisted of only a tiny minority of the work force and were almost all craft dominated, restricted to whites, and concerned with wages and work conditions. If they had any political aims, it was for the reservation of certain jobs for whites, or more ominously, that all Africans be removed from the towns. The Transvaal Miners Association (TMA) argued differently: they wanted black labourers, but restricted to unskilled jobs, and they opposed the use of whites as unskilled workers, least they be promoted, and replace them. Furthermore the TMA's main aim was not higher wages, but recognition of the union, an eight hour day bank-to-bank - to shorten the time at the working face, and to combat the dreaded 'white death' (or miners' phthisis).

Phthisis, caused by the inhalation of white rock particles, produced by drilling and dynamiting, was the greatest killer on the Rand, accounting for thousands of death every year, cutting down the average life expectancy to five, or only four, years in many cases - and even where the miners did not die, 'their active working life ... [was] only four years'.[27] Until this was controlled, the one ameliorating factor would be a shorter working day. Lord Gladstone, in a dispatch to the Colonial Office, after the 1913 strike said that:

> The principle factor [for the unrest] has undoubtedly been the growing realization ... of the frightful risks from the ravages of miner's phthisis to which their work exposes them... They gamble with their lives for high wages, but there remains the haunting dread of the future, and to earn £100 a month (sic) is for them no soporific.
> ... phthisis has made their life abnormal, and the capitalists who are the only visible beneficiaries under the system

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[25] The Evening Chronicle, July 1913, passim, carried a series of articles on the July days, using this heading.

[26] Gladstone to Colonial Office, 22 January 1914, CO 4990. On 31 January he gave the total number of white workers as 92,000.

[27] Evening Chronicle, 5 June 1913.

> ...have become ... the focus of a bitter class hatred on the part of many of the men.[28]

R.L. Outhwaite, the British M.P. who was on the Rand during the miners strike in 1907, said that the action aimed at 'an intolerable death-dealing tyranny' and 'endeavour[ed] to break ... the terrible relations' leading to the high mortality in the mines.[29] Reynold's Newspaper in several articles on the gold mines, which caused a stir on the Rand, gave statistics of fatalities under the headline 'City of Dreadful Death',[30] and D. Ivon Jones wrote to say that of the 15 men on the 1907 strike committee, ten had since died of phthisis, three had the disease but were still alive, and all but one other were dead, some possibly from the same cause.[31] The issue was summed up by a pro-labour paper that said:

> Phthisis must be destroyed or it will destroy the mines, and with them the Rand. This is where the length of the day comes into the discussion.[32]

However, that was not the whole story. There was deep resentment amongst Labour supporters against the government, the mine magnates and the press (which was regarded as being in their hands).[33] Since 1911 the TMA had fought the Randlords, over the reduction of overtime pay and retrenchment; victimisation of union officials; and the refusal of management to recognise the union, or even communicate with union officials on conciliation boards.[34] In addition it

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[28] Gladstone to Colonial Office, 20 July 1913, CO 27645. On 31 January 1914, he said miners earned £20-40 a month, CO 5950.

[29] Outhwaits, in Daily Chronicle, 7 July 1913, quoted the South African parliament, and also an authority's claim that 'at least 150,000, probably 250,000, and possibly 350,000' were killed, maimed and scrapped in the mines since the end of the [Boer] war.

[30] Reynold's Newspaper, 3 August 1913. The article gave figures of African fatalities, and quoted doctor's reports on men who never reached their kraals, but were found dead on the roads.

[31] Reynold's Newspaper, 14 September 1913. Jones' letter was quoted in an editorial. The strike of 1907, over the introduction of more rockdrills per supervisor, was occasioned by the fear of phthisis.

[32] Evening Chronicle, 4 June 1913.

[33] Manchester Guardian, 9 July 1913. The causes of the strike as given by Labour leaders to the Daily Chronicle correspondent in Johannesburg. The principle cause was stated to be the 'terrible mortality in the mines'.

[34] Ibid.; Elaine Katz, A Trade Union Aristocracy: A History of White Workers in the Transvaal and the General Strike of 1913, African Studies Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, 1976, pp.326-9; R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.126.

was claimed that there was fear in some towns least marginal mines be closed without notice, and the men left without employment.[35]

Yet, in all the conflicts with management, the white workers and their supporters showed only contempt for the Africans. In what must stand as the most cynical of the many statements of the time, that of the Evening Chronicle, sturdy champion of the miners, surpasses all others. In an editorial column, the paper provided a rough calculation of the cost to management of shortening the working day to provide an 8 hour bank-to-bank day. They estimated that if applied to all workers the annual cost would be £600,000, but if only white workers were considered, the cost would be £300,000. The editor concluded:

> Our own view is that there is very little objection to such differential treatment if the true losses can be adjusted.[36]

When the clash came, it was at the New Kleinfontein mine in Benoni - and the issue was union activity:

> The management at last arrived at the fact that they were losing a good deal of profit and appointed a new manager to 'cleanse the stable'.[37]

The new manager, E.H. Bulman, was reputedly a hard task master, and together with a new underground manager, secured the dismissal or resignation, of 'redundant' miners.[38] He also cancelled the Saturday half day holiday that mechanics had long enjoyed, and when they protested, replaced them by non-union labour.

The Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE) and TMA demanded that the Saturday half-day be restored, but management was adamant. The Transvaal Federation of Trades (the trade union federal body) got a strike committee elected, and demanded the reinstatement of the sacked, and recognition of the TMA. By 27 May, engine drivers and reduction workers were out and the strike was complete. The management retreated when told by an inspector of labour that the dismissals contravened the Industrial Disputes Prevention Act, but

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[35] Evening Chronicle, 1 September 1913. Letter from Buss Melman, who supported the demands of the 'world working class', and the SALP, and wanted security of tenure ,,, if South Africa was to be kept a 'white man's country'.

[36] Evening Chronicle, 3 June 1913.

[37] Letter from F.D.P. Chaplin, joint general manager of Consolidated Gold Fields to J.X. Merriman, 15 July 1913, quoted by Katz, Trade Union Aristocracy, p.382.

[38] Katz, ibid., p. 381.

would not ommunicate directly with the union. On 12 June, with the strike still total, the management brought in scabs.[39]

On 19 June miners at Van Ryn came out in sympathy with New Kleinfontein. Two days later five strike leaders were arrested and infuriated workers all but stormed the Benoni police station.[40] Thereafter, workers led by pipers in Highlands attire and women carrying red banners, marched to mines and Victoria Falls and Transvaal Power Company (VFP) stations (which supplied electricity to the mines), appealing to the workers to come out,[41] and were seldom turned away. By the end of June nine mines were idle - except for pumpmen, permitted by the strike committee to stay, to prevent flooding.[42]

Scabs were attacked, houses burnt down, and G.W. Mason, a union official declared at a meeting that:

> No scab had any right to live as long as there was a pool of water deep enough to drown him in, or a rope long enough to hang him with.[43]

The government brought in 540 Royal Scots in a show of force, but by 2 July the strike had spread to many of the VFP stations. A broader committee took control and declared a general strike which was to be announced at the Johannesburg market square on Friday 4 July. The mmeting was banned under the old Transvaal Republic Law 6 of 1894, (forbidding meetings, and allowing troops to disperse more than six persons on a public square).[44] But a similar ban had been defied in Benoni on 29 June, and it was not believed that this would be any different!

The meeting began, but when the third speaker rose, troops and mounted police wielding pickhandles, charged and knocked people down indiscriminantly. When the crowd retaliated with stones and bottles, swords were drawn, and again and again (using flat blades)

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[39] This account is compiled from, newspaper accounts; Cope, Comrade Bill; and Katz, Trade Union Aristocracy, Ch. 9.

[40] Rand Daily Mail, 21 June 1913.

[41] Cape Times, 2 July 1913, described the procession as the 'Great Red Army'.

[42] Transvaal Leader, 1 July 1913. If the men at the VFP stations came out, the pumps would be inoperable. By 4 July at least one station (Rosherville) was out, and workers at Brakpan and Vereeniging, were considering their position.

[43] Transvaal Leader, 1 July 1913, reporting a charge of incitement to violence against Mason, at the Benoni court.

[44] Outhwaite, Reynold's Newspaper, 6 July 1913. He also wrote of trade unions being 'a matter of life and death for the workers if they are to prevent the spread of phthisis'.

the crowd was driven back, reformed, and met a new onslaught.[45] People scattered, halted the trains, stopped the trams,[46] and set the centre of Johannesburg ablaze (see above). And there were running battles between police and those who had seized guns.

On the 5th, the General Strike on the Rand was complete, and in the early afternoon, as crowds collected near the Rand Club the Dragoons formed a square and fired. Press reports, and Gladstone's dispatches exonerated the troops, but eye-witnesses told a different story. One man at the scene wrote:

> Opposite the [Rand] Club the cavalry came to the halt and dismounted, the crowd flying for safety to the pavements. The crowd finding the military did not pursue, halted and watched the scene, and whilst some were thus standing and others trying to get away, a volley was fired (blank so I am informed). Seeing that no harm was done the crowd still watched. Practically without an interval another volley was fired - ball this time - and they dropped. Altogether eight or nine volleys were fired and I believe everyone in the vicinity will agree that there was no appreciable pause between any of the volleys. It was load and fire. The crowds were running, and as they ran the shots were pouring into them. I saw the firing, saw the people drop. I was through the war with the first Cavalry Brigade, but I have never seen such a sight as the indiscriminate shooting of men, women, and children.[47]

Over 20 lay dead, and over 200 were wounded,[48] Correspondents likened the events to the Paris Commune,[49] but that was fanciful. The workers were furious, but did not try to remove the government.[50] Lumpen elements used the occasion to loot the stores of Indians in Vrededorp, Fordsburg and Newlands.[51] Even in Benoni, the

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[45] Cape Times, 21 July 1913, from a letter sent by a clergyman to Rev Balmsworth, and read out at the protest meeting. (see above).

[46] Cape Times, 8 July 1913. This report noted the 'great part' played by women who incited the crowd to resist police and troops on the 4th, led the holding up of the trams, brought the railways to a standstill, and 'showed the way to ... miners who closed down the stores in town'.

[47] Letter written by 'For Valour', Evening Chronicle, 9 July 1913. Similar letters, written by 'A Scotchman' and by A.S. Purchase, appeared on 10, 11 July. Extracts of the first letter were reprinted in Labour Leader, (London), 7 August 1913.

[48] Evening Chronicle, 26 September 1913, reported that the number of wounded treated at the Johannesburg Hospital for wounds received on 4 and 5 July was about 170; 89 had been detained for treatment, 12 had died, and 12 were still in hospital. On 7 July the paper said that the real total would never be known, as many sought their own medical attention.

[49] Daily Chronicle, 7 July 1913.

[50] Yet, see Evening Chronicle, 8 July, 1913, for a rumour, believed by many, that General Hertzog was marching on Johannesburg with 3-25,000 oprecht (upright) burghers to help the strikers.

[51] Evening Chronicle, 9 July 1913.

centre of greatest violence, there was no signs of an assault on the state. The goods station was burnt to the ground, scabs assaulted and some of their houses or possessions destroyed, wagons held up or destroyed, and according to one report: 'The Red Flag has been supreme ... it waves from hundreds of houses and stores. The police and military have been impotent...'[52] The government summonsed 800-1000 cavalrymen to the Rand the following morning:[53] and the red flags disappeared.

On the afternoon of the 5th, Botha and Smuts travelled from Pretoria and agreed a truce with the Federation; appearing to supercede, but acting in concert with the mining magnates. The strike was called off and all disturbances were to end; there was to be no victimisation, and workers' grievances would be investigated. The government undertook to compensate the scabs,[54] but that was disavowed by the trade unions. Part of the waiting crowd rejected the truce with cries of, 'What about the shooting?', 'What about the dead?', and 'You've been bought'.[55] Others, who accepted the truce, agreed that it should have been voted on by strikers.[56] Mary Fitzgerald, Dave Kendall, [?] Horak (representing Afrikaner workers), and others, claimed the settlement offered nothing to the vast majority who came out, and resolved to continue the strike.[57] But there was no organisation or means to continue, and men returned belatedly to work.

On Sunday the strike committee constituted itself as a Committee of Public Safety, posting pickets at hotels, bottle stores and other threatened premises, while police and military guarded public buildings, banks, and residences of magnates, the Chief of Police, and Public Prosecutor.[58] Of the 120 persons arrested on Saturday, 25 were charged with looting, the rest with 'public violence'.[59]

Some Africans stopped work in June, at times encouraged by trade unionists who grasped the need for joint working class action.

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[52] Transvaal Leader, 8 July 1913.

[53] Daily Chronicle, 4 July 1913.

[54] Transvaal Leader, 8 July 1913. (No papers appeared on Monday the 7th.)

[55] Daily Chronicle, 7 July 1913.

[56] This was the view of Waterston, a leading member of the SALP. Transvaal Leader, 8 July 1913.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Cape Times, 8 July 1913.

[59] Transvaal Leader, 8 July 1913.

R.B. Waterston, a strike leaders, called on black workers to: 'Tchella lo Baas wena funa maningi mali and picanniny sebenza' ('Tell the bosses you want more money and less work'), but many white workers disapproved; and Dan Simons caused a stir in his address at a Benoni open-air meeting with the words, 'Ladies, Gentlemen, and Kaffir Brethren'.[40]

After the 5th many black workers came out, demanding higher wages, or wages deducted for days in which the mine had been idle. At several mines Africans, wearing red rosettes, refused to go underground,[41] and demanded 5s. a day (compared to the existing wage of 2s). However, most returned to work after a show of force by troops or mounted police, or threats of instant dismissal. The 'ring leaders' and those who would not resume work, were arrested. Once again, British troops confronted the workers, with bayonets drawn, or firing overhead, or 'into the ground near their feet', or charging with iron-shod pickhandles; one eye-witness claiming that two workers were killed at the Meyer and Charlton by men of the Staffordshire Regiment.[42] Some workers demanded the release of imprisoned colleagues, or at City and Suburban, shouted 'Kill the Police!',[43] but the strike was over.

The General Strike of 1914

> If the miners struck alone, Johannesburg could still contrive to get along for a time - probably for longer than the mines could hold out; if the railwaymen struck too, the case of Johannesburg was desperate.
>
> Round Table[44]

Throughout July there was talk, first of resuming the strike, then of a 'suspended strike' (allowing for a walk out at any time), and finally at the end of the month, the Federation of Trades decided to abandon the strike and 'rely upon our industrial and political organisations to remedy our grievances'.[45] Through this period the government was condemned by the Federation and the Amalgamated Society of Railway and Harbour Servants (ASRHS), for

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[40] Report of meeting of 13 June, Cape Times, 9 July 1913.

[41] The numbers involved are not known. Press reports gave 9,000 in the central mining area nearest Johannesburg, - 5,000 at Village Main Reef; 1,000 at City and Suburban; 1,000 at Meyer and Charlton (Daily Chronicle, 9 July); 1,500 in Randfontein (Manchester Guardian, 7 July); 500 at New Modderfontein (Transvaal Leader, 10 July).

[42] Evening Chronicle, 11 July 1913.

[43] Transvaal Leader, 11 July 1913.

[44] Round Table, 1914, 'The South African Strike', pp.231-54.

[45] Transvaal Leader, 1 August 1913.

refusing to recognise the railwayman's union, and not investigating workers' complaints - chief of which were the long hours worked by train crews, and the pay of unskilled white workers who received 3s.4d, 4s, or at most 5s. per day, when bare subsistence was said by the union to be 8s. per day.[46]

General Smuts said that accepting the terms of the strike leaders on the 5th, was 'one of the hardest things [he had] ever had to do', and he resolved to be ready next time.[47] Contingency plans were drafted, requesting that all available imperial troops be placed at the disposal of the government; advising mayors on procedures to be followed; and allocating control officers and headquarters in twelve central areas, in the event of a fresh strike. Proclamations were drafted, to be signed by the Governor-General and Smuts when required, specifying measures to suppress disturbances, and maintain order and public safety.[48]

Reports of dynamite being found on railway platforms, in culverts, and so on, added to the state of uncertainty,[49] In September 1913, when the government was still investigating workers' conditions, in fulfillment of the July agreement, the Minister for railways announced that retrenchments would be necessary, and on Christmas eve, the first dismissal notices were handed out, possibly as a provocation, because the railways were busy, and men were working overtime. J.H. Poutsma, the union secretary, had threatened to stop the railways at the first sign of dismissals, and a strike was called for Friday 8 January.

Meanwhile, on 2 January, white miners in the Natal collieries came out, demanding 20s. per day, a 57 hour week, and overtime at one-and-a-half. They also demanded the reinstatement of four men, laid off because there was a shortage of black labour. Over a thousand black workers also took action, demanding £5 per month, but they went back when warned that the strike was illegal. The

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[46] Evening Chronicle, 21 October 1913, gives details on wage rates, from the secretary of the Braamfontein branch of the ASRAS. Union recognition was held up by ASRHS refusal to concede the administration's right to alter the union's rules 'if deemed necessary'.

[47] There were several reports that at one stage J. Bain held a pistol to Smuts' head, to stop an armed unit storming into the negotiating room.

[48] Gladstone Dispatch enclosing letters from the Prime Minister's office, dated 25 July 1913, CO 29414. There were also other drafts on the enrolment of special constables, and so on.

[49] See e.g. Rand Daily Mail, 11 July 1913. It seems that this was largely the work of provocateurs.

whites called for a general strike, and although their executive demurred, the threat remained.[70]

The railway strike started on the 8th, and most railway workshop employees came out, as did the train crews in some districts - but too few to cause much dislocation.[71] There were doubts about the role played by Poutsma in what happened: he did not consult the branches, nor other unions with members on the railways, and there were few signs of preparation, locally or nationally. Members of the Federation advised against the strike, and they were furious when the strike was announced.[72] However, there were sympathy walk outs by typographers, building and Municipal workers, and colliery workers, indicative of the depression and discontent of the time. A week later, just over 9,000 gold miners were out, The Federation closed ranks and after a ballot, a general strike was called for the 14th. This was countered by a declaration of Martial Law, and the total number of workers who responded is unknown, but in the confusion numbers had little meaning.

Strikers first tried, unsuccessfully, to pull the train crews out, and then the signalmen, and there was also some attempts at sabotage. Official sources listed thirty eight instances in which portions of lines were blown away, explosions occurred on trains, or on railway property, points were interfered with, and so on.[73] But the strike could not have succeeded - and some suspected at the time 'that the crisis was deliberately sought and prepared for by the government' to destroy the trade unions and the Labour Party,[74] with Poutsma as the witting or unwitting tool. On the 7th troops occupied railway stations and workshops in Johannesburg, Germiston and Pretoria. Poutsma, Justin Nield (his deputy) and Colin Wade of the SALP were arrested on the 10th, and held incommunicado.[75] Then came Martial Law on the 13th; the proclamations and special passes

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[70] Ibid., pp. 150-51; Transvaal Leader, 2 January 1914.

[71] Ann O'Quigley, 'The 1914 Strike', The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries, Vol.II, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 1981.

[72] Cope, Comrade Bill, p. 148, says 'he played a leading and exceedingly suspicious role ...' See also pp.150-2 on the position in the union.

[73] A printed list of 'secret outrages committed or attempted', during the strike of January 1914, CO 7843. See also Manchester Guardian, 10 January 1914.

[74] Letter sent indirectly to the Colonial Office, of 21 January 1914, signed by leading Labourites, W.H. Andrews MLA (President of the SALP), H.W. Sampson MLA, W. Wybergh, S.P. Bunting, F.A.W. Lucas, and D. Dingwell, CO 5258.

[75] O'Quigley, 'The 1914 Strike'.

for movement in proclaimed areas, having been printed in anticipation in December.[76]

The nature of Smuts' measures were described in the letter of 21 January by SALP leaders (as quoted above):

> The situation prevailing here is intolerable, and quite unprecedented under the British flag and constitution.
> The story which has been put about by the South African press, and no doubt cabled home, of a Syndicalist Revolution, is entire rubbish, and without the slightest foundation, being designed partly for British consumption, and partly to enlist middle class sympathy out here.
> ... It is a deliberate effort to suppress their political opponents by removing the leaders and terrorising the rank and file, and at the same time to swamp Hertzogism by exciting Dutch racialism against the 'common enemy'.
> The whole affair has been on our side a peaceful industrial dispute: the Mass Meeting on Sunday, January 11th on Market Square was not only perfectly orderly, good humoured and self controlled, but it afforded a dramatic proof that the disturbances of the previous July were directly due to the action of the Police and soldiery in charging the crowd.
> On this occasion not a Policeman or soldier was to be seen, and although the Authorities had suspended the local tram service, the crowd was greatly larger than the one that had collected on July 4th.

The authors listed the stringent measures imposed under martial law. The offices of trade unions and the SALP had been raided, as had printing shops that produced leaflets for the labour movement - and their machines destroyed. There were arrests, without legal help being allowed, of M.Ps (Creswell and T. Boydell); of Provincial and town councillors, and of candidates in forthcoming elections; and of the entire executives of the ASE and the ASRHS, although all opposed violence:

> The severest sentences are anticipated and the deportation of the Leaders is believed to be imminent. Railway and mine workers are being evicted everywhere.
> It is an offence ... to advise any person to strike or to continue to strike or to assist a striker or his family in any way. The police also looted the Strike Distress Committee's food supply in Pretoria.

There were bans on wearing SALP colours, on the red flag, or using the words 'scab' and 'blackleg'. 'A man got £2 or fourteen days for looking 'sneeringly' at a Policeman ...' Permits were needed to cross magisterial boundaries, or to use wheeled vehicles (and these were usually refused); meetings of more than six persons were banned; news censored; and prominent persons restricted to their houses, or shadowed by police spies:

> All centres are swarming with Burghers, who are to be allowed to retain their arms and accoutrements permanently.
> Racialism has been directly revived by the Government through this means and has received great impetus...

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[76] Cope, Comrade Bill, p.150. The proclamation terms were printed in the press, see Transvaal Leader, 14 January 1914.

> The public is menaced everywhere by Police, Burghers and Civilian Force with fixed bayonets. Unoffending people walking the streets are ruthlessly handled, herded into arcades, and driven like cattle to the Charge Office under Police guard.
> Apart from all questions of detail, the serious features are that, as in the case of the Indians, the armed forces of the country are being used, not to suppress violence, but to terrorise men into working. Secondly. That the public services of the country, such as post, telegraph, telephone and the public press are being controlled under the pretext of Martial Law not merely so as to prevent incitement to violence but to prevent any criticism of the Government and to avoid any information being made public either here or in England which the Government finds inconvenient. Thirdly. That these things are being done for Party Political purposes, relating partly to the domestic issues between Botha and Hertzog, but still more to the tacit combination of Botha and the capitalists to stem the rising forces of the Labour Party, in particular of Botha's public and repeated assertions that 'socialism cannot be allowed in South Africa'.

After commenting on General de la Rey's statement that his men had responded 'to the call of their party, which was represented by the Government in power', they concluded that the government's actions would 'undoubtedly be endorsed by the Union Parliament', and they hoped the Indemnity Bill would be vetoed by the king.

Some 70-100,000 men from the army, defence force, police, and burgher 'commandos', were called up by the government - including many who were strikers;[77] and special constables were enrolled to replace police called up for strike duty. All railways, communication networks, power stations, and mines were placed under guard.[78] On 15 January the mass round up of trade unionists began. First the Pretoria and Johannesburg strike committees, and hundreds of 'strikers' in Benoni. Activists in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, Volksrust, Bloemfontein, Cape Town, and so on, were arrested. The armed forces were instructed to root out the forces of 'anarchy', and the nadir of this action consisted of investing the Trades Hall with 4,000 troops, training a field gun on the building, and demanding the surrender of the incumbents - eleven members of the Federation executive, and thirty two pickets.[79]

The use of the army was not without its own internal contradictions. There were 30,000 burghers under arms, and there was open talk of the commanders arresting Botha and Smuts, and proclaiming a Republic. Denys Reitz, a Botha man, recalled that the troops he led from Heilbron, in the Free State, had to be harangued for two days

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[77] Gladstone Dispatch, 22 January, CO 4990, p.16.

[78] O'Quigley, 'The 1914 Strike'; Cope, Comrade Bill, pp.154-5, describes the measures (and the brutalities) of the armed forces. The Transvaal Leader, 13 January 1914, under the heading 'Free State an Armed Camp', said that streets in Bloemfontein recalled war days, but that strikers were 'orderly and peaceful'.

[79] Cope, Comrade Bill, p.153.

before they would cross into the Transvaal.[80] They were also bent on discrediting the government - thus General Beyers, the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief, gave orders in Germiston to arrest 'every man if he looked like a striker ...' and marching at the head of his troops, deliberately created a great deal of resentment among orderly citizens.[81] Whether other brutalities were similarly motivated is not recorded. Troops wielded sjamboks and rifle butts indiscriminately, and men and women were herded into cattle pens, or marched several miles to gaols, and so on.[82] By way of contrast, members of Commandos fraternised with strikers in some districts, after hearing their complaints.

The strike was over by the 21st, and the men went back defeated. Nearly 700 railwaymen were retrenched, and many had to accept lower rates of pay.[83] The position of the ASRHS was precarious, with the men 'crushed and dispirited', and working under conditions that left them in despair. They could 'not cease work, nor absent themselves from duty, nor write to the press, nor in any way communicate their grievances to the public - under the threatened penalty of six months hard labour, or a fine of £50, or both'.[84] There was also widespread victimisation. Hundreds of strikers were blacklisted; former executive members of the ASRHS were dismissed, and in some regions, membership of the union was proscribed.

The ultimate move by Smuts, was to covertly move nine men on the night of 27/28 January, from prison in Johannesburg, and place them on the Umgeni in Durban. Despite attempts by members of the SALP to have this illegal deportation stopped, the boat could not be stopped at sea, and the men, not all of them leaders of the strike, were shipped to Britain.[85] Smuts was indemnified by parliament, but he had antagonised many people, and this was made obvious by the election results for the Transvaal Provincial Council elections, in which the SALP made significant advances, and won 23 seats.

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[80] Denys Reitz, Trekking On, Faber, 1933, pp. 63-5.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Cope, Comrade Bill, p.154.

[83] O'Quigley, 'The 1914 Strike'.

[84] Letters from J. Nield to his sister, Ada Nield Chew, reprinted in Labour Leader, 18 June 1914, and in Socialist (Glasgow), July 1914.

[85] The deportation was forecast in the letter to the Colonial Office of 21 January (above). Cope, Comrade Bill, p.158, cites a similar prediction in the conservative South Africa ten days before the event.

The Natal Indian Worker's Strike[86]

> For ninety years after emancipation, sugar planters and sugar workers ... worked out the inheritance of slavery... As part of the world demand for raw materials, the Indians voyaged across the seas ... to labour upon the plantations ...
>
> Hugh Tinker, A New System of Slavery[87]

From 1860-1911 Indian indentured labourers arrived in South Africa primarily to work on the sugar plantations, and then in the collieries, the railways and elsewhere.[88] In 1903, the Indian government set a quota after the rejection of its demand that legal disabilities be mitigated,[89] but the system continued until 1911, when stopped by the Union government. The whites of South Africa divided on the issue. Employers saw advantages: indentured labour was not easily organisable, and wages on the plantations were subminimal.[90] The housing was squalid, the rations poor, and hours of work during the busy season inhuman.[91] But traders opposed their Indian counterparts (most of whom arrived to cater for the labourers); and white workers, trade union leaders and members of the SALP were vehemently anti-Indian and urged repatriation, fearing that white wages would be undercut.

Men were promised a free return passage after five years indentured, and five years 'free' service, or a plot of land. To discourage those who opted to stay, a £3 yearly tax was imposed in 1902 on every non-indentured adult who had arrived after 1895, and their children (including girls over 12 years, and boys over 16). There were other discriminatory measures, including the proposed invalidation of customary marriages (partly to prevent spouses of

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[86] See the pioneer work by Maureen Tayal Swan, 'The 1913 Natal Indian Strike', Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol.10, No.2, April 1984.

[87] Hugh Tinker, A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas, 1830-1920, OUP, London, 1974, p.19.

[88] See M. Tayal, 'Natal Indentured Labour in Natal, 1890-1911', Indian Economic and Social History Review, Vol.14, No.4, 152,184 labourers entered Natal from Madras and Calcutta between 1860-66 and 1874-1911. 26,000 were on plantations in 1908 and 18,000 in 1911.

[89] Tinker, New System of Slavery, pp. 297-8, states that Sir Alfred Milner's request in 1903 for 100,000 men to work on the railways of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, was blocked for this reason.

[90] Henry S.L. Polak, The Indians of South Africa: Helots in the Empire and How They are Treated, Nateson, Madras, 1909, p. 48. Men got 10s.x1s.-14s. per month and adult women and youth 5s.x6d.-7s. for the first five years; and 16-20s. and 8-10s. respectively for a second term.

[91] Swan, 'The 1913 Natal Indian Strike', p. 242.

multiple marriages entering the country), a bar on crossing provincial borders without permits, and a register for Indians in the Transvaal (to determine the right of residence).[72]

The provincial and national Indian associations petitioned and agitated against these discriminatory and offensive regulations, and Gandhi conducted a personal crusade to get them repealed, co-operating at times with some members of the Indian organisations. His Satyagraha (akin to 'soul-force' and disavowing active retaliation against an opponent) had little appeal for the indentured worker - with whom Gandhi had no empathy, and little if any contact. During 1910-11 Gandhi campaigned against registration in the Transvaal, but this collapsed when Indians found their trading licences would be renewed only after registration. Thereafter Gandhi campaigned for the repeal of the £3 tax, and this evoked a response from the Indian working class, far beyond expectations.[73]

The Indian working class in 1913-14 consisted of some 3,800 colliery worker, 18,000 on sugar plantations, 2,700 on public bodies (including railway men), and 2,500 in other occupations.[74] The colliery workers were the first to respond to a strike call by Gandhi and his co-workers, and starting on 14 October some 2,500 had stopped work by the 27th. The sugar workers started coming out on 5 November, and a general strike called from Monday 10 November, involved some 17-19,000 men [and an unstated number of women] for periods ranging from a few days, to three or four weeks.[75] Newspaper reports indicated that all branches of industry in Durban were effected, and that railway workers, municipal services, messengers, drivers, cooks, and even house servants across Natal were out.[76]

The extent of the strike was indicative of the two factors that weighed on every worker: the squeeze they felt in a period of economic depression, and their frustration in trying to escape from

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[72] Indians were forbidden entry into the Orange Free State, and faced restrictions in the other Provinces.

[73] See Swan, 'The 1913 Natal Indian Strike', for the factions inside the petty bourgeoisie, and their attitudes to the workers; also a review (p. 247) of the Transvaal campaign and its collapse by 1911. See also M.K. Gandhi, Satyagraha in South Africa, Navajivan, Ahmedabad, 1972.

[74] Report of the Indian Enquiry Commission, Cape Town, UG16-1914. See also Swan, p.249.

[75] J.A. Polkinghorne, 'Report of Deputy Director of Indian Immigrants, Natal, for the Year Ending 31st December 1913'. CO 12682.

[76] Transvaal Leader, 18 November 1913.

servitude. The £3 tax, which acted as a barrier to their entering the free labour market, or even escaping from proletarianization was the triggering factor in their entering the strike, but their objectives and hopes ranged from that of the more permanent workers who hoped to improve their work conditions; to plantation workers, living under the most degrading conditions, and subjected to supervision that was brutal, who believed in the intervention of a rajah, who (in one version) would rescue them from their desperate position.[97]

On 14 October 78 workers from the Farleigh colliery came out on strike. When ordered to return to work by the 17th or face prosecution, they were joined by some 2,000 workers from nine mines. One week later, 4-5,000 (including railway men) were out in northern Natal.[98] Initially, the mines kept working, and although no attempt was made to call the African workers out, the strike effected the output of coal seriously.[99] On the 29th, the workers were ordered to return, or have their rations (which many mines still supplied) withdrawn, lose pay and be in breach of contract.[100]

At this juncture the workers joined the satyagrahists in illegally crossing the Transvaal border. Gandhi hoped that their arrest would enhance his campaign, and the workers would get food and shelter in the gaols. From 29-31 October 750 coal miners, some with families, moved towards the border, and within days, 4,000 were on the march. The first batch of volunteers were arrested and sentenced to return to the mines, which were proclaimed outstations of the prisons in Newcastle and Dundee, and forced to work under the staff who were appointed temporary warders.[101] However, the government was in no hurry to arrest most of the marchers, and the organisers had to to supply, and pay for, the marcher's food.[102]

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[97] Swan, 'The 1913 Natal Indian Strike'. The 'rajah' appeared either as a beneficent saviour, or as a punisher of non-strikers. There were also claims that Gokhale of the Indian Congress was coming to abolish the tax, but some said they had come out in support of Gandhi.

[98] Transvaal Leader, 23 October 1913.

[99] Gandhi, quoted in Transvaal Leader, 27 October 1913, said that Africans were not being asked to strike, because there were no complaints against the employers (sic).

[100] Transvaal Leader, 30 October 1913.

[101] H. Polak, et al, Mahatma Gandhi, Odhams, 1949, pp.86-7. The trial was reported in Transvaal Leader, 25 October 1913, The number sentenced is uncertain, because of varying reports in different papers, but was probably less than twenty.

[102] The minimum ration per adult, of one and a half loaves of bread daily, and some sugar, cost thousands of pounds per month.

The arrest of Gandhi seemed to bring the campaign to an end, and it might have collapsed, but for its spread to the plantations. Yet no one claimed responsibility for calling the plantation workers out, and Gandhi said that he had told them emphatically not to strike. Writing to Senator Campbell, he said that after his arrest it was 'impossible to control the men, and the movement became not only spontaneous, but is assumed gigantic proportions'.[103] Gandhi explained that he had tried to confine the strike to the collieries, hoping 'that this would achieve the purpose aimed at'. He said not a word about conditions on the plantations, nor on the shooting of strikers (see below), and he assured the Senator, that he was so indebted to him for trying to get the tax repealed, that if he had called the plantations out, Campbell's men would have been last on the list.

The strike of field workers and mill operators, was a mix of peasant revolt and industrial action. Cane fields were burnt[104] and groups of workers patrolled the fields to prevent any work, while others stayed in their barracks, and refused to venture out. Local leaders emerged, and were defiant. One group confronted by police at Lamarcy, near Verulam, said that Gandhi had told them not to work, and 'The police could shoot if they chose, but they would not work'.[105] There was at least one clash in which there was shooting. Colin Campbell, son of the Senator, led troopers across the Mount Edgecombe estate, to persuade workers to go back to the fields, (by promising to restart rations).[106] Workers who would not comply came under gunfire, and at least six were killed and forty wounded.[107]

The strike bit deep in Natal. Ships ran short of supplies of bunkering coal, and the mines lost export orders they could not be sure of executing. Hotels, shops, and railways were short of labour, and alternative staff had to be trained. But it was Indian businessmen who suffered most, and many were reported to be doing

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[103] Letter to Senator Marshall Campbell, owner of the Natal Estates, reprinted in Rand Daily Mail, 5 January 1914.

[104] Evening Chronicle, 17 November 1913, reported that 150 acres of cane were destroyed, after strips of cane were set alight.

[105] Evening Chronicle, 17 November 1913.

[106] Press reports, mainly quoting from white sources, altered in successive accounts. and were radically different from those told by plantation workers. It is thus not possible to provide a systematic story covering the events.

[107] Gladstone dispatch, 29 November CO 43234, gave four killed and 24 wounded, and eight whites 'more or less seriously hurt'. The Transvaal Leader, 28 November, gave 6 Indians killed and forty wounded (of whom at least two died later): there was no mention of any white injured.

scarcely any trade.[108] Their support for the campaign, already strained after disputes with Gandhi, was tempered by the need for a return to the status quo, and they tried to cool the situation. On 20 November while reaffirming support for passive resistance, they condemned violence, advised strikers to be patient and give no trouble to the police; and urged a return to work for some. Members of the Natal Indian Association, with police permission, visited the sugar estates and warned workers against leaving the estates to which they were attached, or resisting the police.[109]

No demands on behalf of the workers were ever presented, and no national leader(s) intervened to state the workers' grievances. That alone ensured failure. Furthermore, Africans and white women were being employed in the towns and the railways to replace them, and there were reports of 'Indians rushing to get back their places'.[110] In fact the Indian workers got little, and many lost their livelihood or suffered great privations. One estimate placed their losses in wages and savings as well over £30,000, and many women were forced to sell their jewellery.[111] Living conditions did not improve, and the workers had little to show for their militancy, and solidarity with the petty bourgeoisie.

Women in Protest[112]

Our search for the connections between the many strands of struggle in 1913-14, started in Jagersfontein, where African and Coloured women (and those of Bloemfontein, and Winburg), refused to carry passes, or pay fines, and were imprisoned.[113] The question seemed to be whether there were unique conditions in this mining village, leading to two significant events over six months, or whether this was only coincidence.

This required a new look at this province which had some unique features. Firstly it had only one tiny Reserve, and blacks were

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[108] Evening Chronicle, 7 November 1913.

[109] Evening Chronicle, 17, 20 November 1913.

[110] Transvaal Leader, 20, 22 November 1913.

[111] Report of Deputy Protector, 31 December.

[112] Unless otherwise cited, the material for this section is taken from Julia C. Wells, 'The History of Black Women's Struggle against Pass Laws in South Africa, 1900-1960', Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1982, Ch.4.

[113] Sol. T Plaatje, Native Life in South Africa, Ravan, 1982, Ch. 7, speaks only of resistance in these three towns. Julia Wells, reading Free State court and municipal records, also found reference only to these towns,

dispersed across the Province, on farms and in towns. Together with the arrival of many women from Basutoland, this accounted for the almost 'normal' sex ratio, in contrast to towns in other Provinces; and women, Coloured and African, were required to carry passes under regulations that predated Union.

Political life in the Free State underwent significant changes in 1913, when its branch of the governing party followed General Hertzog into opposition in Parliament. The local army commanders sided with Hertzog, and presumably the police followed suit.[114] Which of these events affected increased police action in May, is uncertain, but the number of arrests on pass offences increased considerably, that of women going up four fold in Bloemfontein.

At first the women paid their fines, but from the end of May, through September, women in Bloemfontein, Winburg and Jagersfontein defied the law, and chose to go to prison. They were led by local women, many of them active church members, and/or school teachers, or the wives of ministers, teachers and business men. Half the women charged were domestic servants, the others claimed to be housewives.

Although the women won (belated) support from the Natives Congress, and from the African Political Organisation (APO), they took the initiative themselves, and faced ridicule from some of their menfolk. Ultimately they formed their own independent OFS Native and Coloured Women's Association, led by Catherina Simmons, and Katie Louw, the president of the Methodist women's prayer group. It collected funds for the families of women in prison, organised deputations, and mobilised support.

The first stand against the arrests came at the end of May in Waaihoek location (Bloemfontein), when a mass meeting of women resolved not to carry passes if police harassment was not stopped. A deputation to the mayor was told that he could not change the laws, and a crowd collected at the police station where some eighty women tore up their passes - for which they were charged. On Friday 30th, some 600 women marched to the court waving walking sticks, knobkerries, broom sticks, and Union Jacks. There was a fracas when the police tried to clear the court, and the women lashed out at their tormentors. 'We have done with pleading, we now demand', they were quoted as saying.

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[114] Control of local police shifted to the South African Police at the end of April, but we are unable to determine whether this had any effect on the events that followed.

The eighty pleaded not guilty, but refused to pay fines, and in this instance were dismissed by the court. The idea caught on, and other groups were to emulate them in the coming months, but it was not always peaceful. On 16 June, a near riot followed the arrest of a woman in the location for being without a pass. Two of her friends released her, and when a posse of police arrested all three, a large crowd collected, and followed them to the police station. There it is claimed, the police struck a spokeswomen with a sjambok when she asked what the charges were, and in the fight that followed the women wielded sjamboks, threw stones, and bit the police. The next day Bloemfontein experienced its first stay-at-homes in a long history of such actions. No woman was allowed to go to work, and 'those that tried to escape were beaten'. Furthermore, said one report, 'The most troublesome were the Cape girls'.[115]

Thirty four women were arrested as a result of the scuffle with the police, and found guilty of public violence, but rather than pay a fine, they went to gaol for two months. This inspired Sol Plaatje, Secretary of the South African Natives National Congress, to write in Tsala ea Batho, of 21 June:

> Let no woman pay a fine. They should all go and fill the gaol ... Let them build new gaols. It is no disgrace to fill them for Liberty.[116]

The APO praised the women on 14 June, and advised them not to do any work while in prison. A fortnight later they criticised men for not standing up, as had the women:

> Our manhood has been almost extinguished. We docilely accept almost every abject position, and submit to every brutality of the white man, with little more than a murmur. Not so our women. They have accepted the white man's challenge, and have openly defied him to do his worst.

There were arrests in Winburg in May, and on 2 June 600 women of the location, singing hymns, marched to the Town Hall, and declared they would no longer carry passes. The Town Council was nonplussed, and then following the lead from Bloemfontein decided to prosecute. On 20 June women were given six days within which to carry passes, and from 1 July the police arrested batches of women, six at a time - the maximum number the local gaol could take! The penalty was four days in prison, although this stiffened over time, and by October was one month or a £2 fine.

The problem of young women over 16, who were at school or unmarried and not employed by a white person was highlighted on 15

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[115] Evening Chronicle, 20 June 1913.

[116] Yet it was Plaatje who urged Congress two weeks later not to pass a vote of solidarity with the striking white miners.

August, with the arrest of Ruth Pululu, an assistant school mistress. Ineligible for a residential pass on all counts, she was required to take employment in domestic service or go to gaol. Either course meant that the school would have to close down.[117]

Pass fees were also meant to provide part of the revenue with which to finance location amenities, and when Winburg's white ratepayers, meeting on 25 September, were told that there was a deficit of £700 in location accounts, they demanded the immediate arrest of the guilty women, and that additional gaol space be made available.

Resisters were compared by whites (in all centres of opposition) with British suffragettes, and their sporting of blue rosettes was taken to be a mark of opposition to carrying the pass, although it is not clear whether the issue of the vote was raised. One white woman seemed impressed. Writing anonymously to the Friend of 11 October, she commended the protesters courage, and called for a demonstration of support by whites. Plaatje, amongst others, responded enthusiastically, but this proved to be quite misplaced. The Friend received replies that were largely abusive, and the demonstration never took place.[118]

The third centre of active protest was Jagersfontein, and the situation differed in that there was an active local branch of the APO and active women in Congress. From May arrests commenced, and older women responded by refusing to buy their monthly pass. Negotiations with the town council elicited no response, and at the end of September 60 women were arrested and charged for not having passes. Aploon Vorster, described as a Mozambiquan Lady, was their spokeswoman, and was sentenced to 30 days: the others got seven days. Thereafter, said the Friend, of 29 September:

> ... a large number of native girls paraded the streets ... singing, shouting and flaunting the blue ribbon - the sign of their suffragettism. They made a rush to the spot where the fifty (sic) convicted women were under police guard waiting to transport them to Fauresmith ...[and] police had to requisition the fire hose to disperse them. Later on some mounted constables with sjamboks were required to clear the streets.

After October the arrest of women on pass offences seems to have abated - although the campaign continued for many months. The issue raised in the address by Dr Abduarahman at the annual APO conference in October, was widely publicised because of its 'splenetic' tone and 'rabid fulminations':

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[117] The mayor, told in November that two schoolgirls were in gaol, reportedly said: 'we are not likely to get servants when native children go to school'.

[118] Letter to Diamond Field Advertiser, 16 October 1913, subheaded 'Help From an Unexpected Quarter'.

> ... this policy of repression cannot last much longer. If a handful of Indians, in a matter of conscience, can so firmly resist what they consider injustice, what could the coloured races not do if they were to adopt this practice of passive resistance? We must all admire what these British Indians have shown in their determination to maintain what they deem to be their rights. The inhumanity of the Free State has driven our women to resist the law. Thirty four of them went to gaol rather than carry passes... I am convinced that if our people as a whole were prepared to suffer likewise, we would gain redress of our most serious grievances while General Botha is still alive. Are we to be driven to that course?[119]

Abdurahman then said: if 200,000 mine workers downed tools, and farm labourers refused at harvest time to work for 1s.6d. per day,

> the economic foundations of South Africa would suddenly shake and tremble with such violence that the beautiful white South African superstructure which had been built on it would come down with a crash entailing financial ruin such as the world had never seen before.[120]

But the President could not sustain the mood. He stopped threatening, and pleaded with the whites to prevent such a calamity by encouraging the coloured peoples to 'improve their position and become more useful citizens'. He prescribed the upliftment of the 'lower classes of coloureds', calling for sobriety and prohibition. He wanted an insurance society for Coloureds; and called on all coloured people, not subject to the Native Lands Act, to aim to buy land. The 'splenetic' speech turned out to be rather a fuzzy speech - but did indicate that the women's struggle had resonated somewhere in the thinking of the Coloured leadership.

Strikes at the Diamond Mines

There were several strike at the smaller diamond mines in 1913-14, at Koffiefontein, Klipdam, Randfontein, Kimberley, Premier Mines, and Jagersfontein, many of which have still to be investigated.[121] These events were invariably described as riots, and as far as can be ascertained from cursory press reports, they all involved some strike action, leading to confrontations between section of the black work force, or between them and either police.

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[119] As reported in Transvaal Leader, 30 September 1913. A copy was sent by Gladstone to the Colonial Office (CO 37199), but there are no further details in any of his dispatches.

[120] Ibid.

[121] See e.g. Transvaal Leader, 7 November 1913, on 600 Africans sentenced to one months hard labour, following 'theft from the compound' during a 'riot' at Smith Mine at Klipdam.

or white workers.[122] It was only the shootings at Premier mines and Jagersfontein that led to significant publicity, but once again strikes were ascribed to 'tribal' friction, illegal beer drinking, and so on, trivialising the event, and exonerating the authorities.

Information on what occurred at the Premier mines comes almost entirely from evidence at an official inquiry.[123] Mine officials said that on 23 November 1913, a policeman struck a worker during an attempt to stop gambling and drinking at No.6 compound. There was looting by the offended workers, and then a lull. At 8.0 p.m. the worker's kinsmen (Basotho), were said to have attacked kinsmen of the policeman (a Shangaan), in the compound. White miners intervened to stop the 'looting and rioting', and the Sotho turned on them. Fortuitously, the whites were armed, and they fired two volleys, killing four and wounding twenty four. Twenty two Sotho were arrested.[124]

The account is too glib, and if true, begs too many questions. What was the cause of this 'tribal' friction? Why did the whites intervene and why were they present with guns? Who were the 'armed local whites' who somehow appeared on the scene? Why were 300 'troublemakers' transferred to Jagersfontein? In fact, the transfer might never have been mentioned, if they had not been such convenient scapegoats for the Deputy Inspector of Mines in the events of January 1914.[125]

On Wednesday 7 January, an overseer F.M. de Wet Stokenstroom, and two white miners assaulted Daniel Molipha variously described as a 'boss-boy', the popular compound barber, and also as a 'petty chief'. He was kicked and hit while down, and been left, unable to move. Workers carried him to the compound, bloodied and covered in

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[122] Wages for blacks in diamond mines (7s-8s9s. for a 26 day month) were higher than in gold mines (5s2s), or coal mines (4s1-43s), but were pitiably low. We know little about conditions in the compounds in the smaller mines, but working conditions were unpleasant. Underground tunnels were 1-1 yds wide, with lighting only from lamps on helmets. Wagons were hand pushed and ran on rails. It was hot and sweaty, with mud underfoot. The Transvaal Leader, 26 November 1913, reported a roof-fall and the death of two blacks and one white at Jagersfontein. Body searches were frequent.

[123] The report at the National Archives, Maseru, quoted by Ranger, 'Faction Fighting', is similar to the above, taken from the Transvaal Leader, 25 November 1913. Ranger has his doubts about the explanations offered at the Inquiry, and we concur.

[124] A letter of the Basuto Council to Gladstone, 16 April 1914 gives these numbers. The press reported three killed, and 22 wounded, eight seriously. See Transvaal Leader, 25 November 1913.

[125] The Deputy Inspector claimed that the 300 men from Premier mines were troublesome from the start, affected the labourers, and were the 'ringleaders and initiators' in the January event.

sweat and mud, then transferred to hospital, where he died the next day.[126] On Friday morning, one Lenepo, led a group to ask about Daniel. They saw Nesbitt, the Compound Manager, who said that the doctor ascribed the death to a ruptured ulcer, brought on by eating too much porridge, drinking too much Mahleu (beer) and coffee(!), smoking dagga (cannabis), and to gonorrhoea (sic).[127] When they asked to see the General Manager, Nesbitt 'kicked them away'.[128]

This was too much. The men did not believe a word of what they were told, and called on everyone to stop work until an enquiry into Daniel's death was held. Large numbers refused to go underground, and when they found men of another ethnic group going to work they stoned them. They also stoned any whites in the compound, and drove them out.[129] Attempts were made by officials, and by the General Manager to get the men back to work, but to no effect. Police officers, together with armed men (many of them miners), arrived and blocked the three compound gates, and two volleys were fired, leaving dead or wounded in the compound. As in most such cases, it is not possible to say definitively who gave the order to fire, or in fact, why the order was given. At the very worst, one or more stones were thrown; but even this was denied. The police sergeant was accused of having given the order to shoot, and many of the dead were shot in positions that indicated that they were far from the gates.[130] Most damning of all, Machopane Mahapela a policemen, who tried to appeal to his fellow Sotho to surrender, was shot twice by the whites - and lay dead.[131]

The damage done by the mineworkers, was in fact remarkable slight. They chased the Compound manager and his staff from the Compound, smashed windows and furniture, and seem to have taken some £50 and about £300 worth of clothing - although even these are not certain.[132] The point blank shooting at unarmed men, and

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[126] From the deposition of Ben Khotso, 15 January 1914, and Joe Letsie, 17 January, Basutoland Despatches (BD) No 168, 1914.

[127] Deposition of Sepinare Phahlahla, 15 January 1914, ibid.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Ben Khotso's statement.

[130] Deposition of Sepinare Phahlahla. Mahlabani stated that he was struck on the back and the leg by a pickhandle 'because I was speaking to the others'. BD 168.

[131] Deposition by Sepinare Phahlahla, BD 168. Phahlahla also stated that the men were satisfied with their treatment prior to this affair. Mahapela was a policemen according to a letter by Chief Griffiths and others to Gladstone, 16 April, 1914, BD 383, (dated 9 May 1914). See also Rand Daily Mail, 12 January 1914.

[132] Report, Deputy Inspector of Mines.

the casualties inflicted on them by the white vigilantes was out of all proportion to what the men did. Many men panicked and tried to escape, but when they clambered across the compound fence were driven back at gunpoint. A press correspondent writing from the mine said that 'those who made for the fence did not desire to enter the town but wanted to get away from the mine, the shooting, and the general bloodshed, and to make for Basutoland'.[133]

When instructed to return to work, the men declared that they wanted to go home. They would not give evidence at the official inquiry into the shooting, having little confidence in speaking to white officials after the recent, widely publicised case, of P.J. Pienaar, a farmer in the Ladybrand region. Accused of killing two blacks (a man and his sister), and selling their cattle to discharge some pressing debts, he was acquitted by a jury, despite the damaging (but circumstantial) evidence.[134] Starting on Saturday, some 600 were taken under armed guard to the border in batches of up to 200.[135]

Jagersfontein - Whatever did Happen?

At one level there is a simple answer to the question 'Whatever did hapened at Jagersfontein'? The women in the location, Coloured and African, and the men in the compounds responded to regulations or to acts of brutality, confronted their immediate oppressors, and took what action they could. Racism in the Free State was harsher, or at least less easily countered, and flashpoint was soon reached. It was the one Province in which there was no Indian struggle, but by default - Indians were prohibited in the 'Free' State.

We can only guess at the contact between the women and the men, but with the sex-ratio of Jagersfontein at around sixteen to one, and abnormal for a Free State town, intercourse between mine and town must have been considerable. The men would have known of the women's campaign, (as indeed the women knew trouble was to be expected on the mines),[136] and that must have had some impact on their own actions, but this would not account for the large number involved in the strike, nor the violence. Nor could the contact with the Free State women account for the strike at Premier mines.

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[133] Friend, 12 January 1914; see statement by Mohlabani, BD 168.

[134] Evening Chronicle, 13 September 1913.

[135] Ben Khotso, ibid. There were varying reports about the number sent home, and no reliable figure is available.

[136] Some women informed their employers, on the morning of the strike, that trouble could be expected, but there is no further information about their contact.

It is more fruitful to look at Basutoland, with which the men kept close links, and to which the men sought to return after the shooting in Jagersfontein. Three issues would have affected the Sotho in 1913: the economic depression (noted above), accompanied by the drought over South Africa, which was particularly severe in Basutoland, and the first request that the British territories be handed to the Union. The drought was probably the most important issue - and in its wake migrant workers, already under economic pressure, would have received urgent pleas to send money home.

In March 1913 Botha sought the transfer of Bechuanaland and Swaziland to South Africa, as part of a plan to absorb South West Africa (Namibia), Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and Mozambique.[137] The Sotho had always opposed incorporation in South Africa, and they would have been alerted to continued South African ambitions. It is in this light that two official reports can be read:

> Recent events would seem to indicate ... that the British Basuto is ever ready to come into open revolt at the slightest provocation, whether imaginary or otherwise, and on such occasions all attempts made by the Europeans in authority to reason with them are met with jeers and insults.[138]

and also,

> At Kimberley ... the Basuto are always regarded as the most troublesome element in the Compounds, and ... in Basutoland I have noticed derisive shouting and gestures from the herdboys and a disinclination among older folk to discourage ... dogs from making themselves objectionable to European travellers.
> Young men on horseback pass one ... with a sneer or a scowl instead of the friendly greeting of the Cape Colony, the salute of Natal or the silent deference of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Mud slinging and stone throwing on the part of the small boys, and the wilful startling of cart horses are said not to be uncommon.
> These things may be mischief, but mischief of a disrespectful almost aggressive sort, and it is certainly not pleasant to conjecture up pictures of a conflict precipitated by the spurious class antagonisms which are being fostered by the agitators of labour (sic), when aggravated by deep-rooted antipathies of race and colour.[139]

The solution proposed was that the police force in Fauresmith and Jagersfontein be increased 'to say thirty men'.

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[137] Smuts spoke about Mozambique becoming part of South Africa at a public meeting in Johannesburg, and had been rebuffed by the Portuguese consul. He raised this issue, together with that of Namibia, inside the British war cabinet in 1918.

[138] T.E. Liefeldt, Inspector Native Affairs Dept., Report on Riot at the Premier Mines, 16 March 1914, CO 417/545, 103706 -BD)

[139] A.L. Barrett, Inspector, OFS Labour District, Dept of Native Affairs, 'Basuto Attitudes - Jagersfontein', 21 March 1914, CO 417/545 103706 - BD.

The period we have discussed was one of instability in South Africa, consequent on economic depression, plus the dislocations involved in unifying local institutions, and in reconstituting the army. The ruling class was split, and the new army command was close to mutiny. With war in Europe imminent, the government, in its moment of triumph in January 1914, was probably at its weakest. If the armed rebellion had not been suppressed so speedily after war was declared, the government would only have been saved through an occupation by Imperial troops. The government was vulnerable, and this was felt (if not always understood) by sections of the Labour movement. Despite their belief that the railway strike had been provoked to destroy the labour movement, and then their anger at the deportation of the strike leaders, they were unable to make common cause with the black workers,

During the events of 1913-14, the perpetrators of the worst outrages were the government, the mine owners, and the British army, exceeding in intensity any actions of the oppressed classes. However, over and above the actions of the army and police force, the white workers, when not involved in struggle with the Randlords or the government, were themselves agents of repression. They shot down workers at Premier mines and Jagersfontein; acted as temporary warders in the Natal collieries; and formed vigilante groups to confront Indians crossing into the Transvaal.[140] And thus, in January 1914, when white miners at Premier mines joined the general strike, African workers just carried on working. If some white trade unionists were aware of the contradictions in their organisations, and Labour leaders were beginning to perceive the nature of the problems they faced, they were still blinkered by the belief that white labour alone could effect change in the country.

Some white socialists did cross the colour line, but this was exceptional. Amongst the first public declarations of support, was that of J.T. Bain, secretary of the Federation of Trades, who supported the Indian workers, and hoped that,

> at a later date the party of which he was secretary would endorse [his statement] that an injury done to the most humble of their race was an injury done to humanity. They must fight for human rights, whether for the coloured or white people. Race must not tell.

He characterised 'the indentured system as [one] of slavery glossed

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[140] See Transvaal Leader, 10, 12 November 1913, for the meeting of the local magistrate, and the Volksrust Vigilance Committee, on their opposition to the Satyagrahists. Also the copy of 18 January 1914, in which the Minister of Justice, N.J. de Wet, 'acknowledged the valuable support given to the Government ... in resisting the Indian invasion'.

over and disguised by law'.[141] Then came a meeting in Johannesburg attended by several prominent white trade unionists. T.W. Ward (one of those arrested in July 1913), speaking on behalf of Bain, described the movement of the Indians as

> an expression of their revolt against oppression. But the real cause was economic ... He was not going to advise them against passive resistance, but he warned them to be careful, and to be ready to be shot down. He was not there to stir up race prejudice, but came as representing a small minority of white workers on the Reef, who realised that the Indian's fight was the white workers' fight ... Your brothers in Natal are fighting your fight. Their fight today will be your fight tomorrow. Do not forget there were a few white men willing to forego all questions of colour to help you.[142]

But Bain was vilified in letters to the Evening Chronicle, which had provided the fullest report of what he had said, and the Natal Federation of Trade and Labour Unions, at a meeting of delegates, reaffirmed the Labour standpoint and called on the government to speed repatriation. Herein lay the tragedy: the white workers, embattled in 1913-14 against mine magnates and government, while strengthening their unions, and building (white) working class solidarity,[143] never extended a hand to the blacks: that being the price they paid for acceptance into the settler community - at the expense of their own unrealised working class interests.

Without wishing to place the position of blacks on a par with whites (as if the interests of slaves could ever be compared with that of their enslavers), it must still be noted that the actions of the petty bourgeois black leadership did little to commend them. Sol Plaatje, champion of the black women, blocked a Congress move of solidarity with white strikers;[144] Gandhi called off his campaign in 1914, in order not to embarass the authorities; and Abdurahman despite his gibes against white repression, did this in order to plead for the economic advancement of Coloured businessmen. This was a mirror image (in a very distorted mirror, to be true) of the pusillanimous approach of the white working class.

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[141] Reported in Evening Chronical, 13 November 1913. Several other white socialists appeared on platforms to express solidarity, but they represented only themselves. These were leaders without any troops.

[142] Quoted in Transvaal Leader, 1 December 1913. As Ward predicted, they 'had to be ready to be shot down'.

[143] Gladstone makes this point in his dispatch, ibid.

[144] Brian Willan, Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist 1876-1932, Heinemann 1984, p. 163 states: Plaatje 'personally drafted a resolution "dissociating the Natives from the [white miners'] strike movement" after the idea had been put forward ...'

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The war was to break out soon, extending from Europe into Africa, and in the process new issues would arise. The leaders of Congress, the APO, and the Indian leadership all supported the war effort of the South African government, and the white working class, or at least the Engliosh speaking section, trooped to the colours. The Afrikaner workers were in dissent, but they were tied too solidly to the Nationalist camp to provide any answers. Only one tiny group amongst the leadership of the SALP had a programme of opposition and they broke away to form a War on War League. Its leaders were among those who were radicalised by the events of July 1913 - January 1914, but they had not had enough time to capitalise on the experiences of the strikes. In any event the 'War-on-War-ites' had themselves to be pushed into opposition to the SALP, and this needed the jolt provided by war; an issue that was not easy for Labourites, many of whom retreated from the new radicalism by the patriotism that swept the country.

The war was to affect the workers in different ways. The white working class was split by the war issue, and the English speaking section marched off to war. A short boom in the diamond industry from 1911-13 ended, and the mines were closed from September 1914 till January 1916 [148] - leading to the repatriation of all migrant workers. 'Diamonds were forever' (perhaps) but were not wanted now. By way of contrast, to finance the war, gold production expanded, and Africans were used as semi-skilled replacements for miners who had joined the army. And it was during the war that the first industrial expansion occurred, absorbing new layers of black workers, and tilting the class forces towards an urban black proletariat. The new radical socialists were to be confronted by new social forces, and they had much to learn before they grasped the dimensions of the problems facing them.

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[148] M.H. de Kock, Selected Subjects in the Economic History of South Africa, Juta, Cape Town, 1924, p. 261.